

## Minutes of the 4<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

1. Date and Time: September 3, 2019 / 10:00 – 17:00

2. Venue: Taj West End, Bengaluru, India

3. Participants: 123 participants

4. Agenda Items:

[Items for Report]

1) The 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> Executive Board Meetings

2) 2017~2019 Progress Report

3) 2017~2018 Audit Report

4) Report on Payment of Annual Membership Fees

[Items for Approval]

1) 2020 Project Plan

2) New Membership Application

3) Election of the Vice-Chairperson

4) Appointment of the Secretary General

5) Approval for Consecutive Terms of Executive Board Members

6) Appointment of the Executive Board Members

7) Amendments to the A-WEB Charter

8) Use of Annual Membership Fees as a Source of Funds

# Details of the General Assembly

## **SESSION 1**

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### **[Announcement on the program of the General Assembly]**

#### **Emcee**

First, let me briefly introduce the program of the General Assembly. As you see from the program booklet, today we will deal with 4 items for report and 7 items for approval. Immediately after closing of the General Assembly, we will have a retirement ceremony for the Secretary General, Mr. Yong-Hi Kim. All of today's events will be finished with a commemorative group photo-taking.

The Secretariat has already circulated, to all members, the 'Agenda for the 4th General Assembly,' and you now have '2017 & 2018 Audit Reports' and '2017 & 2018 Annual Reports' on your table as well.

For your reference, decisions made at the General Assembly are based on agreement according to the Charter. In case we do not reach an agreement, a decision will be made by a simple majority of the participating members present at the meeting. We have a heavy agenda to deal with at the General Assembly. I would like to ask for your cooperation to ensure the events run smoothly.

### **[Opening of the General Assembly]**

#### **Emcee**

Now, we will begin the 4th A-WEB General Assembly. Unfortunately, A-WEB Chairperson Mr. Constantin-Florin Mituletu-Buica is not with us today. Instead, Mr. Ion Mincu-Radulescu, on behalf of the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania, will deliver his opening remarks. Please give him a warm round of applause.

**[Opening Remarks]**

**Romania Chairperson (acting), PEA, Mr. Ion Mincu-Radulescu**

ladies and Gentlemen, esteemed members and distinguished guests, on the occasion on the 4<sup>th</sup> General Assembly meeting, Mr. Constantin-Florin Mituletu-Buica, president of the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania wishes to say thank you to the Executive Board members, to the General Secretariat including to the Mr. Kim, Secretary General, and to all distinguished A-WEB members for strong support received during our mandate as Chairperson of the Association held by our authority. During the mandate held by the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania, the number of the Association member has been increased, the projects supported by A-WEB have been developed successfully, and more importantly, we have initiated and discussed very valuable ideas and projects for future electoral development goals. The Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania and myself are very proud and happy about our contribution to A-WEB development and democracy-building capacity for our members around the world.

A-WEB might consider the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania and myself as a strong strategic partner for future cooperation and democracy-building capacity. Please allow me to wish success to our new elected Chairman Mr. Sunil Arora, to our new Secretary General Mr. Choe, and wish to all A-WEB members all the best.

Let's help each other in A-WEB practice. Let's share together what we have the best in terms of democracy like our logo says "Democracy to Grow for All Worldwide." Thank you very much again for your attention and for your support.

**Emcee**

Thank you for your speech Mr. Mincu-Radulescu. From now on, the A-WEB Chairperson will host the General Assembly.

**[Announcement on the Quorum]**

**Romania Chairperson (acting), PEA, Mr. Ion Mincu-Radulescu**

According to our Charter, we have 109 members. The necessary quorum is 55 number of the participants. Today, we are present 45 directly with the delegates and with 19 Power of Attorney. So we can declare open the General Assembly working. And now, the new Chairperson will take over the meeting. Thank you very much again.

**[Introduction of the Next Chairperson]**

**Romania Chairperson (acting), PEA, Mr. Ion Mincu-Radulescu**

Let me introduce our new Chairperson Mr. Sunil Arora.

**[A-WEB Flag Hand-over]**

**Emcee**

Once again, I proclaim that Mr. Sunil Arora, the Chief Election Commissioner of India has become as the fourth Chairperson of A-WEB. Mr. Radulescu hands the flag, which is the symbol of A-WEB, over to the next Chairperson, Sunil Arora. Mr. Radulescu is handing the A-WEB flag over to the next Chairperson Sunil Arora. Please give a big round of applause to the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania for its hard work over the past two years and to the next chairperson to offer congratulations. The 'A-WEB flag' will be kept by the Chief Election Commissioner of India during his term and will be handed over to the next Chairperson at the next General Assembly.

Before Mr. Sunil Arora gives us the inaugural speech, the Election Commission of India would like to share the information of the voter network magazine. I would like to invite Mr. Ashok Lavasa and Mr. Sushil Chandra to launch the Voice of

International Magazine.

(The magazine launching ceremony and photo-taking)

Now, I'm pleased to invite the new Chairperson Mr. Sunil Arora to give us his inaugural speech. Please join me in a warm welcome for Mr. Sunil Arora.

**[Inaugural Speech]**

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Mr. Ion Mincu Radulescu, Adviser, PEA of Romania/Chair of A-WEB, my esteemed and worthy colleagues from Election Commission of India, Election Commissioner, Mr. Ashok Lavasa, Election Commissioner Mr. Sushil Chandra, Excellencies, outgoing Secretary General, in-coming Secretary General, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my privilege and pleasure to welcome you all here in Bengaluru at this 4th General Assembly of the Association of World Election Bodies, as we call it, A-WEB. I welcome you to India, the Land of Mahatma Gandhi, a mention of whom I made yesterday also in the Executive Board, who enshrined the virtues of homespun democracy in his lifetime. This year, we are marking the 150<sup>th</sup> year of birth Anniversary of Gandhi. But, look at his vision. He wrote in as early as 1939 "Democracy must in essence mean the art and science of mobilizing the entire physical, economic and spiritual resources of all the various sections of the people in the service of the common good of all" and it is rather a happy coincidence that Mahatma Gandhi started his first foray into the resistance movement in South Africa, the Land of Nelson Mandela or Madiba as he is affectionately called throughout the world.

A-WEB is a multilateral organization that we are all aware. I think the people who did the initial drafting of the charter, I must pay them all the compliments because they, besides introducing what AWEB is, the preamble itself like the preamble of any constitution, lays down as to what AWEB stands for. " We, Election Management Bodies, Regional Election Associations, and International Election Organizations

around the world, without derogating from the independence of each election management body, realizing the need to strengthen cooperation between and among election management bodies for the purpose of ensuring a credible electoral process in the world, committed to promoting conditions conducive to free, fair, transparent and participative elections and to the development of a democratic culture in the world. Upholding human rights and committing to the promotion of gender equality and the inclusion of people with disabilities and other marginalized communities in the electoral process, recognizing that elections play an important part in the democratic process, resolve to establish a body to be known as Association of World Election Bodies.”

And as the Election Commission in India, I and my colleagues we feel privileged that this time, the Executive Board and the General Assembly have chosen to make India the Chair for the next two years of this august, prestigious and visionary body. And I can assure you categorically that we shall spare no effort to make sure that the ideals enshrined in the preamble and whatever has been stated in the vision and mission of A-WEB is carried further and A-WEB moves from strength to strength with the cooperation of one and all sitting here.

Today, A-WEB represents almost 112 democratic countries of the world. 2/3 of global population now lives in a democratic rule. But is that enough to make us complacent? And is that enough to think that we have accomplished our task? With all due regards, the answer is` NO` because, those places where the democracies are either struggling or nascent or wanting to come out of the shell, fighting totalitarian regimes, they need to be assisted and they need to be helped in every which way so that they can also join the comity of democratic nations. To that extent, we, from this platform, extend not just the sympathy but we view each of the citizens residing in those countries with deep and genuine empathy and take it upon ourselves to ensure that we in some way without impinging on their sovereignty, try to create an atmosphere throughout the world so that they also see the light of the democratic order in the coming years.

I would like to convey lot of thanks to my friend from Romania for having led from

the front the General Assembly. I would also like to extend deep gratitude to our outgoing members, welcome the new members, gratitude to the outgoing Secretary General, welcome to the new Secretary General, with the assurance that all of us shall kind of be around not to do any guidance but to kind of do any hand holding if and when he and his people require to carry the A-WEB ideals further.

And for the outgoing Secretary General, I believe that there is a small ceremonial farewell today but yesterday, in the meeting of the governing body, the Executive Board, practically each and every member, they were effusive and overwhelming in their praise of his contribution to the A-WEB ideals and one could make out that that kind of overwhelming praise was not a kind of mere ritual but it came from the deepest recesses of the heart.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals 2016, which have replaced the UN Millennium Development Goals, do not advocate the establishment of democratic governments directly but under point number 16.7, it advocates ensuring Responsive, Inclusive, Participatory and Representative decision making at all levels. There could not be a better vision for democracy by 2030.

Democracy as we all are aware has gone through several phases of expression and contraction in history. But since 1976, there has been more or less an irreversible growth of democracy across the world. A phenomenon that Samuel Huntington referred to as a “Third Wave of Democratization.” This third wave further intensified as many dictatorships collapsed under the weight of their own actions at the end of the cold war. Many of our friends sitting here have been through those phases and are now basking in the sunshine of democracy.

As for India, I am sure you all are aware, but I would like to still recall that the founding fathers of our Constitution were such visionaries that our Republic was promulgated formally on the 26th January 1950. But the Election Commission of India was formally announced on 25th January 1950 i.e. a day before the Constitution was formally adopted and promulgated, which means, they were very sure from the day one that we have to be a democratic nation and they gave us a wonderful Article

324, which has resulted in the creation of Election Commission for the superintendence, direction and control of the entire process. There can be no forum on which we would not like to pay homage to the founding fathers of our Constitution who thought as much when the Constitution was made, drafted and written. And this time, after doing the 17th Lok Sabha Elections, as I mentioned yesterday also and after handing over the list of elected Honorable members to the Honorable President of India, all three of us and our colleagues, we decided to visit the shrine of Mahatma Gandhi to pay homage to express our humility and to express our gratitude and also to partly get relieved of three months of tiring process, putting it very mildly.

Having said that, I again reiterate the commitment of all of us and India, today as the Chair, to spare no effort in the furtherance of the ideals of democracy. You are kind enough yesterday to allow us an AWEB center in Delhi and as I have said yesterday that we have already done a lot of work and that any of your schedule permitting if you could go via Delhi, we can show you what all has been already done and also what all shall be done in the next one year for the benefit of one and all. Each and every member of A-WEB is welcome to partake all the facilities, do research, documentation, training, share their ideas, share their views, share their vision, so that this Center becomes a real Center of Excellence throughout the democratic world. We are again thankful to you for having made India 'The Chair' for this august body and before closing, I again reiterate that we would not be found wanting in any respect for the furtherance of ideals for which this body has been created. Thank You.

### **Emcee**

Once again, please give a big round of applause to the new Chairperson. From now on, the new Chairperson will host the General Assembly.

### **[Agenda Proceedings]**

### **India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Now we start with the agenda. The first item is for reporting. So kindly start.



**Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Good morning, I am Seung Kim, Deputy Director of A-WEB. Before proceeding over our agenda, I have a couple of announcements to make. At this General Assembly, we have a heavy agenda before us. Of the agenda items, in particular, we will elect the next Vice-Chairperson who will host the 5th General Assembly and Executive Board members representing their continent. We will also deal with the appointment of the next Secretary General as well as the amendments to the A-WEB Charter. I would appreciate if you cooperate in dealing with all agenda items tabled at the General Assembly through generous understanding and mutual concession.

Under Article 14.2 of the Charter, decisions should be made through consensus reached by members present at the General Assembly. Where consensus is not reached, decisions shall be made by a simple majority of the members present at the General Assembly. All members present are eligible to cast their vote. Partner organizations have the right to speak during the General Assembly, but will not have the right to vote.

**[Agenda 1. Report on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Executive Board meetings]**

**Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Mr. Chair, with your permission, I would like to explain about the first agenda item. This agenda item is presented to report on the 6th and 7th Executive Board meetings.

To begin with, the 6th EB meeting was hosted by Fijian Elections Office on March 27, 2018. This meeting was attended by 14 EB members, 1 Oversight & Audit Committee member and three observers. The EB members present approved 2017 Progress Report, 2017 Audit Report, 2018 Work and Budget Plan and new membership applications. They also decided to form a sub-committee to review and revise the current charter. For more details, please refer to page 2 to 4 in the agenda book.

The 7th EB meeting was hosted by Central Election Commission of Bulgaria on February 21, 2019. 14 EB members and two observers participated in this meeting.

The EB members approved 2018 Progress Report, 2018 Audit Report, 2019 Project and Budget Plan, and new membership applications. They partially modified and approved the final proposal for the Charter amendments by the sub-committee established at the 6th EB meeting. For more details, please refer to page 3 to 10 in your agenda book. Thank you.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Any comments from the House?

- ▶ Conclusion: The report on the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Executive Board meetings is approved as proposed.

**[Agenda 2. 2017-2019 Progress Report]**

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Then we go to the next agenda item, progress report for 2017-2019.

**Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Thank you. Mr. Chair. With your permission, I would like to briefly explain about the second agenda item. This agenda item is presented to report on the activities the Secretariat has carried out since 2017. To begin with, in 2017, the Secretariat implemented ICT projects in five countries in cooperation with our member EMBs including Uzbekistan, Ecuador, El Salvador, DR Congo and Fiji. The Secretariat also carried out Election Management Capacity Building Programs with 109 participants from 42 member EMBs and Election Visitors Programs inviting 91 election officials from 39 member EMBs.

In 2018, the Secretariat launched a new website for a better communication with members and conducted several types of promotional activities such as making promotional videos and issuing Newsletters. It also carried on with its ICT projects in

El Salvador, Fiji, Samoa and Papua New Guinea. In 2018, the Secretariat developed two different types of training programs. One is called 'Specialized Training Program on ICT-based Election Management' and the other is Election Management Capacity Building Program. Each program had its own curriculum and its own target audience.

For the year 2019, the Secretariat has run two Election Management Capacity Building Programs so far, inviting 38 election officials from 14 countries. The Secretariat is scheduled to run one more program in October this year. It has also completed its ICT projects on developing election information system and reconstructing data center in Samoa and Papua New Guinea.

For more information about Secretariat's activities during the last two or three years, please refer to your agenda book, and 2017 and 2018 annual reports. Thank you.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Any comments from any honorable member?

**DR Congo, CENI**

Thank you so much for allowing me to take the floor. Democratic Republic of the Congo would like to comment about the contribution of A-WEB to the work of adjudication and authorization of voter's data. Thanks for offering computers and servers to be used for the detection and adjudication of duplicates and underage persons in order to make the voter's list more reliable.

The second reason to thank is for your contribution to the security of the Data Center. Thanks to the offer of the new interconnection equipment and configuration of the redundancy of the servers managing the electoral data. Thank you for the increment of the storage capacity by supply of new equipment for storing electoral data.

The third reason for thanking you is a support for the research and development of the project initiated by the CENI management which allowed the CENI DRC to organize the elections of December 30, 2018 which gave rise, for the first time to the history of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to a civilized and peaceful transfer of power between a president of the outgoing and an elected incoming president of the republic.

The fourth reason of thanking the A-WEB is the offer of the first voting machine to launch voter education for the December 30, 2019 elections. We would like to thank the previous Secretary General. We would love to give him a grand round of applause for his efforts and contribution.

I am also going to share a few observations on documents. The name of my country in French is “République démocratique du Congo” and our capital is “Kinshasa.” There is confusion with our neighbor of the west located on the right bank of the river Congo and whose capital is “Brazzaville.” And regarding the flag, the flag of the DR Congo has been poorly represented. For correction, DR Congo is symbolized by a sky-blue flag, decorated with a yellow star in the upper left corner and crossed at an angle of a red band finely framed in yellow.

We would like to share an experience of using the voting machine in the combined elections of December 30, 2018. We would have liked the adoption and use of the voting machine in the elections in DR Congo to be included in the part of the 2017-2019 progress report. The voting machine enable us to improve the Congolese electoral system through the information and communication technologies that our A-WEB organization is promoting.

Thanks to the IT that A-WEB has given, the Congolese voting machine, a 21-inch touch screen device that allows voters to print their votes on a blank ballot at the polling station, is an innovation that allows us to save time and costs. Because we have the record for the largest ballot in the world for a poll, more than 50 pages in A3 format for 181 different constituencies, the voting machine has reduced the size of the ballot to a small paper, A6 format, for three polls combined and indeed this same paper could allow us to organize four direct polls combined. Also, it has facilitated the counting, reducing the time, and human errors through double checking and comparison of results. The errors of centralization and duplication have been reduced thanks to the machine, that has allowed us to give a more transparent process in our context of DR Congo which is a big territory.

What the CENI has learned from the adoption of the voting machine is that innovation

has not always been easily accepted. It is always afraid to change existing habits and procedures. But, as an electoral management body, we are supposed to use all means and strategies of communication to reassure the stakeholders (political parties, candidates, voters, international community, etc.) the soundness of innovation. Thus, after use of the voting machine in the elections of December 30, 2018, currently in the DRC, the voting machine is no longer a subject of dispute and doubt. On the contrary, it has been requested by many organizations to facilitate their vote. We thank A-WEB for your attention as well as your support. Thank you.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Any further comments?

- ▶ Conclusion: The Progress Report for 2017-2019 is approved as proposed.

**[Agenda 3. 2017-2018 Audit Report]**

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Then we go to the next item.

**Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Thank you. Mr. Chair. With your permission, I would like to briefly explain about the third agenda item. This agenda item is presented to report on the Audit results for the year 2017 and 2018. Article 27 of the A-WEB Charter states that the members of the Oversight and Audit Committee shall conduct an annual evaluation of the management of the Secretariat, the execution of programs, and the supervision of finances.

In accordance with A-WEB financial regulations, the Secretariat appointed an external auditor to conduct an audit of A-WEB's finances. The auditor assessed that our financial statements were presented fairly in all material aspects. During the 6th EB

meeting in 2018 and the 7th EB meeting in 2019, the Oversight and Audit Committee analyzed the external auditor's report and gave prior approval to the report.

For more details about income and expenditures of the Secretariat in 2017 and 2018, please refer to the Audit Reports and Annual Reports. Thank you.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Any member would like to say? Any views on this issue?

- ▶ Conclusion: The Audit Report for 2017-2018 is approved as proposed.

**[Agenda 4. Report on Payment of Annual Membership Fees]**

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

I think we can go to the next item, report on payment of annual membership fees.

**Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Thank you. Mr. Chair. With your permission, I would like to briefly explain about the fourth agenda item. This agenda item is presented to report on payment of annual membership fees of year 2017, 2018 and up to now. In the 2nd General Assembly, it was decided that each member pay 10,000 US dollars per year for its annual membership fee.

As you see on page 19 and 20 in your agenda book, 12 and 13 members paid their membership fees in 2017 and 2018 respectively. In 2019 so far 5 members have paid their membership fees. The annual membership fee paid by a member is being used only to cover the member's travel expenses for attending A-WEB's meetings. Thank you.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Today, ECI has moved a proposal in this regard. Would you like to elaborate? Meanwhile, any other comment from any other member please?

### **DR Congo, CENI**

Thank you so much, dear president. We would like to make the modalities of membership fees explicit, and about how it will proceed. Thank you.

### **India, ECI**

Honorable Chair, on behalf of the Election Commission of India, I would like to say the matter of annual membership fee is not only a matter of money, but it is also a matter of commitment and involvement with A-WEB membership. It is desired that all members do pay their membership fee. If the countries want, considering the fact that they may have financial constraints, they may like to offer their suggestions so that the membership fee necessarily comes from all the countries whatever is the reasonable or appropriate amount. Thank you.

### **Mali, CENI**

Thank you, president. I am representing Mali. I would like to take this opportunity to thank A-WEB for their warm welcome and congratulate them. I also thank the old team of last year for all the work that they have done. Having said that, talking about the annual membership fees, we know that the annual membership fees cannot really take it forward. But what about alternative ways of financing? We are a group of a lot of different organizations. The African Union and all the organizations have 5 thousand dollars. I would wish to see the revision based on this amount, because you say that there are only 5 countries that paid in 2019. I would like to set a new amount of annual membership fee that is acceptable and manageable. Thank you.

### **India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Any other member? The Secretariat has already reported the item. So we all heard the views of honorable members.

- ▶ Conclusion: The report on payment of annual membership fees is approved as proposed.

**[Agenda 5. 2020 Project Plan]**

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Now, we can go to the next part of the meeting which is the items for approval. The first item is 2020 project plan.

**Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Thank you. Mr. Chair. With your permission, I would like to briefly explain about the fifth agenda item. The Secretariat has made its 2020 Project Plan with a special focus on capacity building of member EMBs. The Secretariat is planning to organize two different capacity building programs. One is Election Management Capacity Building Program with 8 different courses. Each course will invite 24 participants and deal with a particular topic different from one another.

The Secretariat has already conducted a survey asking members about the topics they want to learn about. Based on their opinions, the Secretariat has selected several topics associated with each stage of election management.

The other capacity building program is called 'Specialized Training Program on Transparency in Elections'. This program will have 4 courses and 20 participants will be participating in each course. The focal point of this program is for enhancing Election Information Systems of member EMBs, and the target audiences are Working-level officials and decision makers from election management organizations who deal with election management, public relations, IT, and human resources. The Secretariat and the National Election Commission of Korea are in the process of securing budget for the successful conduct of these two capacity building programs.

For more details about the 2020 project plan, please refer to page 23 to 26 in your agenda book. Thank you.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

This is put for the consideration of approval to honorable members. I think we can



take it that the honorable members have approved.

- ▶ Conclusion: The 2020 project plan is approved as proposed.

### **[Agenda 6. New Membership Application]**

#### **India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

We can go to the next item that is new membership application.

#### **Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Thank you. Mr. Chair. With your permission, I would like to briefly explain about the sixth agenda item. Under Article 6 of the Charter, national election management bodies wishing to join A-WEB shall submit a written request for membership to the Executive Board, care of the Secretary General. Then the Secretariat shall table the request for consideration at the next General Assembly. Since the 3rd General Assembly in 2017, a total of six election management bodies and one regional election association have applied for membership as follows:

- For membership status, we have 1) Central Election Commission of Ukraine 2) National Election Committee of Cambodia 3) Electoral Complaints Commission of Afghanistan 4) Electoral Supervisory Board of Republic of Indonesia 5) Office of the Electoral Commissioner of Mauritius 6) Political Parties Registration Commission of Sierra Leone
- For associate membership status, Association of Asian Election Authorities (AAEA) has applied.

All those applications were considered at the past three Executive Board meetings and as a result, except for Political Parties Registration Commission of Sierra Leone, all of them were granted temporary membership prior to the General Assembly.

In the case of Political Parties Registration Commission of Sierra Leone, the Executive Board have concluded that they will postpone deciding on the membership of the candidate and further examine the role and the function of the candidate as an election management body. According to the examination, the Executive Board will make their final decision on the membership of the candidate at the next Executive Board meeting. Now, I would like to put the membership applications of six candidate organizations approved by the Executive Board on the table.

With regard to membership status, TSE of Costa Rica has applied for suspension of its membership. According to Article 14.1.4, the suspension of TSE of Costa Rica shall be also tabled at the 4th General Assembly. Thank you.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

The issue of Sierra Leone was discussed yesterday at some length at the Executive Board meeting. It was felt that the issue of Political Entities and EMBs needs to be far more sharply defined than it is today, which is why this issue was referred to a subcommittee for further consideration. The other proposals were approved by the Executive Board. Any further comments for the issue?

**Sierra Leone, NEC**

Thank you very much, Mr. Chair and audience. I am the Chair of the Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone. But I want to state here that in Sierra Leone, there are two Electoral Management Bodies. We have the National Electoral Commission that is responsible for, as usual, elections. But there is also Political Parties Registration Commission. It is an independent body which is almost equal status as the National Electoral Commission. But its function is to deal with political parties, their registration and regulation.

Just as the EMBs generally in some cases, some EMB members perform all the functions, but in some they are separated. In some countries, for instance, boundary delimitation is done by a separate body. So in Sierra Leone, PPRC is an independent commission and constitution. It doesn't dependent on any political party or

government. It's completely independent so there are two EMBs in Sierra Leone: PPRC, with its own constitutional status and function and NEC. The Chairperson of PPRC is even here. He was invited since they applied. Mr. Chairman on behalf of Sierra Leone, it would be better to hear from the Chairman himself briefly. That is my opinion.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

If the members of the Executive Board recall it yesterday, this issue was debated quite at length. Some members read the Article 5 of the Charter. Subsequently, it was felt that Article 5 should be holistically read with 6.3. It was felt that this issue should be examined slightly more sharply and come back to this forum.

**Advisor, Mr. Terry Tselane**

Thank you very much, Chairperson. My name is Terry Tselane and I am a senior advisor for A-WEB and a member of the Executive Board. I just want to indicate that in terms of the process, the General Assembly is the highest decision-making structure of A-WEB. If the issues that were raised in the Executive Board meeting yesterday, are clarified by Sierra Leone, there is no hindrance in terms of making a decision around those issues.

I think the General Assembly is an appropriate body to endorse that decision and therefore I want to suggest that, instead of actually deferring the issue to another time, the issues that were raised as a stumbling block yesterday have been appropriately addressed by Sierra Leone Electoral Commission and therefore move for approval of a decision to accept the PPRC from Sierra Leone that has requested to be accepted as a member.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

It would be recalled that yesterday there was a kind of definite lack of clarity on the kind of demarcation. This clarity has been provided by the honorable EMB of Sierra Leone. That is very understood that the General Assembly is the ultimate body. So, if all the members or the majority of members feel that this should be carried through,

we can reconsider the position of yesterday. But as I said earlier also that yesterday there was a rather polarized feeling on this issue and the Executive Board is also an ultimate microcosm of the General Assembly. So, it's not that the Executive Board didn't deliberate on the issue. Nevertheless, it's for the honorable members to take a call.

### **Sierra Leone, NEC**

Actually, this Sierra Leone case is very unique. In Africa and most part of the world, this is a part of the unique institution EMB that is responsible in the constitution to deal with, as I said, Political parties, their regulation, etc. It is completely independent and the Chairman of Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone, I have already said, I am even a member of that institution too. So, the General Assembly is the ultimate body and we would like the General Assembly to reconsider that decision. Thank you.

### **Guinea, CENI**

I am Mamadou Tounkara from Republic of Guinea. I believe that the debate we are having is the debate that started last night during the Executive Board meeting regarding Sierra Leone. The question that we are asking ourselves is the name that is a little bit conflictual, Political Parties. And when we look at our Charter, it is a little bit hard to define what entity should be part of A-WEB.

Now, yesterday if I understand right, we, the Executive Board members, agreed to have a subcommittee that was composed of representatives from each continent and the subcommittee was going to review the case concerning Sierra Leone. So, what I am going to ask everybody here is that we have listened to Sierra Leone because yesterday there was a question. We didn't hear Sierra Leone yesterday. We had so many questions about how the two entities work together. It's true in most countries we do have the Electoral Commission that is independent and that also like in my country in Guinea we have the ministry of administration that register political parties. That is a different situation.

So what I am asking is to have Sierra Leone give the same answer it just gave us to

the subcommittee that we put in place yesterday, for the subcommittee to send the final report to the Executive Board to either approve or deny. But, I hope this is going to be approved based on what we heard from Sierra Leone today. I also hope that it goes through the subcommittee that we all agree, and we are going to have to do work before making a decision. Thank you.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Like I said yesterday, the view of Sierra Leone could not be held in such a graphic debate because there was no little to tell. At the same time, the members still felt that it would be better the subcommittee examine it. We can set a time period. With all having heard Sierra Leone today, the members could take an alternate view.

**Bangladesh, EC**

Thank you Chairperson for giving me the floor. It is efficient that many countries are showing interest to be a member of EMB. Because of your activities, because of your role, and because of the performance that the EMB is showing so far. But we have got some limitation also. There are countries which are not capable financially or from their infrastructural point of view to hold some big meetings if they are members of this great body of A-WEB. So it is obvious that every country who are the members of this body should have the privilege of hosting and holding meetings like Executive Board meeting or annual general meeting. Countries like India, South Korea, Romania, and Bulgaria may accommodate this kind of huge meeting.

I think there should be limitations although our Charter provides that more than one member can be accommodated from one single country. The time has to come to consider that if the number goes expanding unlimited, then it may go up to 300 or 400 members including member of, more than one member of a single country. For example in many countries, there are many independent constitutional bodies who are working in anywhere of helping elections, conducting elections. But they are not the key player of managing elections and holding elections.

So who could be the member of this body? This should be decided by the authorities

of A-WEB. A country should decide who is the one that should be the member of A-WEB. I don't think that more than one body from a single country should be included in A-WEB. Otherwise, it will go beyond management of a single country holding meetings also. I think that the subcommittee constituted yesterday should examine the matter in detail and recommendations should come from that body for placing to the next Executive Board meeting and we need to make a final decision in the next General Assembly. Thank you.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

I think Fiji also wants to say something.

**Fiji, FEO**

Thank you, Chair. The General Assembly is the final decision-making authority of the A-WEB. In the Executive Board meeting yesterday, we had the deficit of not being able to hear the applicant to move its application to be a member.

There are two points that come into play. One, if this is pushed to the Executive Board committee to deal with, their membership application will take over two years for approval because the next General Assembly is in two years time.

The second point being, if the applicant is present, it's my humble suggestion that the committee of the Executive Board quickly have a meeting on this matter with the applicant and then ascertain whether they wish to grant temporary membership until the next General Assembly when the rules are properly finalized.

The third option is that the General Assembly votes on the application. One other point is that there are other countries that have more than one institution that is registered in A-WEB that is a tribunal followed by a procedural organization. The precedent has already been set. The Political Parties Registration Commission, in my view, is another permanent EMB function in a country. Fiji's position is that we should accept the membership.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

I think whether it is the Executive Board or the General Assembly, everybody is bound by the Charter of A-WEB. That is the basic paradigm within which we all operate.

**Kenya, IEBC**

Thank you very much. I think yesterday we were deliberating while we didn't have the facts. Today, we have been told the facts from the country itself that are not the body that is applying but assistant body which is confirming that they are involved in the electoral management. It is, therefore, unwise for us to defer this matter to a committee when the General Assembly has the overall mandate. It is our position from Kenya, we support the application of Sierra Leone. Thank you.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

One way could be that the subcommittee which was constituted yesterday could have a separate detailed session with Sierra Leone and bring it as a special item tomorrow morning. That's one way of looking at it.

**Burkina Faso, CENI**

I believe that it is right way that the General Assembly should give the power to this committee. This is a tiny commentary about the position of Sierra Leone. If you look at the vision, we have set the vision of A-WEB that is transparent and accepted by all. It's not management of political parties, normally in certain countries is taken care by justice and if you don't accept management of political parties which is different from the management of elections. A-WEB is not an organization of political parties management bodies. It is important to make this different. We must decide it right now. Thank you so much.

**Palestine, CEC**

Thank you, Chair. The question here actually, an ideal situation is to have one member from each country. This is an ideal thing for the voting purposes. The question that we have to ask ourselves is 'do we have to open the door for an institution of political parties in general?' Because this is something new for us.

If we have to start registering political parties registration commission, we have to be careful because we are going to have heaps of application in the future. The question that should be raised here is ‘do they have a role in conducting elections or not?’ Because political parties registration commissions do not actually have the same role in managing elections as many other EMBs.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

We have kept hearing strong views on various sides. That is why it was suggested that maybe this subcommittee could have a session with Sierra Leone today itself. We could bring it as a special item tomorrow morning.

**DR Congo, CENI**

Thank you so much. I think that’s a good solution that the subcommittee members and Sierra Leone could meet and take a decision to harmonize the problems among themselves, which could be a perfect solution.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Thank you for accepting this suggestion. We discussed it at length yesterday and we have been discussing at quite some length today also. I propose that we have the meeting of the subcommittee today with the new Secretary General who will be anchoring it. We could discuss it as a special item, first thing, tomorrow morning. Then, we will proceed with the other agenda.

**Cambodia, NEC**

Honorable Chair, If I can make a short speech on behalf of the National Election Committee of Kingdom of Cambodia. Respective honorable distinguished member of A-WEB, September 4, 2019 is the auspicious day that the National Election Committee of Kingdom of Cambodia, Central Election Commission of Ukraine, Electoral Supervisory Board of Indonesia, Office of the Electoral Commissioner of Mauritius, Electoral Complaints Commission of Afghanistan, as well as Association of Asian Election Authorities are officially included as members of the Association of World Election Bodies at the 4<sup>th</sup> General Assembly held in Bengaluru, India, among a



total of 114 members from 105 countries around the world.

This is a great honor for the National Election Committee of Kingdom of Cambodia. Taking this opportunity, on behalf of Excellency Sik Bun Hok, Chairman of NEC, on behalf of NEC, and on my own behalf, I would like to express my profound saying to Excellency Chair of A-WEB as well as members of A-WEB for their support extended to the NEC of Cambodia. We have agreed to abide by the Charter of A-WEB and in our common endeavor to make A-WEB a vibrant international organization where sharing of responsibility is commune to all members. Thank you very much, honorable member for your attention.

- ▶ Conclusion: New membership application is approved as proposed except for the Political Parties Registration Commission of Sierra Leone. This issue will be discussed at the subcommittee meeting presided over by the new Secretary General after the session.

#### **[Agenda 7. Election of the Vice-Chairperson]**

##### **India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Can we go to the next item, Election of the Vice-Chairperson?

##### **Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Thank you. Mr. Chair. With your permission, I would like to briefly explain about the seventh agenda item. Article 17.1 of the A-WEB Charter states that the head of the Election Management Body hosting the next General Assembly shall serve as the Vice Chairperson of A-WEB. Since January 8, 2019, the A-WEB Secretariat has taken applications from member EMBs wishing to host the next General Assembly. As a result, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Bolivia and the Election Commission of South Africa had submitted their applications to the Secretariat. The Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Bolivia, however, sent to the Secretariat a letter of expressing its intention to withdraw its application on August 14. The agenda item is hereby

presented to report to the General Assembly that the Election Commission of South Africa is the single candidate to be elected the next Vice-Chairperson. Thank you.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Would the Assembly ratify? I take it that the General Assembly has ratified and congratulate South Africa for this.

**[Inaugural Speech]**

**Emcee**

Please give a big round of applause to the newly elected Vice-Chairperson, Glen Mashinini. I would like to invite Vice-Chairperson of A-WEB, Glen Mashinini to give us his remarks. Once again, please give a big round of applause to the newly elected Vice-Chairperson Mr. Glen Mashinini.

**South Africa Chairperson, EC, Mr. Glen Mashinini**

Thank you, program director, A-WEB Chair, Mr. Arora, your excellencies, distinguished delegates here present, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed today an honor to my country and to the Electoral Management Commission of South Africa today we are being given such an international responsibility. It represents a major milestone that the Electoral Commission of South Africa set itself almost about five years ago in its strategic plan when it set out to achieve what it named preeminent electoral management body in the world.

This is another milestone that acknowledges that we are very much in that direction. But interestingly, this morning over breakfast I was talking to Mr. Chairman from India, there were certainly interesting commonalities in our discussion regarding what IEC of South Africa and Election Commission of India stands for. What was the interesting part is that we both as countries have almost the same midwife. The midwife of democracy in India and that's today we congratulate for taking this responsibility as the Chair, the midwife was none other than Mahatma Gandhi. Who's next in line was the President Nehru.

Similarly, in South Africa. Mahatma Gandhi and the first Nobel Peace Prize winner from Africa, Chief Albert Luthuli were the two midwives of democracy in South Africa. Later then, Nehru and Nelson Mandela walked us into the democratic system or social order. So indeed to me today, I am saying something that began way back then. In fact, it was the Bandung Conference in Indonesia in 1955 where then developing nations came together and pledged their commitment to social justice and democracy on the basis of being non-aligned.

Here we are today, we are seeing exactly that movement continuing and having been part of the world community. For us, South Africa, we take that responsibility and baton very seriously. If you allow me, Mr. President, just share that remarks that one wishes to put on the table in this honor and responsibility is that we do see a number of things as our priorities. Among them is that in two years, we should take the responsibility of making such an effort as India as just demonstrated today to host this auspicious international gathering. We hope we will walk you through the footsteps of Chief Albert Luthuli, Mahatma Gandhi, and Nelson Mandela first devoted.

The second point one wishes to share with you is that we share deeply with India the issue of setting up an institute that advances training. We want to take that baton and make sure that in the region and continent that we are in we can make sure that we are linked so that e-learning continues to strive for our region not only for South Africa as we are a part of African region.

The third point that we see as a critical point during this period is addressing the issue of this institution or this body being a single source funded organization. It is something that is of concern to us as to whether that is a sustainable model and if that would be some alternatives that will have to be considered and passed by us as collective members.

Lastly and most importantly, the vibrancy of this institution is realized with continuous intra-membership activities and bilateral activities in between the General Assembly. We hope also that we will play our role in encouraging that there is more intra-member's activities among ourselves. A-WEB is not a body that just comes to

gather only for conferences and disappear in between.

Program director, Chairperson, with those few words, we, South Africa, would like to acknowledge and thank everybody for having given us confidence and support and we would like to thank outgoing Secretary General for his continued support and interaction with South Africa in ensuring that we'll remain a participating member. Thank you.

### **Emcee**

Thank you, Mr. Mashinini for your remarks. Now, we will continue to proceed with the agenda.

- ▶ Conclusion: Election of the Vice-Chairperson is approved as proposed.

### **[Agenda 8. Appointment of the Secretary General]**

#### **India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

The next agenda item is the appointment of the Secretary General.

#### **Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Thank you. Mr. Chair. With your permission, I would like to briefly explain about the 8th agenda item. Secretary General, Yong-Hi Kim, expressed his intention to resign at the 7th Executive Board meeting in Bulgaria, requesting the election of the next Secretary General to be conducted at the 4th General Assembly in India. The Executive Board accepted his resignation and his request to initiate a process to elect the next Secretary General, and decided to receive applications for candidate registration until May 31, 2019.

In accordance with the Article 18.1 of the Charter, the Secretariat sent an official letter to all A-WEB members to guide the process of candidate registration. As a result, the Secretariat received three applications, Mr. Jonghyun Choe from South Korea, Mr.

Terry Tselane from South Africa, and Mr. Umesh Sinha from India. In the end, however, they all agreed that Mr. Choe is to be the sole candidate for the next Secretary General according to the spirit of the Charter of A-WEB stressing reaching a consensus for decision-making.

At the extraordinary Executive Board meeting yesterday, the appointment of the next Secretary General was tabled as an agenda. As a result, the Executive Board decided to nominate Candidate Mr. Jonghyun Choe for the next Secretary General.

The agenda item is hereby presented for approval of the appointment of Mr. Jonghyun Choe as the Secretary General in accordance with the Article 14.1.8 of the Charter.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

The General Assembly is requested to ratify the appointment which was decided yesterday by the Executive Board. I will take it that the appointment is ratified and welcome the new Secretary General.

**[Inaugural Speech]**

**Emcee**

Please give a big round of applause to the newly elected Secretary General Jonghyun Choe. I would like to invite Secretary General of A-WEB, Jonhyun Choe, to give us his remarks.

**Secretary General, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Jonghyun Choe**

Distinguished Representatives of Members of A-WEB, I would first like to congratulate His Excellency Shri Sunil Arora, Chief Election Commissioner of India on his inauguration as Chair of the General Assembly. Chairman Arora has been doing a tremendous job in leading the Election Commission of India, the world's largest democracy. And I have every confidence that Chairman Arora will indeed contribute greatly to the further advancement of A-WEB during his chairmanship. The Indian chair has already taken a meaningful initiative with the proposed opening of the A-WEB India Center for Training, Research and Documentation. I would also like to

extend my warm congratulations to Mr Glen Mashinini on taking up the vice chair.

My deep thanks go also to His Excellency Daniel Constantin Buica, President of the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania, who has served with distinction as Chairman of the General Assembly. As he leaves that post we convey to him the deepest appreciation. Last but certainly not least I would like to pay tribute to the outgoing Secretary General Mr. Yong-hi Kim for the tireless efforts he has made for A-WEB. I wish you continued good health and happiness and every success on your new path.

Ladies and gentlemen, you have entrusted me with a very meaningful responsibility as Secretary General of A-WEB. I sincerely thank the Executive Board members for nominating me as next Secretary General and all of you here for approving that nomination.

The process of election is a very cornerstone of democracy. Against this backdrop, A-WEB is indeed a very special association. With this year marking the 6th anniversary of A-WEB I note that it is now well on course. This is a time to generate fresh momentum for A-WEB to enable it to take further strides forward. And I feel a great sense of responsibility as I have assumed the role of Secretary General at such a vital stage.

First of all, I will engage in close communication with the Executive Board, ensuring that the General Assembly well serves its part as the supreme body of A-WEB. Secondly, I will focus on exchanges and cooperation among Members of A-WEB for the capacity building of Members. For this, I will foster a Secretariat that is attentive to your views and proposals. I trust such efforts will serve to further consolidate the foundation of A-WEB, which is already an international organization in the broad sense of the term.

I would like to bring my words to a close by expressing my sincere gratitude to everyone in the Election Commission of India for their hard work to ensure the success of this event. Everyone, including myself, who is here in India to participate in this meeting, will I am sure long remember this four-day stay in Bengaluru. And I

wish the Election Commission of India every continued success in all its noble endeavors. Thank you very much.

**Emcee**

Once again, please give a big hand to Secretary General Jonghyun Choe. Now, we will continue to proceed with the agenda.

- ▶ Conclusion: Appointment of the Secretary General is approved as proposed.

**[Agenda 9. Approval for Consecutive Terms of Executive Board Members]**

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Please put forward.

**Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Thank you. Mr. Chair. With your permission, I would like to briefly explain about the 9th agenda item. Article 15.2 of the A-WEB Charter stipulates that the EB members' term of office lasts until the appointment of the next Executive Board by the following General Assembly, with members being able to serve up to two(2) consecutive terms.

Among the EB members who can serve a second term, Central Election Commission of Taiwan, Malawi Electoral Commission, Independent High Authority for Elections of Tunisia, Bangladesh Election Commission, Central Election Commission of Palestine, Fijian Elections Office, Central Election Commission of Bulgaria, Central Election Commission of Uzbekistan, Supreme Electoral Tribunal of Paraguay, Supreme Electoral Tribunal of El Salvador, National Civil Registry of Colombia, and Independent National Electoral Commission of Guinea have notified the Secretariat of their intentions to serve their consecutive terms.

The agenda item is hereby presented for approval of the consecutive terms for those forementioned election management bodies as Executive Board Members until the

next General Assembly.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

The General Assembly will ratify it? So this proposal has been ratified by honorable members. Welcome to the new Board.

**Burkina Faso, CENI**

Thank you. My congratulations on the new appointment. The General Assembly is the sovereign body and has received the candidates for the new Executive Board Members. My recommendation is the following, to make a motion by the General Assembly in this instance to approve new ratifications first by us and then you. Thank you.

**Taiwan, CEC**

The Central Election Commission of Taiwan wish to extend our sincere gratitude to the General Assembly to approve that CEC of Taiwan will get the second term as a member of the Executive Board. CEC of Taiwan is one of the founding members of A-WEB and a member of the Executive Board. We always sincerely and loyally implement our duty as a member of A-WEB and we have actively participated in the A-WEB activities and events. It is also our sincere hope that as a member of A-WEB, we share the same right on an equal basis.

According to the Article 3 of A-WEB Charter, it states that the Association shall be a non-political, autonomous, and independent association comprised of election management bodies around the world and shall not interfere with the sovereignty of any country. According to the Article 7, all the members of A-WEB share the same rights to participate in all of A-WEB events and services from the Secretariat. We sincerely appreciate and thank you, Election Commission of India, for offering this opportunity for Taiwan to participate in this event. Also, Taiwan wish that A-WEB would offer an equal opportunity to our commission to participate in all A-WEB events.

We have a humble request that we noticed that in the booklet provided by the



Secretariat, there are some incorrect information and it must be corrected. For the time for holding the elections that are listed, the booklet only mentioned the legislative election, that means the elections of members of parliament. We would like to make it correct that in 2020 there is Presidential elections to be held in January. We also welcome all A-WEB members to join the election observation program which will be held in Taiwan in 2020. Thank you very much.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

I would request the Secretariat before closing the session to delineate and outline the programs of the next session.

**Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Mr. Chair. With your permission, I would like to briefly explain in advance about the next agenda item we are going to deal with after lunch or coffee break. With regard to Appointment of EB members, let me tell you about the number of vacant seats for each continent: 2 for Africa, 1 for America and 2 for Europe. I would like to request members from each region participating in the General Assembly to nominate members representing their region to fill the vacancies within the Board: 2 for Africa, 1 for America and 2 for Europe. Please have a small group discussion of each continent with vacancies during or after your lunch or coffee break. Thank you.

- ▶ Conclusion: The consecutive terms of the Executive Board members tabled is approved as proposed.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

We break for the lunch and reassemble at 13:30. Thank you.

**Emcee**

Now, we are going to have a coffee break, then I will inform you when the luncheon is

ready. So until then, please enjoy your coffee and I will let you know when the luncheon is ready. The plenary session will resume at 14:30.

## **SESSION 2**

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**[Announcement]**

### **Emcee**

Now, we will continue to proceed with the agenda. Mr. Chairperson will preside over the afternoon session.

**[Announcement on the outcome of the subcommittee]**

### **India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Welcome to all the honorable delegates for the second session. I was told that during this interval, the new Secretary General has already convened a meeting and facilitated the meeting with the group of nations on the issue of Sierra Leone. I would like him to kindly elaborate on it.

**Secretary General, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Jonghyun Choe**

The subcommittee had a meeting and I chaired the meeting and five members joined the meeting representing Asia, Bangladesh, representing Oceania, Fiji, representing Africa, Kenya, representing Europe, Romania, and representing Americas, Paraguay. They had reached an agreement that we can welcome the Political Parties Registration Commission of Sierra Leone as a new member of this body.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Welcome Sierra Leone as for the decision unanimously taken by the members of the group of nations. Now, we go to the regular listed agenda. The meeting for appointment of Executive Board is still going on.

- ▶ Conclusion: The subcommittee decided that PPRC of Sierra Leone is entitled to be a member of A-WEB. The agenda 6, new membership application, is approved as proposed.

**[Agenda 11. Amendments to the A-WEB Charter]**

**Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Mr. Chair, since the African group have not returned from their group meeting, shall we move on to agenda 11 instead of agenda 10.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Now, we can go to agenda 11, amendments to the A-WEB Charter.

**Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Thank you. Mr. Chair. With your permission, I would like to briefly explain about this agenda item. Article 28 of the Charter states that amendments to the Charter shall be adopted by at least two-thirds of the members present at the General Assembly. Discussions on the need for the Charter amendments were first initiated at the 6th Executive Board meeting where they formed a special committee for a multilateral

review of the Charter amendments. The special committee, composed of representatives from each continent, convened the second meeting(Feb 20, 2019) to finalize the amendments and tabled the final amendments at the 7th Executive Board meeting(Feb 21, 2019). The Executive Board reviewed and partially modified the Charter amendments submitted by the special committee, and approved the final version of the amendments as an agenda item for the General Assembly.

Please refer to page 39 to 45 in your agenda book to compare the Charters before and after the amendments. The agenda item is hereby presented for approval of the Amendments to the Charter.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Any views on the proposals of the amendment of the Charter? We can take it that the amendments have been ratified by the General Assembly.

- ▶ Conclusion: Amendments to the A-WEB Charter is approved as proposed.

**[Agenda 12. Use of Annual Membership Fees]**

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

The next item is use of annual membership fees.

**Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

Thank you. Mr. Chair. With your permission, I would like to briefly explain about the last agenda item. Article 23 of the Charter stipulates annual membership fees as the source of funds for the Association. When the annual membership fee system was first introduced, the purpose of the annual membership fees was to vitalize the members' participation in A-WEB's activities and events. For this reason, the use of the membership fees paid by a member has been limited to the member's travel expenses for attending A-WEB's meetings.

The financial resources of the Association are currently dependent on subsidies from the Korean government. Diversifying revenue sources is necessary for the Association

to operate as a stable and independent organization. Therefore, the following agenda item is put forward so that the annual membership fees can be partially used as the source of the budget for the Association.

Currently, the amount of annual membership fees is 10,000 USD and it is used to cover the travel expenses for attending meetings of the Association. A member's annual membership fee is separately managed from other members. Therefore, each member can check the details of their deposits and withdrawals.

The diversion of the annual membership fees shall not violate the existing principle that each member's annual membership fee is 10,000 USD and this annual fee is used for travel expenses to attend A-WEB's meetings. Therefore, the unused amount of an annual membership fee of \$10,000 paid by a member will be carried over to the next year when the member will pay a new annual membership fee of \$10,000. Only remaining amount carried over will be donated to the Association so that the balance of \$10,000 will remain for the year. The Secretariat will open a new bank account to manage the donations from the annual membership fees. The donations will be used for the programs which will benefit not specific members but members in general. The use of the donations is regularly reported at the EB meeting and General Assembly.

The agenda item is hereby presented for approval of the Use of Annual Membership Fees as a Source of Funds. Thank you.

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Any views on this? Then we take it that the General Assembly ratified the amendment.

► Conclusion: Use of annual membership fees is approved as proposed.

**[Agenda 10. Appointment of the Executive Board Members]**

**India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

I request the Secretariat to kindly announce the outcomes of the next Executive Board Members.

**Deputy Director, A-WEB Secretariat, Mr. Seung Kim**

In accordance with Article 15.2.1 of the A-WEB Charter, NIEC of Somalia and CENI of DR Congo for Africa, JCE of Dominican Republic for Americas, CEC of Bosnia and Herzegovina for Europe have been nominated to be the next EB members. The agenda item is hereby presented for approval of the new members of the Executive Board.

**[Acceptance Speech]**

**Emcee**

I sincerely congratulate you on your election as a new member of the Executive Board. The representatives of the newly elected EMBs will make an address. The speech will be made by alphabetical order of the country name. First, I would like to invite the commissioner of the Central Election Commission of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina, CEC**

First of all, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the new Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary General in A-WEB organization. I am very satisfied with this moment. I didn't know it would happen that we become a member of the Executive Board. We would like to express to all members of A-WEB organization our gratitude for support. You gave us this honor. We will try to justify your support and professional work of the Executive Board. We will do our best. Once again, Thank you for your support. Thank you, new presidency and dear friends around the world.

**Emcee**

Thank you. Now, I would like to invite the next speaker, director of international relations of the Junta Central Electoral of Dominican Republic.

### **Dominican Republic, JCE**

Good afternoon to everybody. In the first place, I would like to thank and congratulate this new Board, Chairperson of India and Vice-Chairperson of South Africa, and the new Secretary General, Mr. Choe, to whom we wish great success and give our cooperation now that we have been elected to once again be part of the Executive Board. We express our compromise to continue supporting the labor and the efforts of this great association of world election bodies and we will contribute to catapult the development of A-WEB and democracy.

I will not be able to finish without acknowledging about the outgoing Secretary General, Mr. Kim who was the idea-maker, the one who founded the basis of what A-WEB is today. Many of us how are here present accompanied him in the beginnings and for that, we express our congratulations and success in his new projects and moreover that he can continue contributing with his experience to this World Election Bodies' Organization. Thank you for electing us and count with the compromise of the Dominican Republic that is made up with two organizations, the Junta Central Electoral and the Tribunal Superior Electoral, whose magistrate is also present here and in some way will be part of this functions. Have a great afternoon, and success to all.

### **Emcee**

Thank you. Next, we will listen to the address of the representative from the National Independent Electoral Commission of Democratic Republic of Congo. Please give him a warm welcome.

### **DR Congo, CENI**

Thank you, Mr. President, Mr. Vice-president, and the Secretary General. We congratulate you for your new posts. In representation of other African countries, I would like to request an excuse for our tardiness to the session. We met and tried to make it fast but could not come up with a compromise. In that sense we were late to the meeting. We have benefited from the support. A-WEB has given us in electoral

information and new technologies, and we have shared this experience with other Central African countries, mainly Togo, in the interest of promoting free, transparent and democratic elections. As I have already spoken about this and have used my time, I would like to say thank you for welcoming us to the Executive Board and we will do our best to represent the African region.

### **Emcee**

Thank you. Lastly, We will listen to the address of the Chairperson of the National Independent Electoral Commission of Somalia. Please give her a warm welcome.

### **Somalia, NIEC**

Ladies and gentlemen, it is an honor for me to be here with you. I wish to express my thanks to the A-WEB for allowing NEC Somalia to be in this historical meeting. On behalf of my organization, NIEC, I would like to congratulate the new Secretary General with his new responsibility and also the new leader for A-WEB. I also want to say thank you and congratulate the previous Secretary General who has done very good job and made it possible for A-WEB to be on this stage. I would like to say thank you and congratulate to the Election Commission of Uganda who gives me this opportunity and position. Thank you very much. I wish that we all succeed. Thank you.

- ▶ Conclusion: Four members(NIEC of Somalia, CENI of DR Congo, JCE of Dominican Republic, CEC of Bosnia and Herzegovina) are newly elected as members of the Executive Board.

**[Closing]**

### **India Chairperson, ECI, Mr. Sunil Arora**

Hon'ble Chairpersons/Presidents and senior delegates from member Election Management Bodies of the A-WEB; Mr. Glen Vuma Mashinini, Hon'ble Chairperson, EC of South Africa & Vice-Chair of A-WEB; Mr. Jonghyun Choe, Secretary General



and senior officials of A-WEB; Mr. Anthony Banbury, President, International Foundation of Electoral Systems; Distinguished Guests, my colleagues from the Election Commission of India; Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have come to the end of the deliberations of the 4th General assembly. I believe all the participants have found them productive and inspiring. We were able to take up all the agenda items brought before the Assembly and have had general consensus of the participants.

I welcome my colleague, Mr. Glen Vuma Mashinini, Chairperson, EC of South Africa as Vice-Chair of A-WEB; Mr. Jonghyun Choe as the new Secretary General of A-WEB and also welcome the new members who have joined A-WEB today, new EMBs to the Executive Board and to the Oversight and Audit Committee.

In a relatively short period of six years the A-WEB has been able to make its impact felt upon the democratic world. There is indeed a demand especially in new and growing democracies to avail the services rendered by the A-WEB.

India, the host nation for 4th general assembly, is one of the founding members of the A-WEB. It thus shares in full measures the ideas and ideals of this multilateral organization and is involved in blueprint of its growth. President Woodrow Wilson once stated that democracy is not so much a form of government, as a set of principles. One of those principles is conduct of timely elections that are free, fair, inclusive, participative, transparent and credible.

Of course, there needs to be a political will to uphold this principle, more particularly if the country has made a recent transition to democracy. But there is also a need for competence and professionalism in electoral management. This comes from capacity building and proper training of staff.

The democratic world needs to rally behind A-WEB, the only organization that is providing specific and targeted set of services to Election Management Bodies (EMBs) of sovereign democratic nations that might need them. If indeed we view democracy as a global movement, cooperation become natural.

From the ECI, we reiterate our commitment to the objectives and mission of A-WEB and look forward to continuing our close cooperation with the Association and its member EMBs to fulfill the objectives of the Association. Further, as I mentioned earlier, we are going to set up an AWEB Centre at the IIIDEM, New Delhi for documentation, research and training for sharing best practices and capacity building among the member EMBs of the Association.

I hope that this meeting will further foster meaningful exchanges on matters of mutual concern and interest as we share our learning and experiences. I thank you all once again for joining us at this meeting. I look forward to seeing you all at the Gala Dinner in the evening today at Shangri-La Hotel.