



## COMMONWEALTH WOMEN'S NETWORK-CWN

**Commonwealth Governments Accredited Organizations.** Strengthening the Commonwealth. Building Businesses and Civil Society Organization's. Advancing Women and Men within 56 member countries, one Platform. The only organization accredited by Commonwealth Governments focused on Women's, Gender and Economic Empowerment.

Douala on 29/09/2023

### COMMONWEALTH WOMEN NETWORK CONTINENTAL MEETING

#### REPORT

Start 10:30 am

The CWN Africa continental region meeting was held on 29/09/2023 at the CWN Cameroon offices in Douala Makèpè. Initially scheduled for 10:00 am, the meeting began at 10:30 am with a welcome from Mr. NIBA Louis, who welcomed all participants and expressed his indignation at the 30-minute delay. He then gave the floor to HRH FONKEM Beatrice Arimo to say a short prayer before the start of the session. In her meditation, she thanked the Lord for bringing us all together here, and for preserving our safety during our journey to Douala for those who had made the trip. She invited the Holy Spirit to be with us during our meeting.

Taking the floor again, Mr. NIBA said that we would work in groups:

1st group: CWN/Cameroon headed by HRH FONKEM Beatrice Arimo

2nd group: CWN/Africa headed by Prince KUATE Edgard

3rd group: Subsidiary CWN groups

#### **Reading of the agenda by Mr. NIBA**

- Opening session by CWN Africa Continental Cabinet Director.
- Chairman of the meeting (M. NIBA)
- Review of action plan from last meeting
- CWN Cameroon organization chart and action plan
- Recent CWN appointments and the rule of law
- CWN subsidiary bodies action plan
- CWN continental report for Africa



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- Upcoming programs
- CBW-Africa Summit Sierra Leone.
- CHOGM Samoa 2

The agenda was read out firstly in English, then in French.

He says that the meeting is scheduled to end at 1pm (10:30am-1pm); it's a working session as well as a meeting.

Prince KUATE, President of CNW/Africa, takes the floor to greet and welcome all members, using the term "Governor", and explains that;

-The meeting is convened because there are appropriate directives. He addressed the Cameroonian women present, asking them to be better equipped, to change their behavior and to make a lot of effort to really get involved in the network.

He says there was a meeting of CWN women ministers last August. Prince KUATE reminds us that we need to promote equity and the notion of gender.

He also spoke of the Commonwealth Business Women Africa conference to be held in March 2024 in Sierra Leone.

He says that right now we're in a hurry and everyone needs to get on board. He wants to move forward with strong women at his side, he doesn't want to leave anyone behind.

### Member introductions

Each member introduced himself, giving his first and last names and his role in the Commonwealth Organization. A number of co-patron members were also present. There were 13 participants: 9 women and 4 men.

Mr. NIBA took the floor to say that the CWN is a family, everyone has the right to enter the family, to communicate, to circulate. We have to move forward (the family language in Samoa means (AIGLA)) He adds that we have so many projects together.

Prince KUATE talked about accreditations:



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1st level:

2nd level:

3rd level:

### Review of action plan from last meeting

The Commonwealth site doesn't prevent us from working as we're in the digital world, we need to give everyone the opportunity to work.

**Lesotho:** Problems sufficed from the resolution between CBWN Kenya and CBWN headquarter which led to the birth of CBW-Africa. There have been too many problems (Miss understanding) which have led women there to approach CWN Africa. CWN through Mr. Niba did all it could to reconcile and call on the attention of what the Commonwealth stipulates against her principles, since the Commonwealth makes peace. CWN Africa provide a provisional accreditation to see what could be done.

-They talked about **timing**; we have to respect time both online and physical meetings at all level.

- They talked about financial contributions, which are compulsory to resolve any problems that may arise.

- **CHOGM 2022 report**: we can't send the report just any old way, Nelsia Robinson has the right to get all the reports before sending them.

The CWN is headquartered in Trinidad & Tobago, where Ms. Nelsia's chair office is located.

Each region is headed by a regional president: Prince KUATE for the Africa region.

-The current office is that of the CWN Africa partner Project Management Solution (PMS).

-the Cameroon office, each country must have its own focal point.

We have 3 Sub regions:

-West and Central Africa

-West and Southern Africa



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-Diaspora

We need to work with the Commonwealth Member States.

CWN has an agreement with Sierra Leone

Commonwealth is an organization of peace and consensus

Sierra Leone to host regional CWN headquarters

A GA was needed in Cameroon to revamp activities and below were the key outcomes;

The board concluded on creation of a website for 250,000 XAF (\$403.70)

6 members contributed: 30,000 XAF amounting to 165,000 XAF (\$266.44) in advance, 85,000 XAF (\$137.27) remaining

Mr. BIDJONG who is the technical expert of CWN Africa region and Commonwealth Business and Entrepreneur Network President explained that he had started work on our site: he said that the hosting and the domain name are available. He says he need to actualize it online, which hasn't been done yet. He gave us a presentation of our site on his computer, just the home page. Once the site is online, we'll be able to see all the other pages.

Returning to Sierra Leone, we said that the task force already exists, that we're going to work with CBW-Africa and partner with the government of Sierra Leone for a successful summit of one of our coalition organisations.

So far, 48 members organisation with CWN accreditation.

PMS is a full membership. Any project has to go through the regional level first.

### CWN Organization Chart Proposal

Mr. NIBA via his computer presented the propose organigram Chart to strengthen the organisation management and hierarchy.

### **CHOGM 2024:**

It will take place in Samoa in October 2024.

All those who want to participate must pay the fees, let's avoid what happened in Rwanda.



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**21/08/2023 is the date on which CWN knocked on the door of the EIB.**

It would be important to have a partnership with the EIB (European Investment Bank). Why this partnership?

Mr. Mbatkom explains that each affiliated structure has a project. If they want to work with the EIB, they have to be up to the task, because they provide a minimum of 1 million euros in funding.

80% of funding in cash and 20% in training but suggested partnership with GIZ.

Set up a project that involves many countries, as in the case of Sierra Leone.

**-Timing:** time is of the essence

**-Financial contribution:** To be a member of the board or organisation, you have to pay the membership fee within the Africa continental region at national or regional agencies as per the CWN Governance Handbook.

**-Individual membership:** The membership will strengthen and cater for the organisation activities member in Africa \$210=125000FCFA

**-Category 1: Association:** Individuals with association titles of SMEs pays \$350=211000FCFA

**-Category 2: Large Enterprises** \$850 (511,500 F) (depending on annual income)

**-Category 3: International Companies, Organisations and NGO's:** (depending on country index)

### Rwanda report

The report will be submitted with that of CHOGM 2022 to the Secretariat by CWN Headquarters in Trinidad and Tobago. At the AGM of CWN after the summit in Sierra Leone, each member will have his report in hand.

There is a template to present annual reports on the Commonwealth website.

CWN Africa continental board presented the management hierarchy and operational offices:

**-Central and West Africa**



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-East and Southern Africa

-Diaspora

### CWN Cameroon election positions & other Countries

-President

-Vice Président

-Secretary

-Financial Secretary

-Public relations

-Strategic program

-Councilors

Giving the floor to HRH FONKEM Beatrice, she said that we're not going to hold the elections now, and she reported on the last meeting of the summit to emphasize on the commitment.

The organizers are the CWN from March 07 to 9, March 2024. The hosts are the CBWA: Commonwealth Business Women Africa and the Government of Sierra Leone.

The theme is: **Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Technology for Economic Empowerment.**

The meeting ends at 2:10 pm with an aperitif (croissant with butter, coffee and juice).

*CWN Africa Continental Meeting Report*

*Presented by*

**Mrs. Valentine Kapoko K.**

**Secretary CWN Cameroon.**