

# PROCEDURE GUIDE FOR THE AFROSAI GENERAL ASSEMBLY

[To be amended as required by circumstances pertaining to consecutive host SAIs]

## FOREWORD

The General Assembly of the Organization of African Supreme Audit Institutions (AFROSAI) is held once every three years, and is chaired by the head of the host Supreme Audit Institution. The aims of the General Assembly are:

- bring together delegates of all member countries to exchange ideas and experiences,
- debate on the most recent world auditing and make recommendations to other member delegates, on issues of common technical and professional interest,
- issue recommendations that will become action guidelines for the various committees, working groups,
- inform on the work and capacity-building plans and the General Secretariat.

The development and updating of the present AFROSAI General Assembly Manual thus aims to serve as a guide and support to the Supreme Audit Institutions organizing and planning this event. In order to do so, the AFROSAI General Assembly Manual only describes the basic elements and principles to take into consideration in planning and organizing the General Assembly. It does not refer to specific items, in view of the cultural and institutional diversity of host SAIs. Suffice to state that the basic requirements for holding the Congress are established in the AFROSAI Statutes and in the Rules of Procedure of each assembly and, in some cases, in information on prior events and practice.

The AFROSAI General Assembly Manual is divided into four general sections:

1. Venue and organization of the Assembly
2. Language services
3. Programs
4. Logistics

The present, updated version of the Assembly Manual contains a number of appendices, for the purpose of illustration only, such as the calendar of activities (with approximate deadlines for the completion of activities and tasks related to the preparation and organization of the Assembly), and relevant information on providers and organizational chart of the host SAI. The aim is for this manual to serve as a guide to the planning activities of the SAI hosting, or interested in hosting, a session. The manual is based on information derived from previous General Assembly Proceedings, as well as information and comments provided by AFROSAI's General Secretariat.

Cooperation and communication between AFROSAI members is the key factor in ensuring the successful planning and outcome of these meetings. Taking into account this spirit of collaboration within the AFROSAI community, constant updating of the present Assembly Manual is recommended. It is suggested here that this work should be a voluntary contribution undertaken by the SAI hosting an assembly, in which it can count on the invaluable support and full availability of recent General Assembly organizers, as well as that of the AFROSAI General Secretariat.

The terms '*General Assembly*' and '*AFROSAI*' are used indiscriminately in the Manual. In the same way, the term '*SAI*' is used to refer to Supreme Audit Institution.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **I. AFROSAI**

The terms AFROSAI and assembly are used indiscriminately in this Manual in reference to the General Assembly of the Organization of African Supreme Audit Institutions (AFROSAI). The General Assembly is one of the four organs of AFROSAI (the others are the Governing Board, the General Secretariat and the Regional Working Groups).

### **II. Duties and Powers**

The duties and powers of the AFROSAI General Assembly are laid out in the AFROSAI Statutes.

### **III. Invitation and participation**

In keeping with the AFROSAI Statutes, all fully-fledged members (SAIs of member-countries of the African Union Organization) and associate members with no right to vote (international, professional or other bodies that share the goals of external government auditing) are entitled to take part in the assembly. The General Assembly convenes once every three years.

### **IV Congress Manual**

The present updated version of the General Assembly Manual is intended as a guide for the SAI in charge of planning, organizing and holding an AFROSAI Assembly. It is based on:

- the AFROSAI Statutes,
- former General Assembly Proceedings,
- the AFROSAI Financial Regulations,
- cooperation with prior host SAIs and the AFROSAI General Secretariat.

## CHAPTER 1.

### ASSEMBLY GENERAL ORGANIZATION AND COORDINATION

Two issues need to be considered before an SAI decides to make an application to host an assembly. These are: budget and relevance. The SAI must consider the cost of holding an assembly and verify availability of funds, as well as the relevance of the Assembly to the host SAI and country.

Following this, once the application has been made and approved, the host SAI must define the kind of administrative structure it wishes to set up in order to fulfil its outlined aims. It should do so following advice given by the General Secretariat and previous host SAIs. In defining this structure, the full participation of the host SAI's high-level staff is required. The latter should be assigned to key positions in the General Assembly Secretariat and its Support Committees. They should also work in close internal and external coordination (with the AFROSAI General Secretariat), to ensure adequate planning and implementation of activities, in keeping with the Rules of Procedure established for each assembly.

#### I. Appointment of the host SAI.

##### a. Designation and Approval

The official designation of the host SAI organizing a session of AFROSAI General Assembly is carried out during the previous Assembly. Pursuant to the AFROSAI Statutes, the Assembly has the power to decide where the next General Assembly will be held, following the Governing Board's suggestion.

##### b. Designation period

During an Assembly, when new members are appointed to the AFROSAI Governing Board, the SAI selected to plan and organize the following assembly takes on the Vice-Chairmanship of the Board. It remains Vice-Chair for three years, until the Assembly is held in its country, at which point it becomes Assembly General and Governing Board Chair for a further three years, until the following Assembly is held.

##### c. Designation relevance

Being designated as host SAI is a chance for a candidate SAI to strengthen its position internationally. It entails greater participation in international forum in the field of auditing and accountability, wider dissemination of technical information, staff exchanges through internships, more active involvement in peer reviews, and the possibility of strengthening its position nationally thanks to this greater international visibility and profile.

#### II Organization

The administrative structure that is set up to plan and organize the Assembly, as well as the staff selected for the Organizing Committee, is critical in ensuring the success of the event. The administrative structure must be set out at the start of the planning process, three years before the General Assembly is due to take place.

##### a. Assembly Secretariat Chair

The head of the SAI must be involved in global planning, project assessment, guideline definition and Assembly decision-making, which he/she will do in his/her

capacity as Assembly Secretariat Chair. It is suggested that a management high level team be set up to assist the head of the SAI with these activities.

**b. Assembly Secretariat**

A main team of people (not more than five) must be constituted to make up the Assembly Secretariat, in charge of supervising the planning and coordinating the operational work of the Support Committees. This staff must report directly to the Assembly Secretariat Chair and must already have wide-ranging experience and/or outstanding planning, organizational, administrative and communication skills.

**c. Support Committees**

Additional staff must be selected to help the Assembly Secretariat with its coordination and implementation tasks. This staff will oversee the work of the main Support Committees. As far as possible, personnel should be selected on the basis of their familiarity with the field of the committee they are assigned to. In cases where this is impossible, personnel should be chosen on the basis of strong administrative, decision-making and communication skills, and preferably mastery of official AFROSAI languages.

Task assignments for each Support Committee must be very specific so that each manager knows exactly what their job entails and can provide adequate and clear guidance to the support staff assisting them in their work.

**d. Support Staff**

The host SAI must select support staff for the implementation of planning activities and mainly for help in running the assembly itself. They will provide assistance for specific tasks and support to each Support Committee Head in their activities. It is suggested that the staff selected be familiar with AFROSAI, have the required organizational skills, and be able to communicate in the AFROSAI languages. It is advisable to try to cover as many AFROSAI languages as possible. The host SAI can choose staff from its own structure or hire external temporary support when needed, depending on the tasks involved.

### **III Planning and Coordination**

Effective internal and external coordination is essential in order to ensure that the Assembly is run as planned. The experience of other SAIs, support of the General Secretariat and early identification of the procedures to be implemented will all contribute to achieve this.

The Assembly Secretariat must work in close coordination with each Support Committee to ensure decision-making in specific areas is appropriate and take into account the needs of other areas. In terms of the calendar of events, it is also important that the host SAI work in coordination with the AFROSAI General Secretariat, the Chair and Governing Board members, other SAIs and Committees, AFROSAI Working Groups, This ensures that information is passed on to Assembly participants and that deadlines are complied with. In the same way, the host SAI must work in close coordination with all service-providers dealing with accommodation, transport, interpretation and translation; audiovisual, interpretation and administrative equipment, catering and other services. The aim is to ensure the successful planning, and smooth running, of the Assembly.

**a. Consultation with other SAIs and the General Secretariat**

The AFROSAI General Secretariat and SAIs that have previously organized an assembly are an invaluable source of information and feedback. The host SAI should try to draw as much benefit as possible from their experience and the guidance that they can provide. It is recommended that as soon as a host SAI is appointed, it should make contact and, as far as possible, hold information meetings with the AFROSAI General Secretariat, as well as with previous host SAIs.

If an SAI has been invited to do so, or has applied sufficiently in advance, it is suggested that the staff in charge or preparation from that SAI participate in the previous Assembly, in order to collate relevant information.

**b. Progress reports on the preparation**

Progress reports on the preparation are an important part of work coordination. They are submitted by the host SAI to AFROSAI's Governing Board – in its capacity as First Vice-Chair and pursuant to AFROSAI Statutes-, in its meetings in the two years prior to the Assembly, and in the last meeting before the Assembly, which takes place in the same year in which it is held. These reports enable the host SAI to get essential feedback and facilitate assembly organization.

**c. Master Plan of Tasks and Activities**

The host SAI should develop a Master Plan of Tasks and Activities for the purposes of Assembly preparation. The Assembly Secretariat Chair shall approve the Plan. The Plan will detail the main tasks at hand, notably budget approval, key reference documents to obtain for Assembly planning purposes, selection of the venue, agreements with hotels, agreements of collaboration with the relevant authorities in the host country, SAI internal processes for the acquisition of supplies and supplier contracts, tenders for the translation and interpretation service providers, amongst others. The Plan also provides for a succinct program of specific activities that have to be performed to achieve the main task outlined. The Master Plan of Tasks and Activities is the starting point for development of annual work plans, identification of specific procedures and drafting of an events calendar, which, by clearly defining duties and deadlines, will facilitate preparation for the Assembly.

**d. Defining procedures**

During the Assembly planning period, and considering the variety of conditions from one host country to the next, it is suggested that host SAIs should develop manuals to enable them to identify key procedures in the planning process. These procedures will help in the implementation of the overall Plan of Tasks and Activities approved by the Assembly Secretariat Chair. They will also speed up the training process for support staff and help to establish deadlines. Each procedure manual could include a contact directory (e.g. Authorities) listing the contact person, or person with whom to make necessary arrangements. The host SAI should also make the most of the AFROSAI Governing Board meeting taking place the year before the Assembly, in order to identify which procedures to follow in organizing the Assembly.

**e. Schedule**

The host SAI should establish a schedule highlighting the main activities and purchases required to organize the Assembly, as well as the Support Committees in charge and the availability dates or periods. The schedule must comply with the deadlines and terms that are set out in the various procedure manuals. It is recommended that a schedule and key deadlines be outlined during the AFROSAI Governing Board meeting, in the year before the Assembly is due to be held.

**f. Comprehensive database.**

It is recommended that the host SAI set up a database, bringing together relevant information pertaining to AFROSAI members and Assembly participants. This information can, for the most part, be found in the Membership Directory, updated every year by the General Secretariat of AFROSAI and the registration forms which participants have filled in. For the purposes of consistency, it is advisable to check with each SAI for any contact changes, a year before the event, to maximize efficiency in communication and delivery of Assembly documents.

The host SAI will use the database to follow the reception and delivery of technical Assembly documents, and the deliverables of the Committees, Working Groups, as well as ensuring follow-up of translations.

The host SAI must ensure that only Organizing Committee members have access to the content of these databases.

#### **IV. Budget**

Before applying to host a Congress, a SAI must carefully consider budgetary issues and the cost of holding the event. To this effect, the host SAI could draw up a preliminary budget assessing the costs of the main services to be provided, such as room rental costs in the venue, language services and transport. The Assembly and General Secretariat share part of these costs.

**a. Host SAI duties**

The host SAI bears all the costs of the Assembly, with the exception of the cost of participation and those costs taken on by the General Secretariat. The host SAI must cover the cost of: setting up the Assembly venue, accommodation booked but not used, hiring audiovisual and simultaneous interpretation equipment, language services (translation and interpretation), printing documents, transport, cultural services, hospitality costs (including refreshments, dinners and formal events), gifts to the participants, medical services, Assembly materials, as well as various administrative supplies.

**b. Participation costs**

Assembly participants must meet travel expenses, as well as accommodation, meals and other expenses whilst in the host country.

**c. AFROSAI duties**

To be conformed to the AFROSAI *Statutes*, the AFROSAI General Secretariat assigns 50% of the AFROSAI membership dues to the host SAI, to cover part of the Assembly costs.

#### **V. Information and Communication**

The host SAI is responsible for ensuring communication with the AFROSAI membership, whether this be in sending invitations, documents and working material or to keep members informed of updates, new developments and other information relating to the Assembly.

**a. Communication with delegates**

The host SAI must be timely in sending out newsletters, invitations or any information and material to AFROSAI members, in the corresponding AFROSAI language. The host SAI should ensure members have received any information sent to them, and obtain any additional contact details on an SAI if necessary. It is advisable to fully verify contact details at least a year before the Assembly takes place (email, fax and telephone numbers, website address).

**b. Website**

The host SAI is responsible for circulating all Assembly related information to the AFROSAI membership. Designing and updating a website is a suitable means of keeping users informed and enabling rapid communication. The website must contain general information on the host SAI and country, the venue and Assembly Secretariat, as well as tourism, cultural information and consular data. However, the website's main focus should be on providing specific information relating to the Assembly, such as agendas and technical documents. The host SAI must develop this website internally, as well as setting up the initial version, regarding which it must inform the General Secretariat, the AFROSAI Journal and AFROSAI members at least two years before the Assembly takes place. It is responsible for the website maintenance, and must post information in the four AFROSAI languages. It is advisable that the website development be incorporated into the Organizing Committee's schedule of activities, establishing drafting translation into the AFROSAI languages and publication deadlines, thus involving Support Committees in the development of web content.

## **VI. Assembly Regulations**

The Rules of Procedure set out the provisions that regulate the AFROSAI Assembly organization and activities. These rules must be tailored to each specific Assembly, since they outline its aims, participation, host SAI and country, official languages, the steps to be taken in preparing discussion themes and methodology for the overall Assembly, debates and plenary sessions. They also define the roles of participants, establish voting procedures and publication of the Proceedings, processes and indicate the participation policy established for the Assembly.

The host SAI is in charge of drafting, publishing and circulating the Rules of Procedure, in the four official AFROSAI languages, to members during the Assembly. Defining the most appropriate Rules of Procedure can be achieved with feedback from the AFROSAI General Secretariat.

The Rules of Procedure should preferably be approved at the Governing Board meeting, one year before the Assembly is held

## CHAPTER II

### LANGUAGE SERVICES

The quality of language services is paramount to ensuring successful communication and cooperation between SAIs during the Assembly. The host SAI is responsible for providing these services in the official AFROSAI languages (Arabic, English and French if possible Portuguese) for all Assembly documents, meetings and events. Language services are made up of translation, whereby written material is translated from one language into another, and interpretation, whereby speech is translated from one language to another.

It is suggested that the host SAI begins planning for language services as soon as it has been designated to host the next Assembly. Before hiring language services, the host SAI must assess the volume and cost. This is the highest cost that the host SAI will have to cover.

#### I. Translation

Translation services are required before, during and after the Assembly. The bulk of translation work will be done before the Assembly. Certain documents, like the *Principal Papers*, need to be translated and distributed, for the purposes of consideration, before the start of the event. In contrast, some documents will have to be translated and handed out whilst the Assembly is taking place. The host SAI is also in charge of providing language services for the two Governing Board Meetings taking place before the Assembly, as well as for the one taking place after the Assembly.

During the Assembly, theme reports and amendments made to working documents will have to be translated, as will the technical theme recommendations. After the Assembly, the *Proceedings*, which constitute an official record of the Assembly, will also have to be drafted and translated.

The host SAI must ensure that quality translation in the four official AFROSAI languages be provided for all Assembly documents (*Principal and Country Papers*, *Discussion Papers*, and the *Proceedings*). This process may be delayed for some documents, since many outcomes may have to be translated a number of times in the various drafting stages. In keeping with the Committee Manual, the Committee, Sub-Committee, Working Groups Chairs are responsible for providing a quality translation in the four official INTOSAI languages and delivering their respective deliverables to the host SAI for distribution during the Assembly.

##### a. Staff

Professional and qualified staff, familiar with the relevant topics, should be employed to translate Assembly-related documents. Professional translation services can be obtained through commercial translation agencies, or, in some cases, through the host country's Department of Foreign Affairs. The AFROSAI General Secretariat can help in finding translators, notably in finding a translation agency or translators with background knowledge of the topics.

The host SAI, alongside the translation service-provider, must assess the number of translators and timelines on the basis of document size and number. The host SAI must take into account the fact that the number of translators needed may vary

at different stages of assembly preparation, as well as during and after the Assembly itself.

In order to determine how many translators will be needed during the Congress, it is essential to bear in mind the extremely short time delays translators will have in order to translate documents. It is suggested that a translation team leader be appointed in order to maximize coordination and language consistency.

**b. Equipment**

The host SAI must choose *hardware* and *software* equipment in accordance with translation needs. This choice should be made with the translation service provider, taking into account the *hardware* and *software* needed for the four official AFROSAI languages. Particular attention should be paid to the equipment needed for languages not used by the host SAI, given the specificity of the *software* and printing needs. In carrying out these assessments, the host SAI must take into account established printing specifications, like printer fonts, document formats and photocopying requirements.

Choice of software and hardware should be made according to Assembly needs. The host SAI must provide both hardware and software in the venue, whether providing its own equipment or through equipment hire. In the latter case, the host SAI is in charge of organizing this with the equipment provider, and making sure that the provider is aware of the needs of the translating team.

Furthermore, during the Assembly itself, translators may need other kinds of equipment, like recorders, typewriters, faxes, modems and telephones. Translation teams must be provided with sufficient space to do their work properly, and the latter should be equipped with standard office equipment, including IT equipment. An extra office space is required for the translation team leader to be able to ensure the follow-up, supervision, assessment and processing of translation work.

**c. Quality Control**

The quality of the translation is critical to the success of the Assembly. With this aim in mind, it is suggested that the host SAI and the translation service provider develop guidelines for quality control. These guidelines should cover issues like the specific Assembly terminology, professional reference material and the level of revision needed according to document type. A revision process should be set up, in which finished translations should preferably be revised by official translators other than those who did the translation.

In the case of technical documents, namely the *Principal and Discussion Papers*, the host SAI may turn to the AFROSAI General Secretariat to define and seek the support of other SAIs who could revise the technical aspects of the translations. No revision is required for the *Country Papers*, since they are drafted directly by SAI members.

**d. Consistency**

The host SAI must ensure that the information contained in Assembly documents is consistent, despite having been translated into various languages. It is advisable to carry out a multilingual revision at the end of the translation cycle, in order to ensure that consistency of information is maintained.

**e. Document management system**

The host SAI must develop a document management system. As early as possible in the planning process, deadlines and orders of priority in Assembly document drafting have to be set and incorporated into the management system. The latter should include deadlines for each AFROSAI language, for document delivery, translation and return by the translation service provider of each Assembly document, for later publication. In this way, the system enables to monitor the costs of the translations required.

*(a) Document color-coding*

Translated documents are color-coded for easy identification and distribution before, during and after the Assembly. The documents are either copied onto pages of the appropriate language color, or bear markers, such as color-coded lines or dots. Documents must be color-coded in the following way:

- Arabic: coffee color
- English: red
- French: green
- Portuguese: blue

## **II. Interpretation**

Interpretation is equally critical to the overall success of the Assembly. Quality interpretation helps to ensure clear communication and understanding of all topics covered. The host SAI is responsible for providing interpretation services in the four AFROSAI official languages for all meetings and events during the Assembly, as well as during the two Governing Board meetings before, and the one immediately after the Assembly.

### **a. Official Sessions**

Simultaneous interpretation in the official AFROSAI languages must be provided for the Assembly Plenary and theme sessions.

### **b. Cultural Activities**

The nature and scope of the program determine the type of interpretation required. Accompanying interpreters (liaison) are frequently assigned to participants who are in charge within the AFROSAI, to help them during cultural events.

### **c. Staff**

Professional interpretation services are required during official Assembly meetings. Professional interpretation services may be hired through commercial language service agencies, or in some cases, through the Foreign Affairs Office of the host SAI. The host SAI may recruit highly qualified interpreters in the host country and, with the help and recommendations from the General Secretariat, may also hire interpreters from other countries, for languages which are not available in the host country. This enables the costs of foreign interpreters

It is very important that the interpretation teams be provided with the Assembly documents before the event, in order to enable them to familiarize themselves with specific terminology and concepts. To this end, the Suggested Terminology for the INCOSAI Congress is of particular value – although the host SAI may design and issue a document containing extra specific terminology, depending on the main themes which will be discussed.

**d. Equipment**

Some, but not all, of the venues chosen by the host SAI are already fitted with interpretation equipment. In both cases, the host SAI must check what equipment is necessary with the interpretation service provider, and ensure that these requirements are fulfilled. The host SAI will liaise with the chosen interpretation equipment provider. Equipment requirements include the sound system for the meeting, booths, language channels, headphones, microphones and recording equipment for the formal sessions.

**e. Recording**

All plenary sessions and Governing Board interpretations must be recorded to establish a factual record of proceedings. Once the Assembly is over, the host SAI must transcribe the recordings into its AFROSAI language, with a view to drafting the *Assembly Proceedings*. The recordings in the other AFROSAI languages must be kept for consultation purposes, in case this is necessary.

## CHAPTER III

### PROGRAMS

This chapter provides information on the different events taking place during AFROSAI, materials needed for these events and the respective guidelines, as well as information on the selection of theme officers. Programs should be outlined as soon as possible as they initiate the planning process.

#### I. Opening Ceremony

During the opening ceremony, the head of the host SAI officially opens the Assembly, welcoming all delegates, observers and accompanying persons. The opening program usually consists of speeches delivered by the host country's authorities, by the Head of the host country SAI and by the outgoing AFROSAI Governing Board Chair.

#### II. General Plenary Sessions

Current AFROSAI activities and initiatives are discussed during the General Plenary sessions. There are two General Plenary Sessions: at the beginning and the end of the time period assigned to dealing with relevant Assembly issues. Plenary sessions are chaired by the Assembly Chair (the Head of the host SAI) and are conducted in keeping with the Rules of Procedure approved by the Assembly, as required by the AFROSAI Statutes. The resolutions presented at the Congress follow the same procedure as those established for Governing Board meetings. Documents are also used in the same way as during Governing Board meetings. The host SAI is in charge of publishing and distributing this documentation. It is crucial that all Assembly participants receive the relevant assembly documents and materials before meetings start.

##### a. Agenda

The agenda lists all the items to be dealt with during each plenary session. Agendas are drafted by the host SAI in agreement with the AFROSAI General Secretariat and other SAIs where appropriate. Each item on the agenda is allotted a time period for discussion and resolution thereof. It is crucial that this time constraint be strictly observed in order to ensure that at all items can be discussed during the time allotted for each plenary session. If the presentation of one or more items during the First Plenary Session unexpectedly extends beyond the time limit imposed, the Chair can request the members' approval to discuss a pending item during the Second Plenary Session, in order to close the First Plenary Session within the given time period.

##### i. First Plenary Session

In this first Assembly meeting, some of the following items on the agenda must be dealt with:

1. Opening welcome speech delivered by the outgoing AFROSAI Governing Board Chair;

2. Greetings the Head of the host SAI as Assembly Chair and AFROSAI Governing Board Chair. This ceremony may be accompanied by a speech by the incoming AFROSAI Governing Board Chair;
3. Approval of the Assembly *Rules of Procedure*;
4. Election of Assembly Vice-Chair
5. Report by the Secretary-General;
6. Presentation of the reports revised and approved in the three years prior to the Assembly;
7. Report by the Chair of Strategic Plan;
8. Report by Committee and Sub-committees;
9. Motions for amendments or adoption of revised AFROSAI *Statutes*, if changes have been proposed;
10. Report by AFROSAI Auditors;
11. Any other matters; and
12. Closing speech by the Assembly Chair, closing the First Plenary Session.

ii. **Second Plenary Session**

The second Plenary Session is the closing session of the Assembly, where the following items (amongst others) must be dealt with:

1. Opening speech to the Second Plenary Session by the Assembly Chair;
2. Resolutions and recommendations passed by the Assembly on the items considered;
3. Report on the *African Journal of Comprehensive Auditing*;
4. Reports by the AFROSAI Committees, Working Groups;
5. Reports by the AFROSAI Regional Working Group Chairs;
6. Election of new Governing Board members;
7. Review of the position of Chair of Strategic Plan;
8. Official thanks to outgoing members of the Governing Board;
9. Official thanks to the outgoing Chair and Vice-Chair;
10. Election of the AFROSAI Auditors;
11. Discussion and approval of the budget for the next triennial period and report on external funding of AFROSAI projects, introduced by the AFROSAI Secretary General;
12. Location and venue of the next Assembly General;
13. Acceptance by the SAI chosen to host the next Assembly General;
14. The technical themes for the next General Assembly;
15. Any other matters;
16. Closing speech by the Assembly Chair, closing the Second Plenary Session.

b. **Other issues**

During each Plenary Session, some unforeseen items may arise which need to be dealt with. These can vary depending on the meeting and should be included in the agenda, following prior consultation with the host SAI and AFROSAI General Secretariat.

c. **Document folders.**

The host SAI is in charge of preparing the document folders that contain background material to the items on the various meeting agendas. These support documents are provided by those SAIs responsible for items on the agenda or are developed by the host SAI. The host SAI ensures that the documents are

translated and copied. It is suggested that at least one blank sheet be included in the folders for the participants to take notes on each of the items to be dealt with in the First or Second Plenary Session. The host SAI is responsible for organizing, compiling and handing out the folders to Assembly participants before the meetings. The folders must be made available to the delegates during the Assembly, and additional copies of the documents should be provided to the Assembly support staff.

**d. Support staff**

During Assembly meetings, including theme group discussions, the presence of support staff is required to make sure that the meetings run smoothly in logistical terms. This implies ensuring that the participants are provided with the required documents and papers, that the microphones and equipment work well, etc. This support may be provided by the host SAI staff or by a specialized provider company. It is recommended that for each session someone be appointed to take note of key discussion topics, as well as the recommendations and resolutions. The notes can then be used to draft the plenary and theme reports.

### III Theme Plenary Sessions

The themes for discussion are suggested by the Secretariat General and approved by the AFROSAI Governing Board. They are submitted to the General Assembly as recommendations. Recommendations made at previous sessions can be taken into account in defining the themes. The themes deal with topics that are at the forefront of current auditing and financial management issues.

**a. Themes**

The preparatory steps for the theme discussions are outlined in the *Assembly Rules of Procedure*. The Procedure includes:

- (a) Listing the themes,
- (b) Obtaining approval on matters arisen by the Assembly General under recommendations of the Governing Board,
- (c) The host SAI designating, upon approval of the AFROSAI Governing Board, the SAIs in charge of drafting the *Principal Papers* and acting as rapporteur for each theme,
- (d) The host SAI or SAIs in charge of the theme translating the *Principal Papers*,
- (e) The host SAI distributing the *Principal Papers* to all the SAIs in the appropriate AFROSAI languages,
- (f) SAIs drafting their *Country Papers*, in response to the *Principal Papers*, and sending them to the host SAI,
- (g) The host SAI compiling and translating the *Country Papers* in the working language as previously agreed with the corresponding SAI Theme Chair;
- (h) The SAIs that drafted the *Principal Papers* drafting a summary of the *Country Papers* and the host translating these,
- (i) The host SAI publishing the *Country Papers* and summarize and distributing them to all SAIs.

In the planning phase of this part of the program, the host SAI should take into account the time required for translating and printing the documents, as well as the *Principal Papers*, theme summaries and other documents required for the theme discussions. Moreover, the time needed to circulate the *Principal Papers* to the SAIs should be taken into account in the planning phase as well as the time it takes

to receive comments on these in the form of *Country Papers*. For the host SAI to complete all these tasks it has to be proactive in its communication and closely coordinate its work with those SAIs providing documents for the Assembly, in order to comply with their planned deadlines for drafting, translation and circulation.

**b. Theme officers**

Theme officers are proposed by the host SAI to the Governing Board's approval. Each theme has a Chair, a Vice-Chair, Moderators, Rapporteurs and Technical Liaison Officers. The duties and responsibilities of each of these are described in the *Rules of Procedure*.

The selection of theme officers should be so as to include:

- (a) The sub Working Groups of AFROSAI and the four AFROSAI languages;
- (b) Representatives of the main auditing systems;
- (c) SAIs that have a strong interest in the theme or SAIs that are currently working in the AFROSAI committee organizing the theme;
- (d) SAIs of different sizes; and
- (e) A combination of SAIs that have already been theme officers and others that have not.

Before the Assembly starts, all the theme officers should hold a meeting. The meeting is a two-part session. In the first part, the host SAI gives instructions to all the theme officers on questions of logistics (rooms available, translations, timetable. Etc) and then the theme officers convene by theme to discuss the strategy required to lead theme discussions and achieve desired results.

**c. Theme sessions**

- (a) Theme sessions are organized within general session, which take part in the resolution and recommendation drafting process.
- (b) Theme officers meeting The theme discussion subgroup officers meet in order to discuss the findings of their respective reports. The recommendations made in each theme discussion subgroup should be pooled and final reports are drafted for presentation in the Theme Plenary session. The final theme report, alongside the thematic discussions subgroup reports, should be translated into the five INTOSAI official languages in order to be submitted at the Theme Plenary Session.
- (c) Theme Plenary Sessions The results of the theme discussions are submitted in the theme plenary sessions. During the plenary session, recommendations made during discussions are submitted for examination and vote. If the recommendations are passed, follow-up actions are undertaken.

**IV. Cultural events**

These events are specifically designed for the delegates, observers and accompanying persons, in order to exchange ideas and to strengthen work relations in a relaxed and informal atmosphere. The *Proceedings* of previous Congresses can be consulted for further information about these events. The cultural program is left to the discretion of each host SAI. The following only serves as an example:

**a. Special events**

Usually various special events are planned during the Assembly for the delegates, observers and accompanying persons, so that they can enjoy host SAIs' culture and hospitality. Furthermore, in the Governing Board meeting, held in the host country in the year before the Assembly, delegates are provided with a program of cultural activities and are taken on a cultural tour after the said meeting.

**b. Accompanying persons program**

Cultural activities are planned for accompanying persons during the day, while the delegates and observers attend the technical sessions. Furthermore, during the Governing Board meeting held in the host country a year before the Congress, accompanying persons are also provided with a program of cultural activities.

**V. Closing Ceremony Program**

According to the program of the closing ceremony, delegates, observers and accompanying persons gather for the official Assembly closing ceremony. This usually means meeting for a cocktail party and for dinner with a short program that will allow all the participants to express their thanks and take their leave. The closing ceremony program usually includes a selection of appropriate musical pieces, speeches by the Assembly Vice-Chair, AFROSAI Secretary General and the AFROSAI Governing Board Chair.

**VI. Assembly proceedings and other official documents.**

After the Assembly, the host SAI compiles the minutes of the meetings in order to have a clear record of the discussions, resolutions, agreements, recommendations and assigned responsibilities for implementing follow-up actions. The minutes compiled by the liaison officers assigned to each session and the transcription of the sound recordings are then used to draft the Assembly Proceedings, which are the official record of the Assembly. The *Proceedings* state the Assembly venue, the participants, the themes discussed and the officers for these themes, the resolutions (minutes) and actions to be taken regarding each theme and expected outcomes. They also include information and photographs of the opening and closing ceremonies as well as of the social and cultural events.

This document is drafted in the AFROSAI language of the host SAI and is translated into the three other AFROSAI languages. Once the *Proceedings* are published, they are sent via ordinary or certified mail to all Assembly participants in the relevant AFROSAI language. The preparation of the *Proceedings* (drafting, translation and distribution) requires a certain amount of time, which is why it is recommended that the work should start as soon as possible in order to avoid neglecting important details.

## CHAPTER IV

### LOGISTICS

Logistics is the name given to the operational aspects of the organization of the Congress as a whole. It involves many different activities, from identifying and responding to session requirements in audiovisual, interpretation and translation equipment to coordinating with suppliers to ensure transfer of the participants to the Assembly activities. The logistic requirements for the Assembly are similar to those of the Governing Board meetings.

#### I. Registration

Registration is the process by which participants inform the host SAI of their attendance at the Assembly. It also includes other important information for Assembly staff.

##### a. Information requirements

The information required from the participants should be determined before the establishment of a database and even before the design of the registration forms. In planning the registration process, the host SAI should pay special attention to the kind of information required from the participants which will be relevant to the Assembly. This is why efficient communication between the different Support Committees is crucial. In case of doubts on the specific information fields, the host SAI can refer to the AFROSAI General Secretariat for advice.

##### b. Registration System (database) and Form

The registration form and the system to support data collection, monitoring and issuing can only be designed after defining information requirements. Various software packages can be used or software can be tailor-made to record the information. Given that tailor-made software can be very expensive and time consuming, it is recommended that readily available software packages be used. The registration form and database should be developed in sequence in order to facilitate the process of data input.

It is recommended that the registration form clearly highlight the information which will be subsequently used (e.g. on badges), in order to avoid any confusion or error with first and last names, job title and status in the SAI or representative organization, etc.

##### c. Translation

Registration forms are translated and printed in the five INTOSAI official languages and are subsequently distributed to the delegates and observers. Special attention should be paid to time constraints concerning these tasks, to ensure distribution is completed within the given timeline.

##### d. Circulation

Approximately four months prior to the Assembly, the host SAI should send the registration form and the preliminary program in the appropriate AFROSAI language by email to SAIs and observers. In the absence of an email address or delivery confirmation, the host SAI should send the documents by fax or ordinary mail. To ensure that the information is delivered in an appropriate manner, the host SAI should establish a calendar of issuing and confirmation of reception of the forms by each SAI or observer.

##### e. Follow-up

After the forms have been filled out and returned to the host SAI, the information is checked to ensure no data is missing. It is then entered in the database. It is recommended that a deadline be set for return of the forms (at least two months prior to the event) enabling a reminder to be sent to the SAIs or observers who did not return their forms. When setting a reply deadline, the host SAI should consider factors like time needed by the delegates to book their flights ahead of time. It should also consider the time required by the host SAI to send a confirmation letter to all SAIs and observers. Large and brightly coloured luggage tags for participants' suitcases to be easily spotted upon arrival in the host country should be enclosed.

The host SAI is in charge of informing the AFROSAI members and other invited organizations and ensuring, by all means possible, that participants receive the confirmation letter.

**f. Registration reports**

When deciding the type of information that is required to create or select a registration system, the host SAI should consider the sort of information that should stem from the database. These reports can be useful to the Support Committee staff within their logistical tasks, such as deciding on the number of discussion paper copies required in each language, finding out arrival times of the delegates to organize their pick-up at the airport, estimating the number of staff needed at the airport, organizing a shuttle service to the hotel, relaying information on confirmed participants in order to prepare a working pack in the appropriate language, etc. All these tasks must be taken into account during the initial planning stages so that they are included in the overall registration process.

**g. Registration pack**

Each participant must receive an information pack when they register at the hotel where they will also confirm their participation to the Assembly. This pack includes Assembly documents, working material and identification badges, information on the programs, and events and any other notices, invitations, gifts to the participants or relevant material.

**II. Congress facilities**

The host SAI is in charge of selecting a venue for the Assembly and ensuring the availability of equipment, staff and meeting rooms for the various working sessions. The host SAI is also responsible for offering a variety of accommodation arrangements.

**a. Venue and accommodation**

There are two options regarding the choice of the venue. The first is to organize the Assembly at a hotel that has a Convention Center and that can put up all the participants or the majority of them. This option avoids commuting to and from the Assembly, and is more cost and time-effective. It also allows almost all the services to delegates to be available at the same venue.

The second option is to hold the Assembly at a Convention Center outside of the hotel. Given the Convention Centers are equipped and prepared for this type of event, it would not be necessary to incur the further costs and efforts of adapting the hotel facilities to the work sessions.

When choosing the appropriate venue, the host SAI should consider the number of participants registered at previous sessions to get an estimate of the capacity

needed, to check the availability of rooms and to book the meeting space required. The host SAI should also check the number of rooms required if all participants are accommodated in the same hotel. Negotiations for the venue should start very early on, taking account of demand and availability on the dates and in the city chosen to host the Assembly. It is recommended the venue should be contacted two years before the Assembly, using the organization of the Governing Board Meeting the year before the General Assembly as leverage to negotiate.

When selecting the venue, other aspects should be taken into account such as the price and services offered. Furthermore, the venue should be in the same category as venues for prior sessions, there should be other hotels of the same category close by where additional participants can find accommodation if necessary; the venue should be located in a safe, culturally appealing and easy access area, and lastly, the venue should have the necessary prestige and experience in hosting international events.

The host SAI is in charge of providing accommodation options, in terms of cost, in other hotels or in the same hotel, bearing in mind the quality, service, facilities, accommodation capacity, location of the hotel, and other aspects inherent to the city such as safety, traffic and distances.

Two or more hotels for participants should also be selected close to the venue. In this case, the host SAI should select a limited number of hotels to keep control of the logistics and the transfer costs. In the event that some delegates should choose different hotels, the host SAI should clearly state that transportation becomes the delegate's responsibility.

Participants can obtain booking information during the registration process. The host SAI is in charge of booking rooms for participants, according to the information provided in their registration forms. However, after the registration form is returned, each participant is responsible for adding extra days to his/her stay in the host city.

**b. Meeting room selection**

The meeting rooms for the Assembly serve different purposes, depending on the event, the aim for which they were selected, the kind of intended activity and the number of participants. The host SAI takes care of booking and fitting out the rooms for:

- (a) Plenary sessions
- (b) Theme discussions
- (c) Theme officer meetings
- (d) AFROSAI General Secretariat
- (e) Organizing Committee
- (f) Interpreters and translators
- (g) Business Centre for delegates
- (h) Meetings of the Head of the host SAI
- (i) Meetings of the AFROSAI Governing Board (before and after the Assembly)

The furniture in the meeting rooms may have to be rearranged or changed depending on the purposes of the event or use of the individual room.

**c. Seating arrangements and name cards**

During the plenary sessions and working meetings, SAI delegates sit in alphabetical order according to their country's name in the local language, followed

by the observers in alphabetical order. A name card will be placed in front of each delegate and observer, listing the participant's name, country or organization (in the case of observers). The specific names of the countries can be found in the AFROSAI directory. At the back of the name cards the same information should appear with an added colour-code that corresponds to the delegate's AFROSAI language. This code will help the local SAI staff to circulate discussion papers in the appropriate language.

**d. Equipment**

The audiovisual, interpretation, computer and communication equipment required for the Assembly should be provided and set up in the respective room before the event starts. If the arrangement regarding use of a particular room is changed, the required equipment may vary accordingly. The equipment needed includes computers, microphones, headsets, audiovisual and recording equipment, faxes, copy machines, scanners, etc, depending on the room. The host SAI ensures that the equipment is suitable and might wish to receive feedback from previous host SAIs in order to do so.

To make organisation and coordination tasks easier, the Organizing Committee should have access, in the room that they have been assigned to, to computers and to the IT server where all the information, discussion papers, registration forms, websites and email are stored.

It is up to the host SAI to provide the delegates with the range of communication facilities (telephone, fax, copy machines), depending on the costs involved.

**e. Coffee breaks**

During the Congress, breaks are scheduled at convenient times during the morning and afternoon sessions, during which coffee and refreshments are served.

**III. Travel Formalities**

The delegates participating in the General Assembly are responsible for getting their visa at the Embassy of the host country in their own country of origin or country of residence. The host SAIs may not be empowered to procure visas and facilitate visa procedures for delegates who require a visa to enter the host country.

However, the host SAI can offer its support to the AFROSAI community through the publication, on its website, of the addresses of host country Embassies in the delegate's country of origin, or Consulates in neighbouring countries if necessary, for delegates to be able to start relevant visa procedures.

**IV. Transportation services**

Transportation services are only provided for activities related to the Assembly. It is crucial that the participants know where and when these services are offered.

**a. Arrivals and departures at airport**

Participants to the Assembly are usually welcomed at the airport by staff from the host SAI and then taken to the venue. For the return trip they are usually taken from the hotel to the airport.

As regards arrival at the airport, the host SAI can prepare material in order to spot the delegates easily. It is recommended that the host SAI staff be on hand at the airport in case they are needed. Frequent last minute changes in flight schedules should be taken into account. The coordination between the host SAI and the transport provider should be efficient enough to be able to deal with these situations.

Some delegations can be welcomed at the airport and driven by their own diplomatic staff. The host SAI should be prepared for such instances. It should anticipate and take advantage of the registration form to ask if the delegates need the airport transport services or will use their own embassy services.

**b. Transportation for the cultural events.**

Transportation services are provided to all the participants for all cultural activities. On some occasions it could be useful to group the participants according to the language they prefer in case information is provided during the event. If no information is given, this is not necessary.

**V. Safety and medical services**

The host SAI should take preventative action when planning the Assembly activities to ensure participants' safety and welfare. These measures should not be an obstacle to the meetings or participants' wellbeing; they should just be readily available in case of an emergency, of a medical nature, for example, the host SAI is in charge of verifying that the venue provides adequate medical units or teams.

**VI. Providers**

The operational success of the Assembly relies on a good selection and hiring of various product and service providers associated with the different tasks and activities that each Assembly Secretariat Support Committee is in charge of. The work schedule should be set at least two years before the Assembly. It should outline the daily activities during the Assembly week, assessing the product and service requirements for each of these activities and prospecting potential suppliers. The organization of the Governing Board meeting a year before the Assembly is a good run-through to evaluate the responsiveness of the chosen suppliers. The host SAI should take into account the internal policies or regulations on purchases within the host country as well as procedures and time required to adequately plan the purchasing of goods and services.

**VII. Communication**

Communication during the Assembly is very important, not only between the participants, but also between the host SAI staff. Furthermore, good communication is also required between key staff of the Assembly and AFROSAI officials. During the Assembly it is crucial that the technical support team be available to ensure that there are no flaws in the system.

**a. Communication of the Organizing Committee**

A strategy should be designed and implemented to ensure communication between the key staff of the Organizing Committee. Key staff should be available at all times during the Assembly.

**b. Communication technology**

Other communication needs should be fulfilled during the Assembly. The appropriate hardware and software should be installed in the venue for the translators, the delegates, the INTOSAI General Secretariat and the Organizing Committee staff. Audiovisual equipment such as projectors, monitors, screens, etc. should also be provided. The Organizing Committee should also be provided with landline phones and fax machines.

**VIII. Publication of documents**

Some aspects of the publication of documents have already been discussed since this is linked to translation. The host SAI should be ready to publish documents before, during and after the Assembly. This means preparing, design and printing specifications. Layout and design are important given the graphic guidelines of the Assembly as a whole. This includes designing the Assembly logo and determining its use on the various Assembly materials such as discussion papers, flags and stationary items. The host SAI should ensure that it has the capacity to copy all documents. This may mean having to transport the copying equipment to the venue or hiring special staff for the Assembly.

**IX. Staff**

Additional staff may be needed during the General Assembly to provide extra support to the host SAI staff. Support staff may for instance be required at the hotel, in the shuttles or for special events. The extra staff requirements will mainly be help-staff for the Support Committees and information desk staff.

**X. Information desk**

The host SAI should provide information to the participants. It is suggested that in order to do so, a specific location be assigned for it or to set up an information desk where participants can ask for any information they need, such as the location of a meeting room, of restaurants in the area, tourist or shopping information. This staff can also help with other activities, such as welcoming and registering the participants at the venue, helping participants during sessions and cultural events and providing information on the transfer services at the airport. It is suggested that the host SAI hire or obtain support from bilingual staff

**XI. Various General Assembly materials**

Various materials are needed for the Assembly. The design and supply of these materials should be considered during the planning phase. Most of these materials are given to the participants in the registration pack that they receive upon registration at the Assembly.

**a. Programs**

All programs should be written and translated with the aim of providing the participants with information on the events.

The Assembly program is the final version of the preliminary program that is sent to the participants together with the registration form. It should include a calendar of events, with times and locations for the meetings and cultural events. It should also include information on the venue and how to get additional information at the information desk. The program should be translated into the four AFROSAI languages and be enclosed in the registration pack in the appropriate language.

**b. List of participants**

After the Assembly has been opened, an official list of participants is issued. The initial information comes from the original registry that is then updated by the host SAI to reflect the actual attendance.

**c. Invitations**

The host SAI should provide invitations to the participants for the opening and closing ceremonies and other cultural events. These invitations should be duly translated and enclosed in the registration pack given to participants when they register, or placed in the pigeon box of each SAI or observer.

**d. Sign-posting**

Signs are used to provide indications, locations and to identify meeting rooms and events, etc. All signs should be written in the four AFROSAI languages.

**e. Mailing materials**

The design and production of mailing materials such as envelopes and stationary items to be used during the Assembly should be taken into account. The bulk of these materials will be used before the Assembly to send the *Principal Papers*, the registration forms, the luggage identification tags, etc.

**f. Paper, pens and folders**

Designing and buying materials such as paper, pens and folders with the Assembly logo for the participants to use during the Assembly should also be taken into account. These materials can be distributed as part of the registration pack or placed at the disposal of the participants in the meeting rooms.

**g. Stickers and luggage tags**

Stickers and luggage tags should be designed bearing the Assembly logo. These stickers and tags are usually sent enclosed with the registration confirmation letter sent out by the host SAI. The purpose of these tags is to allow the support staff of the host SAI to easily spot delegates' luggage and help with its transportation upon arrivals and departures at the airport.

## **XII Miscellaneous**

There are many miscellaneous activities related to the Assembly that are crucial to the Assembly's success

**a. Photography**

Photographs are usually taken during the Assembly events. The host SAI is in charge of arranging for a professional photographer to take the official picture of the Assembly as well as working at the other events. The official photograph should

be taken at an appropriate time so that it can be available during the second Plenary Session. Two official photographs are suggested: one with the Heads of delegations only, and one with all the delegates.

**b. Catering**

Many participants have specific dietary requirements. The host SAI should ensure that catering providers take these requirements into account, without getting unduly involved in personal preferences, in order to facilitate the logistics and keep prices at a reasonable level. That is why it is advisable to design menus to fit every taste. The Organizing Committee should keep to the time allotted to meals in the timetable of sessions and activities.

**c. Archives**

Assembly materials should be kept and filed. Decisions should be taken on which type of materials should be kept. These documents should be kept for at least three years or until the next Assembly is held. In some cases the host SAI should bear in mind existing government regulations on archives.

**d. Assembly coverage**

The *African Journal of Comprehensive Auditing* actively participates in coverage of the General Assembly, and subsequently publishes information on it. It is vital that the host SAI provides the necessary facilities and conditions for their work to be carried out, such as information on the preparation and Proceedings of the Assembly, access to the website, pictures, minutes of the meetings, etc. A member of the Organizing Committee should be appointed as liaison to support the Journal in its work.

Due to the importance of the Assembly, the host SAI must be ready to hold the event with the support of the official media, especially during the Opening Session in which officials of the host country usually take part. The host SAI should contact the media as soon as possible, inform them of the nature and the features of the event and extend an invitation for them to take part in the events. The host SAI can hold a press conference during the Assembly to attend to the press and inform them of details of the event.