



## **FINAL COMMUNIQUE OF THE 9<sup>TH</sup> RETREAT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF SENATES, SHOORAS AND EQUIVALENT COUNCILS OF AFRICA AND THE ARAN WORLD**

### **STATEMENT**

1. We, members of the Association of Senates, Shoora and Equivalent Councils of Africa and the Arab World (ASSECAA) meeting in Bujumbura in the Republic of Burundi, from September 19 to 20, 2022;
2. Thank the Government of Burundi for agreeing to host the work of the 9<sup>th</sup> ASSECAA Retreat Meeting and appreciate the warm welcome extended to us;
3. Acknowledge the special contribution of the current President of ASSECAA;
4. Express our gratitude to the Burundian Senate for having successfully invested in the preparation of the logistics of the session and the communications relating to the two (2) themes of reflection, namely:
  - 1□The effects and repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic on Arab-African economies and government response; as well as
  - 2□The Russian -Ukrainian war and its repercussions on supply chains, energy and food prices;
5. Confirm that ASSECAA is for us as an appropriate space to help each other to develop diplomacy and parliamentary cooperation on a continuous basis;



6. Note unanimously that the crises of Covid-19 and the Russian-Ukrainian war have produced obvious negative effects on Arab-African economies, which have resulted more particularly in a collapse in oil prices, a drop in global demand for this product, a decline in domestic tourism, a limitation of population movements, a decline in the level of per capita income, disruption of supply chains and global trade to Africa and the Arab world as well as an increase in poverty;
7. At the same time, we deplore that the Russian-Ukrainian war was accompanied by the increase in food prices, the worsening of Arab-African food security, inflation with a certain impact on particularly fragile economies , of the confrontation between the great powers with repercussions on the rest of the world, in particular on the African and Arab countries;
8. Note together that the member countries of ASSECAA have undertaken in a diversified manner to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, in particular through direct measures to support income, deferral or temporary debt relief, management rational barrier measures (confinement, wearing a mask, vaccination, etc.), etc. ;
9. Share together the concern to project without delay strategies to face the consequences of the Russian-Ukrainian war or to minimize them as much as possible;
10. Desire to promote together, as member countries of ASSECAA, a united zone for development on the basis of the various potentialities that each country presents in the fields of agriculture, energy, trade, etc. ;



11. Share in the idea that the crises of Covid-19 and the Russian-Ukrainian war are to be taken as precious opportunities for ASSECAA to rethink the way of managing crises from the perspective of the cooperation of senates in order to establish mechanisms intended to guarantee populations a good economic survival thanks in particular to food security and guaranteed cross-border and regional trade;
12. Seize this closing moment of the 9<sup>th</sup> ASSECAA Consultation Meeting to express our commitment to share with us the experiences of the functioning of our senates and the strategies implemented to prevent and deal with crises when they arise;
13. Faced with this observation established during the reflection on the political and economic aspects, we members of ASSECAA endorse the following recommendations:

**Recommendations to ASSECAA:**

- Transmit the recommendations resulting from this meeting to the respective governments for their implementation;
- Strengthen the parliamentary diplomacy of ASSECAA member countries;
- Participate in the interparliamentary meeting session to be held in Kigali in October 2022;
- Collaborate in order to write our own history;



### **Recommendations to African and Arab governments:**

- Take advantage of the current covid-19 crises and the Russian-Ukrainian war to establish and activate strategic partnerships to ensure Arab-African food and energy security;
- Reassess medical services in African and Arab countries and make them more effective in finding African and Arab solutions linked to African and Arab realities;
- Invest in research in order to build an African and Arab world that is designed on the improved model of these two worlds;
- Redefine the concept of Arab-African security and include food security as one of its components;
- Reconsider the concept of food security which has still not been a priority in the agendas of international organizations or bodies with a view to achieve food self-sufficiency for all Arab and African countries by increasing the level of production and developing crops and staples;
- Study the possibilities and opportunities of Arab and African food integration in order to improve the food security of all the countries of the Region;
- To do this, invest in joint agricultural projects given the availability of huge financial surpluses, vast arable land, resources and diverse experiences in several areas related to the food production process which lacks integration;



- Prepare a series of measures to deal with the consequences of the current global rise in the prices of basic foodstuffs as well as fuel;
- Diversify sources of food imports, especially wheat;
- Strengthen regional and cross-border trade;
- Extend or increase social protection systems so that each person can enjoy their rights to an adequate standard of living, including the right to food and the right to social security;
- Increase domestic production and reduce imports;
- To do this, invest in the agricultural sector to secure the needs of countries and not make them vulnerable to sharp variations in market prices due to various political or economic shocks;
- Take advantage of the current crisis to establish and activate strategic partnerships, use everyone's capacities and opportunities to ensure food and energy security in Africa and the Arab world;
- Develop manufacturing, light and medium industries by relying on countries which have experience in this field;
- Mobilize investments to collectively tackle the causes and consequences of food crises;
- Act together to deal with the problems of importing basic necessities and establish alternative supply chains;



- Adopt guarantees/measures to minimize negative impacts in the event of economic sanctions;
- Ensure that the prices of basic necessities remain accessible to all;
- Create a mutual aid mechanism in the event of a humanitarian crisis;
- Rethink the cooperation policy adapted to the current global context and take the initiative to improve diplomatic relations with the powers;
- Do everything in their power to weigh on the international chessboard by exploiting, as a good father, the riches of the subsoil, the soil and the facilities offered by the climate in the production of food for food self-sufficiency;
- Prioritize the consumption of local products in order to give them more value;
- Become aware of the concepts of political, economic and cultural independence;
- Make more efforts to share the financial, technological and health resources available at home to alleviate dependency;
- Put in place urgent measures to support farmers in the rural world because experience has shown that it is thanks to peasant agriculture that cities have survived during confinement;
- Adopt a common policy of regular consultation on health policy issues to make their voices heard;



- Increase budgets allocated to health and research to promote African and Arab medicine;
- Help each other between ASSECAA countries to carry out agricultural projects together and thus have enough food.

Finally, the participants forwarded a vote of thanks to the President of the Republic of Burundi and through him to the Senate, Burundian government and people for the warm reception and generous hospitality accorded to them as well as for a very well-organized meeting.

**Bujumbura, Burundi, September 20, 2022**