



Initiatives of Change

Farmers' Dialogue International
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Where farmers renew their calling
to feed the world



General Assembly – November 20th 2013 – Centre Amani – Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo

The GA was convened by a letter sent by email to all 14 members on October 30th.

Council Members Present :

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|------------|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| - Uganda | : Jamil Ssebalu | - Great Britain | : Jim Wigan |
| - France | : Jean-Pierre Emeriau | - DR Congo | : Alphonse Bisusa |
| - Tanzania | : Martin Simtenda | - Rwanda | : Laurent Munyandikirwa |
| - Kenya | : George Kamau | - South Sudan | : Milton Melingasuk Lado |

1/ Apologies for absence

Phil Jefferys (Australia) Malgorzata Penda (Poland).

2/ Specially Invited Participants

Claude Bourdin (France) as GA Secretary and FDI advisor and Didier Genatio (Mayotte).

3/ Election of Chairperson

Jamil Ssebalu as Vice President of FDI was elected as Chairperson proposed by Phil Jefferys the President was unable to be present.

4/ Welcome remarks.

- Jamil welcomed participants and congratulated those who have been elected to the Committee, and thanked all FDI members for the trust shown to him and to the Committee.
- He specially welcomed Didier Genatio, as delegate of Farmers' Dialogue in Mayotte and because of the proposal to organise the next IFD there in 2015.
- He welcomed Claude Bourdin, acting as secretary of the Assembly and FDI's adviser.

Claude drew peoples attention to the fact that this was a historic meeting, as it was the first face-to-face meeting of the Farmers' Dialogue International Association since its creation in June 2013. (Previous meetings had taken place via email)

- Jamil noted that the assembly does not have an elected woman. This is linked to the choice of member-countries in selecting who represents them at the GA.
- The Chairperson also conveyed the regrets of Phil Jefferys, the president of FDI, who could not join us in Bukavu because of complications in obtaining a visa. Jim Wigan gave some explanation to this situation and a letter from Phil Jefferys will be read during the International Dialogue.
- Claude Bourdin spoke of a message sent by Malgorzata Penda who could not come but was thinking of us as we meet in Bukavu. (Delegate from Poland on the FDI association)
- A delegate from Somalia has also been prevented from coming at the last minute, as all flights were fully booked.

5/. Review of progress since the launch of FDI

The Chairman asked for news of FD activities in delegates' countries.

- **South Sudan:** FD is actively preparing a workshop to take place soon and a larger event in March 2014. The FD team has many contacts with young people through the Agricultural University. The chairman encouraged them to send out news of their activities. The South Sudan team would like to prepare itself for holding an International FD gathering some time in the future.
- **Caux 2013:** Phil Jefferys took part in the "Land Lives and Peace" session. Jim Wigan is in contact with the person in charge of this project for IofC.
- **Caux 2013 - TIGE session (Trust and Integrity in the Global Economy):** The Swiss FD team has been closely involved in one of the work streams during this session run by Cristina Bignardi (Italy). They focused on the question of wasted food.

- **Somalia:** Swedish IofC friends have given valuable support through Hassan Mohamud, a Somali living in Sweden who regularly visits Somalia; this initiative is stimulating the growth of an FD team. Jamil Ssebalu has been there to help. There is a great potential. A project relating to seed supply is developing, through FD. George Kamau, from Kenya, has also been involved with this.
- **Nigeria:** A new contact is keen to develop FD there. Jamil Ssebalu will follow this up.
- **DR Congo:** After the “Training of Trainers” held in Nyahururu in 2012, in February the local FD team had organised training for grass-root farmers. The group was then invited to the International Farmers’ Dialogue now taking place, as a way to continue the mobilisation of farmers. The authorities were informed about FD activities. The team wish to extend FD initiative to the whole of DR Congo. The idea of linking up this Dialogue with “Creators of Peace” did not materialise this time. This is something to work on, as it is essential in this area! Martin Simtenda asked the reasons for employing Fiacre to help with the preparation of the Bukavu dialogue. Alphonse Bisusa, president of FD Congo, answered that Fiacre Sengati's experience in FD, his own commitment, the fact that he is French-speaking and the 2 weeks he spent in Bukavu before the Dialogue made his participation essential for the organisation and the running of the Dialogue. Claude Bourdin added that the funding for Fiacre Sengati (flight, stay in Bukavu and wages) came from specific requests to a Funding organisation and that did not affect the direct funding of the Dialogue.
- **Tanzania:** Martin Simtenda underlined the good organisation set up by the DR Congo team. Juliana Swai was not able to visit DR Congo for work reasons. The Tanzania FD team is considering whether to organise an international Dialogue in 2017.
- **Kenya:** George Kamau expressed his gratitude to the Congo team for this Dialogue and to the FDI Committee for the financial support for the funding of the travel costs of the Kenyan group. Then he explained why the President of the Nyala cooperative was unable to attend at the last minute. He explains that the FD work in Kenya is going on strongly, though on a more individual basis and with need of more internal communication.
- **France:** Jean-Pierre Emeriau talked about the developments of FD in France, with partnerships developing with different farmers' organisation. The French FD association is now based in the Chambre d'Agriculture in Angers.
- **Rwanda:** Laurent Munyandikirwa said that the event in Bukavu was a good way to mobilise FD people. FD in Rwanda is a small initiative, which needs to be stimulated. Jamil Ssebalu thanked the Rwandan team for organising the transfer of delegates who passed through Kigali on their way to Bukavu. He offered possibilities for younger Rwandans to come to Uganda for training and exposure to FD.
- **Great Britain:** Jim Wigan commented that Pat and Kristin Evans, Alec Hutton all who were strongly committed to FD, are not with us any more and FD in UK is in need of fresh mobilisation!
- **Ukraine and Poland:** Claude spoke about the contacts in Poland and Ukraine. Friends in Ukraine would like to organise a European FD gathering at some point, but they need support. He hopes that FD in Europe can become more active and organised. “The challenges for European Farmers are huge”.
- **Uganda:** Jamil Ssebalu reminded members that FD Uganda has recruited a person to work in the Kampala office. This has been a great help. A mini-dialogue had been organised in the North of the country.
- **Mayotte:** Didier Genatio confirmed the decision of his team to organise the next International Farmers' Dialogue in Mayotte in 2015. He recalled the process, which he and his team went through, since the Training session held in Kigali in March 2011. FD has developed in Mayotte in partnership with other organisations. He feels Mayotte is a good place for FD, as it is part of French-speaking African, and with a majority of Muslims. Having a Dialogue there is a chance to mobilise France, Europe and Africa at the same time.
- **FD Website:** similar to other websites of the IofC family it was being redesigned. This needs some preparation after which FDI will have to set up an editing team to manage its content.
- **5-years plan:** this is the next big challenge for FDI, after its completion last June. The idea is to have a plan that can assist FDI to get adequate funding to develop its activities.

6/. Report of FDI Accounts

Claude Bourdin gave itemised details on the background FDI accounts: FDI Committee has made an agreement with the French FD association asked them to manage their financial activities for the time being. There have been four major activities involving funds in which FDI has been active:

- FDI has received gifts to support the organisation of the Bukavu meeting. A decision has been taken by the FDI committee about the allocation of these funds. It involves 14,800 \$US.
- FDI has delegated the French FD to employ Fiacre Sengati for one month in order to help the DR Congo team with the preparation and running of the Bukavu Dialogue. FDI got 2 grants to fund this (travel costs, stay in Bukavu and wages). The total cost of the funding for this is £3,000.
- FDI has been supporting the making of a short film on G Kamau's experience, in link with rural development and with Farmers' Dialogue. This project involves 770 €, most of it covered by funds coming from the French FD Association.
- The annual fee to the international IofC association and the contribution to the running of the website has been paid by UK FD funds this year for a total of £485.

Jamil Ssebalu expresses his hope that the FD International Association will soon get an independent bank account, as an expression of its independence. Jean-Pierre Emeriau, Treasurer of FDI, will enquire about this in France.

7/ Legal issue

- There was a proposal that the first period of accounting should run from the launch of FDI on June 12th to December 31st 2014). This was unanimously accepted.
- To launch the process to choose an auditor. Claude Bourdin was asked to search for a solution, possibly linked to the legal adviser who helped with the constitution.
- To discuss any points of the constitution needed to be reviewed (at a next GA) Members are encouraged to look at the constitution and raise any point, which should be revised: this work needs to be done before the next GA is the next time we can make a change.
- To consider enlarging the committee from the present 7 up to as many as 9 or 11. This point was raised as the Committee was initially formed with 7 members, hoping that the next GA would complete it according to the rules laid out in the constitution (the committee can have up to 11 members). The suggestion was made that this question is postponed for the next GA, to enable a proper discussion in team work with the Skype international Coordination Group which meets regularly with people of the Committee and other FD members.

8/ Enlarging the membership of the FDI association (14 members at the moment)

The Committee and its Secretary is charged to communicate with FD people in countries, which are not yet FDI members. This is the case of Sweden, Switzerland and Nigeria. As far as Mayotte is concerned, some legal advice is needed, as Mayotte is a French territory. It is recognised that the plan is for Mayotte to represent the different islands of the region, which are often forgotten. Mayotte is near Madagascar and the Comoros Islands.

9/ Participation of FDI to the IofC Americas conference in Colombia - February 2014

Jim Wigan and Claude Bourdin had been asked to consider taking part in the Americas IofC Gathering which is going to take place in Columbia in February 2014. Since then information has come that it would be better if FD participation was encouraged for the gathering which will follow this one, as this occasion is aimed at to helping people from the Americas to get to know each other and decide how to move forward together.

10/ Any other business

- It was suggested that a report on Farmers' Dialogue Africa could be produced at the end of 2013
- George Kamau expresses his gratitude for the chance of being able to represent Julius Khakula at this GA as he is doing a lot for FD in Kenya. He also thanked those who have helped with the making of the film about his own experience.
- Jamil Ssebalu thanked Jim Wigan for his long commitment with FD. He also underlines the importance of Agriculture: his college has now obtained the services of an Agronomist, which is a great help with helping with the school's projects.

As the agenda is fully covered, Jamil Ssebalu thanked all participants and closed the GA, at 22.00 November 2013

Signed - J. Ssebalu – Vice President Signed

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C. Bourdin – Acting Secretary