

## 14<sup>th</sup> AFRAC General Assembly Meetings

The **14<sup>th</sup> AFRAC General Assembly and meetings** took place at the EKA Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya from 25 to 29 September 2023. The meetings consisted of:

**The Opening Ceremony** which was officially opened by Dr Juma Mukhwana, HSE Principal Secretary, State Department for Industry, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, Kenya. Opening speeches were given by numerous officials, which included the Hon. James Gakuya, Chairman, The Kenya National Assembly on Trade, the AFRAC Chair - Dr Ron Josias (South Africa), the PAQI Chair – Mr Celestine Okanya (Nigeria), KENAS CEO – Mr Martin Chesire (Kenya), Mrs Susan Munyiri-Ochieng (KENAS, Kenya) and PTB representative – Mr Martin Kaiser (Germany).



**The AFRAC Evaluator Working Group (EWG):** The main objective of the EWG was to review the Peer Evaluator's register, confirm evaluator scopes, monitor the performance of evaluators and trainee evaluators, review the peer evaluator's needs and AFRAC's needs and consider any candidate peer evaluator applications received. The EWG Convenor is Mr Robin Gopee (MAURITAS). Yolanda Vinnicombe (SANAS Quality Manager and AFRAC Secretariat) is a member of the AFRAC EWG.

47 peer evaluator / trainee evaluator performance reports were reviewed following their participation in the evaluations of EAS (Ethiopia), SADCAS (Botswana) and SOAC (Cote D'Ivoire) this year, 6 evaluator CVs were reviewed and their scopes confirmed, and the CV's of 6 candidates nominated to be trained as

evaluators were reviewed. The EWG made recommendations to the MRA Committee regarding the qualification of AFRAC evaluators, the selection of candidates to be trained as evaluators, and further improvements to the AFRAC evaluation processes.

**AFRAC Sub-Committee meetings** were held for Certification (Chair: Mr Michael Talam – KENAS), Calibration and Testing (Chair: Mr Sam Thema - SANAS), Inspection (Chair: Mr Abraham Wekesa – KENAS) and Medical (Chair: Ms Barbara Mokgethwa – SANAS). The sub-committee's make recommendations to the Technical Committee regarding the specific scopes.

**AFRAC Marketing and Communication Committee (MCC):** The main objective of the MCC was to follow-up on implementation of the 2023 MCC workplan, monitor MCC performance indicators, receive feedback on AFRAC's social media engagements, received feedback on ILAC MCC and IAF CMC meetings participation and develop the 2024 MCC Workplan. The MCC is chaired by Mr Muteti Mutisya (KENAS). Ms Tshenolo Molamu (SANAS Marketing & Communication Manager, and SADCA MCC Vice-Chair represented SADCA at the meeting).



**AFRAC MRA Committee meeting:** The main objective of the MRA Committee meeting was to review progress on the 2023 workplan items and previous meeting actions and resolutions, plan for upcoming peer evaluations, consider recommendations of the EWG, review progress on review of the MRA documents, review Accreditation Body (AB) transition reports, recommend improvements to the management of the MRA processes, review final peer evaluation reports and draft the 2024 MRA Committee Workplan. The MRA Committee Chair is Eng. Mahmoud Eltayeb. The meeting passed 22 resolutions, which included:

- recommendations to the MRA Council regarding the recognition and scope extensions of 3 AB members;

- recommendations to the MRA Council regarding the extension of AFRAC's scope;
- the qualification of 2 evaluators as AFRAC Team Leaders: Mr Marcel Gbaguidi (SOAC) and Mr Chankar Bheekhun (MAURITAS);
- the qualification of 4 trainees and AFRAC evaluators: Mr Abraham Wekesa (KENAS), Ms Doris Mengo (KENAS), Dr Basma Hussein (EGAC) and Mr Xavier Mugari (SADCAS); and
- the selection of 6 candidates to be trained at the upcoming AFRAC Peer Evaluation training to be held from 4 to 7 Dec. 2023, bringing the total number of candidates to be trained to 19.

**AFRAC Technical Committee meeting (TC):** The main objective of the TC meeting was to review progress on the 2023 workplan items and previous meeting actions and resolutions, review progress on review of the technical publications, review progress of the 2023 Sub-Committee workplans and develop the 2024 TC workplan. The TC Chair is Mr Thabo Chesalokile (SANAS). The meeting passed 22 resolutions, which included:

- Encouragement to members to participate in their respective National Mirror Committees for the revision of ISO/IEC 17020, ISO/IEC 17024, ISO/IEC 17067 and ISO/IEC 17012;
- The extension of the scope of the Calibration and Testing Sub-Committee to include PTP and RMP; and
- The recommendation to approve the 2024 TC workplan.

**AFRAC MRA Council meeting:** The main objective of the MRA Council was to make decisions on applications to the AFRAC MRA including scope extensions to the MRA, make decisions regarding the status of Membership to the AFRAC MRA, oversee the implementation of AFRAC, ILAC and IAF resolutions relevant to the AFRAC MRA Signatories and review changes forwarded by signatories that affect the AFRAC MRA.

The meeting passed 11 resolutions, which included decisions to:

- Maintain the AFRAC MRA signatory status of EAS (Ethiopia) in the scopes of Testing, Medical Testing, Inspection, Management System Certification in sub-scope QMS, and also to extend EAS's scope of recognition to include Calibration and Product Certification.
- Maintain the AFRAC MRA signatory status of SADCAS (Botswana) in the scopes of Testing, Calibration, Medical testing, Inspection and Management System Certification in sub-scopes: QMS, EMS, FSMS, and OH&SMS, and also to extend SADCAS's scope of recognition to include Product Certification.
- Maintain the AFRAC MRA signatory status of SOAC (Côte d'Ivoire) in the scopes of Testing, Calibration and Medical Testing, and also to extend their scope of recognition to include Product Certification and Management System Certification in sub-scope QMS.
- Confirm AFRAC's readiness to accept applications from ABs in the following scopes:
  - ISO 21001 (Educational organizations – Management systems for educational organizations);

- ISO 28001 and ISO 28003 (Security management systems for the supply chain – Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of supply chain security management systems);
- ISO/TS 22003 – Food safety management systems - FSSC 22000; and
- ISO 13485 (Medical Devices Management Systems) including the subsequent recognition by IAF for this scope.

The MRA Council was chaired by Mr Hany El Desouki (EGAC). Mr Mpho Phaloane (SANAS Executive of Accreditation and acting CEO) attended as the SANAS voting member for this meeting.

**AFRAC Executive Committee meeting (EXCO):** The main objective of the EXCO was to follow-up on implementation of the 5-year Strategic Plan, review progress on the EXCO's 2023 workplans and previous meeting resolutions, develop the 2024 EXCO Workplan, review AFRAC's finances and consider the MRA Council and Committee Chair's recommendations. The EXCO passed 30 resolutions, which included:

- The appointment of the AFRAC 2024 internal auditors
- The approval of the following documents:
  - GD004-01 AFRAC Guidelines for assessing the appropriateness of few participants in an interlaboratory comparison programme;
  - P005-01 Procedure for submission of AFRAC position on various matters; and
  - P009-04 Procedure for evaluating the impact of international documents on the AFRAC MRA.
  - A013-12 MRA Committee 2024 Workplan;
  - A010-05 Technical Committee 2024 Workplan; and
  - A023-06 Marketing & Communication Committee 2024 Workplan.
- The endorsement of recommendations and reports of the TC, MCC, MRA Committee and MRA Council, as well as the reports of the Secretariat and Treasurer.
- Appointment of AFRAC representatives to the ILAC/IAF meetings, the IATF2023 and the Cassava conference

The EXCO Chair is Dr Ron Josias (AFRAC Chair). The members of the EXCO are the AFRAC Board of Directors and consists of the Chairs of the TC, MCC, MRA Committee, MRA Council, a representative of the Arrangement and Full membership categories, including non-voting members, i.e. the Treasurer, Secretariat, and a representative of the Associate and Full membership categories.

**The AFRAC General Assembly (GA):** The main objective of the GA was to provide progress on the work of AFRAC during 2023, approve the EXCO 2024 workplans, approve AFRAC financial proposals, approve relevant AFRAC documents, elect office bearers and approve the General Assembly Resolutions. The GA approved 34 resolutions, which included:

- The approval of the following documents;
  - A009-12: 2024 EXCO workplans;



- M001-05 Policies and Procedures for a Mutual Recognition Arrangement Amongst Accreditation Bodies; and
- The AFRAC Memorandum of Incorporation.
- Congratulations to AFRAC members, MRA Council, Committees, the Secretariat and the evaluators for their work and contributions resulting in the extension of AFRAC's scope of recognition under the ILAC MRA for PTP and RMP, and under the IAF MLA for Product Certification & Certification of Persons;
- The appointment of the AFRAC financial accountants;
- The decision to maintain meeting registration fees of USD 300 for the 2024 GA and meetings;
- The decision to start charging AFRAC membership fees as from Jan. 2024;
- Acknowledgement and appreciation of reports received from AB members, as well as Regional and International partners;
- Expression of gratitude to the facilitators of AFRAC trainings and workshops conducted in 2023;
- Expressions of gratitude to PTB, Germany and SANAS for the financial support to AFRAC and the Secretariat;
- Election of the following office-bearers:
  - Re-election of Mr Hany El Desouki (EGAC) as AFRAC Vice-Chair;
  - Re-election of Mr Thabo Chesalokile (SANAS) as AFRAC Technical Committee Chair; and
  - Election of Mrs Susan Munyiri-Ochieng (KENAS) as the MRA Council Chair.

The GA expressed their appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Kenya and KENAS for providing excellent facilities and arrangements conducive to the successful AFRAC meetings and 14<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

The GA also noted with appreciation the support of Dr Juma Mukhwana, HSE Principal Secretary, State Department for Industry, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment, for officially opening the AFRAC meetings and for hosting the 14<sup>th</sup> AFRAC General Assembly and AFRAC Gala Dinner.



*From left: Mr Hany El-Desouki (AFRAC Vice-Chair), Mrs Yolanda Vinnicombe (AFRAC Secretariat), Dr Ron Josias (AFRAC Chair) and Ms Fikile Skosana (AFRAC Secretariat)*

**The AFRAC Gala Dinner:** The African Themed AFRAC Gala Dinner was a colourful event of AFRAC and KENAS's celebrations, speeches and festivities to end off the very busy yet successful week of the AFRAC meetings. Certificates of recognition were awarded to by the AFRAC Chair, Dr Ron Josias to EAS (Ethiopia), SADCAS (Botswana) and SOAC (Côte d'Ivoire) for maintaining and extending their AFRAC MRA recognition.



*From left: Ms Pinkie Malebe (SADCAS), Mr Xavier Mugari (SADCAS) and Ms Eve Gadzikwa (SADCAS CEO), Dr Ron Josias (AFRAC Chair), Mr Marcel Gbaguidi (SOAC CEO), Mr Bonsa Negera (EAS CEO)*

Certificates were also issued to the newly qualified evaluators presented by Eng. Mahmoud Eltayeb (MRA Committee Chair).







*From left: Ms Fikile Skosana (AFRAC Secretariat), Eng. Mahmoud Eltayeb (MRA Committee Chair) with Mr Xavier Mugari (SADCAS), with Abraham Wekesa (KENAS), with Doris Mengo (KENAS), with Marcel Gbaguidi (SOAC)*

KENAS presented certificates of recognition to the KENAS past Directors, and after many speeches, it was finally time to relax and enjoy the eventing.