

Minutes of Video Conference of AGAOA Members
held on 07th June 2007

A Video Conference of AGAOA Members was held on 07th June 2007 at 11:00 AM IST. The meeting was held in assistance of the World Bank, using their Video Conference systems in the Member countries.

The Meeting was attended by the following Heads of Accounting Organisations and their Officials:

1. Mr. V N Kaila, CGA, India (Chairperson)
2. Mr. Mohammad Aqa, Director General of Treasury, Afghanistan
3. Mr. Almamun Md. Sanaul Huq, CGA, Bangladesh
4. Mr. Thurpa Tshering, Chief Accounts Officer, Bhutan (through Audio)
5. Mr. Mohamed Ahmed, Financial Controller, Maldives (through Audio)
6. Mr. Sushil Prasad Sharma, Financial Comptroller General, Nepal
7. Mr. Naimatullah Abid, CGA, Pakistan.
8. Mr. D Widanagamachchi, DG State Accounts Department, Sri Lanka

At the outset, Mr. V N Kaila, CGA India and Chairperson of AGAOA welcomed all the participants to the Video Conference, and thanked them for taking out time to attend the Conference.

The Minutes of the discussion held on the Agenda points are listed below:

1. Confirmation of the Proceedings of the Second Assembly of AGAOA held on 17th September 2007 at New Delhi.

- ❖ DG, State Accounts Department, Sri Lanka raised the issue that as per Para 5D of the Proceedings, Sri Lanka were to present a paper on “Accounting as a Tool for Effective Financial Reporting” in the next Video Conference. He however stated that this was a lengthy and technical topic, and therefore it would be more appropriate if the paper was presented in the Third Assembly of AGAOA. This was agreed upon by all the Members.

- ❖ The position regarding ratification of the AGAOA Charter by remaining Members, viz. Maldives, Bangladesh and Bhutan was raised. Chairperson informed the Members that he would write to all the Member Countries who had not yet ratified the Charter.

The Proceedings of the Second General Assembly were confirmed by all Members.

2. *The funding of AGAOA Assemblies/ Meetings- the travel and boarding cost of Members (who have paid their due contributions only) attending the meetings should be borne by AGAOA through the annual contributions. Additional avenues for funding through donor agencies like the World Bank, SIDA, ADB or DFID could be explored.*

- ❖ The view that emerged was that the financial position of AGAOA was not very strong at present, and the limited available resources should not be utilized to bear travel/ boarding cost of Members. It was agreed that for the present, the cost of travel for attending AGAOA Assemblies and other Meetings should be borne by individual Member countries. Meanwhile, AGAOA Secretariat and Treasurer would approach all the Members who have not paid their dues.

(Action: AGAOA Secretariat/ Treasurer)

3. *The Statement of Financial Position, as sent by DG, State Accounts Department, Sri Lanka (Treasurer, AGAOA) is enclosed. According to the Financial Statement, the dues of the Members are as below:*

Sl. No.	Country	Contribution Due	Remarks
1.	<i>Afghanistan</i>	<i>US\$ 9500</i>	<i>Not paid joining fee or annual contribution.</i>
2.	<i>Bangladesh</i>	<i>US\$ 9500</i>	<i>Not paid joining fee or annual contribution.</i>
3.	<i>Maldives</i>	<i>US\$ 9500</i>	<i>Not paid joining fee or annual contribution.</i>
3.	<i>Nepal</i>	<i>US \$ 3000</i>	<i>Not paid annual contribution for 2005 and 2006.</i>
4.	<i>Bhutan</i>	<i>US \$ 1500</i>	<i>Not paid annual contribution for 2006.</i>
5.	<i>Pakistan</i>	<i>US\$ 9500</i>	<i>Paid their contributions, but not yet remitted the amount to the AGAOA</i>

		<i>Account maintained by Sri Lanka.</i>
Total due		US\$ 42,500

- ❖ The issue of contributions outstanding was taken up in the Meeting, and each Member explained their positions. CGA, Pakistan clarified that their contributions were duly paid and would be remitted to the AGAOA Bank Account in Sri Lanka within two days' of the Meeting.
- ❖ All the other Members assured that they would take necessary action and steps to persuade their respective Governments to agree to remit the contributions.
- ❖ FC, Maldives however requested the Chairperson to write to the Minister of Finance & Treasury on the matter. It was decided that Chairperson AGAOA would take up the matter individually with all the Members.
- ❖ The Treasurer was also asked to invest suitable amount of AGAOA funds in term deposits with the approval of the Governing Board, so that satisfactory amount of interest is earned.

(Action: AGAOA Secretariat/ Treasurer)

4. *To designate INGAF (Institute of Government Accounts and Finance), New Delhi, as the Regional Training Center of AGAOA, along with a proposal to hold a week long 'Experience Sharing Programme' on accounting procedures, new initiatives undertaken, advancements made in the field of IT and Financial Managements and Reporting Systems etc.
Similar Experience sharing programmes could be held by other Member countries.*

- ❖ Initiating the agenda item, Chairperson asked Mrs. Sujata Prasad, Director INGAF, to introduce INGAF to the Members. She briefly mentioned the history of INGAF, and outlined the training programmes INGAF conducts, and mentioned that Officials of over 75 Countries have attended training programmes at INGAF. She mentioned that detailed information on INGAF can be seen at the website: www.ingaf.in. At this

point, Chairperson also informed the Members about the websites of CGA, India (www.cga.nic.in) and AGAOA (www.agaoa.org).

- ❖ CGA Pakistan briefly described the initiatives taken by the Audit & Accounts Training Institute of Pakistan. After lot of deliberations on this issue, it was decided that there should not be only a single Regional Training Center (RTC), and all the Member Countries with suitable training facilities can propose an RTC, since the basic idea is dissemination of knowledge and professional expertise.
- ❖ It was decided that initially INGAF would start functioning as a provisional RTC of AGAOA, and Sri Lanka and Pakistan informed that they would revert back after internal discussions with the various authorities in their Countries to designate their Institutes as RTC's, namely SLIDA (Sri Lankan Institute of Development Administration), and AATI (Audit & Accounts Training Institute, Pakistan) respectively. It was also decided that further discussion on this matter would be taken up at the Experience Sharing Programme at New Delhi.
- ❖ It was agreed to hold the proposed 'Experience Sharing Programme' from 10th to 14th September 2007 at INGAF, New Delhi, India. CGA Pakistan however mentioned the following points regarding the Experience Sharing Programme:
 - i The expenses on attending the said Programme would be borne by individual Member Countries.
 - ii The two research papers, which were assigned to CGA Pakistan (*Managing transition from Cash based Accounting to Accrual based Accounting*) and DG, State Accounts Department, Sri Lanka (*Global trends in financial reporting- usage in Members countries*) would be discussed in the Experience Sharing Programme to be held at INGAF.

(Action: AGAOA Secretariat/ Director INGAF)

5. *Expansion of AGAOA.*
6. *Inviting Members of other Accounting Organisations like the East and Southern African Association of Accountants General (ESAAG) as*

Observers to attend AGAOA Assemblies/ Meetings on reciprocal basis.

- ❖ Items 5& 6 were discussed together. Chairperson informed the meeting that during the recent ICGFM Conference he was met with tremendous enthusiasm from many Asian Countries (Vietnam, Laos, Philippines, East Timor etc) to become Members of AGAOA. He also mentioned that there are only three Associations of Governments' Accounting Organisations in the world (namely ESAAG, PEMPAL [Public Expenditure Management- Peer Assisted Learning] and AGAOA), and efforts should be made to establish some cooperation between these Organisations.
- ❖ The idea of expanding AGAOA and inviting new countries to become Members was welcomed by everyone. It was decided that initially Asian Countries would be invited to become Members, while other Associations would be invited to attend Meetings/ Seminars as Observers on reciprocal basis. The Chairperson was unanimously authorized to contact other Countries/ Associations.

(Action: AGAOA Secretariat)

7. *Common issues facing the Heads of Accounting Organisations- Cash based accounting vs Accrual based Accounting, new initiatives on internal audit, etc.*

- ❖ The technical aspects were briefly shared by some Members:
 - i CGA Pakistan informed that their PIFRA Project was at an advanced stage, and they would discuss their experiences in the transition to accrual accounting at the Experience Sharing Programme.
On the issue of internal audit, he mentioned that the Government had promulgated the CGA Ordinance 2001, which was effected to strengthen the Internal Controls and Internal Audit at the Federal and the Provincial level. Similarly, an Internal Audit Manual had been circulated in Pakistan for comments.

- ii FCG Nepal informed that the country was on the path of transition to accrual based accounting, and a Gap Analysis Study on the Accounting Standards had been conducted, and the Report had been prepared.
- iii DG, State Accounts Department, Sri Lanka informed that the Government Accounts had been prepared on Cash basis, with a lot of features of Accrual based accounting. The Accounts complete with the Financial Statements reflecting contingent liabilities and other information had been prepared within three months of the completion of the financial year (which is the same as Calendar year in Sri Lanka). For further details Members could visit the website www.treasury.gov.lk.

It was agreed that there should be constant interaction among Members on such technical issues, and they would be further discussed in detail in the Experience Sharing Programme in September.

8. *Any other items for discussion.*

- ❖ Chairperson proposed that a Journal on AGAOA should be taken out, and it would preferably be an e-journal. All the Members welcomed this suggestion, and Chairperson, with the approval of other Members nominated Mr. U S Pant, Chief Controller (Pensions), Ministry of Finance as the nodal person from India for the journal. It was also agreed that Articles/ Papers from all Member countries would be sent to AGAOA Secretariat along with name of their Nodal persons.

(Action: AGAOA Secretariat)

- ❖ The matter of the next Assembly of AGAOA was taken up. FCG Nepal proposed that the next Assembly could be held in Nepal. Other countries were asked to provide their willingness to host the Assembly, and after a consensus, it was decided that the Third Assembly of AGAOA would be held in Kathmandu, Nepal in the second week of October 2007. The details of the Assembly would be provided by FCG, Nepal in due course.

(Action: FCG Nepal)

- ❖ Chairperson also encouraged all the Members to share their websites, e-mail addresses, and also to designate a nodal Officer to coordinate the activities on their behalf.

(Action: All Members)

- ❖ The meeting concluded with thanks to all Members and also to the World Bank for providing their excellent facilities.