



"making humanitarian action accountable to beneficiaries"

8th General Assembly,

Location: MIE2, Chemin de Balexert, Geneva, Switzerland

DRAFT MINUTES

DAY 1: 6th May, 2010

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed all participants, new members and HAP staff to the 8th General Assembly and noted the challenges and achievements of the Secretariat over the past year. The Chair encouraged all members to strengthen their commitment to HAP's values, continue to support the Secretariat and to advocate for HAP and improved accountability in the sector. Highlighting HAP's achievements he noted: the increase in Membership of 50% since 2009, individuals from over 100 agencies in 42 countries have contributed to the review of the HAP 2007 Standard; there has been increased HAP presence within the sector and strong engagement with the UN system.

Katharina Samara, Acting Executive Director welcomed all Members to Geneva and to the 8th General Assembly and highlighted that HAP's members are and will continue to be instrumental in bringing profound change in the humanitarian sector.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA FOR THE 8TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Decision: The Agenda of the 8th General Assembly is adopted.

3. MINUTES OF THE 7TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

(a) Approval of minutes and matters arising

The following matters arising were addressed as follows:

- HAP and its members to explore options to facilitate, and advocate for, the inclusion of accountability to beneficiaries in evaluation TORs. *Progress: The Secretariat provided feedback on ToRs for Real Time Evaluations (the ToR for the Inter-Agency Real Time Evaluation of the Haiti Earthquake Response included specific reference to the HAP Standard) and is contributing to the OCHA-led consultations on joint humanitarian impact evaluations. Another venue for promoting accountability to beneficiaries in evaluations has been the engagement with the NGO and Humanitarian Reform Project. As part of its 2010-2011 Workplan, the HAP Secretariat will more actively seek to inform evaluation ToRs and will work closer with member agencies in this regard.*
- The 2009 Humanitarian Accountability Report will be published separately from the Secretariat Report. *Progress: The 2009 Humanitarian Accountability Report has been published separately from the Secretariat Report, although the same order of Chapters 1 through 4 as in previous years has been maintained.*
- The Secretariat will contact participants to contribute suggestions and data to the proposed chapter on voices of disaster survivors and members will provide

testimonials from their activities. *Progress: Representatives of several member agencies (including members of the Board) provided suggestions to the Secretariat on the preparation of Chapter 3 in the 2009 Humanitarian Accountability Report. The approach and method of data-collection will be reassessed based on feedback to the report (see above). The Research Associate will design a more structured approach to facilitate the collection of testimonials from members' activities with a view to complement the growing pool of case studies that is currently available on the HAP website.*

- The inter-operability paper developed by the Sphere Project to be circulated to all quality and accountability initiatives and made publicly available. *Progress: The paper was circulated to all initiatives and made publicly available on the HAP website here: <http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/qandafinalpaper.pdf>.*
- The findings coming from the HAP evaluation to be incorporated into the Standard review process. *Progress: Recommendations highlighted by the evaluation report in as far as the Standard is concerned have also been raised during the review consultations, in particular to make the language in the Standard more accessible (including to multi-mandate organisations) and to not include more benchmarks in the 2010 Standard.*
- The quality and accountability initiatives invited to develop a key messages paper to be presented at a GHD meeting by SIDA. *Progress: Done. See minutes from the meeting of the quality and accountability initiatives on 16 November 2009: <http://www.hapinternational.org/pool/files/ga-minutes-111609.pdf>*
- Dates for the 2010 GA to be discussed at the Board meeting. *Progress: Dates were discussed and agreed at the Board meeting in May.*

Decision: The minutes of the 7th General Assembly are approved.

4. TREASURER'S REPORT

HAP's Treasurer Jonathan Mitchell presented an overview of the Secretariat's 2009 financial report (referring to page 43 of the 2009 Secretariat Report) and the 2009 Audit Report and noted that:

- 2009 was a successful year in financial terms with revenue of 2.3 million CHF; 1.9 from donations and 224,000 CHF from cost recovery for service.
- Expenditure total was 2.1 million CHF, representing a reduced budget. HAP finances were well managed by the Secretariat, enabling a net surplus of 200,000 CHF to be placed in reserves.
- A new auditing firm was employed to undertake the financial audit of the 2009 accounts.

The Treasurer noted that HAP is still a small organisation and depends heavily on fees (membership and for services contracted) to be paid on time. In 2010, there will be additional costs associated with the change of Executive Director; the Treasurer encouraged HAP members, if possible and when called upon, to support the Secretariat financially.

Decision: The General Assembly unanimously approved the 2009 audited accounts.

5. ANNOUNCEMENT OF NOMINATIONS: Board Members (8 positions open)

The Chair explained the procedure for election to the Board. Candidates who were present at the General Assembly were given the opportunity to introduce themselves floor. The HAP ED thanked the two outgoing Board members, Mamadou Ndiaye (OFADEC) and Andreas

Kamm (Danish Refugee Council) for their service to the Board. These members could no longer stand for re-election due to term limits.

6. THE 2009 SECRETARIAT REPORT

a) Highlights since the last General Assembly:

For more details see the [HAP Secretariat Report](#)

Membership:

- HAP International has grown rapidly since 2007 when it stood at 17 members; in 2010, HAP reached 55 members

Certification:

- Currently there are 8 HAP certified agencies while 14 members have undertaken a baseline analysis against the HAP Standard

Services:

- New Emergencies: The new emergencies deployment (NEP) in Haiti has been well received and it will continue for the next six months.
- New case studies are available on the website.
- The service list has been revised to take into account patterns of demand and feedback. Training and capacity building services are more flexible and readymade tools are available to suit individual situations; materials and guidance to help facilitate and guide the work of member agencies are available.

Wider interest in HAP's work:

- There has been strong interest in HAP from Australia and the US, at both agency and governmental levels.
- Increased activity in a number of locations, including India and Lebanon, with various UN agencies and the cluster system. The focus has been to increase accountability across the humanitarian system.
- HAP has been invited to speak at the IASC focal point meeting and at the principals' meeting.
- HAP has also been contributing to the humanitarian reform process through its engagement with the NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project.
- UNHCR undertook a baseline analysis at its headquarters in 2008 and a programme site baseline in Georgia in October 2009; the next NEP deployment in Dadaab will be hosted by UNHCR.

Complaints Handling & Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

- The Secretariat has worked closely with the UN/NGO PSEA Taskforce, providing opportunities to focus on PSEA issues at the global level, but also at the local level in Haiti with MINUSTAH, WFP and OCHA to create capacity to handle complaints on and prevent sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA).
- The Inspectorate Project was launched with Save the Children UK and continues to highlight the importance of PSEA.

Cooperation with other Quality and Accountability (Q&A) organisations:

- The Secretariat has worked with other Q&A initiatives to improve coherence; notably with People In Aid, Sphere and the DEC.

Discussion points:

LWF: HAP's focus seems to be on Asia and Africa; what about opportunities for engagement in Latin America?

Sungi: With the closure of HAP Pakistan, CWS is assisting local partners to build their capacity and understanding of accountability; perhaps this could be the approach of HAP members in Latin America as well?

DanChurchAid: It is promising to hear HAP is interacting more with the NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project.

DEC: DEC has 9 members who are HAP members and DEC wants to work more closely with HAP to increase coherence.

LWF: With a number of HAP members attending the global cluster meetings, the membership must take these opportunities to promote HAP and accountability.

There was also some discussion about HAP's level of engagement with organisations that fall in the broader objective of "promoting accountability of the system."

b) Recommendations from the 2009 Evaluation Report and how they are addressed in the Strategic Plan 2010-2012

Katharina Samara highlighted the implementation of recommendations and alterations undertaken by the Secretariat to the [2010 Workplan](#) and [2010-2012 Strategic Plans](#). The updated versions are available at www.hapinternational.org.

c) Members discussion of the 2009 Evaluation Report

Members discussed the Evaluation Report and shared their perspectives in small groups reporting back in a plenary session. They were also asked to link their discussions to the following question "If you were the new Executive Director of HAP International, what would be the key priorities and directions of HAP?"

d) Report back to plenary from small group discussions

A summary of the suggestions and potential areas for future work and exploration are as follows:

Membership and support services:

- The incoming Executive Director needs to decide whether to widen or to consolidate the current membership.
- Plan operations and increase impact into other areas, like Latin America.
- Examine the role of members in improving advocacy for accountability and for HAP International
- Focus should be on HAP's capacity to provide services to members and other agencies; there should be more emphasis on training and networking between the time of the baseline and certification.
- Peer Support Groups (PSG) should be reinvigorated and facilitated by Secretariat.
- The membership must take a larger role in advocacy within the humanitarian community, inside of clusters and other fora.
- New models for working with partners and reaching programme and project sites should be explored.
- Humanitarian versus development focus needs to be looked into and explored more.

Certification:

- Examine why certain members do not want to get certified and why in some cases agencies believe that it takes longer to see the organisational benefits of certification.
- Should certification be mandatory for members?
- What is the impact of certification on beneficiaries?
- How can linkages with other standards and institutions be strengthened to avoid duplication of efforts

Engagement with other organisations:

- What are the top priorities and how should the Secretariat divide its time and energy between UN or other bodies and small partner networks?
- Cooperation with the GHD and the broader humanitarian reform process should be supported from the membership.
- What expectations do members have for the Secretariat to take on within the wider aid sector?

Management:

- What is the funding base and sustainability for HAP's work?
- Secretariat should not be Geneva based but regionalised.
- Explore opportunities to increase staffing capacity of the Secretariat (staff secondment, regional locations, etc.)
- Clarify the role of advocacy of the Secretariat on behalf of members in international fora, networks, etc.
- Opening a dialogue on funding with the membership

7. MEMBER'S 2009 ANNUAL REPORTS

[A presentation](#) was made by Matthew Carter (Humanitarian Director, CAFOD) on Challenges, Achievements and Learning 2009 experienced through the implementation of the HAP 2007 Standard and being awarded HAP Certification. He highlighted that 'HAP certification is an investment with great rewards' and that the 'HAP standard is a solid frame to set work within and is adaptable'. He also highlighted that 'change within organisation and shift in mindset takes time' and agencies should not be discouraged by this.

8. ANNUAL REPORTS PLENARY SESSION

HAP Full Members shared their achievements, challenges and main learning points in small groups and then discussed the points in a plenary session. This was seen as a useful and interactive process that enabled discussion of the key points and shared learning. Agency-specific annual reports are available on the HAP website [here](#).

A summary of approaches and challenges in implementing the HAP 2007 Standard follows. Achievements:

- Getting to a position of having a complaint and response mechanism (CRM). Going to communities to develop the CRM has been a learning experience for many Members. The process takes time, which is expected; however, clarity of purpose and commitment should not be lost.
- Tearfund provided an example of how the CRM could be utilised to change methods of work within an organisation.
- CFSI highlighted the use of mobile phone SMS as a form of feedback in the Philippines; this approach opened discussions with beneficiaries

- OFADEC views its complaints handling system as a key achievement
- SUNGI Pakistan established a complaints handling policy within the early stages of a programme, using two members of staff from the local community.
- Partnership – the importance of knowing, learning, and working with partners has been reinforced; it was seen that partners can teach HAP members as well as be taught on issues of beneficiary participation.
- CRMs can open positive discussions with staff and partners and CRM for stakeholders beyond the beneficiaries should be strengthened.
- Accountability is a new language and it should be explained and highlighted in innovative ways. This can lead staff and agencies to have ‘eureka moments’, which help with driving accountability within the agency. Medair received a presidential medal for its clean water campaign which in which a “Medair WASH song” was used in West Africa.
- Country directors should ‘market’ accountability within their agency as it has fruitful results.

Challenges:

- Developing a Humanitarian Accountability Framework (HAF) has been a difficult road for some (deciding what the organisation wants to be measured against and agreeing on priorities). Why has the process been so hard? Is it the communication of what a HAF is or what it should look like? Or maybe, as organisations we may not know what we want to achieve?
- Should the HAF be a corporate accountability framework and not only limited to humanitarian work?
- Senior management may be positive but not all staff are always on board.
- Staff can be reluctant to be involved in a formal complaints system.
- Organisational streamlining and changes within agencies delay certification

Jose Riera, Senior Policy Advisor (UNHCR) and Manisha Thomas, Senior Policy Officer, (ICVA) were guest speakers at an evening reception at the end of the first day of the General Assembly.

Day 2: 7th May 2010

9. MAIN LEARNING FROM THE HAP DEPLOYMENTS IN 2009

- The New Emergencies Policy (NEP) was developed in 2005. To reflect learning to date, the Secretariat will engage with members to update the Policy and the Protocol.
- The main spirit of the Policy is still relevant today although it does get challenged; accountability ought to be a key component of the early stages of a new emergency.
- Some of the main aims or approaches of the Roving Team are to gather evidence that accountability is possible in the early stages of an intervention, as well as provide extra capacity to Members so that accountability can make a difference from the beginning of an intervention. A by-product of NEP deployments has been new agencies joining as members.

- The approaches taken by the Roving Team are subject to continual review and improvement. Stronger support from Members in the lead up to and post deployment is required to reach achievements.
- The establishment of an Accountability and Learning Working Group as a component of each deployment will also be reviewed.

Discussion:

DRC: HAP is the only quality and accountability initiative that has a certification scheme and NEP deployments, which set it apart from the rest. Field deployments are important, bringing accountability close to the beneficiaries as opposed to it being solely a head office process. Dadaab is a well-placed location for the next deployment, though Somalia is the cause for what happens in Dadaab. DRC is working to strengthening accountability in Somalia. Why didn't HAP focus on a Somalia deployment?

HAP: Discussions with agencies in Somalia revealed security issues, a difficult inter-agency atmosphere and some broader issues, which could not be addressed in a three-month deployment.

CARE International: A communication strategy should be developed on the NEP deployments. Are after action reviews regular activities in deployments now?

HAP: After-action reviews are a part of deployments and for Haiti an evaluation will be done along with the review. Ongoing communication takes place with members and with the broader public, via the website.

COAST: HAP is doing much advocacy in the field, which has positive results.

10. THE FIRST DRAFT OF THE 2010 HAP STANDARD –

The [Standard Review process](#) and the key activities undertaken as part of the review were highlighted. The brief presentation is available [here](#).

Discussion on the process:

CARE International: Unresolved issues remain around the coherence between the Sphere Standards and the HAP Standard. The two review processes were a great opportunity for more to have been achieved. Why are the Sphere Common Standards and the HAP Standard so different? Within ECB it was clear that the two ought to be brought closer together.

HAP: The HAP Secretariat regarded 2009 as a golden opportunity where the two review processes could come together. It was hoped that a joint consultation plan could be developed following a meeting between the Sphere Common Standards Reference Group and the HAP Steering Committee; unfortunately, the Sphere Project colleagues did not find this to be a suitable approach. This said, some progress has been made, and the opportunity is still there to bring together the two texts where this is appropriate.

Sphere Project: There was a lot of discussion on this topic amongst staff and Board of the Sphere Project. The lack of joint consultation workshops does not negate agreement on the

need for overall coherence and collaboration. The lack of joint consultations does not mean that we did not consider each other in our individual consultations.

For Sphere, the Common Standards is only one in 6 chapters and what the Sphere Project is doing with HAP keeps the engagement alive: a representative from the Sphere Project sits on the HAP Steering Committee. It is an incremental approach; perhaps 5 years ago the Project and HAP wouldn't even have this conversation. Synergies and differences need to be acknowledged.

DCA: DCA echoed the point raised by CARE International, noting that the Common Standards reflect the HAP Standard. DCA hoped that the Standard could be inserted as the Common Standards to produce one product in the end.

HAP: Many of the HAP members are involved in Sphere Project activities, and some sit on the Sphere Project Board. The Secretariat needs its members to actively engage and take ownership of improving coherence between processes that they support. Progress has been made towards inter-operability with the Sphere Project, although this may be slower than some would like. The Secretariat calls upon the membership and particularly, those members sitting on the Sphere Board, to contribute towards progress in this regard.

Feedback on the HAP 2010 Standard:

Participants were divided into small groups with a specific section of the preliminary draft HAP 2010 Standard and rapporteurs reported back in a plenary session with their initial suggestions:

Group 1: Working With Partners

- Include a requirement for those working with partners under each benchmark
- Benchmark 1: define partnership; scope of partnerships; change wording on disaster survivors as it is seen as too humanitarian
- Define how partnerships are established (process and criteria and how accountability is embedded in the process); how best to monitor; partnership agreements need to include principles around accountability and how best to monitor compliance within the agreement
- Benchmark 4: include agreement on standards of behaviour between partners and of partners' staff
- In relation to partners, wording needs to shift from "ensure" to "work with partners to"
- Benchmark 2: use of language needs to include "be accessible to implementing partners"
- More work needs to be done to empower partners; use explicit language on defining partners (i.e. donors being partners)

Discussion:

ICVA: Add reference to the Principles of Partnership.

NCA: what are the implications of change in the HAF for those agencies that have completed baselines and are not going to Certification until the new Standard is approved?

MERLIN: if the goal posts are shifting, what does that mean?

HAP: The HAP Standard is concerned both with agencies that work in partnership as well as with agencies that work collaboratively; thus attention will be given to the Principles of Partnership in the Guide.

The HAF is still contained in the draft of the 2010 Standard, although elements from the older definition of a HAF are spread across requirements, to make the Standard overall more logical and avoid repetition.

So far, the review process has resulted in a preliminary draft that is considered to be less onerous for agencies, while still delivering high level results for beneficiaries. The Secretariat is looking into the best means to transition from the 2007 to the 2010 versions, and is seeking advice from certifying bodies that have managed similar transitions.

Group 2: Accountability Framework (preliminary Benchmark 1)

- Accountability framework was viewed as an artificial thing developed by HAP. Suggestions were made to have a “statement of commitment”.
- The new benchmark uses more accessible language; wording suggestions will be fed to the HAP Secretariat directly.
- Qualifying norms were questioned on their purpose (as the majority are required for Membership) although no strong objections to them remaining.
- Concern of changing how the HAF and statement of commitments are being implemented, larger emphasis on the organisation to highlight the documents to be accessible to HAP.

Group 3: Quality Management Systems

- Include Benchmark 6 of the HAP 2007 Standard in Benchmark 1
- Requirement 6.2 could be mainstreamed into the rest of the benchmarks
- The wording around continual learning is still vague; this is about drawing and applying the lessons. This needs to be emphasised more in the Standard. Learning within the organisation is essential but we should also highlight the application of lessons to the sector (beyond the organisation)
- Monitoring: is not included in the current wording. Look at the 6.1 and make sure this element is included in the new Standard.

Discussion: CARE International: Benchmark 6 – Continual Learning is the basis of our evaluation process.

Group 4: Other Stakeholders

- The HAP Standard needs to be applied to various stakeholders for accountability to beneficiaries to be strengthened
- Make reference to other stakeholders but clarify when and how these are defined, and justify why they are relevant to improving accountability to beneficiaries
- Meeting the HAP Standard will benefit the organisation but perhaps trying to open it to other stakeholders will dilute achieving improved accountability
- Disaggregate country-based and international stakeholders.

- The standard also indirectly paves the way for improved accountability to donors and non-beneficiary stakeholders (sponsors, non-official donors etc) but this takes time.
- HAP Standard is seen as the minimum, but more detail is needed on what the expectations are of different stakeholders while the focus remains on beneficiaries.

Discussion:

Independent Board Member: Sometimes strong and good management can also silence beneficiaries, thus the focus must remain on quality management systems that put beneficiaries at the core of the organisation's operations.

Group 5: HAP Standard Principles Section

- Humanitarian Principles now called the HAP Standard Principles – agreement on the wording.
- The explicit hierarchy has been removed but there needs to be some way of justifying decision making (based on a hierarchy); there is a need to be able to explain action or lack thereof.
- Keeping the principles is important, as opposed to moving to the Red Cross Code of Conduct
- Is there a problem keeping humanitarian principles as opposed to opening to a non-humanitarian focus? It was agreed that HAP needs to keep this focus for now.
- Do we take out the first four principles with humanitarian focus; the remaining 6 are accountability focused. The first four could be put into the Qualifying Norms as a form of commitment. There needs to be a technical discussion about how best to handle this.
- Could coordination come under this section as there will not be a separate coordination benchmark?

11. POLICY AND GOVERNANCE PROPOSALS

a) Standard Review

For decision: That the HAP General Assembly delegate authority to the HAP Board to approve the HAP 2010 Standard on behalf of the General Assembly, provided the proposed consultation process is followed.

Discussion:

Suggested Options:

- a) Remote vote from each members
- b) Other options
- c) The General Assembly delegate the task to the Board

OFADDEC: Is the Members' feedback accessible and will the final draft be available for review online?

HAP: All documents will be available in the public domain and open for feedback.

CARE International: To what extent can we really try to be consistent and coherent with the Sphere Standards? The Sphere Project has postponed their process until 2011- and while the postponement of the HAP Standard is not suggested, how can we make the most of the two processes happening in parallel?

HAP: We hope to further explore if and how we can bring parts of the text together or make references to each other.

Decision: The GA delegated authority to the HAP Board to approve the HAP 2010 Standard in Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management

b) The Accountability Framework and Accountability Workplan

For decision: Proposal to make the Accountability Framework/self-assessments and Accountability Workplan guidelines more coherent

Discussions were held on the alignment of the Accountability Workplan (AWP) and the Humanitarian Accountability Framework (HAF); the Secretariat is supporting members to submit an AWP within three months of membership and also assisting agencies to draft a HAF. This has been challenging for both the Secretariat and the agencies involved. Over the past year, the Secretariat has examined the possibility of aligning both documents. The Secretariat would like to explore whether one tool could meet the requirements of both the AWP and HAF. The tool could be used by agencies to visualise their current accountability framework and also meet one of the qualifying norms if they decide to move towards certification. The main issue is that the requirements around AWP were developed before the Standard was developed (which includes the HAF) and are in direct link to the HAP Principles of Accountability.

Discussion:

Merlin: Merlin is grateful to receive permission to delay submission of its AWP until after conducting the baseline with the HAP Standard. Having an action plan after a baseline was undertaken is a logical approach. The baseline should be conducted first. The HAF is not a tool through which the AWP can be reported against and so these should not be collated.

HAP: Three months for submitting an AWP is the time allowed for each new member as per the Statute; in the interim period, a shorter AWP can be submitted, and of course an AWP makes more sense after a baseline.

Merlin: Finding out where the agency sits is absolutely crucial. Within three months a self-assessment/baseline should take place.

Act for Peace: The template of the AWP is useful as it takes the agency towards key goals such as a baseline, but beyond that the AWP seems to have no relevance.

ACT Alliance: What was the purpose of making Members submit their AWP within three months?

Act for Peace: the AWP has been a requirement of membership before the certification scheme was developed, when members were only obliged to report to develop and report against an AWP.

Decision: Richard Cobb (Merlin) and Jenny Wells (ACT for Peace) would join the Secretariat to form a working group for the purpose of aligning the AWP and HAF.

c) **The HAP Complaints against Members Policy**

For consultation: Proposal and Terms of Reference to revise the current Complaints against Members Policy.

The policy was developed in 2003 and the Secretariat wishes to review the policy. The parameters of Benchmark 5 need to be applied with respect to the handling of complaints against Member agencies.

World Vision International: Why do people complain through the HAP mechanism, is it because an agency mechanism does not exist or is it because the agency specific mechanism is superseded?

HAP: This mechanism should be last resort and in cases where complainants feel that justice has not been done, or their complaint has not been dealt with correctly.

OFADEC: An OFADEC beneficiary submitted a complaint to HAP instead of sending it to us. The complainant was a beneficiary accountability focal point and he preferred to send it to HAP rather than send it to us. The complaint was related to our CRM and information sharing procedures. It was an interesting lesson learnt for our agency. If it would have been sent through the agency system there is a possibility that it would have been disregarded, however because it was received by HAP we had to act fast, investigate and respond to it as deadline and updates were required. Support was provided by HAP on how to investigate and address the complaint.

Lisa Henry (DCA): The system of complaints against Members works but a review would be useful.

12. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE NEW BOARD MEMBERS

The outgoing Chair thanked the Board members adding that 'We all owe Nick Stockton many thanks for what he did for HAP. We achieved a lot under his leadership, and I wonder if we would be here if it weren't for him. He is the main contributor of the position we have today. Nick Stockton, thank you very much for all of this.'

The result of the Board elections was communicated to the General Assembly as follows: all standing members were re-elected while Manu Gupta (SEEDS India), Rein Paulsen (World Vision International) and Jenny Wells (Act for Peace) were elected as new Board members.

13. MEETING OF THE NEW BOARD TO ELECT THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Board Member Ms Agyedho Othwoh Bwogo Board highlighted the following points:

- The Board met to discuss the applications for the candidates for positions of Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer. The Board were in agreement to put forward Antonio Donini (who was previous Vice-Chair) as Chair of the new Board for the interim period, Mathew Carter as Vice-Chair and John Mitchell to continue as Treasurer. Continuity and proximity were cited as the two main reasons for recommending these candidates.
- It was acknowledged that the composition of the Board does not reflect regional context, geographical location or diversity.

- The Board is close to gender balance as per the Statutes.

Ms Agyedho Othwonh Bwogo requested the General Assembly to extend support to the proposed candidates and asked for a formal vote.

Discussion:

Q: What does interim period mean and how long would it be?

A: Andreas Kamm said that the interim period would be one year.

Q: Is there an expectation, that a new round of voting will take place after the interim period?

A: Antonio Donini responded that he will assume functions for one year only.

Q: Can you please elaborate the appointment and recruitment process of the Executive Director?

A: Matthew Carter in response said that it will be a transparent, accountable and open process; the Board therefore decided to work with an international recruitment agency. The purpose is to ensure that the Members can be involved in the process; it is believed that the recruitment process will take three months while the transition will take an additional three months. A recruitment agency will be identified by seeking three tenders and completing the due process.

Decision: The GA endorsed the Board proposal for Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer.

Decision: A committee for the recruitment of the Executive Director is composed of the following Board Members: Lisa Henry (DanChurchAid) Antonio Donini (Chair) and Matthew Carter (CAFOD).

14. DATES FOR THE 9TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN 2011

Decision: 18th Board meeting will be held on the 20th of October; the 19th Board meeting will be held on the 11th of May 2011 and the 9th General 12-13 May 2011

15. FINAL COMMENTS

HAP's Acting Executive Director, Katharina Samara thanked the membership for the support and encouragement expressed throughout the year and personally over past 3 months, noting the challenging, exciting and interesting time for the Secretariat in 2009. She stressed that the HAP team is a remarkable group of people. The Secretariat has remained focused and at the moment is ahead of the 2010 Workplan. She also expressed her thanks to the outgoing Board for their efforts and welcomed the new Board. She said that the Secretariat looks forward to working with the new board and building on current progress.

New Chair, Antonio Donini seconded the words of Katharina Samara and appreciated the Secretariat's work. He thanked Andreas Kamm for his patience and commitment.

Andreas Kamm (out-going Chair): noted that he had spent 7 interesting years with HAP since 2003 and supported the accountability cause since the HAP was the Ombudsman Project. Mr Kamm said he was proud to see HAP develop into a leading quality and accountability initiative and saying goodbye is made easier as HAP is at the very best it has ever been and can only do better in the future. He noted that he would miss his Board

colleagues and visits to the Secretariat. He said that he can be counted as a strong advocate of HAP and that the Danish Refugee Council would continue to advocate for and solicit support from HAP. He stressed that all agencies subscribe to a number of codes of conduct, principles, etc. but that the real challenge is compliance. He added that the new Board will surely find ways for taking the organisation forward that will not undermine the application of the HAP Principles of Accountability. He emphasised that unless these principles are used and independently judged, agencies will be left with empty commitments. He asked the General Assembly to take good care of the independent verification process, and to keep the current momentum.

He ended by thanking the Secretariat for all their hard work and said it has been a great experience working with strong professionals.

General Assembly closed May 7, 2010, 1611 Hours (UET).