

Minutes from IDA-Diaspora's Teleconference-Call on June 28th, 2014

The teleconference started at 3:30 PM Washington DC time. About 65 Irobs participated from many countries such as United States, Europe, Israel, Australia, and Ethiopia. We were anticipating participants from Saudi Arabia but they were not able to dial-in due to the connection issues.

- A. On behalf of the IDA-diaspora committee members, the committee chairperson, Mr. Tesfagiorgis Hagos, had started the meeting by welcoming the participants, and then introduced the main agendas to be discussed during the call. He also gave the participants an opportunity to add additional agendas that are relevant to IDA's objectives and should be part of the discussion, but no one from the participating members came up with any. Accordingly, the meeting was proceeded with the list of the original agenda items as were presented by the chairman.
- B. The chairman presented IDA-diaspora committee's progress report in the last three months summarized as follows:
 - IDA-diaspora has obtained a legal Registration Identification as a Not-For Profit and Charitable organization in the USA.
 - IDA-diaspora bylaws was developed, and approved by committee members and is found on IDA's website. He had encouraged the members to read the bylaws and familiarize themselves with it. Any questions or suggestions should be directed to IDA-Diaspora committee members for clarification and or with suggestion for modification. The bylaw is written in English but there is a plan to develop Amharic and Tigrigna versions in near future.
 - Bank account has been opened in the name of IDA-diaspora branch, in the USA. There is also a plan to open a branch in Canada.
 - About 60 Irobs in North America (USA & Canada) have joined IDA-diaspora and paid their annual member fees which totaled around \$11,000.00 US dollars. When accounted for all diaspora members, the committee believes this amount will easily be doubled by end of the year. Additionally, assuming the current undertakings by committee members are executed accordingly, there is a potential to triple this amount within the next six months.
 - A New website www.irobdevelopment.org was developed and launched in the name of IDA. The committee believes that IDA website will help us to:
 - introduce IDA's objectives to wider audience,
 - gather relevant information about Irob and maintain them for future reference,
 - ensure that all IDA's activities, including incomes and expenses, maintain full transparency.
 - etc.

The chairman also reminded the audience that IDA website was developed voluntarily and free of charge by our own Irob expert, Mr. Abraham Tesfay, a Computer Programmer and a Senior Software Engineer by profession. A website is not a onetime done-deal project but a working document that requires continues enhancement. Accordingly, Mr. Abraham has once again volunteered to continue to administer, design, customize, and make the necessary updates as needed and on continuous basis. The cost IDA has saved because of his willingness and inherent passion to serve the Irob people is incalculable.

- The chairman has also thanked Mr. Abraham Tesfay on behalf of IDA committee and the Irob people. The website is already well enriched with many important Irob cultural and historical records such as Irob music, Irob documentary film, saho-radio link, informative articles about Irob, and many other relevant articles and reports. Additionally, Tigrigna and or Amharic articles are organized for easier access. IDA related documents such as its bylaws, its goals; its mission and vision statements are also available on the website. Visitors have the option to provide their feedback/constructive comments in English or use geez fonts if they prefer to provide their suggestion or comments in Saho, Tigrigna, or Amharic.
- The chairman has encouraged the participants (both active and potential members), to register online and create their login and password information. As this is a secured website, the Diaspora committee has already created a database for active members who had paid their membership dues and contributions. Active members and other onetime benefactors are able to view and print their statements by logging directly to their IDA account online at their convenience. This will help to cross-reference IDA's finance books with actual contributions made and make any necessary corrections if needed. Contributors are encouraged to keep their records such as copy of receipts for future reference.

C. Per request from the Chairman, Mr. Abraham Tesfay, also stressed the need of a professional website for any organization, be it For-profit enterprises or Not For-profit organizations like that of our IDA for various important reasons. He further elaborated that the website will be helpful in IDA's activities by facilitating timely communication, ensuring transparency such as in financial reports and other record keepings, serve as a storage place for Irob historic records & heritages; that it will serve as information & reference purpose for generations to come. Mr. Abraham stressed that he will take the ownership of designing & administering the web, and called upon all Irobs to contribute their inputs by way of providing contents such as educational and informative articles, Irob cultural related videos, music, arts, photos, etc.

D. IDA-diaspora committee members (Mr.Tesfay Desta and Mr. Alema Kahsay) have informed the participants about inherent desire of Irobs around the world to join IDA and

contribute their share for the betterment of Irobs, and particularly the activities and progresses in Europe, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Israel. The duo had stated that Irobs who reside in Europe have already started contributing their membership fees while the residents of the latter two countries are showing great progresses. The Saudi residents for example have already formed permanent committee members of five (5) and the newly elected committee members are moving quickly to organize all Irobs who reside there, and Israeli residents are not very far behind. It is expected that the residents of these two countries will start paying their membership fees within the next month or two. Other related information included:

- Mr. Adhanom Aduma from Australia indicated that Irobs in Australia are ready to contribute their membership fee & join IDA-diaspora soon.
- Mr. Girmay Tesfay of Canada had stated majority of the Irobs in Canada have already contributed or pledged their annual IDA member fees.
- USA committees members believe about 60% of US residents have become active IDA members. A member is “active” when she/he pays membership dues. The committee was confident that the participation rate in the USA will continue to increase.

- E. Mr. Giday Adoumer has taken his turn to inform the participants about the activities of Irobs in Ethiopia in general, and in Addis in particular. Mr. Giday indicated that Irobs in Addis Ababa are in process of reorganizing themselves and are motivated and energized by the diaspora activities in promoting IDA’s objectives to help Irob people in the developmental related programs. During his stay in Addis Ababa, Mr. Giday said that he has discussed about IDA’s objectives & its importance with many Irobs. He also affirmed that Irobs in Ethiopia have realized that now is the time to revitalize IDA. From his discussions with Irobs with various backgrounds (business owners, professionals, students, and the population at large), Mr Giday had stated that he could not help but be inspired by the new motivation and desire he had noticed among Irobs across Ethiopia. Mr. Giday has recently returned from his visit to Ethiopia and to hear the positive tone of Irobs at home and their readiness to contribute their share to help their own, be it in the form of material, knowledge, and time was uplifting and refreshing.
- F. Questions, comments, and clarifications were well entertained during the meeting. The feedbacks from most participants indicated satisfaction on the progresses made within short period of time (three months) by the IDA-diaspora committee.
- G. The participants have appointed an internal auditor to help ensure the transparency and stewardship IDA finances and other activities. Mr. Tesfay Kumanit was elected with full support of the participants (without any objection) as an internal auditor for IDA-diaspora.

The meeting was smooth, civilized, and successful and concluded within 2½ (two & half) hours.

We thank you all participants for your civility, generosity, and assistance you continue to provide us to ensure that IDA-diaspora meets or exceeds its expectation. Together, we will play a pivotal role to help eradicate poverty from Irob land. If not us, then who is supposed to help our people?

Thank you again,

===== IDA-diaspora committee July 7th, 2014=====