

**AMARC 8**

**WORLD CONFERENCE OF COMMUNITY**

**RADIO BROADCASTERS**

**“VOICES FOR A BETTER WORLD: COMMUNITY MEDIA AND SOCIAL JUSTICE”**

**“MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY”**

**KATMANDU, NEPAL**  
**21 TO 27 FEBRUARY**

# AMARC General Assembly

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Day 6, 26 February 2003

## General Assembly Session 1

### 1. Opening Remarks

Steve Buckley, Deputy President of AMARC International, welcomed all to the 8th General Assembly of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters and invited the participants to select the people to conduct the deliberations.

### 2. Election of President and Secretary for the Assembly:

Mr. Ian Pringle was designated to act as Chair of the General Assembly. He briefly overviewed the "Assembly Procedures" and documents.

### 3. Approval of the Assembly Agenda:

The agenda was approved by the Assembly

## General Assembly: Session 1

1. Opening of the Assembly
2. Election of President and Secretary for the Assembly
3. Approval of Assembly Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes of AMARC-7
5. Approval of new members
6. Modification of By-Laws and Regulation (Change of statutes)

## General Assembly: Session 2

7. Report of the International Board
8. Approval of Financial Reports 1998 – 2001
9. Selection of Auditing Firm
10. Report of Regional and Sectorial Meetings
11. Action Plan and Budget for the Period 2002 -2006

## General Assembly: Session 3

12. Assembly Resolutions

## General Assembly: Session 4

13. Election of International Board
14. Recommendations for site of next General Assembly

15. Any other business
16. Installation of new International Board
17. Closing session (adjourning of Assembly)

#### **4. Approval of Minutes of AMARC-7**

##### **Corrections to the Minutes:**

- Margaretta D'Arcy pointed out there was an inaccuracy in the minutes that needed to be corrected. Francesco Diasio suggested to move the approval of the minutes to after the pause to be able to read them before approval. The Chair accepted the suggestion and approval of the minutes was moved as the first item of the second session of the Assembly.
- Margaretta D'Arcy made a correction in the minutes from AMARC 7 in page fourteen, fourteen resolution on the Women's March in 2002. The resolution was in support of the Global Women's Strike on the 8 of March, 2002 not the Women's March. There was another resolution about the Women's March in 2002 that was proposed, voted and passed but which does not seem to be included she said.

Minutes from the AMARC 7 General Assembly were moved by Margatetta D'Arcy, Ireland and seconded by Stanly Kaka, New Guinea, approved by the majority with one abstention.

#### **5. Approval of new members**

The names of the new members was presented and read for the participants by Michelle Ntab.

Steve Buckley explained that 3 organizations that were in the list were asked for further documentation before they could be recommended as new members. These organizations were Metro FM, Nepal, Antenna Foundation, Nepal, and AmanNet Jordan.

##### **Comments made by participants**

- A participant from Nepal pointed out there was a transcription mistake in the list.
- Further clarification was made that Environmental cycle radio and Radio Sagarmatha were two different organizations.
- Elizabeth Robinson pointed out that Prometheus Project, USA, had been left out of the list of associate members.
- The following corrections to the names of new members were made: Radio Dialogue FM, Zimbabwe, Community Radio Center in East Timor.
- It was also noted that FM Sante in Senegal did not exist anymore.
- Clarification as to the process to accept new members was also asked. Organized regions accept their own members taking into consideration the criteria outlined in AMARC bylaws and then the list is past on to the IBOD and finally to the General Assembly for approval.

The list was moved by Tabo Matiwane from South Africa and seconded by Fatou Bintou from Senegal. Approved by the majority

## **6. Modification of By-Laws and Regulations**

The Chair explained that the changes of statutes (IBOD) proposal could only be adopted if they gain the approval of at least two thirds of the participating voting members. The Chair also recommended that members read the proposal carefully before being adopted. Bianca Miglioretto read the new amendments out loud and commented on the amendments that had been adopted during AMARC7 which were introduced mainly in response to the growth of the organization, to ensure better representation. After the amendments the Board realized that the statutes were not in tune with these changes introduced at Milan and this is why the Board is proposing the following changes in statutes that the members should have received 6 months ago by mail:

### **Change of statutes:**

#### **Article 3.2 to be changed as follows:**

3.2 AMARC has two categories of members: regular, in these statutes also referred to as voting members and associates.

Moved by Barbara Loiser and seconded by Muthoni Wanyaki. Approved by the majority. Motion carried

#### **Article 5.2.4 to be changed as follows:**

5.2.4 Ratify the election of the vice-presidents members of the Board of Directors elected by another AMARC body. Elect those vice-presidents members of the Board of Directors not elected by another AMARC-body according to article 6.1.

This change in order to clarify which positions elected at the general Assembly need to be ratified by the Board of Directors

Moved by Margareta d'Arcy, Ireland, seconded by Yaya Sangare, Mali. Approved by the majority. Motion carried

#### **Article 5.5 to be changed as follows:**

5.5 The Quorum is set at 10% of the regular members.  
(from 25% at present)

Moved by Alison Brown, Vancouver Coop, Canada, seconded by Peter Rice, South Africa. Not approved by two thirds of the majority. Amendment does not pass

### **Objections to this amendment**

- Pia Matta from Chile pointed out that a more open and inclusive discussion should be held before changing the quorum from 25% to a 10%.

The Chair made the clarification that there were 267 paid members of AMARC, 67 were present at the meeting, and therefore the required quorum was met.

- Gustavo Gomez, coordinator for Latin America, asked for further discussion on the proposed change of quorum as it would significantly reduce participation in assemblies.
- Margareta d'Arcy pointed out that AMARC Assemblies were about participation and setting the quorum to 10% will be undermining that participation upon which democracy should function.
- Maria Suarez from the Latin American delegation, suggested that the Board looked for alternative ways of participation: Regional meetings should discuss the agenda prior to the General Assembly and representatives should be able to bring informed votes from the regions. Using new technologies should also be explored. This should be included in the plan of action. Changing the quorum to 10 % is not a solution.
- Des Preston suggested that quorum should be rather raised not lowered.
- A member of the African delegation (name not noted) commented that 10% quorum was realistic in light of the cost of bringing the participants to the Conference.
- It was suggested by Bianca Miglioreto that a resolution be drafted to make it a priority for the new board to look for alternative ways of participation.

**Article 5.9 to be changed as follows:**

1.9 That a member may not serve as a proxy for more than 10 votes.

Moved by Mouthoni Wanyeki, Kenia seconded by Haby Diallo, Mali. Approved by 69 people, 4 abstentions. Amendment was passed.

**Objections and clarifications to the proposed amendment**

- Elizabeth Robinson pointed out that this was a concern raised by the regions.
- The Chair suggested that a resolution be drafted to find creative ways of making sure that people whose proxies are being carried by another member should be well informed as to the issues being discussed.
- Bianca Miglioreto supported this suggestion
- Francesco Diasio pointed out that 10 proxies was too high a number
- Vickram Khrisna, India, suggested that in the future, a clear statement as to the purpose of the amendments be clearly written. This would reduce the risk of the amendments being misunderstood.
- Steve Buckley, UK, said that this amendment was intended to broaden the democratic structures of AMARC by providing a chance to those participants that came from countries with less than 4 members to be represented and by limiting the number of votes any one country with lots of members can carry.

**Article 6.2 to be changed as follows:**

6.2.1 The President, Deputy-President and Treasurer are elected by the regular members of the General Assembly to a term that runs through the next regular meeting of the General Assembly.

6.2.2 Where the President is unable to complete the term the Deputy-president shall serve as interim president until the next regular meeting of the General Assembly.

6.2.3 Executive Committee members shall not hold any Executive Committee position for more than two consecutive terms.

6.2.4 The outgoing president remains as ex-officio member of the Board of Directors, without voting rights for one year.

Moved by Carol Pierson, NFCB, USA, seconded by Andre Ilboudo, Burkina Faso. Majority was in favor. Motion carried.

## **General Assembly 2**

### **Report of the international Board**

A written copy of the Report of the International Board was made available in three languages (EN, FR, SP)

The Chair called for the report to be moved as presented. It was moved by Alison Brown, Vancouver coop, Canada and seconded by Zongo Ramane, Radio Local de Poura, Burkina Faso.

The Chair ask for objections to the report. The Report was voted for approval. More than two thirds voted in favor. Motion was carried.

## **8. Approval of Financial Reports 1998 – 2001**

Barbara Losier, Treasurer of AMARC International distributed and presented the financial report. She gave details on the deficit budget situation which was also reported in the AMARC 7 conference in Milan. She announced that she also had received information, although not final, from the year 2002. Copies were also made available to the participants. She explained the figures and the amount of the deficit which had increased significantly in the last year (of the budget) She also said that the 2002 report will be voted or approved until the auditor finished the revision of it.

### **Comments and clarifications on the Financial Report**

- Maria Pia Mata, Chile, asked why the reports for 2002 had not been ready for the Assembly. The same question was later repeated by Maria Suarez from the Dominican Republic.
- Ms. Losier answered that due to the fact that there had been not enough time to compile of the required information (contracts with founders, bank statements etc) in order for the auditor to submit a final statement. However,

the estimation was for a 30,000 Canadian dollars profit of \$30,000 Ca. She also said that according to the estimations by the year 2006 AMARC should be able to be out of the deficit situation.

- Ms Losier said that the Board had succeeded in convincing the Canadian government that AMARC should be exempted from paying taxes so we are also waiting for a good amount of money in tax returned, estimated at \$17,000 Ca but it could be bigger.

Moved by Margatetta d'Arcy, Ireland, seconded by Syed Abid Rizvi, Pakistan.  
Approved by the majority of the participants. Motion carried.

The participants were asked to acknowledge the receipt of the 2002 draft report as information. Moved by a participant from South Africa (name not noted), seconded by Elizabeth Robinson, USA. Approved by the majority, Motion carried.

## **1. Selection of Auditing Firm**

Barbara Losier, Treasurer of AMARC International, talked on the current AMARC Auditing firm run by Martin Duchesne and it's work performance. She further explained that Martin Duchesne with 20 years of experience in auditing is well known to AMARC and that he was aware of the internal situation. There were some suggestions from the members as to the change of auditors on a periodical basis. Barbara Losier explained that to change the auditors, the board has to come up with alternatives to present to the members in the next Assembly in four years.

Moved by Margareta d'Arcy, seconded by Carol Pierson, USA.

### **Comments regarding the selection of the Auditing Firm**

- Barbara recommended that the same auditor be kept. Francesco Diasio asked what were the alternatives. Barbara said that Martin had done an excellent job in the last 20 years and was very familiar with AMARC files.
- Carol Pierson said that in her opinion it was not a good time to change auditors, especially because a new treasurer was starting his-her term. However, in her opinion, it was a healthy practice to change auditors on a regular basis to bring fresh views. She suggested the board look into changing the auditor in about 2 years time.
- Michel Godart, Radio Panik representative, said that in delegates should wait until the next Assembly to appoint a new auditor from the choices presented by the board.
- A delegate from South Africa (name not noted) pointed out that choices should be given to the members at the next General Assembly.
- Finally, another African representative said that in his view it made sense to keep the same person, unless it was found he was not doing a good job. The fact that the auditor is close to the secretariat is a good reason to keep him too.

The proposal was voted for the acceptance of the appointment of the same auditors. More than two thirds voted in favor. Motion carried.

## **Report of Regional and Sectorial Meetings**

### **Africa. Presented by Lynn Mouthoni, President of AMARC Africa**

#### **The African regional report stressed on AMARC-Africa's support for new community radios, participation, evaluation, training for station managers and use of ICTS**

AMARC Africa's first two years of operations were 1997 and 1998. Given the limited financial and human resources, initially mobilized by the Regional Secretariat for the ambitious objectives, the management had to take bold decisions.

A new plan of action was developed and implemented from 1999 to 2001. These activities resulted in the hiring of a new Regional Director, an increase in membership and a better recognition of AMARC Africa's role in the development communications and media sectors in Africa.

Most of the objectives were achieved through the support of various partners like Ibis Interfund, the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA), and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA). The primary objective was to raise the institutional capacity of AMARC Africa in terms of human and material resources so as to enable service delivery to its members. For most of the new membership included upcoming community radio initiatives that required support to either create the conditions or regulatory environment for community radio to exist or to actually set up.

The programmes and projects were delivered in partnership with other development communications actors in the region, such as the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) and the Panos Institutes or with the support of members and directors. A new communication strategy was also developed and implemented, resulting in consistent and regular contact with members and a much better recognition of AMARC-Africa's umbrella role in the community radio sector across the continent.

In 2000, AMARC-Africa was able to begin the delivery of training to its members as well as new community radio initiatives. Additional financial support was obtained from the British Council, the Conference, Workshop and Cultural Initiative Fund (CSCF), the Department for International Development (DFID), the Open Society Institute of West Africa (OSIWA) and Stem van Africa for both core funding and programme and project work. The institutional capacity of AMARC-Africa reached maturity and members and new community radio initiatives directly benefited from this evolution.

AMARC-Africa's programmes and projects now address nine core areas:

- Communications (among members, including Tam Tam and the Women's Newsletter)
- Exchanges (addressing programme exchanges on campaigns as well as visits)
- Publications and research

- Lobbying and legislation
- Support to new community radio initiatives (including strategic planning, mobilisation for participation and evaluation)
- Training (on management, production, the use of ICTs and networking)
- Women (including the facilitation of exchanges, training and the use of ICTs)
- ICTs (including facilitating access to the Internet, training in digital production)
- Special Projects (which are thematic, for example, around conflict, the environment, HIV/AIDS and women)

In conclusion, the achievements of AMARC Africa are substantial. We consider the gradual building of trust among the Board of Directors, among our members and between our two sub-regions as our greatest achievements. The collaboration and cooperation that has taken place, independent of the Regional Secretariat, is a testament of our success.

I therefore close by thanking the Board of Directors, the amazing team at the Regional Secretariat and all our members for their maturity and support over the last four years.

**North America. (Non-organized region of AMARC) Presented by Elizabeth Robinson, North America representative** (Synopsis collected from the notes)

Ms Robinson started by explaining that AMARC North America represents stations in Canada and the US. In Canada, there are two French umbrella organizations, ARC du Canada and ARC du Quebec, both these organizations group radios that strive for the protection of the French language in the North American context, among other objectives. Following the A7 Conference, an attempt was made to form a francophone network within AMARC called URCAF, Barbara Loiser participated actively in this effort. In Canada there is also the National Community and Campus Radio Association, NCRA, which recently started an Indigenous network.

In the US, there are 3 primary umbrella organizations: National Federation of Community Broadcasters, NFCB, with who AMARC has worked closely in recent times; Grass Roots Radio (the first AMARC regional meeting took place during a GRR assembly 3 years ago) and the AIROS network which is an indigenous network of radios that has collaborated with AMARC in various occasions, particularly during the *Radio Without Frontiers* Campaigns. She added that last year, however, she and Norm Stokewell from the US undertook the project (RVSF) since the shortage of staff at the International Office did not allow for anything else.

The most work from the North American Region has been done at the International level and the International Board, of which Barbara and herself are members. AMARC-NA participated in a number of important events, including the *Summit of the Americas* in Quebec City, three years ago where AMARC organized a Communications Forum attended by representatives from North and Latin America. The focus of the forum was on how the Free Trade Agreement of the Americas (NAFTA) would affect the communications sector. There was also had a live broadcast from the Summit coordinated by AMARC and some local partners. They also represented AMARC at the *World Social Forum* in two consecutive occasions. There was a training component and a live broadcast from the event. In the last Social Forum they advocated

for political representation of AMARC in the organizing committee and they will be presenting a resolution to this Assembly on this respect.

**The Latin American and Caribbean. Presented by Gustavo Gomez, Regional Coordinator** (Translated from Spanish, synopsis collected from the notes)

Mr. Gomez started by saying that instead of giving a report on how the ALC region was composed or the past years' activities, the delegation had decided prior to the Assembly, to focus on aspects that will shed light as to how the Region had been restructured, its successes in times of crisis and the challenges ahead. He went on to say that in LA there is an acute economic crisis, a process of globalization and take over of the means of communication by foreign interest that threaten the freedom of expression and the right to communicate in the region. This in addition to the fact that in most LA countries, the legislative frameworks are unfavorable to community broadcasting.

He said that parallel to this phenomenon, there was also a tradition of strong social movements with more emerging in the region as a response to the new challenges posed by globalization. AMARC-ALC had to take the measures necessary to be able to keep up with these dynamics. The measures took the form of a restructuring of the organization with the goal of democratizing and decentralizing the processes and the work being done. He cited as an example to this new way of doing things, the emergence of a Central American Radio Network and the emergence and strengthening of the Women's Network. He added that the challenges to be faced by the new administration, will be met with transparency and sharing responsibility. He also urged the International Board to support these efforts and ended his presentation by saying that unless the movement was strengthened from the grassroots, the organization would not be strong enough to face the challenges ahead.

**Europe. Presented by Francesco Diasio, Representative for Europe** (Translated from French, synopsis collected from the notes)

Mr. Diasio referred to the European crisis that most people already knew. He said that the crisis had not been only economic but also political. He also emphasized that the necessary steps to rebuild the movement were being taken and read a communiqué in this respect. The communiqué was drafted by the participants in an informal meeting that took place in Brussels, in February of this year, among representatives of the CR movement (names read out but not noted). Those who could not attend send their written contributions.

Highlights of the Communiqué addressed to the General Assembly of AMARC in Kathmandu:

- In the communiqué, the participants recognized the importance of a pan European structure that could continue at an international level the work that AMARC-Europe had been carrying out
- The participants committed themselves to putting in place an efficient organization that could or not take the name of AMARC.

- They requested AMARC to reserve a place in the Board of Directors to the elected representative from this new organization to be formed

He finalized by saying that a European Assembly will be called in the next months with the objective of deciding on the type of organization to be created. Representatives of many European radios and radio organizations will be invited to take part.

**Oceania. Presented by Stanis Kaka, representative for Oceania**

Mr. Kaka said that unfortunately, he was not in a position to give a full report at the moment as he was new to the AMARC movement. However, he said that lots of work was being planned in the region for the next years.

**The Women's International Network Report. Presented by Bianca Miglioretto. WIN Representative to the Board**

Ms Miglioretto pointed out that the report of the WIN had been presented during the second day of the conference (Women's Day) She also said that the Plan of Action for the WIN had been approved at a meeting the day before and that it would be incorporated in the AMARC Strategic Plan of Action.

**11. Action Plan and Budget for the Period 2002 –2006**

Steve Buckley presented the Strategic Plan of Action and Budget (2003-2206). He said that the document provided in 3 languages would be used as a framework for further discussion on the Action Plan. The Strategic Plan of Action was first drafted in May last year and subsequent amendments have been made to it since then. He went onto talk about the main points included in the document which are as follows:

- **Institutional Reinforcement**
- **Projects and Programs:** Public Education and Mobilization, Lobbying and Advocacy, ICT's and Capacity Building, Women's International Network, Asia Pacific Region(, Community Media Fund

Mr. Buckley stressed that the participants could propose changes to the existing documents. He also said that the resolutions that have been drafted during the course of the week in the different workshops would be included in the Action Plan as annexes. Finally he said that the board had received suggestions to include strategies to increase membership and find ways to improve internal communication in the organization. He said that these suggestions would be taken into account when implementing the Plan.

**Comments and objections to the Plan of Action and Budget**

- Margaretta D'arcy suggested that AMARC should take very seriously the resolution to improve internal procedures and controls. She added that external government regulators or representatives for funding agencies participation should be limited and they should not be allowed to "hunt the halls" during the conference. She felt that this unlimited participation curtailed the freedom of expression and speech of the participants. She cited the example of the

- UNESCO representative interfering in the Asian meeting and threatening with withdrawing financial support to the organization if his conditions were not met.
- Steve replied that he was not the one to make a ruling or take a position on this issue. He explained that over the years AMARC has consistently invited its friends from regulatory bodies and funding agencies to participate in its conferences. Moreover, many of AMARC members have gone on to work in these institutions (regulatory bodies and funding agencies). This has been done in a spirit of openness. This spirit of openness entails certain risks that he considered worth taking. He concluded that it was for the participants to draft a resolution to see this changed if that is what they wanted.
  - Adding to this concerns Vickram Khrisna, participant from India, read out a statement to the Assembly (highlights of the statement below). He said that he had not become a member of AMARC and that had no intention of becoming a member as a salient protest to the following:

- The constant presence of a dictatorial and dominating individual of a funding organization in the Asian Regional meetings
- Total lack of transparency and cooptation of the group to manage the process of the formation of AMARC -Asia
- The resulting working group for the Asian Region with 15 members each representing 1 country lending itself to potential fatal inability to work effectively.

- Lynn Mouthoni Wanyeki made a request to the participants to come up with resolutions to address the serious concerns that had been raised.
- Das Preston, USA, raised an objection in the section of Institutional Reinforcement. He consider it too week and suggested that a statement of independence from governments and corporations be included to prevent the kind of meddling to which Mr. Khrisna had referred to.

At this point the Chair asked for the Strategic Plan of action to be moved. Moved by Barbara Losier, ARC du Canada, seconded by Syed Avid Rizvi, Pakistan

Elizabeth Robinson pointed out that the time to make amendments to the document had not been given. More time was allowed for amendments to the Plan of Action

#### **Further Discussion of Plan of Action**

- Das Preston, USA, reiterated his point to include provisions to prevent corporations, governments or any funding agencies to influence AMARC's policies, particularly referring to the text on page 8 of the document.
- Barbara Loisier, proposed for the Plan of Action to be approved with the resolutions that had been drafted by participants.
- Mr. Fourti Salah, delegate from Tunisia, pointed out that North Africa was absent form the Strategic Plan of Action. He asked if another four years were to pass before addressing the lack of freedom of the waves in that region.
- Mr. Buckley advised Mr. Salah to draft a formal resolution to make sure his concerns will be included in the Plan of Action. He said however that the region was also included in the stated objective to lobby and advocate for communication rights at the WSIS in Tunisia. In this Plano f Action however, the focus of AMARC was to strengthen the Asia Region.

- Tamara Mohamed, from AmmanNet, Jordan, pointed out that Jordan was included in the Asian region.

Chair asked for approval of the Strategic Plan of Action, the majority voted in favor, motion was carried.

**The Budget.** Mr. Buckley presented the budget and explained the main elements of the document.

### **Highlights**

- There are 7 Funding Agencies from which AMARC is reasonably expecting to get funding for its projects (listed)
- Funding from UNESCO could be withheld during the next period because of disagreements in the management of some projects.
- Other donors will be approached.
- Significant efforts will have to be made to reduce the deficit. The assessment has been done for a four-year period to solve the deficit situation.

### **Discussion following the Budget presentation**

- Mr. Francesco Diasio asked for clarifications as to the bases for making these predictions.
- Mr. Buckley said that the projection was based on expenses incurred by the International Office in the past.
- Mr. Gustavo Gomez, ALC, asked about the budget for institutional reinforcement, which includes regional meetings.
- Mr. Buckley said that the cost of institutional reinforcement which included improving the relationship with members and thus traveling, will have to come up from the core operational cost of the organization.
- A participant from North America (name not noted) asked if there was a plan in the next few years to move away from governments' funding.
- Mr Buckley said that the challenge was to build self-financing capacities and make sure AMARC does not be dependent on only one donor that can influence the policies of the organization.
- Mr. Syed Abid from Pakistan asked why the financing for the Asia regional office stopped after the third year. He asked if the AMARC office was expected to be self-reliant within 3 years.
- Mr. Buckley answered that that was the case.
- A participant from Africa (name not noted) requested that more information be given as to where the expenditures had been greater over the past years to allow participants to make more informed suggestions to improve the budget.
- Mr Gomez asked for a estimative figure to be included in the budget for Institutional Reinforcement.
- Seema Nair, India, asked if there were contingency funds for the Asia Office if after four years it was not financially sustainable.
- Mr. Buckley replied that at the moment there was no contingency budget for the Asian Office. He said that he expected the Asian Office to deal directly with donors after the initial establishing phase.

Budget seconded by Apath Mbesi from South Africa. Approved by the majority. Motion carried.

*See annex - 4 for Strategic Plan of Action and Budget*

### **General Assembly: Session 3**

#### **12. Assembly Resolutions**

The following resolutions ensued, in their majority, from the different workshop that took place throughout the week:

##### **Resolution 1 - Asia Pacific Region**

The Asia Pacific region participants gathered in Kathmandu, Nepal at AMARC 8 have constituted a Regional Committee currently consisting of 16 members from 15 countries and chaired by Mr Bharat Koirala who is also proposed as the representative for the Asia Pacific region in the International Board of AMARC.

The regional Committee constituted at AMARC 8 has a mandate to prepare statutes for the Asia Pacific regional section of AMARC, to establish an Asia Pacific regional office of AMARC in Kathmandu and to oversee projects and programmes in the region.

The Asia Pacific region participants propose to the General Assembly of AMARC gathered in Kathmandu, Nepal 2003 to endorse their decision to establish a regional section and to accept the Asia Pacific region as a duly constituted regional section of AMARC with representation on the International Board of AMARC.

Proposed by : Kasela Community Radio, Papua New Guinea  
Seconded by: Kodaio Productions, Philippines

##### **Comments by participants**

- Das Preston pointed out that the group that was entrusted with writing up statutes for the AMARC-Asia region was in high risk of being co-opted by money or pressure from outside parties.
- Mr Khrisna presented an amendment which needed to be adopted by an AMARC member to be moved (Mr. Khrisna is not a member of AMARC):

##### **Proposed amendment**

As the formative process of AMARC-Asia has been put in question, it should be redone completely, transparently, and democratically for the ratification before the closing session tomorrow. The General Assembly should be adjourned to allow time for this process to take place and should resume tomorrow.

##### **Comments to the proposed amendment**

- Mr. Buckley gave a point of information and pointed out that the statutes of any region have to be approved by the International Board, according to the AMARC

statutes. This provides an opportunity for checks and balances to deal with this issue of co-optation.

- Elizabeth Robinson pointed out that that the members of the region should be able to deal with this issues themselves.
- Bernardette Barranco from Kodaio Productions, Philippines, announced that a meeting was being organized for the Asian participants to deal with the concerns being raised.

The original resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority.

## **Resolution 2 - Community radio in Africa**

AMARC members of African countries and representatives of the community radio stations propose to the General Assembly of AMARC gathered at Kathmandu, Nepal, February 2003 as follows:

We call on the governments of African countries particularly Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Mauritania, Guinea, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Somalia, Swaziland, Rwanda, Central African Republic, Congo Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea to open the air waves to marginalized and excluded sections of these countries populations by:

1. Restructuring the regulatory framework statues, policies, laws etc to enable for the emergence of community broadcasting in these countries.
2. Creating favourable provisions for the licensing of the community radio stations in these countries ranting community radio licenses to interested communities and organizations.

Proposed by: Kofi Larweh, Radio Ada - Ghana

Seconded by: Ambrose Zwane, Radio Lubombo - Swaziland

### **Comments by participants**

- A participant from Africa proposed to take out the list of countries as it excludes many other African countries.
- A participant to Nigeria asked for countries to be named in the resolution as this will put more pressure on those countries, especially those with more hostile positions towards community radio.

### **Proposed Amendment**

- Include the following countries: Rwanda, Central African Republic, Congo Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea

The resolution was amended, voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

## **Resolution 3 - Community Radio in Europe**

AMARC members of European countries and representatives of the community radio stations propose to the General Assembly of AMARC, gathered at Kathmandu, Nepal 2003, to decide referring to and endorsing the Brussels communiqué from 1 February, where people met to discuss the situation concerning community radio and AMARC Europe, the following:

1. A mandate to monitor the feasibility and take initiative for a meeting in Europe for European members of AMARC and other community radio stations is given to Francesco Diasio from AMIS in Italy.

This meeting possibly an AMARC Regional General Assembly should take place as soon as possible in 2003 whereby the main goal is to strengthen the European community radio sector again.

2. To accept Francesco Diasio as a liaison person between Europe and the AMARC International Board.

This resolution was proposed by Michel Goedart, Radio Panik, Brussels and seconded by Aurel David, Radio Voces Campi, Romania

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

#### **Resolution 4 - Women's International Network**

We demand that all governments involved in peace talks now and in the future ensure full and active participation in all aspects of the peace process -as laid down by the UN Security Council 1325 October 2000- of women who have been directly affected by the war. Since 80% of the victims of war and armed conflict are women, there should be 80% of women in the negotiating team. Compensation must be paid to these women, children, their communities, their loved ones in proportion to the entire cost of the war, proposition to the total amount of cash, material support necessary to reconstruct the country. Before the peace process begins, funds should be made available so that women have full understanding of their entitlements.

AMARC passes the resolution unanimously by all participants in this conference and commit themselves to distribute this resolution. If this is not done, women will forever remain victims of war and be further exploited by those who claim to be helping victims of war.

This resolution proposed by Margaretta d'Arcy, Wired FM-Ireland and seconded by Jane Parker, Radio Peace International.

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried

#### **Resolution 5 - Membership at the World Social Forum**

For the past three years, tens of thousands of people have converged on Porto Alegre, Brazil for the World Social Forum, a venue where progressive movements and individuals have come together to imagine and work towards a better world based on

principles of social justice. AMARC has participated in the WSF for the past two years, represented by members from Latin America, North America, Africa and Europe who represented community radio and produced programming from the venue. In 2002, we joined with partners from other communications organisations to lobby for the inclusion of a communications strand in meetings. In 2003, communications was established as one of five major themes, but we were very sorry to find that community radio was given almost no representation by the organisers. To correct this situation, we met with members of the organising committee who acknowledged this as a problem and indicated that they would welcome a proposal from AMARC to sit on the organising committee if that was the wish of our membership.

We consider participation and representation of AMARC at this and similar forums as important as participation in the World Summit on the Information Society.

We, therefore, ask the General Assembly of AMARC 8 to support a resolution to be submitted to the Organising Committee of the World Social Forum requesting AMARC membership on that Committee.

This resolution proposed in by Elizabeth Robinson (AMARC North America), Gustavo Gomez (AMARC ALC) and seconded by Maria Suarez (AMARC ALC)

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

### **Resolution 6 - Community radio stations in conflict and post conflict situations**

The workshop based its deliberation on the case studies of community radio workers in Nepal, DRC and the work of Internews on specific experiences of community radio stations in the different environments of conflict and post conflict. The workshop made the following recommendations with respect to the practice of community radio stations and the struggle of community radio workers in conflict and post conflict countries:

:

1. The programming of community radio should focus on peace, human rights and good governance.
2. Subjects of the community radio programming on conflict and post conflict should focused on groups and people affected by the conflict - especially the displaced people, the most vulnerable people such as women, children and the abuses inflicted on them.
3. Community radio should serve as instruments of inclusion, promote cohesion, grassroots democracy, transparency and accountability, it should also serve as a bridge between the local and the national in conflict situations on specific areas of conflict around the world, the workshop recommended that:
  - i. AMARC should support associations, community organisations and women groups that work with community radio stations in the struggle against violence against women.
  - ii. AMARC should strengthen the capacity of community radio stations in the areas of new technologies in communications.

- iii. AMARC should condemn the arbitrary arrests, affricates, violations of rights, executions directed at children and women and community radio workers in countries engulfed in wars and conflicts.
- iv. AMARC should condemn cannibalism (anthropophagy) as practice by the rebels of the MLC in Ituri Province in the North East of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) against women, and pygmies who are indigenous people and are now a minority. (This should be included in the Kathmandu declaration)
- v. AMARC should assist to fund community radio stations who operate in extreme difficult conflict and post conflict situations.
- vi. The AMARC Assembly should adopt a resolution of the promotion of peace in Congo. This should be included in the Kathmandu Declaration.
- vii. AMARC should support the struggle of ARCO in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), in its defence of "Radio associative" and others community radios
- viii. AMARC condemns the US\$ 5000 that community radio stations have to pay as administrative fees, because these stations are the voices of those without voice.
- ix. AMARC demands the unconditioned re-opening of radio Maendeleo in the DRC.

This resolution proposed in by Freddie Mulongo, Democratic Republic of Congo and seconded by Zane Ibrahim, South Africa

### **Comments from participants**

- A participant from Africa (name not noted) asked for certain things to be omitted from the resolution as they do not pertain to the majority.
- Tabo Matiwane from South Africa, asked the resolution be adopted as proposed as the defense of human rights are part of the AMARC agenda.

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried

### **Resolution 7 - Gender equality**

Male members of AMARC should endeavour to:

1. Change individual mental attitudes towards girls and women as inferior to men in the sector, in particular and in society in general.
2. Extend this attitudinal change by speaking to fellow men across racial and cultural barriers about the importance of giving more recognition to girls and women.

3. Support their fellow men's actions to support their women folk in progressing educationally and financially in life.
4. Encourage women in our organisations to venture into roles and positions and assume responsibilities traditionally expected to be for men.
5. Encourage the women in the communities to come out and express themselves about areas in which they feel there is imbalance. The imbalances should be derived from the communities but not imposed upon them.
6. Provide internships and offer mentorship programmes to women in decision-making positions in their organisations.
7. Start up or increase the programmes for men about gender issues and stereo types tendencies that exist within society.
8. Start up or increase youth programmes that involve both boys and girls so that they learn to work together at the same level in community radio.
9. Start up or increase the women and gender advocacy programmes on their broadcasts.
10. Increase educational programmes in the broadcasts with the aim of creating awareness about gender issues.
11. Increase the number of women media managers in various radio initiatives.
12. Increase the amount of programme content about affirmative action in the communities in their broadcasts.
13. Create women's programmes that would be owned and produced by the women themselves to address women and gender issues.
14. Create a new brand of leadership which includes women in their organisations and develop second layer leadership programmes that will include women.
15. Campaign for women to be in broadcasting to boost women empowerment to deal with equality issues.
16. Reach out to WIN-AMARC to find out what forms of support or advice they can get to address gender issues.
17. Partner with organisations that are able to influence the increase of girls and women involvement in community radio in the technical, managerial and service provision sectors.
18. Change their approach to reporting and gender issues by letting the content come from families and gender roundtables instead of having one-way information flow about what the male journalists think about gender issues.

19. Create a forum to discuss gender issues with women of AMARC to be set up to facilitate joint discussion about gender issues such as a list serve. This would promote equal participation and contribute to equality in society.
20. Arrange activities for male AMARC members, which include women to tackle inequality issues.
21. Engage other progressive global forces to fight against any form of exclusion towards women and girls.

This resolution proposed in by Fortune Sibanda, Zimbabwe and seconded by Ambrose Zwane , Radio Lubombo, Swaziland

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

### **Resolution 8 - Women bridging the digital divide**

As community broadcasters we are constantly challenged by the lack of ownership of our own channels of communication and we call upon AMARC International to:

Support and facilitate efforts to acquire our own satellite and server to enable collective access to the new ICTs., especially by women.

This resolution proposed by Bianca Miglioretto, Switzerland and seconded by Barbara Losier, Canada

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

### **Resolution 8.1 - Connecting women bridging the digital divide**

Taking into account the concerns regarding the digital divide serves to further disempower women, especially the women of the South, we call upon AMARC International to strengthen all efforts to ensure:

The participation and representation of women on all delegations to the WSIS, working in collaboration with Inter-governmental agencies such as UNIFEM and other partners.

That women, especially women of the South, receive appropriate technical training to assist them to become more integrated into the production and management of community radio stations.

That women are equipped with the policy and technical information to better understand and therefore address the implications of the impact of ICTs and the outcomes of the WSIS on both community radio and community broadcasting in general.

That AMARC's information and networking processes take into account the needs of rural women and women who may yet be unable to access e-mail and Internet, so as not to create a digital divide within our membership.

**Resolution 9 - Solidarity and the role of AMARC International** (Translated from Spanish)

Develop a wide system of information and communication among the radios from all regions with the objective of having a better understanding during emergency situations and persecutions faced by the members of AMARC.

Reactivate the International Solidarity Network of AMARC, improving its impact. To achieve this objective we require technological support and financial resources so that this work be permanent and effective and not merely testimonial.

1. To promote a CONCRETE solidarity from AMARC to all its members, prioritizing the situation of radios that are persecuted or silenced and those whose broadcasters face a threat to their lives, specially small and isolated radios.
2. To this effect, establish a Solidarity Fund that can give concrete support in these situations, to buy equipment to allow radios to go back on air, pay the services of lawyers when necessary and carry out lobbying campaigns in their countries
3. Find mechanisms of exchange and cooperation between the regions that systematically carry out actions of solidarity and advocacy, such as Africa and Latin America, to improve their capacity to defend their members, work with other regions and achieve better results at the international level (UN, Human Rights organizations, Cooperation Agencies and others)
4. Establish urgently, coordination and action mechanisms in Asia, Oceania and Europe to be able to effectively address the adverse situations that these regions are facing at this very moment.
5. Support fundraising activities to create the conditions to develop this work among the regions, sub-regions and countries.
6. Coordinate actions at the regional level with an international strategy in mind that advocates for changes in international standards on human rights, the recognition of community radios and demanding the democratization of legal frameworks of broadcasting to allow for equal access to electronic media.
7. Form in this World Assembly a working group that in coordination with the International Board of AMARC ensures the development and concrete character of this and other resolutions.

This resolution proposed by Gustavo Gomez, AMARC ALC and seconded by Maria Suarez, FIRE-AMARC ALC

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

## **Resolution 10 - AMARC International Charter**

We call upon AMARC International and AMARC members to strengthen all efforts in the following areas:

Exercise the human right to communication and facilitate the full and equal access of all social sectors to radio and television, and other media, including new information & communication technologies (ICTs).

Share to mission to democratise communications in order to guarantee freedom of expression and to contribute to equitable and sustainable development.

Express the aspirations of civil society, especially those excluded from decision making, by age, gender and from the economic arena.

Promote socio-cultural and linguistic heritage, independent from commercial and governmental interests, partisan political and religious proselytise.

Represent the interests of all communities.

Assist them to define themselves as non-profit civic organisations and to seek sufficient diversity in their financing, to prevent the compromise of their objectives.

Offer quality programming services that is informative, educational, entertaining and are subject to community participation and evaluation.

Operate as a platform for citizen's participation, where their voices and perspectives can be heard and where diversity is encouraged.

Defend fundamental human rights, gender equality, resist discrimination and promote the spirit of peace and mutual understanding.

Maximise the use of available technologies by community media centres to enhance the capabilities of their participants.

Practice participative democratic governance and transparent administration, respecting the rights of both their personnel and the community being serviced, including persons with disabilities as well as women and children.

Guarantee participation of women at all levels, including those of decision-making.

Act to promote harmony, co-operation and communication within our heterogeneous membership.

Recognise the power of community radio and work to ensure that our members use it responsibly, particularly in conflict.

This resolution proposed in by Ambrose Zwane (Radio Lubombo) and seconded by Zane Ibrahim (Bush Radio)

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried

## **Resolution 11 - Kathmandu Declaration**

As governments, private corporations and international non-governmental organisations met in the world's banking capital for the Second Preparatory Committee of the World Summit on the Information Society, the General Assembly of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters opened in Kathmandu, Nepal a country in which only fifteen percent of people have access to electricity. This assembly convened at a moment when our world is grievously threatened by rampant militarism, accelerated privatisation of or most basic resources, religious fundamentalism, and extreme capitalism. These collective forces threaten all human rights as defined in the United Nations Charter on Human Rights.

We find it inexplicable and indefensible that many nations have failed to sign this document more than fifty years after its creation. Most of the world's people including those in Asia exist in conditions of abject poverty which can only be rectified by insuring that all people have access to water, food, shelter, seeds, the means of livelihood, and that their cultural and linguistic diversity is protected. AMARC considers that all of these rights are underpinned by the right to communicate as defined in Article 19 of the UN Charter of Human Rights which includes the opportunity for a free exchange of information and ideas for all people regardless of borders. This right is in great jeopardy where it is recognised and routinely violated where it is not recognised, as the consolidation of ownership of mass media leaves the control of these domains in the hands of a few.

Despite these conditions or because of them, there are also many hopeful trends regarding rights of communication. The community radio broadcasting movement is rapidly growing including in areas such as Asia where there have been little development of this sector until now. AMARC and its community radio members and partners have been able to demonstrate the possibilities which the right to communicate embodies. They have directly contributed to progressive social change and social justice by providing access to those marginalised and disadvantaged by the mainstream media; have successfully created legislation for the sector in many countries; and have undertaken training projects which have built capacity and contributed to sustaining community access.

There are also openings for representatives of civil society including grassroots movements and non-governmental organisations to participate in global agenda setting in the communications realm. There are vibrant grassroots movements and popular actions emerging and making their presence felt in all global regions.

In light of all of these things, we, the General Assembly of the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters declare the following:

### **Community Radio**

- We acknowledge and endorse the African Charter on Broadcasting which defines community broadcasting as that which is for, by and about the community, whose ownership and management is representative of the community, which pursues a social development agenda, and which is non-profit.

We believe that broadcasting spectra constitute a part of the global commons which should not be privatised, rather that only use rights should be given and that community media should have first access.

- We call on all nations and governmental authorities, particularly those in Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean to create and implement legislation which would provide access to all the electronic media, especially to community radio in equal opportunity for all, with particular attention to the rights of women, children, the disabled and other disadvantaged groups, and to provide the necessary support and training to make it viable, in all instances taking gender into account.
- We call upon all nations, governmental authorities and community radios to ensure access and ownership of all means of communication for women.
- We call for regulation of frequency spectra for community radio such that it favours the development of this medium for the use of local communities.

### **The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) and beyond**

- We consider the WSIS that is taking place in Geneva, Switzerland in December 2003 and in Tunis, Tunisia in 2005 to be an important venue for highlighting the role of community media in the overall struggle for social justice and people's empowerment.
- We, along with other progressive media sectors and civil sector actors, abhor the threat to an open internet or the infringement of rights to privacy in the name of "national security" or a "war on terrorism", and call on all governments and all social forces to oppose these threats whether corporate or governmental.
- We consider that it is an established fact that community media, particularly community radio, have given communities the means of cultural expression, news and information, and local dialogue. Radio is the most widespread electronic communications device in the world and a unique means of reaching the world's poorest communities. Community radio broadcasting is increasingly recognised as a bridge across the digital divide between those who have access to the world's information resources and those who do not.
- We therefore urge all the participants in the WSIS process, particularly the government of Tunisia which will host the second assembly, to recognise and support the role of community media in providing spaces for people's voices to be heard in the formulation and implementation of national, regional and international policies on information and communication technologies and in the construction of an information society which is globalised for the many rather than the few. Further this approach must extend beyond the WSIS into the foreseeable future.

### **The role of community media in progressive social movements**

- We consider the emergence of social justice movements such as the World Social Forums to be essential in achieving the goals stated above and commit AMARC's resources to continued participation in them as a critical conduit for information about such events and actions. However, we regret that such movements have often tended to marginalise community broadcasting to the same degree that has existed in the governmental and corporate sectors.

- We, therefore, call on the organisers of these movements to recognise and support the role of community media in providing spaces for people's voices to articulate the ways in which they imagine that another world is possible, and to open a seat at the planning table for representatives of community broadcasters.

**Conclusion:**

The General Assembly of AMARC is committed to the realisation of the right to communicate in its broadest, most inclusive sense. We pledge to work to protect our members and those they serve from any infringement of this right and thereby to contribute to the securing of all the rights included in the United Nations Charter on Human Rights and those rights which have been ratified since its establishment. We will do so in the open, transparent and accountable manner which we demand from the other sectors with which we interact.

This resolution proposed by Margaretta D'arcy, Ireland and seconded by Elizabeth Robinson, USA

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried

**Resolution 12 - Violence against women presented by the Women's International Network** (Translated from Spanish)

Presented by the Women's International Network - AMARC

Considering:

- That sexual aggression is a form of violence against women that attempts against her human rights
- That the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Violence Against Women and the Platform for Action of the World Conference on Women that took place in Beijing are instruments adopted by states in which they commit themselves to prevent, sanction and combat all forms of violence against women
- That AMARC in its statement of principles includes the need to work for gender equality and has carried out campaigns with the aim of sensitizing people to this issue.

Resolves:

That the participants in the Assembly show solidarity to the women that were sexually attacked during their stay at the Yak and Yeti Hotel in Nepal; complains to the Administration of the Hotel (in written) for allowing the impunity of the aggressors, for becoming accomplices by not acting firmly and timely to capture the aggressor having been identified and demands the corresponding compensation for having been affected the integrity of the women of the Women's International Network of AMARC

The community radios members of AMARC will inform on this censurable act and commit themselves to support campaigns to call attention to this problem affecting women throughout the world, taking their testimonies.

Organize a public event Thursday February 27 at 12 pm, to publicly voice our rejection to this act and for which Nepali media will be invited.

This resolution proposed in by AMARC WIN and seconded by Bianca Miglioretto and Fortune Sibanda.

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried

### **Resolution 13 - Motion against war in Iraq**

Noting that:

- Those who push for the stand off against Iraq are undermining the UN agreed inspection processes.
- Developing countries and their emerging economies will be the hardest hit by the consequences of war and it's outcomes.
- There is no compelling evidence that warrants war against Iraq, as outlined in the flooded US presentation before the UN Security Council.
- Global forces of power and greed motivate it.

Believing that:

- War affects ordinary and unsuspecting citizens of countries affected by war in particular women, people with disabilities and children.
- War can be avoided if those who want to assume global dominance can allow the current UN processes to unfold to it's logical conclusion.
- Global capitalism presents itself in various forms and ways, and it's extension can manifest itself by means of wars against nation states.
- Preparations for war currently underway therefore impose a challenge on all community media fighting for peace and social justice around the world to act in unity to defend world peace and global democracy.

Therefore we resolve that:

- As AMARC International Assembly gathered in Nepal Kathmandu united in our conviction that war against Iraq is wrong.
- It is wrong because it is the poor communities who will be its main victims, and it will inflame, rather than resolve, global conflicts, particularly those in the Middle East.

- As AMARC members we are united in our opposition to war.

This resolution proposed in by Tabo Matiwane, NCRF, South Africa, and seconded by Ambrose Zwane, Radio Lubombo, Swaziland

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

#### **Resolution 14 - Supporting member community radio activist**

AMARC International should:

Support member community radio activist that have new ideas/concepts of running community radio initiatives more effectively, productively and participatory.

This resolution proposed in by Tabo Matewane, NCRF, South Africa and seconded by Ambrose Zwane, Radio Lubombo, Swaziland

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

#### **Resolution 15 - Adoption of Portuguese**

We propose to the General Assembly of AMARC, gathered in Kathmandu, Nepal:

That the next AMARC International conference include Portuguese as one of the official languages of the organisation.

The resolution is supported by the fact that there are in the association members from a variety of Portuguese speaking countries. These are: Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and Brazil.

This resolution proposed by Sylvia Alfonso, Radio Sussudenga, Mozambique and seconded by Thais Ladeira, Radio Revolucao, Brazil.

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

#### **Resolution 16 - Equal participation for people with disabilities**

AMARC must affirm at all times that the exclusion of people with disabilities from society is a social and political issue requiring appropriate attention. AMARC should encourage full and equal participation by people with disabilities at conferences.

This resolution proposed in by Jean Parker, Radio Peace International and seconded by Zane Ibrahim, Bush Radio, South Africa

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

#### **Resolution 17 - Freeing of frequencies for community radios in Senegal** (Translated from French)

Considering the promises made by the Senegalese government in the occasion of the sixth General Assembly of AMARC in Dakar in 1995, of freeing 80 frequencies for community radios

Considering the successes noted in the occasion of the Pan African Conference of AMARC in 2001

Considering the promises made to the International Board of Directors of AMARC during a presidential meeting of freeing 8 frequencies for the benefit of projects undertaken by radios members of AMARC.

The General Assembly of AMARC recommends to the Senegalese government to honor the commitments made on this respect by the highest authorities of the country

This resolution proposed in by Habi Dialo, Mali and seconded by a participant (name not noted) from Guinea Bissau.

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

#### **Resolution 18 - North Africa and the Middle East** (Translated from French)

Freedom of expression and freedom of the waves are rights that AMARC must have as a priority.

We invite AMARC to participate in the struggle for freedom of speech and of the radio waves (in this region) by stating this in its plan of action and by supporting this struggle by all means.

This resolution proposed in by Salah Fourti, Radio 7, Tunisia and seconded by Zane Ibrahim, Bush Radio, South Africa

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

#### **Resolution 19 - North African region**

The North African region has been neglected in the past despite several promises of attention and inclusion.

We therefore resolve that more attention, support and willful commitment be directed towards the region in the immediate future in order to assist in the development of freedom of expression in North Africa.

This resolution proposed in by Zane Ibrahim (Bush Radio) and seconded by Salah Fourti (Radio 7)

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

#### **Resolution 21 - Nepali women**

We, the participants of AMARC 8, want to show our deep concern on ongoing peace process in Nepal. Conflict can not be solved by arms and even talk without proper representation of women. Therefore, women should be given an active role in the peace process to make peace sustainable and positive.

We request the Nepalese government as well as the Maoists leaders to have women equal as men in the talks committee. May peace be restored by the honest efforts of women.

We also suggest to give compensation, counselling (through Community Radio wherever its possible) as well as long term support to the victims of the eight year long arm conflict.

This resolution proposed in by Radio Lumbini, Nepal and seconded by Bianca Miglioretto

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

#### **Resolution 20 - Quorum** (Translated from Spanish)

Considering:

- That AMARC has as one of its objectives and mission, the democratization of community radios, communications and many societies
- That at present, there is a difficulty to reach a quorum of 25% for financial reasons and
- That AMARC must look for alternative ways of democratic participation, instead of reducing quorum

We propose:

That the priority task of the International Board of Directors in all instances and of all the membership, be of coming up with methodologies and creative processes in the use of new technologies in order to launch a democratic decentralization process that allows for effective participation of the membership in the General Assembly and other conferences of AMARC. An example of this is the organization of conferences at the national and regional levels leading to the General Assembly. Another example are teleconferences and virtual forums.

This resolution proposed in by Maria Cabrera, ISIS International, Philippines and seconded by Aleida Calleja, Comunicación Comunitaria, Mexico

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

#### **Resolution 22 - Community Radios in Latin America** (Translated from Spanish)

The General Assembly of AMARC, gathered in Kathmandu, Nepal on the 26th of February, 2003, expresses:

Its concern for the situation of community radios in Latin America and the Caribbean and asks the governments and regulatory bodies in the countries of this region to recognize the right of civil society to administer radios and other electronic media and to enjoy equal access to these.

This Assembly demands that the necessary changes be introduced in the legislative frameworks of broadcasting to make them compatible with International treaties on Human Rights and Freedom of Expression recognized in the region

This resolution proposed in by Gustavo Gomez, AMARC ALC and seconded by Francesco Diasio, AMARC Europe .

The resolution was voted for acceptance and adopted by the majority. Motion carried.

Mr. Diasio, AMIS, Italy, formally protested for the allocation of time given the number of issues to be dealt with in an Assembly of an organization of the size of AMARC. He pointed out that this problem had risen 4 years ago and then again four years later. He asked for the Assembly to make the time to discuss this issue and proposed solutions to make sure it does not happen again.

#### **General Assembly: Session 4**

##### **Election of International Board**

The list of candidates for the different positions for the AMARC International Board were made available and circulated among the voting members. Mr. Pascal Berque, Panos Institut, Paris, designated member of the Election committee, reminded the participants of the procedures and rules during the process. The following positions were up for election: President, Vice-president, Treasurer, WIN Representative (ratification), Four Regional Vice-presidents (Mr. Bharat Dutta Koirala was elected as representative for AMARC Asia to the Board of Directors to be ratified by the Assembly)

The candidates briefly addressed the voting members (Synopsis of speeches collected form the notes):

- Steve Buckley from UK, standing for the position of AMARC President spoke on the areas he considered a political priority: The reinforcement AMARC's relationship with other social movements to contribute to the struggle against poverty, discrimination of migrants and women, a sustainable environment and an acceptable system of global governance. The reinforcement of AMARC's efforts on advocacy and lobbying to defend the legal policies already attained and to deepen the recognition of CR and the access to the radio spectrum at the national, regional and international level. Addressing the challenge of sustainability by building the capacities of our members using appropriate technology and supporting national associations. Prioritizing CRs, especially those who face poverty, have limited freedom of expression, and those in conflict

- areas. The reinforcement of AMARC's internationalism by reviewing our international vision and structures, through activities such as the Radio Voices without Frontiers campaign and the Women's Network and creating new spaces for international dialogue and exchange within our membership and the wider environment. Finally to strengthen the political institutional-financial base of AMARC to make sure that our collective experience about social capital is resilient to external pressure and to reinforce our independence and sustainability.
- Lynn Muthoni Wanyeki from Africa, standing for the position of Deputy - President said that she shared a platform with Mr. Buckley. She added that the advantage of being in a crisis is that it allows for reformulation and re-strategizing. Key areas that need restructuring are: the International Organization as a whole for democracy to be reflected in the organization.
  - Elizabeth Robinson from USA, standing for the position of Treasurer said that she had not particular skills to be treasurer of the organization. She added "There are a couple of principles that I would like to share with the Assembly: He who plays the piper calls the tune, which for me means that we need to be mindful of where our money comes from. I can only tell you that I love this organization and that it is now more threaten that never before. I can tell you that my heart goes out to all those whose lives are endanger in an almost daily basis. We need to continue working together around the money to help them"
  - Frida Warden, standing for Representative of the North American Region. (Absent) Represented by Dorothy Abbot who talked about the work Ms Warden has been doing. She reminded the audience that Frieda Warden had been a member of AMARC since 1986 the same year she founded WINGS. She is a passionate radio producer and has trained women all over the world and is committed to the women's movement.
  - George Christensen from Radio 1 in Gambia, standing for Vice-President-African Region is presently at Geneva, representing AMARC at the WSIS preparatory meeting. One of his colleagues from the African delegation spoke in his behalf. He said that Mr. Christensen was a competent and committed broadcaster who has struggled for the liberalization of the radio waves in Africa. "We think that he is the best person to help AMARC make the transition to digital technologies" He added.
  - Maria Victoria Cabrera - Baleza from Philippines, standing for the Vice-President (WIN) was chosen as the WIN representative by a women's meeting the preceding day
  - Stanley Stanis Kaka from Papua New Guinea, standing for the Vice-President Asia Region said he wanted to represent the real community and asked for the support of the delegates
  - Fourti Salah from Tunisia, standing for the Vice-President- North African Region said that he was representing North Africa without a mandate. He said that his mission started 15 years ago and that he had been a member of AMARC for

over 10 years. He added that he was standing for the liberalization of the waves in the countries of North Africa and on the inclusion of Arab world.

The Chair suggested that the Election Committee President Mr. Berque start the process. The voting members were given different color voting papers to drop in the ballot boxes. The color of the voting papers distinguished the candidates. The ballot boxes were visible and placed at the panel desk area. The Chair invited all voting members to start the voting process.

### **Election Results**

The Election Committee proceeded with the counting of the votes and the results were as follows:

Steve Buckley (UK) was elected as the new President of AMARC

Lynn Muthoni Wanyeki (Kenia) was elected new Deputy President

Elizabeth Robinson (United States) was elected Treasurer of AMARC International

Bharat D. Koirala, (Nepal) was ratified as the Asian Representative in the International Board of Directors

Maria Victoria Cabrera-Baleza (Philippines) was ratified as the new Vice-President representing the AMARC International Women's Network (WIN)

Frieda Werden ( US ) was elected new Vice-President representing the North American Region

George Christensen (Gambia) was elected new Vice-President representing the African Region (not present at the Assembly)

Stanley Stanis Kaka (Papa New Guinea) was elected Vice-President representing the Asia - Pacific Region

### **14. Recommendation for site of next General Assembly**

There were four proposals put forward by the delegates:

- Latin America, announced by Gustavo Gomez, El Puente FM Radio, Uruguay
- South East Asia, announced by Marie Bernadetta Barranco, Kodao Productions, Philippines
- Jordan, announced by Tamara Mottmad Aref, Ammannet Radio, Jordan middle east.
- Eastern Europe, announced by David Aurel, Radio Independante Romania, (the suggestion was withdrawn voluntarily)

**15. Any other business**

**16. Installation of new International Board**

The newly elected Board of Directors of AMARC was installed

**17. Closing session:**

The Chair declared the Assembly adjourned.

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# AMARC 8 Closing Ceremony

Day 7, 27<sup>th</sup> February 2003

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## 1. Concluding speeches

### **Steve Buckley, newly elected President of AMARC International:**

- Steve Buckley expressed that in preparing for the conference he had visited Nepal and most of the community radio stations, he covered 800 miles in four days. He was prepared to take risks as AMARC was in financial crisis, and he had prioritized to host the AMARC 8 conference here in Kathmandu. He said that, AMARC 8 was a success. He focused on the importance of the objectives and plans of action that ensued from the Conference and General Assembly. The period ahead will be a challenging one to try to stabilize regional chapters of the organization going through difficult times. He thanked all the participants and gave special thanks to the Local Organizing Committee, Radio Sagarmatha-Nepal forum of Environmental Journalist (NFEJ), the chair of the General Assembly, Ian Pringle and the Election Committee Chief Pascal Berque. He further thanked the following:
  - The AMARC 8 Secretariat
  - The Interpreters for all the good work
  - The outgoing President, Maria Victoria Polanco
  - The former General Secretary, Sophie K. Ly
  - The Hotel staff and management

### **Lynn Muthoni Wanyeki, the newly elected Deputy President**

- Lynn Muthoni Wanyeki, the newly elected Deputy President reflected upon the week long conference and noted that conferencing in big hotels and going back and start working in the community on a day to day basis is different and challenging. She talked about how AMARC brings people together as a movement and how the community radios have been working to attain their goals in their respective communities.

### **Elizabeth Robinson, newly elected Treasurer**

- She thanked all the participants for having made the conference possible

### **Mavic Cabrera- Baleza newly elected Vice president (WIN)**

- She said that members of the Board had to demonstrate their will to work for the advancement of community radios. She referred to the financial crisis as a challenge that had to be overcome together.

### **Stanley Stanis Kaka newly elected Vice president**

- He said that he had gained lots of experience from the community radios represented in the Conference. He reiterated his commitment to represent the Asian Region and the different radios in the region, particularly those facing difficulties.

### **Bhupendra Basnet, Station Manager of Radio Sagarmatha and Local Organizing Committee Member**

- Bhupendra Basnet thanked AMARC international for giving Radio Sagarmatha the opportunity to organize this conference and also thanked the newly elected board of AMARC international. He expressed his happiness to have Mr. Bharat Koirala representing the Asia-Pacific region as Vice-president in the International Board. He said that during the long week of the Conference, Radio Sagarmatha had given priority to covering the issues with daily news, interviews and a direct broadcast from the Hotel. He thanked all at the Radio Sagarmatha, the Hotel, Collin Robbins (Wong Productions) and everybody that made the broadcast possible. He also thanked Mr Zane Ibrahim for having started the Brick to Brick project to raise funds for radio Sagarmatha. Finally he said he was sure that AMARC 8 would have a very positive impact on the movement of community radios in Nepal and the whole of Asia Pacific for a long time to come.

### **Mohan Bista, General Secretary of Nepal Forum of Environmental of Journalist (NEFEJ) and Local Organizing Committee Member:**

- Mohan Bista, said that organizing AMAREC 8 had been a challenge for Radio Sagarmatha and a dream come true. He thanked Maria Victoria Polanco and Steve Buckley from the Board of Directors, Ian Pringle and Gabriela Mayorquin for their contribution to the Conference. He also thanked the Local Organizing Committee and all of the participants.

### **Acknowledgments**

#### **Suman Basnet, Conference Director, LOC**

- Suman Basnet the Conference Director, thanked the whole team that made the Conference a success. He called upon newly elected Deputy President of AMARC international Lynn Muthoni Wanyeki to hand out a token of appreciation to the acknowledged people.
- Steve Buckley thanked everybody at the International Office in Montreal and the staff of the African office whose support during the crisis had been invaluable. He particularly thanked Michel Ntab for her commitment and hard work and for having accepted to act as acting General Secretary. Tokens of appreciation were handed over.

## 2. AMARC 8 Solidarity Prize:

Michel Ntab first reminded the participants that the solidarity prize had been established in 1992 to acknowledge member of AMARC that had significantly contribute to fulfill two of the main mission of AMARC, access to information and solidarity. She went on to name the past recipients of the prize: 1992 Radio Enriquillo, Haiti, a station that broadcasted during the times of the dictatorship from the Dominican Republic. In 1995 at the Conference in Dakar, Senegal, the prize was given to South African stations, by means of the NCRF, for their contribution to end the Apartheid regime. 1998 in Milan the prize had been awarded to the B52 Radio in Serbia, ex-Yugoslavia.

This year many nominations were received and the selection was not easy. However, the two organizations were selected for their contribution in providing access to information and defending the fundamental right of freedom of expression. The following are the names of the recipients:

1. **Comunica**-Paraguayan Association of Broadcasting (Asociacion Paraguaya de Radiodifusion)

Recently obtained 107 frequencies in Paraguay for community broadcasting thanks to its lobbying work. Maria Suarez received the prize in behalf of *Comunica*

2. **Radio Maendeleo** of the Democratic Republic of Congo, situated in an occupied territory by the rebels. Despite the fact that it has been closed twice and that members of its staff have been incarcerated in several occasions, it has continued to work under pressure. Sosthene Bulambo Wa Tombo from Radio Maendeleo received the prize.

The Solidarity Prize consists of \$ 5,000 Canadian dollars in equipment shared between the two winners.

### **Radio transmitter (build during the conference) handover:**

2 Radio transmitters built during one of the workshops conducted by Pete Tridish, Prometheus Radio Project, were awarded. One of the transmitters was given to the *Antenna Production group* in Nepal and the second one was given to one of the participants that help to build it to take back to her community in India.

### **Suitcase Radio handover:**

A suitcase Radio equipment manufactured in Canada was handed over by Colin Robbins from Wong Productions, to the Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ) Received by Mohan Bista, General Secretary of NEFEJ.