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**REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE APPLICATION FOR
OBSERVER STATUS BY THE INTERNATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF LIONS CLUBS**

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BY THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LIONS CLUBS**

INTRODUCTION

1. Following the adoption of the Criteria for Granting Observer Status and For a System of Accreditation within the AU by the Executive Council and the subsequent endorsement by the Assembly both in July 2005, the Commission of the African Union has received a number of applications for Observer status and accreditation with the Union, including the application by the International Association of Lions Clubs (the Association), reference TY/079/05 and dated 17 May 2005, (Annex I), which is the only one that is complete.

2. In accordance with part I, Section II (5), of the Criteria relating to granting of observer status to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), applications by NGOs will be considered and processed by the Commission for submission to the Executive Council through the Permanent Representatives Committee.

3. The International Association of Lions Clubs is a Humanitarian World-wide Non-Profit making Organization established “to create and foster a spirit of understanding among all peoples for humanitarian needs by providing voluntary services through community involvement and International cooperation” with 1,354,881 members in 46,221 clubs in 745 districts in 194 countries and geographical areas of the world.

4. Although the Association has its headquarters in the United States of America, it is registered and undertakes activities in forty-five (45) Member States of the African Union. In Africa it operates independently of the Headquarters through twelve (12) districts headed by governors. The list of membership and year of registration in AU Member States as well as the list and contacts of district governors are attached hereto as Annexes II and III respectively.

MEMBERSHIP

5. The Association is constituted as districts in the following AU Member States: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, The Comoros, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote D'Ivoire, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

6. It is worth noting that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia in its Note Verbal reference AU 2-8/9/05 dated 05 September 2005 (Annex IV), has indicated its support for the granting of observer status to the Association. In the Note Verbal, the Ministry noted that the Association has been chartered in Ethiopia since 1966 and has a commendable track record in the fields of

hygiene, health and education. In addition, the Ministry affirmed that the Association would positively contribute towards the achievement of the objectives of the African Union if granted observer status.

AFFILIATIONS

7. The Association enjoys observer status with the United Nations and is affiliated with UNECOSOC; UNESCO; UNICEF; FAO; WHO; and the Council of Europe. The documents relating to the affiliations of the Association is attached hereto as Annex V.

OBJECTIVES

8. The main objectives of the Association are to:

- a. organize, charter and supervise service clubs to be known as Lions Clubs;
- b. coordinate the activities and standardize the administration of Lions Clubs;
- c. create and foster a spirit of understanding among the peoples of the world;
- d. promote the principles of good government and good citizenship;
- e. take an active interest in the civic, cultural, social and moral welfare of the community;
- f. encourage service-minded people to serve their community without personal financial reward, and to encourage efficiency and promote high ethical standards in commerce, industry, professions, public works and private endeavours.

ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LIONS CLUBS

9. The Association engages in Community Service Projects in the areas of health, hygiene, and education, namely:

- a. Aid to the elderly;
- b. Citizenship;
- c. Crime Prevention;
- d. Culture/the Arts;
- e. Disaster Relief; and
- f. Literacy;
- g. Vision screenings;
- h. Blood donation; and,
- i. Provision of diabetes medication/equipment.

10. In addition, the financial expenditures of the Association on the Continent is estimated at \$18 Million per year. The list of activities of the association is attached hereto as Annex VI.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

11. The basic resources of the Association on the Continent is substantially, derived from the contributions of its members. Nevertheless, the Association receives additional funding from the International Foundation of Lions Clubs (the foundation), which is a bank founded to serve the Lions Clubs around the world. The financial sources of the foundation are:

- Contribution from Members of the Melvin Jones Fellowship; and
- Funds raised from the public from time to time for different purposes.

PRINCIPLES APPLIED

12. In processing the application of the Association the Commission took into account the Principles to be applied in granting Observer Status within the Union as spelt out in Part I, Section I of Criteria. In this regard, the Commission wishes to underline the following:

- The aims and purposes of the Association are in conformity with the spirit, objectives and principles of the Constitutive Act of the African Union;
- It is an international NGO of recognised standing in areas of hygiene, education, health etc, which is duly registered and undertakes activities in Forty-five (45) Member States of the Union, without any restriction to undertake regional and continental activities;
- It has an established headquarters with an Executive body;
- It has a democratically adopted constitution, a copy of which has been deposited with the Chairperson of the AU Commission and attached hereto as Annex VII;
- It has a representative structure and possesses appropriate mechanisms of accountability to its members, who exercise effective control over its policies through appropriate democratic and transparent decision-making processes;
- Its membership on the African Continent is made up of African citizens and service minded people residing in the continent;
- It does not discriminate on the basis of specific criteria, such as gender, colour, religion, ethnicity, tribe or race, on the basis of which its application can be denied.

APPLICATION PROCESS

13. In accordance with Part I, Section II of the Criteria, the Association has met the requirements stipulated for an NGO wishing to apply for Observer Status within the AU as follows:

- Its written application to the Commission, dated 17 May 2005, indicating its intention, was received prior to the deadline of at least six (6) months before its consideration by the Executive Council; and

- Its Constitution, up-to-date list of membership, sources of its finances including copies of its most recent balance sheet, and memorandum of its activities containing its past and present activities (Annex VIII), its connections, including any connections external to Africa have been duly submitted to the Commission in at least two (2) languages.

14. The Executive Council at this present session is therefore invited to consider the application by the Association for observer status with the African Union.

15. The documents submitted by the Association in support of its application are attached hereto as Annexes.

APPLICATION DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED BY LIONS CLUB INTERNATIONAL

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