



KDDAUK General Monthly Meeting on 26th October 2019.

The meeting was called to order by the chair, Mr. Aiah B. Tondoneh.

The Christian prayer was conducted by Chief S.Y.O. Lebbie, and the Muslim prayer conducted by the Yenda chair, Mr. Mackie Sheik, who recited the first chapter of the holy Koran, the alfatia.

Next was the minutes of the last meeting in September which was read by the secretary of KDDA-UK Mr. Sahr Queegbana Kamanda.

The chair asked if there were any observations arising from the minutes and at the same time, Mr. Tamba Opel Sam Sumana asked for the presence of the assistant secretary of KDDA-UK.

If there were no matters arising from the minutes, the chair asked for someone to adopt the minutes as the property of KDDA-UK. Mr Opel Sumana moved that the minutes be adopted, seconded by Mrs. Patricia Saffa.

The next item on the agenda was the chairman's address, in which he thanked all the ones that attended the meeting in September as well as the ones that were not present. He welcomed specifically, chair Mackie Sheik of the YENDA-UK for attending the meeting. He said that he purposely invited him to the meeting, he also welcomed the presence of honourable Tamba Opel Sumana, whom he also invited to attend the meeting. He also acknowledged the presence of his strong advisers and elders in the persons of Mr. S.Y.O. Lebbie and Mr. Sahr Stephen Kabba.

Also welcome were Mr. Samuel Torto and Mr. Sahr Sinah after being absent from the KDDA-UK meetings for quite some considerable time.

He also took the opportunity to welcome our sister Mrs. Theresa Willems back from Sierra Leone for the funeral of her dad and Mrs. Sodengbe, who had returned to the meeting after a while.

He said, he has this habit of asking, whether there was any good or unwelcome news in the community?

Honourable Tamba Opel Sumana gave the good news that he had become a grand- parent six days ago and there was a standing ovation by attendees for the news. The chair asked if there was any good or sad news but there was none. He also mentioned that there was a functioning welfare department, and if there is any sick person in the community or grief, we should take the opportunity to contact the welfare department at once.

He said he was taking the opportunity to thank the members and supporters of the organisation for being there and supporting the current trustees in promoting the aims of the organisation and mentioned that today, the 26th of October, 2019 marks the first year of being trustees. During this first year, he said the team has been very professional and extraordinarily strong in enforcing the operational system of KDDAUK with relevant policies and safety procedures in carrying out the organisation's aims.

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Because of these systems in place, an excessively massive storm had just passed over our heads. With keeping a healthy cash balance and proved the KDDAUK is bound by the legal laws under the charity commission in England and Wales. Regular payments in the bank has increased gradually, and as a result, he thanks the trustees and be proud of them. He also mentioned that the leadership of KDDAUK has completed a year running the organisation and reminded the attendees that at this time next year, there will be elections for trustees which will be very transparent and strict according to the constitution of this organisation. So, active members must work in the community and promote the kwedondoya idea to work for Kono District and our people in Sierra Leone. The chair also expressed thanks to Doctor and Mrs. Ngegba for making it possible for KDDAUK to conduct meetings in their home.

The chair said that the trustees have all seen the update from the charity commission which he has posted, and we have discussed at the general meeting. The inspectors have said that they were very happy with us because of the systems we have been put in place and they have never seen this number of trustees supporting an investigation at any one time, and the number of meetings held so far have been very impressive and this means that we are doing very well. As agreed in the earlier meeting that the members of the treasury team should publish every quarterly the updated monthly payments made by members on the organisation's website and on the social media platform for all to see and be aware of contributions made by all the members. The reasons for this are:

1. to supply concrete proof of eligibility to contest for any position as a trustee.
2. Publishing this information on the organisation's website and the social media platform, encourages others to register with the organisation.
3. To avoid unnecessary argument with people who are hell-bent on disrupting the bi-annual general election of the KDDAUK.

Therefore, we are all encouraged to update our payments because our contributions will ease the process of catering for medical equipment and other necessary support for our people in Kono District. Efficient payment could be done by direct debit or by making a full yearly payment through the KDDAUK account. Also, gift aid forms are available with the treasury team and any contributions made to KDDAUK charity can be claimed from the HMRC.

The chair thanked everyone present and gladly announced that the storm cloud that was hanging over our heads as now passed and decided not to say much because that is part of the agenda to discuss. He also mentioned that the organisation has had a few nominations by people in America or Sierra Leone as the best diaspora organisation and it is advertised on Facebook. So please vote for KDDA-UK as the best diaspora Non-governmental organisation. The chair was also nominated for the distinguished leadership award in the diaspora and was asking that we vote for him.

The secretary complimented the chair by announcing another award which KDDAUK was awarded by the Kono Union-USA for organisation of the year which engenders KDDA-UK as reputable organisation recognized the world over.

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Honourable Tamba Opel Sumana made a point of correction to the secretary's comment about our brothers in the United Kingdom not recognizing KDDAUK as an important organization. He said no matter how many Kono organizations are formed, KDDA-UK is the primarily and well recognized as the umbrella Kono organization despite all our difficulties. Secondly, he said for an organization to go through the charity commission inquiry and come out unscathed is impressive.

He thanked Dr and Mrs. Ngegba for opening their humble home and accommodate KDDA-UK to hold meetings. He further recommended that KDDA-UK should find a cheap and reasonable hall to hold meetings because our population is larger than the accommodation being temporary provided at the Ngegba's residence. He further said that KDDA-UK is way above holding a meeting in a house a large hall. He advised that KDDA-UK stress reliability at meeting attendance.

Mrs. Patricia Saffa made a point about the seating area at the Ngegba's residence, suggesting that it can be extended, and she even offered to bring fifty added chairs to complement the existing ones. If the research shows that the attendance is more than fifty people, then we will make the move for hiring a hall.

Next was the update on the statutory inquiry and where we as a charity stood in the face of the inquiry by the charity commission. The secretary thanked all the siblings who exercised patience and understanding in the predicament the charity found itself. He said, he referred to it as a predicament because a lot of undermining were going on and letters were flowing from all directions just to slander KDDA-UK. He recalled a notice which was sent from the charity commission to the chair, saying that the commission had opened a statutory inquiry under section 46 of the charity's Act 2001 for reasons which he read to the attendants at the meeting. He further informed the attendees about the manner which the commission used to investigate the charity; interviewing the chairman, thoroughly going through all the financial documents submitted, the main discrepancy found was that the end of year balance of account was not carried forward and because of that discrepancy the bank account the charity was frozen and our access to the account was stopped. When we took the step to reconcile the account, the charity's bank account was unbarred, and a certificate was given to show that our bank account has been unbarred. The secretary thanked all the former leaders and trustees of KDDAUK who have worked extremely hard to make what the charity is today. He said that even though we have not yet got the final report from the charity commission, we have been partially exonerated because the use of our bank account has been returned to us and the charity running as normal.

Mr. Sahr Stephen Kabba mentioned that there were a lot of organisations registered as charities in this country, and asked why is KDDA-UK in the spotlight? He said simply because of our own members. He mentioned people like Sahr Fasuluku writing a letter to the charity commission is the name associated with the origin of the charity commission's statutory inquiry of KDDA-UK. He said that KADDA-UK is the organisation he relies on, and that we should all go to any extent to prevent anyone from destroying the good name of our charity. To support Mr. Kabba's point, Mr. S.Y.O Lebbie brought the attention of all to the point in the constitution that if any member's character is contrary to the requirements of the constitution, that member must be expelled from the organisation. He said if we do not take any action on this matter, it will be a precedent for others to follow.

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Mr. Sahr Sinah who had been away for a long time, returned to the meeting and thanked all for the contributions they have made towards the development of KDDA-UK. There have been differences in the organisation before but there has been peace and the organisation remained intact. He said people have written letters to the charity commission, but the organisation has been exonerated. He said we should not respond to peoples' bad actions with revenge. He also said there are discrepancies that were highlighted and a member of the trustees' board having more than four charities. He recommended that we speak to the trustee. He said he belongs to the organisation and he will start to update his membership.

Mrs. Christiana Sodengbe said that since the time of Dr Kai Ngegba's tenure as head of KDDAUK these miscreants were members of the trustees' board and are well aware of what is happening in the organisation and because of the grievance of losing an election decided to write to the charity commission and make false accusations against the charity. She asked how it is possible to work with people of that sort. She believes that action based on the constitution should be taken against them. She feels that KDDA-UK is very lenient with its members and for an organisation to be progressive, it must be firm with its members.

Mr. Tamba Opas Jimmy-Kay took the floor to comment on Mr. Sahr Sinah's contributions. He said firstly the information he based his argument on was wrong. He said there is a trustee who has other charities, not four but two. The reason KDDA-UK is linked to the commission is because of his link with KDDA-UK. He the crucial point here is that we are working as a team and succeeding as an organisation.

Aminata Jerry Brown said that the extent that Sahr Fasuluku and the others went to discredit the KDDA-UK was too far and as a result we should think carefully about how to deal with the situation.

Mrs. Sia Jaward, suggested also that whatever we do should go by the constitution.

The reason the charity commission, during the investigation took KDDA-UK seriously, was because of the system we had in place and the number of trustees that turned up for the investigation. The documents we had in draft forms, our appearance like the t-shirt, showing our logo, all confirmed the authenticity of the KDDA-UK as a charity.

One of the documents we have in a draft form is the sponsorship and donation acceptance policy. We want to say thanks to Miss Sumbay Saffa for making this document possible. The trustees wish to ask that Mrs. Patricia Saffa to extend their sincere gratitude to Miss Sumbay Saffa for making the exercise so easy for us with the charity commission. We also want to adopt it as an official document, as well as the recommendations made by the accountants. We also want witnesses to sign the document.

There was no update on the constitutional review committee because the chair, Dr Kai Ngegba was sick.

The social department team headed by Mrs. Brown thanked everyone and even welcomed the presence of Haja Kadiatu Kabba at the meeting. She said the search for the hall for our Dinner and

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Dance in 2020 has not had any success yet but the team is still hunting around for a suitable venue. The team is also appealing to members who know about suitable places that are accessible to please contact the team members with information. Mrs. Brown also mentioned that Mr. Mackie Sheik did supply a contact number for a venue that they had used to organise their function. Mrs. Brown also advised that in looking for a suitable venue, we should consider the cost of organising the Dinner and Dance and the location also should be central. Mr. S.Y.O. Lebbie contacted a friend about the cost for using their facility for dinner and dance. It was £20 per head and the venue is centrally found in Wembley. Mrs. Brown asked that the social department team contact the contact for further information.

The chair suggested in the next general meeting, the social department should have several venues found with their costs to be compared by members.

Next, was the treasury department with their accounts report. Mrs. Tondoneh went through the account, and said that from the 18th of October, the account of the charity stands at £8,371.55. Payments to the ADK Accountants amounted to £450. She appealed to all members to update their accounts and regularise their payments. Every three months, information of the members that have made payments will be published on the charity's forum on the social media platform as evidence of monthly payments and registration. Payments for transportation to Hemel Hempstead will be refunded by cheque to the trustees who attended the charity commission inquiry.

Mr. Mackie Sheik thanked the chair for extending an invitation to attend this general meeting. He said he was also happy for the working relationship between KDDA-UK and Yenda and appreciates the fact that Yenda originates from KDDA-UK, and also very grateful for the £300 KDDA-UK has contributed towards their community hall project endeavour and on behalf of Yenda, he wishes to express his sincere thanks to the trustees of KDDA-UK. He advocated exchange of ideas and consultation between KDDAUK and Yenda. On the matter of Sahr Fasuluku and the other concerned Konos, he advised that if they come and apologise for their actions, the trustees should accept them back into the KDDA-UK fold as reckless sons.

Mr. Samuel Torto thanked everyone present and his mission at the meeting was to see because the information he had been receiving was worrying and to know the extent of the information. From all the reports from meeting, he was a bit satisfied that there was no trouble looming for KDDA-UK. The second point that was clarified, according to information heard was about another trustee involved with other charities. He said, when you hear a friend or even an enemy involved in fraud, is extremely distressing, and that was another reason is attended the meeting. He said he now understands that there were bookkeeping errors that triggered the inquiry and mentioned that someone writing a letter to the charity commission does not trigger any investigation on the part of the charity commission. The chair refuted the comment that writing letters to the commission does not trigger any inquiry. He systematically itemised reasons for the inquiry, which confirmed that there were people whose actions handled triggering the inquiry.

Mrs. Patricia Saffa personally named Mr. Torto as a Kono elder who had been reading all the accusations of fraud on the social media platform by Sahr Fasuluku and others, did he intervene

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and warn them or condemn their actions? No kono elder took any stand for the chair and the trustees of KDDA-UK because they all believed that the trustees were thieves and corrupt.

Mrs. E. Tondoneh presented a cheque of £300 to the chair of Yenda as contribution from KDDA-UK towards their project and Mr. Mackie Sheik received the contribution and promised that Yenda will use the money for the intended purpose.

Mrs. Yie Mani-Bayoh nominated herself as the whip for every future meeting of KDDA-UK to control our meetings.

Mrs. Theresa Willems also thanked all the members for their generous financial support provided towards the funeral of her dad. She also mentioned that members of KDDA-SL came to visit and sympathize with her and she also briefed them on developments about KDDA-UK and they also brief her about their operations in Koidu. The chair talked about micro-credit, internet café which they would like support from us for.

Mrs. Siah Jaward asked whether there were any library facilities in Koidu City? The members mentioned libraries that existed before the war.

Mrs. Patricia Saffa said that she talked to members of KDDA-SL and said that she was intending to support three women with micro-credit and buy three bikes for three young men. She was wondering whether this should be done with the support of KDDA-UK.

Mr. Sahr Kabba asked about the Kono Conference. The conference chair, Mr. Aiah Y. Sodengbe briefed the members about the Kono conference which took place in December 2018. He said the conference was well attended by Konos from all the diaspora organisations and well supported by the government of Sierra Leone. He said that the keynote address was presented by the vice president. He said that the plan was to take the conference to Kono and hand it over to the chiefs to manage it. Out of the conference, a lot of resolutions were taken, and the administrative work was left with the chiefs to address. It was not until the end of July and early August that the chiefs sent out the records of resolutions to be drafted. The plan was to release the report of the resolutions at Kono conference 2019. Since then there has been a total Chinese wall about information about the next conference. Prior to that in September, due to the dissatisfaction members of the Kono conference were concerned that a lot of things had gone wrong since the Kono conference was handed over to the chiefs. Because of these concerns and dissatisfactions, the chair of the Kono conference was mandated to write a letter to the chair of the council of chiefs to register the concerns the members were dissatisfied with. There were also other concerned groups such as Kono resource group, who were not aware of what was going on since the conference was handed over to the chiefs. The response from the chair of the council of chiefs was annoying and disappointed everyone. His response was that people were very annoyed and directly addressed the conference chair that he insulted him and his office. He also said that the Kono conference was handed over to the chiefs and they are ones that make the decisions about the conference now. He even mentioned that KDDA-UK and the other diaspora organisations should be reporting to his office.

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The general members advised strongly that the responsibility and control of the Kono conference be taken back from the chiefs.

Mr Dennis Turner the project coordinator said that during the charity commission's inquiry, one of the highlights was accountability of funds spent on projects like the Kono conference and when we look at the direction the Kono conference has taken now, it is a failed project. He said in our last meeting, we agreed to undertake three projects which are medical equipment, medication, and internet café in the year 2020/21. These were approved in the last meeting. So, thinking about bringing the Kono conference back on board will be a problem.

Mrs. Aminata Brown suggested that we take the Kono conference problem very seriously because a lot of finance, time and effort have been put into it.

Haja Kabba apologised for coming late and staying away from the trustees' board and meeting attendance but insisted that she wants to resign her position as a member of the welfare team because of the treatment she had received from a certain trustee. In response to her, the chair explained that the problem is being handled and Mrs. Sumana-Robinson and the husband have been contacted about the issue. A formal procedure is being set up.

Regarding the renting/leasing of garage, it was agreed that two garages will be rented, and payment made by direct debit.

The next meeting will take place on the 30/11/2019 at Mrs. Patricia Staffa's residence and Mrs. Aminata Brown also formally invited members to her son's eighteenth birthday.

Christian prayer was performed by the secretary and Muslim prayer performed by Haja Kabba.

Sahr Queegbana Kamanda

Secretary KDDAUK.

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