

An Orientation note to members of the FAFICS Standing Committee on Membership

Background: FAFICS Bureau established an ad-hoc committee on Membership and Membership Support during 2022-2023. Two Vice Presidents Marashetty Seenappa and Abdou Khader Diakhate were assigned main responsibility for this committee in their respective work programme of the Bureau.

Key objectives of the committee included contacting AFICS associations that were inactive or less active in the last three to four years so as to assist with their revival and also to support and assist retiree International Civil Servants interested to start an AFICS association in countries lacking an association.

UNAPATA the AFICS association of Tanzania that was dormant for over three years was recently assisted by FAFICS with the revival process successfully and its representative attended the 53rd FAFICS Council. Also, FAFICS assisted the UN retirees in Ivory Coast to start a new AFICS association and its President attended the 54th FAFICS Council in Bangkok in July 2024

The committee has established contact with associations in Nigeria, and Ghana. Also UN retirees in Liberia, and Zimbabwe, have expressed their desire to establish new associations. FAFICS is identifying their support needs. Lao PDR has also expressed interest in starting an AFICS association. As the demand for FAFICS support is increasing, the need for this committee to be strengthened and upgraded to a **Standing Committee** as the 'fourth pillar' of FAFICS was long realised by the FAFICS Bureau and was endorsed accordingly by the 54th FAFICS Council in July 2024.

Scope of FAFICS Interventions: The Membership Standing Committee will serve associations that need support from FAFICS. The Standing Committee will also assist in the formation of new AFICS associations in line with the new 'rules and procedure'. This Standing Committee will constitute 'the fourth pillar of FAFICS'.

FAFICS has already started identifying vulnerable associations and initiated few support interventions. FAFICS has established contact with AFICS associations in Nigeria, and Ghana with the objective of providing assistance.

Ghana: The association in Ghana needs to be assisted to amend its statutes to let non-nationals as well as nationals to be eligible to enrol and equally to allow both national officers and International Professionals to join the association without a hindrance.

Nigeria: Like in many associations, the AFICS association in Nigeria has faced management challenges following the 2019 COVID pandemic and a new management body is yet to take off. Mr Abdou Khader Diakhate, Vice Chair of the FAFICS Membership Committee is in touch with some of the key members of the association.

Likely New Associations: Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mauritania, Liberia, Hungary and Lao PDR : UN retirees from each of these countries have requested for more information about FAFICS, membership, nationality issues, professional versus other UN retired staff, and assistance in drafting of statutes. When the new associations are established, and their Statutes are approved, the associations will be ready to seek approval by the FAFICS council.

An analysis of the situation of existing AFICS associations in Latin America needs to be done. Also an assessment needs to be done of the potential for new associations in the Caribbean, and the countries in Eastern Europe especially those in the proximity to Austria as ARICSA can be a great supporting hub.

Governance of the Standing Committee on Membership

The 54th FAFICS Council in July 2024 approved the Membership Committee as the fourth pillar of FAFICS and as the **Standing Committee on Membership** with Marashetty Seenappa FAFICS Vice President as the Chair and Abdou Khader Diakhate (FAFICS Vice President) as the Vice Chair. It is proposed that the Standing Committee is supported by eight to ten members selected from the FAFICS expert pool. Members be drawn guided by geographic locations. The representations suggested being Central, Southern and East Africa, Francophone Africa, Middle East, The Americas, The Caribbean, Eastern Europe , South Asia and East Asia.

Workplan of the Standing Committee on Membership

November- December 2024 : Selection of committee members

January-February 2025 : 1st Virtual meeting of the Membership Standing Committee 1st Monday of January 2024. Key agenda items to include, review of Terms of Reference. Review of priority countries / AFICS association based on communication and current progress. Establishment of the 2025 programme of work and budget for the Standing Committee. Election of a rapporteur.

March-April 2025 : 2nd Virtual meeting on 1st Monday of March 2025. Review of progress from members on the follow up of AFICS associations needing support and the formation of new associations. Feedback from the FAFICS bureau. Updating of the Work Programme. Discussion of travel assistance to new AFICS associations to attend 55th FAFICS Council.

May-June 2025 : 3rd Virtual meeting: 1st Monday of May 2025. Discussion and review of progress from countries / associations. Drafting of a progress report for presentation to the 55th FAFICS Council to be held in July 2024.

July 2025: 55th FAFICS Council. (Venue and dates to be announced)

August-September 2025: 4th Virtual meeting of the Standing Committee. Discussion of the feedback from the 55th FAFICS Council. Updating of the work programme based on the review of progress report from the members of the Standing Committee and the suggestions from the FAFICS bureau.

October-November 2025: 5th Virtual meeting of the Standing Committee. Review of progress from the members and the associations / countries supported. Feedback from FAFICS Bureau . Identification of priorities for programme of work for 2026 for the Standing Committee.

December 2025. No meeting. MERRY CHRISTMAS to all.

Terms of Reference of the Standing Committee on Membership:

1. Review requests for seeking FAFICS support for starting of new AFICS associations and take appropriate action.
2. Assist FAFICS Secretary to provide information on structure, function of FAFICS, and FAFICS brochure, FAFICS website to those UN retirees seeking to start a new AFICS association in the country.
3. Identify and encourage well established AFICS associations willing to assist UN retirees in neighboring countries with the process for starting of new AFICS associations.
4. Review membership status in the last five years of all AFICS associations to identify those where the membership number is static or dwindling rapidly. Contact such associations and establish dialogue about increasing membership and identify any support needed from FAFICS
5. Seek from all AFICS associations, the minutes of their latest Annual General Body meeting, review the level of activity of the association. This will not only assist with differentiation of active versus less active associations but also may reveal a few common challenges

AFICS associations are facing and as to how FAFICS could be of help.

6. Through the FAFICS secretary, establish a “ Who to Contact” list for all AFICS associations and validate (ie as on 15 May 2024 for example). This will imply a compilation of the latest lists of Executive committee of each of the AFICS associations.
7. With the help of the FAFICS Treasurer, identify those associations that are at default in paying their FAFICS affiliation dues for more than two years. Identify such ‘dormant’ associations and review these on a case by case basis and propose actions by FAFICS.
8. Working closely with the FAFICS Standing Committee on Communications ensure that FAFICS website integrates electronic hyperlinks to websites of all AFICS associations.
9. Monitor requests of AFICS associations for FAFICS support on various issues including any emergency assistance required as a result of natural disasters affecting the families and livelihood of retiree families. Provide information on UNJSPFR Emergency Fund.
10. The Standing Committee meets virtually every two months submits interim progress reports to the FAFICS Bureau and final report to the FAFICS Council