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**Our Continent Africa**  
is a periodical on the current  
political, economic, and cultural  
developments in Africa issued by  
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**Special Edition**  
**150 Years of Egypt's Parliament**

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## Editorial

**This special issue of “Our Continent Africa” Magazine coincides with Egypt’s celebrations marking the inception of parliamentary life 150 years ago (1688-2016) including numerous functions atop of which come the convening of sessions of both the Pan-African Parliament and the Arab Parliament in the infamous city of Sharm el-Sheikh. This issue is designed and dedicated to celebrate this historic event out of conviction of the editorial board of “Our Continent Africa” (“Afriqiya qartna”) Magazine of the importance of strong ties binding Egypt and African nations.**



**Egypt is and will always be proud of its African roots as stipulated in Article 1 of Part I of Egypt’s 2014 Constitution stating “The Arab Republic of Egypt is a sovereign, united, indivisible State, where no part may be given up, having a democratic republican system that is based on citizenship and rule of law. The Egyptian people are part of the Arab nation seeking to enhance its integration and unity. Egypt is part of the Islamic world, belongs to the African continent, cherishes its Asian dimension, and contributes to building human civilization.”**

**Egypt is a country that is proud of its African identity and one of the founding states of the African Union. After President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi assumed office in June 2014, the African Union lifted Egypt’s suspension. Egyptian diplomacy did play a big role towards that goal. Since assuming office, President el-Sisi has been keen on participating in the African Union summits to help restore Egypt’s status in Africa in general, and in the Nile Basin region in particular. In July 2014, the Egyptian Agency of Partnership for Development (EAPD) was established to push forward cooperation with Africa via providing technical expertise to African countries in all fields. Egypt was also elected a member for a three-year term at the African Union Peace and Security Council, having secured the support of 47 African countries.**

**The issue at hand sheds light on the current House of Representatives, history of constitutional and parliamentary life in Egypt as well as the Pan-African Parliament, its presidents and the most important proceedings of its consecutive sessions. The issue celebrates African women accomplishments in the Continent's parliaments.**

**The current issue also recognizes the important role of the founding fathers of liberation movements across the continent like Gamal Abdel-Nasser, Ahmed Sékou Touré, Patrice Lumumba, Leopold Senghor, Julius Nyerere, Kwame Nkrumah, Hawari Boumadyan and Nelson Mandela to name but a few. Their struggle and great sacrifices for freedom and independent is a reminder of the necessity of joining efforts to further promote the values of humanity and freedom so that Africa can assume its rightful place at the international level, thus becoming a continent for peace, prosperity and welfare for all nations given the economic, human, cultural and natural potentials Africa has.**

**“Our Continent Africa” Magazine welcomes Egypt’s guests from peace-loving African, Arab and Western countries to this international gathering in Sharm el-Sheikh wishing everyone a pleasant stay in their second homeland Egypt, the mother of the world and the cradle of civilization. It is our hope that the gathering of world parliamentarians at the celebration will provide a useful opportunity to deliberate upon issues of mutual interest and send a message of tolerance and fraternity.**

**Ambassador  
Salah A. Elsadek**

**Chairman, State Information Service**

# Egypt's constitutions in history



Egypt is known for having one of the earliest administrative and legislative codes in history. Throughout its history, formidable human cultures and civilizations were incepted, and brought into being, offering the most advanced form of governance and management. Pharaonic civilization laid down the groundwork in Egypt in terms of governance and management. Egypt's constitutional experience started under Mohammed Ali Pasha in the 19th century. This document allowed for the establishment of some representative council known as "Dawaween", but it was never a fully fledged constitution in the contemporary sense of the word. In 1866 under Khedive Ismail, the first representative council was established and its bylaws were gifted from the Khedive, so

they did not impose a real obligation on the government. Still, the bylaws of 1866 were a step towards devolving governance in Egypt away from the hands of a single ruler. In 1882 under Khedive Tawfik, a constitutional document was drafted and it paved the way for the 1923 constitution.

## **Constitution of 1882**

The promulgation of the 1882 Constitution was the result of populist demands. Previous eras were limited to bylaws or the "Siyasetname", issued under Muhammad Ali to regulate the public affairs of the country. They were not constitutions in a technical sense as they were limited to purely administrative matters. The Constitution of 1882 created the first Egyptian parliamentary representation - pre-

vious councils had been only consultative. Prime Minister Sherif Pasha was delegated to draft the constitution, but because of mounting disputes he did not remain in power to witness its ratification. His successor, Prime Minister Mahmud Sami El Baroudi, presented the new constitution, which was passed by the House of Representatives, ratified by the Khedive, and officially declared in force on February 8, 1882. The 1882 Constitution declared two authorities in the state, the executive and legislative branches. It assigned the task of debating and endorsing the state budget to the Parliament. It also outlined the powers and responsibilities of the executive branch and completely excluded the Khedive from any type of oversight. It affirmed the sovereignty of the nation over the state and affirmed that the nation is not subject to hereditary rule. Among the disadvantages of this constitution was that it was issued via Khedival decree, to the people. It also ignored the judiciary and considered it to be a sub-category of the executive power. This constitution was repealed after the British occupation of Egypt and the issuing of the bylaws in 1883.

### **Constitution of 1923**

The Constitution of 1923 was a constitution of Egypt from 1923–1952. It was replaced by the Constitution of 1930 for a 5-year period before being restored in 1935. It adopted the parliamentary representative system based on separation of and cooperation among authorities. The

following differences distinguish the constitution of 1923 from the 1882 Constitution: It recognized the separation of three powers, the executive, judiciary, and legislative, established a bicameral system with two councils: the Senate, with a consultative function, and the Council of Representatives, with a legislative function. It detailed many rights and freedoms omitted from previous constitutions. Examples include: regulation of nationality rights, the right to resort to the judicial system, and the right to freely practice one's religion. It regulated the issuance of laws and ministerial oversight more elaborately than its predecessors. It is characterized by its emphasis on the sovereignty of the Egyptian nation. Although the draft Constitutions of 1879, 1882, and 1923 were written in response to popular demand, they were issued as a grant from the ruler, none of them submitted the head of state to any type of oversight or accountability. And, it allowed the King to ratify laws. If the king rejected a draft law, it required a two-thirds majority to pass.

### **Constitution of 1930**

The Constitution of 1930 was the constitution of Egypt from 1930 to 1935. It replaced the Constitution of 1923 until the Constitution of 1923 was restored in 1935. King Fouad issued a royal decree to repeal the 1923 Constitution, and replace it with the 1930 constitution, drafted by the government of Ismail Sidky Pasha to strengthen the powers of the king at the

expense of the Parliament. The authority of the parliament had increased due to the control of the Wafd Party and other political parties over the reins of the state. While the new 1930 Constitution retained many of the 1923 articles, it added several items increasing the powers of the king to counter the growing influence of the liberal Wafd party in Parliament. For example, it gave the right to propose financial laws to the King alone and not to the Senate. On March 12, 1935, under public pressure and in what became known as the "Cairo Uprising," the King abolished the 1930 Constitution and reestablished the 1923 Constitution.

### **1952 Constitutional Declarations**

When the revolution by the Free Officers Movement took place in 1952, the Movement announced its first constitutional declaration, repealing the 1923 Constitution, ousting King Farouk, and replacing him with his son Ahmed Fouad, Egyptians supported the Movement. The First Declaration promised to establish a committee that would draft a new constitution. The Second Constitutional Declaration issued in January 1953 dissolved all political parties and confiscated all their funds on behalf of the people. The Third Declaration set forth general principles leaning towards democracy and constitutionality. It was signed by Major General Mohamed Naguib, Commander-in-Chief of the Army, and the leader of the revolution. The Fourth and final declaration decreed

the abolition of the monarchy, the proclamation of a Republic, and the inauguration of Major General Mohamed Naguib as President of the Republic on June 18, 1953.

### **Constitution of 1954**

This provisional constitution was issued in 1954 and was rejected by the Revolutionary Command Council, although it was drafted by cross-section of fifty leading politicians, and legal and economic experts.

### **Constitution of 1956**

The Constitution of 1956 was the constitution of Egypt from 22 July 1957 to 1958 and from 1961 to 1964. It replaced the Constitution of 1923 and was replaced by the Constitution of 1958. It was restored in 1961, until it was replaced by the Constitution of 1963. The 1956 Constitution was issued after the ousting of Mohammad Naguib from his post in 1954. Gamal Abdel Nasser was declared his successor. The Revolutionary Command Council formed a constitutional drafting committee. This constitution was put to a popular referendum in 1956 and became the first Egyptian constitution to be issued with popular consent from the people. Its most prominent elements were: the State's guarantee to provide for universal education and employment. It also specified a law for agricultural land ownership. The 1956 constitution closely followed the 1923 constitution, but replaced the monarchy

with a republican system. The preamble made it unequivocally clear that the constitution was issued by the Egyptian people and not as a favor granted by anyone. The 1956 Constitution stayed in force for only twenty months.

### **Constitution of 1958**

Provisional Constitution, the “Constitution of the Union” came about following the union between Egypt and Syria, which led to the suspension of the 1956 Constitution and the declaration of the 1958 Provisional Constitution. This document was very brief and included a number of principles and transitional provisions in addition to an emphasis on the Arab character of the new state and the regulation of nationality.

### **Constitution of 1964**

The 1964 Constitution decreed a socialist orientation to the country. It was issued as a temporary constitution until a permanent one could be drafted. This constitution differed from prior ones because it defined the ideology of the state of Egypt as socialist.

### **Constitution of 1971**

After the military defeat of 1967, the drafting of a permanent constitution was postponed. After Gamal Abdel Nasser’s death in 1970, his successor Anwar El-Sadat decided to expedite the issuance of the constitution as part of his “Corrective Revolution” and in order to secure control

over the country and to eliminate what he later called the “centers of power”. A constituent commission was formed by Presidential decree and the 1971 Constitution was then put to a referendum. It was called a permanent constitution, like its 1956 predecessor. The 1971 Constitution confirmed the socialist nature of the state, stressed the pan-Arabist and Islamic basis of the state and elevated the status of the judiciary and established the Supreme Constitutional Court, which enabled the judiciary, for the first time, to regulate laws effectively and to rule on the constitutionality of laws. It stressed the dual nature of the executive branch, consisting of the Head of State and the cabinet and entailed the powers of the “People’s Assembly.” It specified the use of referenda and elections as selection tools for MPs and president and the four powers of the state; the executive, the judicial and legislative powers - with the addition of the press. The constitution detailed the powers of each authority and how its affairs were to be conducted. The President of the Republic remained unaccountable before the People’s Assembly. He serves as the head of the executive and judicial branches, and the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. There have been three amendments to the 1971 Constitution:

### **1980**

The First Amendment included two clauses. The first clause was related to the length of the Presidential term. The amend-

ment substituted “for other periods” instead of “for another period,” thus extending the presidential term indefinitely. The second clause confirmed the supremacy of Islamic law over all other sources of legislation by changing the wording of the article from “Islamic law (Sharia) is a principal source of legislation” to “Islamic law is the principal source of legislation provisions.”

## 2005

The Second Amendment was to Article 76 of the Constitution modifying the selection process of the President of the Republic. Instead of specifying a referendum as the means to select the President, the amendment specified that the President would be elected by direct, national, secret ballot. This amendment stirred great political controversy because of the surprising format of the new article - the text of the new article took up almost two pages of the Constitution—the longest article in the document. It also included procedures and conditions of nomination that contradicted the original nature of the Constitution. The modification stipulated that a party needed at least 5% of the seats in the Parliament to be able to nominate a candidate, thereby diminishing the chances of parties and political movements from participating in this process.

## 2007

35 articles were amended. Most of the amendments revolved around changing

the economic direction of the country from socialism to a free economy, and upholding the principles of citizenship. It also included amendments to the articles related to the Vice President and his powers, and granted additional authority to the Prime Minister.

## March 2011 constitutional declaration

Following the ousting of President Mubarak on February 11, 2011, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), the highest military authority, assumed leadership of the Egyptian state. On February 13, 2011, SCAF announced a constitutional declaration suspending the 1971 Constitution and declaring some general principles for the State. On March 19, 2011, seven articles of the Constitution of 1971 were amended and put to a referendum. Article 179 on the Law of Terrorism was abolished, and two paragraphs were added to Article 189. In March 2011, SCAF issued a 64 article constitutional declaration pertaining to amending and re-activating the old constitution. The amended articles submitted to the referendum were integrated into the Constitutional Declaration. The Constitutional Declaration has undergone two modifications: An amendment was made to Article 38 of the Constitutional Declaration concerning the election of members of the People’s Assembly and the Shura Council.



## **Constitution of 2012**

Through a decree on November 22, 2012, former president Mohammed Morsi allowed himself sweeping executive and legislative powers. Only few days later, a constituent assembly, consisting almost entirely of the Muslim Brotherhood and different Salafi trends, issued a draft constitution which was moved to a popular referendum on December 15 and 22, 2012. Egypt's new constitution was approved by 63.8 percent of the vote. Morsi's acceleration of the constitution-writing process reflects the increasing impatience of the President's office and the Muslim Brotherhood with the faltering transition process in post-Mubarak Egypt. Yet, the immediate consequence was an escalation in the struggle between Islamists—emphasizing the legitimacy of their moves through previous electoral victories—and a heterogeneous camp of liberal and secular forces that came to re-unite in what they saw as a real danger of authoritarian renaissance. After the announcement that the new constitution had been signed into law, Morsi moved quickly to swear in new members of the country's Shura Council – the upper house of parliament – which he protected from dissolution by decree a month earlier.

## **Constitution of 2014**

Since July 2013, Egypt has been working toward a new, democratic government structure that represents the interests of

all its citizens. The Egyptian constitutional referendum took place in January 2014 and resulted in the overwhelming acceptance of a new constitution, which had been drafted in the aftermath of the ousting of former president Morsi after one year in power. The 2014 constitution was drafted by a 50-member panel drawn from across Egyptian society, which was considerably more representative than the panel which drafted the 2012 constitution. The Constitution was completed through an amending process that was the most transparent and inclusive in Egypt's history. A ten-person committee of experts—including judges, jurists, and legal scholars—drafted proposed changes to Egypt's 2012 Constitution which were then debated, amended and approved by a Committee of 50 representatives that reflected a broad cross-section of all Egyptian society. Final approval of the entire document was unanimous. Egypt's new Constitution was crafted to rectify the failures of past. The Constitution enables true separation of powers and more equilibrium between the legislative and executive branches. The Constitution provides for a Parliament with strong oversight over executive actions, with the aim of limiting the power of the President, including a mandate to both develop and approve state policy and budget priorities. This is similar to parliamentary systems in many democratic countries (Article 5). The Constitution mandates term limits for the President of two four-year terms (Article 140). The Constitution mandates

representation for women, workers and farmers in the new Parliament, and other elected bodies (Articles 11, 243). The Constitution articulates a clear process for presidential impeachment. The Parliament is able to exercise the ability, for the first time, to impeach the President for violating the Constitution, not just for criminal violations and corruption as was the case in previous constitutions (Article 159). Article 40 forbids the confiscation of

property, which can guard against the seizure of church land and the demands of payment for its return. Article 92 protects the rights and freedoms of individual citizens. The 2014 constitution makes commitments to equality, non-discrimination, and equal opportunity in several articles, and even binds the state to establishing an independent commission to ‘eliminate all forms of discrimination’.

# List of Egyptian Parliament Speakers



When Napoleon Bonaparte's expedition arrived to Egypt, Napoleon held negotiation with El-Azhar scholars and community leaders, which resulted in forming an integrated structure for the country in the modern style. The nucleus of the Egyptian parliament is the "General Cabinet" established by Bonaparte, as he called on December 4, 1798 for establishment of general assembly of prominent national figures to have the capacity of representing Egyptians from all parts of the country, for the purpose of consultation over

the councils he formed and in setting the administrative, fiscal and judicial systems in the state. The General Cabinet in its first constituent form consisted of 180 members representing all districts and different social classes; scholars, tradesmen and civilians. This parliament first held session on October 6, 1798. Bonaparte issued what was called the Decree of Conditions which specified competence and functions of the General Cabinet emphasizing its consultative legislative capacity. In the first confrontation between the par-

liament and leaders of the French expedition on taxes, Bonaparte suspended the newly-established parliament, thus flaring the first Cairo Revolution on October 21, 1798, one of the demands of which was the de-suspension of the parliament.

The history of Egypt's parliament, the first in the Arab, African and Middle East regions, dates back to 22 October 1866 when the 75-MP Council of Consultative Deputies (Maglis Shura Al-Nuwab) was formed. The council, opened during the era of Khedive Ismail (1863-1879), held its first meeting on 25 November 1866. The Egyptian Parliament emerged with the consultative representative systems that started since Mohamed Ali assumed office and set down the principle regulations for the Supreme Council. It was one of the first parliamentary attempts to regulate the relationship between the ruler and the people, until Khedive Ismail came on 22 October 1866 and established the first representative parliament in the true sense of the word, namely the "Representative Consultative Council" (Maglis Shura al-Nowwab), modeled on the modern Western mode of establishing elected legislative institutions. These institutions represented the electorate and voiced their interests to the executive authority. The aim was to implement the modernizing theories of Khedive Ismail, which sought to establish a sound parliamentary life capable of truly expressing the interests and aspirations of the different sects and social strata of the Egyptian people.

### **Speakers under Khedive Ismail**

Ismail Ragheb Pasha ( November 25, 1866 – January 24, 1867), Abdullah Ezzat Pasha (January 28, 1868- March 31, 1870), Abu Bakr Rateb (July 10, 1871- August 6, 1871) (January 26, 1873- March 24, 1873), Abdullah Ezzat Pasha (August 7, 1876- May 16,1877), Kasim Rasmy Pasha (March 28, 1878- April 21, 1878), Gaafar Mazhar Pasha (April 24, 1878- June 27, 1878), Ahmed Rashid Pasha (December 26, 1878- April 10, 1879), Hassan Rostom Pasha (May 18, 1879- July 6, 1879).

### **Speakers under Khedive Mohamed Tewfik Pasha**

Mohamed Sultan Pasha (December 18, 1881- March 26, 1882) (November 19, 1883- August 18, 1884), Ali Sharif Pasha (September 7, 1884- September 22, 1884), Omar Lotfi Pasha (November 29, 1894- July 17, 1899).

### **Speakers under Khedive Abbas Helmy II**

Ismail Mohamed Pasha (November 3, 1899- April 7, 1902), Abdel-Hamid Sadek Pasha (April 10, 1902- January 30, 1909), Prince Hussein Kamel Pasha (January 30, 1909- March 3, 1910), Mahmoud Fahmy Pasha (April 11, 1910-June 30, 1913), Ahmed Mazloun Pasha (December 8, 1913- June 17, 1914).

### **Parliament Speakers under King Fouad I**

Ahmed Mazloun Pasha (March 15, 1924- December 24, 1924), Saad Zaghloul

Pasha (December 24, 1924- March 23, 1925) (June 10, 1926- August 22, 1927), Mostafa el-Nahas Pasha (November 7, 1927- March 15, 1928), Wessa Wassef Pasha (March 20, 1928- July 18, 1928) (January 11, 1930- October 21, 1930), Mohamed Tewfik Refaat Pasha (June 20, 1931- November 29, 1934), Ahmed Ziwar Pasha (February 23, 1924- July 24, 1924) (October 25, 1924-), Mohamed Tawfiq Nasim Pasha (November 25, 1924- December 14, 1925), Hussein Rushdy Pasha (May 23, 1926- November 16, 1927), Adly Yakan Pasha (January 3, 1930- October 22, 1930).

### **Speakers under The Regency Council**

Ahmed Mahir Pasha (May 23, 1936- February 1, 1938), Mohamed Tewfik Nassim Pasha (May 11, 1936- May 12, 1936), Mahmoud Bassyouni (May 19, 1936- August 12, 1937) (November 17, 1937- May 7, 1938).

### **Parliament Speakers under King Farouk I (Bicameral)**

Dr. Mohamed Bahie El-Deen Barakat Pasha (April 12, 1938- November 17, 1939), Abdel-Salam Fahmy Gomaa Pasha (March 10, 1942- November 14, 1944), Mohamed Hamed Gouda Pasha (January 18, 1945- November 6, 1949), Abdel-Salam Fahmy Gomaa Pasha (January 16, 1950- March 23, 1952), Mohamed Mahmoud Khalil Bek (May 8, 1938- May 6, 1942), Ali Zaki Al-Orabi (May 7, 1942- December 19, 1944), Mohamed Hussein Heikal Pasha (January 16, 1945- June 17, 1950)

and Ali Zaki Al-Orabi (June 17, 1950- December 10, 1952).

### **Parliament Speakers under former President Gamal Abdel-Nasser**

Abdel-Latif Boghdadi (July 22, 1957- July 4, 1958), Anwar Sadat (July 21, 1960- September 27, 1961) (March 26, 1964- November 12, 1968) and Mohamed Labib Shokeir (January 20, 1969- May 14, 1971).

### **Parliament Speakers under former President Anwar El-Sadat**

Hafiz Badawi (May 14, 1971- October 22, 1974), Sayed Marey (October 22, 1974- October 2, 1978) - (October 2, 1978- November 3, 1978) and Sufi Abu Taleb (November 3, 1978, November 4, 1983).

In May 1980, the Shura (Consultative) Council was set up to broaden the scope of political and democratic participation. The Parliament became bicameral, consisting of the People's Assembly and the Shura (Consultative Council).

### **Parliament Speakers under former President Hosni Mubark**

Mohamed Kamel Leilah (November 4, 1983- June 22, 1984), Rifaat el-Mahgoub (June 22, 1984- October 12, 1990) and Ahmad Fathi Sorour (December 13, 1990- February 13, 2011).

On February 13, 2011 a constitutional declaration was issued by The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces to disable the constitution and to dissolve the People's

and the Shura Council.

### **Parliament Speakers under The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF)**

Saad El-Katatni (January 23, 2012-September 22, 2012).

The People's Assembly was dissolved by a High Constitutional Court ruling issued on June 14, 2012.

### **Parliament Speakers under former President Mohamed Morsi**

Saad El-Katatni (January 23, 2012-September 22, 2012).

The People's Assembly was dissolved before former president Mohamed Morsi assumed office. On 8 July, Mohamed Morsi issued a decree calling back into session the dissolved parliament for 10 July 2012. Morsi's decree also called for new parlia-

mentary elections to be held within 60 days of the adoption of a new constitution.

The Shura Council was dissolved on 5 July 2013.

After the adoption of the new constitution in January 2014, as Article 245 thereof included the abolition of the Shura Council, the legislative authority in Egypt has become limited to single chamber system, namely the House of Representatives, which consists of 596 members; 568 of which are elected by the slate and individual systems, where 448 seats were dedicated for individual system and 120 others for the slate system.

### **Parliament Speakers under President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi**

Dr. Ali Abdel-Al (January 10, 2016-Current).

# Profile of House Speaker Dr. Ali Abdel-Aal



Ali Abdel-Aal, a constitutional law professor, was elected as speaker of Egypt's parliament during the first procedural session which saw the legislature convene for the first time in more than three years after MPs swore the constitutional oath. Abdel-Aal, 68, a prominent constitutional law professor at Ain Shams University, had won a seat in the parliamentary elections late in 2015 in Upper Egypt on the "For The Love of Egypt" electoral list, which strongly supports the policies of President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi. In 2013, Abdel-Aal made headlines when former interim president Adli Mansour selected him to the 10-member committee entrusted with hand-

ing a draft of Egypt's new constitution to a wider 50-member body for review. In 2015, Abdel-Aal headed a committee entrusted with drafting three election laws; the exercise of political rights, the House of Representatives affairs, and the division of electoral constituencies.

"We need to be wise concerning the legislations we issue, which must favour the people's interests," Abdel-Aal said in his first speech after being named speaker. "We will employ self-criticism in the parliament so we can always have an evaluation of our performance. And bear in mind, the supporters of the 25 January and 30 June revolutions have made us responsible for

their ambitions, so we need to meet their expectations.”

Ali Abdel-Aal won the position of Parliament Speaker with 401 out of 585 correct votes and 5 void, against six other contenders, including Ali Meselhi who came in second place with 110 votes; Kamal Ahmed (36 votes); Tawfik Okasha (25 votes); Eid Heikal (4 votes); Khaled Abu Taleb (3 votes); and Mahmoud Othman Al-Atmani who won the single vote he cast for himself.

### **Educational & Professional Background**

- MA in Law, Ain Shams University.
- General Law diploma, May 1973.
- Criminal Law diploma, May 1974.
- PhD in Law, Paris University 1984.

### **Posts**

- Deputy Prosecutor General, 1973.
- Lecturer in General Law department, Faculty of Law, Ain Shams University.
- Egyptian Cultural Attaché in Paris, 1987-1991.
- Constitutional Adviser, the Kuwaiti Emir Cabinet.
- Constitutional expert in Parliament, 1992.

### **Parliamentary Activities:**

- Headed a high-level parliamentary delegation in the 12th round of the Parlia-

mentary Assembly of the Union of the Mediterranean (PA-UFM) in Morocco, 28-29 MAY 2016.

- Headed a high-level parliamentary delegation in the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) ordinary sessions, where Egypt regained membership in the African Union following a three-year suspension in Johannesburg, South Africa, 3-13 MAY 2016.
- Headed a high-level parliamentary delegation at the 23rd Conference of the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union held at the Arab League, Cairo, 4-10 April 2016.
- Headed a high-level parliamentary delegation at the 134th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly held at the Arab League, Lusaka, Zambia, 19-23 March 2016.
- Participated in the First Conference of Arab Parliaments Speakers held at the Arab League headquarters, in Cairo, 24-25 February 2016, which was held under the auspices of President Abdel Fatah El Sisi. Speaker Ali Abdel Aal was named chairman of the conference.
- Headed a high-level Parliamentary delegation in the 10th Session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM) Tirana, Albania, 18- 19 February 2016.
- Headed a high-level Parliamentary delegation to the Inter-Parliamentary Union



(IPU), Geneva, 14 -17 February 2016.

- Participated in the Mediterranean Youth Conference in France.
- Participated in the first conference on outlining the first draft of the Ethiopian constitution in Addis Ababa in 1993
- House of Representative Speaker Dr. Ali Abdel-Aal authored several books, the most important of which are:
  - The Media Law (2014).
  - The Constitutional Judiciary (2014).
  - Public Freedoms (2014).
  - Egypt Constitutional System under 2014 Constitution.
  - Constitutional systems in Egypt and Kuwait, A Comparative Study (2010).
  - The Role of Democracy in the Development of Municipal Councils System, A Comparative Study.

# Overview of the Pan African Parliament sessions

## President Sisi emphasizes importance of role and functions of the PAP, praises its achievements



The Pan African Parliament was established as an organ of the African Union (AU) in order to ensure the full participation of African peoples in the development and economic integration of the continent. The first Parliament was inaugurated on 18 March 2004 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and its headquarters is in Midrand, South Africa.

The ultimate aim of the Pan African Parliament shall be to evolve into an insti-

tution with full legislative powers, whose members are elected by universal adult suffrage. The new protocol granting these powers has been adopted by the AU and is currently under ratification by member states. However until such a time that the new protocol comes into force, the Pan African Parliament shall have consultative and advisory powers within the AU.

AU Member States are represented at the Pan African Parliament by five Par-

liamentarians, at least one of whom must be a woman. The representation of each Member State must reflect the diversity of political opinions in each National Parliament or other deliberative organ.

Under rule 28 of the PAP's Rules of Procedure, the Parliament should meet at least twice in ordinary session within a one-year period. Parliamentary sessions can last for up to one month. Under rule 29, the PAP can meet in extraordinary session.

#### **Parliaments and presidents since 2004**

##### **- First Parliament:**

March 2004 to October 2009

President:

Gertrude Mongella, UR of Tanzania

##### **Second Parliament:**

October 2009 to May 2012

President:

Idriss Ndele Moussa, Chad

##### **Third Parliament:**

May 2012 to May 2015

President:

Bethel Nnaemeka Amadi, Nigeria

##### **Fourth Parliament:**

May 2015 to Current

President:

Roger Nkodo Dang, Cameroon

##### **First Parliament:**

**March 2004 to October 2009**

The inaugural session of the Pan-African Parliament took place at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 18-20 March 2004. This session was

marked by the opening ceremony and the inaugural session of the Parliament. Two hundred and two (202) Pan-African Parliamentarians elected or nominated out of a total of 205 from forty-one (41) Member States of the African Union that had ratified the Protocol to the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community relating to the Pan-African Parliament, participated in the deliberations of the session.

Under the chairmanship of Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, the then President of the Republic of Mozambique and Chairperson of the African Union, the inaugural session which opened on 18 March 2004, was marked essentially by the swearing of the oath of office/solemn declaration by the Pan-African Parliamentarians and the election of the President of the Parliament.

This ceremony of assumption of office was conducted by four nominated senior parliamentary officials, on the basis of the different working languages of the Pan-African Parliament, namely: Arabic, English, French and Portuguese. Thus, 202 Pan-African Parliamentarians from 41 States took the oath or made their solemn declaration in the working language of their choice.

Before electing the PAP president, the parliamentarians adopted the rules for the election of the President of the Parliament. In compliance with the Protocol, the President was to be elected by secret ballot, by simple majority of the members present and voting. Three candidatures were an-

nounced, namely the candidatures of Ghana, The Sudan and Tanzania. At the end of various consultations, Ghana and The Sudan withdrew in favour of Tanzania. Therefore, Mrs. Mongella Gertrude Ibengwe, Tanzanian Parliamentarian (East Africa), became the sole candidate for this post.

Mrs. Mongella Gertrude Ibengwe, President elect of the Pan-African Parliament then took the oath of office. The deliberations of the inaugural session continued under the presidency of Mrs. Mongella Gertrude Ibengwe, President of the Pan-African Parliament with the reading of the vote of thanks by an Ethiopian Parliamentarian. The Pan-African Parliament held its 1st session at the headquarters of the African Union on this same 18th day of March 2004 according to the following agenda: Election of the four Vice-Presidents of the PAP; Establishment of the Bureau of the PAP; Adoption of Rules for the Constitution of Committees and Rules of Debate; Constitution of the Committees of the PAP; Debate on the statements of the Current Chairperson of the African Union and the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union. After taking the oath of office, the Vice-Presidents were invited by the President of the Parliament to take their seats on the podium. Three Ad Hoc Committees were set up to prepare the basic texts for the operation of the Parliament. The Committees are as follows: Legal Affairs Committee; Budget Committee; Credentials Commit-

tee. The Pan-African Parliamentarians expressed their views on the issues raised by the Chairperson of the African Union and the Chairperson of the Commission in their respective statements made at the inaugural session of the Pan-African Parliament. Parliamentarians from the following countries took the floor: Tunisia, South Africa, Senegal, The Sudan, Congo, Algeria, Namibia, Djibouti, Gabon, Ghana, Egypt, Lesotho, Uganda, Benin, Libya, Tanzania, Botswana, Burundi, The Gambia, Mauritania, Mauritius, Rwanda, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Zambia, Kenya, Niger, Cameroon, Zimbabwe, Mali, Guinea Conakry, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Togo, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, and Ethiopia.

As representatives and the voices of African peoples rather than States or governments, the PAP underscored the magnitude of the responsibility, trust, and confidence conferred on them by African peoples themselves, and by the Constitutive Act and Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) to ensure the responsiveness of the AU to the highest aspirations of all segments of the African people, on which the success of the AU would also be judged. In this light, the PAP noted the expectations of the African people's were high, resolving that failure was not an option, and the mobilization of adequate resources, and all necessary measures to ensure the smooth and effective conduct of its activities was crucial.

**Second Parliament:  
October 2009 to May 2012**

On 26 October 2009, the second ordinary session of the second legislature of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) took place at Gallagher Estate in Midrand, outside Johannesburg. In addition to members of the PAP, in attendance were members of South Africa's government and diplomatic corps as well as local and international media. Opening statements were issued by the representatives of the PAP from the Arab League, Senegal, Chad, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and South Africa. The majority of remarks addressed the challenges facing the continent, while emphasizing the need for African solidarity in light of the global economic crisis and other factors. The Zimbabwean speaker referred to the current challenges facing the country and elaborated on the SADC mission that was scheduled to arrive in Zimbabwe in a week. The Nigerian representative issued a strong statement against 'constitution-tinkering' in Guinea and Chad, and firmly reminded delegates of the dangers of military coups as well as Nigeria's experience of this in the recent past. The keynote address was then delivered by the President of South Africa, Mr Jacob Zuma, who spoke about South Africa's ongoing commitment to the PAP. The address could be a veiled reference to concerns that the post-Thabo Mbeki government in Pretoria may lessen its involvement in the PAP which was seen as a major focus area of the Mbeki administration. President Zuma, while noting

current challenges, also emphasized the strides made by the continent over the past few years.

The Third Ordinary Session of the Second Parliament of the Pan African Parliament (PAP) was opened in Midrand South Africa by Dr. Moussa Idriss Ndélé, the then President of the PAP. In his opening speech, Ndélé said PAP will ensure that all African countries attain the millennium development goals (MDGs) by 2015. He added that PAP was working hard to see to it that all the countries in Africa achieved the MGDs as scheduled. "We want to improve maternal health and reduce infant mortality," he said.

Prior to his speech a number of messages of solidarity were delivered in the House by the President of the African Union's Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), Mr. Akere Muna, the Premier of Gauteng Province in South Africa Ms. Nomvula Mokonyane and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency, Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki. Recalling the NEPAD Secretariat transformation into the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, Dr. Mayaki said that the NEPAD Agency is "proud to be associated with PAP and will continue to robustly engage PAP as a key organ of the African Union, particularly in promoting popular participation and representation of African peoples in decision-making and good governance".

In addition, because both PAP and NE-

PAD are undergoing a transformation process for the improved delivery of Africa's development priorities, Dr Mayaki stated in conclusion that "without any doubt the delivery on NEPAD and Africa's development priorities will be strengthened through PAP's legislative power".

Ndélé highlighted the need for PAP to be transformed from a consultative to a legislative organ and ended by expressing PAP's desire to see free, fair and transparent elections in Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire and Chad in the coming days and months.

On the issue of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, Ndélé said that the PAP had launched a campaign known as "11before2011" which aims to get eleven ratifications for the Charter before the year 2011.

Ndélé also noted with happiness that seventeen African countries would by the end of this year celebrate their 50th independence anniversaries; a sign that the continent had matured. He called for dialogue among sub-regional parliaments in order to achieve Africa's quest for development and achieve the dreams of the founding fathers.

On her part, the Special Guest of the Session, H.E. Ms. Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of the Republic of South Africa said that "African nations must focus their energies on promoting peace on the continent." The Minister emphasized the importance of Africans uniting and cooperating to rid Africa of conflict.

She validated the importance of the PAP saying that it was "an important organ of the AU that has a critical role in the democratization process of the continent, peace-building, development, unity and integration."

The South African Minister called for the further advancement of democracy in Africa. Appealing to nations to do more to curb coups, she added that "the resurgence of this phenomenon undermines our continued efforts to entrench and consolidate democracy on the continent and remains a threat to the stability of Africa."

The Minister called for AU instruments to be reviewed in order to deal with unconstitutional changes in government, and for stronger measures to be taken to deal with perpetrators of coups.

During the opening session, thirteen new Members of Parliament representing Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and the Sudan were also sworn-in during the sitting.

The Sixth Ordinary Session of the second PAP on 16 – 20 January 2012 was held outside of the Seat of the PAP for the first time since its inaugural Session. As per Article 25 of the Protocol, the Protocol was to be reviewed after 5 years of entry into force. This process started in 2009 according to an AU Assembly Decision. Most importantly, it was proposed that the status of the PAP is changed from an advisory and consultative institution into a legislative organ. Addis Ababa was chosen specifically to advocate for this transformation,

as was this time which falls immediately before the African Union Summit.

**Third Parliament:  
May 2012 to May 2015**

Togo has joined the list of countries calling for the granting of legislative powers to the Pan African Parliament. H.E Kwesi Seleagodji Ahoomey-Zunu, the Prime Minister of Togo, said that PAP would play a more important and significant role in uniting Africa, if granted full legislative powers. “There is need to amend the Protocol and grant PAP full powers. It should also be based on universal adult suffrage,” he said. The Prime Minister represented the President of Togo, H.E Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe, at the opening of the Third Ordinary Session of the Third Pan African Parliament held at the Gallagher Centre, in Midrand, South Africa on Monday, October 21, 2013. PAP was set up to “provide a common platform for African peoples and their grass-roots organizations to be more involved in discussions and decision-making on the problems and challenges facing the continent.”

The Presidents of Ghana and Chad together with the Presidents of the Assembly have on different occasions called on the African Union member states to grant PAP legislative powers. The decision has been on the AU Heads of Government Summit agenda for some time now, having been approved by the Permanent Representatives Council. H.E Kwesi Seleagodji

Ahoomey-Zunu said that PAP chaired by Bethel Nnaemeka Amadi, a from Nigeria had discussed several issues of importance to Africa including the financial crisis, climate change and campaigned against terrorism; but needed more powers to act as a link between the African people.

The PAP President, Bethel Nnaemeka Amadi officially opened the Sixth Ordinary Session of the Third Parliament of the Pan African Parliament on 18th May, 2015 in Midrand, South Africa. The 6th Session takes place at the time when the term of the current parliament is coming to an end on 26 May 2015. The May 2015 session was the 6th and last one for the 3rd Parliament which he led as President. Various members of the PAP highlighted his good work and commitment to ensuring the PAP serves the African Union and its people. Adoption of the new PAP protocol by the African Union heads of states was especially noted as one of the greatest achievements during his tenure as the PAP President.

The highlights of the 6th session were:

- 18 May – official opening on the 18 May, by the President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya, as Guest of Parliament, and the 2nd Vice-President of the Republic of Sudan who is a former member of PAP.
- 21 May – the former President of South Africa, H.E Thabo Mbeki presented the African Union report on illicit financial flows out of Africa.
- 22 and 23 May – the PAP and AU Com-

mission co-hosted the 3rd Inter-Generational dialogue with the African Youth by Dr Nkosazana Zuma, the Chairperson of AUC.

- 25 May – PAP to celebrated Africa Day under the theme, “Women Empowerment”.
- 27 May 2015 – election for new Bureau and the President.

#### **Fourth Parliament: May 2015 to Current**

The First Ordinary Session of the Fourth Pan African Parliament opened in Midrand, where the host government of South Africa pledged continued support to the institution. “I would like to assure you of our continued support to the Pan African Parliament as the government and the people of South Africa and we remain available for engagements on issues you may wish to raise with us at all times,” said Ms Maite Nkoana, South Africa Minister of International Relations and Cooperation. The new President of PAP, Roger Dang Nkodo, chaired this Session, being held at the PAP headquarters in Midrand, South Africa, October 5 – 17, 2015. Minister Nkoana, who represented the South African President, said that the revised Protocol for the Pan African Parliament will enhance its mandate as it enters into force adding that it would have the full support of her government. The Pan-African Parliament concluded its second ordinary session on 12 May 2016

with the adoption of seven draft resolutions and six draft recommendations during its final plenary sitting. Amongst the decisions taken was to hold the next ordinary session in another member state of the African Union (AU). It was proposed and adopted that the PAP would establish focal points responsible for issues relating to women within the Parliament’s structures, including the Bureau, Caucus, Committees and Secretariat. As part of this decision, the PAP will increase awareness of gender issues and advocate for the reduction of gender gaps.

The PAP would also establish a New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) focal point to ensure linkages, coordination and synergies between the Parliament’s committees and the AU’s technical body, NEPAD. A climate change resolution concluded that the PAP would develop a concrete work plan for the annual participation of the Committee on Rural Economy, Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources at COP22. PAP will mobilise adequate financial resources to secure the participation in global annual climate change meetings and harmonise the participation of AU organs in future COP summits.

Some recommendations included the adoption of the AU budget for the financial year 2017, and the speedy resolution of the conflict in Burundi by the United Nations, AU and international community, specifically by stimulating dialogue between stakeholders.



The PAP further recommended and adopted the establishment of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA), the support for the apprenticeship and exchange of practical skills for continental e-governance, and the strengthening of women's rights to land access. PAP's President Roger Nkodo Dang congratulated the Safia Elmi Djibril for her election as Vice President, as well as parliamentarians who have been elected into permanent committees or caucuses.

"Debates were lively and many issues were raised. Parliamentarians showed their passion to the issues we face in Africa. The raising of these issues will help us to find solutions for these challenges" said President Nkodo Dang. "Parliamentarians are an essential link of the PAP. Without you the ambitions of the PAP can't be realised, and that's why your inputs will always be welcome. I look forward to see you at the next session," he concluded.

Egypt's speaker of the House of Representatives Dr. Ali Abdel-Aal attended meetings of the second session of the Pan-African Parliament. He delivered a speech during the inaugural meeting of the PAP second ordinary session. Dr. Abdel-Aal, was accompanied by Egyptian parliamentary delegates. Egypt's participation in the May session marks the resumption of its activities in the PAP after a three-year lapse. Egypt has been without a parliament since 2012, effectively barring it from participation in the PAP. Dr. Abdel-Aal also held talks with South African President

Jacob Zuma to discuss "bilateral as well as and regional and international issues of mutual interest. As with other member states, Egypt is represented in the PAP by five parliamentarians including Mai Mahmoud in the Rural Economy, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment, El-Sayyed Felefel in the Education, Culture, Tourism and Human Resources and Mostafa El-Gendy in the Committee on Justice and Human rights and Hatem Bashat in the Committee on Co-operation, International Relations and Conflict resolution.

The PAP President Roger Nkodo Dang, heading a high level delegation to Cairo, Egypt on 24 February 2016, met with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, in order to discuss the role of the Pan-African Parliament. President El-Sisi stressed the important role and functions of the PAP and praised the achievements made by the institution over the past few years. The President also emphasized the PAP's contribution in strengthening ties between the different member states and promoting understanding amongst the peoples of Africa. President El-Sisi and President Nkodo Dang discussed the regional situation in Africa, with President Sisi stressing that the exact circumstances surrounding the continent requires a coordinated and concerted effort in the face of common challenges, mainly the widening circle of terrorism. President Nkodo Dang's visit to Egypt takes place in the context of the PAP's sustained advocacy

**campaign on the ratification of the revised protocol of the Pan-African Parliament. President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi also met with Pan-African Parliament head Roger Nkodo Dang on 23 August 2016 to discuss regional issues. House Speaker Ali Abdel-Aal affirmed how critical it is for Egypt to regain its formerly influential role on the continent.**

**A parliamentary delegation led by member of parliament Hatem Bashat, who heads the African Affairs Subcommittee attended meetings and sessions of the PAP**

**on behalf of parliamentary speaker Ali Abdel-Aal in South Africa July 2016. The sessions discussed the latest recommendations made by the PAP, its budget, and human rights and gender issues.**

**In line with Egypt's pivotal African role, Egypt hosts the October session of the Pan-African Parliament, in Sharm el-Sheikh which coincides with Egypt's celebration marking the 150 anniversary of the inception of parliamentary life in Egypt.**

# Profile of Former Presidents of Pan-African Parliament



**Gertrude Mongella**

**First Parliament: March 2004 to October 2009**

**President: Gertrude Mongella, UR of Tanzania**

In March 2004 Gertrude Mongella was chosen to be the first President of the Pan-African Parliament. Known as Mama Beijing, Ms. Mongella served as Chairperson of the Fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing. After being appointed Minister of State for Women's Affairs, she became Minister of Lands, Natural Resources and Tourism from 1985 to 1987 and for the following four years, worked at the Tanzanian President's Office as Minister Without Portfolio.

Having risen to international prominence in 1992, when she was appointed as the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference

on Women, Gertrude Mongella is one of the world's most influential people. Mongella is a staunch advocate of equal rights for women around the world, particularly those from lesser developed countries.

Mongella was born on September 13, 1945, coincidentally the same year the UN was founded. Along with two sisters and one brother, she grew up in her birthplace, a small Tanganyikan island called Ukerewe, in Lake Victoria. Her father, a carpenter, defied local customs by sending his children to school. After successfully completing her secondary education, Mongella enrolled at the newly formed Dar es Salaam University, located near the Indian Ocean in the eastern seaport city of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. From 1967 to 1970 she worked towards and earned a degree in education. Mongella's political involvement began early on as she became one of



the few female members of the only existing Tanzanian political party, and consequently, the ruling party--Chama Cha Mapinduzi, or Revolutionary Party. She quickly became highly respected, which eventually pushed her career in a different direction. In 1975, Mongella was appointed to serve as a member of the East African Legislative Assembly, throwing her into public service and giving her a taste of the limelight. Once in that position, she quickly rose to the supreme organ of Chama Che Mapinduzi through election by a 20-member Center Committee. Subsequently, Mongella was appointed to several ministerial posts, including Minister of State, during which time she was responsible for women's affairs, and then Minister of Lands, Natural Resources, and Tourism.

During the 1980s, Mongella represented Tanzania in various capacities at numerous global conferences and forums, particularly those emphasizing women's issues. She served as a vice chairperson of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievement of the United Nations Decade for Women, held in Nairobi, Kenya. She also chaired the African delegation to that 1985 conference. Five years later she led a Tanzanian commission that presented a status report to the World Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

In 1991, Mongella was appointed Tanzania's High Commissioner to India. She served as a member of the Board of Trust-

ees of the UN's International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) during the early 1990s. With such extensive qualifications, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali made an unsurprising decision in 1992, when he designated Mongella as the Secretariat of the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing, China.

In 1998 she became a member of the OAU sitting on the Women Committee for Peace and Development, In 1999 she was a member of the "Council of the Future", UNESCO, Paris, France. In 2000 She was a Member of the Tanzanian Parliament Ukerewe Constituency. In 2002 she was a member of the OAU's High Level Advisory Panel of Eminent Persons. In 2002 Mongella was a member of the Regional Reproduction Health Task Force for the World Health Organization's African Region, She was also leader of the OAU Election Observer Team to the Zimbabwean Presidential Election. 2003 saw her as Goodwill Ambassador for the World Health Organization's Africa Region. She became a Member and President of the Pan African Parliament in 2004. In 2005 the University of Georgia awarded her the Delta Prize for Global Understanding. She was designated Chairperson of the International Advisory Board of the African Press Organization (APO) in February 2008.

**Idriss Ndele Moussa Yayami**  
**Second Parliament: October 2009 to May 2012**

**President: Idriss Ndele Moussa, Chad**

Idriss Ndele Moussa Yayami (17 April 1959 in Faya-Largeau, Chad, Africa – 20 May 2013) was the president of the African Union's Pan-African Parliament from 2009-2012. He became president on May 29, 2009. The other leading contenders for the presidency were Sawadogo Lassane and Mostefa Abdelaziz El-Gendy. Moussa received

a majority of votes of the members of the Pan-African Parliament.

A dental surgeon by profession, Moussa has served as Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Ndjamena. He is married and has six children.



Moussa has held several leadership positions within the National Assembly of Chad, and has served for several years in the Pan-African Parliament. He also

served Secretary General of the Conseil Supérieur de Transition (CST), which acted as a provisional parliament from the National Sovereign Conference in Chad. He was a member of the African Union mission to observe the parliamentary elections in Mauritius in 2005, member of the PAP mission to observe the general elections in Zimbabwe in 2008, and Head of the PAP mission to observe the parliamentary elections in Angola in 2008.

He died on 20 May 2013 in a car accident.



**Bethel Nnaemeka Amadi**  
**Third Parliament: May 2012 to May 2015**  
**President: Bethel Nnaemeka Amadi, Nigeria**

Bethel Nnaemeka Amadi was born in Nigeria on 25th April 1964, to Mr. and Mrs. Amadi both from Imo State. Growing up, he was influenced by the fact that both his parents were school teachers who instilled the importance of education and hard work as a foundation for success.

Hon Amadi was elected Vice Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association – Africa Region from 2009 - 2012. He served as 1st Vice President of the Pan African Parliament where he was placed in charge of Legislative Business, championed continental integration, led the Parliament to several high profile functions and was deeply involved in the transformation process of the Pan African Parliament into a full legislative body.

In May 2012, H.E. Hon Bethel Amadi was elected President of the Pan-African Parliament. As President of this continental body, Amadi's impeccable leadership brought about unprecedented growth in the parliaments global recognition and prominence. He was instrumental in repositioning PAP as a viable platform for articulating the wishes and aspirations of the people of Africa. As a result of his leadership, the Pan-African Parliament established significant framework for deepening democratic governance, sustaining Africa's democratic ideals and promoting

peace and security election observation missions and fact finding missions to conflict areas.

Also the PAP has since its establishment in 2004 exercised only advisory and consultative powers. This institutional limitation to the capacity of PAP to be responsive to the goals of governance and democracy building in Africa was the first challenge Bethel Amadi took up as he assumed office as President and he became determined to see that the Protocol is amended. Under his leadership, the Assembly of the African Union in a summit held on the 27th of June, 2014 at Malabo in Equatorial Guinea approved the amendment to the Pan African Parliament protocol and therein granted it legislative authority in clearly defined areas. An aspiration that eluded so many Presidents before his time, Bethel Amadi with focus, determination and remarkable display of leadership made it a reality. Today, the Pan -African Parliament after 10 years of its establishment has now acquired legislative functions to develop draft model laws in areas approved by the Assembly of Heads of States and Government.

Between 2012 and 2015 he served as President of the Pan-African Parliament. On 27 May 2015 his successor Roger Nkodo Dang was elected.

# Profile of Pan-African Parliament President Roger Nkodo Dang

Honorable Roger Nkodo Dang, has been elected the new President of the Pan African Parliament. He is a member of National Assembly of Cameroon and represents the Central Africa Region. He took over from Bethel Amadi whom he designated as an ambassador of the PAP charged with the promotion, signing and ratification of the Protocol as revised by the PAP. Roger Nkodo won the elections with 85 votes against Mozambican Eduardo Joaquim Mulembwe (70 votes) and Tunisian Rahoui Mongi (9 votes). Nkodo Dang secured the highest number of votes amongst the contestants and was therefore declared the winner of the election. He was immediately congratulated by the two other contestants who pledged to cooperate and work with him in the spirit of “One Africa, One Voice”.

In his acceptance speech, Nkodo Dang congratulated his fellow contestants for exhibiting the spirit of sportsmanship and expressed his appreciation to the PAP parliamentarians for the confidence reposed in him and pledged to carry everybody along. He poured encomiums on the outgoing President of PAP, Ambassador Bethel Amadi for the able way he piloted the affairs of the Parliament in the past three years particularly for ensuring the approval of a revised protocol by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in June, 2014 which granted legislative powers in defined areas to PAP. Nkodo



Dang expressed optimism regarding ratification, adoption and implementation of the newly approved revised PAP Protocol would be achieved in no distant time.

The President of the Pan-African Parliament has amongst other things, the arduous task of overseeing the political and administrative matters of the institution. He is to preside over all parliamentary sessions excluding those of the permanent commissions. The President of the Pan-African Parliament is also charged with representing the institution at various levels.

Roger Nkodo Dang is from the Nyong and Mfoumou division of the Centre region. He holds a bachelors degree in Law and a Masters degree in International Relations. Nkodo Dang was first elected into the National Assembly of Cameroon in 2002 and re-elected in 2013. Before his election as President of the Pan-African Parliament, was elected First Vice President in 2012 and re-elected in 2014 representing the Central African region.

# Political Participation of Women in Egyptian & African Parliaments

## History of Egyptian Women Participation in Parliamentary Life

Egyptian women were given the right to run for parliament in 1956, making them the first to be granted suffrage rights in the Arab world. Suffrage right was stipulated in the 1956 constitution and in 1957, eight women ran for seats in parliament. On July 14, 1957 the first two Egyptian women won seats in parliament, making history both in Egypt and in the Arab world. Historically, the first Egyptian woman MP to be elected in Egypt was Rawya Attiya in 1957. In 1956, as the Egyptian Constitution granted the Egyptian women the right to vote and to run for the Parliament, Rawya Attiya ran for elections in Dokki Constituency in 1957 for the National Assembly and she got 110,807 votes. Attiya was raised in a political family, her father was a leading Al-Wafd Party member in Giza governorate during the Royal era. Unlike most of the girls during then, Rawya Attiya completed her education and got a bachelor degree in education from Cairo University in 1946. She also took a diploma in psychology and a Master degree in journalism. After working in education as a teacher for 15 years, she joined the Egyptian armed forces during the 1956 war in its medical sector. The right of women to

vote and to run of the parliament came after a long struggle of Egyptian women led by feminists like Doria Shafik. MP Amina Shukry also ran and won in the 1957 parliament in the runoffs in Alexandria.

In the 1964 parliament, women grabbed eight seats, which amounted to 2.2 percent of the 360 seat house. The introduction of quotas in 1979 marked another milestone for Egypt's women. The quota reserved 30 seats for women and women could also compete against men over other seats. In 1979, 200 women contested and 33 won parliamentary seats. Late president Anwar al-Sadat appointed two more women, which brought the total to 35 women lawmakers, accounting for eight percent of seats. The quota was broadened in 1984 to include marginalized categories which reduced the percentage of women in parliament to 7.8 percent or 36 seats. In the following elections, the quota was cancelled and the drop was more pronounced. Women only made up 3.9 percent of lawmakers in 1987, when 14 female contenders won seats and four were appointed.

But 1990 marked an even harsher blow to women, who only made up 0.22 percent of all lawmakers, after winning 10 of 454 seats. The quota was reinstated in 2010, guaranteeing 64 seats, but women were unable to win any additional seats.



In 2012, the quota was lifted and female representation in parliament was less than 2 percent despite a record number of candidates that exceeded 900.

After the June 30 revolution in 2013, the Shura (Consultative) Council was dissolved and the 2014 Constitution was issued. This Constitution is considered one of the best Constitutions with regards to women's rights. It included gains for women in the different thresholds of political, civil, economic and social rights.

In Egypt, a new parliamentary law guarantees a minimum of 70 women representatives (or 5%) in a chamber comprising 568 elected seats and 28 appointed by the President. A total of 2,573 candidates stood in the most recent elections. According to the Egyptian Centre for Women's Rights, 100 women candidates ran on eight party lists and a further 110 women ran as independents, totaling 8.2 per cent of all candidates. Seventy-five women were directly elected, including five as independents, while another 14 were appointed by the President. As almost 15 per cent of Egyptian parliamentarians are now women, Egypt has made an impressive step forward when compared to the results of previous elections held in 2012. President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi issued a presidential decree appointing 28 parliamentarians to Egypt's newly elected House of Representatives, including the following female prominent MPS:

#### **Anissa Hassouna**

Hassouna is the secretary-general of the

Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs as well as the executive-director of the Magdi Yacoub foundation. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in economics and political science from Cairo University, she served as a diplomatic attaché at the Egyptian foreign ministry. Following her work for fourteen years at the Arab Economic Unity Council in the Arab League, Hassouna served as the general manager of the Egyptian International Economic Forum. She is a lecturer at the Diplomatic Institute in the foreign affairs ministry as well as at the Banking Institute at the Central Bank of Egypt.

#### **Rania Elwani**

Known as the Golden Fisher, Elwani is a former Olympic and African record holder in swimming. Rania Elwani has competed in three Olympic Games: 1992 in Barcelona, 1996 in Atlanta and 2000 in Sydney (semi-finalist in the 50 and 100 m freestyle swimming). She won three World Cup gold medals, two silver medals and one bronze medal in 1994-1995; she was six times silver medallist and four times bronze medallist at the African Championships in 1990; plus multiple gold, silver and bronze medallist at the African Games in 1991, 1995 and 1999. She was elected as a member of the IOC Athletes' Commission in 2004 and was an IOC member from 2004 - 2012. Elwani currently works as a visiting physician of obstetrics and gynaecology at Ain Shams University. She is the founder of many athletic associations that aim to prepare future Olympians.

Lamis Gaber, Lamis Gaber is a political writer. She is also a practicing physician. She has been published in an array of Egypt-based publications.

Caroline Maher, Maher, 29, serves as the head of the human resources Department in one of the leading automotive companies in Egypt.

Marianne Amir Rafael, The 38-year-old Rafael works as a consultant at the communications and information technology ministry. She received her PhD from Cairo University.

Magda El-Sayed Bakry, The 41-year-old Bakry is an assistant professor at the Sadat Academy for Management Sciences.

Doaa Youssef Soliman, The 41-year-old Soliman works as a professor of general law at Cairo University.

Hala Mohamed Abu Ali, Abu Ali, 43, is professor at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science at Cairo University. She is also the Secretary General of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood.

Sherin Ibrahim Farrag, The 44-year-old Farrag works as an assistant professor of biomedical engineering at MTI University for technology and information.

Rasha Ahmed Ismail, The 44-year-old Ismail heads the Spanish section at the school of arts at Cairo University.

Galila Osman Henawy, The 58-year-old Henawy is the head of the State Federation of Radio and Television.

Mohga Ghaleb Hashem, The 60-year-old Hashem is a professor of interpreta-

tion of the Qur'an at the Faculty of Islamic and Arabic Studies at Al-Azhar University for women. She was the first elected dean to the Islamic studies section at Cairo University.

Bassant Ahmed Fahmy, The 64-year-old Fahmy works as the chairman, manager and director of a finance, banking, and consulting company.

**Pioneer Female MPs in Egyptian Parliament**

Egyptians women have prominent roles in contemporary history like: Safia Zaghloul (1878-1946) who was called "Om Al Masrreen"; Hoda Sharawi (1879-1947) who established The Egyptian Women Union in 1923 and participated in the international women conference held in Rome in 1923; Samira Moussa, a nuclear scientist (1917-1952); Dr. Sohair Al Qalamawi (1911-1997) who made remarkable intellectual contributions in the academic and public life; Amina Al-Said (1914-1995), a writer and chief editor of "Hawa"(EVE) magazine; Mofida Abdel-Rahman (1914-2002) the first female lawyer, Seza Nabrawi (1897-1985), a female activist; Nabawia Moussa (1887-1951), the pioneer of girls education; Malak Hefni Nassef (1886-1918) who contributed greatly to the intellectual and political discourse on the advancement of Egyptian women in the early 20th century; Dorriya Shafik (1908-1972) who fought for the women's right to vote, and established the "Bent Al Nile" Daughter of the Nile) Movement; Eisha Abdel-Rahman, a writer and intel-

lectual (1913-1998); Hekmat Abu-Zaid, the first minister of social affairs in September 1962; Aziza Amir (1901-1952), one of the founders of the Cinema industry in Egypt and the producer of the first Egyptian long narrative film “Laila” in 1927 and Om Kalthoum, who following the 1967 defeat, embarked on a four-year concert tour across the Arab world to raise money to rebuild the Egyptian military, to name but a few.

Noteworthy, Princess Fatma, the daughter of Khedive Ismail, allocated 3357 acres for charity, that their revenue not to be hers but for the people on the 13th of July 1913. The revenue of that land would fund the Islamic Charity society in order to educate the poor kids, she wanted them to be doctors and engineers to revive her grandfather Mohamed Ali project in a way or another.

Among most notable contemporary female parliamentarians are:

### **Margaret Azer**



An activist, feminist, Copt and one of the very few female members of the 2012 dissolved Egyptian parliament, Azer has a distinguished presence in the Egyptian political and social scene for years. In 2007,

Margaret Azer co-founded the liberal Democratic Front Party and later became its first female Secretary General. She then joined the Wafd Party.

### **Africa’s female MPs, Quota systems are transforming African parliaments**

Legislation is a key driver of female representation. Heading up the African contingent is Rwanda, by far the best performer with 64 women (to 36 men) in parliament, helped by a law stipulating that 30% of all parliamentary seats be held by women. The next African state to figure is South Africa, where the African National Congress upped its quota of women in government from 30% to 50% in 2009. Botswana, by contrast, has dipped from 17% in 2003 (ranking it 54th in the world) to 8% (putting it 125th). Nigeria has increased its proportion up a shade from 5% to a still paltry 7%, according to the statistics on women in parliament from the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Of the 36 lower houses of parliament worldwide that have reached the 30% threshold considered necessary for women to have an impact on decision-making, 11 are African. At the end of 2012, one-fifth of sub-Saharan MPs on average were female, according to figures of the Geneva-based Inter-Parliamentary Union. That may not sound a lot, but marks an increase of seven percentage points on 2002, and puts the continent on a par with the global mean. In many cases, the gains are because of quota systems, which are increasingly

popular. In 2012 Senegal's parliament saw the fastest advance in female representation globally after it enforced a parity law. Women make up almost half of it. South Africa is not far behind, ranking eighth in the world, with women taking 42% of Parliament's seats, almost double the rate in 1994 when the ruling African National Congress (ANC) created a voluntary party quota, allocating 30% of posts to women.

Minimal change was seen in women's average share of all parliamentary seats following elections in 2015: it rose by only 0.5 percentage points. In the past ten years, that figure has increased by 6.4 percentage points, from 16.2 to 22.6 per cent. Women took 25 per cent of all the seats up for renewal in 2015. Sub-Saharan Africa increased its regional average by 0.7 percentage points, bringing women's representation up to 23.2 percent.

The number of women Speakers of Parliament reached an all-time high by the end of 2015 at 49 (or 17.9% of the total number of Speakers). Women also became Speakers for the first time ever in Namibia. In Namibia, long-time Deputy Speaker of the upper house and Chair of the IPU's Coordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians, Margaret Mensah-Williams, was promoted to Speaker, in a new era of female leadership, following the appointment in 2015 of Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila as Namibia's first female Prime Minister.

The importance of women in these po-

sitions of parliamentary leadership cannot be overstated. Women have proven many times over their willingness to usher in gender-sensitive reforms. The case of Mauritius is illustrative. There, the country's first woman Speaker, Santi Bai Hanoomanjee, has sought to establish a parliamentary caucus on gender equality, which will review legislation and policies from a gender perspective.

After unprecedented numbers of women were reported to have contested the 2015 election in Sudan, the number of women MPs increased by five percentage points, to 30.5 per cent. Twenty-two political parties reportedly submitted electoral lists that included a total of 128 woman candidates, while a number of women also ran as independents. This high proportion of women candidates is directly linked to the National Electoral Law: it allows political parties more than 4 percent of whose candidates are women to nominate women for reserved seats.

Only 22.8 per cent of all national parliamentarians were women as of June 2016, a slow increase from 11.3 per cent in 1995. As of September 2016, 10 women are serving as Head of State and 9 are serving as Head of Government. Rwanda had the highest number of women parliamentarians worldwide. Women there have won 63.8 per cent of seats in the lower house. Globally, there are 38 States in which women account for less than 10 per cent of parliamentarians in single or lower houses, as of June 2016, including 4 chambers with no

women at all.

As of June 2016, only 2 countries have 50 per cent or more women in parliament in single or lower houses: Rwanda with 63.8 per cent and Bolivia with 53.1 per cent; but a greater number of countries have reached 30 per cent or more. As of June 2016, 46 single or lower houses were composed of more than 30 per cent women, including 14 in Sub-Saharan Africa and 11 in Latin America. Out of those 46 countries, 40 had applied some form of quotas - either legislative candidate quotas or reserved seats - opening space for women's political participation. Gender balance in political participation and decision-making is the internationally agreed target set in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

### **Prominent African Female Parliamentarians**

#### **Fatima Ahmed Ibrahim (Sudan)**



For over 60 years Fatima Ahmed Ibrahim placed herself at the forefront of women's rights and social change in Sudan. She rose to prominence as a leader of the 1964 revolution for independence. Her public presence and powerful personality inspired other women to become active in

political affairs. Together women in Sudan worked to not only gain legal standing, but to acquire equality and positions within government. A year later, Fatima would become the first woman elected to Sudan's newly established parliament. Fatima returned to Sudan to be appointed as deputy in the Parliament in 2005. She announced her retirement in 2007 at the age of 74, stating "Now is the time to hand over the banner to the youth" and called for a new generation of young men and women to take her place.

#### **Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga (Uganda)**



Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga is a Ugandan lawyer and politician who has been Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda since 19 May 2011. She is the first female to be elected Speaker in the history of the Parliament in Uganda. She succeeded Edward Ssekandi, who served as Speaker from 2001 to 2011. She is also the current Member of Parliament (MP) for the Kamuli District Women's Constituency, Busoga sub-region, a position she has served in since 1989.

#### **Rose Mukantabana (Rwanda)**



Born 31 August 1961, Rose Mukantabana is a lawyer and women's rights activist. She is the former President of the Chamber of Deputies of Rwanda and was the first woman elected to the post. She was elected to serve as chair of the African Parliamentary Union from 2013-2015. She earned a post-graduate "specialized diploma in human rights" from Université Saint-Louis Bruxelles. In 2002, she served as vice president of Pro-Femmes, a pacifist umbrella organization which coordinated the efforts of 43 NGOs for women's development and rights. In 2005, she began working as the National Coordinator of the Women's Legal Rights Initiative sponsored by USAID and in 2007, moved to "Action Aid International Rwanda", first serving as Women's Rights Coordinator and later as the Program Development Manager. In 2008, she was elected as a Member of Parliament representing the Kigali City constituency. On 6 October, 2008, she was elected by her fellow MPs to serve as President of the Chamber of Deputies of Rwanda until 2013 by a margin of 70 for and 10 against. Her election made her the first female to head

the parliamentary body. In 2012, she was elected to serve as the chair of the African Parliamentary Union (APU) through 2015.

### **Naima Ben Yahia (Morocco)**



Ms Naima Ben Yahia has been a representative of "Istiqlal" party on the National List in the Moroccan House of Representatives since 2011, where she advocates strongly for social and gender equality issues. Through the Ministry of Social Development, Family and Solidarity, Ms Ben Yahia is the Director of Women's Affairs and Gender, co-ordinator for the parliamentary working group of male and female parliamentarians for gender equality, and the Moroccan parliamentarian head for the gender and gender development public policy group.