

**Minutes  
of the 10th General Assembly  
of 28 September 2012  
at Ferney-Voltaire**

**Present:**

- Presidency: Winds of Hope,
- Active Members: A Better Life Foundation, Au fil de la vie, Aviation sans frontières, AWD Stiftung Kinderhilfe, Dutch Noma Foundation, Enfants du Noma, Ensemble pour Eux, Gesnoma, Hilfsaktion Noma, Hymne aux Enfants, Idées'Elles, Label Vert, La Voix du Paysan, MAMA Project, Noma Hilfe Schweiz, Non au Noma en RDC, Persis Burkina, Persis Valais, Peter Ustinov Stiftung, PhysioNoma, Project Harar, Sentinelles.
- Partner Members: WHO/AFRO, FDI
- Associate Members: Centre Nopoko, Prométhée

**Invited Guests**: Bilifou-Bilifou, La Maison de Fati, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), Jean Ziegler (Human Rights), H.E. Prosper Vokouma (Ambassador of Burkina Faso to Switzerland and the United Nations in Genève), Tamara Pelège (interpretation).

**Apologies**: Antenna Technology (represented by Winds of Hope), AEMV (represented by Gesnoma), Enfants du Monde, Facing Africa (represented by AWD Stiftung Kinderhilfe), GIGIP (represented by Gesnoma), Hirzel Fondation, Marianne Wanstall (interpretation).

**Absent**: Enfants du Monde

The General Assembly (henceforth GA) was declared open at 13h30 by the presidency of Winds of Hope (henceforth WoH).

**1. Introduction by Presidency.**

Philippe Rathle welcomed the members, noting with pleasure the record attendance of 41 participants at this meeting.

He reminded the meeting that, according to Statutes, each Member had one vote, and that there was not one vote for each person present. Votes would therefore be cast using the red cards distributed to each member association or foundation.

An attendance list was circulated.

Philippe welcomed the presence for the first time of MSF, which had decided to become involved in the fight against noma in collaboration with WoH. Two projects had already been launched: the introduction of systematic checking of the oral cavity in the regions subject to malnutrition in which MSF is active; and collaboration between the reception centres run by MSF and by Sentinelles at Zinder in Niger.

Philippe announced that the interpreter Marianne Wanstall was absent, for the first time since the creation of the NoNoma Federation (FINN), for reasons of ill-health. He wished her a rapid recovery and thanked Tamara Pelège for stepping in to provide the interpreting service.

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**2. Adoption of the Minutes of the 9th GA 2011**

The members present at the GA unanimously adopted the Minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2011.

**3. Members**

**3.1 Statutes**

Philippe Rathle reminded members that in August they had received the new version of the statutes which included the changes approved at the AGM in 2011: definition of three levels of membership; new section on the rights and obligations of members; and various other minor amendments. He asked if anyone wanted to make any comments.

Robert van Poppelen, Dutch Noma Foundation, stated that Art. 6.3. (right to exclude members without giving reasons) did not seem correct to him. Since no other members wished to speak on this point, he said he had full confidence that the Article would be applied in an enlightened fashion. Philippe thanked Robert for his trust and agreed to ask Bertrand Piccard why the Article was phrased so uncompromisingly.

Martina Adams, AWD Stiftung Kinderhilfe, requested that the Articles be translated into English. Philippe said that only the French version had legal force. He noted that translations were a big imposition for such a small structure as WoH. If any member wished to undertake a free translation of the statutes, this would be most welcome.

**3.2 Membership Applications**

Two new candidates for active membership introduced themselves to the meeting.

**Bilifou Bilifou**, represented by André Bühler, was created in 2001. Its President is Chantal Bühler and her Vice President, Philippe Bédard. The three main activities are: the operation of a spirulina farm at Ouahigouya with an annual production of 400 kg; bilingual schooling for children at primary and secondary school; and the partnership with Persis Valais for financing and maintaining the operating theater at Burkina Persis. The association also supports other projects such as the Center for Rehabilitation and Nutritional Education (CREN) at the Regional Hospital in Ouahigouya.

Robert van Poppelen supported the application, but drew attention to the fact that a large number of member associations in the Federation are already active in Burkina Faso. He would like to welcome new members active in other countries. Philip reminded the meeting that the role of the Federation was to bring together all stakeholders in the fight against noma, so that they can share their experiences, harmonize procedures, develop synergies, improve the efficiency of field work, and develop advocacy against the disease. The Federation does not have an account and does not finance any projects. It is simply a platform for discussion. The qualifying factor for an applicant organization to join FINN is involvement in efforts to eradicate noma.

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**After discussion in the absence of the candidate, the GA voted, with one abstention but no votes against, to accept Bilifou Bilifou as an active member.**

**La Maison de Fati**, represented by its President, Caroline Benaim, was created in 2009 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in response to an appeal issued by Dr. Philippe Bellity, Enfants Du Noma, for a post-operative childcare center. Its main mission is the rehabilitation of children who have undergone major operations in maxillofacial and orthopedic surgery. It has 50 beds and they serve 45,000 meals per year on an annual budget of € 120,000. Its name commemorates the first child in the center who had been operated on for the sequelae of noma. In the context of pre-and post-operative tasks, the Maison de Fati collaborates with Ensemble Pour Eux. It also carries out prevention campaigns in the villages. Augustin, one of the nurses in the reception center, had put in place just such a prevention campaign against noma during the year in question. He became personally involved by producing a CD for local radio and television stations.

During her presentation, Caroline stressed the importance, in her eyes, of operating on the children in their own country, so as to avoid uprooting them, and cutting them off from their family structures. Yvan Muriset, Sentinelles, opposed the idea that medical transfers abroad were a source of trauma. He explained that such transfers were essential in complicated cases, which could not be surgically treated on the spot due to the lack of structure. A debate was opened with contributions from Marie-Claude Bottineau, MSF; Benoît Varenne, WHO; Denise Baratti-Mayer, Gesnoma; Claire Pouteau, Physionoma; and Christine Allary, Enfants du Noma. The conclusion was that it was inappropriate to view the two options as being in conflict. The choice of one or the other was imposed by such factors as the medical complexity of the operation, hospital admission conditions, the security situation on the ground, and especially the quality of the psychological counseling available for children and their families.

**After discussion in the absence of the candidate, the GA voted unanimously to accept La Maison de Fati as an active member.**

### **3.3 Resignations / Exclusions**

PR recalled that in 2011 it had been decided to grant a final year of grace before taking any decision to exclude associations that no longer participated in the GA and RT of FINN and did not pay their dues, as required by the Statutes.

**Enfants du Noma** had rectified the situation regarding subscriptions and since 2011 had again begun participating in GAs and RTs.

**Facing Africa** had resumed contact during the past year. Chris Lawrence, the President, had paid all overdue subscriptions and had presented apologies for absence from the meeting and appointed AWD Stiftung Kinderhilfe to represent them.

**Enfants du Monde** had also re-established contact during the past year. In 2012, Alain Roque, the President, had paid the membership fee for 2009, but not for the following years. He had presented apologies for absence from the meeting but had not appointed a representative as required by the Statutes. Yvan Muriset defended the association, stating that it continued to finance some of Sentinelles' surgical missions. Bernard Mivelaz, Persis,

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reported that Gisele and Alain Roque were in the process of handing over office, and thought it would be ill-advised to exclude the association during this transitional period.

**After discussion, the GA decided, with two votes against, to grant an additional year to Enfants du Monde to regularize its situation.**

**Campaner** had not re-established contact during the past year. They still did not respond to emails from the Federation and it was not possible to reach them by telephone. Dues remained unpaid since 2009. There had been no response to the notice convening the AGM, and no association had been appointed to represent them.

**After discussion the GA decided, by a majority of 12 votes in favor to 6 against, to exclude Campaner from the International NoNoma Federation.**

**4. Other Business and Closure of Meeting**

Yvan Muriset regretted that for years the members of the Federation had not filed their annual reports on the *nonoma.org* website, as they had committed to doing. Some members mentioned the difficulty of carrying out this up-load on the current website. Philippe Rathle, who supported the substance of Yvan's remark, stated that the Federation's website was due to be renewed after Winds of Hope's, and that this should greatly facilitate the updating of information, either by displaying link to reports that are already on members' own websites, or by up-loading them onto the FINN website. Robert van Poppelen asked that the level of detail required for these reports be clarified.

Since no-one else wished to speak, Philippe thanked the General Assembly for its active participation in the discussions and closed the meeting at 15.10.

The Presidency



Winds of Hope

Lausanne, 16 July 2013