

Irob Development Association (IDA) - Diaspora branch 2014 performance

Introduction

IDA's diaspora branch was officially established in March of 2014 in the USA.

Mr. Tesfay Desta Adoumer from Denmark initiated the Idea of organizing all Irobs under one umbrella organization so that it is easier to discuss and tackle the ongoing economic and social issues of our people. He believed that it was only when we organize ourselves legally, as non profit and non-political organization that strictly adheres to Ethiopia's and international NGO laws and regulations that we can effectively address and resolve the multi faceted issues our people continue to suffer from. His tireless and persistence efforts made the Diaspora branch of IDA a reality. Tesfay began his initiative during the last months of 2013.

At the first of its kind global conference call of Irobs on December 28, 2013, we had participants from four continents (North America, Europe, Australia, and Africa). At the conclusion of 6 hours of constructive and critical discussions by 60+ participants, seven volunteer ad-hoc committee members were given a mandate to research on how we can effectively get organized, to facilitate objective discussions with various Irobs as well as existing Irob associations, and get back to the mass with a practicable solution.

It was on the February 1st, 2014 follow up International conference call the ad-hoc committee presented the following proposals.

- Since there was a legally established organization (IDA) back in Ethiopia, all Irobs both at home and abroad should be organized under IDA and work hard to strengthen it.
- Diaspora Irobs should establish branch offices that should closely collaborate and work with IDA as a hand and glove.
- IDA diaspora to have its own committee members and bylaws that are inline with IDA's overall objectives.
- IDA should develop its own website to effectively facilitate communications across the globe, document Irob culture and history, and maintain valuable documentation for future reference.
- Membership to be volunteer with yearly contribution of US dollar \$300 for family and \$240 for individuals. This was meant to be reasonable for a family but any husband and wife are welcome to pay individual fees of \$240/each.
- Irobs residing in different parts of the globe were free to determine their own annual fees as they see it reasonable to their circumstances

All of the aforementioned recommendations were accepted and approved by majority of the participants.

During this conference, the seven Ad-hoc committees were asked to continue as permanent members for the term of three years. Additional 4 were elected so that each continent has representation. The new committee was composed of three women and eight men.

The committee members then elected a chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and vice chairman. The rest of committee members were assigned to various responsibilities. Each member contributes in his/her expertise. The committee has been very productive and has effectively utilized team efforts and individual expertise.

2014 Performances of IDA diaspora

- IDA Diaspora bylaws were developed.
- Vision and Mission statements of IDA were finalized
- IDA USA branch was legally registered and established in the USA
- IDA Diaspora's main Bank Account was opened in the USA
- About 137 overall active members have paid their 2014 annual membership dues.
- IDA Website domain was developed
- IDA-USA branch was approved for non-taxable status under section 501 (C) 3

- Canada Branch has been formally organized and elected its local committee members and opened its own local bank account under IDA's name. Any monies in excess of minimum requirement are to be transferred to the main IDA's bank in the USA.
- Irobs who reside in Europe have started paying their dues
- Irobs in Israel have been conducting several local meetings, to date, about 40 of them have paid their membership dues
- Saudi Arabia Irobs are in a process of organizing themselves
- Diaspora Committee continues to play a pivotal role to help motivate IDA members back home.

IDA website

Mr. Abraham Tesfay Hagos, a Computer Programmer and a Senior Software Engineer, who is also a paying member of IDA, has voluntarily designed and developed IDA website (www.irobdevelopment.org). The website is in use since May of 2014 and houses many relevant documents. The Weekly Saho radio program, for example, can now be accessed directly from the IDA website. We encourage concerned Irobs to regularly surf the web and provide feedback for improvement. Paying IDA members can now view and print their receipt by logging directly to the website. In our strive to continue to be more transparent, IDA members will be able to view Diaspora activities of income using their login information.

Again, it is great to have dedicated individuals such as Mr. Tesfay Desta and Mr. Abraham Tesfay. Their hard work, commitment to action, and their hunger for success are priceless competencies that will forever serve as exemplary for other Irobs to follow their suit. The duo's volunteer service to help disadvantaged Irobs is incalculable.

Active paying IDA Diaspora members

USA	57
Canada	17
Europe	20
Israel	<u>46</u>
Total members	139
Saudi Arabia - In progress	
South Africa - In progress	

Finances (net of Expenses)

USA	\$ 9, 713
Expenses	<u>892</u>
Net cash	\$ 8,821
Canada	\$ 2,780
Europe	\$ 3, 340
Israel	<u>\$ 9,960</u>
Net Cash Available:	\$ 24,701

Ongoing activities

Mobilization of Irobs in all parts of the world is continuing in full force. A lot of efforts are being worked out behind the scenes to mobilize Irobs in South Africa, Europe, Saudi Arabia, to mention a few.

As many of us recall, some Diaspora IDA members such as Ato Tesfay Desta, Ato Alema Kahisay, Ato Soum Berhe, and Ato Giday Adumer have had several meetings with Irobs in Addis Abeba, Mekele, Adigrat, and Dawhan during their visits to Ethiopia. Some meetings were formal while others were informal. Those meetings served as a foundation to help encourage Irobs to get organized under one umbrella, (non-profit, non-political) organization that had already been approved as such by Ethiopian government, i.e, by the Tigray regional administration. Diaspora Committee continues to work closely with concerned Irobs in multiple cities back home as well. To date, Addis and Mekele residents have formed their local committees, and others are to follow the suit. We hope to see more actions as the 5-Year strategic plans and prioritizing of pertinent projects are finalized.

Current Diaspora board committee members

- Mr. Tesfa Hagos, USA – Chairman
- Mr. Alema kahisay, England
- Mr. Tesfay Desta, Denmark
- Ms. Fesseha Kahisay. USA - Treasurer
- Mr. Girmay Nigusse, USA
- Mr. Girmay Tesfay, Canada
- Mr. Hagos Gebrai, USA
- Mr. Abrah Sibhat, USA - Secretary
- Ms. Tihish Giday, USA
- Mr. Brhane Misgina, Israel – lead IDA Israel
- Ms. Almaz w/silassie, Italy- lead Italy IDA
- Mr. Tesfay Kumanit, USA - auditor