



International  
Code of Conduct  
Association

**6<sup>th</sup> ICoCA Annual General Assembly**

**Geneva, Switzerland**

**21 November 2019**

**Minutes**

**AGENDA POINTS**

1. **Opening Remarks**
2. **ICoCA Governance: Annual Report Presentation**
3. **Pillar Meetings**
4. **Plenary Panel - *'Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: From Policy to Practice'***
5. **Workshop 1 (Parallel) - *'Towards Shared Responsibility: The Role of Clients'***
6. **Workshop 2 (Parallel) - *'Human Rights Trends: Perspectives from Civil Society'***
7. **Plenary report back from Pillars**
8. **Election Results and other business**
9. **Wrap up & closing remarks**

## 1. OPENING REMARKS

- 1.1. The Chairperson of the Board of Directors Mr. Rémy Friedmann opened the Annual General Assembly (AGA) at 09:12AM. He thanked participants for their attendance and announced that there is interpretation in Spanish and French.
- 1.2. The Chairperson explained that the Association is now fully operational and in an important phase of its existence with the recent adoption of the Strategic Plan. He encouraged participants to use the AGA to foster cross-pillar exchanges.
- 1.3. The Chairperson announced that the Association signed a headquarters' agreement with the Swiss Government on Monday 18 November 2019, which granted immunities and privileges to ICoCA. He highlighted that this agreement provided assurance that all information received by the Association is well protected and safeguarded.
- 1.4. The Chairperson introduced the Board of Directors, including CSO Board Director Mike Posner who apologised for his absence. He then reminded participants of the voting process and the items for vote. He confirmed that a quorum of Members was present according to Article 6.8 of the Articles of Association (AoA), that the Assembly was duly constituted and that it could adopt resolutions in compliance with the Articles of Association.
- 1.5. The Chairperson announced the agenda of the day.

## 2. ICOCA GOVERNANCE: ANNUAL REPORT PRESENTATION

- 2.1. The ICoCA Executive Director Mr. Jamie Williamson thanked the UK Government for hosting the pre-AGA cocktail reception on 20 November 2019, as well as all participants and speakers for attending the 2019 AGA.
- 2.2. The Executive Director introduced the Annual Report and the activities implemented during the year. He announced that the Annual Report will be made available electronically after the AGA.
- 2.3. He continued by introducing the Strategic Plan and its four Goals which will guide the activities of the Association for the next five years.
- 2.4. The Executive Director provided an update on the Association membership composition and growth. He presented the 23 ICoCA Certified Members and reminded that all Industry Members should aim to achieve ICoCA Certification within two years of their Membership.
- 2.5. The Association's activities over the last 12 months included:
  - 2.5.1. Continued work with Certification Bodies to streamline the certification process;
  - 2.5.2. Publication of PSEA Guidelines, with the support of ICoCA Members and the UK Government;
  - 2.5.3. Maintaining ICoCA's Complaints mechanism and work with ICoCA Member Companies to strengthen their own mechanisms;
  - 2.5.4. Three field missions to Peru, Iraq and East Africa whereof two enabled first-time meetings between private security companies and civil society organisations.

- 2.6. The Executive Director thanked four CSO Members for the support they provided to the Association during the past year: Usalama Reforms Forum from Kenya, Iraqi Al-Amal Association from Iraq, Institute for Overseas Safety and Security from China and Socios Peru from Peru.
- 2.7. He explained that ICoCA's first Company Self-Assessment (CSA) was launched in July 2019. The CSA is a mandatory tool for Member Companies to complete, and is an essential part of the Association's Monitoring role. The Executive Director commended the 93% of Member Companies who submitted their CSA and announced that an analysis of the data would be made available in due course.
- 2.8. The Executive Director underscored that client outreach locally and internationally was one of the main priorities of the Association during the past year. He explained that the Association supported clients in reviewing their procurement processes, emphasising that clients and donors have to carry out their own due diligence when hiring private security companies.
- 2.9. The Executive Director provided an update on the 2019 budget, reflecting a solid financial situation. He noted that the Association changed auditors effective as of the audit of 2018 accounts. The new auditing firm is Berney Associés Audit SA, which has also been nominated for the audit of 2019 accounts. The important contributions of the Swiss and the UK Governments were recognised, and other governments were also encouraged to make contributions. He provided an overview of the projected 2020 budget and indicated that no major growth is planned for the coming year.
- 2.10. The Chairperson welcomed any comment or question by Members on the change of auditors, but received none. The AGA took note of the change of auditors.

### **3. PILLAR MEETINGS**

- 3.1. Representatives of the Association's Pillars met in closed-door meetings.

### **4. PLENARY PANEL – PREVENTING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE: FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE**

- 4.1. The moderator, Dr. Sorcha MacLeod, introduced the plenary panel, based on the PSEA Guidelines recently published by the ICoCA. She thanked the UK Government for the funding support provided to develop the guidelines.
- 4.2. Board Director Ms. Deirdre Brown introduced the UK Government's engagement on PSEA and the support provided to develop ICoCA Guidelines. She explained that measures taken are the beginning of a difficult journey, emphasising the need to encourage reporting and the importance of doing no harm.
- 4.3. Ms. Tina Tinde introduced the work of the International Federation of the Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies, mentioning a number of challenges with regard to the implementation of PSEA in this context. She underscored that organisations should first address PSEA internally before doing so externally.
- 4.4. Mr. Andrew Farquhar explained the structure the company GardaWorld has in place to address PSEA. He reflected upon existing challenges and how the company addressed those internally.
- 4.5. The panellists reflected on: 1) challenges of addressing PSEA effectively within an organisation, 2)

potential solutions to address these challenges including serious leadership commitment, pressure from governments and donors, building working groups to implement a survivor-centred approach, asking for external expertise, collaboration between the private and public sector, and 3) the importance of having effective reporting mechanisms in place.

## **5. PARALLEL WORKSHOP 1 – TOWARDS SHARED RESPONSIBILITY: THE ROLE OF CLIENTS**

- 5.1. Board Director Mr. Charlie Mayne introduced the panel.
- 5.2. Ms. Anna Kleitsidou explained how PMI has learned lessons from Kazakhstan in 2009 when Human Rights Watch documented human rights violations of tobacco farmers. PMI uses the 2018 Human Rights road map to inform their own policies and practices and that they expect the providers and suppliers they work with to honour the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- 5.3. Mr. Pierre Pirelli of PMI explained how they contract with over 250 private security service providers, only 2 of these are ICoCA certified. While ICoCA's protocol is exactly what PMI needs, their challenge is that many private security companies feel that ICoCA is too expensive, the process for obtaining certification too long with no added value in joining the Association.
- 5.4. Mr. Abraham Mathai of the UN remarked that private security companies' primary concern is to make money. For the UN private security companies are only used as a last resort, and they make clear distinction between armed and unarmed private security. While armed providers must be Members of ICoCA, membership of the Association is not a requirement for contracting unarmed guards, though these companies should still abide by the International Code of Conduct.
- 5.5. Mr. Laith Shaanah stated that for GE, ICoCA has simplified the procurement process as the International Code of Conduct is in line with GE's own Code of Conduct. As ICoCA is checking and monitoring companies, this gives GE the confidence that ICoCA Members are suitable companies to contract. GE also distinguishes between ICoCA Members and ICoCA Certified companies, giving preference to the latter.
- 5.6. An animated question and answer session saw participants questioning clients' policies and whether these were adhered to in practice. One participant said that if the UN wasn't going to require Membership in its procurement policies and practices why should any other organisation be expected to; the UN should be a leading example of best practice for others to follow.

## **6. PARALLEL WORKSHOP 2 – HUMAN RIGHTS TRENDS: PERSPECTIVES FROM CIVIL SOCIETY**

- 6.1. Board Director Ms. Beatrice Godefroy introduced the panel, asking panellists to present human rights trends and challenges from an international and national perspective.
- 6.2. Board Director Ms. Meg Roggensack discussed five human rights risks applicable to the private security industry from an international perspective: 1) third party recruitment of personnel, 2) selection and vetting challenges in complex environments where the necessary documentation is not available or reliable, 3) subcontractors and the need to extend due diligence to them, 4) risks from armed and unarmed personnel conduct, and 5) the use of new technology.
- 6.3. Mr. Chinwike Okereke presented AFRILAW’s baseline study on Private Security Governance in Nigeria. He reflected upon the regulatory environment and challenges of the private security governance in Nigeria.
- 6.4. Ms. Carmen Rosa de León-Escribano presented IEPADES’ work in Guatemala. She introduced the results of a survey conducted by the organisation among private security clients, and reflected upon how to address the challenges identified in the survey.

## **7. PLENARY REPORT BACK FROM PILLARS**

- 7.1. Board Director Mr. Christopher Sanderson reported on the Industry pillar meeting, highlighting the need to communicate more effectively on what is the scope of ICoCA Certification, on the need for Industry Members to stay engaged and on encouraging the raising any concerns they may have early on during the year.
- 7.2. Board Director Ms. Beatrice Godefroy reported on the CSO pillar meeting. She emphasised a number of challenges CSO Members are facing. She also mentioned the need to reinforce the CSO pillar, to increase representativity among CSO Board Directors, and to better include CSOs in ICoCA governance discussions.
- 7.3. Board Director Mr. Rémy Friedmann reported on the Government pillar meeting, stressing the importance of governments as clients of private security companies and to help reaching out to clients of the corporate sector, and the need to include ICoCA in procurement practices. He also mentioned the responsibility of host governments to ensure effective private security governance.
- 7.4. Ms. Debora Avant reported on the ICoCA Observers meeting, mentioning the challenging diversity of Observer profiles and commending the Secretariat’s efforts to reach out to the group. She also highlighted the wish of Observers to be better informed and to be more included in ICoCA’s governance.

## **8. ELECTIONS & VOTING RESULTS**

- 8.1. The Chairperson confirmed the quorum of 25% of Members in each stakeholder pillars for the voting.
- 8.2. The Chairperson announced that 6 Government Members voted in favour of re-electing the Swiss Government on the Board of Directors. He welcomed Mr. Frédéric Chenais as the new

representative of the Swiss Government, as well as Mr. Clifton Johnson as representative of the US Government replacing Ms. Katherine Gorove. One Government Board seat remains vacant.

- 8.3. The Chairperson announced that Mr. Caleb Wanga from Usalama Reforms Forum was elected as new CSO Board Director replacing Mr. Josua Loots, with a majority of 12 votes.
- 8.4. The Chairperson announced that Mr. David Hornus from Group CORPGUARD was elected as new Industry Board Director representing 'UK/Europe' replacing Mr. Chris Sanderson, with a majority of 20 votes.
- 8.5. The Chairperson announced that Mr. Charlie Mayne from VSC Security Solutions was re-elected as Industry Board Director representing the 'Rest of the World', with a majority of 19 votes.
- 8.6. The Chairperson announced that Item 1 '2018 Audited financials' was approved, with 6 Governments Members, 21 CSO Members, 40 Industry Members voting in favour.
- 8.7. The Chairperson announced that Item 2 'Amendments to Articles of Association, Membership requirements, and Article 12 and 13 Procedures to introduce an Affiliate category' was approved, with 6 Government Members, 19 CSO Members, 44 Industry Members voting in favour.

## **9. WRAP UP, CLOSING AND WAY FORWARD**

- 9.1. The Chairperson thanked the AGA participants for their contributions and input throughout the day.
- 9.2. The Chairperson thanked CSO Board Director Mr. Josua Loots, Government Board Director Ms. Katherine Gorove and Industry Board Director Mr. Chris Sanderson for their invaluable contributions and support to the Board of Directors.
- 9.3. CSO Board Director Ms. Meg Roggensack thanked the Swiss Government and the Chairperson Mr. Rémy Friedmann for their invaluable support to ICoCA since the inception of the Association.
- 9.4. The Executive Director also thanked leaving Board Directors for their work and stated that the Secretariat is looking forward to continue cooperating with ICoCA's Members in the next year.