



COMMISSION AFRIQUE/AFRICAN'S COMMISSION  
**UNION INTERNATIONALE DE LA MARIONNETTE**  
Organisation Internationale fondée en 1929, rattachée à l'UNESCO/ [www.unima.org](http://www.unima.org)

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## COMMISSION AFRIQUE UNIMA

### **REPORT 2008-2012.**

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(Balance sheet the first mandate of the Committee Africa)

**Bamako March, 2012.**

The balance sheet of this first mandate of the Committee is partially positive. We were not able to operate the activities recovering from some of our major objectives. Activities which determining for the life of the structure in Africa. But some obtained results give us the hope of a better future for the continental Organ, if we manage to gather the conditions required to face these objectives.

### **First year:**

It is necessary to note at first that the first slice of the activities was painful during the first year (2008-2009). The president of the Commission having opted for the participation of all the African persons in charge in the work, it obliged us to face at first certain difficulties the management of which took us more time than planned.

This option not shared by the president aimed at the creation of solidarity, for the convergence of our efforts in the work and, by there even, to favor the implementation of a solid base of Unima in Africa. The Committee has of to face at first these difficulties inherent to the group work, the joint work, but also the difficulties of the members to get organized to dedicate a party of their time to the activities of the Committee.

What really contributed to distract us and to take away us from our task was the intention shown by a councilor to set up a system of discrimination between the members of the Unima in Africa. This discrimination which consisted in creating excellent members (those who practice the puppet theater) and the second-class members (the producers, the theorists and the sympathizers of the puppet) had no its way.

It is thus after a quarter of exchange of ideas and discussions that the Committee was able to elaborate and to subject its program of activities to the ballot of diverse and varied objectives.

For the efficiency in the work we set up a shape of original internal organization with the cutting of the Continent in ' Development areas UNIMA ', every Zone being confided to an international councilor. We were so able to approach some activities during this first year:

- The creation of a network of collaboration between the Centers UNIMA of Africa and the establishment of the links between our centers UNIMA and those besides the world;
- The setting-up and the promotion of Unima in Africa;
- The conception of a road map for the elaboration of the directory of the African companies;
- The creation of the News bulletin of the Committee.

### **The second year:**

For the second year 2009-2010 we intended to begin the execution of a party or a totality besides of the program, according to the established timetable. But it was rather dedicated to the consolidation of the activities begun during the first year:

- 1- The exchanges and the collaboration between the African centers on one hand; and on the other hand between center African and the other centers of rests of the world;
- 2- The setting-up(presence) and the promotion(class) of Unima in Africa;
- 3- The newsletter of the Committee.

Among the activities which we were not able to approach during the second year, in spite of our will, it is necessary to note for the main part:

- 1-The implementation of a system of interAfrican meeting of puppet theatres;
- 2-The production of a book or a CD-ROM on puppets in Africa;
- 3-The elaboration of a directory of the troops and the companies of Africa.

These various activities had of common, generally, that they require a material and financial contribution which is not within the reach of the Committee.

### **The third year:**

During the third year (2010-2011) we not only had difficulty approaching the other activities, but also pursuing the activities current as: the exchanges between the national centers, the News bulletin of the Committee, the directory of the troops and the companies of Africa.

Besides the lack of average material and financier to approach new activities, the tiredness gained ground with the members of the Committee. This situation very unfavourable to our advance obliged us to revise our ambitions with more objectivities. We so decided to choose one or two activities which we could approach with the means put at the disposal of the various Committees. In dialogue with the International General Secretary, our choice concerned in a unanimous way to the edition of the first directory of the troops and the African companies and the organization of a meeting of the Committee, that is, the presidents of african's centers Unima.

We benefited of our participation the Board meeting of Unima Dordrecht, Holland, to give this information, but also to evoke our difficulties and all our concerns as for their consequences with regard to the future of the Committee.

Finally, more important, during this 3rd year the Committee boguet a laptop computer, to allow the president to be effectively able to execute the work which is assigned to him.

### **The fourth year:**

The fourth year did not bring a big change in the situation general of the Committee. For the edition of the directory the presidents of development areas UNIMA and the presidents of the national centers, excepted some did not show themselves as high as the wait for the research and the routing of the information concerning the troops and the companies relavant their zones, or their countries.

We cannot leave untold the big effort supplied by the president of the National Center of Cameroon, the mister Frédéric TALA. Besides the information concerning its country, the interested set up itself as president of Zone by giving us information onto the troops and the companies of puppets of the Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, the Centre-Afrique, Congo Brazzaville and of R.D. Congo. We so owe her the presence of the companies of the first three countries in the Directory.

In the same order of ideas it is necessary to underline mister Thierry Ouedrago's intervention, member of the Union of the Puppeteers of the Burkina Faso (UMAB), without which this country was not going to appear in the Directory \*

This disinterestedness of the presidents of Zones and the national Centers took the look of a general demobilization noticed from November 2011. The members of the Committee answered on average only a message on four messengers for those who kept in touch.

It is in this atmosphere that the president of the Committee was invited to take part in the colloquium organized by the future Section UNIMA of Yaounde, Cameroon, on the occasion of the 2nd publishing of his "International festival Christmas in Puppet".

In spite of the financial charge, he answered the invitation. Because it was an opportunity in the perspective to work on the setting-up and on the promotion of Unima in Africa. The results were beyond our estimation. Because besides a presentation on Unima, we had the opportunity to get in touch with puppeteers of the other countries of Central Africa as Chad. And it allowed us to make a big step within the framework of the activities of the elaboration of the directory.

The meeting of the members of the Committee, the second priority activity was urgently imperative. Unfortunately she had to take place only by Skype on Sunday, March 17th 2012, after three attempts to organize it respectively in Niamey, Douala and Bamako.

In the agenda of this meeting by Skype with great difficulty organized we had:

- A-** Critics and proposals on texts governing the activities within the Committee;
- B-** Critics and proposals on the objectives of the Committee;
- C-** Reflection and proposals on the question of the succession of the President of the Committee;
- D-** Miscellaneous.

It not been able to end because of a power cut in Bamako.

The second session scheduled successively on March 26th and April 5th, to finish the meeting, not been able to take place at first because of difficulties of connection in South Africa, Janni Younge being the coordinator, and secondly because of politico-military difficulties to Mali.

The not completion of this meeting which saw the participation of the presidents of five national centers (Algeria, South Africa, Egypt, Benin, Mali, Niger and Senegal) is very regrettable. Because it showed itself the real diagnostic for the identification of the difficulties of collaboration shown by certain members of the Committee(Commission), but she was especially going to allow us to propose in the authorities of the International Organization a consensual way for the choice of future presidents.

### **Conclusion:**

In conclusion we can retain that the Committee made results by reports to some of cos objectives: the creation of the newsletter; the publishing of the first directory of the troops and the companies of African puppets; the setting-up (presence) of Unima in Africa.

By means of Web Master's degree Fabrice Guillot, the Newsletter was created in March 2009. Published under the Title *UNIMA AFRIKI KUNAFONI* it is for its fourth number published in March 2012. It is the rather rich publication which informs us of the development of the art of the puppet and the health of Unima in Africa.

The first directory of the troops and the companies of Africa the work of which extended over four years of the mandate is from now on a reality. Without being exhaustive from the point of view inventory, it is the very simple document which

informs addresses of the companies of puppets of twenty one (21) African countries, and often the Diaspora.

With regard to figures the setting-up(presence) of Unima in Africa was a big satisfaction. Indeed when the Committee was born, only seven (7) African countries had a Center UNIMA in service: South Africa, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali, Niger and Togo.

Four years allowed us the creation of a center UNIMA in Benin, in Ivory Coast, in Cameroon, and in Senegal. The fifth country, Egypt, which had its Center UNIMA during these four years has of to get in touch directly with the International General Secretary.

At the moment we have three other countries which could have very soon their Center UNIMA: Congo Brazzaville, Chad and Tunisia. What will give us a total number of fifteen member countries of Unima in Africa.

With these various results, it is the hardest who begins from now on for the continental Organ. Because it is a question of beating us for the conservation of these experiences, but also of trying to forge ahead.

To do it a reorganization of the Committee would be imperative with the implementation of an office ( executive organ) consisted of the presidents of centers who demonstrated a real will to work for the promotion of Unima in Africa and the development of the arts of the puppet on the Continent. An office the composition of which will highlight the substitute of the president.

The President:

Mamadou Samaké.

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\*- We knew mister Thierry Ouedrago thanks to the opportunity of the workshop of training organized by mister Pierre-Alain Rolle, President of the Committee for the International Cooperation of the UNIMA, in Kayes Mali.