



STATE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA PARLIAMENT

SOADPLAW006 ROYAL CHAMBER LAW

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LEGISLATIVE INTENT

These two words, "kings" and "queens", belong to the European tradition, but in Africa, there have always been leaders, whether they were called Pharaohs in Egypt, Ingonyama among the Zulus, Negus in the kingdom of Aksoum, Mansah in the Empire of Mali or Almamy in the Fouta-Toro. Launched in 1964 by Unesco, the *General History of Africa* covers three million years in eight thick volumes, and provides a better understanding of African kingdoms through the ages, thanks to the work of such important historians as Cheikh Anta Diop, Joseph Ki-Zeerbo, Bethwell Allan Ogot, Théophile Obenga, Ali Mazui, etc.

Long before the beginning of the Christian era, there existed for example the Kingdom of Kerma (2500-1500 BC) and the Kingdom of Punt (2444-1069 BC) in Eastern Africa, the Nok civilization in West Africa (1250 BC-250 BC), the Sao civilization in Central Africa (6th-century BC-16th century AD). And after the beginning of the Christian era (which is obviously not a turning point in African history), we could mention, among the most famous, the Empire of Ghana (West Africa), the Kingdom of Monomotapa (roughly the present Zimbabwe), the Songhai Empire or the Kingdom of Congo in Central Africa, all civilizations, kingdoms, and empires which obviously had their leaders, kings, and queens.

In Antiquity and the Middle Ages, Europe knew how rich and powerful the kings of Africa were. Their image was of course very blurred, mixing reality and legends, but the Egypt of the Pharaohs was well known and was the source of a large part of the knowledge of ancient Greece and Rome; and the Christians would dream of the three Kings, bringing treasures to the Child Jesus, and among them Balthazar, "a black-skinned king with a thick beard", according to the historian, Bede the Venerable (7th-8th century). Some people had heard a little about Mansa Moussa, leader of the Mali Empire, the richest man in human history, and until the 16th century, iconography represented African kings as being rich and powerful leaders, which they often were, indeed.

There were not only kings, but there were also great queens in Africa. Among the most famous is the Queen of Sabba, whose mythical meeting with King Solomon is reported in the Bible, but also Nefertiti, wife of Akhenaten, who lived between 1370 and 1333 BC, and who played a great role in the 18th dynasty. In ancient Egypt, many other queens marked their time, particularly Cleopatra VII Philopator, who became the mistress of Julius Caesar and then of his former lieutenant, Mark Antony, and who inspired hundreds of paintings, sculptures, plays, operas, films, and even video games.

The queens could be the wife, or the mother of the kings, as testified by the candaces, in the Empire of Kush, who played a very important role, and sometimes even more important than that of the king. This is an opportunity to recall that the famous city of Carthage (*Qart Hadasht*, the New City) was founded by a woman, Queen Elyssa (Dido, in the Roman texts), who was even deified by her people after her death, and associated to the Goddess Tanit.

Obviously, the beginning of colonization in the 16th century constitutes a major break. Most African kingdoms gradually entered a phase of decline. Some became "protectorates", such as the kingdoms of Kenya, which came under German and then British protectorate with the arrival of the British Imperial Company of East Africa in 1888, while Malawi became the Central African Protectorate. Other kings were simply killed or exiled, such as the dey of Algiers in 1830, Behanzin, the King of Abomey in 1894, and Samory Touré, the founder of the Wassoulou Empire, who was also deported.

The queens did not fail to participate in this resistance against colonization. Thus, Queen Nzinga of Ndongo and Matamba (1583-1663), led the military struggle against the Portuguese, and is still today a symbol of the Angolan nation, of anti-colonialist militants and of African feminist movements. Some queens particularly distinguished themselves in the art of war, such as Tassin Hangbè, who ruled the kingdom of Danhomè from 1708 to 1711, and who founded the *Agojie* regiment, the famous Amazons (celebrated in the movie, *The Woman King*, with Viola Davis), who fiercely fought the French colonial troops.

However, Queen Ranavalona III was overthrown in 1897 and exiled by French troops taking possession of Madagascar, while Linguère (queen) Ndaté Yalla Mbodj, the heroine of the anti-colonial resistance, the last queen of the Waloo, had to give in to the French armies in Senegal. The only king whose kingdom remained sovereign is of course Haïle Sélassié, the Negus who, according to tradition, is the heir of a lineage going back to King Solomon and the Queen of Sabba. To support his efforts against the armies of the Italian fascists, he called for international help, and many Africans from the Diaspora came to his aid - their descendants are still present in Ethiopia today, in the Shashamane region.

Speaking of the Diaspora, it is often believed that there were kings and queens in Africa, but that there were none in the Diaspora: that is wrong. In fact, many leaders of the anti-slavery struggle in the Americas were members of royal families from Africa, the most famous example being Toussaint Louverture who, according to tradition, came from a line of Princes of Allada in Benin. Another emblematic example is Gaspar Yanga (or Nyanga) who, in the 16th century, led the slave revolt in Mexico and founded the city of Yanga, the first black town in the Americas, in the State of Veracruz: he was coming from a royal family of the kingdom of Congo (region of current Gabon).

Similarly, it is worth mentioning Aqualtune, a Congolese princess of the 17th century, who led 10,000 men in the battle of Ambuila. Defeated, she was captured and sold into slavery in Recife, Brazil. She escaped and joined the Quilombo dos Palmares, an autonomous territory of rebel slaves. Already an African princess, she soon became head of the Quilombo, giving birth to a royal lineage, as her son, Ganga Zumba, and her grandson, Zumbi, also became kings of Palmares.

In the Diaspora, in addition to leaders from established African royal lines, new leaders emerged in the colonies, who also took the title of king. In the context of marooning, Nanny (1685-1755 approximately) emerged as one of the main leaders of the Maroon movement, and became Queen Nanny, founding Nanny Town, which still exists today in Jamaica. In Panama, in the 16th century, Bayano gathered between 400 and 1200 maroons, according to sources, and founded the Palenque of Ronconcholon, near the current Bayano River, which now bears his name. The Spaniards feared him and called him « *el Rey Negro Bayano* » (the Black King Bayano).

In the French colonies also, many new kings emerged. In Reunion Island, in the Indian Ocean, the main Maroon leaders are called Emperor Baal, Emperor Pitré, King Diamparé, King Mafati, King Phaonce, King Tsymandevo. In the French-speaking area, the most famous of these new leaders are undoubtedly Jean-Jacques Dessalines, who took power after the capture of Toussaint Louverture, and became emperor under the name of Jacques 1er. After his assassination, Christophe took power in the north of Haiti and became king, the eponymous character of Aimé Césaire's play, *The Tragedy of King Christophe*. In this sense, it appears that royalty has also played an important role in the Diaspora, even if this role is most often ignored or underestimated.

Since independence, what is the situation of kings and queens in Africa and in the Diaspora? On the continent, three kingdoms are still sovereign States: Morocco, Lesotho, and Eswatini (formerly called Swaziland). But there are still several hundred kingdoms and chieftaincies that have evolved from the kingdoms of old and still exist. In the Diaspora, the maroon territories, and the palenques still have their traditional chiefs, and in today's Brazil, there are more than 5000 quilombos, and therefore as many traditional leaders. But most often, the republics that were created after independence left little room and power for these traditional rulers.

However, kings and queens in Africa are becoming increasingly organized. They are creating organizations and federations and are more and more recognized in the Constitutions of African countries, as is the case in Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, and Cameroon. They work for the development of Africa and are very interested in their children in the Diaspora. This is why, on July 1, 2021, by decree, the Prime Minister of the State of the African Diaspora created the SOAD Royal Chamber, under the authority of Queen Aïdji and Chief Charumbira, an institution that brings together numerous organizations of kings, which in total gather several thousand traditional leaders.

Alongside Parliament, which has legislative authority, this second chamber has powers that are far from symbolic, unlike those of the House of Lords in the UK. Indeed, in Africa, since traditional leaders often have great authority over land issues, SOAD intends to seek their advice and blessings before engaging in discussions with the government for all agricultural or real estate projects, such as smart cities. Similarly, for all cultural issues, such as restitution, their legitimacy is obviously essential, as they are the guardians of tradition, and can also facilitate peace and mediation in case of tensions or conflicts between African Presidents. This is what is called royal diplomacy.

This is why the authority of traditional leaders, who have been weakened by Colonization, should be restored. There is no contradiction with the democratic nature

of the State of the African Diaspora. SOAD is not a monarchy, as are, for example, Spain, Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, the United Kingdom, Thailand, Cambodia, Japan, and Malaysia (which are also democracies, by the way), but it does give a very important place to the Pan-African kingdoms, which are invited to sit in SOAD's Royal Chamber.

Moreover, it is not only about strengthening kings but also queens. As much as possible, SOAD wishes to promote more queens in Africa and in the Diaspora: in 2021, the first Vice Prime Minister and the Minister of Historical Legacy of SOAD were both coronated by Dadah Adjahouto Dodo, Emperor of the Aïzo, and they became Kandake Houindokon and Queen Aidji, paving the way for other queens in the Diaspora to be also coronated. Moreover, if the traditional leaders who are in power allow it, SOAD expects to create queendoms in the context of its smart cities, which can strengthen women's leadership in Africa and the Diaspora.

While recognizing the undeniable legitimacy of the republics that have been created over the past several decades, it is important to acknowledge that kings and queens, who have existed for centuries and millenniums, can also be tremendous assets for the future of Africa, the Diaspora and the State of the African Diaspora. That is why the SOAD government is submitting to the Parliament this bill regarding our Royal Chamber, its mission, vision, functioning, and perspectives.



TITLE 1 - DEFINITIONS AND PRINCIPLES

Article 1: Definitions

Titles and references quoted herein shall have the following meanings:-

Kings: A male monarch, a supreme ruler, or a sovereign over a region, territory, nation, or country.

Queen: A female monarch, a supreme ruler or a sovereign over a region, territory, nation, or country; the wife, mother, or widow of a King. A woman who rules a Queendom in her own right; a woman of supreme rank and power who was coronated as a Queen.

Kingdom: Territory ruled by a King.

Queendom: Territory ruled by a Queen.

Chief: A traditional leader or ruler of a village, people or clan, or the ruler of a tribe or a group of families.

Princess: A non-reigning female member of a royal family, especially a daughter or granddaughter of a King and Queen, or the wife of a Prince. A woman who is a ruler of a principality.

Prince: A male member of a royal family other than the monarch, especially a son or grandson of a King and Queen. A man who is a ruler of a principality.

SOAD Royal Chamber: A Royal body and an organ of the State of the African Diaspora which invites Pan-African Royalties to work with SOAD to form a bridge between the African Kings, Queens, Chiefs, and Traditional Leaders as well as priests and priestesses, princesses and princes to interface with the Pan-African family and for the Royalties to be able to participate in programs which connect Africa to the Diaspora and the Diaspora to Africa.

Royal Organisations: A collective body, association, or federation of Kings and/or Queens either regionally, nationally, inter-continently, or globally to form an organization for the purpose of working together for common interests and harnessing collective power for the good of their communities and/or exerting political influence.

Repatriation: The act or process of returning to the country of origin, allegiance, naturalisation, or citizenship.

Reparation: The action of making amends for a wrong one has done, by providing payment or other assistance for harm, loss, or damage to those who have been wronged. The action of repairing something.

Restitution: The action of returning stolen land, artifacts or anything else to the original owner. Restitution is a form of Reparation.

Article 2: Principles

The State of the African Diaspora shall make its efforts to return the conscious awareness of the Kingdoms and Queendoms and rebuild their power and glory.

The State of the African Diaspora shall promote and contribute to the advancement of women by promoting Queens and new Queendoms in Africa and the Diaspora.

TITLE 2: PRESENTATION OF THE SOAD ROYAL CHAMBER

Article 3: Creation

The Royal Chamber operates under the authority of the Prime Minister. The SOAD Royal Chamber was created by Decree on July 1, 2021. It includes Kings, Queens, Princesses, Princes, Traditional and Religious Leaders, Priests and Priestesses. The Royal Chamber is composed of Kings and Queens, organizations and associations of Kings and Queens, as well as African spiritual elders connected to the Kingdoms/Queendoms.

Article 4: Purpose

The purpose of the Royal Chamber is to create strong family ties between Africa and the Diaspora through the Royal lines. The Chamber is also a bridge and gateway towards repatriation through the Kingdoms. The African Diaspora resulting from the deportation of captives taken into slavery while they were citizens of the former kingdoms, can be repatriated and reintegrated, according to their desire, into the Kingdoms/Queendoms of Africa through the Royal Chamber of SOAD.

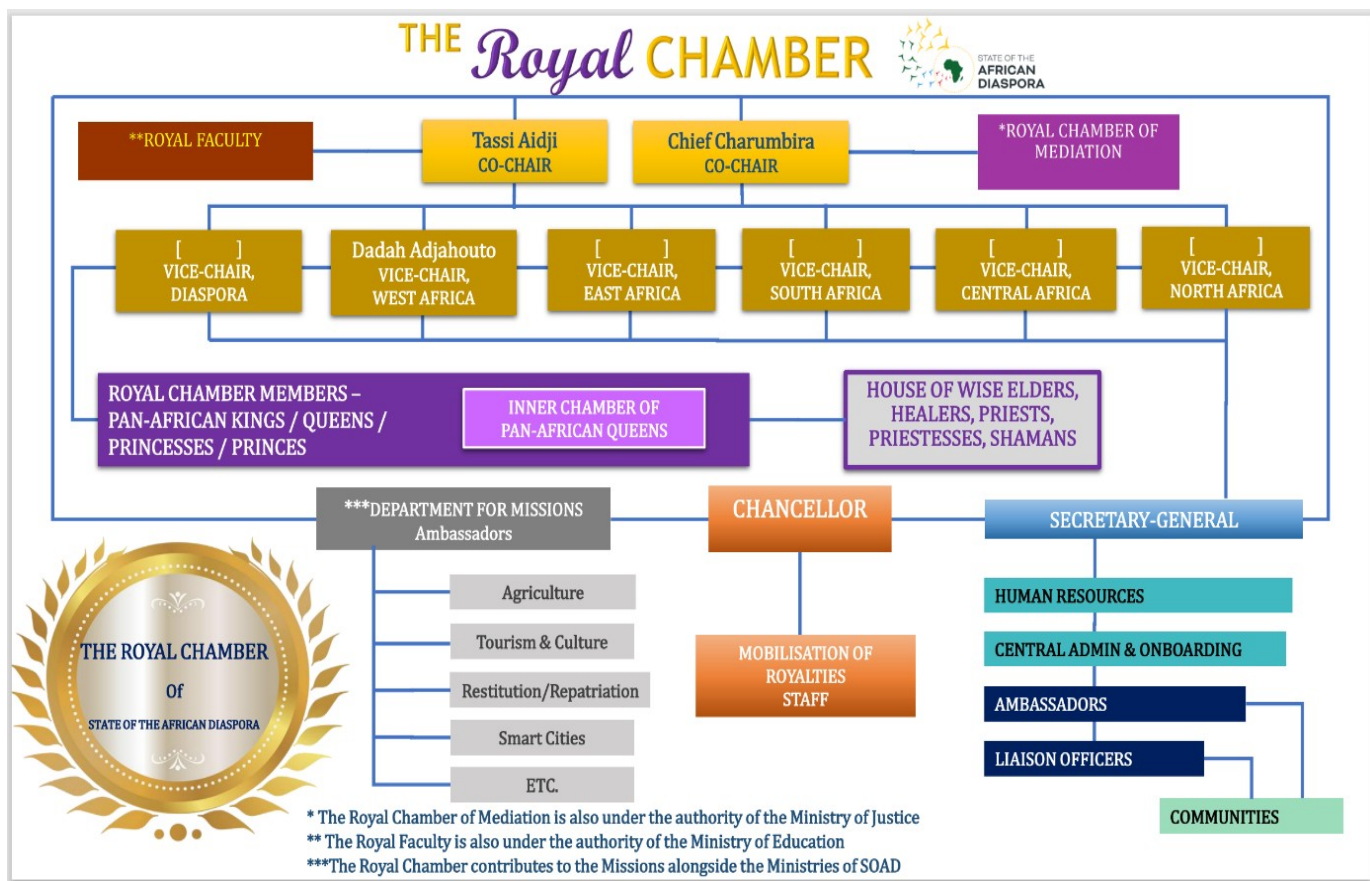
Article 5: Co-Chairs

The Co-Chairs are designated by the Prime Minister. The term of the Co-Chairs is five years and may be renewed twice. The Prime Minister has the option to put an end to the mandate of either of the Co-Chairs. If one of the Co-Chairs resigns, the Prime Minister shall, in his capacity, designate a successor.

Article 6: Vice-Presidents

The Co-Chairs designate the 6 Vice Presidents for the Region. The term of the Vice President is five years and may be renewed twice. The Co-Chairs have the option to put an end to the mandate of any of the Vice Presidents and shall designate a successor.

TITLE 3: STRUCTURE OF THE ROYAL CHAMBER



Article 7: Composition

The Royal Chamber comprises the following:

- Two Chairpersons (Co-Chairs):** The Co-Chairs preside jointly over the Royal Chamber and facilitate the operationalisation of the activities, meetings, committees,

events,, and departmental affairs. The Co-Chairs representation is a Queen and King, one from the Diaspora and one from Africa.

b) **Vice Presidents:** A Vice President presides over each one of the 6 Regions of Africa and the Diaspora; North Africa, South Africa, East Africa, West Africa, Central Africa, and the Diaspora - 6 Vice Presidents. They are the facilitators and representatives of their Region of Kings/Queens within the Royal Chamber.

c) **Main Royal Chamber Members:** Consists of Kings, Queens, Princesses, Princes, Traditional Leaders, Priests and Priestess, Royal Associations, and Federations. They are the Royal Authority that mandates, supports, and endorses the important initiatives of SOAD, for example, the restitution of cultural artifacts, and include Africa and the Diaspora in cultural days, festivals, ceremonies, and events.

d) **The House of Wise Elders, Priest, and Priestesses:** Support the spiritual welfare of Africa and the Diaspora and are called upon for specific ceremonies, such as ancestral consultations, ritual, healing, and spiritual well-being.

e) **The Inner-Chamber of Pan-African Queens:** Is a body of Queens and Princesses who work together on specialist initiatives, to galvanise Queens Associations and Federations to work collectively and globally in Africa and the Diaspora, on specific topics, such as Women, Youth, and Children, on Ceremonies and Events and a high focus on the development of the Queendoms.

f) **The Chancellor:** The Chancellor of the Royal Chamber is responsible to the Co-Chairs and supports in all academic, fiscal, and administrative matters. This includes overseeing all aspects of the Royal Chamber (financial management, facilities, fundraising, public relations, etc.,)

g) **The Secretary-General:** is responsible to the Co-Chairs and to the Chancellor and organises the various aspects of human resource management, centralizes the administration and creates a synergy for implementation of activities between SOAD State Members and the Royal Chamber.

h) **Department for Missions:** Contributes to the mission and plan of actions of SOAD, such as Smart City projects.

TITLE 4: ADMISSION INTO THE ROYAL CHAMBER

Article 8: Eligibility

The Royal Chamber of SOAD is open to kingdoms of the different regions of Africa and the Diaspora. Traditional leaders and elders are models for our future generations. They will teach their history and will help reconnect with the African traditional cultures.

Article 9: Admission by Invitation

To develop the Royal Chamber, Kings, Queens, Princes, Princesses, Priests, Priestesses, and Royal organisations that are not yet in the Royal Chamber can receive an invitation. They will have to send back an acceptance letter.

Article 10: Admission following Application

Kings, Queens, Royalties, and Royal Organisations interested in being in the Royal Chamber may send an application.

Article 11: Refusal

The Co-chairs in consultation with the Vice Presidents, if necessary, shall have the right to reject an application. There shall be no appeal process.

Article 12: Dispute over legitimacy

If there is a dispute over the legitimacy of a member of the Royal Chamber, there shall be an internal process to come to a determination. The final decision shall be made by the Co-Chairs. There shall be no appeal process.

Article 13: Admission of a SOAD Citizen through Coronation

A SOAD citizen who was coronated through the protocols of the Royal Chamber automatically becomes a member of the Royal Chamber.

TITLE 5: CORONATION AND ELIGIBILITY

To be crowned King or Queen, several options are possible:

Article 14: Coronation by marriage

In traditional Kingdoms, Coronation by marriage happens when a woman marries a King.

Article 15: Coronation by application through the “Call to the Diaspora”

People who wish to become a prince, princess, king, or queen in a specific kingdom must make a request by writing to coronation@thestateofafricandiaspora.com

Through the Royal Chamber, the request will be sent to the Kingdom chosen by the applicant and the Kingdom shall make its own assessment and deliberation of the application.

Within the State of the African Diaspora, there may be ceremonial queens, an honorary title, which allows a person to become queen and/or to be at the head of a kingdom named queendom. These queens may be at the head of a kingdom/queendom and have below them chiefs responsible for suburbs, villages, or neighborhoods. They will be chosen for their qualities, skills, and competence in leadership.

TITLE 6: REPATRIATION THROUGH THE KINGDOMS AND THE QUEENDOMS

Article 16: Repatriation through the Kingdoms

The State of the African Diaspora shall request whether the Smart Cities built by its Government can become new Kingdoms. The Government of the State of the African Diaspora shall discuss with the country authorities and traditional leaders.

Article 17: Repatriation through the Queendoms

The State of the African Diaspora shall request whether the Smart Cities built by its Government can also become new Queendoms. The Government of the State of the African Diaspora shall discuss with the country authorities and traditional leaders. The Queens and the Associations of Queens of the Royal Chamber of SOAD shall also participate in the Repatriation initiative, through the Queendoms.

Article 18: Promotion of the Kingdoms / Queendoms

The Kingdoms and the Queendoms shall be encouraged to promote their territories by detailing their history, heritage, ethnology, societal behaviours, traditions, values, dress code, etc. in order to provide the African Diaspora with a well-rounded and informed decision about the Kingdom or the Queendom.

TITLE 7: KINGDOM ID ELIGIBILITY

Article 19: Functions of the Royal ID

For repatriation through the Kingdoms, a Nationality Kingdom ID shall be made available for the Citizens of SOAD.

a) The identity card of the State of the African Diaspora or a kingdom is primarily a reparation, a recognition of the belonging of Afro-descendants to an African nation. The identity card also makes it possible to retrospectively render justice and to bring reparation to the deported ancestors. That the diaspora can cultivate relations with the land and the members of the royal courts is an old pan-African dream, but also a spiritual wish transmitted by the ancestors.

b) The royal identity card will allow the connection, and union and will bring the necessary strength to political, economic, and cultural power. The royal identity card will also allow citizens priority access to any SOAD developmental projects within the Kingdom.

c) All the people of African descent arriving in a traditional kingdom through the Royal Chamber shall be educated about customs, culture, and traditions as a way to reconnect with their ancestors.

Article 20: Eligibility

All citizens of SOAD, holding a digital ID shall be eligible to apply for Kingdom nationality or any other affiliation decided by the Kingdom. Non-citizens of SOAD shall not be eligible for this initiative as this is operated exclusively by the Royal Chamber of SOAD.

All Citizens of SOAD shall complete an application form where they will specify the kingdom they would wish to repatriate to based on a personal preference or desire, a DNA result, or their origin, etc.

Article 21: Multiple Citizenships

Any citizen of the State of the African Diaspora can acquire the nationality of several kingdoms.

Article 22: Methodology

The SOAD Royal Chamber shall facilitate the connection to the King's/Chief's administrative body for the application to be considered by the Royal committee.

Article 23: Application Process

Once the first level of application is made, an initial informal interview process shall be conducted by either a Co-Chair or their nominated representative to discuss particularities, such as cultural knowledge, spiritual preparation, orientation, and other specifics of cultural integration.

The application is then passed to the Vice-President of the Region of which repatriation is sought. The Vice-President secretariat shall then present the application to the King/Chief Committee of choice to assess the application.

Article 24: Kingdom Identity Approval Process

The Royal Chamber of SOAD itself does not make the decision as to the acceptance or non-acceptance of a SOAD citizen into a Kingdom. Each kingdom shall create its committee for the deliberation and approval, of the issuance of the royal ID. The rules of procedure for each kingdom and the rules for obtaining the royal identity document shall be made available to applicants or on request from the Kingdom administration.

Article 25: Non-acceptance into a Kingdom

If a SOAD citizen is not accepted into the Kingdom of choice, he or she may refer back to the Royal Chamber whereby an alternative Kingdom/Chieftancy, in another region or another country, can be identified.

TITLE 8: COOPERATION AND PROGRAMS OF ACTION

Article 26: General Cooperation

The Royal Chamber of SOAD shall work in cooperation with the government, the ministries and the different agencies of SOAD to implement the programs of action of the State. Here are some examples of the programs where the Royal Chamber may be involved.

Article 27: Education

The Royal Chamber of SOAD shall educate the public about the Kingdoms of Africa and the Diaspora, their history, their geography, their cultures, their activities. To do so, the Royal Chamber may create a website and work with the Royal Faculty of Historical Legacy or the University of the State of the African Diaspora (USOAD).

Article 28: Restitution

One of the main programs of the Royal Chamber shall be Restitution. Therefore, the Royal Chamber shall cooperate with the Government and the Heritage & Culture Commission of SOAD on this topic.

Article 29: Peace and Mediation

The Royal Chamber shall cooperate with the Government of SOAD to work on Mediation and Peace Building in Africa and in the Diaspora.

Article 30: Agribusiness

The Royal Chamber shall cooperate with the Government of SOAD to work on land and agribusiness programs.

Article 31: Smart Cities

The Royal Chamber shall cooperate with the Government of SOAD to work on smart cities, which will include programs for housing, industry, trade, health, education, etc.

Article 32: Cooperation with Other Royalties

The Royal Chamber shall cooperate with Royalties, Kings, Queens, and Royal Organisations to implement its vision and programs

TITLE 9: DISPUTE RESOLUTION WITHIN THE ROYAL CHAMBER

Article 33: Violation and Sanction

All members of the Royal Chamber shall respect the laws of their country, Kingdoms or Queendoms and the laws of the State of the African Diaspora. Should a member not respect the laws of SOAD, article 34 shall come into force.

Article 34: Penalty for Violating the law

The penalty for a Member violating the law of the Royal Chamber and/or SOAD may be exclusion or suspension from the Royal Chamber. The Royal Leadership of the Chamber shall undertake this process.

Article 35: Mediation

When conflicts arise between governments, kings, queens, or traditional leaders, the case may be sent to the SOAD Royal Chamber of Mediation.