



Translation from Romanian

Strategy for the representation of the Permanent Electoral Authority (PEA) in relation with the international organization *Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB)*

Considering the Decision no. 4/2020 of the Romanian Parliament on the approval of the Regulation on the organization and functioning of the Permanent Electoral Authority (PEA), the permanent representatives of the Authority appointed to the international organizations fulfill the following attributions:

- a) manages the relationship of the Authority with the international organization to which they have been seconded;
- b) ensures the connection of the Authority with the members of the international organization with which they have been seconded and proposes joint projects with them;
- c) elaborates and implements joint projects and programs in the fields of competence of the Authority;
- d) promotes the good practices of Romania in the matter of organizing elections and referendums, as well as in the field of financing political parties and electoral campaigns;
- e) ensures the transmission of the Authority's communications to the international organization to which they have been seconded;
- f) represents the Authority at conferences, seminars and meetings in the electoral field of the international organization to which they have been seconded and prepares reports in this regard, which they submit to the Department of International cooperation;
- g) elaborates weekly reports containing notes and information related to the activity in the electoral field of the international organization to which they have been seconded, which are submitted to the Department of International cooperation.



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Thus, according to the mandate received based on the Order of the PEA's President from 01.07.2021, the activity of representing the PEA to the international organizations has continued with the *Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB)*, in order to expand the cooperation between the two institutions specialized in the electoral field.

In terms of international relations, the main objectives followed are the good representation of the PEA at the international level, the development of experience-exchanges in electoral matters in order to share know-how and to insure electoral assistance at the international level.

The active development of cooperation relations in the electoral field, at international level, with similar bodies and partner institutions and ensuring the transparency of electoral activity in order to strengthen the reputation of PEA as an advanced and reliable electoral actor at international level, subscribes to PEA's general mission.

In order to consolidate the international recognition of the PEA, as a reliable institution that provides trustful public electoral services and ensures the fulfillment of the legitimate wishes of the electorate, we must innovate and multiply the number of cooperation activities.

In the run-up to its establishment, PEA has acquired sufficient development of administrative capacity and can be a strong and credible partner to provide electoral expertise and assistance, but also to develop exchanges of good practice with similar electoral bodies or relevant international electoral organizations. Historically, from the point of view of the experience gained in the organization and management of elections, PEA managed together with other Romanian electoral actors with attributions in the electoral field, over 34 different electoral elections, such as presidential elections (years 2019, 2014, 2009), European Parliament elections (years 2019, 2014, 2009, 2007), parliamentary elections (years 2020, 2016, 2012, 2008, 2004), parliamentary by-elections (years 2014, 2010), local elections (years 2020, 2016, 2012, 2008), local by-elections (years 2021, 2017, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007), referenda (years 2019, 2018, 2012, 2009, 2007).



About Association of World Election Bodies (A-WEB)

As an organization, A-WEB aims to support the efforts of electoral management bodies to strengthen their capacities, especially through international cooperation, customized ICT programs to strengthen a country's electoral system and ensure election management, organizing training sessions to strengthen capacity electoral management, running programs for election visitors.

The year of 2011 was the beginning of a new international institution when the National Electoral Commission of the Republic of Korea (NEC) proposed the establishment of a global association for structural and firm support in the conduct of free and democratic elections in countries around the world. The proposal was further developed through a series of deliberations in the working group (s), the completion of the A-WEB Charter and finally, in October 2013, the establishment of the A-WEB was officially announced, together with the approval of its operating status.

A-WEB is the largest international non-governmental organization in the field of electoral management. Founded in South Korea, Incheon, A-WEB currently has 118 members, electoral management bodies (EMBs), from 108 countries on all continents, Europe (17), Asia (25), America (30), Africa (37), Oceania (6).

A-WEB has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with international organizations active in the electoral field such as: Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL), International Parliamentarians' Congress (IPC), International Center for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS), Korean Civic Education Institute for Democracy (KOCEI) and has active contacts or partnerships with a numerous international or regional organizations in the electoral field such as: United Nations Development Program (USA), The International Foundation for Electoral Systems-IFES (USA), International IDEA (Sweden, Stockholm), Francophone Electoral Skills Network-RECEF (Canada, Quebec), European Center for Electoral Support-ECES (Belgium, Brussels), The Electoral Integrity Project (Harvard University, Sydney University), The Electoral Knowledge Network-ACE (founding members IDEA International, IFES), International Republican Institute-IRI (USA), National Democratic Institute-NDI (USA), Democracy International, U.S. Agency for International



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Development-USAID (USA), Korea International Cooperation Agency-KOICA (South Korea), Organization of American State-OAS (Columbia), Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (South Africa), Center for Democracy and Electoral Studies (Cameroon), The Asia Foundation (USA).

A-WEB has two regional centers, A-WEB Seoul (located in the Republic of Korea) and A-WEB New Delhi (located in the Republic of India).

Statutory bodies such as the General Assembly (4 sessions) and the Executive Committee (9 sessions), with the support of the Chairperson, Vice-President, Secretary General and the General Secretariat of the Association, ensure the management of the international organization A-WEB.

For the period 2019-2021 (extended due to the pandemic until oct. 2022), the presidency of A-WEB is held by the Electoral Central Commission of India, and for the next two-year cycle, the presidency will be taken over by the Independent Electoral Commission of Africa South.

PEA has been a member of A-WEB since the establishment of the organization and has held the vice-presidency of A-WEB in the period of 2015-2017, the presidency of A-WEB in the period of 2017-2019, and within currently mandate, the Permanent Electoral Authority holds a seat on the Executive Committee A-WEB.

Given the opportunities for international cooperation in the electoral field offered by the A-WEB electoral community and the successful existing cooperation relations between the two entities, PEA and A-WEB, at the beginning of July 2021, PEA submitted to the Romanian Parliament the proposal to approve the payment of the annual participation fee of PEA as a full member of the international organization A-WEB.

About the A-WEB projects planned for 2021

At the A-WEB Executive Committee on April 2021, the planned projects were approved.

I. Capacity Building for Publicity and Efficient Operation of the A-WEB Secretariat

Task 1. HR Management for Efficient Operation of the A-WEB Secretariat

□ Objectives:



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- Running internship programs with the local community;
- Creating a working environment which improves work efficiency;
- Period: throughout the year
- Key Agenda:
 - The Secretariat is working closely with Incheon city, where the Secretariat is located, in running internship programs. Incheon city recruits highly recommended university students and the Secretariat offers opportunities for the students to acquire skills required for international work during their internship in the Secretariat;
 - The Secretariat is offering a flexible work schedule for the staff to maximize their work efficiency;

Task 2. Developing Professional Competence of the staff

- Objectives:
 - Providing the staff with training about office administration and budget execution;
- Period: throughout the year
- Key Agenda:
 - The Secretariat will prepare workplace learning experiences for the staff to be able to improve their performance and better understand budget and budget execution;

Task 3. Reinforcement of Global PR Activities

- Objectives:
 - Promoting a positive image of A-WEB through systematic PR activities;
 - Encouraging members to contribute to publications;
 - Strengthening the online platforms for smooth exchange of information and communication;
- Period: throughout the year
- Key Agenda
 - The Secretariat will carry out strategic press release to raise the profile of A-WEB;



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- The Secretariat will produce and distribute promotional materials to increase the A-WEB's visibility;
- The Secretariat is planning to issue the 2020 annual report and newsletters containing news and contributions of member organizations;
- The official website of A-WEB will be regularly updated and upgraded;
- The Secretariat will continue to facilitate the communication among members by activating the official SNS platform of A-WEB;

II. Pursuing Sustainable Growth of A-WEB as an Organization and Enhancing Cooperation among Member EMBs

Task 4. Successful Holding of the 9th Executive Board Meeting

Objectives:

- Making elaborate preparation for successful holding of the meeting;
- Presenting agenda items closely related to the accomplishment of the vision and mission of A-WEB;

Period: from January to June

Key Agenda

- The Secretariat has been looking for the most effective way of holding the EB meeting, in preparation for a drawn-out pandemic. It conducted a survey of the EB members' opinions on a possible modality of the coming EB meeting and after careful consideration of the survey results, decided to hold the meeting in a written form;
- The Secretariat has made thorough preparations for inclusive agenda items. The agenda includes the 2020 progress report and financial report as well as the 2021 project plan of the Secretariat. The agenda also contains important matters to be discussed to realize the vision and mission of the Association such as Establishment of regional center, secondment to the Secretariat, regulation of the Secretariat and payment of annual membership fee;



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Task 5. Successful Holding of the 5th General Assembly Meeting

Objectives:

- Preparing for the meeting in collaboration with the host country;
- Encouraging all members to actively participate in the meeting to raise a sense of belonging to A-WEB among members;

Period: from July to December

Key Agenda:

- The Secretariat will devise measures for holding the meeting under COVID-19. It will be using various communication tools for smooth communication with the host and monitoring the development of COVID-19 to find the most effective way of holding the meeting;
- The Secretariat will design the program of the meeting that will promote members' active participation in the meeting. The Secretariat held several webinars on Election Management During COVID-19 and conducted online Capacity Building Programs for Election Management in 2020 under COVID-19. The lessons learned from the webinars and practical know-how about running a training program in times of pandemic will be shared in the 5th General Assembly meeting;

Task 6. Creating Opportunities for Cooperation among Member EMBs

Objectives:

- Enhancing cooperation with the A-WEB regional centers;
- Updating electoral information of member countries as well as members' organizational information;
- Diversifying revenue source for sustainable growth;

Period: throughout the year



Key Agenda:

- The Secretariat will strengthen the cooperation among members and timely update members' information. It will work closely with the regional centers to enhance the network and sharing of information among members. The members' information and their electoral data will be regularly updated and stored in a database;
- Securing revenue source is important for sustainable growth of A-WEB. The Secretariat will prepare for an agenda item on payment of annual membership fee to be discussed in the coming Executive Board meeting and General Assembly meeting;

Task 7. Facilitating Exchange of Knowledge and Information on Election Management

Objectives:

- Hosting international conferences on election management for the promotion of international cooperation;
- Participating in conferences hosted by other international organizations for the expansion of network;

Period: throughout the year

Key agenda:

- The Secretariat will produce and share with all members of A-WEB the '2020 Chronicles on A-WEB Webinar Series : Election Management during COVID-19'. The results of the seminars the A-WEB Secretariat hosted or participated in 2020 will be contained in this publication;
- The Secretariat is planning to expand its network by actively participating in other International conferences as well as to hosting two webinars in 2021;

Webinars scheduled for 2021 by A-WEB

- Jan., International Centre for Parliamentary Studies (ICPS) Via online "Strengthening Access in Registration;



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- Apr., Arab EMBs, UNDP Via online "Arab EMBs' Webinar Series, Seoul International Forum on Elections (SIFE);
- Sep., ACEEEO, The 30th Annual Conference of ACEEEO;
- Nov., Organization of American States (OAS), Inter-American Meeting of Electoral Authorities, Melanesian Spearhead, Group Secretariat (MSG), The 2nd MSG Member's Election, Management Board Conference;
- Dec., BAWASLU Indonesia, The 3rd Electoral Studies Program (ESP);

International conferences scheduled for 2021 by A-WEB Secretariat

- Jun, A-WEB Secretariat with International Centre for Parliamentary Studies - ICPS), via online, "Elections & Technology: How to incorporate new systems into our electoral processes post COVID-19";
- Oct-Nov., A-WEB Secretariat and Asian Network for Free Elections – ANFREL, via online - The Asian Electoral Stakeholder Forum 5 (AESF), "Lessons Learned: The Way Forward for Elections in Asia Beyond the COVID-19 Pandemic";

III. Establishing the Credible Election Environment through A-WEB's Capacity Building Program

Task 8. Introducing New Formats of Election Management Capacity Building Programs

Objectives:

- Diversifying training formats to maximize the effectiveness of the training;
- Consulting experts for objective feedbacks on the training projects;

Period: from January to December

Key agenda:

- The Secretariat has decided to conduct six election management Capacity programs on line, as a face-to-face training poses security risks due to COVID-19;
- The Secretariat will introduce the 'Multi-phase Training Program' in which participants experience four phases: *phase 1.* completing and submitting prior task; *phase 2.* basic training; *phase 3.* finalizing action plan; and in-depth training;



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To make the evaluation of the program more objective, the Secretariat will consult with experts in the field of development cooperation, in addition to conducting an internal evaluation;

Task 9. Developing New Courses and Examining the Effect of the Courses on Actual Policies

Objectives:

Establishing a plan on research capacity building for developing new training courses;

Maintaining the network of the participants for sharing the training effect on each country;

Period: from January to December

Key agenda:

The Secretariat will establish a stage-based preparation plan for enhancing the research capacity of the training team which is responsible for developing tailored training courses for a country and multiyear small group training courses;

The Secretariat is currently evaluating the effect of each training course by measuring overall satisfaction rates and each effect on actual policies after a course. For a more accurate evaluation of the effect of the training the Secretariat will complement and specify the existing performance index by referring to other training organizations;

The Secretariat will improve the quality of the training programs by analyzing the cases of action plan initiatives collected from the post-course surveys.

Task10. Observing the Elections Conducted by Member EMBs and Running Election Visitor Programs

Objectives:

Successful Operation of the A-WEB's Election Visitors Programs;

Supporting Member EMBs to Run their Election Observation Programs;

Period: throughout the year



□ Key agenda:

- ▣ The Secretariat will establish a basic manual of the operation of the Election Observation programs conducted by member EMBs and A-WEB's Election Visitors programs;
- ▣ The Secretariat will monitor media reports of members' elections;

Summary of PEA activities in relation to A-WEB, January to June 2021

For the year 2021, up to this point, PEA has carried out various activities in relation with the international organization A-WEB:

1. Regarding the management of the PEA relationship with A-WEB;

- on February, 2021 - submission of the form of expression of interest regarding the A-WEB training program Capacity Building Program 2022;
- on March, 2021, the transmission of updated data on PEA;
- on April, 2021, PEA's participation in the A-WEB Executive Committee (9th), in written format (remote).

2. Regarding the representation of the PEA at the conferences, seminars and meetings in the electoral field of the international organization A-WEB (online participation):

- on April 30, 2021, the PEA participated in the Seoul International Forum on Elections: “The Road to Effective Post-Pandemic Democracy,” organized by the Korean National Electoral Commission (NEC) for A-WEB members; Participants in the event: Maria Crăciun-head of service and Alexandra Iordache-parliamentary consultant, from external relations service within International Cooperation Department;
- on June 30, 2021, PEA participated with a presentation made by Ovidiu Oproaica - general director within computerization of electoral processes department at the conference organized by A-WEB in collaboration with ICPS, “Technology in elections: Methods of integrating new



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technologies in post-pandemic election processes"; Participants in the event: Ovidiu Oproaica - general director, Gabriel Dica-director within Computerization of Electoral Processes Department.

3. Regarding the PEA's participation in the A-WEB capacity building program in the field of electoral management

- Between 23.06-02.07.2021 PEA participated in the program "Media use in electoral management", phase 1; Participants: Sorin Lazăr-head of department, Anamaria Revnic-Călugărița -director, Luiza Nedelcu-parliamentary counselor within International Cooperation Department, Mircea Preoțescu-head of Electoral Bodies Coordination Department, Ionuț Bălașa - general director of Coordination and Monitoring the Territorial Activities Department;

- On July - submission of answers to the questionnaire on the institutional capacity building program - CBP 2021.

4. Regarding the promotion of Romania's good practices in the organization of elections and referendums, as well as in the field of financing political parties and electoral campaigns:

- Submission of articles for the A-WEB Newsletter regarding the following events:
- Electoral considerations and lessons learned in 2020: Romania's experience - online conference organized on January 21, 2021 by PEA in partnership with the International Foundation for Electoral Systems-IFES;

- The 3rd Scientific Conference of electoral experts: Accessibility of the electoral process - online conference organized on January 16, 2021 by the Permanent Electoral Authority of Romania and the Venice Commission.

Proposals on PEA's cooperation relationship with A-WEB, July to December 2021

Considering the history of PEA's collaboration relationship with A-WEB, the Association's specialization in electoral matters, the ongoing projects at A-WEB, the potential for developing international relations with A-WEB member countries, we consider it appropriate for the months of July to December 2021 to cover the followings:



1. Regarding the management of the PEA relationship with A-WEB

- Promoting PEA as an international electoral assistance provider within the projects or activities carried out by A-WEB at international level;
- Establishing the list of topics of electoral expertise (knowledge products) of strategic interest for PEA, such as: documentation, testing, implementation and use of technology in elections; organization and management of elections and referendums; financing of political parties and electoral campaigns; misinformation and code of conduct in elections; international election monitoring & observation code; electoral code etc.;
- Analysis and establishment of the list of regions/countries of strategic electoral interest within A-WEB, taking into account criteria such as election experience, electoral technology used in the electoral process, electoral systems and considering the PEA's International cooperation Strategy for relevant international organizations (A-WEB, RECEF, ACEEEO, IDEA International, IFES etc.), the global objectives of the International Development Cooperation Agency of Romania - RoAID within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania - MFA Romania (Republic of Moldova, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, Middle East, Africa, Latin America and Caribbean) and the global/regional policy of international cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Romania (Europe, Africa, America, Central and Caucasus, South and East Asia, the Near and Middle East, Oceania);
- Connecting PEA to A-WEB programs / projects / activities, in the electoral field, carried out on distinct geographical regions: Europe, America, Asia, Oceania, Africa;
- Identification and connection of PEA to individual sources / providers of electoral expertise from the A-WEB network community for electoral expertise topics of strategic interest;
- Identification, collection, exchange and dissemination of documentation or research materials, methodologies, manuals or guides of good practice on the topics of electoral expertise of strategic interest for the PEA.



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2. Regarding the promotion of Romania's good practices in the organization of elections and referendums, as well as in the field of financing political parties and electoral campaigns

- Establishment of a team at PEA level, of experts, for providing electoral assistance at international level to promote knowledge products in electoral matters and to implement good electoral practices; the main criteria for experts are the technical electoral competences covered by the PEA and the foreign languages used;

- Elaboration of standardized electoral knowledge products and of the methodology or guide of good electoral practices for the electoral segment targeted by PEA;

- Participation of PEA in A-WEB projects or initiation of events / actions dedicated to PEA for the promotion of electoral knowledge products or good practices according to the objectives of PEA.

3. Regarding the elaboration, approval and implementation of joint projects and programs between PEA and A-WEB

- Depending on the strategic electoral interests of the PEA circumscribed to the objectives of international cooperation of MFA Romania and RoAid related to the receptivity of A-WEB or A-WEB members, we will initiate proposals for joint projects/programs such as: signing partnerships/memorandum of cooperation (MoU) with similar electoral bodies, associations of regional/international electoral bodies, electoral assistance agencies, electoral documentation and research institutions, electoral training or electoral profile institutions; organizing dedicated events or training programs; organizing and participating in electoral observation programs, study/documentation visits in order to exchange experience and develop good electoral practices etc.

4. Regarding the representation of the PEA at the conferences, seminars and meetings in the electoral field of the international organization A-WEB

- Participation as a speaker on behalf of the PEA team of experts for providing electoral knowledge and electoral assistance at planned conferences / seminars / meetings/ projects.



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5. Regarding the connection of the PEA with the members of the international organization A-WEB and the proposal of joint projects with them

- Depending on the objectives and strategic electoral interests of the PEA (list of topics of electoral interest and regions/countries targeted) and the global objectives of external cooperation of the MFA Romania and RoAid, we will send letters of intent to initiate international cooperation.

6. Regarding reports and summary information about electoral activity of the international organization A-WEB

- Information about the activities carried out by A-WEB and the relationship between PEA and A-WEB will be frequently elaborated.

For the PEA, identifying the latest trends, challenges and developments in democratic electoral management and electoral processes, in order to facilitate effective exchange of experience with other electoral management bodies it is a workable priority and a permanent benchmark for improving institutional capacity.

Removing barriers for increasing participation in the electoral process and including the views of all sections of society in the development of electoral policies are matters constantly facing new challenges. To meet these challenges, election management bodies need to come up with new initiatives, to innovate, to integrate state-of-the-art technologies and strengthen their administrative capacity. Sharing knowledge about elections and electoral practice through technology serves as a genuine resource for learning from the electoral experiences of other electoral bodies.

PEA's capitalization of ideas, experiences, data, documents, studies, research, applications, and know-how of a theoretical, normative and applicative nature in the electoral field, shared on the occasion of bilateral or multilateral experience-exchanges at international level, is a natural consequence of efforts to strengthen institutional capacity and achieve planned international cooperation objectives.



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At the same time, the correlation and pursuit of the specific objectives of each structure within the PEA with the general objectives of the PEA, will lead to the successful fulfillment of the mission and functions of the Authority in the area of its competences of activity, in electoral matters.