

Club
AGORA
international

PART OF THE ROUND TABLE FAMILY

AGORA CLUB INTERNATIONAL

N°01

2019-2020

Fairy tale of

AGM

MARRAKESH

DARE TO GROW - BY CHRIS HELSEN : INTRODUCTION OF THE NEW BOARD : FAIRY TALE OF AGM MARRAKECH - BY MIHAELA CRACANA : NEW ISP -PALESA PADS : IMPRESSIONS OF A ACI CONFERENCE VETERAN-BY GABI ABAGIU : MOROCCAN EXPERIENCE-BY DOTTIE NTENGERENJI CHARTER 4 CLUBS : CALENDAR ACI 2019-2020 : AGORACLUBINTERNATIONAL.COM



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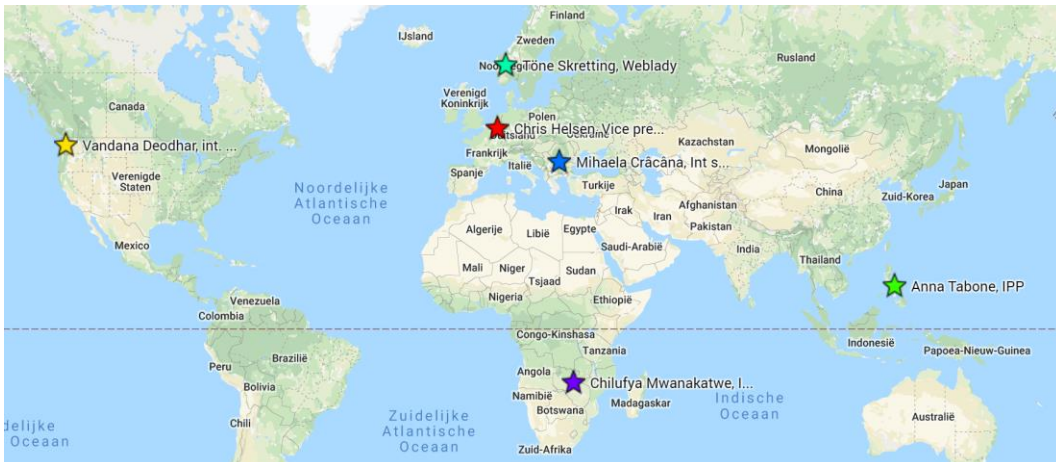
1. Dare to grow

Dear members of Agora Club Worldwide,

In Marrakech, at the Annual General Meeting of ACI I started my presidential year. Leading and promoting our beautiful organization will be my main function. At first sight maybe a daunting task but I am not doing this on my own.

I can rely on an amazing and a really global board. Together with Anne Tabone, Immediate Past President from AC Malta but living in the Philippines, Chilufya Mwanakatwe from AC Zambia, Int. Vice President, Mihaela Crăcăna from AC România, Int Secretary, Vandana Deodhar from AC Seattle, Int Treasurer and Tone Skretting, from AC Norway weblady (not an official function but very well appreciated).

I am very happy that these wonderful ladies are so courageous to walk this journey with me.



My motto this year is:



My family and I have a very strong connection with our garden and everything that grows in it.

And just like in gardening we can see GROW as a challenge!

In all seriousness, have you ever planted something in your garden and then could not wait for it to grow? I know I certainly have and I have the same feeling now. I am impatient to see our Agora Club GROW in all aspects.

- Grow not only in number of clubs but also grow in service, in friends and in maturity
- Grow from friendship to commitment.
- Grow in Agora life: start local, go national and international.
- Grow in our Round Table Family.
- Grow in new continents. Asia is the next new continent in ACI.
- Grow in new countries: Nepal will be chartered the 4th of march and Russia, Cyprus, Greece and Kenia are in the pipeline.
- Grow in the exposure of our Agora Club.
- Grow in our international project , Palesa pads in South Africa.

I hope you can accept this challenge ?

A very personal touch in my logo is a pepper (spicy or not spicy)

Over the years me and my husband have developed a spicy fundraising activity. We sow the seedswe grow the plants.....and sell them for charity.....

And my advice to you all is : spice up your life

- With planting smiles
- Growing laughter
- And harvest friendship

Thank you Conference Team of AC Morocco to organize our 23 rd Agora International Conference. You achieved to welcome more than 450 participants of 20 countries! Congratulations!

I am ready for THE SPICY , GROWING ADVENTURE.

Our countdown has started for ACI in The Hague, The Netherlands, Let's go Royal Dutch!!

Yours in friendship & service.

Chris Helsen
President Agora Club International 2019-2020

Plant smiles. Grow laughter. Harvest friendship.



2. Introduction of the new board



Chris Helsen - helsen.c@gmail.com

Chilufia Mwanakatwe – chilunmwanak@gmail.com

Anna Tabonne – annatabone@gmail.com

Vandana Deodhar – vandu5144@gmail.com

Mihaela Cracana – m_cracana@yahoo.com

Tone Skretting - tone@ert.no

3. Fairy tale of AGM Marrakech

Once upon a time faar, faaar away, over the mountains and the see, it was a kingdom named Morocco. And in that kingdom there were some special kind of Fairies veeery active, that dared to have big dreams. They planned to invite for a meeting, in their country their ladies friends from the world of Agora show them the beauties of their kingdom and to

spoil them in parties. Well, they worked hard to organize this for two years..



Of course the adorable ladies were delighted and, when time comes, they started to come to Morocco, through the star gate Menara...



Guests come and come and filled the hotel Palm Plaza, than the other hotels around...poor fairies they hardly find time to sleep but managed all 500 guests!
First group of 120 princesses and princes on 30 SUV started the first pretour in the desert, to Ouarzazate through Atlas mountains ...than a lot of stunning places with strange names comes into our way...TIZINTIZIKA, BEN HADDOU KASBAH, TINGHIR, SKOURA DADES, TODRA GORGE, ERFOUD, MERZOUGA... wow! It comes the desert with the camel riding, TAZZARINE, TALIFAT ...





The second pretour filled all the busses with curious people ready to jump off jump in to argan oil cooperative and Essaouira attractions...



**In this fairytale a little
reality entered, the
Concillour's meeting...**



Finally the first party time arrived! Palace Suleyman opened it's gates for hundreds of merry, noisy groups of funny dressed participants...





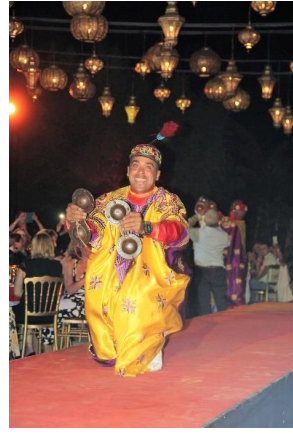
Saturday morning – time for official meeting of Agora Club's members worldwide begin with drums and music and continues with fun, voting, applications and projects for the future...





After lunch and visit of the Marrakech Medina and Bahia Palace it comes the most exiting part of the fun~ the gala . For this the fairies magic transformed all the cars into carriages and ladies and knights with colorful burnous went to Palace Dar Soukkar – what a magical night...





Everybody lives happy ever after and arrived safe home, but the Marrakech experience will remain a dear memory. Thank you dear moroccan ladies for your efforts, commitment and all the hard work!

*By
Mihaela Cracana*



4. New ISP – Palesa Pads

#KeepAGirlChildInSchool



Every girl should have the opportunity to attend school every day!

Many girls in Africa miss 3 –5 days of school each month because they cannot afford sanitary pads.

Most girls eventually end up dropping out of school altogether

With our project, Palesa Reusable Sanitary pads , we can provide a sustainable solution for up to 5 years, which is a girl's school career.

OUR FIRST PROJECT WILL BE LAUNCHED IN JOHANNESBURG IN NOVEMBER 2019

Beverley Patterson, convenor of ISP, Laura Van Zyl , AC South Africa President , Chilufya Mwanakatwe, Vice President ACI and Chris Helsen, President ACI will be present in Johannesburg to launch the first mission

Visits to Community Centers in Soweto, visits to Factory (22 November) and hand-over of the Palesa Pads in Soweto(23 November).

Next missions will be arranged and will be announced at our website and facebook.

5. Impressions of a ACI Conference veteran

Yes, I can say I am a veteran while I attended the ACI conference in 2008-Aubonne, 2015-Brasov, 2017- Malta, 2018 – Gent!

I'm not a big traveler but I found a challenge in Morocco's visit. If not now, when?

My husband, Sorin, member of C41, accompanied me. Side by side, right?

We arrived safely in Marrakech but now getting worried because of the unusual temperature for us, 42 degrees. But coming to Palm Plaza and meeting the conference's organizing committee and a lot of our friends, all the worries are gone. Souad, Sabah, Karima, Narjisse, Amia, Hanane, Lamia were very busy with **Registration**.

We started taking pictures against the beautiful banner of the conference in the background. Here are some of them with ladies from Agora Morocco, Agora US, ladies from Beziers- France, Carine and Veronique from Holland, ladies from the reunited team representing Agora Romania. My husband met Mohamed, from C41 Marrakech.

We went to bed late though I knew it followed a long day in Essaouira and charter meeting AC3 Detroit.

Essaouira is a picturesque port city on the Atlantic coast with 18th-century seafront ramparts. I enjoyed very much in spite of the strong "Alizée" that that ruined my hairstyle. On our way we stopped at an argan oil factory, which was very interesting. A beautiful Moroccan lady (of course, she is using the argan oil!) was a a marvelous guide. And other lovely ladies were working to get the so called "golden liquid".

We came back a little late for the **charter meeting of Agora No.3 Detroit**, having as God-mother Club Agora Casa-Bouskoura 5. Participants from Agora Morocco, Italy, Iceland, Romania and C41 Romania spent an unforgettable evening.

The entire day of **3rd of October** was very special for me, being **my 65th anniversary**.



I woke up early on Friday for attending the **Councillor Meeting**. Of course, we had an agenda carefully prepared by our international board, Anna, Chris, Maria-Erla, Vandana, Isabelle, Tone. In the light of the candle of friendship, we discussed the subjects on the agenda of the general meeting, we exchanged ideas on the past Agora year and of the future of Agora Club in each member country.

A special **Welcome Party** followed at Palais Soleiman. Hundreds of beautiful dressed ladies in their national colours but with an oriental touch. The food was outstanding and the entertainment very good. A wonderful evening and lots of dancing!

Saturday morning we all were in a good mood for the **AGM**, being welcomed by drummers. Words of welcome from the ACI President, Anna Tabone, have increased the excitement as well as the lighting of the candle of friendship and reading of the aims and objectives by Dounia, words of welcome from the vice mayor of Marrakech.

Our conference was honoured by special guests as the International Presidents (LCI, Tangent, RT, C41), past ACI officers and honorary ACI members.

We enjoyed the combined report of ACI Board. We have listened carefully to Vandana who presented the Report of the auditor, Financials ACI year 2018-2019, Budgets ACI year 2019-2020.

We have applauded the results of the service projects HAPPY HEARTS, Together4Charity, The South African Bug, Sonja Trogir - Flood Relief, The knitting Project.

The emotion has increased when Veerle De Jonge presented the closure report on ACI ISP 2015-2019, EFTW. Splendid PPT on the ISP! Veerle announced a great end for EFTW in Agora: Diana, a special young Romanian lady, recovered after a tumor in her left eye tear gland, received 5000 euro from ACI to continue the needed treatment.

A big thank you for the huge work of Sandy Van Niekerk & Veerle De Jonge, Conveners ACI ISP 2015-2019.

After the Coffee Break, two moroccan dancers taught us to move on oriental rhythms. Wow! And then back to work!

AC Nepal presented the application for Associate membership and we gladly voted in favor. You should think about attending The Charter of AC NEPAL, on 4th of March 2020!

The next topic was related to the **amendments** proposed to our Rules by the ACI Board 2018-2019.

Like all the other subjects, these amendments were discussed in detail during the concillors' meeting so that the outcome of the vote was predictable.

In a truly royal style, Corry, Veronique, Carina, carried us to the story they wrote for us with a lot of imagination - The **ACI Conference 2020**. Let's go Royal Dutch in Den Haag! Full of humor and very convincing, Agora France presented in 3 different languages their proposal for hosting the **ACI Conference 2021**, at Le PUY du FOU (near Nantes). Elected best park world wide, Puy du Fou offers a multitude of great shows and adventures. We voted in favor, ready for the promised adventures!

My favorite moment of the conference, **Membership Awards** (AC Iceland, AT Germany, AC Botswana) and **Creativity Award** - Mihaela Cracana (Agora Romania) for the project "I'll do it my way"!

Two applications for **ISP** were presented with a great deal of conviction: Beverly Patterson (AC South Africa) – “ Palesa Pads – Reusable sanitary towels” and Marleen Bollen (AC BELGIUM) - Mobile School. Both projects are very needed and the decision wasn't easy for councilors. The winner is ISP of AC South Africa.

The conference was coming to its end. The outgoing president, **Anna** , shared with us her feelings and thoughts at the end of her amazing year for Agora International. Her exceptional speech lifted us to our feet and the ovations were totally deserved. **Congratulations , Anna, Isabelle, Chris, Maria-Erla, Vandana, Tone! Great job!**

Our brand new international president, **Chris**, came to give us her first speech!

Wonderful motto, “**Dare to grow, add spice to life**”

Congratulations Chris and all our best wishes for your presidential year together with your Board 2019-2020: VP Chilufia, Secretary Mihaela, Treasurer Vandana, IPP Anna, Tone!

And how else could a weekend be ended if not with a glorious **Gala**?

The Moroccan ladies had the idea to take us all with very elegant and beautifully decorated carriages until the Palais Dar Soukkar.

Starry, starry night... and Anna shined in a very elegant turquoise dress... **The Presidential Drink** and the party that followed was the peak of an exceptional Agora weekend.



You can find on Facebook and on www.agoraclubinternational.com a lot of other pictures and movies that are more eloquent than me!

A big thank you to the **AC Morocco - Conference Committee** for how they organized this AGM of our Agora Club International!

Yours in friendship.

Gabriela Abagiu, Nat. Pres AGORA ROMANIA 2018-2019

6. Moroccan experience



Dottie NTENGERENJI

President -AGORA Zambia 2019/2020

This article is dedicated to the 23rd Agora Club International (ACI) Conference that was held in Marrakech, Morocco from 3rd through 6th October, 2019.

As one of the recipients of the Travel Fund, I would like to thank the International Board for their generosity as these funds assisted with my registration package.



I arrived in Marrakech and was welcomed to a city of red buildings and motor bikes. I quickly checked in at Rawabi Hotel then walked to Palm Plaza with my colleague Sylvia Mwansa. Palm Plaza was the conference hotel where logistics were being done. At the registration desk we were warmly welcomed by smiley faces from the organizing committee.

It was the first time we met but
it

Arrival for registration at Palm Plaza felt like we had met before and they walked us through the registration. - the ladies were friendly: -Sabah, Souad, Narjisse, Karima, Dounia and all.



The Pre-tour took us to Essaouira - a Jewish area. On our way to Essaouira, we came across spectacular scenes - like goats in a tree and camel rides. What a pleasure it was to get to know how the Argan oil is processed in this town. We then went to the fish market and toured the place.



On the way to Essaouira- Dottie far left, Chilú &



Behind me is a tree with goats on it



Syliva, Dottie and Chilú posing after a wonderful lunch





Ladies making the famous Argan oil



After a tour of the Argan Oil plant we were treated to lunch at the Essaouira Hotel & Spa.



AGORA Luxembourg lady in tears after eating a hot spice thinking it was some food similar to their traditional food in Luxembourg

The next day was full of energy and enthusiasm and ready to face the challenges of the Councillor's Meeting. All issues were discussed with utmost serenity and positivity.



Members of the Councillor's Meeting
Dottie & Chilú at Councillor's meeting

After the Councillor's meeting, we had Couscous lunch with ceremonial Moroccan tea at Ksar El Hamra and this was followed by a tour to the Medina Museum. Here at the museum, I had the pleasure to get to know the

history, myth and the enchantment of the old palace which has an area of five acres and it is the work of the grand vizier Ahmed Ben Moussa also known as Ba Hmad who reigned from 1894 to 1900 - a magnificent place with very high walls.





Ayelet, Dottie & Mari at the Medina Museum



Couscous served after Councillor's meeting

Then it was time for the Welcome Party -everyone was dressed in beautiful attires depicting their national colors and danced to the rhytem of the night.



Madagascar, France & Zambia



On Saturday morning we had the 2019 ACI-AGM. We embraced all changes for the well being of AGORA Club International. Out going President Anna gave her farewell speech and Incoming President Chris gave her welcoming speech and announced her motto "Dare to Grow".

In the evenings we all dressed up and took to the dancing floor as

the new ACI Board was ushered in.

*Vice President Chilufya, ACI President Chris and AGORA
Zambia President Dottie*



Immediate Past President Anna with Dottie



The next day I joined the other ladies for a Post tour at Tahanaout - an Artistic place where we had lunch and made our own paintings. We also had an opportunity to have our hands painted with henna.



In conclusion, I would say, the 23rd ACI/AGM in Marrakech was fantastic. Special thanks to the ACI Conference Committee for putting everything together - I enjoyed every moment and the Moroccan tea that was soothing to our hearts - Shukran.

A big thank you to the Board for the travel grant.

I also thank everyone for their friendship and the enthusiastic participation during the conference - a very good forum for networking. Looking forward to the next conference to be held in The Hague. Will endeavor to work with the current Board to ensure that what is lined up in the pipeline will be achieved as we dare to grow this wonderful association.

Lots of love.

Dottie

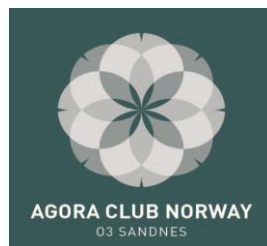
7. Charter 4 clubs

14 September it was a very good day for Agora , 4 new clubs chartered.

Agora Club 21 La Tierache Belgium



Agora Club 03 Sanders Norway



Agora-Tangent Club 32 Itzehoe Germany



Agora Club 5 Sacele Romania



Welcome, ladies and we are waiting to see you growing !!!

The second ACI FORUM – a very good occasion to travel and meet friends – soon informations on the website !





DATE OF EVENTS ACI 2019-2020



DATE	EVENTS	LOCATION
2019		
SEPTEMBER		
28 September – 3 October	Boardmeeting 4	MARRAKECH
OCTOBER		
4 - 6 October	ACI AGM	MARRAKECH
6 October	Old and new board: handover meeting	MARRAKECH
	New board: BM 1	
NOVEMBER		
31 October-3 November	Half Yearly meeting 41 Int	MALTA
31 October-3 November	Half Yearly meeting Tangent CI	MALTA
18-22 November	ISP – Palesa pads – mission South Africa	SOWETO
14 November	ACI DAY	
23 November	charter TC 6 Hiede	GERMANY
24 November	SKYPE MEETING	
DECEMBER		
15 December	SKYPE MEETING	
2020		
JANUARY		
19 January	SKYPE MEETING	
24 - 26 January	MTM Middle European and African Region	VIENNA
FEBRUARY		
6 – 9 February	Half year meeting RT international meeting	LUXEMBURG
31 January – 2 February	MTM Nordic Region/south European and Apac	REYKJAVIK
24 - 28 February	BOARDMEETING 2	BOTSWANA
February	INSTALLING NATIONAL BOARD IN BOTSWANAN	BOTSWANA
MARCH		
4 March	AC NEPAL CHARTER	NEPAL
22 March	SKYPE MEETING	
APRIL		
07 April	AGM SWITZELAND	

MAY		
09 May	AGM ICELAND	REYKJAVIK
	AGM ZIMBABWE	HARARE
16 May	AGM SOUTH AFRICA	JOHANNESBURG
	AGM USA	SEATTLE
10 May	SKYPE MEETING	
22 - 24 May	AGM GERMANY, 25 ANNIVERSARY	SCHLESWIG
31 May	SKYPE MEETING	
JUNE		
1 - 5 June	BOARDMEETING 3	VERONA
5-7 June	FORUM 2	VERONA
5-7 June	AGM 41 and TCI	VERONA
	AGM THE NETHERLANDS	
4 June	AGM UK	SOUTHEND ON SEA
	AGM SANDNESS 1 NORWAY	
	AGM ITALY	
	AGM ROMANIA	DUBOVA
	AGM MOROCCO	CASABLANCA
13 June	AGM FRANCE	LILLE
19 June	AGM MALTA	VALETTA
	AGM ZAMBIA	LUSAKA
27 June	AGM BELGIUM	TIENEN
	AGM ISRAEL	
AUGUST		
27 - 30 August	LCI	LAHTI, FINLAND
SEPTEMBER		
2 - 6 September	RTIWM	INDIA, Delhi
OCTOBER		
28 September – 1 October	BOARDMEETING 4	BELGIUM OR THE NETHERLANDS
1 - 4 October	ACI The Hague	THE HAGUE, THE NETHERLANDS



INTERNATIONAL SERVICE PROJECT 2019 – 2021

#KeepAGirlChildInSchool

Every girl should have the opportunity to attend school every day! Many girls in Africa miss 3 –5 days of school each month because they cannot afford sanitary pads. Most girls eventually end up dropping out of school altogether.

With our project, Palesa Reusable Sanitary pads, we can provide a sustainable solution for up to 5 years, which is a girl's school career.

One mission = 5000 € = 300 GIRLS

We need your help to make this ISP a success.

DONATIONS:

Account number: AGORA CLUB INTERNATIONAL

IBAN BE 25-001-6811249-82

BIC/SWIFT: GEBABEBB

Please mention: DONATION PALESA PADS
AND YOUR NAME OR NAME CLUB NAME

**OUR FIRST
PROJECT WILL
BE LAUNCHED IN
JOHANNESBURG
IN NOVEMBER
2019**

www.palesapads.com