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## DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terms of Reference for the Operational / Planning Workshop of the Somali  
Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commission.

April 2011

## I- Context and justification:

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The African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) is a specialized institution of the African Union mandated to develop and promote the use of African languages in all the domains of the society, in collaboration with the Regional Economic Communities and the Ministries of Culture. To carry out its task and reinforce the process of developing and promotion of African languages, ACALAN and other partners such as UNESCO, the International Organisation of the Francophonie (OIF), the Swiss Cooperation and the Spanish Embassy, organised a series of conferences in the various Economic regions of Africa, on the theme: « **National Policies: the Role of Cross-Border Languages and the Place of Lesser-Used Languages**».

The synthesis Conference, that followed, held in Addis-Ababa at the headquarters of the African Union between February 5 and 7, 2009, validated the recommendations of the regional conferences, and identified 41 Vehicular Cross-Border Languages, throughout the continent, on which ACALAN is going to focus in the next years. Out of the forty-one (41) languages, twelve (12) were selected to establish Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commissions. The twelve languages are: **Standard modern Arab and Berber** for North Africa; **Hausa, Mandenkan and Fulfulde** for West Africa; **Kiswahili, Somali and Malagasy** for East Africa; **Chichewa / Chinyanja and Setswana** for Southern Africa, and **Lingala and Beti-fang** for Central Africa.

The Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commissions are one of the two working structures of ACALAN at grass-root level, the other being the National Language Structures that serve as Focal Points of ACALAN. Their task include empowering the language, coordinating and establishing synergies with institutions dealing with the promotion of African languages and national structures in the member states of the African Union. They are composed of linguists that undergo a process of selection according to criteria set by the eight-member Assembly of Academicians, one of the organs of ACALAN.

In accordance with the recommendations of the Synthesis Conference, ACALAN has already established five Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commissions, **Chichewa/Chinyanja and Setswana** in Southern Africa, and **Hausa, Mandenkan and Fulfulde** in West Africa. It is in this context that ACALAN is organising the operational / planning workshop to establish the Somali Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commission and plan for its priority activities for its three-year tenure.

## Objectives

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The objectives of the operational and planning workshops are:

- To establish the Somali Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commission comprising of members from the following countries: Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia and Kenya.
- To agree on the modalities of operation of the Somali Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commission and of the National Language Structures.
- To identify priority areas to be addressed by the Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commission during its three-year mandate.
- To produce a plan of action taking into account the priority areas identified.
- To clarify the role of other stakeholders, including Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Regional Languages Centres (RLC), Universities, Civil Society Organizations, Focal Points and Task Forces in ACALAN's task.
- Discuss any other issue pertinent to the operation of the Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commission.

## Methodology:

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- The workshop would be carried out in forms of plenary, presentations, questions/comments and group work, with the participation of the members of the Assembly of Academicians for the region and of resources persons.
- Each member will present an abridged country report that will allow the identification of priority areas to be addressed by the Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commission during its three-year mandate.

## Expected results :

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- The Somali Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commission is established;
- A Plan of action for the priority activities of the Somali Commission is elaborated;
- The modalities of operation of the Somali Commission and of National Language Structures are clarified;
- The roles of the Regional Economic Communities (RLC), National Language Structures (NLS), individual Focal Points and Task Forces are defined;
- Any other question related to the operation of the Somali Commission is clarified.

## Participants

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Will participate in these workshops the identified potential members to establish the Somali Vehicular Cross-Border Language Commission, a member of the Assembly of Academicians of ACALAN in the region concerned, the Chairperson of the Assembly of Academicians, the representatives of the **Intergovernmental Authority on Development ( IGAD)** and UNESCO in the region, the representative of the Regional Languages Centre (RLC), the representative of the National Language Structure, resource persons (Focal Point and Task Force of the region, University departments and Non-governmental Organisations concerned) and members of the ACALAN Secretariat, a representative of the host country.

## Budget

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To be determined.