



DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

AFRICAN UNION MODEL SUMMIT 2015

**To be Held at Women's University in Africa
Republic of Zimbabwe**

I. Context and Justification

1. The African Union Southern Africa Regional Office (AU-SARO), in Lilongwe Malawi, was established in 2001. AU-SARO is the representational office of the African Union in the Southern Africa region. Its mandate is to develop and maintain constructive and productive relationships between the African Union (AU) Member States within the Southern Africa region, as well as SADC and COMESA. The main objectives of the Office are to popularize the African Union and to lead advocacy programmes on behalf of the AU in the region.
2. A limited knowledge of the African Union continental integration agenda in many African countries, especially at the grassroots level, often hampers citizens' tracking and understanding of the AU Policies, programmes and decision making processes. Information on regional integration and cooperation may not be very well understood among some African citizens, limiting countries' effective participation in important international fora, and their contribution to the crucial continental matters. Recognizing this awareness challenge, the 2009/2012 African Union Commission Strategic Plan emphasized the need for active participation and contribution of all segments of African society in continental development. Similarly the new 2014/2017 AU Commission's Strategic Plan, focuses on sharing knowledge and information as it is vital to economic development. Reaffirming that citizens should be at the center of development, the newly adopted Agenda 2063, calls for action and a strategic framework and roadmap to achieve continental development goals and represents a collective effort and an opportunity for Africa to regain its power to determine its own destiny, and is underpinned by the AU Vision to build **an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, an Africa driven and managed by its own citizens.**
3. The African Union Southern Africa Regional Office, (AU-SARO), in line with AU Commission Strategic Plan and its mandate to popularize the Organization in the region and also play an advocacy role is implementing a program on capacity building targeting universities namely the **African Union Model Summit.**
4. The African Union Model Summit is a simulation exercise of the proceedings of the African Union Summit which is held twice yearly and consists of meetings of the Permanent Representatives Committee, the Executive Council and culminates in the Summit of the Heads of State and Government. It is students based activity, in which participants from Education/Tertiary institutes assign themselves to the African Union Member State and represent their chosen country in all the proceedings of the African Union Summit in the exercise.
5. The whole process brings out understanding and appreciation of the operations of the proceedings of the African Union and its programmes, including those on

Peace and Security, Governance and Human Rights, Trade and Regional Integration, and Development.

6. The AU Model Summit was successfully conducted with the Catholic University of Malawi in the Republic of Malawi in 2011; the University of Namibia in the Republic of Namibia in July, 2014 and with various public and private higher education institutions in the Republic of Mauritius in August, 2014.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE AU MODEL SUMMIT

7. The African Union Model Summit aims at sensitizing African countries on the necessity of developing solidarity and common fronts through promotion of awareness among the university students about the aims and objectives of the AU; enabling understanding of the role and functions of the various organs of the AU; and helping the students appreciate the linkages of the AU with other international bilateral and multilateral agencies. Therefore, the programme seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- Increase awareness of the role, organization, and performance of the African Union;
- Understanding the role and functions of the various organs of the AU;
- Understanding the system of deliberation in the AU;
- Understanding the implementation of resolutions; and understanding the linkages of the AU with other international bilateral and multilateral agencies;
- Contribute to the study of Africa and the AU;

3. EXPECTED OUTPUTS OF THE AU MODEL SUMMIT

8. The model summit is expected to assist students in broadening their understanding of:

- Key economic, social and political security issues facing the African continent
- Patterns of cooperation between the African Union, the United Nations and other international organizations;
- Multi-various determinants, capabilities and constraints that shape the foreign policies of member states of the African Union;
- Patterns of cooperation and conflict that characterize intra-african diplomacy in search for solutions to continental issues;
- Impact of major powers' global policies on economic, social and political security issues facing the African continent as well as attempts to influence the policies

- of major powers in matters of common concern;
- Build student leadership capacity.

4. FORMAT OF THE AU MODEL SUMMIT

8. Following the structure of the African Union Summit, a theme based approach is adopted to facilitate discussions in the various meetings which the Model Summit simulates. With the assistance of AU-SARO the participating institution(s) may decide on an organizing theme to guide discussions in the proceedings.
9. Participating students may be drawn from a variety of study disciplines. Students will be assigned to work in groups consisting of 4 to 5 participants. Each group thus forms the delegation of their chosen Member State and will represent the country in the various meetings of the Summit proceedings.
10. In preparation for the Summit, each group is expected to study the Member State they represent in terms of historical, economic, infrastructural, governance, electoral systems, educational, peace and security issues etc. The students will develop extensive knowledge of their chosen Member State and will thus be able to represent and articulate their country position on various issues. The involvement of academic and faculty staff is required to assist and guide students in the whole exercise. A resource person (mentor) with knowledge about the AU, its procedures, policy organs etc. may also be required to help prepare the students and guide their preparations. With assistance from AU-SARO, the participating institution(s) may need to prepare a workshop to acquaint students with the conduct of meetings, meeting procedures, protocol and etiquette to enhance the Summit experience.
11. At the end of the study, the Model African Union Summit will be held on a given theme for example Infrastructure, Agriculture and Food Security, Climate Change, Peace and Security, Democracy and Good Governance etc). The Model Summit may be successfully completed in two days.

9. SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

12. AU-SARO is guided by the Government of the host country in the selection of the Higher Education/tertiary institution(s) to host the Model Summit and from which participating students will be selected. The simulation will represent 54 AU Member States of which there will be a maximum of 5 students representing each 'Member State'. Thus a total of 270 students will be selected to participate in the Model Summit.
13. The criteria and mode of selecting students are left to the host country and its participating higher education institutions to decide. AU-SARO however encourages gender inclusivity as well as selection broadly representative of the student population of the higher education institution(s).

10. FUNDING FOR THE AU MODEL SUMMIT

14. The budget details are to be worked out and agreed between the AU and the relevant institution/authority from the host country. **AU-SARO will contribute a token amount and in kind support** to the host institution to cover some of the costs to be incurred.

11. DATE AND VENUE

15. The date of the proposed Model Summit may be mutually agreed upon by AU-SARO and the host country and institution(s). Two days are deemed ideal for the Model Summit. AU-SARO would purpose the model Summit take place before June 2015.
16. Preparatory work to be completed between February and June 2015.

12. CONTACTS

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