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**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Twelfth Ordinary Session
25 – 29 January 2008
Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA**

EX.CL/384 (XII)

**REPORT OF THE SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE
AFRICAN POPULATION COMMISSION GENERAL ASSEMBLY
16 – 17 JULY 2007
JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA**

INTRODUCTION

The African Population Commission (APC) was established in 1994 to advise the then Organization of African Unity (OAU) and, now, its successor, the African Union (AU) on population and development matters. The APC is composed of the highest officials of National Population Commissions and/or analogous institutions dealing with population and development issues in Member States.

The 6th Ordinary Session of the General Assembly of the APC took place on July 16 and 17, 2007 in Johannesburg, South Africa under the theme “Policy Implications of The State of The African Population Report 2006.”

The following AU Member States were elected into the Bureau of the African Population Commission:

Chairperson:	Burundi (Central Africa Region)
1st Vice Chairperson:	Egypt (Northern Africa Region)
2nd Vice Chairperson:	Cote d'Ivoire (West African Region)
3rd Vice Chairperson:	Mauritius (Eastern African Region)
Rapporteur:	Swaziland (Southern African Region)

At the end of the meeting the delegates adopted the Johannesburg Declaration on the State of the African Population which among other things requests the African Union Commission in collaboration with the ECA, UNFPA and other partners, to coordinate the review of ICPD+15.

Honorable Ministers, the following documents are being presented to you for endorsement:

- The Report of the 6th Ordinary Session of the General Assembly of the African Population Commission,
- The State of the African Population Report 2006; and
- The Johannesburg Declaration of the Sixth Ordinary Session of the General Assembly of the African Population Commission

EX.CL/384 (XII)
ANNEX 1

Theme: *“Policy Implications of The State of The African
Population Report 2006”*

REPORT

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**SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE
AFRICAN POPULATION COMMISSION
GENERAL ASSEMBLY
16-17 JULY 2007
JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA**

APC/ Rpt (VI)

**Theme: “Policy Implications of The State of The African
Population Report 2006”**

REPORT

REPORT

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The 6th Ordinary Session of the African Population Commission (APC) General Assembly was held at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa, from July 16 to 17, 2007. Its deliberations focused on the theme: “***Policy Implications of The State of The African Population Report 2006***”. The objective of the meeting was to analyse the consequences of the State of African Population Report 2006 and share experiences and lessons from different countries on how to integrate population and development in Africa within the framework of the millennium development goals (MDGs).

II. ATTENDANCE:

2. The Meeting was attended by delegations from the following AU Member States: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Egypt, Ghana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda and Zambia.

3. It was also attended by Representatives of the following countries, International and Regional Organizations, Agencies, NGOs and CSOs: SADC, UNECA, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO, IPPF, NEPAD, League of Arab States, Partners for Population and Development (PPD) Africa Office, Strategic Framework for Africa Representative, Witwatersrand University, Germany Foundation for World Population, USA and AU Commission.

III. ITEM 1: OPENING CEREMONY

(i) Official Opening Ceremony

4. The official opening ceremony took place on July 16, 2007. Hon. Dr. Jean Swanson Jacobs, Vice Minister of Social Development of the Republic of South Africa was the guest of honour while Dr. Jacques van Zuydam, Chief Director for Population within the Department of Social Development of South Africa was the Director of Ceremonies. The Director of Ceremonies welcomed all participants to the Sixth Ordinary Session of the African Population Commission (APC) General Assembly. This was followed by the AU anthem.

5. The following officials and dignitaries addressed the opening ceremony in the order listed, and their statements were distributed and are annexed to the Report:

- Dr. Gill Greer, IPPF Director-General
- Dr. Hussein A. Gezairy, Regional Director, WHO-Eastern Mediterranean Region

- Dr. Ben Kiregyera, Representative of the Executive Secretary, UNECA
- Mrs. Fama Hane Ba, UNFPA, Regional Director for Africa
- Adv. Bience Gawanas, AU Commissioner for Social Affairs
- Opening address and launch of The State of African Population Report 2006 by Hon. Dr. Jean Swanson Jacobs, Deputy Minister of Social Development of the Republic of South Africa and Guest of Honour.

IV. ITEM 2: REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE BUREAU

6. Hon. Dr. Jean Swanson Jacobs, the Deputy Minister for Social Development of the Republic of South Africa presented this report on behalf of Hon. Zola Skweyiya, Minister of Social Development and Chairperson of the APC Bureau. She informed the APC General Assembly that the Bureau started its work with the convening of the First Bureau Meeting in Bloemfontein, South Africa in September 2005 where the Bureau adopted a concrete Action Plan that covered the period 2005-2007. She then informed the meeting that during same year, the APC took part in International Symposium on Official Development Assistance for Population and Development and the International Workshop on Population and Development which was held in China from 26 October to 3 November 2005.

7. The Bureau Chairperson informed the meeting that the APC also participated in the Seminar on Regional Integration, at the International Forum for Social Policy (IFSP) that was held in Montevideo, Uruguay on 21 February (afternoon) and 22 February (Morning) 2006. She informed the delegates that during this workshop, the South African Government registered and organized the seminar as part of the programme of the IFSP, which was convened by the Management of Social Transformations (MOST) programme of UNESCO to which the African Union was invited. She thanked the AU Commissioner for Social Affairs for having spared time to represent the African Union at this workshop.

8. She further reported that in line with the Action Plan adopted in Bloemfontein, the Bureau met for the second time in Nairobi, Kenya to review the progress on the development of the State of the African Population Report 2006. She informed the meeting that the report was finalized during the Third Bureau Meeting which took place in Ghana on the margins of the West African regional forum. The Chair reported that she was pleased that at least two regions had managed to convene their regional forums and was also optimistic that the other regions would follow suit, especially considering that the East and Central African Regions have already submitted concrete proposals on their regional forums.

9. The Chairperson, however, acknowledged that one activity of the Bureau still remained a challenge. This was the compilation of the APC Profile. She observed that although the questionnaires were sent more than once to the Member States, the

response rate was still very low. She informed the meeting that this was a very important exercise and she recommended that the new Bureau pursue this issue further. She requested the Secretariat to distribute the shorter version of the questionnaire during the meeting so that APC Members can complete it on the spot while waiting for the complete questionnaire.

10. The Chairperson also reported that there had been some attempts at formalizing the relationship between the APC and UAPS. She underscored the need to take this forward as UAPS was an important partner on matters of population and development in Africa. She then suggested that the AU Commission should be involved in the activities of the UN Population Commission.

11. She concluded her presentation by thanking her colleagues from Congo, Tunisia, Ghana and Kenya for all the good work and commitment they demonstrated throughout the two years. She also thanked the Commissioner for Social Affairs for her support and enthusiasm..

12. During the discussion that followed, delegates commended the outgoing Chairperson of the APC for the excellent report. They also suggested that Forums of Ministers responsible for population and development should be convened at Regional Economic Community level. The importance of building strategic partnership with NGOs, Civil Society, UN Agencies, the media and parliamentarians was emphasized. The AU Commission then assured the delegates that the issue relating to the UN Population Commission will be addressed.

V. ITEM 3: PROCEDURAL MATTERS

a) Election of the Bureau;

13. After the necessary consultations, the Bureau was elected as follows:

- Chairperson: Burundi (Central Africa Region)
- 1st Vice Chairperson: Egypt (Northern Africa Region)
- 2nd Vice Chairperson: Cote d'Ivoire (West African Region)
- 3rd Vice Chairperson: Mauritius (Eastern African Region)
- Rapporteur: Swaziland (Southern African Region)

b) Adoption of the Agenda;

14. The Agenda was adopted after a slight amendment where "Strengthening and Financing of APC" was proposed as a new Agenda item before "Any Other Business".

c) Organization of Work

15. The Programme of work was adopted as proposed and the Assembly agreed to start their work in the morning at 09.00 and break for lunch at 12.30 hrs and reconvene in the afternoon at 14.30hrs and end the day's work at 18.00 hrs.

VI. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

ITEM 4: GENERAL DEBATE ON THE POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF THE STATE OF THE AFRICAN POPULATION REPORT 2006

16. The State of African Population Report 2006 was introduced by a representative of the AU Commission which is the Secretariat of the Africa Population Commission. He started by thanking the APC Bureau for the oversight role they played during the preparation of the report. He also thanked the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for the financial and technical support which the organization provided to the secretariat. He then introduced the State of African Population 2006 Report to the General Assembly.

17. The presenter highlighted the theme of the report which was “*Population Dynamics: Implications for achieving the millennium development goals.*” He then referred to the process that ushered in the MDGs and acknowledged that a number of countries have made some progress in implementing the MDGs though a lot more still remains to be done especially in Africa. He, however, observed that the progress towards MDGs was threatened by the prevailing population trends on the continent.

18. The presenter then provided a brief explanation on the relationship between population growth and socio-economic development, noting that although population growth provides a stimulus to economic growth by providing the much needed labour and product markets, rapid population growth, unmatched by resource availability and land carrying capacity, increases demand for vital social services which may adversely affect sustainable development. He then went on to suggest that this debate should be framed broadly to include the age structure as presently the debate was only based on population size and growth rate. He thus observed that Africa’s young population can be turned into an opportunity if proper investment in health and education, coupled with policies that stimulate job creation, is made.

19. The presenter then provided the highlights of the report. He observed that according to the report no world region has as much potential for population growth as Africa due to its high birth rates and the likelihood that death rates will continue their slow decline. He informed the meeting that in 1950, the African Union’s population was only 215 million but as of 2006 the population of Africa had reached 924 million, only 76 million shy of the 1 billion mark. He observed that very large increases in Africa’s population size are virtually guaranteed for two reasons: the extreme youthfulness of the continent’s population and High birth rates. In this regard the presenter informed the meeting that Africa’s population will grow to almost 1.4 billion in 2025 and about 2 billion in 2050.

20. The presenter then reported that according to the report Africa has a crude death rate of 15 deaths per 1,000 persons which is very high by any standard while Infant mortality rate was estimated at 88 per 1,000. With a life expectancy at birth of 52 years (51 for males and 53 for females) 15 years lower than that of the developed world, Africa

remains the continent with the least life expectancy at birth in the world. He noted that the low life expectancy in Africa is due to HIV/AIDS which is more prevalent in southern Africa.

21. With respect to fertility the presenter reported that in Africa a woman can expected to give birth to 5.1 children on average in her life time. He explained that this was the case because in Africa only about 28 percent of married women aged 15-49 are using some form of family planning while 21 percent are using modern methods.

22. On gender and development the presenter noted that women's voice in national parliaments has grown significantly in many countries of Africa. Many countries exceed the world average of 16.6 percent (lower house statistics). This development should bode well for legislation on women's issues. He however said that women's labor force participation still lags behind that of men.

23. The presenter concluded by making a number of policy recommendations in the areas of health, education, employment creation and rural development. The policy recommendations were meant to ensure that Africa benefits from the "demographic dividend" concealed in its youthful population and included investment in Sexual Reproductive Health and Family Planning, investment in health, education and job creation; increasing Antiretroviral Treatment (ART) coverage, Preventing mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT), free bed nets for malaria prevention, universal DOTS coverage in TB treatment, and promotion of safe motherhood and maternal and child health.

24. In the general debate that followed, delegations generally commended the AU Commission for the production of the report. Suggestions were made on the need to give tools to Member States on how to integrate population in Poverty Reduction Strategies and Development Planning. Countries were also urged to address the issue of migration as the much talked about "demographic dividend" will be in receiving countries when Africa is actually a sending continent. There was also a suggestion on the need to address the issues of social protection and social security especially for the elderly and orphans and vulnerable children. Finally, the countries recommended strengthening of capacity for collection, management and use of statistics.

ITEM 5: REPORT ON THE PROFILE MAPPING AND WAY FORWARD

25. The brief on the African Population Commission profile mapping was presented by a representative of the AU Commission. She mentioned that a questionnaire was developed by AUC in cooperation with UNFPA, endorsed by Member States and sent to Member States in 2005 to fill in and return to the Commission. The UNFPA helped disseminate the questionnaire. The purpose of this questionnaire was to get feedback from Member States that can assist with the compilation of National Population Commissions Profile, aimed at facilitating communication among the APC members, the Bureau, Partners and the Secretariat.

26. The Representative indicated that despite the AU Commission's efforts to get feedback from all Member States, only 16 countries have completed and returned the

questionnaire to date. She urged the rest of the countries to return the questionnaire during the Conference or within two months to enable the AU Commission to compile the report together with the Bureau, and share it with Member States. She also emphasized the need to strengthen cooperation and interaction between APC members.

27. The following recommendations were made:

- Member States which have not already done so should fill in and transmit the questionnaire to the AU Commission within two months to facilitate the compilation of the report of the profile Mapping;
- The Bureau of the APC should continue to take the lead in following-up in their respective regions while the UNFPA should sustain its support.

ITEM 6: REGIONAL FORA REPORTS

(a) West Africa

28. It was reported that the West Africa Region held its Regional Forum for Reproductive Health in November 2006 in Accra, Ghana under the theme "*Making Motherhood Safer: A National Priority Towards Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*". This also provided an opportunity to encourage Member States to complete the questionnaire for the profile mapping exercise.

29. The West Africa Bureau member appealed to AUC assist in mobilizing resources for holding of the Regional Fora meetings as they were an expensive exercise requiring a minimum of \$60,000 each.

(b) East Africa Region

30. The Eastern Africa Region has not yet held its forum. It was however reported that the region has already submitted a proposal to the AU Commission for convening the Meeting. The forum was supposed to take place before the APC General Assembly but this was not possible because of resource challenges.

(c) Central African Region

31. It was reported that the Central Africa Region had already submitted a proposal to the AUC on its forum. The forum was supposed to take place before the APC General Assembly but this was not possible because of resource challenges.

(d) Southern Africa Region

32. The Commission reported that the Southern Africa Region had managed to organize two forums. The first one was in September 2005 and the second one was in March 2007. The March 2007 forum was organized on the margins of Population Conference which was on the theme "*Institutionalization of dialogue between Population*

Research and Development Policy in Africa" that was organized by the Department of Social Development of South Africa. In line with the Bureau Action Plan, the theme for the March 2007 was on Safe Motherhood.

(e) North Africa Region

33. The Northern African Region Forum could not be organized due to lack of funds.

34. During the general discussion that followed the presentation delegates requested the AU Commission to contribute financially towards the organization of the Regional Forum as they were an expensive undertaking. They also requested the Commission to highlight best practices that have been documented in the regional forums. It was also observed that convening the regional forums as a joint initiative between the APC and RECs could ensure sustainability.

ITEM 7: REPORT OF THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERS OF HEALTH ON SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS, SEPTEMBER 18-22, 2006, MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE

35. The AU Commission representative informed the meeting that in an endeavor to address sexual and reproductive health issues on the continent, the African Union Commission elaborated a Continental Policy Framework for the Promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Africa. This policy framework was developed as a response to the call to reduce the high levels of maternal and infant morbidity and mortality in the African continent from various stakeholders. It was developed in collaboration with the African Regional Office of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other development partners.

36. The Representative reported that the policy framework addresses issues that were identified at six Sub-regional consultations jointly organized by the African Union and IPPF. These consultations identified several factors that contribute to deaths among women and children on the continent. The consultations recommended the implementation of the Roadmap for the Acceleration of the Reduction of Maternal and Newborn Child morbidity and mortality as the strategy for improving reproductive health.

37. The presenter then reported that the Continental Policy Framework for the Promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights in Africa was adopted by the 2nd Session of the Conference of African Ministers of Health held in Gaborone in October 2005. In that Session, the Ministers called for a Special Session to discuss the issues in greater detail and come up with a concrete plan of action for integration of SRH in PHC, among other things. Mozambique offered to host this special session. The decision to convene a special session was endorsed by the Summit of Heads of State and Government in Khartoum, Sudan in January 2006. The Special Session took place from September 18-22, 2006.

38. The presenter then informed the delegates that the main out come of the Special Session was the Maputo Plan of Action for the Operationalisation of the Continental Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Policy Framework in Africa which was distributed. The presenter concluded by calling upon the Member States to plan well and promote the implementation of the Maputo Plan of Action which is already underway, in collaboration with partners at regional, continental and international level. She noted that the Policy Framework and Plan of action were well-received and that goodwill and funding are forthcoming.

39. The Commissioner for Social Affairs supplemented the brief by reminding participants that this is a framework to guide Member States develop and implement appropriate well-coordinated and harmonized SRHR Policies at national and regional levels. She, however, expressed concern that such consensus can get derailed through outside influences if allowed. The Commissioner acknowledged the support and cooperation by the IPPF and UNFPA and other partners in the process. She concluded by calling upon Member States to carry the process forward within adopted frameworks.

40. The Meeting took note of the brief.

ITEM 8: REPORT ON THE SINO-AFRICA COOPERATION

41. The Representative of the AU Commission informed the delegates that as part of the Bureau's involvement in promoting international partnership in the field of population and development, the Bureau Chairperson and the AU Commission participated in the "International Symposium on Official Development Assistance for Population and Development and the International Workshop on Population and Development, China, 26 October – 3 November 2005". At this symposium a declaration was adopted which urged (inter alia):-

- Countries to allocate adequate resources to enable the achievement of the global reproductive health for all by 2015;
- Developed countries to also help developing countries acquire the technology and human capacity needed to achieve universal access to reproductive health and the MDGs by 2015, including reproductive health commodity sufficiency and supply security;
- Developing countries to devote no less than 4% of their national health budgets to reproductive health services and information, and to include in their national budgets a line item for reproductive health, including reproductive health commodities;
- Increased financial and technical support for training, reproductive health commodity exchanges and sharing of experience and information on programme mechanisms and standards setting;
- Partnerships among governments, NGOs and the private sector;
- All partners to join an effective global alliance to ensure universal access to reproductive health services by 2015 and the achievement of the MDGs.

42. The AU Commission Representative further reported that after the symposium, representatives of several African countries, the Chinese government and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) met and agreed to the following strategic actions:

- Capacity building in management, research, training, monitoring and evaluation and service provision, within the context of health service delivery;
- Infrastructure for comprehensive health care delivery;
- Joint ventures to promote the production, distribution and to ensure the security of appropriate health commodities and contraceptives at country, sub-regional and/or regional levels in Africa;
- Advocacy to create an effective Sino-African alliance to support the population, health and development agenda, particularly in relation to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

43. The AU Representative informed the meeting that the African Union will coordinate the African consensus for these strategic activities and that the National Population and Family Planning Commission of China will work with the appropriate authorities and partners in the People's Republic of China. The IPPF Africa Regional Office will facilitate this cooperation by providing administrative and technical support. He concluded by informing the delegates that after receiving the AU Commission report on the Sino-Africa Cooperation in April 2006 in Nairobi, the APC Bureau made the following recommendations:

- The AU Commission should play a pro-active role in engaging China in the areas of population, development, reproductive health and family planning.
- The AU should coordinate, in collaboration with other partners – IPPF, UNFPA, etc, the Sino-Africa cooperation;
- The APC should also advise countries and support the AU in its effort to promote partnership with China;

44. During the discussion that followed, the AU Commissioner for Social Affairs provided a background and context to the ongoing negotiation on the Sino-Africa cooperation in the area of population and development including reproductive health. She then invited IPPF and UNFPA to provide additional highlights on the process as they were involved in the initiative. Accordingly, Representatives of the two organizations indicated that the population and reproductive health dimension of the Sino-Africa cooperation, which in the past focused much on economic and trade relations, was pursued taking into account:

- The experience of China in dealing with population and development issues, including family planning and reproductive health;
- South-South cooperation;
- The potential for building capacity, infrastructure, and
- China's role in the international fora advocacy

45. The Director for Partnership for Population and Development (PPD) Africa Region added that PPD was established with the purpose of promoting South-South cooperation which dates back to 1994 around the ICPD. He also expressed commitment to enhance collaboration among developing countries in the South and between African countries, involving both Members and non-Members of PPD. In this connection, the Representative of UNFPA informed the Meeting of UNFPA's initiative to strengthen inter and intra-African collaboration in the context of South-South cooperation. Participants commended the efforts being made by the AU Commission, the APC Bureau and Partners like IPPF, UNFPA, PPD and others.

46. Finally the Meeting made the following recommendations:

- to continue to engage development partners such as China in addressing population and reproductive health issues in Africa;
- to promote cooperation based on mutual respect and principle of equality in exchanging best practices and sharing experiences;
- in the process of promoting sexual and reproductive health, to reflect the unique situation of Africa which requires more emphasis on the rights-based approach.

ITEM 9: Funding and Strengthening of the African Population Commission

47. This item was introduced by the UNFPA Representative who explained that although the UNFPA would continue to support the APC, there was need for all Member States to seriously consider the issue of funding for the APC. In the ensuing debate the delegates emphasized that the subject of supporting the APC should be wider than just funding meetings. They suggested that there should be a general commitment to strengthen the APC capacity and for more effective advocacy.

48. The AU Commissioner for Social Affairs reiterated that this issue was very important for the future of the APC and its revitalization. She wondered if the related challenges were due to the fact that Population and Development fell under various sectors in different Member States.

49. After a lengthy and thorough discussions on this item, the following recommendations were made:

- Member States should participate more actively in the programmes and activities of the APC
- The capacity of the APC Secretariat should be strengthened through provision of necessary human and financial resources.
- The APC should work more effectively with the various structures of the AU and raise awareness on the need for concrete action on population and development in Africa;
- The New Bureau of the APC should develop a clear work plan and circulate it to National Population focal points (councils)

- The New Bureau should encourage Regional for a and the secretariat was requested to synthesize the outcomes of these fora with emphasis on best practices and the way forward and ensure that the results are shared with all stakeholders;
- The APC should keep in mind the linkage between Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS etc with population and development;
- There should be a clear understanding of the concept of population and its different dimensions
- There is need for population education through the integration population issues in school curricula;
- The various multilateral and bilateral donor supported programmes are important but the African Union Commission should coordinate and harmonise continental programmes, while regional programmes should be led by regional bodies; so that there is one single integrated population programme for Africa. Planning and follow up should be done collectively by concerned stakeholders. ;
- South-South Cooperation should be strengthened through exchange of information experiences, etc.; engage with more partners in the field of population and development;
- Consideration should be given to changing the name of the African Population Commission to the “African Population and Development Commission” or Council to make its mandate broader and inclusive of other wide-ranging development concerns.

ITEM 10: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

50. There was no other competent business to be discussed.

Item 11: DATE, VENUE AND THEME OF THE 7TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

51. The APC agreed to hold its 7th Ordinary Session in July 2009 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It was further agreed that the theme of the 7th Ordinary Session of the APC should centre on migration, urbanization and development or the Millennium Development Goals. The AU Commission was mandated to finalize the theme in consultation with the Bureau.

ITEM 12: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 6TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

52. Ms. Duduzile Dlamini, the Rapporteur, Swaziland presented the Report of the Meeting as well as the Declaration on the State of the African Population and requested the delegates to consider and adopt the outcomes. The documents were then formally adopted as amended.

ITEM 13: CLOSING

53. The Closing Ceremony was chaired by Mr. Mr. Omer Ndayishimiye (Burundi) Chairperson of the 6th General Assembly of the APC. The following officials/dignitaries made closing remarks:

(i) Mr. Jacques Van Zuydam, Representative of South Africa

54. Mr. Zuydam expressed the appreciation of South Africa for the opportunity to host the Conference. He observed that as a country they found the richness of the discussions on strengthening the APC very encouraging. He noted that the success of the General Assembly was due to the close collaboration by outgoing Bureau Members as well as the AU Commission under the leadership of the Commissioner for Social Affairs. He congratulated the new Bureau and also thanked all participants and the South African Team for the success of the Meeting. He underscored South Africa's pride at being part of the Johannesburg Declaration which his country is committed to implementing. He concluded his remarks with a quotation from the State of Africa Population Report 2006, emphasizing that people are the most important assets of any country.

(ii) Remarks by Adv. Bience Gawanas, AU Commissioner for Social Affairs

55. The Commissioner thanked the outgoing Bureau led by South Africa, which set a standard of operation that the new Bureau should emulate. She commended the WHO Regional Director for Eastern Mediterranean, the IPPF Director-General, the UNFPA Regional Director for Africa and the Representative of the UNECA Executive Secretary for their active participation in the Conference. She also thanked all delegates for their constructive contributions. She emphasized that the Conference was, in essence, about people and should therefore, be followed through. On behalf of the AU, she conveyed her appreciation to South Africa for hosting the Conference. She particularly conveyed her appreciation to the Minister for Social Development for his dedication. She then proposed that next time, Regions should be given an opportunity to present respected Reports. The Commissioner concluded by wishing all participants a safe journey home.

(iii) Remarks by Mr. Omer Ndayishimiye of Burundi Chairperson of the 6th General Assembly of the APC

56. The Chairperson of the General Assembly first thanked South Africa for hosting the meeting and the AU Commission for organizing the Conference as well as the participants for their contributions. He expressed hope that Member States would follow up and implement the outcome thereof; and called upon partners to continue providing support, particularly at country level. He then commended the outgoing Bureau Members for their efforts and all participants for their support.

(iv) Vote of Thanks by Dr. Hussein A.A. Sayed, Representative of Egypt

57. On behalf of all delegations, Dr. Sayed commended South Africa for hosting the Conferences, the wonderful facilities and generous hospitality. He particularly thanked the Department for Social Development for the untiring efforts towards the successful organization of the Meeting. He then thanked the guest of honour and other dignitaries not only for their Statements at the Opening Session but also for participating in the whole Conference. He thanked the AU Commissioner for Social Affairs and her team as well as the outgoing Bureau for their efforts. After appreciating the contributions of all delegates, he called for commitment towards the revitalization of the APC. He concluded by thanking all the support staff for contributing in one way or another to the success of the conference. He then wished everyone bon voyage.

58. The 6th General Assembly of the APC then adjourned.

EX.CL.384 (XII)
Annex II

**JOHANNESBURG DECLARATION OF THE SIXTH ORDINARY
SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE AFRICAN
POPULATION COMMISSION**

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APC/Decl (VI)

JOHANNESBURG DECLARATION OF THE SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE AFRICAN POPULATION COMMISSION

We, Members of the African Population Commission (APC), gathered at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa from July 16 to 17, 2007 on the occasion of the Sixth Ordinary Session of our General Assembly which focused on the theme “*Policy Implications of the State of African Population Report 2006*”.

RECALLING:

1. The Millennium Declaration adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in the year 2000.
2. The Plan of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development and the Dakar/Ngor Declaration on Population and Development.
3. The Continental Sexual and Reproductive Health Policy Framework (2005) and the Maputo Plan of Action for its operationalization (2006) of the African Union;
4. The Africa Health Strategy adopted by the AU Conference of Ministers of Health in April 2007 and endorsed by the Assembly.
5. The African Regional Nutrition Strategy
6. The Accra Communiqué on Safe Motherhood adopted in November 2006 during the West Africa Regional Forum.
7. The Mafikeng Declaration on Population and Development adopted during the Population and Development in Africa-Research and Policy Dialogue in Africa Conference in March 2007.
8. The African Common Position on Africa fit for children adopted in Cairo in 2001.
9. The African Youth Charter
10. Second Decade on Education Plan of Action

ACKNOWLEDGING that rapid population growth can undermine sustainable social and economic development in Africa.

AWARE that:

- The African population remains youthful which poses both opportunities and challenges.
- Gender inequality persists in all spheres, particularly in the labour force participation and decision making.
- As age dependency shrinks greater productivity and higher incomes are possible depending on social and economic policy responses of individual countries.
- Aware that the demographic dividend concealed in Africa youthful population is not automatic but depends on policy responses;

CONCERNED that:

- Africa is not on track to attain the Millennium Development Goals almost half way through the target period;
- Debate on population and development has been confined to population size and growth rate ignoring aspects of the age structure and the implications of population dynamics to socio-economic development and poverty reduction.
- HIV and AIDS is having a devastating impact on political, social and economic development in the face of poverty and other challenges; and that both maternal and infant mortality in Africa remains high and that it is most likely that the MDG target of reducing maternal and infant mortality by 2015 will not be met.

We therefore, COMMIT ourselves to:

1. Increase investment in expanding and repositioning family planning as an integral part of sexual and reproductive health and socio-economic development in line with the Maputo Plan of Action on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights and the ICPD Plan of Action.
2. Integrate population variables in development planning in order to accelerate progress towards the attainment of the MDGs.
3. Increase investment in programmes that deal with the health of youth, women and children in line with the Africa Health Strategy and advocate for political, economic and social reforms that ensures the participation of youth in society.

4. Integrate and mainstream gender into population and development, women's empowerment including engagement to combat gender-based violence.
5. Put in place policies and programmes that keep youth and adolescents in school, with particular focus on the girl child since education for girls and women contributes to better health-seeking behaviour, improved uptake of family planning, reduces infant and maternal mortality rates and improves the living conditions of the family, in particular, and the society, in general.
6. Make primary education compulsory and free and that technical and professional training be developed to absorb those who are excluded from the general education system so as to give everyone the opportunity to be involved in economic development.
7. Advocate for the implementation of the Ouagadougou Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment and Poverty.
8. Promote south-south collaboration on population and development especially through regional networks, sharing of experiences and best practices;
9. Speed up progress on delivery of basic health services and interventions by renewing commitment to prioritize, allocate resources, and accelerating child survival efforts that incorporate several high-impact but standardized "packages" of health interventions within African countries.
10. Advocate for the central role of maternal health in Africa's development and commit to giving urgent priority to delivering affordable, high quality and accessible maternal health care services.
11. Scale up responses to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in line with the Abuja Call for Accelerated Action against these three diseases including the call of AU Heads of State on reduction of mortality.
12. Advocate for the implementation of the African Union Migration Policy Framework;
13. Address issues of social protection and social security especially for the elderly, orphans and vulnerable children.
14. Use African Union's united strong voice to work with developed countries to launch, by the year 2008, a group of "Quick Win" actions (especially in education and health sectors) to promote economic growth of the continent so as to save and improve the lives of millions of people.
15. Press for meaningful debt relief, debt cancellation, and more generous and predictable official development assistance (ODA). But more importantly, the African Union should press for favourable terms of trade and access to

developed country markets. Only through fair trade and access to markets will Africa find real and long lasting answers to poverty eradication on the continent.

16. Strengthening the institutional capacity for coordination, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the national population policies including the collection, management and use of statistics;

17. Involve the civil society in active partnership for service delivery and advocacy

WE CALL UPON:

18. Member States to commit themselves to the strengthening of the APC by supporting activities and effective participation of its delegations to relevant meetings at the APC.

19. Member States to invest and address the causes of youth migration from the continent and its implications on the age structure and the overall plan for sustainable growth.

20. Development Partners to sustain their support to national, regional and continental efforts to promote population and development;

21. The African Union Commission in collaboration with the ECA, UNFPA and other partners, to coordinate the review of ICPD+15 and report to our next Session; **ALSO REQUEST** the Commission to facilitate the signing of the Sino-Africa Cooperation Agreement in the areas of population and sexual and reproductive health as well as ensure its operationalization.

22. The AU Commission in collaboration with Partners, to follow up the implementation of this Declaration and other recommendations of our Session and report to our next Session.

**Sandton Convention Centre,
Johannesburg, South Africa,
July 17, 2007**

2008

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