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**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

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**REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON  
PROGRAMMES AND CONFERENCE**

## REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMMES AND CONFERENCE

### I. INTRODUCTION

**1** The Permanent Representatives' Committee (PRC) Sub-Committee on Conferences and Programmes held three sessions as follows: 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> March, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> May, and 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2012. The first and second sessions were held under the Chairperson of Dr. Monica Juma, Kenya's Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). The third session was chaired by His Excellency Mamodou Jallow who is Gambia's Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union and the ECA. He chaired the meeting on behalf of Dr. Juma who was out of the country on official duties. In attendance were all members of the Sub-Committee. The Deputy Chairperson, Mr. Erastus Mwencha, also attended the first session of the meetings.

**2** The first Session of the Sub-Committee on Programmes and Conferences convened on 28 February 2012, to outline the areas of work for the sub-committee in the year. Specifically, the meeting outlines the work-plan for the subcommittee, which included the following elements:

- i) Terms of Reference for the PRC Sub-Committee on Programmes and Conferences.
- ii) Consideration of the 2013 Budget Framework Paper in order to guide the preparation of the 2013 Budget.
- iii) Guiding the preparation of the new Strategic Plan in terms of:
  - Review of the performance of Strategic Plan 2009-2012;
  - Concept Note containing the approach, including the methodology and road map;
  - Review of the various phases in the development of the new strategic plan.

**3** The Sub-Committee also discussed modalities of work and enhancement of synergies with other Sub-Committees, particularly that of Administrative, Budgetary and Financial matters. In this regard the Sub-committee observed that whereas there were issues of common interest to both Sub-Committees, there were also items that were unique to each.

**4** It was also agreed that the Sub-Committee on Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Matters would focus on other financial and administrative issues, including audit and the review of salaries and other benefits.

5 It was further agreed that the Joint Sitting of the two Sub-Committees would discuss the following:

- Annual Budget Execution Report; and
- Draft Budget 2013.

6 Accordingly, the sub-committee on programmes and conferences dealt with items 2(i-ii) fully and partially with 2(iii),. The rest of the work will be undertaken in the second half of the year as it relates to the process of developing the new strategic plan.

## **SESSION 1:**

### **II. ORGANISATION OF WORK AND AGENDA**

7 The Sub Committee met over a two day period from 12 to 13 March, 2012. The following agenda items were considered and adopted:

- i) Opening Remarks;
- ii) Terms of Reference for the PRC Sub-Committee on Conferences and Programmes;
- iii) Consideration of the 2013 Budget Framework Paper;
- iv) Consideration of the Review Report on the Implementation of the African Union Commission (AUC) Strategic Plan 2009-2012;
- v) Any Other Business.

### **III. OPENING REMARKS**

8 In her opening remarks at the first session, the Chairperson informed the meeting that the purpose of the meeting was to consider the 2013 Budget Framework Paper whose aim was to provide the general direction of AUC activities during 2013. She, therefore, called on the meeting to seriously deliberate on the document with a view to providing the AUC the necessary input and guidance on the forthcoming budget process.

9 In his remarks, His Excellency the Deputy Chairperson outlined the background and importance of the Paper as a guiding tool for the activities of the Commission in the budgeting process. He highlighted the fact that this was the third year running in which the Commission had prepared such a Paper and had proved useful. He, therefore, called on the meeting to give the Paper the seriousness it deserved.

### **IV. TERMS OF REFERENCE (TORS) FOR THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON CONFERENCES AND PROGRAMMES**

10 The meeting observed that despite being in existence for some time, the Sub-Committee did not have Terms of Reference (TORs) outlining its mandate and functions. It was, therefore, recommended that TORs be developed to provide better

guidance to the operations of the Sub-Committee. In this regard, the Commission was requested to prepare TORs to be submitted and considered at the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

## **V. CONSIDERATION OF THE 2013 BUDGET FRAMEWORK PAPER**

**11** The Director of Strategic Policy Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Resource Mobilisation (SPPMERM) presented the 2013 Budget Framework Paper highlighting the context under which the Paper was being prepared, i.e. that the 2013 Budget would be a transitional budget and that emphasis in the budget would be placed on implementing the unfinished agenda of the 2009-12 Strategic Plan. He also outlined the objective, past performance of the budget, principles of the budget, as well as programmes and Flagship Projects, including proposed implementation modalities and way forward for the budget.

### **Discussions**

**12** In the discussions, the Sub-Committee made the following observations and recommendations:

- a) The Sub-Committee recommended that the 2013 Budget Framework Paper should have a “Foreword” and that the foreword should include more statistics on Africa’s performance in various areas and also highlight Africa in the global context, i.e. showing Africa’s future and prospects and situating the African Union in this process.
- b) The Sub-Committee also recommended that Budget Framework Paper should outline the context under which the 2013 Budget was being prepared i.e. that it was a transitional budget; that the 2009-12 Strategic Plan was being reviewed ahead of the preparation of the new Strategic Plan; that the 2013 Budget would be a Union-wide budget paying particular attention to complementarity and subsidiarity issues.
- c) It was also recommended that mention should be made of efforts by the AUC to draft a Medium Term Framework for the AU from which both the AUC and AU Organs would draw their Strategic directions.
- d) The meeting also expressed the need to underscore the current theme of “Boosting Intra-African Trade” as one of the key tenets of Africa’s integration.
- e) Furthermore, the Sub-Committee recalled that 2013 would be the first year of operationalizing Specialised Technical Committees (STCs) and that as such, their (STCs) prioritization and financial implications thereof needed to be highlighted in the budget.

- f) With respect to the objective of the Budget, the Sub-Committee recommended that the Paper should reflect the fact that the budget being prepared now was a Union- wide budget not just AUC Budget and that projects to be implemented during the 2013 Budget would be those left unfinished in 2012 and any new projects arising from 2012 Council and Assembly Decisions.
- g) The Sub-Committee also discussed past performance of the AUC budget and requested the Commission to provide more information especially on the performance of the operational and programme budgets highlighting the ratios and balances between these two items.
- h) With respect to challenges encountered in the implementation of the budget, the Sub-Committee requested the Commission to further elaborate on the challenges highlighting issues such as; relations with Partners, late disbursement of funds, late reports, late audits and implementation of projects outside the budget.

**13** With respect to budget prerequisites and assumptions, the Sub-Committee agreed on the following:

**Prerequisites:**

- i) Emphasis on results rather than activities(Results Based Management)'.
- ii) Take into account programme budget implementation rates of previous years.
- iii) Enhancement of efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources.
- iv) Elimination of extra budgetary transactions and bringing into the budget framework all identifiable projects within all the departments.
- v) Provision of framework indicators for effective monitoring, evaluation, and reporting.
- vi) Compliance with the 5% budget cap on Member States resources.
- vii) Consistency and uniformity in costing budget items across Departments.
- viii) Observance of the principles of subsidiarity and complementarity.
- ix) Observance of the AU Financial Rules and Regulations as well as guidelines provided by the PRC and its Sub-Committees.

**Assumptions on Operational and Programme Budgets:**

**a) Operational Budget:**

- i) Additional costs of recruitment of staff which should not exceed 100 people.
- ii) One step increase in the salary of existing staff based on satisfactory performance.
- iii) Additional operational and maintenance costs arising from the use of the new AUC Conference Complex.

- iv) The costs related to the operationalization of the STCs in 2013 as mandated by the AU Assembly.

**b) Programme Budget**

- i) That Programme Budgets for all AU Organs will have a Zero growth over the 2012 budget.
- ii) Will maintain same projects approved in 2012, unless completed. No major new projects will be introduced.
- iii) Will incorporate activities aimed at the implementation of new Decisions of AU Executive Council and Assembly made in January 2012.
- iv) The cost of celebrating 50 years of the establishment of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and 10 years of the establishment of the AU. These costs will also include a comprehensive review of achievements and challenges during the 10 years of AU and its NEPAD Programme.
- v) Will take into account the fact that in the spirit of the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), not all projects planned for a particular year can be completed, but instead, a phased approach is pursued.

**14** At the end of the first session the Sub-Committee adopted the 2013 Budget Framework Paper subject to the amendments made.

**SESSION 2:**

**15** The second session of the Sub-Committee was held on 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2012 and agreed on the following agenda:

- i) Opening Remarks;
- ii) Consideration of the Terms of Reference of the Sub- Committee on Conferences and Programmes;
- iii) Reaffirmation and Adoption of the 2013 Budget Framework Paper;
- iv) Consideration of the Review Report on the Implementation of the African Union Commission Strategic Plan 2009-12;
- v) Any other Business.

**VI OPENING REMARKS**

**16** In her opening remarks the Chairperson reminded the Sub-Committee that the session was a continuation of the meeting that was held on 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> March, 2012 and that given time constraints they would prioritise items (ii) and (iii) on the above

agenda. It was agreed that item (iv) on the agenda would be discussed and dealt with at an opportune time since it was different from the other items on the agenda. She further pointed out that the focus would be to examine and reaffirm whether the commission had incorporated the Sub-Committee's recommendations in the paper.

## **VII. CONSIDERATION OF THE REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**17** The Director of Strategic Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation and Resource Mobilisation (SPPMERM) presented the TORs highlighting the context, mandate and functions of the Sub-Committee.

**18** The Sub-Committee considered the revised Draft Terms of Reference (TORs) as prepared by the Commission. The Sub-Committee commended the Commission for developing the TORs and made additional comments to sharpen them.

**19** The Commission took note of the observations made by the Sub-Committee and amended the Terms of Reference accordingly.

**20** The Commission took special note of the instruction to "ensure that the AUC, unless in exceptional situations, does not convene meetings and conferences one month before the January and June Summits."

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**21** The Sub-Committee agreed to recommend its Terms of Reference for Adoption by the PRC.

## **VIII. CONSIDERATION OF THE REVISED BUDGET FRAMEWORK PAPER**

**22** The Sub-Committee considered the Draft Budget Framework Paper as revised by the Commission following the recommendations made during the first session and proposed additional amendments as follows:

- a) The meeting recommended that the Commission should provide information on budget absorption rates for operational and programme budgets as measured against available funds;
- b) It also recommended that a comparison of the contribution of Member States and Partners should be made over the Composite budget instead of only Programme Budget. The Sub-Committee also agreed that the composite budget figure should include supplementary funding in order to present a clear picture of the absorption rates;
- c) With regard to the challenges encountered in budget implementation, it was noted that the challenges were cross-cutting amongst all the six programme areas;

- d) With regard to the budget pre-requisites, the Sub-Committee clarified that projects to be implemented in 2013 will incorporate those which were outstanding from 2009-2012 Strategic Plan and those emanating from January 2012 Summit Decisions;
- e) With regard to 2013 budget assumptions the meeting agreed that programme budgets for all AU organs will have a zero-growth over the 2012 budget;
- f) With regard to Partner funds, the meeting agreed that the budget should reflect secured funds and not mere pledges;
- g) The meeting advised the AUC to revise the tables on funds availability with a view to incorporate the latest figures and thereby provides a better picture of the funding situation.

## **IX. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- a) The Sub-Committee confirmed that the necessary amendments had been effected by the Commission and that the Budget Framework Paper now provided adequate direction for the preparation of the 2013 Budget;
- b) In view of the above, the Sub-Committee agreed to recommend to the PRC, the adoption of the 2013 Budget Framework Paper.

## **SESSION 3:**

### **X. INTRODUCTION**

**23** The third session of the Sub-Committee took place on 21<sup>st</sup> May, 2012 under the Chairperson of Gambia's Ambassador to Ethiopia who is also Permanent Representative of the Gambia to the African Union and to the ECA, His Excellency M. Sajo Jallow. He chaired the meeting on behalf of Kenya's Ambassador to Ethiopia who is also the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the African Union and ECA, Her Excellency, Dr. Monica Juma, who is the substantive Chairperson of the Sub-Committee. Her Excellency Mamosadinyana P.J. Molefe, Botswana's Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative of Botswana to the African Union and the ECA, assisted in chairing a part of the session.

### **XI. ORGANIZATION OF WORK AND AGENDA**

**24** The Sub-Committee considered and adopted the following agenda:

- i) Opening Remarks;
- ii) Consideration of the Review Report on the Implementation of the African Union Commission (AUC) Strategic Plan 2009-2012;



- iii) Any other Business.

## XII. OPENING REMARKS

**25** In his opening remarks, the Chairperson welcomed all present and informed the meeting that he was chairing on behalf of Dr. Monica Juma who was out of the country on official duties. He further informed the Sub-Committee that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss and consider the Review Report on the Implementation of the African Union Commission Strategic Plan 2009-2012 as prepared by the Consultant, Dr. Omar Touray. He then introduced the Consultant to the Sub Committee.

## XIII. PRESENTATION OF THE REVIEW REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLAN 2009-2012

**26** In his presentation, the Consultant explained that the objectives and scope of the review were as follows:

- i) Review the implementation of the AUC Strategic Plan 2009- 2012;
- ii) Assess the responsiveness of the Strategic Plan to the AU Vision and AUC mandate;
- iii) Identify the Strengths and Weaknesses of the Plan;
- iv) Assess programme relevance and impact;
- v) Identify best practices and gaps;
- vi) Make recommendations on the way forward.

**27** Dr. Touray further informed the meeting that the strengths and weaknesses of the plan were as follows:

- a) **Responsiveness to AU Priorities.** With 4 pillars, 6 programmes, 18 strategic objectives, 74 strategies and 91 expected results, the Strategic Plan responds to the mandate of the Commission in that the programmes jointly address all the issues identified under the Constitutive Act as being Africa's priorities.
- b) **Clarity of Context and Objectives.** In addition to being responsive to the vision of the African Union and to the mandate of the Commission, the Plan also adequately assesses the strengths and weaknesses as well as the opportunities and threats faced by the African Union. Furthermore, the plan has enunciated good objectives.
- c) **Over Ambitious and Limited Prioritization.** Notwithstanding its responsiveness to AUC mandate and other strengths cited above, the Plan is over ambitious. Implementing 18 strategic objectives, 74 strategies and achieving 91 expected results within a period of 4 years is not realistic, especially in the face of funding difficulties and human resource constraints.

Moreover, all the programmes have been placed on the same footing and given equal priority.

- d) **Vague and Impractical Strategies and limited Distinction between Strategies and Expected Results.** Some of the strategies and strategic objectives identified in the plan are either too vague or lie outside the remit of the Commission. Similarly, there is hardly any difference between strategies and expected results. In all the four pillars, the strategies are also the expected results.
- e) **Promotes Duplication of Efforts.** There is a lot of duplication of efforts. In some cases, programme nomenclatures may be different, but the implementation requires the same course of action.
- f) **Inconsistent and inadequate attention to detail.** In a few cases, strategies have been attributed to the wrong actors. In other instances, the actors have been totally omitted, and the implementation matrix does not address this gap in any satisfactory manner.
- g) **Lack of Detailed Implementation Plan.** The Strategic Plan is not accompanied by a detailed implementation plan, and this has led to a silo approach by departments where there is very little inter-departmental collaboration during implementation.

**28** In his concluding remarks, the Consultant made the following observations:

- a) **Programme Implementation Plan.** Overall programme implementation was good because, to a large extent, the Commission had implemented the various programmes identified in the Plan.
- b) **Inter-departmental Collaboration.** Existing evidence shows that inter-departmental coordination and collaboration might have improved in some cases; however it remains generally weak and departments continue to work in silos.
- c) **Relations with Member-states.** Relations with member-states have improved, but a number of challenges exist. These include difficult working relations especially with regard to finance, budget and conference (translation) services.
- d) **Partnerships.** AU's partnerships are not only politically expedient they also provide the AU with vital funding support. However, a number of challenges remain. The Joint Africa Europe Strategy, for example, suffers from inadequate involvement of all stakeholders in the implementation process.

The strategy also does not give adequate attention to the development dimension. The lack of dedicated financing for the JAES also remains a major impediment to implementation.

- e) **Involvement of Partners in Planning.** While the AUC and Member-States draw up the AU priority programmes, partners account for over 90 per cent of the resources required for the Union's programmes. Few partners have expressed reservation about the internal processes that generate the priority programmes, but Partners feel they should be included in the implementation planning of the programmes.
- f) **Communication.** Communication between the AUC and Partners is not optimal, and as a result the two harbour conflicting expectations.
- g) **Accountability.** There is evidence of a strong political will to deepen accountability and transparency in the Commission, and partners are of the view that the Commission has made a lot of progress in this area. However, Partners feel that the progress is not sufficient to enable them to give direct budget support to the Commission.
- h) **Off Budget Allocations.** AUC's absorptive capacity constitutes another major gap. While the AUC blames the Union's budget processes for the low budget implementation rates that have been recorded over the years, Partners and Member-States alike blame the low budget implementation rate on AUC's low absorptive capacity. Off budget allocations have had a distorting effect on AUC programme implementation and monitoring.
- i) **Relations with RECs.** A challenge to the AUC relations with RECs is the AUC's weak capacity to coordinate the activities of the RECs, even though coordination between the AUC and the RECs has registered some progress especially in recent years. While the RECs recognize and accept the principle of subsidiarity in their relations with the AUC, there is less clarity on its application. Some RECs are of the view that the AUC should not view itself as an implementing agency but should rather play more of a coordinating role.
- j) **Adequacy of Funding.** Going by the volume of resources appropriated to the operational and programme budgets, it is clear that the funds are adequate as budgeted. The problem, however, is the timing of the funds because they are usually received late and this affects the effectiveness of the resources.

- k) **Member States Contributions.** AU Member States not only contribute less to the programme budget (on average 10 per cent), their contributions to the operational budget are often largely delayed. Thus, there is always a significant gap between appropriation and actual disbursement.
- l) **Absorptive Capacity of the Commission.** While the absorptive capacity of the Commission with respect to the operational budget is high, it is low for the programme budget, and this can be blamed only partly on the budget cycle – since both programme and operational budgets are determined within the same budget cycle.
- m) **Staff Compliment.** The 912 staff comprising 518 professional staff and 384 general service staff, approved in July 2011, would have gone a long way in addressing the human resources requirements of the Commission but the actual staff strength of the Commission is inadequate and does not allow the Commission responds effectively to the requirements of the programmes.
- n) **Impact.** When examined on an input-impact continuum, most of the activities that the Commission undertook are outputs. The impacts of these activities are not optimal because these are determined by outcomes that are generally processes at the country and regional level. The Commission generated important outputs, but for these activities to have any meaningful impact there should be outcomes at the country and regional levels. Producing and tracking these outcomes at the country level is the most difficult part of the continuum for the African Union Commission. This constitutes one of the main gaps in the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

**29** On the basis of the above observations, the Consultant made the following Recommendations:

- i) That because of the difficulties experienced with regard to inputs, outputs and impact continuum, the next Strategic Plan should not be an *African Union Commission Strategic Plan*, but an *African Union Strategic Plan* whose implementation would require the full participation of the RECs, Member-States and other stakeholders who would assume responsibility for translating outputs into outcomes at the regional and national levels.
- ii) Member States and other stakeholders should be adequately involved in the design phase of the next Strategic Plan and the implementation matrices so that roles and responsibilities are established from the outset. This would also ensure that reporting on measures taken at the national and regional

level becomes part and parcel of monitoring and evaluation of the programmes.

- iii) A transitional period of two years should be agreed upon to facilitate the development of a Union-wide plan. In the interim, a short-term plan should be developed to serve as a bridge to the Union-wide plan and provide a framework for the Commission's activities during this period. However, the risk associated with a fresh transitional plan is that besides additional resources that would be required, it may require more time for preparation by the Commission, as well as consideration and adoption by Member-States.
- iv) An alternative to 3 above is the extension of the existing Strategic Plan for two years to enable the Commission complete a number of programmes that have begun but remain incomplete. This alternative has the attraction of being more cost effective than the option of drawing up a new transitional plan.
- v) The transitional Strategic Plan should focus on areas where the AUC has already developed a niche, and where it has capacity to implement and/ or enforce at continental, regional and national levels. These areas include:
  - a) **Peace and Security:** Deepening Peace Support Operations, completing on-going peace talks, and dealing with emergencies.
  - b) **Trade and Industry.** Reducing barriers to intra-African trade; support to RECs to move their regional integration agenda; enhanced coordination of African position in the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations.
  - c) **Political Affairs.** Follow-up the implementation and domestication of existing governance and human rights instruments on the continent.
  - d) **Agriculture:** Tracking progress on the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) at regional and country level and leveraging international support for agriculture on the continent.
  - e) **Infrastructure and Energy:** Finalizing studies and design of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) programmes.
  - f) **Social Affairs:** follow up on the implementation of the Campaign for Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, Infant and Child Mortality in Africa

(CARMMA) and other legal instruments on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related goals that have been adopted and signed by member-states.

- g) **Science and Technology.** Consolidation of the Pan-African University (PAU) and other capacity building initiatives.
  - h) **Economic Affairs:** Help build capacity for economic analysis including collating and interpreting statistics/data at national and regional levels; coordinate the implementation of the Minimum Integration Programme (MIP) at the regional level.
- vi) The capacity constraints facing the Commission should be looked at closely and long-term solutions identified. In this regard, the AUC should, in addition to the United Nations (UN) Ten Year Capacity Building Programme, leverage partnerships with other organizations such as the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) to support capacity development in the Commission.
  - vii) The African Union should use the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the African Union to assess the State of the Union in order to determine whether the status quo should be maintained or major structural and process reforms should be undertaken.

#### **XIV. DISCUSSIONS AND OBSERVATIONS BY THE SUB-COMMITTEE**

**30** In the discussions that ensued, the Sub-Committee commended the consultant for a job well done and observed that the observations and recommendations of the review would provide an important input towards the development of the next Strategic Plan of the AU.

**31** The Sub-Committee also made the following observations:

- a) That the review went beyond its mandate of reviewing programme implementation during the Plan period and instead covered a performance audit of the Commission.
- b) That the review should have set out activity by activity what the Commission had planned to do during the period 2009-2012, what had been achieved, what had not been achieved and why, what remains unimplemented, and what has been the actual expenditure compared to the planned budget.
- c) Agreed with the review that Strategic Plan 2009-2012 was over-ambitious and had resulted in the AUC spreading its activities too wide.

- d) On the need to have a two year transitional phase, the Sub-Committee was of the view that AU Policy Organs approved one year i.e. 2013.
- e) There was a tendency by the Commission to opt for training and other capacity building measures provided abroad when the same was available in Africa.
- f) That Member States had different procedures for ratification of legal instruments and the slow pace was not an indication of lack of commitment.
- g) On the observation that most Member-States Embassies lacked competency to ably discuss planning and budgetary issues, it was felt that this observation was incorrect.

### **Response of the Consultant and the Commission**

**32** In his response to the issues raised by the Sub-Committee, the Consultant made the following remarks:

- a) That it would not have been possible to undertake a comprehensive review by only focusing on programme implementation. Instead, it had been necessary to also look at the entire environment, including the systems, processes and means (e.g. staff compliment and funding availability).
- b) That an activity by activity analysis had not been possible as the 2009-2012 Strategic Plan did not have a comprehensive and costed implementation plan.
- c) That other observations relating, for instance, to the slow pace of ratification of legal instruments, competency of Embassies on budgeting and planning matters, inadequacy of staff compliment at the AUC, were his own professional observations based on responses he had received from the stakeholders interviewed during the exercise.

**33** In response to some of the issues raised by Member States, the Commission in turn, indicated the following:

- i) The one year transition phase approved by the Policy Organs was based on the premise that the current practice of preparing only the AUC Strategic Plan would continue. However, the recommendation to prepare a Union-wide Plan would necessitate rigorous consultations and the involvement of all key stakeholders and would thus require more time and resources.

- ii) The preparation of the next Strategic Plan provided an opportunity to rationalize and focus the activities of the Union on a few key outcomes.
- iii) The Commission would endeavour to utilize capacity building opportunities available in Member States.

## **XV. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**34** Following the responses by the Consultant and the Commission, the Sub-Committee took note of the Report on the Review of the Strategic Plan and agreed to recommend to the PRC the following:

- a) That the Commission, in close collaboration with the Sub-Committee on Programs and Conferences, should immediately initiate the process of developing a Union Wide Strategic Plan.
- b) That in doing so, the recommendations of the Review Report of the 2009-2012 Strategic Plan should be taken into account, in particular the following:
  - The involvement of key stakeholders such as RECs, other AU Organs, Members States, the NPCA, and Civil Society.
  - The next Strategic Plan should be accompanied by a comprehensive implementation Plan.
  - The next Strategic Plan should be accompanied by a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework.

## **XVI. CLOSING REMARKS**

**35** The Chairperson thanked the Sub-Committee members for their constructive deliberations and closed the meeting.



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