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**REPORT OF THE 3RD SESSION OF THE AU CONFERENCE OF
MINISTERS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (CAMSD-3),
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, 26 – 30 NOVEMBER 2012**

**REPORT OF THE 3RD SESSION OF THE AU CONFERENCE OF
MINISTERS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (CAMSD-3)
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, 26-30 NOVEMBER 2012**

INTRODUCTION

1. The Third Session of the AU Conference of Ministers of Social Development was held in Addis Ababa, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, from 26 to 30 November 2012. The Conference was convened pursuant to the implementation of Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec. 625 (XVIII) of January 2011.

2. The Conference fell within the purview of Strategic Pillar II of the AUC Strategic Plan 2009-2012: Development, Integration and Cooperation, and in particular, advanced the principles of the AU Constitutive Act, namely, to promote sustainable development and raise the living standards of the African peoples within the framework of various instruments related to social development adopted by the African Union.

3. The main objective of the Conference was to consider the components of the African Union Disability Architecture, consisting of the legal, programme and institutional components, in order to improve the lives of persons with disabilities on the Continent. Measures to address the wellbeing of children and families in Africa was also considered, as well as measures to facilitate implementation of the Social Policy Framework for Africa.

4. The Conference was held at Experts and Ministerial levels and was attended by Ministers and Experts from AU Member States, as well as Representatives from UN Agencies, Civil Society Organizations, and other International and Regional Organizations dealing with social development issues.

5. The main outcomes of the Conference were:

- The Continental Plan of Action on the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010-2019);
- The African Union Disability Architecture;
- The State of Africa's Children Report, 2012;
- The African Common Position in preparation for the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, 2014; and
- The African Common Position on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa.

6. The Report of the Ministerial Meeting is being submitted for endorsement by the Executive Council.

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**THIRD SESSION OF THE AFRICAN UNION
CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
26-30 NOVEMBER 2012**

CAMSD/MIN/Rpt(III)

**THEME: *PROMOTING THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES***

REPORT OF THE MINISTERS' MEETING

**REPORT OF THE MINISTERS' MEETING OF THE THIRD SESSION OF
THE AU CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT,
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, 26-30 NOVEMBER 2012**

INTRODUCTION

1. The Ministers' Meeting of the Third Session of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Social Development (CAMSD3) was held at the New Conference Centre, African Union Commission, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 29 to 30 November 2012. The theme of the Conference was "Promoting the Rights and Welfare of Persons with Disabilities."

ATTENDANCE

2. The Ministers' Meeting was attended by delegates from the following AU Member States: Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central Africa, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Saharawi, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3. The following Inter-Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations and cooperating partners were represented: African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development (ACARTSOD), Government of the United States of America, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, African Decade of Persons with Disabilities, Africa Platform for Social Protection (APSP), African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI), GIZ, HelpAge International, International Labour Organization (ILO), Office of International Diplomacy (OID), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

4. The complete list of participants is attached as Annex 1.

Agenda Item 1: OPENING

5. The outgoing Chairperson, Hon. Ibrahim Adam Ibrahim, Minister of Social Welfare and Social Security of the Sudan welcomed Ministers to the meeting and alluded to activities over the past two years by the AU Commission in conjunction with Member States and expressed appreciation to all for placing social issues firmly on the agenda of the Continent. The Minister expressed the hope that the restructuring of ARI would be concluded soon and presented an offer of the Sudan to host the secretariat of the successor institution of ARI. The Minister briefed the meeting on the achievements of the Sudan regarding upholding the rights of persons with disabilities and children's rights.

6. In his address to the Ministers, the UN Special Rapporteur on Disability, Mr Shuaib Chalklen, informed the meeting that his mandate focuses on the UN Standard Rules, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and that he encourages Member States to ratify these instruments. He also serves as catalyst for international cooperation in accordance with article 32 of the UN Convention. The Special Rapporteur lays special focus on vulnerable persons with disabilities, such as children in countries in conflict, and persons with psychosocial disabilities, as the

latter have no or very little access to education and employment. Mr Chalklen alluded to the high level UN meeting on disability which will take place on 23 September 2013 in New York. He encouraged Member States to submit their recommendations for the meeting, and mentioned that the meeting will also feed into the post 2015 development agenda for inclusion of persons with disabilities. The Special Rapporteur informed the meeting of the establishment of the African Disability Forum which will focus on research, civil society organisations, capacity building and implementing the Continental Plan of Action on the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities.

7. In his opening address, the acting Commissioner for Social Affairs, H.E. Prof. Jean Pierre Onvehoun Ezin mentioned that there is a general lack of reliable data on disability in many AU Member States which hampers the efforts to document the relationships between poverty, social exclusion and disability. This has resulted in a lack of awareness among policy and decision makers of the strong link between poverty reduction and promotion of equal participation opportunities of persons with disability in development contexts. As a result, the disability dimension has not featured in general social development and poverty reduction strategies in many African countries. The Commissioner asserted that time has come to keenly involve the talents of persons with disabilities to develop African economies and communities.

Agenda Item 2: PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A) Election of the Bureau

8. Experts elected the Bureau for the Third AU Conference of Ministers of Social Development as follows:

Chairperson:	Egypt (North Africa)
1 st Vice Chairperson:	Nigeria (West Africa)
2 nd Vice Chairperson:	Gabon (Central Africa)
3 rd Vice Chairperson:	Swaziland (Southern Africa)
Rapporteur:	Djibouti (East Africa)

9. The Drafting Committee was composed of the Rapporteur for the Meeting, and 3 staff members of the Department of Social Affairs, AU Commission.

10. In the absence of the Minister from Egypt, the First Vice Chairperson, Hon. Hajiya Zainab Maina, Minister of Women Affairs and Social Development, of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, chaired the meeting.

B) Adoption of the Agenda and Programme of Work

11. The meeting adopted the agenda and programme of work consisting of 11 items.

Agenda Item 3: CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE AU COMMISSION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISIONS OF THE 2ND AU CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

12. The **Report of the AU Commission on the Implementation of the Decisions of the 2nd AU Conference of Ministers of Social Development**, presented by the AU Commission, outlined actions undertaken with regard to the implementation of the Ministerial Decisions with regard to Social Policy and Social Protection, Disability, Restructuring of the African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI), Older Persons, the Family in Africa and the of implementing the Call for Accelerated Action on the Plan of Action Towards Africa Fit for Children. The report concludes that, as social integration and cohesion is to be driven by the State, this 3rd AU Conference of Ministers of Social Development poses a significant opportunity to galvanize political will towards investment in social policy measures in AU Member States.

13. The Ministers noted the report with appreciation.

Agenda Item 4: SUMMARY REPORT OF THE SESSIONS OF THE AFRICAN COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE CHILD, SINCE NOVEMBER 2010, AS PRESENTED TO THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

14. The **Summary Report on the Sessions of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, since November 2010**, was presented by a member of Committee. Mr Cyprien Adebayo Yanclo made a presentation on the activities undertaken by the Committee during the period 2010-2012. He mentioned the activities regarding communication, the interpretation of the Articles of the Charter, advocacy missions for the ratification of the Charter, the Commemoration of the Day of the African Child, and collaboration with other AU Organs and stakeholders. The main challenges of the Committee were inadequate Secretarial staff to assist the Committee in carrying out its mandate, the lack of a budget and inadequate collaboration of States Parties. Botswana and Burkina Faso expressed interest to host the Secretariat. Mr Yanclo called on Member States that have not yet ratified the Charter and those who have not yet submitted their State Party Reports on the implementation of the Charter to accelerate the processes of doing so. He also called on Member States to cooperate actively with the Committee.

15. The meeting noted the report with appreciation.

Agenda Item 5: REPORT OF THE 22ND ORDINARY SESSION OF THE MINISTERIAL GOVERNING BOARD OF THE AFRICAN REHABILITATION INSTITUTE (ARI), HARARE, ZIMBABWE, 23-26 OCTOBER 2012

16. The Chairperson of the Governing Board of the African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI), Hon. Dr Joseph Katema, Minister of Community Development, Mother and Child Health of the Republic of Zambia, presented the Report of the 22nd Ordinary Session of the ARI Governing Board. The Minister highlighted the decision on the restructuring of the Institute, which calls for a Secretariat for the new African Union

Disability Institute (AUDI) and 5 regional offices, to advance the implementation of the Continental Plan of Action on the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010-2019), and future AU policies on disability.

17. After initial remarks by Member States, and clarifications presented by the Commission, the Chairperson deferred the debate to when the same item would be discussed in the Report of the Experts' meeting.

Agenda Item 6: MINISTERIAL PANEL INTRODUCTIONS ON DISABILITY

18. Four Ministers made introductions to the debate on disability.

19. Hon. Lutfu Dhlamini, Minister of Labour and Social Security,, Swaziland, highlighted the need for social protection measures for persons with disabilities to assist them to fully participate in development. The Minister noted that it is well known that disability and poverty are interlinked and alluded to the mainstay measures to cushion people from falling into or remaining in poverty. In addition, access for persons with disabilities to public housing programmes, social security, social protection programmes and their participation in designing and reviewing existing national poverty reduction plans, is required.

20. Hon. Romadan Ashenafi, State Minister of Labour and Social Affairs, Ethiopia, emphasised that the goal of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010 – 2019) is the full participation, equality and empowerment of persons with disabilities in Africa. To reach this goal, national programmes should encourage the full participation of persons with disabilities in social and economic development. In this regard, national disability coordination committees should be strengthened and the effective representation of persons with disabilities and their organisations should be ensured. There is also need to support community-based service delivery, in collaboration with international development agencies and positive attitudes towards children, youth, women and adults with disabilities should be encouraged. Measures should be implemented to ensure their access to rehabilitation, education, training and employment, as well as to cultural and sports activities and access to the physical environment.

21. Hon. Paurina Mupariwa, Minister of Labour and Social Services, Zimbabwe, underlined the need for education, training and employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. The Minister emphasised that Member States must ensure that all public and private primary and secondary school buildings, colleges and universities and teacher training institutions are physically accessible to all persons with disabilities; that teacher education curricula mainstreams all categories of disabilities; and that teaching and learning materials appropriate for persons with disabilities be developed. With regard to employment, the Minister reminded that a benchmark of at least five percent (5%) of the workforce within the public and the private sector to be composed of persons with disabilities.

22. Hon. Mamadou Sidibe, Minister of Humanitarian Action, Solidarity and Older Persons, Mali, indicated that if full participation of persons with disabilities is to be achieved in societies, gender sensitive, specialized health and rehabilitation services need to be provided to people with disabilities. Regarding health services, among others, a system of early intervention or referral, needs to be introduced or

strengthened, to minimize the occurrence of secondary disability for persons with disabilities. Disability sensitive family planning and reproductive health services should also be developed. Regarding rehabilitation, the Minister encouraged Member States to design and produce their own assistive devices.

23. In the debate that ensued, the Ministers made the following observations:
- Integration of persons with disabilities in society entails their employment and not only for them to land up in sheltered employment;
 - Emphasis should be on education of persons with disabilities;
 - Early childhood development for children with disabilities is very important;
 - Units for disability rights should be established at institutions of higher education;
 - Community based rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities should be put in place;
 - Every department and organ of the African Union should include disability in their programmes;
 - There should be a greater focus on non-visible disabilities, such as intellectual, learning and psychosocial disabilities.

Agenda Item 7: CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE EXPERTS' MEETING OF THE 3RD SESSION OF THE AU CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

PRESENTATION AND CONSIDERATION OF THE AU DISABILITY ARCHITECTURE

24. Four major reports were discussed under this agenda item, namely:
- i) The Reviewed Continental Plan of Action on the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010-2019);
 - ii) The Draft African Union Disability Architecture (AUDA);
 - iii) Report on the Restructuring of the African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI);
 - iv) The Protocol on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Reviewed Continental Plan of Action on the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (2010-2019)

25. The Ministers made the following **decisions** with regard to the **Continental Plan of Action for the African Decade on Persons with Disabilities (2010-2019)**:

- That statistics on Persons with Disabilities in Africa will be included in background sections of the in the Continental Plan of Action on the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities.
- That future documents of the Conference of Ministers of Social Development be made available in accessible format. Egypt offered to help the AUC in production of Braille documents at a lower cost through its national centre.
- That comments on the inclusion of elderly persons as vulnerable to disability will be incorporated in the Continental Plan of Action on the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities.
- That the African Union Commission and all African Union Member States work towards guaranteeing universal access for People with Disabilities. Member States should therefore respect international Conventions on Universal access. This includes access to ICTs, public transport, infrastructure, buildings, etc.

Draft African Union Disability Architecture (AUDA)

26. Upon considering the **Draft African Union Disability Architecture (AUDA)** the Ministers made the following **decisions**:

- The AUDA document should be enriched by comments from discussions.
- The Department of Social Affairs, AUC should mainstream the respective thematic areas of the Continental Plan of Action into the work of the other departments of the Commission.

Report on the Restructuring of the African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI)

27. The CAMSD3 Ministers' Meeting considered the report and made the following **decisions**:

- That the African Rehabilitation Institute should dissolve according to Article XVII of its Agreement;
- That a Committee be appointed for the liquidation of the assets of ARI, which terms of reference should also include the development of a new Statute for the new Institute/ Specialized AUC Office. The Committee consists of Zambia as Chairperson, Togo as Vice-Chairperson, Kenya as Rapporteur, Malawi as Vice-Rapporteur and Zimbabwe as member, the Republic of Congo to represent Central Africa and a member to represent North Africa, to be co-opted;
- That the Committee shall prepare a Report on the Dissolution of ARI to the Assembly of Heads of State and Governments, through the Executive Council, for the approval for the dissolution of ARI, according to its Agreement;

- That the AU Commission provides a caretaker director to manage the cessation of the contracts of ARI staff, including dues to be paid to staff, as well as recoveries to be made, as recommended by the ARI Governing Board;
- That Member countries of ARI should pay their arrears in their assessed contributions of the past four (4) years to ARI in order to cover the costs related to the liquidation of the Institute.

Protocol on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

28. The Ministers **decided** that:

- The Working Group of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights should finalise the drafting of the Protocol on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for adoption in 2014;
- The draft Protocol be circulated to Member States;
- The Protocol be presented for discussion by the next session of the AU Conference of Ministers of Social Development;
- Persons with disabilities should be consulted in the drafting of the Protocol.

PRESENTATION AND CONSIDERATION OF THE STATE OF AFRICA' CHILDREN

29. Two reports were presented under this agenda item, namely:

- i) The State of African's Children Report, 2012;
- ii) Report of the Third African Forum on Children.

30. After considering the two reports, the Ministers meeting made the following **decisions:**

- The definition of disability in the State of Africa's Children Report 2012 be reviewed, as well as the language, e.g. "children possessing disabilities", be replaced with "children with disabilities";
- The World Report on Disability should be acknowledged in the State of Africa's Children Report 2012;
- The role of Governments should be spelt out more clearly, as well as that of families, not to reject children with disabilities;
- Children living in conflict situations needs to be brought out more strongly in the State of Africa's Children report;

- There should be clear provisions in emergency plans for the removal of children with disabilities in situations of human and natural disasters;
- There needs to be a strong focus on girl children with disabilities in the State of Africa's Children report as they are prone to sexual exploitation and are marginalised in education opportunities;
- In both reports, statistics from the Continent on Disability should be reflected;
- Children with disabilities should be clearly reflected as a priority area of the Renewed Call;
- The Renewed Call, as well as the State of Africa's Children Report, 2012, should make mention of child-headed households and programmes to support these households should be developed and implemented;
- The State of Africa's Children Report should be printed for wide distribution, after inclusion of inputs from the meeting.

PRESENTATION AND CONSIDERATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SOCIAL POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICA

31. Two papers were prepared under this agenda item, namely:
- a) Paper on Social Protection measures towards vulnerable groups in Member States, and
 - b) Report on the Training of social policy analysts from Member States.

Paper on Social Protection measures towards vulnerable groups in Member States

32. The Ministers made the following **decisions** after considering the paper:

As Member States still consider human and social development issues as secondary and economic development more important, despite the interconnectedness of the two components,

- That Ministries dealing with Social Development must drive the political agenda by having a solid social development plan which brings together technical expertise and the political agenda of the Member State;
- That Ministers from Member States working on Social Development, meet at regional level to discuss social development issues, in- between the two years of the AU Ministerial meetings;
- That the AU Commission engages with RECs on the implementation of the SPF to ensure its adaption at regional levels;

- That challenges at national level be addressed which may hinder implementation of social protection programmes; limited budgetary provisions may cause restraints, however, management of the resources in a transparent manner should also receive priority;
- That social protection programmes be sustained primarily by Member State funding and not be dependent upon donor funding;
- That social protection provisions for the poor feature in the Post 2015 Development agenda;
- That capacity building and skills be developed to implement social protection measures through accelerated training for social workers at national levels and that facilities for social workers be improved;
- That the AUC develops indicators to measure the level of social protection that vulnerable groups enjoy in Member States.

Report on the Training of social policy analysts from Member States

33. The Ministers **decided** the following regarding the report:
- That the AUC provides more regular training on social policy analysis training for experts from Member States from the 5 regions;
 - That Member States and the AUC intensify opportunities and facilities to train more social policy analysts.

THE DRAFT AFRICAN COMMON POSITION IN PREPARATION FOR THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE FAMILY, 2014

34. The meeting made the following **decisions** regarding the Common Position:
- That the draft African Common Position in preparation for the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family, 2014, is adopted, with amendments from the meeting, and forwarded to the Africa Group in New York for presentation to the UN Commission on Social Development;
 - That Member States are called upon to recommit to the implementation of the AU Plan of Action on the Family;
 - That in 2014, Member States should implement special programmes for the strengthening of families.

DRAFT AFRICAN COMMON POSITION ON RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS IN AFRICA

35. Pursuant to the discussions, the meeting **decided**:

- That issues of older persons with disabilities clearly be highlighted in the African Common Position for Rights of Older persons;
- That Civil Society Organisations also be included in the delegations of the next Open Ended Working Group at the UN in New York;
- That national data on older persons be gathered and disaggregated by age, gender and disability;
- That the role of Civil Society Organisations be outlined more clearly in the draft Common Position;
- That the draft African Common Position on Rights of Older Persons in Africa, be adopted, with amendments from the meeting, and forwarded to the Africa Group in New York for presentation to the UN Commission on Social Development;
- That access to health services for the treatment of HIV and other communicable and non-communicable diseases for older persons, be improved.

Agenda Item 8: DATE AND VENUE FOR CAMSD-4

36. The Republic of Guinea offered to host the 4th Session of the AU Conference of Ministers of Social Development. The date of the Conference in 2014 will be decided between the AU Commission and the host country.

Agenda Item 9: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

37. There were no items listed under Any Other Business.

Agenda Item 10: ADOPTION OF THE MINISTERS' REPORT OF THE 3RD SESSION OF THE AU CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

38. The Ministers adopted their Report with amendments to be incorporated by the AU Commission.

Agenda Item 11: CLOSING SESSION

39. The Second Vice-Chairperson of the Ministers meeting, Hon. Nzet Biteghe from Gabon thanked the Ministers for their constructive contributions, and the AU Commission for their technical support to make the meeting a success.

40. The meeting was then adjourned.

2013

Report of the 3rd session of the AU conference of ministers of social development (Camsd-3), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 26 – 30 November 2012

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