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UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA

P. O. Box 3243

Telephone: 517 700

Fax: 5130 36

website: [www. www.iau.int](http://www.iau.int)

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**REPORT OF PRC SUB-COMMITTEE ON THE SPECIAL
EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUND FOR DROUGHT
AND FAMINE IN AFRICA (SEAF)**

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INTRODUCTION

1. During the period July to December 2014, the PRC Sub-Committee on the Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa (SEAF) was seized with the issue of Ebola in the three West African countries most affected namely Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

On Ebola:-

2. Several meetings were held by the Sub-Committee to discuss the Ebola situation, which had become a humanitarian disaster as well as a development challenge.

3. During these deliberations, the Sub-Committee received briefings from the Department of Social Affairs on the Ebola situation in the three countries to explore assistance of the fund to address the situation. As a result, the Commission launched the Africa Union Support to Ebola Outbreak in West Africa (ASEOWA) operation in August 2014 to contribute to on-going efforts of national and international communities to stop the spread of Ebola Virus disease in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone with the support of the fund.

4. The deliberations resulted in various decisions by the Sub-Committee which were endorsed by the Executive Council during its Sixteenth Extraordinary Session that was held on 08 September 2014, in Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA, when they adopted decision Ext/EX.CL/Dec.1(XVI) which makes provision to;

- i) Facilitate the expansion of the mandate of the AU Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa to include public health emergencies and other calamities;
- ii) Ensure the replenishment of the exhausted AU Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa to continue to provide support to Member States and elaborate specific criteria for the Fund operations; and CALLS ON Member States to make voluntary contributions to the Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa whose resources are dwindling by the day. In this regard, to explore possibilities of convening a Pledging Conference in favour of that Fund.

5. To this end, the Commission disbursed a total of USD 1,000,000.00 from the SEAF Fund to the affected countries as follows:

Guinea	USD 150,000.00
Liberia -	USD 150,000.00
Sierra Leone	USD 150,000.00
Grant to the Commission	USD 300,000.00

Grant to the Centre USD 250,000.00

Total Amount Disbursed USD 1,000,000.00

Review of the Terms of Reference of the Sub-Committee:-

6. The amount available in the fund when the Sub-Committee met at its 24th Meeting on 10 September 2014 was USD 3,540,861.48. This amount was not inclusive of the USD 1,000,000.00 commitment made at the 23th Meeting of the Sub-Committee referred to above. The Sub-Committee on that date also reviewed the status of the Fund and discussed possible ways of restructuring the Fund. Members of the Sub-Committee expressed concern over the fact that the Fund had not been replenished. It was noted that the situation was not appropriate, as it would render the Sub-Committee incapable of responding to any future emergencies. It was then agreed that the Commission would make a proposal on restructuring of the Fund for the Sub-Committee's consideration.

7. The Sub-Committee and the Executive Council noted that the Terms of Reference of the Special Emergency Assistance Fund was to respond specifically for Drought and Famine. The Sub-Committee decided to make an exception and provide assistance from the Fund for Ebola, which strictly speaking does not fall within the mandate of the Fund. This was because of the pressing challenge occasioned by the outbreak of the epidemic. Members of the Sub-Committee and the Executive Council therefore agreed to review the mandate of the Sub-Committee to include other emergencies, which will require a review of the Terms of Reference of the Special Emergency Assistance Fund by inference of the Sub-Committee. The Department of Political Affairs is in the process of reviewing the current Terms of Reference to provide a holistic approach to emergencies in Africa. The Sub-Committee will consider the revised Terms of Reference during one of its meetings in 2015.

On the Activities of the PRC Sub-Committee on Special Emergency Assistance Fund:-

8. The Sub-Committee on Special Emergency Assistance Fund was represented at the AU Annual Humanitarian Symposium by H.E. Mr Alain Aime Nyamitwe, Ambassador of the Republic of Burundi where he made a presentation on the activities of the Sub-Committee SEAF, especially the involvement of SEAF on Ebola response during 2014. The Humanitarian Symposium brings together Members of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and IDPs and all humanitarian actors including those that respond to Conflict related disasters and natural disasters in RECs, some Government Bodies, UN Agencies, NGO's and Intergovernmental bodies operating in Africa. The purpose is to provide a platform for free exchange of experiences, information, good practices and lessons learnt. This is the 3rd Humanitarian Symposium that the AU has held and it was the first time that the PRC Sub-committee on SEAF participated.

9. The Humanitarian Affairs, Refugees and Displaced Persons Division (HARDP) of the Department of Political Affairs will restructure the activities of the Sub-committee beyond disbursement of funds to more involvement in natural disasters related matters including field assessment missions, and representation in different

relevant meetings focusing on natural disasters. This will enable the Sub-Committee to be more informed and involved in activities related to its mandate.

10. The Department will also provide a collaboration and harmonization mechanism between the work of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and IDPs and the PRC Sub-Committee on Special Emergency Assistance Fund by coordinating the activities of the two Sub-Committees.

11. To this end, the Department will provide yearly work plans for the approval of the Sub-Committee by February of every year.

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