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**ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION**

**Twenty-Fifty Ordinary Session**

**26 – 27 June 2014**

**Malabo, EQUATORIAL GUINEA**

**Assembly/AU/20(XXIII)**

**CONCEPT NOTE ON THE US - AFRICA LEADERS SUMMIT**

**Recommendations of the Executive Council Ministerial Preparatory  
Committee to the 23<sup>rd</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of  
Heads of State and Government,  
27-28 June 2014**

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**BACKGROUND**

1. Forty-seven (47) African Heads of State and Government, and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission have been invited by the President of the United States of America to attend a US-Africa Leaders Summit, to be held in Washington from 3-7 August 2014.

2. During his second official visit to Africa in 2013, President Obama announced that he would be hosting African leaders for a Summit in Washington in 2014. This announcement happened against the backdrop of review of the US policy on Africa under the Obama administration with a view “to further strengthen ties with one of the world’s most dynamic and fastest-growing regions”.

3. It is expected that the Summit will take forward some key and ‘strategic’ elements of the new Obama Administration Policy on Africa and the major announcements made during his Africa trip, including focus on trade and investment in Africa, energy and infrastructure development, and peace and democratic governance.

4. As host country and initiator of the Summit, the agenda and invitations, were determined by the government of the United States. The US administration has engaged with the different African capitals that are invited, met with the AU Commission and also briefed the African ambassadors represented in Washington on preparations for the Forum and the agenda.

5. The Summit will be held over three days, and include the following components (see Annexure A):

- Capitol Hill Luncheon Reception with Members of the US Senate and Congress and the CEOs/Leaders engagement on 4 August.
- US-Africa Business Forum and AGOA Forum of Trade Ministers on 5 August; and
- Summit Leaders Meeting, between President Obama and African HOSG on 6 August
- President Obama’s Press conference. African leaders will have the opportunity to meet the press across the road at US Institute of Peace.

6. The agenda of the Summit Leaders Meeting on 6 August is as follows:

- Session 1: Investing for the future
- Session 2: Peace and Regional Security
- Session 3: Governing for the Next Generation

7. On the margins of the Summit will be the Engaging Young Leaders forum, a Spousal programme, side-events by US think tanks, NGOs, universities and businesses. A group of young Africans selected by the US Administration will participate in the Youth Leadership Forum, and African business leaders identified by US missions in the US-Africa Business Forum.

8. The US Administration indicated that there shall be no Communiqué from the meeting; it will just be the press Conference by President Obama, held immediately after the conclusion of the Summit.

## **AFRICA-US RELATIONS IN PERSPECTIVE**

9. The United States of America and the African continent share a long common history, starting with the transatlantic slave trade, hence the presence of a large African Diaspora in the US. This relationship was further cemented through the Pan African movement, which sought to unite Africans and their descendants in the common struggles against slavery, racial oppression and colonialism.

10. Since independence, the relationship between Africa and the US have evolved in the political, social, cultural and economic spheres, with many African countries having relations with the US in some, or all of these areas.

11. Today, the US is the largest foreign direct investor in the continent, larger than the European Union and China. Unfortunately US FDI is characterized by three features: firstly, it has remained relatively static; secondly, the structure of investments have not change, it remain primarily in natural resources, and predominantly fossil fuels, and thirdly, that it is highly concentrated in a few countries. As we move forward in our engagements with the US, this should also be an opportunity review this structure of US FDI, so that investments are also directed in areas of beneficiation, value addition and manufacturing and agribusinesses in Africa.

12. The US uses AGOA, legislated by the US Congress in May 2000, as its main promoting instrument for trade relations with Africa. Now that AGOA is due for review in 2015, it will be an opportunity to revisit the instrument and have a higher level of ambition.

13. President Obama has announced the US Power Africa initiative, which offers an opportunity to revisit traditional US investments in Africa, of which more than 50% are in fossil fuels, whilst there are immense opportunities in Africa for investments in green and renewal energy as well.

14. The US State department and the AU Commission cooperate in the areas of peace and security, economic development and democracy and good governance, based on an MOU signed at the start of 2013.

**15.** Africa is on an upward trend and seeks mutually beneficial partnerships with other regions and continents. It therefore looks at the nature of partnerships with a view to rationalizing them and enhancing the benefits to its transformation and integration efforts.

**16.** Whilst the arrangements for the US-Africa Leaders Summit seem to be predominantly commercial, Africa wishes to add the appropriate emphasis on an all-encompassing developmental and transformation approach.

## **EXPECTATIONS AND OUTCOMES**

**17.** For Africa, given the relationship between the US and Africa explained above, and Africa's concern of engaging with the world on the basis of its common interests, it is proposed that we should seek to achieve the following outcomes from this event:

- a) To explain the African perspective on its development agenda, based on the Common African Position on Post 2015 Development Agenda and the African Agenda 2063 and other frameworks.
- b) Engage with the US on African approaches to:
  - Its vision for the continent's economic development through industrialization, agriculture, agribusinesses, human capital development and technology and value addition; and its trade relations and access to international markets and technology transfer;
  - Infrastructure including PIDA and its energy needs and plan;
  - Its approach to people centred development, and the empowerment of women and young people;
  - Peace and Security and the African architecture in place to deal with this, and dealing with the root causes of conflicts;
  - Governance and human and people's rights and the African normative frameworks and initiatives in this regard;
  - Sustainable financing of African development, and in particular cooperation between the US and Africa to stem the illicit flows from the continent and facilitating the remittances and the participation of the Diaspora in Africa's development;
  - The right of Africa to participate equitably in global governance, including UN Security Council reform.

**18.** This approach recognizes that in each of the above areas, there are US programmes, more particularly in the areas of energy (Power Africa), trade (AGOA) and

cooperation on peace and security. It also takes note that many of these programmes are in the form of concessions, about which the US consults, but does not negotiate with Africa.

**19.** Africa has been engaging its youth in a variety of national and continental for a to discussion Africa's future, development, governance and their role. We are mindful that our youthful population presents a demographic opportunity, and are committed to their health and well-being and their empowerment through education, a skills revolution, science and technology and through entrepreneurship and job creation.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS ON AFRICA'S PREPARATIONS**

**20.** The Executive Council notes that the Group of African Ambassadors in Washington has been convened by the US Administration to brief them on the Summit preparations and formats, and they in turn have met on their own to discuss an African response. The outcomes of this have been compiled into an African Concept Paper, which has been transmitted to the AU Commission and to their respective capitals.

**21.** The Executive Council therefore recommends the following:

- a) The AU Commission is tasked to prepare an Aide Memoire on the three areas proposed by the US that the Leaders Summit on 6 August will cover, capturing Africa's common positions and interests on the overall partnership and the themes, for distribution to all Member States.
- b) That the participating countries agree to have at least three (3) Heads of State and Government as Lead speakers per topic to introduce the African perspective.
- c) Ensure that African Ministers of Trade coordinate minimum African positions on the AGOA forum and other trade related matters.
- d) Engage with African business and other sectors around common African positions in events.
- e) Notwithstanding that the meeting is a unilateral US initiative, the African side should discuss with the US possibility of a experts and Ministerial to precede the Summit, to incorporate Africa's inputs to the agenda, as well as the proposal to adopt a joint Communiqué, and a joint press conference with the US President at the end of the Summit.
- f) In the event that this is not acceptable to the US, the African side can issue a separate statement and arrange its press conference to convey Africa's perspective on the Summit.

**22.** Task a team from the Executive Council and the Commission to meet the US Administration around preparations for the Summit.

**23.** Africa is of the view that its partnership with the US should evolve into a formal and structured framework where enforceable commitments, obligations, targets and accountability will be jointly negotiated and agreed.

**PROGRAMME OF SUMMIT EVENTS 4-6 AUGUST 2014**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>EVENT</b>
4 AUG	Capitol Hill lunch, hosted by Chair of Senate Subcommittee on Africa, and Representative Karen Bass. HOSG and US Senators and Members of Congress
	CEO/Leaders Dinner: HOSG and CEOs from US companies investing in Africa (not clear if African CEO's will be present?)
5 AUG	US-Africa Business Forum, co-hosted by the US Department of Commerce and Bloomberg Philanthropies. HOSG, US and African Businesses, US Government agencies and Members of Congress. President Obama will participate a part. African Trade Ministers plus 2
	AGOA Ministerial Forum, hosted by US Trade representative Michael Froman
	White House Dinner, hosted by President and Mrs. Obama: African Heads of Delegations and spouses, plus 1
6 AUG	Summit Leaders Meeting, between President Obama and African HOSG. Three thematic sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investing in Africa's Future: sustainable development and economic growth</li> <li>• Peace and Regional Security: current challenges and long-term solutions</li> <li>• Growing for the Next Generation: leading next generation, progress and obstacles to development, full achievement of fundamental rights.</li> </ul> African Heads of delegation only, plus 1 or plus 2.
	President Obama's Press Conference

2014

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