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**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE THEME OF THE YEAR 2021**



**ANNUAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITES ON
THE ROADMAP OF THE AU THEME OF THE YEAR FOR 2021**

FEBRUARY 2021 TO FEBRUARY 2022

**Theme: *'Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building
the Africa we Want'***

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The African Union (AU) Theme of the Year for 2021 '**Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa we Want**' was launched by H.E. Felix Tshisekedi, President of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Chairperson of the African Union during the 34th African Union Assembly held from 06th to 7th February 2021. Since its launch the AU Commission embarked on the implementation of activities and programmes outlined in the roadmap of the Concept Note of the year. The activities and programmes implemented were aimed at popularizing the theme of the year within the AU Member States, arts, culture and heritage partners including with Pan-African Cultural Institutions, at the international level and the African citizenry at large.

2. One of the mandates of the Department of Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development (HHS) is to develop continental cultural policies and oversee the implementation of such policies by the AU Member States. Hence the theme of the year which was implemented by the Department of Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development also the house of the AU Agenda 2063 Flagship Project '**The Great Museum of Africa, Permanent Memorial of Slave Trade**' which is aimed at portraying the rich cultural heritage of the continent and will be hosted by the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria on behalf of the continent.

3. The implementation of the activities and programmes of the year of arts, culture and heritage showed clearly that the decision was timely. Furthermore, the implementation of Assembly Decision 772(XXXIII) on Arts, Culture and Heritage which calls upon Member States to allocate at least 1% of their national budgets to the sector by 2030 will increase the role, profile and visibility of the sector across the continent. Of paramount importance is the uplifting and promotion of the artists, cultural workers and traditional leaders who are the custodians and implementers of various programmes on arts, culture and heritage on the continent.

4. In tandem with the theme of the year, the Department of Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development moved forward the implementation of the following projects:

- i. The Establishment of the Great Museum of Africa and Permanent Memorial of Slave Trade
- ii. Using Culture & Arts for Boosting and Promoting African Identity, Common Heritage, Shared Values
- iii. Promotion of African identity, common heritage, and shared values through the creative economy

5. This report is a summary of the activities undertaken in the period between February 2021 and February 2022 and it is in six (6) sections including the introduction. Section II presents activities undertaken, Section III presents milestones and results, Section IV Presents the impact, Section V Outlines the lessons learnt and Section VI Provides the recommendations and follow up actions.

II. ACTIVITIES

6. The Roadmap of the AU Theme of the Year 2021 has fifty-eight (58) activities which were inscribed by the AU Commission, Member States and partners. Despite the major challenges posed both by the COVID-19 pandemic and the lack of financial resources, the AU Commission in collaboration with Member States and partners were able to successfully implement at least sixty percent (60%) of the activities inscribed in the roadmap of the theme of the year for 2021. Some activities are still in the process of implementation.

7. Annex 1, below, outlines activities carried out in line with the implementation of the AU theme of the year for 2021. Annex 2 provides a list of activities and programmes to be carried out in 2022 given the extension granted by the AU Policy Organs to extend the implementation of activities of the roadmap of the AU theme of the year of 2021 to December 2022.

III. MILESTONES AND RESULTS

8. The milestones and results of the implementation of the AU theme of the year can be categorized into five (5) main areas:

A. *Arts, Culture and Heritage Continental Policy Instruments*

- Launching of the entry into force of the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance of 2006; The Charter for African Cultural Renaissance is the main continental policy instrument in the area of arts, culture and heritage and its entry into force and implementation will without doubt enhance the promotion and profiling of the sector so that it contributes to development, promotion of African identity, shared values, a culture for peace and social cohesion. To date the following seventeen (17) AU Member States have ratified this instrument: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroun, Chad, Congo, Cote D'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Guinea, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa;
- Endorsement of the draft African Union Model Law on the Protection of Cultural Property and Heritage by the 6th Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs (STC-JLA) held virtually from 22 – 24 September 2021;
- Enhanced resolve for the protection of cultural property and heritage on the continent using continental and international legal instruments as guides for strengthening of national legislative frameworks in this area;
- Draft Statute of the Centre for Linguistic and Historical Studies by Oral Tradition (CELHTO) validated by Experts from Member States;
- African Common Position on Restitution of Cultural Property and Heritage drafted during the Continental Experts' Workshop on the Restitution of Cultural Property and Heritage held in Dakar, Senegal in collaboration with the Government of Senegal and the Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA).

B. *Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) on the Continent*

- Revised African Union Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries validated by experts from Member States, and popularized. The Revised AU Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative industries is a tool aimed at guiding Member States in drafting policy instruments in the creative economy and it is guided by the following principles: Stimulate economic growth of the CCIs; Promote social inclusion, cohesion, peace building and African integration; Respect diversity of cultural expressions and African cultural identities; Safeguard cultural heritage including repatriation and restitution of cultural property of African origin; Protect intellectual property rights; Promote compliance to standard-setting instruments; Enhance international cooperation in the CCIs and Protect cultural rights and freedom of expression.
- The creative economy on the continent was promoted through partnership with the AFREXIM Bank Creative Africa Summit (CANEX) held in Durban, South Africa from 19th to 20th November 2021; the 7th Edition of the All Africa Music Awards (AFRIMA) held in Lagos, Nigeria on 21st November 2021; The 27th Edition of the Pan-African Film and Television Festival of Ouagadougou (FESPACO) held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from 16th to 23 October 2021; The Africa Fashion Reception and Africa Celebrates held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 16 to 21 October 2021.
- Statute of the African Audio-Visual and Cinema Commission (AACC) popularized and promoted in various fora including the 74th Edition of the Cannes Film Festival and FESPACO.

C. Great Museum of Africa (GMA), Protection of Heritage and Combatting Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Property

- Great Museum of Africa Project document and the draft Statute developed; The Great Museum of Africa a Flagship Project of the African Union Agenda 2063 seeks to showcase Africa and its rich plural culture, heritage, history and outstanding natural beauty to its people and to the world. It will enable Africa's aspiration to leverage its cultural resources for development and social justice. The GMA will be a continental hub for the initiation of negotiations for the repatriation of illicitly trafficked cultural property from the continent.
- Preparations of the launch of the Great Museum of Africa (GMA) were finalized. These include the finalization and printing of the GMA project document, media strategy as well as the launch concept note;
- Preparations for the Continental Exhibition to be opened during the launch of the GMA Temporary Site were finalized;
- Promotion of the AU Model Law on the Protection of Cultural Property and Heritage and the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance was done during the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property;
- Publication and launch of a thematic issue of the CELHTO scientific journal on the issue of the restitution of African cultural property

D. African Languages and Oral Traditions

- ACALAN launched the African Languages Week in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from 27 to 30 July 2021 in collaboration with the Government of Burkina Faso. as a major event to be held annually from 24 to 30 January that should be observed by all Member States of the African Union, to mark the relevance of African languages and cultures in Africa and the African diaspora, as a special moment of African identity. It also aims to demonstrate the indispensable role of African languages in Africa's integration, development, sustainable peace; foster awareness across Member States of the African Union to fast track the development of national language policies within the context of the African Union's Language Plan of Action for Africa, and thus promote the use of African languages in all spheres of life, especially as official languages and languages of instruction, knowledge creation and management; and to sensitize Africans on the importance of African culture, of which African languages are a major component, in establishing and promoting a culture of peace, and sustainable development;
- ACALAN and UNESCO jointly organized a consultative meeting on 25 and 26 May 2021 in accordance with the United Nations declaration of 2022 – 2032 as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages, Africa Day commemoration and the theme of the year, to prepare the African Chapter of the Global Action Plan for the IDIL2022-2032. Best practices, particularly with respect to the implementation and evaluation of the IDIL 2022-2032 were identified, and monitoring at national, regional, and global levels of the initiatives was improved. ACALAN will propose to the STC-YCS4, a Decade of African Languages alongside the UN International Decade of Indigenous Languages 2022 – 2032.
- CELHTO carried out a study on the endogenous mechanisms of conflict prevention, management and resolution in Central Africa;
- CELHTO Organized a competition with prizes on the collection of tales and legends on African cultural values;
- Sensitization of Member States on the importance of culture in general, history and oral traditions in particular in the development process of our continent was done by CELHTO;
- Reinforcement of the teaching materials on African languages through CELHTO's collection of tales that will be translated in vehicular cross-border African languages;
- Awareness of stakeholders on the importance of crisis and conflict management traditional mechanisms;

E. Building Partnerships and Cooperation

- The recognition of H.E. Kenneth David Kaunda, former President of Zambia for his contribution to African cultural renaissance and the spirit of Pan-Africanism;
- The renewed commitment by Member States through ministries responsible for arts, culture and heritage and partners on galvanizing the sector using the golden opportunity presented by the AU year of arts, culture and heritage;
- Thirty-five (35) young people trained in entrepreneurship and heritage sustainability by the African World Heritage Fund(AWHF);
- At least thirty (30) heritage experts trained in heritage management in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Heritage Management Institution;
- Enhanced popularization of the African World Heritage Day celebrated on the 05th May each year in order to contribute to the increase of African Sites in the prestigious UNESCO World Heritage List and removal of African Sites from the World Heritage List in Danger;
- Prizes awarded to six (6) children related a context on dictation and promotion of African Languages;
- Promotion of AU arts, culture and heritage instruments during the 2nd Luanda Biennale on a Culture for Peace held in Luanda, Angola from 27th October to 2nd December 2021;
- Promotion of African fashion, design, textiles and cuisine during the African Fashion Reception (AFR) held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 14 to 16 October 2021;
- Creative industry of music promoted during the 7th Edition of the All Africa Music Award (AFRIMA) held in Lagos, Nigeria on 21st November 2021;
- Co-Chairing the Creative Africa Advisory Group (CAAG) meetings which led to the 2nd Intra-Africa Trade Fair and Summit on the Creative Economy (CANEX) in Durban, South Africa;
- Assessment of decent work in the arts, culture and heritage sector, carried out in collaboration with ILO and UNESCO;
- Prizes awarded to twenty (20) storytellers, students and researchers for the collection of stories from West and Central Africa on traditional African values.

IV. IMPACT

9. Advocacy and popularization of the AU Theme of the year for 2021 was undertaken at various levels including: Ministerial level, Members of Parliament; cultural workers and experts; Media; young people, grassroots and communities. The activities carried out on the theme of the year have contributed to the popularization and increase of visibility of the arts, culture and heritage work done at continental level.

10. With the entry into force of the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance, the validation of the Revised AU Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries, and the adoption of the AU Model Law on the Protection of Cultural Property and Heritage conditions are set at continental policy level to ensure that the sector is galvanized and re-ignited to fully contribute to the economy of the continent and to

the continental free trade area. Stronger and aggressive promotion of the instruments is required for greater impact and to implementation by all stakeholders.

11. The implementation of the AU theme of the year for 2021 has also managed to bring various partners in the arts, culture and heritage sector to the fore and to share their events and activities as well as enhance their collaboration with the AUC in the arts, culture and heritage sector. There are excellent prospects for future collaborative projects. Such partnerships have been lacking in the arts, culture and heritage sector and their advent now should be dearly appreciated and taken on board.

V. LESSONS LEARNT

12. The approved theme of the year for 2021 on arts, culture and heritage has helped to further ascertain that the sector can be revitalized and its contribution to continental integration, African identity, peace building and socio-economic development is unquestionable.

13. Initially the theme of the year was not allocated a budget. The requested and approved supplementary budget for the implementation of critical activities inscribed in the roadmap of the theme of the year for 2021 was significant. Some of the activities could not be able to be implemented without the supplementary budget.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS AND FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

14. Member States that have not yet done so are called upon to ratify and or accede to the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance for instrument to achieve universal ratification and its massive implementation.

15. The Statute of the African Audio-visual and Cinema Commission was approved by the 32nd AU Assembly held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in February 2020. To date no Member State has ratified this instrument of the creative economy. Member States are requested to ratify this important instrument which will promote the development of the sector.

16. The operationalization of the Temporary Secretariat of the African Audio-Visual and Cinema Commission (AACC) to be hosted by the Government of Kenya will galvanize the development of the creative economy of audio-visual and cinema on the continent and ensure its contribution to the economy. The launch of the Temporary Secretariat of the AACC should be a priority in 2022.

17. Some of the activities undertaken on the AU Theme of the year for 2021 were held online and so cancelled/postponed due to the restrictions imposed by the COVID 19 pandemic. The Launch of the Temporary Site of the GMA which was planned to take place on site in July 2021 had to be postponed due to the 3rd Wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in Algeria. Priority is to be given to the launch of the Temporary Site of the GMA in 2022.

18. In order to build the permanent site of the Great Museum of Africa, a Flagship Project of the AU Agenda 2063, a robust and comprehensive resource mobilization

strategy should be implemented; Member States are requested to strongly support this project in the arts, culture and heritage sector and its resource mobilization activities.

19. The African Union Model Law on the Protection of Cultural Property and Heritage is a strong continental tool aimed at guiding Member States in developing or strengthening national laws in the protection of cultural property and thus combatting illicit trafficking. There is need for continued popularization and dissemination of this policy instrument.

20. There is need to establish more creative and interactive platforms to promote and profile the continent's arts, culture and heritage sector and create more avenues for funding arts, culture and heritage projects and programmes. The implementation by Member States of Assembly Decision AU/Dec.772 on the allocation of 1% of national budgets to the arts, culture and heritage sector by 2030 is a step in the right direction.

21. Ministries responsible for Culture or Education in the Member States are requested to respond to the ACALAN's request to have National Language Structures established to serve as its focal institutions as stipulated in ACALAN's statutes. This will enhance ACALAN's operations in many Member States.

ANNEX1:**ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED IN LINE WITH THE AU THEME OF THE YEAR FOR 2021: 'ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE; LEVERS FOR BUILDING THE AFRICA WE WANT'**

1. Virtual Forum of Ministers' Responsible for Arts, Culture and Heritage to Launch the AU theme of the Year for 2021, March 2021
2. Partners' in the Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector Meeting to popularize the AU Theme of the Year for 2021, March 2021
3. Validation Workshop of the Revised AU Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries, March 2021
4. Pan-African Parliament Webinar on the AU Theme of the Year for 2021, April 2021
5. The 2nd Edition of the ASWAN Forum on Sustainable Peace and Development, March 2021
6. Virtual Meeting on Sites of Memory and the World Heritage Convention, April 2021
7. African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) Youth Forum, May 2021
8. Celebration of African World Heritage Day by the CELHTO and Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO)
9. Celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property
10. Joint Webinar Organized by the AUC, ICRC and the IPSS on the AU Theme of the Year for 2021, May 2021
11. Continental Launch of the Entry into force of the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance and Celebrations of Africa Day, May 2021
12. Africa Day Celebrations Organized by the Africa Group of Ambassadors in Various Countries, May 2021
13. UNESCO Workshop on New Approaches for Renovating of History Teaching and Learning About Africa, May 2021
14. Africa Dialogue Series Organized by the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) on the AU Theme of the Year for 2021; May 2021
15. The 11th African Border Day Celebration Organized in collaboration with the African Union Border Programme (AUBP)
16. The African Pavilion During the 74th Edition of the Cannes Film Festival, July 2021
17. Celebration of the African Integration Day for the Promotion of the AU theme of the year for 202, July 2021
18. The Launch of the African Languages Week, July 2021
19. Online Seminar on Intangible Cultural Heritage Conservation and Development for English-speaking Countries in Africa from 19-30 July 2021.
20. Adjudication of the 07th Edition of the All Africa Music Awards (AFRIMA)
21. Second meeting of the UNESCO Interagency Platform on Culture for Sustainable Development (IPCSD) - 30 September 2021

22. The 3rd Conference for a Euro-African Academic Partnership: "Building the future together: The Role of academic cooperation in shaping a new project of socio-economic integration for Youth" – September 2021
23. Reviving the Project on Liberation Routes in Southern Africa
24. The 2nd Luanda Biennale on a Culture for Peace, Luanda, Angola, October 2021
25. The AUC Jury and Side Event on the Popularization of the Statute of the African Audio-Visual and Cinema Commission (AACC) during the 27th Edition of FESPACO, October 2021
26. 5th Edition of the Africa Fashion Reception (AFR), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, October 2021
27. The 2nd Intra-Africa Trade Fair and Summit on the Creative Economy (CANEX), Durban, South Africa, November 2021
28. The 07th Edition of the All Africa Music Awards, November 2021
29. Continental Experts' Workshop on the Restitution/Return of Cultural Property and Heritage, November/December 2021

**ANNEX 2:
ACTIVITIES TO BE CARRIED OUT AS A PRIORITY IN 2022 IN LINE WITH THE
AU THEME OF THE YEAR FOR 2021**

1. Launch of the Temporary Site of the Great Museum of Africa, a Flagship Project of the AU Agenda 2063 to be hosted by the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria on behalf of the continent
2. Launch of the Temporary Secretariat of the African Audio-Visual and Cinema Commission (AACC) to be headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya
3. Advocacy and sensitization for the ratification of the Statute of the African Audio-Visual and Cinema Commission (AACC)
4. The finalization of the Draft African Common Position Paper on Restitution of Cultural Property and Heritage
5. Popularization and dissemination of the AU Model Law on the Protection of Cultural Property and Heritage
6. The Organization of the 6th Pan-African Cultural Congress (PACC6)
7. The Organization of the 2nd Pan-African Conference of Writers (PACW2)
8. The Organization of the 2nd Creative Africa Summit (CANEX)
9. Development of the Draft Continental Arts Education Policy
10. Organization of the Virtual Forum for Traditional Leaders
11. Study on the Endogenous Mechanisms of Conflict Prevention, Management and resolution in Central and East Africa
12. Finalization of the Assessment on the Decent Work in the Arts, Culture and Heritage sector and subsequent activities and programmes in the area of decent work in the sector.

DRAFT DECISION ON THE ANNUAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ROADMAP OF THE AU THEME OF THE YEAR FOR 2021: ‘ARTS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE: LEVERS FOR BUILDING THE AFRICA WE WANT’

The Executive Council,

1. **TAKES NOTE** of the Annual Report on the Implementation of the Roadmap of the African Union Theme of the Year for 2021 titled: ‘**Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa we Want**’ which highlights milestones and results achieved and provides the recommendations and follow up actions.
2. **FURTHER TAKES NOTE** of the activities yet to be implemented as part of the AU Theme of the Year for 2021 including the launching of the Temporary Site of the Great Museum of Africa (GMA), a Flagship Project of the AU Agenda 2063 in Algiers, Algeria and the start of its operations; the launching of the Temporary Secretariat of the African Audio-Visual Cinema Commission (AACC) in Nairobi, Kenya; The finalization of the Draft African Common Position on Restitution of Cultural Property and the Assessment on Decent Work in the Arts, Culture and Heritage and
3. **REQUESTS** Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Pan-African Cultural Institutions and partners to participate in the launch of the Great Museum of Africa Temporary Site and the African Audio-Visual and Cinema Commission Temporary Secretariat and the finalization of the Draft African Common Position on Restitution of Cultural Property and Heritage;
4. **CALLS UPON** all AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Pan-African Cultural Institutions, UN Agencies and partners in the arts, culture and heritage sector to continue supporting the implementation of activities and programmes in line with the AU theme of the year for 2021, since the implementation of activities on the 2021 AU Theme of the Year has been extended to December 2022.

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