

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي

UMOJA WA AFRIKA



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

UNIÓN AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: +251 115 517 700 Fax: +251 115 517 844
Website: www.au.int

ASSEMBLY OF THE AFRICAN UNION
Thirty-Seventh Ordinary Session
17 - 18 February 2024
Addis Ababa (ETHIOPIA)

Assembly/AU/9(XXXVII)
Original : English

**REPORT OF THE 41st SESSION OF THE AUDA-NEPAD HEADS OF
STATE AND GOVERNMENT ORIENTATION COMMITTEE (HSGOC)**

REPORT OF THE 41st SESSION OF THE AUDA-NEPAD HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT ORIENTATION COMMITTEE (HSGOC)

1. The AUDA-NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC) held its 41st Session virtually on 13 February 2024, hosted by the African Union Development Agency (AUDA NEPAD) prior to the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union.

2. The Session was attended by the Heads of State of the Arab Republic of Egypt (Chair of the AUDA-NEPAD HSGOC), Union of the Comoros (Chair of the AU), People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, Republic of Chad (as Chair of the Community of Sahel–Saharan States), Federal Republic of Nigeria, Republic of Senegal, Republic of Equatorial Guinea, Republic of Malawi, Republic of Zambia, Republic of Guinea-Bissau and the Republic of Djibouti (as Chair of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development) as well as the Chair of the Presidential Council of the State of Libya (as Chair of the Arab Maghreb Union). The Session was also attended by the Vice Presidents of the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, the Republic of Uganda, and the Prime Cabinet Secretary of the Republic of Kenya. Furthermore, the session was attended at the ministerial level by representatives from the Republic of Rwanda (Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation), the Republic of Cameroon (Minister of Economy, Planning & Regional Development) and the Republic of Zimbabwe (Minister of Defence). There was participation at the ambassadorial level from the Federal Republic of Ethiopia, the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Angola (Chair of SADC). Also in attendance were the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Commissioners, the Chief Executive Officer of the AUDA-NEPAD, Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas, and representatives of partner institutions.

OPENING CEREMONY

3. His Excellency Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt and Chairperson of the AUDA-NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee, presided over the 41st session of the Committee. President El-Sisi began by expressing gratitude for the trust placed in him to lead the committee during challenging times, amidst significant international and regional changes. The President highlighted the importance of the meeting, occurring ahead of the endorsement of the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan of the 2063 Development Agenda, aimed at uplifting the lives of Africans.

4. President El-Sisi acknowledged the progress made in various developmental areas across the continent, including infrastructure development, intra-African trade, and empowerment initiatives for women and youth. However, he also recognized persistent challenges such as unemployment, conflict, humanitarian crises, and environmental concerns like climate change.

5. The President detailed Egypt's priorities over its stewardship of the HSGOC, focusing on policy and strategy formulation, finance mobilisation, continental integration, climate change mitigation, and the nexus between peace and

development. He underscored the necessity of a clear approach in implementing the second ten-year plan, informed by past experiences.

6. President El-Sisi highlighted Egypt's efforts to mobilise international financing, advocate for African interests in global forums through the recent membership of the AU in G20 and Egypt in BRICS, and promote joint resource mobilisation through initiatives like the "Team Africa Resource Mobilization Campaign." He also underlined the importance of accelerating the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) and addressing climate change issues.

7. On the priority issue of climate change, President El-Sisi recalled that one of the key outcomes of COP 27 held in Egypt was the establishment of a fund for loss and damage. He added that efforts in this regard culminated in the signing of an agreement for Egypt to host the AUDA-NEPAD Center of Excellence for Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience, supporting member states in fulfilling their commitments and building African capacities in resilience and adaptation.

8. Regarding peacebuilding, President El-Sisi underscored Egypt's belief in the close relationship between peace, security, and development. He mentioned efforts to review the AU's policy on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, aiming for a sophisticated approach to peacebuilding that enhances the coherence of efforts among various actors. Egypt's role as the Champion of the post-conflict reconstruction and development file at the African Union was emphasised, focusing on supporting African nations emerging from conflict.

9. President El-Sisi highlighted the crucial and consistent role AUDA-NEPAD has played in supporting development efforts on the continent since its establishment, stressing that this role needs to be strengthened and developed, including through increasing the resources of the agency. He also pledged continuous support for the agency's work.

10. In conclusion, President El-Sisi expressed optimism about future collaboration within the HSGOC to advance the 2063 Agenda and fulfil the aspirations of the African people.

11. His Excellency Azali Assoumani, President of the Union of Comoros and Chairperson of the African Union, acknowledged the significance of the meeting on the eve of the adoption of the Second 10-Year Plan for Agenda 2063. The President further emphasised that political will only is not enough and that we must invest strongly in AUDA-NEPAD to monitor the implementation of our programs and initiatives. President Assoumani praised AUDA-NEPAD's efforts in coordinating development activities and emphasised the need to strengthen the Agency to better represent African Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

12. In the unstable, complex global environment that AUDA—NEPAD is operating in, President Assoumani called for establishing a dedicated fund to support Agenda 2063's implementation and highlighted the importance of addressing resource mobilisation challenges and strengthening partnerships in which the Agency has proven up to the task. The President also commended the collaboration between Comoros and AUDA-NEPAD, highlighting the successful initiatives launched during a

mission to his country in July 2023, supporting micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).

13. His Excellency Moussa Faki Mahamat, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), commenced his statement by conveying his sincere wishes for peace, stability, and prosperity to the AUDA-NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC) for the year 2024.

14. The Chairperson acknowledged the challenging international landscape within which the meeting is being convened, highlighting several global threats, including the ongoing impact of COVID-19, the Russia-Ukraine War, the situation in Palestine, as well as the maritime traffic difficulties in the Red Sea, noting that these have had a significant negative impact on Africa. In light of these challenges, the Chairperson expressed solidarity with the Arab Republic of Egypt, particularly given its proximity to Palestine and the economic ramifications resulting from the challenges in the Red Sea.

15. In his remarks, the Chairperson recalled that the NEPAD Secretariat was established in 2001, with one of its objectives being to increase investment in infrastructure as a prerequisite for Africa's development. However, the evolving global context necessitated a reconfiguration, which resulted in the institution's transformation into the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) with a new mandate. To this end, AUDA-NEPAD is now well positioned in relation to the implementation of Agenda 2063 and its contribution in attaining its associated flagship projects.

16. The Chairperson referenced the recent progress attained by the continent, in particular the inclusion of the African Union (AU) as a permanent member of the G20 and the joining of BRICS by some African Member States, noting that this presents new opportunities in the area of forging meaningful partnerships for Africa's development. Notwithstanding these gains, the need to effectively address the challenge of funding for AU institutions and development programmes was highlighted, underscoring the need for a coherent approach to resource mobilisation, the inclusion of the African private sector, and Member States' financial contributions in the implementation of continental programmes. Addressing the aforementioned challenges will enhance the continent's ability to deliver on the implementation of the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda (STYIP) 2063.

17. In conclusion, the Chairperson noted that the broader challenges facing the continent, including the imperative to diversify economies, foster employment and wealth creation, mitigate exchange rate fluctuations, manage high debt burdens, address insecurity, and navigate political crises, among others, necessitate greater political will and the exploration of innovative approaches to tackle these challenges effectively.

CLOSED SESSION

18. The agenda was adopted as proposed. It comprised:
- a) Presentation of the 2023 Results-based Performance Report of the AUDA-NEPAD by Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas, AUDA-NEPAD Chief Executive Officer
 - b) Progress Report on the Presidential Infrastructure Championship Initiative (PICI) by H.E. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa
 - c) Any Other Business
 - d) Date and Venue of the 42nd Session of the AUDA-NEPAD HSGOC
 - e) Closing Statement by the Chairperson of the AUDA-NEPAD HSGOC

19. Ms. Nardos Bekele-Thomas, Chief Executive Office of AUDA-NEPAD, delivered the Agency's 2023 Results-based Performance Report against a challenging economic context characterised by increasing vulnerabilities across the continent. She underscored the gravity of the international and continental landscape, citing higher government debt, inflationary pressure, and tighter monetary policies as contributing factors to economic instability. Moreover, Ms Bekele-Thomas highlighted the socioeconomic challenges faced by the Member States, including a surge in extreme poverty, widespread food insecurity with a significant portion of the population facing hunger and malnutrition nightly, and Africa's pronounced susceptibility to the effects of climate change, despite its minimal contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions. In response to these challenges, Ms Bekele-Thomas emphasised the urgent need for intensified efforts by AUDA-NEPAD, in collaboration with local actors, policymakers, regional bodies, and development institutions, to address present socioeconomic crises, prepare for future challenges, reduce vulnerabilities, and build resilience across all sectors of society. She stressed the importance of unity of purpose and leveraging global platforms like the G20 to demand action and accountability towards these commitments.

20. She underscored initiatives to transform Africa's economic landscape, such as the African Commodities Strategy, designed to elevate the continent from a primary raw materials supplier to a competitive hub for value-added products. Ms Bekele-Thomas highlighted the importance of aligning the ACS with other key frameworks, such as the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), to foster regional integration and economic development. Addressing the issue of negative perceptions from international credit rating agencies, the CEO of AUDA-NEPAD proposed a redefinition of risk assessment that considers the specificities of African economies. She advocated for establishing a continental rating agency to provide an alternative and credible source of information for investors and policymakers.

21. Ms Bekele-Thomas also emphasised the inextricable link between sustainable development, peace, and security, advocating for AUDA-NEPAD's Triple Nexus Programme and calling for support for the Programme. She highlighted the need for political and financial support to accelerate the programme's implementation, which aims to address the root causes of conflict and instability while promoting sustainable development.

22. Furthermore, Ms. Bekele-Thomas outlined the significance of the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan (STYIP) in advancing Agenda 2063. She underscored the rigorous evaluation undertaken to lay the strategic groundwork for the plan, emphasising the importance of adequate funding to realise its ambitious objectives. She highlighted the need for coordinated efforts to monitor and report progress on the STYIP through the dashboard for Agenda 2063 to track real-time progress and provide valuable insights for Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs). Ms Bekele-Thomas also underscored the role of AUDA-NEPAD in coordinating and mobilising resources through initiatives like the Resource Mobilization Campaign dubbed Team Africa, aimed at attracting investments needed to propel Africa's development.

23. Ms Bekele-Thomas underscored the pivotal role of infrastructure development in Africa's economic transformation. She emphasised the importance of initiatives such as the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) in addressing the continent's infrastructure deficit and fostering regional integration. Ms Bekele-Thomas highlighted the progress made through PIDA, including the investment of US\$84 billion in regional infrastructure over the past decade. She emphasised the critical need for continued investment in infrastructure to enhance connectivity, facilitate trade, and spur economic growth across Africa. Additionally, Ms. Bekele-Thomas stressed the importance of leveraging digital infrastructure to bridge the digital divide and harness the transformative potential of technology for socio-economic development.

24. Furthermore, Ms Bekele-Thomas emphasised the significance of artificial intelligence (AI) in driving Africa's development agenda. She highlighted the African Union's Continental Strategy on Artificial Intelligence as a framework to harness the potential of AI for inclusive growth and sustainable development. Ms Bekele-Thomas underscored the importance of building capacity at the country level to regulate and responsibly deploy AI technologies. She emphasised the need for collaboration between Member States and AUDA-NEPAD to ensure that AI initiatives are aligned with development priorities and contribute to addressing pressing challenges such as healthcare, education, and agriculture. Additionally, Ms. Bekele-Thomas highlighted efforts to reform AUDA-NEPAD's Centers of Excellence into comprehensive knowledge hubs to consolidate and disseminate insights on AI and other emerging technologies to drive innovation and prosperity across the continent.

25. Regarding climate change adaptation and mitigation, Ms. Bekele-Thomas also mentioned the establishment of the Centre of Excellence on Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation in Egypt, as well as efforts to promote climate financing opportunities. Ms Bekele-Thomas outlined AUDA-NEPAD's focus on education, digitalisation, and skills development to reduce inequalities in access to education and knowledge. Initiatives such as the WorldSkills Africa Desk and support for MSMEs were highlighted, along with efforts to strengthen health systems, including operationalising the African Medicines Agency (AMA) and supporting health financing.

26. In her address, Ms Bekele-Thomas also touched upon the institutional challenges facing AUDA-NEPAD, particularly regarding funding and operational capacity. She highlighted the concerning trend of diminishing financial contributions from member states, which had dropped significantly over recent years, posing a

threat to the sustainability of vital programs. Ms Bekele-Thomas stressed the urgent need for sustainable and predictable funding to ensure AUDA-NEPAD could effectively fulfil its mandate and drive Africa's development agenda forward.

27. Ms Bekele-Thomas outlined several strategic initiatives and plans for 2024 to address these funding challenges. Firstly, she stressed the importance of diversifying AUDA-NEPAD's resource base, focusing on philanthropic foundations and private sector engagement. Collaborative efforts with philanthropic institutions, such as the partnership with the University of Cape Town to establish a centre dedicated to promoting strategic philanthropy in Africa, aim to link philanthropic endeavours with impactful development initiatives, thereby bolstering AUDA-NEPAD's financial sustainability.

28. Furthermore, Ms. Bekele-Thomas highlighted the finalised draft of the private sector engagement strategy, which aims to leverage the private sector as a critical partner in Africa's development journey. This strategy seeks to unlock the potential of private sector investment and participation in key development projects and initiatives, supplementing traditional funding sources and enhancing the agency's financial resilience.

29. Additionally, Ms. Bekele-Thomas emphasised the establishment of a Development Fund, aligning with the decision of the 35th Ordinary Session of the AU Summit. This fund aims to mobilise public and private investments totalling \$3.3 trillion to bridge the financial gap identified in the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan. The feasibility study for the Development Fund is slated to be presented at the next ordinary session of the Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC) for consideration, reflecting AUDA-NEPAD's proactive approach towards sustainable financing solutions.

30. During her address, the CEO of AUDA-NEPAD emphasised the urgent need to broaden the agency's footprint both nationally and regionally, aiming to enhance the swift delivery of impactful programs to communities in need across the continent. This strategic expansion involves meticulously refining AUDA-NEPAD's delivery model in close collaboration with the AUDA-NEPAD Steering Committee. Moreover, it entails crafting a comprehensive proposal that mirrors the aspirations of Member States and responds effectively to the specific needs and demands of diverse local contexts. This concerted effort seeks to ensure that AUDA-NEPAD's presence becomes tangible and accessible, effectively translating into meaningful development outcomes.

31. Ms. Bekele-Thomas concluded her remarks by reiterating AUDA-NEPAD's unwavering commitment to achieving sustainable development, peace, and prosperity for Africa. She underscored the critical role of the African Union and its institutions in addressing the continent's multifaceted challenges, calling upon African leaders to demonstrate steadfast commitment and solidarity in pursuit of these shared goals. She reaffirmed AUDA-NEPAD's dedication to achieving tangible results and maintaining high accountability standards to drive Africa's development agenda forward.

32. After the presentation made by AUDA-NEPAD CEO, President El-Sisi proceeded to the following Agenda Item titled Progress Report on the PICI. He asked Ms. Bekele-Thomas to brief the meeting on developments in this regard. AUDA-

NEPAD CEO, Ms Nardos Bekele-Thomas, informed that the agenda item has been deferred due to logistical challenges related to the PICI process. She elaborated that the delay stemmed from the inter-ministerial meeting held on the morning of February 13, chaired by H.E. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa, which lacked sufficient time to adequately address technical issues before presenting the report to the HSGOC. This was primarily due to the complexity of the validation process for the annual PICI report, which mandates tabling the report to an Africa-wide Inter-ministerial meeting prior to presentation to the 12 PICI Presidents and ultimately to HSGOC. Unfortunately, the Continent-Wide ministerial meeting convened by South Africa as chair was delayed, leaving insufficient time to resolve technical matters and convene a meeting with the 12 PICI Presidents before presenting the report to HSGOC. In this regard, she indicated that South Africa, in its capacity as chair, requested the withdrawal of the item from this meeting's agenda. They expressed their commitment to collaborate with the Chair of HSGOC to define a robust process for future tabling. Additionally, Ms Bekele-Thomas noted that President Ramaphosa and his designated ministers were unable to attend this HSGOC meeting due to their involvement in ongoing proceedings at the National Assembly. To ensure representation, South Africa was represented by H.E. Ambassador Xolisa Mabhongo, Deputy Director-General of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), ensuring continued engagement despite the unavoidable absence of President Ramaphosa and his ministers.

DISCUSSION OF THE HSGOC MEMBERS

33. In his statement, His Excellency Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, expressed gratitude to His Excellency President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, and His Excellency President Azalia Soumani, , among others, for this meeting amid various crises facing Senegal. He commended the AUDA-NEPAD for the Result-Based Performance Report for 2023, acknowledging the socio-economic progress made while recognising ongoing challenges. President Sall emphasised the need for AUDA-NEPAD to focus on transformative results, particularly in infrastructure development, including roads, rail, logistics, energy, and agriculture. He encouraged initiatives like Energize Africa to boost revenue sources for the youth and achieve energy infrastructure goals. President Sall highlighted the importance of agriculture in feeding Africa and the world, calling for a reassessment of the Malabo Declaration to address climate resilience and youth integration. He underscored the significance of the Second Dakar Financing Summit in accelerating funding for the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) priority actions and urged stakeholders to prioritise its implementation. Furthermore, President Sall underscored the need for Africa to mobilise domestic resources and explore new funding sources and partnerships. He commended the creation of the AUDA-NEPAD Development Fund as a potential avenue for funding African Union (AU) projects and programs. He concluded by thanking the members of this meeting for their attention.

34. In his address, His Excellency Teodoro Obiang Mbasogo, President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, highlighted the importance of AUDA-NEPAD in implementing Agenda 2063 and transforming continental projects into policies and scientific innovations at all levels. President Obiang Mbasogo congratulated the AUDA-NEPAD CEO for the quality of the Performance Report and highlighted the

agency's progress in various areas such as environmental sustainability, industrialisation, human capital development in general and youth empowerment in particular, and agriculture. He underscored the need for AUDA-NEPAD to focus on strengthening health systems, enhancing security, promoting agriculture resilience, and fostering agro-industrial inclusion. President Obiang Mbasogo reaffirmed Equatorial Guinea's commitment to supporting AUDA-NEPAD's strategies and plans for the continent's development, emphasising cooperation and integration among African countries to address poverty, hunger, and underdevelopment. He called for AUDA-NEPAD to play a central role in defining and implementing new priorities for social and political transformation in alignment with the second decade of Agenda 2063, emphasizing the need for the agency to promote innovation as a critical enabler. Additionally, he noted the importance of member states' contributions to AUDA-NEPAD's functioning and independence from external influences, advocating for the agency's empowerment to promote sustainable development solutions. President Obiang Mbasogo affirmed AUDA-NEPAD's pivotal role as the continent's primary development agency, capable of proposing solutions at national and continental levels and on the international stage.

35. His Excellency Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia and Chair of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), acknowledged the role of AUDA-NEPAD in accelerating the delivery of the African Union's Agenda 2023 goals and commended the agency for fostering inclusive partnerships, particularly with the private sector, to drive economic development, trade, and investment in Africa. President Hichilema emphasised the importance of the private sector in accelerating infrastructure development, particularly in transportation, energy, and digital connectivity, to enhance economic integration. He stressed Zambia's commitment to investing in infrastructure through public-private partnerships despite facing debt challenges. He urged the AUDA-NEPAD to continue investing in innovation to deliver on its mandate effectively. President Hichilema cited examples of regional infrastructure projects in Zambia, such as the North-South corridor and Tazara Railway, to further underscore the importance of advancing the continent's infrastructure agenda. In conclusion, President Hichilema called for collective efforts to ensure a brighter future for all Africans and reiterated Zambia's commitment to the continental agenda, especially Agenda 2063.

36. His Excellency Abdelmadjid Tebboune, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, appreciated the efforts made under President El-Sisi's leadership and commended AUDA-NEPAD's results-based performance for 2023. He outlined Algeria's support for initiatives promoting small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and youth entrepreneurship, emphasising their importance for the Algerian youth. President Tebboune underscored the significance of economic integration in Africa and noted the need to improve infrastructure through public-private partnerships and the creation of continental development funds. He highlighted the importance of boosting production capacities, strengthening the industrial sector, and accelerating the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). President Tebboune further outlined Algeria's infrastructure investment projects, including the Trans-Saharan Route, road projects connecting Algeria with neighbouring countries, optic fibre projects, and railway routes. He called for greater mobilisation of technical, human, and financial resources to implement Agenda 2063 effectively and support environmentally friendly projects for structural transformation. In his conclusion,

President Tebboune thanked President El-Sisi for his leadership and expressed hope for fruitful deliberations to advance the continent's development.

37. His Excellency Mohamed Al-Menfi, Chair of the Presidential Council of the State of Libya, extended warm commendations to President El-Sisi for his exemplary leadership of the Committee and insightful direction in shaping development priorities across the continent. He also lauded the African Union's tireless efforts in fostering cooperation among its organs and the Regional Economic Communities. The Chair expressed deep appreciation for the unwavering dedication of the CEO of AUDA-NEPAD in advancing Africa's development agenda. Emphasising the significance of evaluating the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan and crafting the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063, he stressed the need for heightened regional, continental, and global coordination. He underscored the importance of prioritising capacity building and ensuring ownership of development initiatives, focusing on empowering women and youth. During Libya's tenure as Chair of the Union of the Arab Maghreb (UMA), he pledged to prioritise initiatives aimed at fostering coordination and cooperation within the region. Recognising Africa's abundant natural resources and human capital as catalysts for economic and social progress, he urged the Committee to establish platforms to enhance public leaders' competency and transparency. The Chair concluded by reaffirming the State of Libya's unwavering commitment to implementing the programs and projects of the Agency, underscoring their dedication to advancing the collective prosperity of the African continent under his leadership as Chair of UMA.

38. Her Excellency Jessica Alupo, Vice President of the Republic of Uganda, warmly congratulated His Excellency President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi for skillfully convening the meeting. She reaffirmed Uganda's steadfast commitment to the African Union and its affiliated bodies, particularly highlighting the significance of the Development Agency. The Vice President acknowledged the commendable strides made by AUDA-NEPAD across various thematic areas, recognising the tangible impact of its programs within Uganda, notably in citizen engagement, agriculture, and nutrition. Furthermore, she praised the formation of Team Africa as a pivotal mechanism for resource mobilisation in pursuit of Agenda 2063. Vice President Alupo emphasised Uganda's active participation in evaluating the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan and its readiness to domesticate the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan, pending Assembly endorsement. Highlighting Uganda's alignment with the objectives of Energize Africa, she showcased initiatives such as the Presidential Youth Skilling Programme and a pioneering parish development model aimed at enhancing credit access for women and young entrepreneurs. Regarding infrastructure, Vice President Alupo reiterated Uganda's unwavering commitment to implementing projects outlined in the second PIDA priority action plan for 2021-2030 (PIDA PAP 2), emphasising the need to address critical issues such as financing, bureaucracy, and regulation to realise the vision of an integrated and free market fully.

39. His Excellency Alamine Ousmane Mey, Minister of Economy, Planning and Regional Development of the Republic of Cameroon, commended President El-Sisi's leadership at the helm of the Committee and expressed gratitude for the comprehensive report presented by the CEO of the Agency. Highlighting the significant progress achieved across all sectors during the first decade of Agenda 2063, he acknowledged the challenges posed by recent crises, underscoring the

imperative of strengthening institutions like AUDA-NEPAD. Minister Ousmane Mey emphasised the continued relevance of AUDA-NEPAD's design and strategy, particularly in promoting infrastructure development crucial for continental integration, trade facilitation, and industrialisation. Looking ahead to the Second-Ten Years of Agenda 2063, he stressed the need for heightened focus on infrastructure and resource mobilisation, advocating for strengthened collaboration among stakeholders and active involvement of the African Development Bank. He reiterated the pivotal role of AUDA-NEPAD in facilitating dialogue and coordination among stakeholders, concluding his remarks by affirming Cameroon's unwavering support for the Agency and welcoming progress towards establishing the Development Fund.

40. Her Excellency Oppah Muchinguri-Kashiri, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Zimbabwe, began by extending heartfelt condolences to the people of Namibia and the continent following the passing of President Dr. Hage Gottfried Geingob. She commended the Government of Egypt, led by President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, for assuming the responsibility of chairing the Committee. She reiterated Zimbabwe's unwavering commitment to its vision and aspirations. Minister Muchinguri-Kashiri also acknowledged the commendable performance of President Paul Kagame of Rwanda during the previous sessions, despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, and recognised the Agency's achievements as outlined in the CEO's report. The Minister emphasised the importance of addressing lessons learned from the conclusion of the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan towards Agenda 2063 in shaping the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan, particularly highlighting funding challenges exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and changing weather patterns. Stressing the necessity of the Development Fund to mobilise resources and enhance the credibility of the development agenda, she emphasised the significance of the footprints structure to overcome challenges hindering impact on the ground. Furthermore, Minister Muchinguri-Kashiri praised AUDA-NEPAD's support to Zimbabwe, particularly through the Genome editing programme, which has contributed to achieving food sufficiency. Regarding infrastructure development, she applauded the Agency's collaboration with development partners, the private sector, and development financing institutions, prioritising the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) for its role in integration, facilitating business, and regional connectivity. The Minister emphasised the importance of ensuring equitable benefits for all member states, in alignment with the Agency's mandate as a knowledge-sharing platform, and underscored the significance of utilising the HSGOC as a platform for critical reflection, monitoring and evaluation of progress on crucial decisions and the Agency's mandate.

41. His Excellency Tete António, Minister of External Relations of the Republic of Angola, commended the Chief Executive Officer of AUDA-NEPAD for the exceptional quality of the report presented during the session, noting its reflection of the execution and progress achieved within the framework of Agenda 2063. Minister António highlighted the significance of the decision by Member States to transform the NEPAD Secretariat into the African Union Development Agency, emphasising the importance of measuring and assessing the implementation and impact of developmental projects. He stressed the imperative of fully supporting the Agency in implementing critical projects and executing the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan. Reflecting on international bias by rating agencies, as mentioned by the Chief Executive Officer, Minister António noted Angola's progress in this area. Concerning health issues, he affirmed Angola's support for the operationalisation of the African Medicines Agency

(AMA). He proposed the assessment and presentation of Member States' contributions to the health and well-being of citizens in the next session. This, he suggested, would facilitate progress assessment and identification of bottlenecks and areas for improvement. Minister António applauded investments made and underscored the pivotal role of infrastructure in development. He endorsed South Africa's proposal for the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union to consider and include the presentation of the Report on the NEPAD PICI in the agenda of the Midyear Coordination Summit. The Minister concluded his remarks by emphasising the importance of increasing resources and providing the necessary capacity to AUDA-NEPAD to enable the Agency to fulfil its mandate effectively.

42. His Excellency the Minister of State of the Republic of Chad, commended President El-Sisi for his exceptional leadership and guidance in steering the Committee. The Minister emphasised the pivotal role of AUDA-NEPAD in addressing and surmounting the socioeconomic challenges confronting Member States. While acknowledging significant progress in infrastructure development, he highlighted the persistent deficit in necessary investments required for interconnecting countries and fostering competitive trade. Regarding education and health, the Minister noted the progress made but underscored the concerning statistic of over 260 million young people not enrolled in schools and the continent's ratio of 2 healthcare workers per 1000 patients. He stressed the imperative of improving these outcomes. Specifically, he outlined Chad's commitment to prioritising development through its newly formulated National Development Plan once the transition period concludes. Key areas of focus within the plan include youth and women empowerment, rural development, energy, education, technology, and infrastructure. Highlighting the unique challenges posed by conflicts in neighbouring countries, he applauded the launch of the Triple Nexus Programme by the Agency, emphasising the essential integration of humanitarian response with security and development efforts. The Minister recognised the Agency's partnership with Chad in developing the Mining Strategy, MSME program, infrastructure development plans, and technical support to the Ministry of Economy and Planning. He urged AUDA-NEPAD to intensify its efforts in supporting Member States undergoing economic transitions through enhanced technical assistance. Furthermore, in alignment with the AU Theme of the Year for 2024, he emphasised the Agency's crucial role in supporting programs related to education, science, technology, and innovation. Concluding his remarks, he underscored the importance of continued support for the Agency's endeavours.

CLOSING SESSION

43. At the start of the closing session, H.E. President El-Sisi announced that the 42nd Session of the AUDA-NEPAD HSGOC is scheduled for February 2025, on the margins of the 38th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union.

44. In his closing remarks, H. E. President El-Sisi thanked the members of the AUDA-NEPAD HSGOC for their participation and valuable contributions, which will be reflected in the report to be submitted for adoption to the 37th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, taking place from 17-18 February 2024.

DRAFT

DECISION ON THE REPORT OF H.E. ABDEL FATTAH EL-SISI, PRESIDENT OF THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE AUDA-NEPAD HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT ORIENTATION COMMITTEE (HSGOC)

The Assembly:

1. **TAKES NOTE WITH APPRECIATION** of the report of H.E. Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt and Chairperson of the Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC) of the African Union Development Agency - New Partnership for Africa's Development (AUDA-NEPAD);
2. **ENDORSES** the conclusions and recommendations of the 41st Session of the AUDA-NEPAD HSGOC, held on 13 of February 2024, in line with AU rules and procedures;
3. **RECALLS** the conclusions and recommendations of the 40th Session of the AUDA-NEPAD HSGOC, held on 15 February 2023; and **NOTES** the progress AUDA-NEPAD has made in addressing them;
4. **REITERATES** the critical role played by the HSGOC in the provision of political leadership and strategic guidance to AUDA-NEPAD and its programmes;
5. **REAFFIRMS** the continued significance and relevance of AUDA-NEPAD as the African Union implementation Agency that is mandated to coordinate development programs, execute priority projects, promote regional integration towards the accelerated realisation of Agenda 2063 as well as to strengthen the capacity of Member States and regional bodies through, *inter-alia*, knowledge-based advisory support, undertaking full range of resource mobilisation, and serving as Africa's technical interface with all development stakeholders and partners;
6. **APPLAUDS** AUDA-NEPAD and African Union Commission (AUC) for leading and delivering the evaluation report of the First Decade of the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the subsequent formulation of the Second Ten Year Implementation Plan (STYIP) and **REQUESTS** AUDA-NEPAD and AUC to finalize all outstanding elements of the STYIP and ensure its successful adoption at the 37th AU Assembly in February 2024;
7. **DIRECTS** AUDA-NEPAD, through increased financial support from Member States, to strengthen the capacities and capabilities of RECs and Member States in data and statistics, to coordinate, domesticate, monitor, and report on the execution of Agenda 2063 Second Ten Year Implementation Plan;
8. **RECALLS** Decision EX.CL/Dec.1143-1167(XL) taken by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, requesting AUDA-NEPAD to accelerate the process of the establishment of a Development Fund; **COMMENDS** the ongoing efforts of AUDA-NEPAD in preparing a feasibility study of the Fund that addresses the financial, governance architecture and programmatic aspects of the proposed Fund, to be presented to the AUDA-NEPAD Steering

Committee, AU Policy Organs and the Committee of Fifteen Ministers of Finance (F15) at an Extraordinary Session of the AUDA-NEPAD Steering C

9. **ACKNOWLEDGS** the critical challenges related to the sustained funding of AUDA-NEPAD and in this regard **RECOGNISES** the pressing need for Member States to increase their financial contributions to the development efforts in the Continent, including through predictable funding for the optimal functioning of AUDA-NEPAD;
10. **RECALLS** Decisions Assembly/AU/Dec 6-32 (II) Maputo, Declaration 8, Assembly/AU/Dec 268-288 (XIV) 2010, Ethiopia, and Ext/Assembly/AU/Dec.1-4(XI), 2018, that the AUDA-NEPAD collects voluntary contributions from Member States; **APPLAUDS** Member States who are providing voluntary contributions in support of the AUDA-NEPAD and **URGES ALL** Member States to adhere to these Decisions;
11. **RECALLS** Decision Assembly/AU/Dec. 283 (VIV) on the need for AUDA-NEPAD, as the technical body of the African Union, to have the required flexibility and agility to carry out its mandate. **TAKES NOTES** of the budgetary and recruitment constraints placed on AUDA-NEPAD and **CALLS UPON** the PRC for continued flexibility relative to budget ceiling and recruitment to enable the Agency to attract highly qualified individuals and deliver on its mandate;
12. **RECALLS FURTHER** Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.1057(XXXV) of July 2019, which adopted the new proposed structure of AUDA-NEPAD to be implemented over a period of three years; as well as Executive Council Decision EX.CL/ Dec.1217-1232(XLIII) of July 2023 which approved the reorganisation of AUDA-NEPAD's approved structure. While **WELCOMING** the progress of AUDA-NEPAD in implementing the reorganisation, pertaining to only 33% of approved staff capacity; **NOTES WITH CONCERN** the budgetary constraints impeding the full implementation of the above Decision; and **URGES** Member States to prioritize the financial resourcing of already approved 100% staff capacity of the agency;
13. **RECALLS** Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.852 (XXXVI) of February 2023 which requested AUDA-NEPAD to explore with Member States the possibility of expanding its national and regional presence to accelerate the delivery of priority programmes of Agenda 2063; and in this regard **WELCOMES** the draft proposal for the establishment of such footprints to deliver on priority projects and realise Agenda 2063; and **LOOKS FORWARD** to its presentation to the AUDA-NEPAD Steering Committee and the Committee of Fifteen Ministers of Finance (F15) at an Extraordinary Session of the AUDA-NEPAD Steering Committee to be held in the first half of 2024;
14. **APPRECIATES** the quality of AUDA-NEPAD programmatic outputs, under the newly established Directorates namely Agriculture, Food Security & Environmental Sustainability; Infrastructure, Trade & Industry; Human Capital & Institutional Development; Strategic Planning, Resource Mobilization &

Partnerships; Knowledge Management and Monitoring & Evaluation; and Operations; as well as the Office of Science, Technology & Innovation;

15. **TAKES NOTE WITH APPRECIATION** of the Report by H.E. Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt and the Chairperson of the AUDA-NEPAD HSGOC, presented and adopted at the 5th Mid-Year Coordination Meeting (Nairobi; 16 July 2023) on “AUDA- NEPAD Success Story in the Consolidation Of Continental and Regional Integration and Achieving Agenda 2063 in cooperation with RECs”; and **URGES** AUDA-NEPAD to build on these gains through continued collaboration with RECs in advancing Agenda 2063;
16. **APPLAUDS** AUDA-NEPAD for conceptualizing and developing the “**Africa Team Resource Mobilization Initiative**” wherein African Union (AU) entities and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) “deliver as one”, to unify and consolidate resource mobilisation efforts across the continent and better support the implementation of regional and national priority programs aimed at fulfilling the goals and aspirations of agenda 2063 second ten-year implementation plan; and **CALLS UPON** AUDA-NEPAD to ensure that all AU entities are part of this initiative;
17. **DECIDES** that the draft Presidential Infrastructure Championship Initiative (PICI) Progress Report be deferred to the 6th African Union Mid-Year Coordination Meeting (MYCM) in July 2024 and in that regard **WELCOMES** the intention of H.E Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa in his capacity as PICI Champion, to convene a virtual meeting of all 12-PICI Heads of State and Government, prior to the MYCM, to present the revised draft PICI Progress Report, for endorsement. **PROPOSES** that the AUDA-NEPAD HSGOC considers the draft PICI Progress Report. **REQUESTS** that the 37th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly, taking place in Addis Ababa on 17 and 18 February 2024, authorizes the 6th AU MYCM to consider and adopt the PICI Progress Report;
18. **APPLAUDS** AUDA-NEPAD on the launch of 10-Year Implementation Report of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA); and **RECOGNISES** the PIDA achievements throughout the continent over the past decade;
19. **ACKNOWLEDGES** the role played by AUDA-NEPAD in managing information on infrastructure projects across the continent through the Africa Infrastructure Database and **REQUESTS** AUDA-NEPAD to build the capacities of national and regional institutions for the collection of relevant data; as well as to build the adequate infrastructure, systems and processes for systematic collection and analysis of data;
20. **REQUESTS FURTHER** AUDA-NEPAD to establish a coordination platform for infrastructure development and financing to ensure alignment of partners program and funding priorities with PIDA's objectives and **CALLS** Member States to mainstream PIDA PAP 2 projects into National Development Plans to ensure that these projects benefit from national budgeting arrangements;

21. **ENCOURAGES** Member States to work with AUDA-NEPAD to build additional capacity at the country level, ensure that Artificial Intelligence (AI) becomes an integral part of country programmes and create AI national agencies to optimize utilisation of AI and ensure security and safety (Responsible AI); and **DIRECTS** the AUDA-NEPAD and AUC to expedite the development of the AI continental strategy framework and Plan of Action considering the fast pace at which the technology is growing;
22. **TAKES NOTE** of the decision of the 4th Specialized Technical Committee of the Ministers of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation, which called for the revamp of TVET systems on the continent to boost employability, inclusiveness, competitiveness, and socio-economic growth; and in this regard **APPLAUDS** AUDA-NEPAD for the launch of the WorldSkills Africa Desk and called for its full establishment at AUDA-NEPAD. **URGES** Member States to support the TVET initiative which is one of the flagship initiatives selected as part of the commemoration of the African Union theme of the Year on education. **FURTHER CALLS** upon Member States to support the Government of Zambia, the host of the next WorldSkills Africa Competition in Livingstone in 2025 (WSZML2025).
23. **COMMENDS** the remarkable progress made under the 10-year implementation plan towards the elimination of HIV/AIDS on the continent, the dedication and collaborative efforts of key partners, such as PEPFAR, who have played a pivotal role in advancing the AIDS response in Africa; **RECALLING** AU Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.852(XXXVI), which affirmed the Assembly's commitment to the Abuja Declaration's 15% target for domestic health financing and requested the AUC, AUDA-NEPAD and Africa CDC to develop a fully costed roadmap to 2030 that will sustain the AIDS Response, Ensuring Systems and Health Security strengthening for the development of Africa and decided to hold an Extra Ordinary Session of the Assembly as soon as possible on Ending AIDS by 2030 and addressing Preventable Maternal Deaths, Communicable and Non- Communicable Diseases endemic to the continent; **ENCOURAGES** the continued support of PEPFAR in deploying essential measures towards sustaining the AIDS response and ultimately ending HIV by 2030; and **CALLS UPON** AU Member States continued political commitment by supporting the reauthorization of the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and ensuring the replenishment of PEPFAR funding for Africa;
24. **ACKNOWLEDGES** progress in operationalizing the African Medicines Agency (AMA) and **URGES** AUDA-NEPAD, AUC and CDC to prioritize its operationalization, leveraging on the African Medicines Regulatory Harmonisation (AMRH). **REQUESTS** AUDA-NEPAD to develop a technical support framework for AMA in alignment with AMRH, AU Smart Safety Surveillance (AU-3S) and Africa Integrated Vector Management (IVM) programs;

25. **WELCOMES** the establishment of the AUDA-NEPAD Center of Excellence on Climate Resilience and Adaptation in Cairo, Egypt. **LOOKS FORWARD** to AUDA-NEPAD's support in operationalizing the center and calls for Member States and development partners to provide technical and financial support;
26. **WELCOMES** AUDA-NEPAD's Report on Climate finance and Carbon Markets in Africa. **DIRECTS** AUDA-NEPAD to develop the "African Gold Standard on Carbon Credit" in collaboration with member states, AUC and partners, mobilizing resources for its effective implementation;
27. **REQUESTS** AUDA-NEPAD to develop a comprehensive Continental Environmental Sustainability, Climate Change, and Blue Economy Program to coordinate activities effectively;
28. **ACKNOWLEDGES** the critical role of agriculture and food systems transformation in sustainable development. **COMMENDS** AUDA-NEPAD's support to Member states and **directs** it, in collaboration with the AUC, to develop a Post-Malabo Framework, prioritizing inclusivity, innovative technologies, climate resilience, gender and youth inclusion, and smallholder empowerment. **REQUESTS** collaboration with partners in mobilizing resources for the framework's design and implementation;
29. **WELCOMES** UNFCCC COP 28 decisions on loss and damage due to climate change. Recognizes Africa's vulnerability and emphasizes disaster risk management and financing initiatives. **DIRECTS** AUDA-NEPAD to collaborate with ARC and WFP to create a continental platform for stakeholders in disaster risk management and to scale up initiatives across Africa with members and partners;
30. **APPLAUDS** the role that AUDA-NEPAD is exerting in facilitating the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, in coordination with the AfCFTA Secretariat, and in line with the African Union theme of the year for 2023;
31. **WELCOMES** the decision of the New Delhi 2023 G20 Leaders' Summit to make the African Union a permanent member of the G20 and **RECALLING** AUDA-NEPAD's longstanding constructive involvement with the G20, **REQUESTS** that AUDA-NEPAD be part of the official AU delegation to the G20 summits;
32. **COMMENDS** the continued exceptional quality of AUDA-NEPAD technical output under the leadership of CEO Nardos Bekele-Thomas;
33. **CONGRATULATES** H.E. Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, for his visionary leadership of the AUDA-NEPAD (HSGOC) during the first year of Chairmanship of the Committee;
34. **RECALLS** that the membership of the AUDA-NEPAD HSGOC for the period February 2023 to February 2025 is as follows:

Central Region	Eastern Region	Northern Region	Southern Region	Western Region
1. Cameroon	6. Ethiopia	11. Algeria*	16. Lesotho	21. Cote d'Ivoire
2. DRC	7. Kenya	12. Egypt*	17. Malawi	22. Ghana
3. Central Africa	8. Rwanda	13.	18. South Africa*	23. Guinea Bissau
4. Equatorial Guinea	9. Uganda	14.	19. Zambia	24. Nigeria*
5. Gabon	10. Tanzania	15.	20. Zimbabwe	25. Senegal*

* non-rotating Initiating Members

EIGHT (8) HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT CHAIRING THE REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES	
26.	ECOWAS
27.	ECCAS
28.	IGAD
29.	UMA
30.	COMESA
31.	SADC
32.	EAC
33.	CENSAD

- 35. FURTHER RECALLS** that as per the AUDA-NEPAD Rules of Procedures and based on regional consultations, the four (4) Vice-Chairpersons of the AUDA-NEPAD HSGOC for the period February 2023-February 2025 are as follows:
- First Vice – Central Region: vacant.
 - Second Chairperson –Southern Region: The Republic of South Africa.
 - Third Vice – Western Region: vacant.
 - Fourth Vice/Rapporteur – Eastern Region: The Republic of Rwanda (as outgoing AUDA-NEPAD HSGCO Chairperson).
- 36.** In line with the Rules and Procedures, **URGES** the Central and Western regions to conclude their consultations and elect their representatives of the Bureau of HSGOC.

AFRICAN UNION UNION AFRICAINE

African Union Common Repository

<http://archives.au.int>

Organs

Assembly Collection

2024-02-17

Report of the 41st Session of the AUDA-NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC)

African Union

African Union

<https://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/10567>

Downloaded from African Union Common Repository