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**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISION
ASSEMBLY/AU/Dec.354(XVI) ON THE ROADMAP IN
PREPARATION OF THE HOSTING OF THE
GLOBAL AFRICAN DIASPORA SUMMIT**

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DIASPORA SUMMIT**

1. Council will recall that at its 16th Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 30-31 January 2011, the Assembly of the Union adopted Assembly/AU15(XVI)Add.5 on the Global African Diaspora Summit Consultative Process. The Decision approved a roadmap towards the preparation of the African Global Diaspora Summit, including its elements. It requested the Government of South Africa and the Commission to continue their close collaboration in order to implement the roadmap and facilitate the successful preparation and conduct of the Global African Diaspora Summit. It also welcomed the decision of the Commission, in consultation with the Republic of South Africa, as a first step to undertake to convene the African Diaspora Technical Committee Meeting to be hosted by South Africa in February 2011 and urged the PRC, Member States, leaders of the Caribbean Community, South America, partners and the African Diaspora population to support these efforts. Finally, the Assembly decided that this issue should remain a standing agenda for the Summit meetings to enable the Commission and the Republic of South Africa to submit timely reports on the progress towards the hosting of the global African Diaspora Summit and beyond.

2. Since that Decision was taken in January 2011, the Commission and the Government of South Africa have continued the process of their strong and close collaboration assiduously in order to carry out the obligations imposed by the Assembly and to meet the objectives, targets and timelines as approved within the Roadmap. This report is intended to provide the Assembly with appropriate information about measures and efforts that have been pursued to implement its directive and obtain a renewal of the mandate in the preparation, planning and conduct of the Global African Diaspora Summit scheduled to be held in the second half of 2012.

The Roadmap and its Elements

3. Within the period under consideration, the Roadmap approved by the Assembly included five basic elements as follows : a) a preparatory meeting for the Technical Experts Committee meeting in the first week of February 2011 followed by b) the Technical Experts Committee meeting in the 3rd week of February 2011 c) Strengthening and consolidating the base created by Regional Consultative Conferences through continued consultations that can enable the creation of Regional Diaspora Network d) building synergies and complementarities with National Diaspora programmes e) continuous and sustained outreach programme for the diverse group of Diaspora communities all over the world.

The Preparatory Consultation for the Technical Committee Meeting

4. The implementation process commenced on the margins of the Summit itself. Soon after the Assembly decision was taken, representatives of the Commission and the

Government of South Africa met in Addis Ababa to conclude arrangements for the preparatory meeting that was held in South Africa soon after from 7-8 February 2011 in Pretoria, South Africa. The objectives of the meeting were four-fold : a) to broaden in-depth discussions on thematic areas highlighted in the course of the Ministerial meeting of 2007 so that the Technical Committee meeting can develop them further as a framework of action; b) to assess and appraise the scope and depth of the work done so far in the lead up to the postponed Summit on the Diaspora with a view to proposing and identifying next steps within the process of ensuing discussions; c) to explore strategies and mechanisms that would foster partnership between the African Diaspora and AU structures in the afore-going contexts and; d) to determine the agenda and work programme that the Technical Committee meeting will require to merge the various elements into a comprehensive blueprint that can set the agenda for a follow-up Ministerial meeting; e) planning and preparation for the Technical Committee meeting including a determination of the scope, range and number of invitees, themes, the format and structure of the meeting as well as the obligations and financial arrangements that will support it; f) finally, there was the need to begin the process of forward planning for the follow-up of the Technical Committee meeting including agreement on the broad outline for a precise host agreement for the Diaspora Summit. The meeting succeeded in meeting these objectives and this enabled the Technical Committee meeting to be held precisely on schedule as contained in the Roadmap.

The Technical Committee Meeting, Pretoria, South Africa, 21-22 February 2011

5. The Technical Committee meeting was held in Pretoria, South Africa from 21-22 February 2011. As agreed at the Preparatory meeting, the Technical meeting had four precise goals. First, it examined, reviewed and updated the Ministerial Outcome Documents prepared in 2007, with emphasis on seeking to remove bracketed areas in which consensus or agreements could not be reached previously. Second, it considered additional elements that could provide new inputs in view of the submissions of the Caribbean leaders to the AU Summit at its 15th Ordinary Session in Kampala, Uganda in July 2010. It also considered the related discussions of Council and Assembly on the Diaspora issue and wider developments that have arisen in the context of the AU's Initiative since the Ministerial meeting on the African Diaspora held in Johannesburg, South Africa in November 2007. Third, it identified priority areas of intervention for action to implement the draft plan of action contained in the Ministerial Outcome document of 2007. Fourth, the meeting sought to develop proposals for "bankable projects" in the thematic areas of political, economic and social co-operation that can be translated into concrete or programmatic deliverables through appropriate and effective implementation plans or framework of action.

Outcomes and Achievements of the Technical Meeting

6. The Technical Committee meeting was the most significant element of the Roadmap. It was held on schedule and accomplished its set objectives and much more besides. A full report of the meeting is provided as an attachment to provide more details. The Technical Meeting was attended by about 100 participants comprising a mix of delegates and technical experts from Diaspora communities in Europe, the Caribbean

Community, South and North America, the Middle-East and the Gulf Region as well as officials from the CARICOM, the World Bank, Member States of the African Union covering the five main regions of the continent and representatives of civil society spread across those regions. The meeting was organized by representatives of the South African Government, particularly its Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) and the African Union Commission as directed by the Assembly Decision.

7. The Technical meeting recorded significant achievements. First, it reenergized the tempo of the Diaspora program by reviving and accelerating the momentum that was stalled by the postponement of the Diaspora Summit in 2007. Second, it was on schedule in accordance with the precise timing of the Roadmap approved by the collective African leadership and thus established the pace for the achievement of other benchmarks and indicators. Third, the meeting afforded an important opportunity for the global engagement of Africans to refine, rebuild and update the architecture of the global African family. In this context, the agenda was extensive and all embracing, providing the essential context for improving and elaborating the Ministerial Outcome Document of 2007 in preparation for the Global African Diaspora Summit in 2012. Fourth and finally, the Technical Experts meeting added that extra-dimension of focusing on key platforms of intervention in the various sectors as well as mechanisms that can be used to implement frameworks of action in such intervention platforms. The design was to tease out 'bankable' projects that could be accompanied by feasibility studies that would enable the Diaspora programme to support processes of selecting projects that would help the AU to extend the benefits of the Diaspora programme to its wider African population within and outside the continent.

Strengthening the Consultative Base of RCCs to enable Creation of Regional Networks

8. Amidst this, work continues apace on strengthening the base of Diaspora consultative frameworks to support the process of organization of regional networks as interlocutors of the AU. Within this context, the Commission through CIDO and the Mission in New York organized a follow-up meeting in April 2011 in New York with the African Diaspora Task Team set up in October 2010 as a result of a previous New York Forum of consultation with Diaspora Groups in that area. The organization of the meeting on the margins of the official visit of the AU Commission to the US was intended to take advantage of the presence of key officials within that environ and to save costs. This Consultative forum enabled the Commission to brief Diaspora Groups on the outcome and decision of the Summit, the Roadmap and its elements and the holding of the Technical Workshop in South Africa in late February 2011. In its own report, the Task Team also put forward a model for the creation of a Diaspora database for Groups in the US which could be of wider application. The Commission hopes to support a pilot endeavour of this project which could then be considered as one of the alternatives to be presented and submitted to a workshop on criteria of Diaspora participation in AU processes and structures that is being planned for the third or fourth quarter of the year in conformity with the approved Roadmap.

9. The processes of strengthening Diaspora consultative base is a key component of the Roadmap and the Commission and the Government of South Africa are assigning key priority to this aspect in the lead up to the Diaspora Summit. Key new platforms will be developed while existing platforms will be strengthened. A key feature of this programme is the holding of a new Regional Consultative Conference in the Middle-East and Gulf Region.

Building Synergies and Complementarities between Continental and National Programmes

10. The building of synergies between the continental and national programs is another important element of the roadmap to which primary importance is attached. Planning has commenced for a workshop or Conference to bring together all Diaspora Ministries and desks of Member States of the Union to synthesize programmes and objectives in order to ensure interconnectivity. This programme is being developed in close association with relevant AU partners such as International Organization for Migration (IOM), Diaspora Groups and Member States. Member States of the Union are pivotal elements in this scheme and there is a need for close interaction within them to enable the attainment of the AU objectives in this sphere. The Decision of the Summit in this regard can provide further impetus for this activity.

Outreach Programme

11. A continuous outreach programme accompanies each and all of the endeavours and the success of the efforts deployed so far can easily be measured by the degree of interests that the programme is attracting in the wider international environment among key international actors in the US, Europe, China, and India, amongst others. Much more is required to be done however and it needs resource support. Also, external interests and awareness are not necessarily a positive thing because we must resist each and any effort of partners or outside bodies to organize our Diaspora for us. These are Trojan gifts because an outsider, however, well-intentioned, should not be the convener of a family meeting. The rebuilding of the Global African family demands authenticity.

Conclusion: Way Forward and Next Steps

12. In conclusion, both the Commission and the Government of South African with the support of PRC and Member States of the Union and the Diaspora community in particular and partners and other Groups in general have devoted considerable attention to implementing the letter and spirit of the Assembly Decision on the Diaspora with significant success. A substantial aspect of the Roadmap has thus been implemented in a short period of about five months. Much more remains to be done however in the lead up to the Diaspora Summit in 2012. These include strengthening the platforms that have already been nurtured, creating new ones and taking appropriate steps as highlighted in the Roadmap and on consequential and related aspects that may arise or have arisen on the process of the implementation schedule. The next step of most critical importance is the organization of a Ministerial meeting to review, appraise and

approve, as the case may be, the outcome of the Technical Meeting in order to set the pace for the conduct of the Global African Diaspora Summit. Consultations are being held in this regard and one key proposal that is being considered is whether this could be done in September 2011 on the margins of the UN General Assembly to take advantage of the concentration of Ministers at a decisive point in time in a contiguous location.

2011

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