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**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**  
**Eighth Ordinary Session**  
**16 – 21 January 2006**  
**Khartoum, SUDAN**

EX.CL/243 (VIII) Add.12

**REPORT ON THE 23<sup>RD</sup> AFRICA-FRANCE SUMMIT OF**  
**HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

**(Item proposed by the Republic of Mali)**

**FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE TWENTY-THIRD ASSEMBLY OF HEADS  
OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF AFRICA AND FRANCE**  
**(Item proposed by the Republic of Mali)**

1. The Twenty-third Assembly of Heads of State and Government of Africa and France was held at the International Conference Centre of Bamako on 3 and 4 December 2005, at the invitation of His Excellency Mr. Amadou Toumani Touré, President of the Republic of Mali.
2. Fifty-one African States attended the Conference with France. Twenty-five of the States were represented by their Heads of State. The Conference, applauded, in particular, the presence of the newly elected President of Liberia, Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Searleaf, first woman Head of State in Africa. Somalia, which was attending the Africa-France Summit for the first time, was represented by its Prime Minister. The United Nations, the African Union, the European Union and other regional and international organizations were also represented at the Conference.
3. The Conference, which was preceded by the preparatory Ministerial Conference held in Bamako on 1 December 2005, had as its main theme, "The African Youth: Vitality, creativity and aspirations". At the initiative of President Amadou Toumani Touré of Mali, a youth forum was held on 8 and 9 November 2005 in Bamako, bringing together young people from the five regions of Africa to express their ambitions and expectations to the Heads of State.
4. The opening ceremony of the twenty-third Africa-France Summit was marked by:
  - a) The welcome address by His Excellency, Mr. Amadou Toumani Touré, President of Mali;
  - b) The statement by His Excellency, Al Hadji Omar Bongo Ondimba, President of the Republic of Gabon, on behalf of African Heads of State and Government;
  - c) The statement by His Excellency, Mr. Jacques Chirac, President of the Republic of France;
  - d) The statement of the African Youths delivered by Mrs. Tamoifo Nkom Marie in the company of a group of youths.
5. After recalling that the African youths account for two thirds of the Continent's population, the Heads of State stressed the urgent need to restore the hopes and confidence of these youths and to define conditions that would enable them to fully play their role in the globalizing world at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
6. At the end of their discussions on the concerns and aspirations of the youths, focusing on the themes listed below, the Heads of State and Government drew the following conclusions:

**7. Socio-political and economic integration of youths in the process of African development:**

The Conference underscored the need to involve the youths in the making of decisions concerning them and having an impact on their future. It also called for a sense of responsibility and respect for ethical values.

It stressed the urgent need to mobilize more financial resources for the economic integration of the youths.

In this regard, the Conference suggested that a Euro-African Investment fund should be set up for the youths and that France should continue with its advocacy to secure the agreement of other partners for the solidarity levy on air tickets .

The Conference also wished that the Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization scheduled to take place in Hong Kong would take Africa's development priorities into consideration during the trade negotiations. In this connection, it adopted the Communiqué annexed to the present document.

**8. Training and employment:**

The Conference stressed the importance of basic education and vocational training as a means of securing jobs, including in the rural areas, and underscored the need to tailor the educational systems and training to the realities and needs of modernization of African countries and of globalization.

It pointed out that peace, good governance and equity were necessary conditions for employment-generating economic development.

**9. Migration as a factor of integration:**

The Conference discussed the issue of illegal immigration. This phenomenon is closely linked to the difficult economic situation of African countries and can only be solved by developing these countries through increased assistance from industrialized countries and new arrangements on debt.

Acknowledging that youth migration within or outside the continent is favourable to the economic growth and development of the host country, the Conference called upon States to seize the opportunity to conclude agreements on such matters as border management, residence conditions and work permits.

**10. The return of skilled Africans**

As the quality of Africans abroad and their huge revenues are an asset to the continent's development, the Conference pointed out that these could be put to the continent's benefit and, consequently, that both the home and the host countries should work together to harness the technical and financial capacities of Africans abroad for development projects in their countries of origin (co-development) and curtail emigration by improving training at home. It suggested that a Franco-African working group should be set up to study the phenomenon and propose solutions.

**11. African youths and the great health challenges:**

The Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their commitment to intensify the fight against HIV/AIDS by improving national health systems in order to increase the access of young people to emergency healthcare and community health services.

They made an urgent appeal to the international community to mobilize more funds in support of national and regional efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases that are a great threat to young people.

**12. Vitality and creativity of African youths:**

The Conference stressed the need to use NICT to promote the employment of young people, trade and business opportunities and education and development, including in the rural areas.

It pointed to the challenges and opportunities that the information revolution puts before the youths as shown by the recent Summit on the Information Society held in Tunis.

**13. The role of African youths in promoting Africa's image, cultural diversity, art and culture:**

The Conference said that African youths should be at the forefront in promoting the continent's image and fighting for the acceptance of cultural diversity necessary for improved understanding among the people and, therefore, for harmonious development and lasting peace.

The Conference praised the adoption, on 20 October 2005, by the 33<sup>rd</sup> General Conference of UNESCO, of the Convention on the protection and promotion of cultural diversity aimed at promoting national cultures. It called upon States to ratify it.

14. With regard to Côte d'Ivoire, the Conference stressed the urgent need to preserve the opportunities for reconciliation, by implementing the provisions of Resolution 1633 by quickly appointing a Prime Minister and specifying his/her powers.

The Conference also recalled the need to hold free and fair elections within the stipulated time.

15. Presidents Amadou Toumani Touré and Jacques Chirac, responded, on behalf of their respective parties, to the statement of the African youths delivered on their behalf by Mrs. Marie Tamoifo Nkom.

**Bamako, 4 December 2005**

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**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**  
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EX.CL/243 (VIII) Add.12  
Annex

**REPORT ON THE 23<sup>RD</sup> AFRICA-FRANCE SUMMIT OF**  
**HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**  
**(BAMAKO, 3- 4 DECEMBER 2005)**

*(Item Proposed by the Republic of Mali)*

**REPORT ON THE 23<sup>RD</sup> AFRICA-FRANCE SUMMIT OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

Mali hosted the 23<sup>rd</sup> Africa-France Summit from 3 to 4 December 2005, focusing on the theme: «**The African Youth: Vitality, creativity and aspirations**».

This Conference was attended by 53 African States and France. Twenty-five of the African States were represented by Heads of State and Government. The United Nations, the African Union, the European Union and other regional and international organizations were also represented.

Prior to the Conference, a Youth Forum was held in Bamako, Mali from 8 to 8 November 2005.

This Forum, which brought together the representatives of African youth and the Malian Diaspora in France, provided an opportunity for the youth to discuss their concerns and expectations, and to prepare a statement addressed to the Heads of State and Government.

In this Statement, the African youth require from African leaders, the establishment of clear and operational development policies taking their concerns into consideration.

To this end, they recommend, among other things:

- better representation of youths in all decision-making organs at local, national and international levels;
- strengthening national employment promotion programmes;
- easing conditions for access by youths to national and international financing;
- putting in place an African and Diaspora Youth Council;
- the personal commitment of Heads of State in combating the AIDS pandemic;
- free and universal access for people living with HIV/AIDS to antiretroviral drugs;
- development of African national resources to curb the brain drain phenomenon;
- increasing cultural exchange and development actions for better understanding of migration as a factor of development.

The African Youth also expressed their readiness to support the Heads of State in their efforts to rid Africa of some ills such as internecine conflicts, the phenomenon of child soldiers and genocides.

The preparatory Ministerial Conference was held on 1 December 2005 and was jointly chaired by the Malian Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, H.E. Moctar OUANE and his French counterpart, H.E. Philippe DOUSTE-BLAZY. It gave the Foreign Affairs Ministers an opportunity to exchange views on the principal theme and sub-themes proposed for discussions as well as co-development related issues. The conclusions of this meeting were submitted for the approval of the Heads of State and Government.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Africa-France Conference opened on 3 December 2005, and was marked by the intervention of the President of the Republic of Mali, H.E. Mr. Amadou Toumani TOURE, who welcomed the guests.

In response, the President of the Republic of Gabon, H.E. El Hadj Omar BONGO ONDIMBA, on behalf of his peers, thanked the Government and people of Mali for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to them.

In his statement, the President of France, H.E. Mr. Jacques CHIRAC, co-Chair of the Conference, highlighted his vision of Franco-African relations.

Finally, Mrs. Tamoifo Nkom Marie, in her capacity as representative of the African Youth, delivered the African Youth Statement to the Heads of State and Government.

All the statements underscored the urgent need to restore the hope and confidence of the youth, and to define conditions that would enable them to fully play an important role in the globalized world, at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

During the deliberations, which were co-chaired by Presidents Amadou Toumani TOURE and Jacques CHIRAC, the Heads of State and Government considered the theme of the Conference, namely, «**The African Youth: Vitality, creativity and aspirations**». This theme was divided into sub-themes presented by the Heads of State designated to do so.

These presentations gave rise to exchanges of views, the conclusions of which are contained in a final document.

The papers focused on the following sub-themes:

- **Socio-political and economic integration of youths in the African development process**, presented by President El Hadj Omar BONGO ONDIMBA of Gabon.

The Conference underscored the need to involve the youths in mechanisms for making decisions concerning them and stressed the urgent need to mobilize more financial resources for the economic integration of the youths.

In this regard, it was suggested that Euro-African Investment Fund should be set up for youths and that France should continue with its advocacy to secure the agreement of other partners for the solidarity levy on air tickets.

- **Training and Employment**, presented by H.E. Mohamed BEDJAOU, Senior Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria, representative of President Abdelaziz BOUTEFLIKA;

The Conference stressed the pivotal role of peace, stability and good governance and the need to promote viable educational systems and vocational training programmes.

- **Vitality and creativity of African Youths**, presented by H.E. Armando Emilio GUEBUZA, President of the Republic of Mozambique.

The Conference stressed the need to use NICT to promote the employment of young people, trade and business opportunities, education and development, including in the rural areas.

- **Migration as a factor of integration**, presented by H.E. Abdoulaye WADE, President of the Republic of Senegal.

The conference acknowledged that the phenomenon of immigration is closely linked to the difficult economic situation of African countries and its solution lies in developing these countries through increased assistance from industrialized countries. It also recognized that migration promotes economic growth and development for home countries as well as the host countries.

- **African youths and the great health challenges**, presented by H.E. Amadou Toumani TOURE, President of the Republic of Mali.

The Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their commitment to intensify the fight against HIV/AIDs, malaria, tuberculosis and the other infectious diseases by improving national health systems to facilitate access of youths to emergency health care and community health services.

- **The return of skilled Africans**, presented by H.E. Jacques CHIRAC, President of the Republic of France. As the quality of Africans abroad and their huge revenues are an asset to the continent's development, the conference pointed out that home countries and host countries should work together to promote co-development to enable Africa to benefit from its diaspora's skills and savings.

- **The role of the youth** in promoting Africa's image, cultural diversity, art and culture, presented by H.E. Blaise COMPAORE, President of Burkina Faso.

The Conference recognized the vanguard role of the youth in promoting Africa's image and the fight for the acceptance of cultural diversity; it expressed satisfaction at the UNESCO General Conference's adoption, on 20 October 2005, of the Convention on the protection and promotion of cultural diversity, aimed at promoting national cultures. It called upon the States to ratify it.

The Conference also expressed the hope that the WTO Ministerial meeting in Hong Kong would take account of Africa's development priorities in the trade negotiations. It adopted a Communiqué to that end.

On the margins of the Summit, Presidents Amadou Toumani TOURE and Jacques CHIRAC received a delegation of representatives of youth organizations led by Mrs. TAMOIFO Nkom Marie, their spokesperson.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Franco-African Summit ended with a Press Conference jointly hosted by Presidents Amadou Toumani TOURE and Jacques CHIRAC.

On that occasion, the two Heads of State responded to the African youths' statement, on behalf of their colleagues.

In the paper entitled "Joint response of Mr. Jacques CHIRAC, President of the Republic of France, and Mr. Amadou Toumani TOURE, President of the Republic of Mali, to the African Youths' Statement addressed to the Heads of State", the Heads of State took note of the concerns and aspirations expressed by the African youths.

They welcomed their commitment to the political, economic and social development of the continent.

The Heads of State called on African youth within the continent and in the Diaspora to be proud of their origin and to have faith in Africa, which remains firm and steadfast despite its many travails, and manifests its creativity through its artists, sportsmen and scientists.

They affirmed their commitment to providing the essential needs of the youth and ensuring that they keep pace with modernity by providing access to the new technologies and ensuring their development.

The Heads of State further emphasised the importance of peace and stability, without which no development action can be successful. This is equally the view of the AU, which has made this a priority with the establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC). Partners of the AU,

including France, together with the UN, are also working towards this objective through peacekeeping operations and training programmes.

In the pursuit of their development objective for Africa, the Heads of State intend to speed up implementation of major regional and pan-African projects, create optimum conditions for free movement of persons and goods, and encourage the involvement of young people in urban and rural areas.

They also stated that they would work to ensure food security, and fight desertification and the disappearance of unique animal and plant species by reaffirming, supporting and defending Africa's agricultural and environmental interests at international fora.

France has pledged its support to Africa in these different areas. In this regard, it has decided to increase aid to the continent to 0.17% of its GDP by 2012 and will relax visa requirements for certain socio-professional categories of persons (business executives, students, researchers and designers) and adopt a strategy of joint development.

Finally, the Heads of State issued a pressing appeal to the youth to join efforts with them to accelerate Africa's progress towards development.

Without any doubt, the Bamako summit was a crucial turning point in the history of Africa-France Summits in that it was the very first time that the main stakeholders, in this case, the youth, were being invited to state their concerns and expectations before the policy makers.

The follow-up ministerial meeting, scheduled for 2006-2007, will be a chance to assess the recommendations of the Bamako Summit.

At the invitation of President Jacques Chirac, the next Summit will be held in France.

Finally, the Assembly took note of the offer of the Arab Republic of Egypt to host the XXVth France-Africa Summit in 2009. This candidature had been approved by the African Union at its Sirte Summit in July 2005.

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# Report on the 23rd Africa-France summit of heads of state and government (Item proposed by The Republic Of Mali)

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