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**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Tenth Ordinary Session
25 – 26 January 2007
Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA**

EX.CL/315 (X) Rev.1

**REPORT OF THE EXTRA-ORDINARY CONFERENCE OF
MINISTERS OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

INTRODUCTION

The January 2007 Summit of Heads of State and Government has been assigned the theme “Science, Technology and Research for Africa’s Development”. In preparation for this Summit, the Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology organized an Extraordinary Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology, in Cairo Egypt from the 23 to the 24 November 2006. The Ministers Conference was preceded by experts’ meeting, which took place from ~~the~~ 20 to 21 November 2006.

ISSUES DISCUSSED

The Ministers had a Report presentation made by the co-chairs of the High-level Biotechnology Panel, which the Commission set up in 2005. They then discussed the Report and the importance of biotechnology for Africa’s socio-economic development and the need to integrate it with biosafety concerns. Other issues discussed were: (1) the need to establish African Presidential Council on Science and Technology; (2) the need to establish the African Science and Innovation Facility; (3) guidelines for establishing Centers of Excellence for the implementation of the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action; (4) technology transfer and acquisition and the recommendations from the First African Union Congress for Scientists and Policymakers; (5) the need to establish a Pan-African Intellectual Property Organization; and (6) the need to involve the Diaspora and to engage the NGOs in science and technology issues.

OUTCOME OF THE MEETING

The Ministers and the Heads of Delegates adopted the report of the experts’ meeting, and the Report of the High-level African panel on modern Biotechnology report was endorsed.

The Ministers and the head of Delegates recommended the following to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union to:

1. Declare 2007 as the launching year of building constituencies and champions for science, technology and innovation in Africa;
2. Promote Africa’s Research and Development (R&D) and develop innovation strategies for wealth creation and economic development by allocating at least 1% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2010 as agreed by Khartoum Decision (EX. CL/Dec.254 (VIII)); and
3. Approve the establishment of a Pan-African Intellectual Property Organization (PAIPO).
4. Support South-South and North South cooperation in science, technology and innovation and enhance its role in international partnerships

DOCUMENTS APPENDED

The following documents are appended: to this report:

1. Report of the Extraordinary Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology;
2. Report of the meeting of the Experts and
3. The Cairo Declaration of the Extra-ordinary Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology.

EX.CL/315 (X)
Annex I

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE MINISTERS

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**EXTRAORDINARY CONFERENCE OF
MINISTERS OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY
20 – 24 NOVEMBER 2006
CAIRO, EGYPT**

EXT/AU/MIN/ST/Rpt.(II)

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE MINISTERS

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE MINISTERS

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Extraordinary Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology was held from 23 – 24 November 2006, in Cairo Egypt to discuss various recommendations and issues raised by the experts in their preceding meeting from 20 – 21 November 2006. The Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology meeting was in preparation for the January 2007 Summit of Heads of State and Government that has been assigned the theme “Science, Technology and Research for Africa’s Development”. The Heads of State and Government will have an opportunity to cast a fresh re-appraisal on the role of science and technology for Africa’s socio-economic development in view of the dynamic changes facing the continent.

II. ATTENDANCE

2. Twenty six African Union Member States attended the meeting: Algeria, Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Malawi, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

3. The CENSAD and ECCAS Regional Economic Communities (RECs) also attended.

4. The representatives of the following organizations also attended the meeting: UNECA, UNESCO, UNDP, UNCCD, UNEP, League of Arab States, World Bank, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ), World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), Institute of Research for Development, France, International Council for Science (ICSU), Harvard University, Association of Commonwealth Universities, African Development Bank (ADB), African Academy of Sciences, Pan African Postal Union (PAPU), HSD/AMCOST, Foundation For Democracy in Africa/Western Hemisphere African Diaspora Network, Group on Earth Observations, and International Institute for Sustainable Development.

III. OPENING SESSION

5. The opening of the Extraordinary Conference of the African Ministers Council on Science and Technology took place at the National Research Centre, Cairo, Egypt on the 23 November 2006, in celebration of the Centre’s 50th anniversary. The African Union and Egyptian anthems were played.

6. Professor Nagia Essayed, the African Union Commissioner for the Human Resources Science and Technology, welcomed the participants and guests. She informed the meeting that the January 2007 Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union, has been assigned the theme “Science, Technology and Research for Africa’s Development”.

7. According to Professor Essayed, the January 2007 Summit would be an opportune moment for Africa to make practical recommendations that would speedily achieve the goals and objectives of Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action. The attainment of these objectives required constant reorientation, review and monitoring of development policies and programmes to focus on long-term scientific and technological sources of economic change and growth. In this connection, the recommendations would guide the African Union and its Member States in implementing the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action. She chronicled the events that took place in preparation of the Summit.

8. The Commissioner informed the participants that the Best Scientific Innovation Prize in Africa would be launched at the next Summit. She also highlighted the achievements the Commission in the areas of ICT, Youth and Education.

Statement by Mr. Walter Erdelen, Assistant Director General for Science and Technology, UNESCO

9. The Assistant Director General for Natural Sciences thanked the Egyptian government for hosting the Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology. He applauded the African Union and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) for the efforts directed towards the implementation of the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action. He said concerted and focused efforts were required in achieving the se goals.

10. He assured the meeting that UNESCO was rallying behind the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action and was aligning its various programmes accordingly including harmonization and coordination of UNESCO's assistance. In this regard, he said UNESCO has participated in various meetings and workshops aimed to trigger the execution of the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action. Today, there exists S&T clusters for cooperation between NEPAD and the UN agencies in S&T. UNESCO was ready to collaborate with the AU in its efforts to host the January 2007 Summit.

Statement by H.E. Prof. Yaye Kene Gassama Dia, Chairperson of Ministers Conference for Science and Technology the Minister of Science and Technology, Senegal

11. In her statement, H.E. Professor Yaye Kene Gassama Dia stressed the commitment of the Heads of State in Science and Technology by choosing the theme "Science, Technology and Innovation for Africa's Socio-Development socio-economic development" for the January 2007 Summit.

12. This called for the Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology to put in place mechanisms to execute Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan at regional and national levels. The Heads of State were also requested to invest in Science and Technology by committing to it 1% GDP. It was noted that investment in Science and Technology was the way to achieve sovereignty.

13. She applauded the efforts by the African Union, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and partners towards the implementation of the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan. She called on the Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology to capitalize on this political will of our Heads of State to actualize the Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology recommendations.

Official Opening address by H.E. Hany Helal, Minister for Scientific Research and Technology of the Arab Republic of Egypt

14. The Minister welcomed the guests and extended to them greetings from the President of Egypt, H.E. Hosni Mubarak. He expressed pleasure in hosting the Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology as Egypt celebrated the 50th anniversary of its National Research Centre. He called on the guests and young scientists to tour the Centre.

15. He said that socio-economic development should be hinged on robust science and technology management with a view to achieving a knowledge-based society. This would require financial and human resources. The youth should also be encouraged to participate.

16. The Minister noted that instead of unnecessary competition, African countries needed to coordinate and establish clear objectives to drive collaborative programmes. The establishment of common Centres of Excellence would be one way to achieve this. He highlighted the challenges that Africa was currently facing such as ineffective management and governance of science and technology, establishment of research and development (R&D) based economies, and effective use and development of S&T human resources, among other things. He called on Africa to invest in science, technology, and innovation.

Overview of the Programme of the Summit By Professor Nagia Essayed, Commissioner of Human Resource, Science and Technology

17. Professor Nagia gave an overview of the tentative programme for the January 2007 Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union which will take place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

18. She said that distinguished dignitaries and scientists such as Professor Calestous Juma, the Director of UNESCO Dr. Koichiro Mastuura, H.E. President ~~Abudullah~~ Wade of the Republic of Senegal, the current chair of the Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology, and H.E. President Paul Kagame of Rwanda, would be among the key note speakers on science and technology at the Summit in January 2007.

19. Among other activities to take place during the 2007 Summit is the joint African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa exhibition by African scientists, companies, and organizations to showcase products and innovations that are making a difference in peoples lives. She requested the participants to collect information on the planned Exhibition.

Presentation by Representative of High-level African Panel on Modern Biotechnology

20. Professor Ismail Serageldin made a presentation on the findings of the High-level African Panel on Modern Biotechnology. He discussed the need for building capacities in S&T through enabling policy formulation, human resources development, and, in particular, the involvement of youth, development of institutions, establishment of public-private initiatives, and financing implementation.

21. He noted that Africa was too big to be dealt with as one entity and, as such, he proposed that biotechnology activities should proceed in the context of regional innovation communities.

22. Areas of priority in biotechnology should be linked to regional specializations such as HIV/Aids in Southern Africa; drug manufacturing in northern Africa; livestock research in eastern Africa; agricultural biotechnology in the West Africa; and biodiversity in central Africa.

23. Prof. Seragaldin said that Africa needed to immediately expand biotechnology training, and improve infrastructure to enhance opportunities for biotechnological investments.

24. He also suggested that Africa should adopt the co-evolutionary approach where biosafety goes hand in hand with the developments in biotechnology.

25. In conclusion, Professor Seragaldin recognized the great potential in supporting biotechnology research and development (R & D) and, indeed, developing African regional innovation communities and local innovation areas.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

26. The Chairperson of the Conference of the African Ministers Council on Science and Technology, Professor Gassama Dia, introduced the agenda, which was adopted without amendments.

27. Ministers and representatives introduced themselves and made opening remarks. They expressed appreciation for the invitations extended to them, and were looking forward to rewarding discussions in preparation for the January 2007 Summit.

V. PRESENTATION OF EXPERTS' REPORT

28. The Chairman the Experts Meeting, Professor Papa El Hassan Diop, presented the report of the experts and highlighted all the documents deliberated and the recommendations that emanated. The report highlighted the following key points and recommendations:

- The importance of biotechnology to Africa's socio-economic development in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);

- The need to integrate biotechnology with biosafety concerns;
- The lack of consensus on the issue of the African Presidential Council on Science and Technology and that the matter was being brought before the Ministers to decide on the way forward;
- The fact that the issue of the African Science and Innovation Facility (ASIF) was debated by the Experts, but no definitive conclusion had been reached, and now the matter was placed before the Ministers for consideration;
- That policies on technology transfer and acquisition of technological capabilities should emphasize convergence of science and technology policies with economic and industrial policies;
- The need to involve the Diaspora and to engage the NGOs in science and technology for the realisation of the African Union Vision;
- The recommendations from the First African Union Congress of Scientists and Policy Makers that sought to promote dialogue on “Science for Policy and Policy for Science”;
- The need to establish a Pan-African Intellectual Property Organization to address knowledge management;
- That Africa’s Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action would be implemented through dynamic Centres of Excellence;
- The request by The Republic of Kenya to host the next Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology 2007 in Nairobi.

VI. DISCUSSION OF THE EXPERTS REPORT

Draft Report of the High-level Biotechnology Panel and Biosafety

29. In the ensuing discussions the Ministers endorsed the strategy on High-level African Panel on Modern Biotechnology.

30. The Biotechnology Strategy was highly applauded as an African initiative to embark on biotechnology research and development (R & D) and, consequently, developing African regional innovation communities.

31. It was recommended that biosafety and biotechnology should be dealt with concurrently due to their complimentary nature.

Proposal for the formation of the Presidents' Council for S&T, (APCST)

32. The proposal for the formation of African Presidential Council for Science and Technology (APCST) was generally not agreed to.

African Strategy for Technology Transfer and Acquisition of Domestic Technological Capabilities

33. It was noted that there was need to establish collaborative programmes between advanced Member States and those still developing their programmes to encourage technology transfer amongst the African Countries.

Report of the Conferences of the Diaspora and African NGOs on the Popularization of S&T

34. It was recommended to encourage more women and youth in S&T disciplines.

35. Also noted was the role of the media and Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology was advised to engage the media in S&T popularisation.

Establishing a Pan-African Intellectual Property Organization (PAIPO)

36. The Ministers agreed on the creation of a Pan-African Intellectual Property Organization (PAIPO).

First African Union Congress of Scientists and Policy Makers

37. The Ministers discussed the scientists recommendation for greater dialogue between scientists and policy makers in order to enhance "Science for Policy and Policy for Science"

38. The Ministers agreed to create a platform for dialogue and on the proposal for the Congress of Scientists and Policy makers to be held every two years.

39. Ministers addressed the need for commitment by Member States to the Executive Council Decision that Member States should make available 1% of their GDP for S&T.

40. It was agreed that a recommendation be made to the summit that this decision be implemented by 2010.

Designing a Model for the African Science and Innovation Facility (ASIF) to Implement the Science & Technology Consolidated Plan of Action

41. Ministers opposed the creation of a new African Science and Innovation Facility (ASIF) to avoid increased running and overhead costs.

42. It was agreed that there was need to establish an S&T fund to support the implementation of the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action.

Criteria and Guidelines for Establishing African Networks of Centres of Excellence in Science and Technology

43. Ministers agreed on the criteria proposed for the establishment of Networks of Centres of Excellence towards the effective implementation of the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action.

Presentation of Draft Ministers' Declaration

44. The draft declaration was presented to the Ministers for consideration.

Discussion and adoption of the Ministers' Declaration

45. Discussion took place on various provisions of the draft declaration. There was general agreement that S&T could be harnessed to realize the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

46. The Ministers suggested a target date of 2010 for the 1% of GDP geared towards funding S&T activities.

47. The Ministers agreed on the need for the establishment of an S&T Fund.

48. The desire to promote the significance of S&T in the affairs of Member States was seen as vital especially in view of the participatory potential of women and youth.

49. The Ministers agreed to request that 2007 be marked as the beginning of a period of launching concerted efforts at building S&T constituencies.

Date and Venue of the Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology 2007

50. The meeting welcomed the offer by the Republic of Kenya to host Ministers' Conference on Science and Technology in 2007.

Closing Ceremony

51. In her closing remarks, H.E. Prof. N. Essayed, the Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology thanked The Arab Republic of Egypt and the local organizing committee for the eminent arrangements, organization, and the excellent hospitality. She also thanked the Ministers for their commitment and support towards to the development of science and technology in Africa. Furthermore, she thanked our partners who have supported us and enriched our discussions. She then thanked everyone would contributed to the success of Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology.

52. H.E. Prof. Yaye Kene Gassama Dia, Chairperson of the Ministers' Conference for Science and Technology and Minister of Science and Technology, Senegal, thanked the

hosting country and all the participants for their valuable contributions and recommendations towards the January 2007 Summit of Heads of State and Government.

53. H.E. Hany Helal, Minister for Scientific Research and Technology of the Arab Republic of Egypt closed the Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology meeting by thanking the participants for their valuable contributions that sought to address the challenges that Africa as continent was facing. He expressed great pleasure in hosting the Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology and was very pleased that the Ministers agreed on a number of recommendations to the summit. He wished every one a safe journey home.

**EX.CL.315 (X) Rev.1
Annex II**

THE CAIRO DECLARATION

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**EXTRAORDINARY CONFERENCE OF
MINISTERS OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY
23-24 NOVEMBER 2006
CAIRO, EGYPT**

EXT/AU/EXP/ST/Decl/13(II)\REV.1

THE CAIRO DECLARATION

**CAIRO DECLARATION
OF THE
EXTRAORDINARY CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY**

**Adopted on 24TH November 2006
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt**

PREAMBLE

WE, the Ministers responsible for Science and Technology meeting at the extraordinary Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology from 23-24 November 2006 in Cairo, the Arab Republic of Egypt;

Guided by the Constitutive Act and vision of the African Union (AU);

Also guided by the vision of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) making science and technology one of its major priorities;

Re-affirming that Science and Technology is the driving force for socio-economic development and enhance economic competitiveness of the African continent to assist in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);

Taking into account Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA) that was adopted at the second Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology in Dakar, Senegal 30th September 2005 and endorsed by AU Summit from 16-21 January 2006;

Recalling the decision of the 8th Ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council in Khartoum, Sudan, January 2006 calling on the AU Commission, the NEPAD Office of Science and Technology and Member States to be responsible for mobilizing financial and technical resources to implement the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action;

Taking into account the deliberations and the recommendations of civil society and Diaspora conferences and the first African Union Congress of Scientists and Policy makers held in Alexandria, Egypt from 27 - 30 October 2006;

Uplauding the decision of our Heads of State and Government to dedicate the AU Summit in January 2007 to science, technology and innovation for Africa's socio-economic development;

Noting the report of the senior officials and experts meeting held from 20-21 November 2006 in Cairo, Egypt

ENDORSEMENT

We hereby endorse the report of the High-Level African Panel on Modern Biotechnology.

COMMITMENTS

We hereby commit ourselves to:

1. **Establish** mechanisms to accelerate and monitor the implementation of the Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action;
2. **Work** together to develop a 20 year African Biotechnology Strategy with specific regional technology goals to be implemented through our Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and to develop and harmonize national and regional regulations that promote the application and safe use of modern biotechnology;
3. **Promote** Africa's Research and Development (R&D) in science and technology and develop innovation strategies for wealth creation and economic development;
4. **Encourage** effective knowledge management and better use of Intellectual Property, transfer of technology as well as South-South, North-South cooperation in science and technology;
5. **Improve** the design and develop a legal instrument for the establishment of the African Science and Innovation Fund (ASIF) as an intergovernmental mechanism to mobilize technical and financial resources for the implementation of the Consolidated Plan of Action;
6. **Maximize** the effective use of locally based scientists, including Science Academies in Africa and African scientists in the Diaspora and also facilitate the relocation of science based SMEs of the Diaspora for the development of the continent;
7. **Popularise** the importance of science and technology for the development of our countries.
8. **Promote** and facilitate greater participation of women and youth in the advancement of science and technology through networks of women, scientists and other capacity building interventions
9. **Use** common guidelines for identifying and establishing networks of centres of excellence in science and technology;

APPRECIATION

We appreciate the decision of the Government of the Republic of Kenya to host the third meeting of the Conference of Ministers of Science and Technology in 2007.

We **EXPRESS** our gratitude to H.E. PRESIDENT HOSNI MUBARAK and the People of the Arab Republic of Egypt for the warm hospitality and excellent organization of this conference.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SUMMIT

In light of these commitments, we recommend to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) to:

1. Declare 2007 as the launching year of building constituencies and champions for science, technology and innovation in Africa
2. Promote Africa's Research and Development (R&D) and develop innovation strategies for wealth creation and economic development by allocating at least 1% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of national economies by 2010 as agreed by Khartoum Decision (EX. CL/Dec.254 (VIII));
3. Approve the establishment of a Pan-African Intellectual Property Organization (PAIPO);
4. Support South-South and North South cooperation in science, technology and innovation and enhance its role in international partnerships

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