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**EX.CL/438 (XIII)  
INTRO**

**INTRODUCTORY NOTE OF THE CHAIRPERSON TO THE  
ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE COMMISSION**

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## INTRODUCTION

1. Today we are living in a multipolar world characterized by the establishment of huge sub-regional entities (EUROPEAN UNION, MERCOSUR, NAFTA, ASEAN....) and the advent of many emerging countries on the international scene. In this new international context, Africa has the means to control the mechanisms and resources needed for its growth and development and to assume responsibility for its own destiny. In this respect, our continent should, in the spirit of solidarity and unity, consolidate the progress recorded in the areas of peace, security and shared values and the rational and optimum management of all its abundant resources. It should further be endowed with the power to participate in international negotiations in order to be a credible partner calling attention in the management of global affairs. Also it should be able to inspire hope and cater for the well-being of its populations.

2. It is hardly two months since the new team you put in place last February and which I have the honour to lead assumed over power at the Commission. Obviously, this period is not enough to enable me to submit a detailed report of activities on our ambitions. However, in the following pages I hope to outline our major guidelines for the Commission at the service of our Member States, maintaining positive achievements in a spirit of institutional continuity while introducing new, realistic and pragmatic initiatives that can enable our continent to move forward towards its comprehensive development in order to put an end to its marginalization. This introductory note therefore aims to share with Member States some analyses and reflections on current issues facing our continent. It is also an introduction to the activity report of the Commission for the period January to June 2008, referenced EX.CL/438 (XIII).

3. In this general context, Peace and Security issues continue to play a primary role, but attention is also given to the significant improvements that the Commission needs to make in respect of building its human and institutional capacities. This note also highlights means identified to provide new solutions aimed at boosting economic growth and sustainable development in the continent, notably by operationalizing its field activities. Obviously issues relating to the consolidation of democracy, the promotion of the rule of law and human rights in an atmosphere of peace and security will be given pride of place.

This introductory note is therefore divided into the following four major areas:

- i) peace and security;
- ii) development problems;
- iii) shared values;
- iv) strengthening of Union institutions.

## I. CONSOLIDATION OF PEACE AND SECURITY

4. During the last six months, the quest for peace and security continued to play a priority role in the work of the Commission. This concerned the completion of the continental architecture for peace and security as well as the prevention and management of conflicts, including the consolidation of peace where it has been restored. Similarly, the Commission strived to strengthen the partnerships it has forged with a number of institutions and countries in furtherance of the peace efforts made in the continent.

### a) Continental Peace and Security Architecture

5. We need not highlight the importance of completing the establishment of the continental peace and security architecture since it is but true that without a fully functional architecture, the AU will face a lot of difficulties in carrying through its ambitious agenda in the area of peace and security. Since the last session of the Executive Council and the Assembly of the Union, the Commission has pursued its sustained efforts towards the establishment of the various components of the continental peace and security architecture and effectively operationalizing them.

6. In conformity with the Protocol on the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU, the continental architecture for peace and security is based on the following four structures: the PSC, the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), the Panel of the Wise and the African Standby Force (ASF). The Protocol further makes provision for enhanced cooperation between the AU and regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and settlement. During the review period, considerable progress was achieved in the establishment and operationalization of these structures.

7. **Panel of the Wise:** the Panel of the Wise was inaugurated on 18 December 2007 and held its first meeting in Addis Ababa on 20 February 2008. At the meeting, it elected the former Algerian Head of State, Ahmed Ben Bella, as its Chairperson for the current year, and also adopted its programme of work. The Panel identified some priority conflict situations on which it will focus its attention. It equally decided that each year, it will initiate brainstorming on an issue relating to conflict prevention and peace consolidation in Africa. For the year 2008, such brainstorming will be devoted to election related disputes and conflicts.

8. **Continental Early Warning System:** Significant progress was recorded in the process to fully operationalize the Continental Early Warning System, notably by sharpening data gathering tools, analyzing data collected, interacting with regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and settlement as well as with those of other relevant international organizations. Every four months, technical meetings will be organized to harmonize data gathering tools and discuss other issues of common

interest. Attention will equally be paid to cooperation with the United Nations, its agencies and other competent international organizations working in this area.

9. **African Standby Force:** the Fifth Meeting of Security Chiefs and officials held in March 2008 and the Second meeting of Ministers of Defence and Security coming thereafter marked an important stage in the ASF establishment process, which has to be completed by 2010 latest. In this respect, the Ministers adopted the ASF guideline documents relating to its doctrine, standard operating procedures (SOPs), training and drilling, and command, control, communication and information (C<sup>3</sup>IS) systems. They also accepted in principle the documents relating to its early deployment capacity and the study on logistic depots. The outcomes of these meetings are contained in a separate report submitted to the Executive Council, indicating also the status of progress in the establishment of the regional brigades.

10. **Protocol Cooperation Agreement between the AU and the Regional Mechanisms.** This Protocol Cooperation Agreement was signed in January 2008. To apply the Protocol Agreement, most Regional Mechanisms transferred officers to the Commission. In furtherance of this cooperation, other measures are envisaged, including the holding of periodic technical and political meetings as well as the regular exchange of information.

**b) Structural prevention of conflicts**

11. **AU border programme (AUBP):** Council endorsed the declaration on the AUBP and its implementation modalities as adopted by the Conference of African Ministers responsible for border issues in June 2007. This Declaration is in line with efforts on the structural prevention of conflicts, and all the more because since African countries gained independence, borders have been a constant source of misunderstanding and disputes.

12. As part of initial measures to be taken in view of the launch of the AUBP, the Commission was requested to initiate an operation on the study of borders at continental level in order to facilitate the delimitation and demarcation of African borders where this exercise has not yet taken place. In this respect, the Commission sent all Member States a questionnaire intended to determine the status of their borders. I urge all Member States that have not yet replied to the questionnaire to do so as soon as possible. Moreover, I am happy to state that some of our partners, particularly Germany, through the GTZ, and Italy expressed their readiness to provide financial and technical assistance for the implementation of the AUBP. In this respect, the Commission identified a number of actions to be undertaken in the months ahead.

13. **Small arms and Light Weapons (SALW):** Our continent is one of the most affected by the illicit proliferation of SALW. This situation is one of the factors contributing to the prevalence of conflicts and insecurity in Africa. It is against this background that a number of initiatives were taken to develop African common positions on how best to address the problem posed by the illicit proliferation of SALW. However,

thus far, these common positions have not been translated into concrete plans of action. As a first step in developing an African Strategy on SALW proliferation, the Commission convened, from 8 to 9 June 2008, in Mombasa, Kenya, a meeting that brought together regional bodies dealing with SALW to share experiences and exchange information in order to enhance synergies and move towards greater harmony between the regions. I intend to take concrete action to follow up the recommendations made by the meeting, including identifying concrete ways through which the AU could effectively give the requisite focus to the issue of SALW, as part of its conflict prevention and peace building efforts.

### c) Developments on the ground

14. There were ups and downs in the development of the security situation in the continent. While significant progress has been recorded in the quest for solutions to some conflicts tearing the continental apart, there has been a persistent deadlock in other areas. Similarly, new tensions have been sparked elsewhere. Over the past six months the Commission has been making efforts to support various peace processes and peace consolidation endeavours underway in the continent. Similarly, it strived to react quickly to the various crises that broke out and instill more impetus in conflict prevention drives.

15. **Comoros:** After more than ten years of sustained efforts, the authority of the Comoros Union Government was finally restored in Anjouan, following operation "Democracy in the Comoros" launched on 25 March 2008. I wish to avail myself of this occasion both to laud the determination of President Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi and then sincerely thank Tanzania, Sudan, Libya and Senegal which provided the required assistance to the Government of the Union of the Comoros in compliance with the decision taken by the Tenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union. I also wish to reiterate the gratitude of the AU to countries of the region which, led by South Africa, spared no efforts to provide aid to the Comoros and lend support to the reconciliation efforts.

16. At the time this report was being finalized, the Comorian Government, with the support of the AU and other members of the international community was making preparation for the holding, on 29 June 2008, of the second round of voting that would enable the election of the President of the Autonomous Island of Anjouan. At the end of the first round of voting on 15 June 2008, none of the candidates running had obtained the number of votes required to be elected. Once the electoral process is concluded, the Comoros will need to embark on a number of priority tasks, including not only the reform of the constitutional architecture of the islands which needs to be rationalized and the improvement of governance, but also to improve the socio-economic situation and to combat poverty whose prevalence, especially in Anjouan, fueled the development of separatism. The AU, which has been present in the Comoros since the beginning of the crisis in Anjouan, will continue to accompany and support the efforts of the Comoros Government.

17. **Kenya:** I am pleased to note that the post-electoral crisis in Kenya was overcome, with the signing, on 28 February 2008, by President Mwai Kibaki and Hon. Raila Odinga, of the National Accord and Reconciliation Act, as well as the *Agreement on the Principles of Partnership of the Coalition Government*. I would like to commend the Kenyan parties for the spirit of compromise and mutual accommodation they have demonstrated. I also would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Panel of Eminent African Personalities led by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, and including the former President of Tanzania H.E. Benjamin Mkapa and Mrs. Graça Machel, as well as to President Jakaya Kikwete, Chairperson of the AU, for the critical role they played in reaching these agreements.

18. Since then, a number of steps have been taken to implement the commitments made. Kenya's Parliament passed the Constitutional Amendment Act and the National Accord and Reconciliation Act by unanimous vote. An enlarged Cabinet was announced on 12 April 2008. The Independent Review Commission on Elections (IREC) has been established, to look into the conduct of the elections, in order to determine what went wrong and ways in which to avoid a repeat in the future. The Commission of Inquiry into the Post-Election Violence has also been established. At the time of finalizing this report, the debate on the draft Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) bill was expected to begin shortly after Parliament resumed its sessions, on 11 June 2008. I urge the parties to remain steadfast in addressing longstanding issues, including those relating to a new Constitution, land and youth employment, thereby consolidating national unity and progress.

19. **Somalia:** In spite of the precarious security and humanitarian situation, there has been significant progress in the reconciliation process. Efforts initiated by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and initiatives made by several members of the international community in furtherance of these efforts, including the United Nations, the African Union and other partners have made it possible for dialogue to be established between the TFG and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS). Through this dialogue an agreement was reached in Djibouti last June 9; it should be formally signed in Saudi Arabia in the months ahead. The agreement paved the way for the cessation of all armed hostilities within thirty days after its signature and the deployment of an international stabilization force. Its implementation should enable the Ethiopian government to withdraw its forces as it has expressed the intention several times.

20. The Agreement inarguably marks a significant stage in efforts to promote a political process open to all and to restore peace and lasting stability. I wish to hail the sense of responsibility and the spirit of compromise shown by both parties, and exhort all the other Somalian actors concerned to join the process. I truly hope that with this agreement, the international community will step up support for the efforts aimed at putting a final end to the violence prevailing in Somali for over two decades now. For its part, the AU will spare no efforts to contribute to the successful implementation of the Agreement whose principle and goals are in line with the action it has constantly pursued at both the political level and as concerns the stabilization of Somalia through the deployment of AMISOM. I wish to avail myself of this occasion to convey my

gratitude to Uganda and Burundi for having provided the AMISOM troops and to thank our partners for their financial and logistic support.

21. **Peace Process between Eritrea and Ethiopia:** Unfortunately there was no progress in the demarcation of the Ethiopia-Eritrea border and the normalization of relations between the two countries. In furtherance of its declaration of 27 November 2006, Eritrea considers the "virtual" demarcation decided by the Border Demarcation Commission to be final and binding; for its part, Ethiopia rejects this procedure for lacking any legal foundation and demands the restoration of the entire temporary safety zone, especially through the withdrawal of Eritrean forces occupying the area and their equipment in order to permit the application of the border delimitation decision of April 2002. The situation has since aggravated; indeed because of the restrictions imposed by Eritrea on its operations, particularly the disruption of fuel supplies since 1 December 2007. The United Nations Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) was obliged to suspend its activities in the Eritrean side. When the mandate of UNMEE expires next 31 July, the Security Council will have to decide on the fate of that mission, based on the various options submitted by the United Nations Secretary General in his report of 7 April 2008. These options range from the re-establishment of the mission in its original structures and duties should Eritrea reconsider its current stand, to the mere and simple dissolution of the Mission, not excluding the deployment along the border between the two countries of small observation team and the opening of Liaison offices between the two capitals.

22. In this context, I can only underscore the need to deploy more sustained political efforts with the view of helping the two countries to overcome current difficulties in the demarcation process and to normalize relation. The AU, which played a vital role in the process that culminated in the signing of the Algiers Agreements of June and December 2000, is ready, with the collaboration of the two parties, to assist them in this respect.

23. **Relations between Djibouti and Eritrea:** The reporting period was marked by the birth of a new hot spot in the horn of Africa. At the end of April 2008 the Djiboutian authorities formally seized several members of the international community, including the AU, on the situation prevailing at the border with Eritrea and particularly the occupation of part of Djibouti territory by the Eritrean army, and the inherent risk of conflict. Reacting to these developments, the PSC early May exhorted the parties to show the greatest restraint and to settle any dispute between them through dialogue on the basis of principles laid down in the Constitutive Act and other relevant instruments of the AU. This will include respecting borders existing at the time of independence and the promotion of the spirit of good neighbourliness. The PSC encouraged the Commission to remain in close contact with the two countries and to monitor developments in the situation in order to assess the situation in the field and hold consultations with the relevant authorities of both countries. In furtherance of this communiqué, a mission from the Commission visited Djibouti from 5 to 9 June 2008.

24. Djibouti once more referred the matter to the PSC reporting that there was heightened tension in the field, and the PSC met on 11 June 2008 to consider the



situation. The meeting was held against a backdrop of serious incidents that occurred the previous day along the border between the two countries. After commending the visit by a mission from the Commission to Djibouti and conveying its appreciation to the authorities of Djibouti for their cooperation, the PSC noted with regret that the Eritrean authorities had not yet accepted to receive the mission. The PSC declared that it was highly worried with this state of things, firmly condemned the use of force and underscored the absolute need to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity independence of Member States. It called for immediate return to the situation prevailing before the current tension, including the immediate withdrawal from the boundary of all forces stationed there since 4 February 2008. Once more, the PSC urged the two countries to show the greatest restraint, to use dialogue to settle any bilateral dispute and to lend full cooperation to efforts made in this direction.

25. I am all the more preoccupied by this situation since it is happening in a region already plagued with many conflicts. Hence the urgent need for determinant action to quell the current tension and find a lasting solution. In this respect, I commend the PSC decision to meet at the appropriate level to consider the situation and also the support given the AU by the Security Council through the declaration made by its President on 12 June 2008.

26. **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC):** the signing in Goma, on 23 January 2008, of the Acts of Engagement by the Congolese Parties to the peace process in the Kivus ushered in a new strict in the peace consolidation process in the country. I urge the parties to work towards the state implementation of these Agreements. I am pleased with the ongoing regional efforts towards the follow-up of the Nairobi joint communiqué, particularly the holding in New York, on 22 April 2008, of a meeting of the Joint Group established by the Tripartite+ Summit held in Addis Ababa on 5 December 2007.

27. The AU intends to step up its support for ongoing efforts in the DRC, notably by identifying areas in which it can play a useful role in post conflict reconstruction and development. The plan is to send an evaluation mission to the country. At the same time the AU will strive to monitor the decision adopted by the PSC at its meeting of 11 April 2008 devoted to the consideration of the report of the AU fact-finding mission on the migration of Mbororo pastoral nomads sent to DRC, CAR, Sudan and Cameroon. The Commission intends in particular to organize, as soon as possible, a meeting bringing together the countries concerned, with the various stakeholders participating, in order to foster a concerted regional approach.

28. **Burundi:** The first half of 2008 was marked by the relaunch of the process to implement the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement of 7 September 2008. Thanks to efforts made by the countries of the region and the Facilitator, with the backing of representatives of the international community including the AU, the Government and the Palipehutu-FNL, on 26 May 2008 signed a Joint Declaration on the Cessation of Hostilities. Since the signing of the Declaration, the AU and other members of the international community are at work to mobilize the support needed to

consolidate the cessation of hostilities, notably by providing humanitarian assistance to combatants. The AU Mission in Burundi (AMIB) is coordinating the work of the committee responsible for following up assistance. The AU Special Force and military observers in Burundi played a vital role in the dispatch of aid to ex-combatants.

29. The signature of the Joint Declaration undoubtedly marks a crucial stage in the peace consolidation process in Burundi since it paves the way for the implementation of the 2006 Agreements. It will facilitate the return, already underway, of Burundian refugees, and also enable Burundians to resolutely embark on the task of socio-economic revival in their country.

30. **Sudan:** Considering its surface area, its diversity and the number of countries with which it shares a common boundary, Sudan occupies a special place in efforts to promote peace and stability in the continent. It is therefore necessary for everything to be done so that various peace processes underway in the country can be carried through. In this respect, I commend the renewed determination of the parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), namely the Government of Sudan and the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Movement (SPLM), to make efforts for its strict implementation as witnessed by the agreement they concluded on 8 June 2008 on a "Roadmap on the return of internally displaced persons and the implementation of the Abyei Protocol" to put an end to the deadlock on this issue. I avail myself of the visit I paid to Sudan in mid May to encourage the parties to redouble efforts to settle hanging issues in the implementation of the CPA, be they in connection with the final redeployment of forces, with the training of integrated mixed units, or with disarmament, demobilization and the demarcation of the North-South border. I assured them of the total support of the AU which reinforced its involvement in the ongoing process by appointing a Special Envoy in the person of the former Nigerian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Oluyemi Adeniji, and the opening of a Liaison Office in Khartoum, with a Bureau in Juba. I also wish to mention the work of the AU Ministerial Committee on Post Conflict Reconstruction in Sudan which is chaired by the South African Minister of Foreign Affairs who visited Khartoum and Juba in early April 2008.

31. Conversely, the Darfur Peace Process is still in a deadlock. Despite the sustained efforts made by the AU and UN Special Envoys, it has not been possible to relaunch the political process due mainly to the lack of confidence between the parties as well as to divisions within the rebel movements and their wranglings. This situation is made all the more complicated by the precarious security situation in the field, which was heightened by the attack perpetrated on 10 May 2008 against the capital of Sudan by Ibrahim Khalil's Justice and Equality Movement (JEM). This is further compounded by tension at the Sudan/Chad border and the rising act of banditry and other attacks directed against humanitarian agencies. In view of such situation, the joint African Union/United Nations Mediation envisaged convening a consultation with the parties on security related issues in order to facilitate the resumption of the political dialogue and the holding of substantive negotiations, but the meeting had to be adjourned following the announcement by the rebel movements of the intension to boycott it.

32. At moment, the AU and the United Nations are stepping up their efforts in view of the rapid nomination of a mediator in chief who will stay full time in Sudan. At the same time, efforts are continuing towards the acceleration of the deployment of UNAMID. The goal is to recruit 80% of the authorized staff of the mission by the end of the year 2008 given that the required conditions will be met. Obviously, there is the urgent need to accelerate the deployment of the mission in order to create, as much as possible, enabling security conditions for the resumption of the political process. Already, it is encouraging to state that with its current staff strength, UNAMID has significantly increase its investigation and patrol activities. The AU intends to fully play the role incumbent on it in the conduct of the hybrid operation.

33. **Chad-Sudan Relations:** The situation in Darfur has a regional dimension. The persistent crisis in the region has seriously affected relations between Chad and Sudan, with both countries trading accusations of subversive activities. Council will recall that its last session was held against a backdrop of high tension in relations between the two countries following the attack perpetrated against Chad, notably the capital city of N'Djamena in late January to early February 2008 by a coalition of rebel movements. In response to that situation the Assembly of the Union had mandated President Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of Congo and the Guide of the Libyan Revolution, Muammar Al-Gaddafi, to take initiatives aimed at finding a lasting solution to the crisis. A number of initiatives were therefore taken, culminating in the signing, by the two countries, on 13 March 2008, under the auspices of President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal, of the Dakar Agreement according to which *"they solemnly undertake to ban all activities by armed groups and to prohibit the use of their respective territories for the destabilization of either State"*. Since then the Contact Group established under the agreement which is co-chaired by Libya and the Republic of Congo has met several times: in Libreville on 10 April 2008, in Tripoli on 12 and 13 May 2008 and in Brazzaville on 9 June 2008.

34. In spite of these efforts, the tension persists and relations between the two countries are still cagey. Indeed, the meeting of the Contact Group held in Tripoli was disrupted by the attack against Omdurman on 10 May 2008; accusing Chad of being implicated in the attack, Sudan broke diplomatic relations with the latter and refused participating in the meeting. At the time this report was finalized, and following attacks since 11 June launched by Chadian rebel movements in the East of Chad, this country once more accused Sudan of violating the commitments made. For my part, after the attack of May 2008 against the Sudanese capital, I met the leaders of both countries to try to persuade them to remain calm and show restraint. I wish to reiterate this appeal and to urge the two countries to stick to the implementation of the commitments made under the Dakar Agreement and later ones. Finally, I encourage African leaders involved in the process to take the necessary initiatives towards the normalization of relations between the two countries.

35. **Situation in Central African Republic (CAR):** the situation in CAR has been encouraging since February 2008. At the political level, the political dialogue process has continued. The Preparatory Committee for the All Inclusive Political Dialogue

(PCAIPD) ended its deliberations on 31 March 2008, and submitted its final report to President Bozizé on 25 April 2008. It made several suggestions on the various aspects of its mission, including the recognition of the AU as international facilitator following the example of the UN and the IOF. The Central African authorities are buckled down to taking the necessary measures to organize the dialogue as such. It is encouraging to note that one of the most active groups in the North of the country finally joined the PCAIPD and concluded a ceasefire agreement with the Government. Meanwhile, the CAR is still confronted with serious security problems, leading to the forced displacement of the population. In this context, I wish to convey my profound gratitude to countries of the region for their actions, notably through the efforts of the CEMAC Multinational Force (FOMUC) to backup the Central African defence forces. The AU will continue supporting FOMUC including the process of transferring supervisory authority from CEMAC to ECCAS which is at a very advanced stage and should soon be completed. The completion of the deployment of the United Nations Mission in CAR and Chad (MINURCAT) should also contribute to the improvement of the security situation.

36. Economic and financial problems constitute one of the major difficulties confronting the CAR. It is therefore most important for international partners to continue lending support to Government efforts aimed at improving the management of public finance, governance and transparency. For its part, in furtherance of the Conference on Solidarity with the CAR organized last October in cooperation with the ADB and the ECA, the Commission will pursue its efforts to rally Member States and the international Community behind the Central African Republic.

37. In Liberia, the overall political and security situation in the country has remained generally stable. As at May 2008, 1,624 members of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) out of 2,000, have been trained apart from the already trained 3,500 personnel of the Liberia National Police (LNP). Liberia is currently in the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) drawdown phase, prior to its final withdrawal from the country. On the economic front, the country reached the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative decision point in April 2008, thus affording it the opportunity of further debt reliefs that the country has been burdened with for many years now. The country has also initiated its new three-year Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) programme scheduled for 1 April 2008 to 30 June 2011.

38. **Côte d'Ivoire:** The positive effects induced by the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and its Additional Agreements have made it possible to maintain a serene political climate in Côte d'Ivoire. This new climate was strengthened by the good cooperation ties between President Laurent Gbagbo and Prime Minister Guillaume Soro, the involvement of all political actors in the process and the civil society, as well as by the Government's decision to adopt a consensus approach to decision-making. In that context, and with a view to holding elections that would conclude the peace process, the main political parties intensified their activities throughout the country. The security situation remained stable during the period under review. As for the humanitarian situation, it was marked by a voluntary return by displaced persons to their

villages of origin, though there are still a number of difficulties to be surmounted. Concerning the economy, it can be observed that the international financial community is gradually resuming cooperation with Cote d'Ivoire.

39. Significant progress was made on the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and its additional agreements, though the initial schedule was not respected. Thus, in relation to the identification of persons, public hearings held for the purpose of obtaining remedial orders for birth certificates were properly conducted in all parts of the country. Following an extraordinary Council of Ministers meeting on 14 April, President Laurent Gbagbo signed a series of legislative and regulatory instruments necessary for implementing the Agreements, one of which was Decree No. 2008-134 to convene the electoral college of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire for the purpose of electing the President of the Republic on 30 November 2008. Moreover, and in spite of the difficulties faced, real progress was recorded in respect of efforts to restore State authority and to redeploy the Administration. A code of good conduct for political parties, groups and forces, as well as for candidates for elections in Cote d'Ivoire, was signed on 24 April. Concerning the military aspects, it should be mentioned that the regrouping of ex-combattants was executed within the stipulated time frame for Government forces, whereas logistical and financial difficulties delayed the regrouping of elements of the New Forces, which began the exercise in a significant manner only in May. Similarly, the process of disarming and dismantling the militia as well as of putting in place of a national civic service has been slow.

40. In conclusion, I would to express my satisfaction with the significant progress made in the crisis exit process in Cote d'Ivoire. I urge the Ivorian parties to persevere in their efforts. I reiterate my appreciation to the Facilitator and assure him, once more, of AU's support. Finally, I call on international partners to continue to accompany the Ivorian Government's efforts.

41. **Western Sahara:** During the period under review, the Commission has continued to follow closely developments in Western Sahara. As Council is aware, in April and October last year, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolutions 1754 and 1783 (2007), both of which took note of the proposals put forward by the two parties on the way forward, and called for negotiations, without preconditions and in good faith, with a view to achieving a just and mutually acceptable political solution, which would provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara. It is on the basis of these resolutions that the UN Secretary-General has organized four rounds of negotiations between the two parties, in June and August 2007, and then in January and March 2008, in Manhasset, New York. A fifth round has been agreed upon, but the date has yet to be agreed.

42. So far, the talks, which also covered possible confidence-building measures between the two parties, have not resulted in any progress with respect to the final status of Western Sahara. It is against this background that the Security Council adopted, on 30 April 2008, resolution 1813 (2008), in which it, *inter alia*, called upon the parties to continue to show political will and work in an atmosphere propitious for

dialogue, in order to enter into a more intensive and substantive phase of negotiations. It is my hope that the two parties will seize the opportunity of the planned fifth round of talks to make progress towards a solution consistent with international legality, in particular the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as in the AU Constitutive Act.

#### **d) Financing Peace Operations**

43. The Commission has continued to work towards the enhancement of its partnership with relevant members of the international community and the mobilization of increased support for the AU peace and security agenda. In this respect, I am pleased to inform Council that steps are underway for the launching of the new Africa Peace Facility (APF) for the period 2008 – 2010, which corresponds to the implementation period of the first Joint Africa-EU Action Plan adopted in Lisbon in December 2007. An amount of €300 million from the 10<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF) has been earmarked for the APF. It is worth recalling that the APF was initially established for a period of three years by the EU, with a total financial envelop of € 250 million drawn from the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF, to fund peace support operations conducted under the authority of the AU. The establishment of the APF, which became operational from May 2004, followed a request by the Assembly in Maputo in July 2003. Subsequently, and at the request of the AU, the APF was replenished both through the EDF and additional voluntary contributions from several EU member States.

44. Efforts have also been made to follow up on decision Assembly/AU/DEC.145 (VIII), of January 2007, relating to the funding of AU-led peace support operations through UN assessed contributions. Subsequently, the Security Council Presidential Statement of 28 March 2007 requested the Secretary-General to provide a report, in consultation with the relevant regional organizations, in particular the AU, on specific proposals on how the UN can better support further cooperation and coordination with regional organizations on chapter VIII arrangements. This report was submitted by the Secretary-General on 7 April 2008. With regard to the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of financing regional organizations in undertaking peacekeeping operations under a UN mandate, the Secretary-General proposed the setting up, within three months, of an African Union-United Nations Panel consisting of distinguished persons to consider in-depth the modalities of how to support, including financing, peacekeeping operations undertaken by regional organizations, in particular as related to startup funding, equipment and logistics, and make concrete recommendations.

45. The Security Council, through its resolution 1809 (2008) adopted on 16 April 2008, welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal to set up such a Panel. At their 2<sup>nd</sup> joint meeting held in New York, on 17 April 2008, the Security Council and the PSC expressed satisfaction with the ongoing efforts to strengthen their relationship through, among other things, taking steps to identify predictable, sustainable and flexible resources to enable the AU to undertake peacekeeping operations in the context of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. At the time of finalizing this report, consultations were

underway for the appointment of the members of the Panel and the adoption of its terms of reference.

46. As Council is aware, under the Joint Africa/G8 Plan to Enhance African Capabilities to Undertake Peace Support Operations agreed at Evian, France, in June 2003, the AU is to host an annual consultation on peace and security issues with all interested donors and African peace and security institutions at the continental and regional level. It is within this context that the Commission convened the annual consultation with the Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, the members of the PSC and representatives from the G8+ and other partners, in Addis Ababa, on 13 June 2008. The meeting provided an opportunity to update and review progress made in the past year in the establishment of the APSA and the implementation of the overall AU peace and security agenda, and to look at ways of addressing the challenges ahead.

47. Finally, I am pleased to inform Council that, on 28 April 2008, Germany confirmed the provision of support to the establishment of an AU strategic level capability for conflict management in Addis Ababa. This will involve the erection of a building that would house a conflict management centre for the AU. This assistance followed a request made by the Commission in April 2005, during the annual consultation with the G8+, in view of the need to build additional office space to accommodate the substantial increase in the staff of the Commission working on peace and security issues and to put in place the required facilities to enable the Commission effectively to discharge its conflict prevention, management and resolution mandate. Since then, the Commission has had preliminary discussions with the German side, including GTZ, which will be in charge of the implementation of the project. In the coming weeks, a number of steps will be taken that would pave the way for the commencement of the project.

48. Evidently, progress was made in promoting peace and security during the period under review. We should however not lose sight of the fact that these achievements remain fragile. To consolidate them, there is a need for continued commitment from the parties concerned and for determined accompaniment on the part of the international community, including the AU.

49. In the months ahead, the Commission will intensify the efforts it deploys to promote peace and stability on the continent, which constitute a prerequisite for any socio-economic development enterprise and a *sine qua non* condition for carrying through the integration process. It will require that the Commission performs, as effectively as possible, its duties in the area of conflict prevention, promptly reacts to diverse crisis situations on the ground, reinforces its presence on the field, notably by opening Liaisons Bureaus in regions in conflict or in a post-conflict situation, and ensures effective monitoring of the framework for action on post-conflict reconstruction and development.

50. During the past years, an increase was observed in the number of crisis related to electoral processes on the continent. It is in that context that the Group of the Wise decided, within the scope of its mandate on conflict prevention, to initiate a reflection on the issue in order to submit recommendations to AU governing bodies. The Commission will provide full support to this collective reflection, which is at once necessary and opportune.

51. At the same time, priority will be given to completing the process of establishing the continental peace and security architecture. In that context, I intend to work on rapidly mobilizing the required human resources, as well as to re-examining procedures and modes of functioning of the Commission, in a bid to attract them in order to adapt them to the exigencies of the rapidity and flexibility inherent in conflict prevention and resolution and to strengthen the Commission's financial and administrative management capacities, since it is true that building such capacity will determine our capacity to mobilize increasing levels of financial support from our partners, particularly with regard to AU-conducted peace operations.

52. There is no need to underscore the crucial role Member States play in implementing the agenda we have assigned ourselves in the peace and security field. These States need to demonstrate a renewed desire to definitely end conflicts which are currently tearing the continent apart by sending a clear message to all those who, by their acts and attitudes, contribute to perpetuating violence and instability on the continent, and by providing financial and logistical support, as well as of the requisite troops each time their assistance is solicited.

## II. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

53. Concerning today's development challenges on our continent, our task remains huge, particularly due to the fragile and insecure nature of our economies which face all kinds of endogenous and exogenous shocks. Runaway hydrocarbons prices, **combined with inadequate basic infrastructures have contributed in part to the food crisis which our African countries now face, which demonstrates** the inability of our economies to resist diverse economic shocks. Moreover, our continent faces huge difficulties in mastering the major funding leverages for its development. The continued worsening of the terms of trade has negatively affected our export earnings. The commitments made by the rich countries at successive G8 Summits and other such meetings as the Monterrey Summit are yet to be translated into action, thus depriving Africa of a sizeable portion of development assistance.

### a) General economic issues

54. Africa faces huge development challenges. Efforts at all levels must focus on the attainment of rapid socio-economic development in order to create a better standard of living for its citizens. We believe that major elements that require attention in this endeavour include the following:



## The integration process

55. The importance of Africa's economic integration cannot be overemphasized. Past efforts by the continent's leadership to bring about sustained socio-economic development have failed to yield any sustainable benefits. As other regions of the world continue to record high economic growth and sustained development, Africa continues to lag behind in all spheres. It is now clear that pursuit of the continental integration agenda is the solution.

56. Africa's ongoing regional integration is crucial, as it serves as a stepping-stone for the continent's integration into the global economy. This is the only means by which we can avoid further marginalization of the continent. Integration holds great potential, including rapid economic growth, greater economies of scale due to expanded regional market, greater scope for increased investment and innovation, and insulation against the vagaries of globalization. In addition, it provides greater opportunities for cooperation in key areas such as infrastructure development and the maintenance of peace in the region.

57. A number of initiatives at the level of the African Union have already been undertaken or are in the pipeline and need to be supported to reach our integration objectives. These include the review of the Abuja Treaty; implementation of the Minimum Integration Programme for the Regional Economic Communities (RECs); the rationalization of the RECs; establishment of the three financial institutions, namely, the African Central Bank, African Monetary Fund and African Investment Bank; and assessment of the status of regional and continental integration process. All these are expected to accelerate Africa's integration process and bring about immense benefits to the continent's citizenry.

58. Regarding the establishment of the three financial institutions, the Commission has received a mandate to set up a steering committee for each of the three institutions to be located in the respective host countries and a secretariat within the Department of Economic Affairs to coordinate the activities of the steering committees. I am happy to report that progress has been made in this respect. Libya has signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to set up the steering committee of the African Investment Bank and has offered office space and equipment. The Commission has already appointed experts who have commenced work. The Republic of Cameroon, host of the African Monetary Fund, has already signed the MoU and has offered office space and equipment. In the near future, these will be formally handed over to the Commission. As soon as this is done, experts will be appointed by the Commission for work to commence. A strategy on the establishment of the African Central Bank has been jointly developed with the Association of African Central Banks (AACB). Discussions with Nigeria are currently ongoing regarding the host agreement for the African Central Bank. This is expected to be finalised and signed in the coming months.

## Private sector development

59. The private sector must be at the forefront of activities geared towards fast-tracking Africa's economic growth and development. The world over, the private sector is recognized as *the engine of growth*, while the public sector takes on the role of *greasing the engine* and ensuring an enabling environment for the engine to run effectively. Africa is no exception to this rule and greater emphasis must be put on developing and implementing policies that support the empowerment of the private sector. However, where market failures exist, the public sector must be prepared to intervene in order to address the shortcomings of the market.

60. The African Union has not lost sight of the importance of the private sector. The decision by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union at the 2005 Abuja Summit to institutionalise the African Private Sector Forum is, hence, a major step in the right direction. This has now become an annual event which serves as a platform for dialogue between the private sector and policy makers as well as an opportunity for private sector actors to network and exchange views on ways of eliminating bottlenecks to doing business in Africa. A similar annual event is the EU-Africa Business Forum, which was launched in 2006 with the objective of bringing together African and European private sector actors as well as policy makers on both sides to discuss the facilitation of business linkages between the two continents. This is organized alternately between Africa and Europe. So far, two such events have been held and topics such as trade and EPAs, infrastructure, information and communication technology, and entrepreneurship were discussed. The next meeting is scheduled for the last quarter of 2008 in Europe.

61. A new window of opportunity for Africa is the advent of public-private partnerships (PPPs). This holds benefits for both the public and private sectors. Potential benefits to government are that private financing can support higher level of infrastructure investment without an immediate increase in the level of government borrowing and debt; and increased efficiency due to potentially better management by the private sector as well as increased chances of innovation. The private sector also tends to benefit because PPPs present business opportunities in areas where it was previously excluded. I therefore wish to take this opportunity to call on all Member States to pursue the PPP option as a credible means of attaining economic development objectives.

## Financing for development and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

62. The objective of socio-economic development cannot be achieved without addressing Africa's problem of weak financing base. Infrastructure development, for example, has been identified as one of the key impediments to Africa's competitiveness and the low level of intra-Africa trade. Addressing problems of this nature require massive investments, which means adequate resources must be mobilized.

63. A number of ambitious projects have been identified, both at regional and continental level, which, if implemented, could create huge impact. Many of these are held back due to the problem of financing. Hence, the proposed creation of an African Investment Bank as provided for in the Constitutive Act of the African Union, will go a long way in addressing the aforementioned financing bottleneck. It is also expected that the proposals on alternative sources of financing the African Union, which are currently being examined, will make an impact in this regard. This is why Member States are urged to support these processes in view of their potential impacts.

64. The lack of financing is also impacting negatively on the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Partly to blame for this is the low disbursement rates vis-à-vis the commitments of development partners. For example statistics show that current Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) of 0.27% of Gross National Product (GNP) falls far short of the target of 0.7% committed. The financing base for MDGs remains weak and this problem will need to be resolved if Africa is to attain them by the target date of 2015. Member States are, therefore, urged to take measures to broaden the financing base of MDGs. Measures such as increasing focus on domestic resource mobilization and better utilization of Diaspora remittances will help. Furthermore, efforts should be made to link Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) to national budgeting processes, develop MDG based national development plans, as well as steps taken to improve public sector financial management. I also wish to call on development partners to honour their commitments.

### **Economic governance**

65. For Africa to attract investment and record solid growth rates on a sustainable basis, appropriate macroeconomic policies must be formulated and implemented. There must be proper economic governance to ensure that macroeconomic fundamentals are right for economies to perform well. Issues relating to controlling inflation, adopting appropriate exchange rate regimes, setting optimal interest rates and management of other economic variables require the adoption of appropriate fiscal and monetary policies. Hence, governments have a key role to play, given the impact of some of these economic variables on investment inflows, level of competitiveness, economic growth rates, job creation, and so on.

66. The issue of corporate governance is also equally important. As many countries are becoming more and more dependent on the private sector for economic growth and job creation, it is important that good corporate governance be promoted to avoid business failures associated with poor corporate governance. Regulatory bodies need to be strengthened to enable them play their role effectively to avoid failures in corporate governance.

#### **b) Development of Basic Infrastructure**

67. Infrastructures play a vital role in economic and social development, in regional and continental integration, and in poverty reduction. Inadequate infrastructure, both in

quantitative and qualitative terms, as well as in physical terms and of the services rendered, will translate into increased production and transaction costs, that seriously undermine Africa's competitiveness vis-à-vis the other continents. Lack of good infrastructures influence the business environment, which thus becomes less attractive for foreign direct investment.

68. Africa's infrastructural deficit is characterized today by the following data<sup>1</sup>:

- Access to electricity for 30% of the population, compared to rates ranging from 70 to 90% for the other major geographic zones in the developing world (Asia, Central America and the Caribbean, the Middle East and Latin America)
- Access to water and sanitation for 65% of the population, compared to rates ranging from 80 to 90% for the other geographic zones
- Telecommunications penetration rate of about 3%, compared to an average rate of 40% for the other geographic zones with a low penetration rate for broadband services;
- Home mail delivery postal services are available to only 22% of the population compared to 83 % in Latin America and in the Caribbean, 94% in Asia and 98% for all industrialized countries
- Access to roads for 34% against 50% for the other geographic zones.

69. The consequences of such a situation on Africa's competitiveness are evident. African countries are among the least competitive in the world, with low infrastructure levels being one of the main causes.

### **Continental infrastructure development initiatives**

70. One of the initial actions undertaken under the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was the establishment, in 2002, of Short-Term Action Plan (STAP) in the area of infrastructure which is based on priority measures and projects. This action plan was based on ongoing programmes and initiatives in the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and sectoral organizations. The NEPAD programme was to infuse a new impetus to the implementation of RECs programmes and to contribute to strengthening them and to accompany them by inserting them into a coherent framework, based on common strategic objectives.

71. This Action Plan, which was the focus of a series of progress reviews, and which constitute only a first step in formulating a medium- and long-term strategic framework for setting forth sectoral policies and programmes that spell out priorities and permit the establishment of partnerships to promote economic integration and that sustain the development of trade and commerce.

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<sup>1</sup>'Infrastructure Development and Regional Integration: Issues, Opportunities and Challenges', an AfDB and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Joint Note; 2006.

72. It is necessary to mention the initiative by President Abdoulaye Wade, NEPAD Infrastructures Coordinator, who organized on 24 January 2008 in Saly Portudal (Senegal), a Round Table on financing infrastructures of NEPAD. The main purpose of this Round Table was to:

- Reach agreement on a list of top priority regional and continental projects in the area of infrastructure; and,
- Solicit the commitment of donors regarding the financing of the studies and execution of the said projects during the coming five years.

73. During that meeting, a top priority programme presented by President Wade, was essentially composed of hydroelectric, road and railway infrastructure, including integrative bridges. The participating donors expressed their readiness to accompany Africa in the execution of these important projects. The African Development Bank had already granted the necessary funding for certain pre-feasibility studies, notably for the Dakar–Djibouti road and railway corridor. It is now time to move from declarations of intent to action.

74. Concerning the medium- and long-term, on the initiative of the Commission, the African Development Bank and the NEPAD Secretariat, a project relating to the Infrastructure Development Programme for Africa (AIDPP) is under elaboration. This Project constitutes a simultaneous extension of the STAP, the Medium- and Long-Term Strategy and of an additional initiative envisaged by the Commission to establish continent-wide policies and master plans for infrastructure development.

75. The Commission, whose role is one of coordination, harmonization and provision of continental leadership in economic and social development matters, as well as in the physical integration of the Continent, among others, was engaged in infrastructure development (transport, energy, water resources, telecommunications and ICTs), considered as one major challenge Africa must face. In carrying out that mission, Regional Economic Communities should fully play their role as pillars of integration.

76. To that end, the Commission, with assistance from the African Development Bank and NEPAD Secretariat, designed a coordination mechanism for infrastructure development in Africa, by which various African stakeholders, led by the Commission, will avail themselves of a framework for joint action and of a forum for dialogue and discussion with Africa's development partners. In fact, through this mechanism, Africa's infrastructure development stakeholders would be able to speak with one voice and pursue a common agenda.

77. For that purpose, all development partners with whom the Commission has established truly privileged relations through partnerships that support Africa's efforts in infrastructure development. These, in particular, are:

- The Infrastructure Consortium for Africa, an initiative of former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Tony Blair, was launched in 2005 for the purpose of catalyzing financing for implementing NEPAD's Short-Term Action Plan (STAP).
- The European Union–Africa Partnership on Infrastructure /European Union–Africa Partnership on Energy, launched on 24 October 2007 in Addis Ababa, within the framework of the new European Union strategy with Africa.
- The Africa-South America Partnership (ASA) whose areas of cooperation are defined in the Abuja Declaration and Plan of Action adopted at the First ASA Summit which was held on 30 November 2006 in Abuja, Nigeria.
- The initiatives under way by other friendly countries of Africa, such as India, with which an important project is being executed, will not be overlooked. This project is pan-African network for online tele-medicine and tele-education services and for diplomatic communications (VVIP).

78. As also indicated above, Africa is pleased with the understanding and accompaniment it enjoyed in Tokyo, last May, during TICAD IV, where a substantial annual financial contribution of one (1) billion US dollars was announced for the development of infrastructure in Africa.

79. Lastly, the Commission is today entering a new dynamic in the mobilization of domestic financial resources, which is capable of affirming its determination to stem the deficit in infrastructure.

80. The commitments made at the “Connect Africa” Summit in Kigali on the Telecommunication/ICTs sector should serve as tools to strengthen this financial resource mobilization.

81. Moreover, it should be stressed that the severe oil crisis has seriously hit African countries, particularly poor oil importing countries; a crisis for which an unparalleled mobilization should be engaged by all stakeholders. The establishment of the African Petroleum Fund constitutes one of the solutions advocated by the Khartoum and Banjul Summits.

82. I would like to draw the attention of Council on the need to improve energy access and safety on the Continent; there is an urgent need to mobilize sufficient resources to implement major hydroelectric projects for integration, such as the Inga Projet in the Democratic Republic of Congo and other regional and sub-regional projects, networking projects to interconnect the various regions of Africa, as well as the development of other new and renewable sources of energy likely to access to the greatest number of African peoples to modern energy.

**c. Accelerating Agricultural Investments in Response to High Food Prices and Food Insecurity**

83. In the last three years, the prices of many key agricultural commodities have shown an upward trend. In January 2008, the FAO Food Price Index rose by almost 50% from January 2007; led by significant increases in the prices of cereals, dairy and vegetable oils. The rapid increase in food prices has had a particularly negative effect on those African countries that are net food importers. Forty five percent of rice and eighty five percent of wheat consumed in Africa is imported. This results in negative terms of trade for the majority of African countries. Majority of the people who bear the brunt of high food prices are those who live on less than one dollar because these are the people who spend 50 to 60 percent of their budget on food. These people are the most vulnerable and are at risk of hunger and malnutrition. While having an adverse effect on consumers, high food prices present an opportunity, in so far as they can motivate producers and investors to invest more along the whole food and agriculture value chain.

84. Working with its development partners, notably the FAO, WFP and IFPRI, the Commission identified five main reasons for the increase in food prices. First, there has been a drop in world cereal production in the last two years due to bad weather in the major producing countries. Secondly, stock levels have remained quite low, aggravating the impact of production shortfalls as markets worry about the lack of a buffer. Thirdly, petroleum and food prices are highly correlated, making it possible for the rapid rise in petroleum prices to exert an upward pressure on food prices. Fourthly, increased demand from the bio-fuels sector has pushed prices upwards. It is estimated that about 100 million tons of grain was used for bio-fuels in 2007; the United States alone utilizing over 80 million tons of maize to produce ethanol. Lastly, economic growth in some large developing countries is leading to changes in diet and increased demand for food crops. Over the last 15 years, meat consumption more than doubled in China and grew by 70 percent in Brazil and 20 percent in India. Since it takes some 7 kg of cereals to produce 1 kg of meat, this shift in diet is also leading to higher cereal prices.

85. Based on the analysis of the causes of high food prices, the Commission found that the impacts of high food prices have been felt not only at the national and regional levels, but have had significant negative implications at the household level. At national level, the impacts differ depending on whether a country is a net exporter or net importer of food. As generally net-food importers, many African countries have experienced an overall loss of their terms-of-trade. Also, as net fuel importers, most African countries have faced higher oil import costs in addition to higher food import costs. It was also proven that rising fuel costs are also contributing to the rising food prices through their impact on freight and transportation costs. Since food typically accounts for a large share of the consumer price index, many African countries are experiencing high levels of inflation. The overall inflation rate is expected to increase in Africa from 6% in 2007 to 7.5 percent in 2008 with over 10 countries expected to have double-digit inflation rates.

86. Notwithstanding the efforts the Commission is making to increase the productivity of food and agriculture in the continent, it is increasingly clear that higher food prices may jeopardize the fight against hunger, as they make it more difficult for households to access food. The population groups that are most vulnerable to higher food prices are those that buy more food than they sell (net-buyers), spend a large share of their income on food and have few coping mechanisms at their disposal. These are the urban poor, rural landless, pastoralists and many small-scale farmers and agro-pastoralists. Pastoralists are particularly vulnerable as they suffer at the same time from falling livestock prices. For vulnerable households, higher prices are having an impact on the quantity and quality of food consumed as well as on expenditures on other basic needs, such as education and health.

87. Although the current situation poses major policy challenges, the Commission has envisaged actions to address the problem of high food prices and assist vulnerable people in two phases: Immediate short-term and long-term. In the immediate short-term, there is urgent need to:

- Expand **emergency responses and humanitarian assistance**. Emergency agencies need to invest more in preparedness and mobilize their capabilities to monitor and assist vulnerable populations. Food or cash transfers need to be expanded and should target the poorest people, with a focus on early childhood nutrition, regions in distress, school feeding with take-home rations, and food and cash for work.
- **Eliminate agricultural export bans**. Although Governments have a legitimate interest in caring for their citizens first, the new wave of export restrictions requires urgent international attention and should be addressed by an *ad hoc* forum of global players negotiating according to a code of conduct and in a spirit of mutual trust building. The elimination of export bans will stabilize grain price fluctuations, reduce price levels by as much as 30 percent, and enhance the efficiency of agricultural production.
- **Undertake fast-impact food production programs in key areas (seeds, fertilizer, credit)**. Short-term action to promote agricultural growth requires access to seeds, fertilizers, and credit for the smallholder sector. Good seeds for rain-fed agriculture are essential for expanding production. There is need for small-scale farmers to have access to procurement programs for their agricultural products at guaranteed minimum prices that reflect long-term international market prices. Carefully subsidized programs for seeds, fertilizers, irrigation, electricity, and water should involve the private sector and facilitate a transition from initial “cash programs” to market-based arrangements.
- **Amend bio-fuel production policies**. A range of measures should be taken to make more grains and oilseeds currently used for fuel available for food and feed. These measures include freezing bio-fuel production at current levels, introducing a moratorium for bio-fuels based on grains and oilseeds



until prices come down to reasonable levels according to long-run supply and demand. A grain-based bio-fuels moratorium would quickly unlock grains and oilseeds for food. This measure might bring maize prices down by about 20 percent and, as a consequence, decrease wheat prices by about 10 percent.

88. The Commission envisages the following medium- to long-term actions to address the problem of high food prices:

- **Calm markets with market-oriented regulation of speculation, shared public grain stocks, strengthened food import financing, and reliable food aid.** Speculation is mainly a consequence, not a cause, of the price crisis, so over-regulation and market policing would be inappropriate responses. Surveillance and regulatory measures, however, such as monitoring speculative capital or limiting futures trading, should be taken to curb excessive speculation in agricultural commodity markets. Regional and global agreements on joint pooling of fixed portions of national stocks (reserves) would also calm the markets. A coordinated set of pledges for a modest grain reserve to be made by the main grain-producing countries should be established at global or regional levels. The pooling of global or regional public stocks, complemented by an import-financing facility, would allow countries with greater food deficits in a particular region to gain access to food supplies at reasonable and stable prices in times of crisis. It would also help contain the speculative expectations that fuel further price rises during the upswing. But such reserves have costs, depending upon their size, which need to be carefully weighed against potential benefits.
- **Invest in social protection.** The Commission is convinced that comprehensive social protection initiatives are required to address the risks facing the poor due to reduced access to food as a consequence of high prices. A hierarchy of appropriate social protection interventions includes both protective actions to mitigate short-term risks and preventative actions to preclude long-term negative consequences. Introducing or scaling up these interventions is complex, associated with substantial costs, and dependent on knowledge base and capacity. At the core of the protective actions are conditional **cash transfer programs, pension systems and employment programs**. These programs exist in many low-income countries and should be scaled up. **Preventative health and nutrition** programs targeted to vulnerable population groups (such as mothers, young children, and people living with HIV/AIDS) should be strengthened and scaled up to ensure universal coverage.
- **Scale up investments for sustained agricultural growth.** To transform the crisis into an opportunity for farmers and to build resilience to future food crises, a transition to viable long-term investments in support of sustained agricultural growth is urgently needed. Such investments are particularly needed in view of the emerging stress factors for agriculture from climate change that threaten to perpetuate the current crisis. Investments for sustained agricultural growth include expanded public spending for rural infrastructure, services, agricultural research, science and technology. New and innovative crop insurance

mechanisms should be introduced and tested at a larger scale. Information technology, improved weather data, and the expected high returns to insurance make innovation in this field now much more feasible. African leaders must implement their commitment to the Maputo Declaration to allocate at least 10 percent of their budgets to agriculture as soon as possible in order to achieve much-needed agricultural growth to meet poverty and hunger reduction targets. The needed supply response is not just a matter of the farm-level expansion of production, but must comprise the **whole food value chain**, with private sector actors in the food-processing and retail industries playing key roles. These investments would have high returns not only in terms of agricultural growth, but also in terms of poverty reduction in both rural and urban areas through increased production and employment and lower food prices.

89. In collaboration with the NEPAD Secretariat and other development partners, and working within the framework of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Commission is currently taking actions to implement the following initiatives to address the crisis of high food prices:

- African Common Market for Food Products;
- Pan-African Land Policy Initiative;
- Framework for African Food Security and the Pan-African Nutrition Initiative;
- Improving Rural Infrastructure and Trade Related Capacities for Market Access;
- Assessment of Early Warning Systems in Africa.

90. In May 2008 the Commission and NEPAD convened a four-day workshop for 18 African countries, in South Africa to identify food price induced constraints and propose practical solutions to the crisis. Participants included representatives of over 30 development partners, NGOs, farmer associations and research institutions and Regional Economic Communities (RECs). A total of 160 persons attended the workshop. The workshop represented an important milestone in building a coordinated African agriculture and food and nutrition security response to the high food prices within the framework and principles of CAADP.

91. Each of the participating countries presented a concept note/proposal on its proposed interventions and received advice from a wide range of experts on improving the proposals. As a follow-up to the workshop, the Commission, NEPAD Secretariat, FAO, WFP, IFAD and the World Bank agreed to hold joint follow-up missions to these countries to implement the recommendations of the workshop. A joint mission has been planned to Mozambique with subsequent visits to the following countries in June and July 2008: Sierra Leone, Senegal, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Uganda and Zambia.

92. The AU Commission also participated actively in the High-Level Conference on World Food Security: the Challenges of Climate Change and Bio-energy, held at the Headquarters of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Rome, Italy from 3 to 5 June 2008. During this Conference about US\$ 7 billion was

pledged to fight against hunger and for agricultural development. The money will benefit countries hard hit by the current world food crisis, allowing them to grow enough food for themselves in the coming planting seasons, and helping them to achieve continuing food security through investment in agriculture and research.

**d) Oil price upswings**

93. Since 2003, oil prices have recorded a quasi-exponential increase. Today, the price of a barrel of oil has reached record levels, oscillating between \$138 and \$140 on the New York market; whereas it was hardly worth \$10 before the first oil shock in 1973. This situation is largely beneficial to oil-producing countries, because of the significant improvement in their balance of payments and the unexpected additional financial resources they earn. These additional resources, which increase the financing capacity of public authorities, may be used in several ways: either to increase public expenditure or reduce taxes; or to pile up financial assets or to significantly reduce the public debt burden; or further still, to for direct redistribution to the populations of the windfall from oil sales and also, above all, finance development projects.

94. As for oil-importing countries, particularly those on our continent, Council will recall that they experience an exogenous shock, with consequences beyond words, and which is difficult to check. These countries witnessed, overnight, an ever-increasing deterioration in their balance of payments and their external transactions accounts; as well as rising production costs, which concurrently placed them in an inflationary situation, with an accompanying increase in fragility and insecurity of their economies. The increase in the prices of essential goods, which the entire world is experiencing today, and which was the cause of protests in some African countries, was, according to analysts, partially due to oil price hikes. Such a situation, if unattended to, contains all the elements for holding down the countries concerned in a state of increasing impoverishment, thus distancing them further from the MDGs.

95. Joint AU/AfDB studies on (i) the impact of rising oil prices on African economies, (ii) prospects for the hydrocarbons (oil and gas) sector in Africa, and (iii) mechanisms for establishing and operating the African Petroleum Fund, have been completed.

96. The conclusions of all these completed studies will be forwarded to African Union Member States, as decided by the 8<sup>th</sup> Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union. Workshops will be organized during 2008 to disseminate their findings.

97. Concerning the establishment of the African Petroleum Fund, it will be lodged at the AfDB and should become operational as soon as the requisite resources for its take off have been collected, that is, a minimum amount estimated at two hundred million US dollars. A Round Table of donors and other development partners will be organized during the second half of 2008. It is expected that African oil or gas producing countries will also make contributions.

98. This Fund will use resources obtained from donors to provide assistance to net oil-importing, low-income countries severely hit by petroleum price increases. This assistance is intended to help those countries face transient balance of payment difficulties. The Fund will intervene through non-refundable grants, low-interest loans or a mix of both types of instruments. The Funds will also finance other activities, notably capacity building for oil-producing countries in areas such as negotiating and managing oil contracts, evaluating projects for building petroleum product refining, processing, transport and storage plants.

**e) Science and Technology**

99. Nowadays, development is above all based on the knowledge economy. Therefore, Africa should speed up its efforts to master the sciences, technologies and innovations. By dedicating the January 2007 Summit in Addis Ababa to the theme: “Science, Technology and Scientific Research for Development”, you indicated the way forward. The Kigali meeting whose theme was “Connecting Africa” and the Lisbon AU–EU Summit held in October and December, respectively, largely discussed the same issues.

100. In that connection, action plans and strategies elaborated are now in their execution phase. Consequently, some dozen centres of excellence, that is, two per region, will be set up by the end of 2010. Efforts are under way to connect universities and schools, and several projects on the knowledge economy will soon be implemented in conjunction with various partners, notably including the European Union. But these efforts fall short, as Africa remains the continent on which communication is the most difficult and which communicates poorly with other continents. As an off shoot of the Kigali Summit, the Commission will bring together telecommunications regulatory authorities of Member States in March 2009, to scrutinize the status of communication in our regions and countries. We intend to forward, for your consideration, their conclusions to be tabled at one of our subsequent sessions.

101. Moreover, in accordance with a decision by the Addis Ababa Summit in January 2007 on the creation of a Pan-African Intellectual Property Organization, action was taken and this entity will be established in the coming months.

**f) Education and Youth**

102. Education is a major concern on the continent. The Member States of the African Union are well aware of the stakes and adopted in 1996, a First Decade of Education in Africa followed in 2006, by a Second Decade which inter alia put emphasis on Higher Education and Vocational Training. In this context, initial consultations are taking place for the establishment on the continent of five (05) Pan-African theme reference universities, one in each region. This project will be finalised in November 2008 and submitted to the appropriate organs of the Union. If, as I hope, it wins your approval, the first of the university institutions would see the light of day in October 2009 and the last ones in September 2010. The key characteristic of Pan-African universities would be

the involvement of African scientists from the Diaspora in their design and management, sponsorship of students, the systematic partnership with the private sector and making the most of scientific results obtained by teachers, researchers and students to develop the host community and the region. All these actions are the result of the Consolidated Action Plan on Science and Technology whose vision is to build an Africa free from poverty and well integrated in the global economy of knowledge.

103. As concerns youth, the asset of the Africa of tomorrow, vocational training centres have been initiated by Member States in cooperation with various development partners in different countries on the continent. Unfortunately, they still don't have the expected visibility and often lack efficiency. The involvement of the Commission in this sector will consist first of all in harmonising, coordinating and promoting such centres in favour of the youth notably in countries that have recently been subject to conflicts. The programme will involve creating, or revitalising five vocational training centres: one for each region, the specific vocation of which will be to give hope again to thousands of youngsters, thus freeing them from unemployment while giving our regional economies qualified labour which is often lacking in production firms. This youth that despair sometimes compels to look for greener pastures abroad at the risk of their lives, deserve greater attention on our part.

104. At the Banjul Summit in 2006, you instructed the Commission to come up with an African Youth Charter which was drawn up and signed by the majority of States. But it still needs many more ratifications before it can come into force. I call on all Member States to ratify this Charter, thereby giving a strong signal to our youth that they have the support of our Governments. In a bid to open this youth to Africa and the world, an African Union voluntary programme has been undertaken. A pilot phase will be starting in the next few months, in partnership with countries that already have experience in the matter in the world and particularly in Africa.

#### **g) Trade Partnerships and International Negotiations**

##### **EPAs and the Integration of Africa**

105. In recent years, African countries have undertaken a number of policy reforms to promote economic growth and meet the challenges of development. The improvement recorded in growth performance in the last few years can be attributed largely to these reform efforts. In 2007, as many as twenty-five African countries achieved a growth rate of more than 5 per cent while the majority of the countries on our continent grew at an average of more than 3 per cent over the past five years. As impressive as current growth rates may be, they are still below the growth rate of 7 per cent that is required to achieve the MDGs by the target date of 2015. Deepening of economic and political reforms is therefore critical.

106. While internal political and economic reforms are important in the current era of globalisation in which the flows of trade and investment have become the major engines of economic growth, achieving the MDGs and meeting the other challenges of

development in Africa will require that the imbalances in the multilateral trading system be removed so that the continent can significantly increase its share of global trade and investment. It is in this regard that the current multilateral trade negotiations- the WTO and EPA- are of importance to Africa. The successful completion of both negotiations, with development outcomes and adequate reflection of the interests and concerns of Africa in the resultant agreements, will enable our continent to effectively use trade and investment to promote sustainable economic growth and development.

107. The African Union is not a party in both the EPA and WTO negotiations. But at the AU Maputo Summit of 2003, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government mandated the AUC to coordinate and harmonise the efforts of African countries in the negotiations. The AUC has been using this mandate to organise the Member States for the development of common African positions and for speaking with the same voice in the negotiations. There is no doubt that in both the WTO and EPA negotiations, our negotiators have been able to articulate well the trade and development concerns of Africa. However, Africa's expectations for development outcomes of the negotiations are yet to be realised.

108. With regard to the EPA negotiations, as at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2007 when the WTO waiver for Cotonou trading arrangements expired, 18 African countries have had to initial Interim EPAs with the EU in order to avoid the disruption of their trade. The assessment of these Interim EPAs indicates that, contrary to the objectives set for EPAs in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement, they cannot serve as effective instruments for the promotion of sustainable development, the eradication of poverty, the reinforcement of Africa's regional integration initiatives, and the gradual integration of the continent into the global economy. With the exception of East African Community (EAC) Interim EPA, all the agreements so far initialled by individual African countries were done outside of the framework of the RECs they belong to and of the regional groupings within which they negotiated. This agreement have not made it possible to address the development dimension in the signatory countries, thus complicating Africa's integration efforts. Now that the issue of the disruption of trade with the EU has been resolved, it is necessary, in the negotiations of full and comprehensive EPAs, that Member States return to the regional frameworks and configurations, for the enhancement of their bargaining power and attainment of outcomes that can promote Africa's development and integration.

#### **TICAD IV**

109. The Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) was held in Yokohama, Japan, from 28 – 30 May 2008. The fourth TICAD, organised under the theme - "Towards a Vibrant Africa: a Continent of Hope and Opportunity," marks the fifteenth anniversary of the process. The Conference brought together 51 African countries, with about 43 African Heads of State and Government, 74 international and regional organisations, including the African Union, private sector, civil society organisations, and notable individuals, all of whom contributed in diverse ways to the discussions of the Summit. Also participating in the Conference were

representatives from 34 partner countries, including the G-8 and Asian countries. The fourth TICAD identified the following three priority areas: (i) Boosting Economic Growth; (ii) Ensuring Human Security, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the consolidation of peace and Democratisation; and (iii) Addressing Environmental issues and climate change.

110. The Fourth TICAD adopted the Yokohama Declaration and Action Plan. The Declaration summarises the commitments of Japan and other partners to African development. The action-oriented Yokohama Action Plan outlines a range of activities under each priority area of TICAD IV that will be implemented over the next five years. The TICAD Follow-up Mechanism, which was designed to monitor and assess the implementation of the activities was also introduced and adopted by participants during the Conference.

111. During TICAD II, Japan made the following pledges of assistance to Africa over the next five years:

- To double Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Africa by 2012;
- To provide up to US\$4 billion of soft loans to Africa for the development of infrastructure, especially road networks and ports;
- To double its grants in aid and technical cooperation for Africa over the next five years;
- To organise a New Technical Assistance Corps of Water Specialists (Water Security Action Team) that will work in Africa for the improvement of water supply;
- To inaugurate within Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), a Facility to the scale of US\$2.5 billion for African investment by Japanese businesses;
- To train one hundred thousand (100,000) Africans as health workers over the next five years;
- To assist build “One Stop Border Posts” designed to make crossing national borders more efficient in the areas of customs and immigration procedures;
- To increase the number of African students studying in Japan;
- To double current rice production output to 14 million tons over the next ten years;
- To work with other countries and international organisations in developing irrigation systems, improving crop varieties, and fostering extension workers in the field of agriculture in Africa;
- To undertake an emergency food assistance package equivalent to US\$100 million, a significant part of it to target Africa;
- Under the Cool Earth Partnership to protect the environment, to commit US\$ 10 billion over five years to tackle environmental problems in the world including Africa;
- To contribute US\$560 million to the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, most of which goes to Africa.

112. I would like to commend Japan for these commitments aimed at addressing the challenges facing Africa. It is my hope that these commitments will be speedily implemented. Having said this, I need to indicate that a number of Member States were of the view that the African Union Commission should not continue to be an Observer in a Summit that concerns the continent's development. Accordingly, there is need to engage with the present co-organisers to ensure that the African Union is henceforth considered as Co-organiser in future TICADs.

## **WTO Negotiations**

113. To date, the development outcomes of the Doha Round of WTO negotiations are few and limited. They include the adoption of the Aid for Trade initiative, the flexibilities in the TRIPs Agreement, and the grant of duty-free and quota free market access to LDCs. While Africa should continue to press for the speedy conclusion of the Doha Round with significant development outcomes, our Member States should take full advantage of the positive results achieved so far. In particular, the offer of Aid for Trade and the commitments of assistance by development partners such as the EU, USA, Japan, should be effectively utilised to enhance our trade and productive capacity, to build infrastructure, to improve interconnectivity and consolidate our regional integration, and to improve our competitiveness in the global economy. The speedy implementation of the Action Plans for Science and Technology and accelerated industrial development of Africa, already adopted by AU Summit, should be accorded high priority in our agenda for effectively integrating our continent into the global economy and having a fair share of the benefits of globalisation.

### **h) Social Development**

#### **Reduce child mortality**

114. In 2000, the world leaders endorsed the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and set 2015 as the target date for achievement of most of the Goals. The MDGs put health squarely at the centre of the international development agenda with three of the eight MDGs directly related to health. These are MDGs 4, 5 and 6.

115. Under-five mortality rates in the African Region dropped from 185 per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 165 per 1,000 in 2005 hardly making a dent in the objective of a two-thirds reduction by 2015.

116. Children in sub-Saharan Africa face the gravest challenges in terms of survival. The Region accounts for 44 percent of the world's under-five mortality and each year over 4.6 million children under the age of 5 years die in Africa. Most of these deaths are due to common, preventable and treatable conditions occurring singly or in combination: Neonatal causes (26%), Respiratory infections (21%), Malaria (17%), Diarrhoea



diseases (17%), HIV/AIDS (7%), and others (4%). Malnutrition is associated with at least 50% of deaths. Currently only five African countries are on track in achieving the MDG. Twenty one (21) countries are making progress but it is insufficient.

117. Current strategies to reduce the unacceptably high under five mortality include: the implementation at scale of a key package of cost effective interventions including: Africa Health Strategy, Newborn care; Infant and young child feeding including micronutrient supplementation; Prevention of malaria using insecticide treated nets; Immunisation; Management of common childhood illnesses, IMCI; Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission of HIV and care & treatment of HIV exposed or infected children.

118. One success story in child survival in recent years is the dramatic decline of measles deaths in Africa which fell by 91% between 2000 and 2006, from an estimated 396 000 to 36 000, reaching the United Nations 2010 goal to cut measles deaths by 90% four years early. The significant decline in measles deaths in Africa was made possible by the firm commitment of national governments and development partners to fully implement the measles reduction strategy, which includes vaccinating all children against measles before their first birthday via routine health services and providing a second opportunity for measles vaccination through mass vaccination campaigns. This success is a clear demonstration that with Government commitment, Partners coordination and resource mobilisation, other causes of child death can be addressed successfully.

### **Combating HIV/AIDS**

119. HIV/AIDS continues to be an enormous barrier for the economic and social development in sub-Saharan Africa with more than 68% of global HIV infections and more than 76% of AIDS related deaths. Although recent data published by WHO and UNAIDS shows that in most sub-Saharan Africa countries, national HIV prevalence has either stabilised or is showing signs of decline; yet new cases are still exceedingly too high about 60% of the world's total (2.1 Million). The rates of ARV coverage by the end of 2007 were of approximately 42% of those in need, compared with 17 % at the end of 2005, showing a significant improvement. Although the ARV coverage has increased substantially in the region, there is need to continue to intensify HIV prevention efforts to reduce the number of new infections (in 2007 an estimated 1.7 million adults and children became infected with HIV in the sub-Saharan Africa) and to strengthen country's epidemiological and behavioural surveillance systems to proper monitoring of progress towards HIV/AIDS MDG targets. Few countries have started to observe declines or stabilisation in HIV prevalence trends among pregnant women aged 15-24. Only 8 countries are on the way to achieve the target of reduction of HIV and AIDS among pregnant women 15-24 years.

120. Constraints that slowed down the response vis a vis the HIV/AIDS epidemic were mainly due to weak health systems; inadequate human resources; unpredicted funds;

inequality coverage of services between urban and rural areas; poor harmonization and alignment to national priorities and prevailing AIDS-related stigma and discrimination. However, there is an increasing high political commitment from countries, with greater involvement of the civil society in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

### **Combating Tuberculosis**

121. Targets for global TB control have been set within the framework of the MDGs. However, the two key global indicators adopted by the World Health Assembly are the detection and treatment of new cases in Directly Observed Treatment short course (DOTS) programmes. The Stop TB strategy is WHO's recommended approach to reducing the burden of TB in line with the global targets. The Stop TB strategy has six major components: (i) DOTS expansion and enhancement; (ii) addressing TB/HIV, MDR-TB and other challenges; (iii) contributing to health systems strengthening; (iv) engaging all care providers; (v) empowering patients, and communities; and (vi) enabling and promoting research.

122. Many countries in Africa have adopted the Stop TB strategy. Currently the DOTS population coverage averages 91%. The estimated regional prevalence, incidence and mortality associated with TB have increased compared to the 1990 baseline.

123. Tuberculosis incidence and mortality is increasing because of high prevalence of HIV in some countries, the emergence and spread of drug-resistant strains and a growing number of refugees and internally displaced people. Stepping up the fight against TB requires improvements in the effectiveness of health systems and in the management of national TB control programmes. Opportunities exist through the Global Fund and other donors for countries to access additional resources required for intensification of the fight against TB.

### **Implementing the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa**

124. The Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa was developed in line with the AU Assembly Decision (Assembly/Dec.55 (IV), adopted in Abuja in January 2005 and also in conformity with the Gaborone Declaration. During the Third Session of the Conference of AU Ministers of Health which was held in Johannesburg, South Africa, under the theme; "Strengthening of Health Systems for Equity and Development", a Technical Committee which was mandated to study detailed implications of local production of pharmaceuticals in Africa was established.

125. This plan is based on the following six priority areas agreed upon by Experts: Mapping, Situation Analysis and compilation of findings, Manufacturing agenda, Intellectual Property Issues, Political, Geographical and Economic Considerations, and Financing. The African Union Commission in collaboration with WHO has already done some of the activities outlined in this phase.

126. This is also in line with the outcomes of the AU Special Summit of May 2006 in Abuja, Nigeria. The summit adopted a Call for Accelerated Action Towards Universal Access to HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria (ATM) Services in Africa.

127. A successful implementation of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa will enable Member States to access affordable drugs in the fight against disease burden especially HIV and AIDS, TB and Malaria.

128. It must be emphasised here that the Plan is not starting from a zero situation. The main purpose of the plan is a framework within which to strengthen pharmaceutical manufacturing activities where they exist on the continent and support the establishment of such activities where they are needed but do not exist at the moment.

### **First AU Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development**

129. In the last decade, Africa has made significant strides in advancing various social and economic development issues. However, social development has not had significant impact on the lives of the population in general and the vulnerable groups, in particular. A lot more needs to be done to address the social challenges including widespread poverty, unemployment, violence, disease, conflicts, disasters and social welfare services.

130. The right to development is embodied in the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the AU Constitutive Act. The vision is to mainstream sound and sustainable social development in all development policies with a view to raising the living standard of African people. Since the 1990s the African Union Commission has taken measures to address the social challenges by adopting policy frameworks, Plans of Action, Declarations and Decisions on various social issues. The challenge is to ensure that these instruments are implemented at national levels and have real impact in changing the lives of the people especially the most vulnerable group.

131. It is within the framework of existing social development policy documents and the mandate given to the AU Commission by the AU Executive Council and Assembly of Heads of State and Government that the AU Commission will convene the First Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development in October 2008 on the theme "Towards a Sustainable Social Development Agenda for Africa". The Republic of Namibia has kindly agreed to host the Conference. The main outcome of the Conference will be the Social Policy Framework for Africa. However, the Conference will also assess progress made in implementing the various social development instruments such as the Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing; the Plan of Action on the Family in Africa; the Plan of Action on the Decade of Disabled Persons; the study on Social Protection, etc. The other objectives of the Conference will be to identify gaps and forge partnership with development partners and Civil Society Organisations in supporting Member States to implement the instruments. The AU Executive Council and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in 2009 will endorse the outcome of the Conference.

## **Social Policy Framework in Africa**

132. The Social Policy Framework in Africa is based on the principle of enabling Governments to protect and promote the welfare of their societies and providing opportunities for individuals and groups to achieve a maximum standard of living. The SPF will therefore be a framework which will guide Member States in promoting the rights, and ensuring the welfare of the vulnerable, marginalised and excluded groups as well as be utilised in developing social development programmes at national level. The draft Social Policy Framework in Africa will be presented to the Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development for their consideration.

133. As part of social development, social protection issues are gaining momentum on the Continent. Social Protection is a means for States to protect citizens from risks, vulnerabilities and deprivations and promote strategies and programmes aimed at ensuring a minimum of standard of living for all people. It is also a mechanism to ensure social sustainability and contributes to economic growth and reduces income inequality and overwhelming poverty. Social protection can be in the form of cash to benefit the most needy people but also in the form of risk management, and ensuring equity and rights. The issue of social protection has therefore, been included in the Agenda of the First Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development. In this regard, the AU Commission has conducted a study on social protection in Africa and convened three Regional Experts Group Meetings on Social Protection (in Egypt, Senegal and Uganda) on the theme: 'Investing in Social Protection in Africa.' The study as well as the recommendations from the Regional Experts Group Meetings will be presented to the Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development in October 2008.

## **AU/IGAD/IOM Migration Workshop**

134. The African Union Commission (AUC), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) hosted a workshop on Inter-state and Intra Regional Cooperation on Migration management in the IGAD Region from 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> May 2008, at the Headquarters of the AU Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop was part of the implementation of the relevant AU Decisions on migration and development and a follow-up of the AU Commission mission to Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Republic of Djibouti conducted on 13-16 April 2008 to discuss on the implementation of the AU main policy documents on migration and development.

135. The main outcome of the workshop is the Declaration on the Establishment of Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Regional Consultative Process (IGAD-RCP) on Migration. The IGAD-RCP has a core function of promoting the common position of the IGAD Member States and African Union as provided in the Migration Policy Framework and to facilitate regional dialogue and cooperation on migration policy issues amongst the IGAD Member States and to improve inter-state and intra-regional cooperation on migration management issues in East Africa Region,

in particular among the IGAD Member States, as well as strengthen cooperation between these countries and EU Member States as well as transit countries such as Chad, Egypt, Libya, Niger.

### **III. SHARED VALUES**

#### **a) Democracy and elections**

136. Matters relating to democracy, elections, governance and human rights are fundamental to the work of the Commission. Whilst we have experienced very positive progress across the continent, you are aware that we continue to face challenges and need to apply our minds and our collective efforts and commitment on consolidating the democratic values and practices we sought to establish through the creation of the African Union (AU).

137. Our continent continues its relentless march towards democracy. Pluralist elections are one of the essential features of this process. Since your last session, a series of elections have been organised on the continent, in Djibouti, in Equatorial Guinea and in Zimbabwe. Following invitations duly addressed to us and in accordance with our mandate, we sent observers to Djibouti and Zimbabwe. Other elections will take place in the course of the year, in Angola, Rwanda, Côte-d'Ivoire, Guinea and Ghana. This is irrefutable proof of our collective willingness to forge ahead, to constantly move the democratic process forward.

138. However, it should be acknowledged that the problems facing this process are numerous and real, in spite of the significant inroads made on the continent. What needs to be remembered fundamentally, is that the democratisation process is today an irreversible reality on the continent. This is most gratifying and we pay special tribute to all those who contributed and continue to do so with a view to strengthening the democratic process on the continent.

139. In particular, we commend the electoral commissions of these countries for their continued commitment to create and maintain an atmosphere of peace and an open electoral framework where political parties and other stakeholders are able to operate. It is our hope that inclusive electoral processes in the continent will continue to be observed in line with the African Union's Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa and the vision for African continent where democratic governance is upheld in a peaceful environment.

140. Beyond our willingness to carry out the mandate you entrusted to us, we consider our presence on the ground as a absolute necessity, that of closely supporting our Member States in the realisation of the democratic vision of the continental organisation, being by their side to make sure, of course, that the processes begun here and there are not only carried out fairly, freely and transparently, but also, and more importantly, in an orderly and peaceful manner, and that beyond legality, the legitimacy of institutions is reinforced.

141. It is gratifying to note that generally speaking elections that took place recently were carried out in the best possible conditions. The great challenge to be taken up is in the management of the results. It seems important to me that we reflect on this together so as to ensure that the post election situations and delays in publishing results - the causes of which may be justified – do not generate violence and contestations highly detrimental to the democratic dynamics set in motion on the continent.

142. The experience in Kenya however raises the critical issue of whether in fact we do need an invitation for the observation of elections. So far the AU has dispatched observers at the invitation of the countries concerned. We should have a proactive approach in monitoring and observing elections.

143. At the level of the Commission, we will begin a dynamic and deep reflection on the general problems of elections on the continent and on the way to observe them that we will submit at the appropriate time.

144. To conclude this item, I would like to inform you that the Electoral Assistance Unit and Fund that you decided to set up are operational, with the overall mandate to build the institutional capacity for the promotion of democracy and democratic elections. If you recall, putting in place this new administrative unit was a direct response to the Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections, which underlined the need to strengthen the organisation's efforts in deepening the democratisation process in Africa. In addition to building institutional capacity for the promotion of democratic elections in the continent we will, over the course of the next year, review our approaches for the support of democratisation processes in Africa. We will develop more effective election observation systems and facilitate the development of capacities of national electoral institutions, amongst others, so as to ensure that we are indeed, adding concrete value and entrenching democratic practices in our continent.

145. I would like to launch an appeal to each and every one to contribute to the Fund, as a mark of our common willingness to help build the capacity of our Member States and create the most optimum conditions for the holding of elections that we all want to be free and democratic.

**b) Rule of Law and Human Rights**

146. The promotion and protection of human rights remains an integral part of the agenda of the African Union Commission. The Commission continues to work with its diverse partners in and outside the continent in the implementation of this agenda, taking cognisance of the Kigali Declaration of May 2003, which was adopted by the African Union as its policy framework for the advancement of human rights in Africa.

147. The Commission has deployed efforts in reinforcing relations between the African Union Organs on human rights, encouraging Member States that have not yet done so

to establish and support National Human Rights Institutions, building strategic cooperation with partners (the United Nations, European Union etc.) on human rights issues. There is need to build on these initiatives.

148. The challenges to the promotion and protection of human rights, include the non-ratification of regional human rights instruments by some Member States, according the same importance to economic, social and cultural rights and civil and political rights, and applying, at all levels, a right-based approach to policy, programme, planning, implementation and evaluation. Human rights in general, and the rise of women, children, refugees and non-combatants in particular continue to be violated quietly and with impunity on the continent.

149. Therefore, I would like to encourage Member States that have not yet done so to so to ratify, domesticate, and respect regional and international human rights instruments, adopt a holistic approach in the promotion and the protection of human rights, ensure that human rights are central to conflict resolution initiatives. The Commission will continue to make efforts in the mainstreaming of human rights in the programs of the African Union.

### **c) The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance**

150. Over a year ago, our Heads of State and Government adopted the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. This is another major step towards realising the democratic vision of the continent by translating into a legal instrument, the political commitments collectively made to consolidate democracy and good governance on the continent.

151. Within the ambits of your collective commitment, we have over the past months focused increased attention on ensuring that the African Charter on Democracy Elections and Governance that you adopted finds practice expression across Member States. We have held popularisation and ratification meetings within all of the regions of the African Union (AU). The latter has just been held in Kigali and brought together representatives from East African Member States. Before that a meeting of Member States from Northern, West and Central Africa was held in Bujumbura from 15 to 17 March 2008.

152. The various initiatives that we have taken since the adoption of the Charter, for its signature, ratification and entry into force, have shown the need for greater interaction, sustained and constructive dialogue with Member States and the various concerned players, notably the Civil Society, with a view to a better appropriation of this important instrument which tackles problems whose extreme sensibility requires our patience and a constructive approach. I believe that we should take the time to convince where there might be reticence and where they might be difficulty to understand.

153. That said, I am aware of what is at stake in the rapid ratification and coming into force of the Charter and I do not doubt the willingness – clearly expressed by our

leaders through its adoption – to make the process of concluding this main instrument in the promotion and consolidation of democracy and good governance on the continent a success.

154. For its part, the Commission will continue to work with RECs and other stakeholders on the ratification process and eventual domestication of this Charter. The central challenge at this stage is to ensure that we all take the necessary steps to ensure ratification.

#### **d) Gender Equality**

155. The Commission has made significant progress with regard to implementation of commitments that advance Gender Equality. In particular, progress has been made in the implementation of the Protocol on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa as well as the Solemn Declaration in Gender Equality in Africa. The Commission through the WGDD is at an advanced stage in finalising an AU Gender Policy for the AU, its Organs and the Commission. Furthermore the WGDD has been successful in implementing Gender Components in the AU horizon 2004 – 2007 and is in the process of developing a new plan for the period 2008 – 2011. While a lot of progress is being made in achieving AU commitments on gender some challenges still exist. One of the Gender Challenge that the Commission continues to face is the realisation of the Parity Principle in the Professional Cadre of AUC staff, which is a good barometer of the existence of this challenge in other AU organs and institutions. In accordance with Article 4 (L) of the constitutive Act, the AU is under obligation to make progressive movement towards parity. Your Excellencies will recall that in the Chairperson's report to the January Summit, it was clearly demonstrated that Parity has been achieved at the Commissioners level which is the highest and the general staff level, which is the lowest. More needs to be done to realise the Parity Principle at the middle cadre levels and it is envisaged that the WGDD 5 years Plan of Action will guide the Commissions and AU organ in realising this goal.

156. The Commission undertakes furthermore to cooperate closely with the PRC and other Organs of the Union as well as its specialised institutions so as to project as one the image of an Organisation in motion, ready to take up the major challenges of our continent, with consistency and determination to achieve together the results expected by our Policy Organs.

#### **e) Integration, Fight against Xenophobia and African Passport**

157. In view of recent experiences in some African countries are obliged to reflect on xenophobia in our continent. The acts violence perpetrated a few weeks ago against migrants and other individuals in South Africa are indeed a matter of deep concern. These experiences do bring into sharp focus our collective commitment to integration. When we experience such levels of xenophobia, we must, as a matter of urgency, confront the reality that such instances go against the principles of integration we



espouse through the Africa Union. We are indeed obliged to find solutions to the xenophobia experienced and ensure that such actions do not take place in any Member State and indeed anywhere in the world.

158. The integration of the continent is, needless to say, our common strategic objective. Its real realisation can only be possible if, beyond our States, our people are integrated. The establishment of a Pan-African passport is the answer to this ambition. Such a document will allow for the free movement of the African peoples across the African space, thereby enabling them to intermingle freely. This seems to be a key parameter for the realisation of the unified continent we all wish for.

159. The Commission has begun the process which should lead it to introduce such a passport. It seems important for us to proceed gradually, starting with the African Union Diplomatic and Service Passports. It is a trial stage which will enable us to evaluate the possible advantages and drawbacks of such a commitment. I would like to believe that we shall cross this stage without any hindrance and that we will be able within a reasonable length of time to establish a Pan-African passport for common use by Africans. At this juncture, I would like to inform Council that the process of establishing diplomatic and service passports is ongoing and very soon we will be able to deliver them in the Commission before considering the possibility of granting them to nationals of Member States on the basis of the understanding we will have reached.

#### **IV. STRENGTHENING OF INSTITUTIONS**

##### **a) NEPAD Integration into Union structures**

160. NEPAD was adopted as an integrated socio-economic programme of the African Union. Its primary objective is to eradicate poverty in the Continent through the coordination and implementation of a wide variety of economic and social development projects. However, there has existed a duplication and overlap between the mandate of NEPAD and the activities of the African Union, impeding them to deal affectively with development challenges facing the Continent. This was, amongst others, one of the reasons that informed the Maputo Declaration of 2003.

161. It will be recalled that the 2007 Maputo (Mozambique) Summit Decision (Assembly/AU/Decl.8) agreed to fully integrate NEPAD into the processes and structures of the African Union Commission (AUC) within a period of three years or until a time when the structures and processes of the AUC become operational. The Declaration builds on the Communiqué of the Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) of November 2, 2002, which stated *inter-alia* that “the NEPAD Secretariat is to be an interim arrangement to service the HSGIC pending completion of the transition process into the African Union”. As such, the intention has been to fuse the processes and structures of both the African Union and NEAD and for the vision and concepts inherent within NEPAD to be fully led by the African Union and its Organs.

162. However, despite numerous efforts, the integration of NEPAD into the African Union did not materialise until the 10<sup>th</sup> AU Assembly in Addis Ababa in January/February 2008. The Summit adopted a resolution to proceed with the integration of NEPAD, immediately and expeditiously. It was also resolved that the 13 point conclusions of the 18<sup>th</sup> NEPAD HSGIC Algiers Brainstorming Summit of 2007 should form the basis of the integration process.

163. With a view to implementing the Algiers recommendations, I have put in place a Coordinating Unit, which will amongst others, elaborate a detailed road map on the integration of NEPAD. The Unit comprises staff from the AUC and representatives from the NEPAD Secretariat, under the supervision of the AU Commissioner for the Economic Affairs. This Unit held its inaugural meeting on June 10, 2008, at the AUC in Addis Ababa, to examine some of the key issues relating to the integration of the NEPAD Secretariat into the structures and processes of the of the AUC. Some of these key issues included discussions on the:

- i. Coordinating Unit, its terms of reference (ToR), work programme and report back to the NEPAD Steering Committee, Ad-Hoc Committee, HSGIC and the AU Assembly in Egypt.
- ii. Recruitment of a new NEPAD Chief Executive Officer (CEO); for which a job profile has been agreed between the AUC and the NEPAD Secretariat;
- iii. Draft ToR for the study on the integration of NEPAD into the AUC structures and processes. The study will focus on, amongst others, the mandate and focus areas of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Authority, organisational structure as well as autonomous and sustainable funding mechanisms; and;
- iv. The host agreement with the Government of South Africa for the NEPAD Secretariat in the transition period.

164. I am convinced that these issues that have been dragging for long will be taken on board by the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) so as to provide political guidance for the implementation of the proposals made. I am sure that from now until the next Summit in January 2009, the Commission would have made substantial progress on the integration of NEPAD into the structures and processes of the AUC.

**b) The Creation of Financial Institutions provided for under Article 19 of the Constitutive Act**

165. The Council will recall that Article 19 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union provides for the creation of the African Investment Bank, the African Monetary Fund and the African Central Bank. Council will also recall that the Heads of State and Government have already decided where these institutions will be located that is, in Tripoli, Libya, in Yaoundé, Cameroon and in Abuja, Nigeria respectively. Similarly, Council will recall the decisions also taken by the Heads of State and Government to

establish Technical Steering Committees (one Committee for each institution) in countries that are to host the Headquarters of these institutions, so as to enable these Committees to carry out all the tasks needed prior to the effective creation of these institutions. The Technical Committees must be supported and coordinated by a Secretariat placed under the supervision of the Department of Economic Affairs.

166. With regard to the implementation of these decisions, I would like to inform the Council of the following:

- i) Concerning the African Investment Bank, the Technical Steering Committee is already in place. Experts are already at work after the Commission negotiated and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Libyan Jamahiriya and after the Authorities of the latter put a brand new three-floored building and appropriate equipment at its disposal. The Committee based in Tripoli will finalise all the documents needed (Protocol, Headquarters Agreement, credit policy, the bank's capital subscription,...) by June 2009 at the latest. The documents will then be submitted to the Heads of State and Government, for consideration and adoption; this, I have no doubt, will facilitate the creation of the African Investment Bank. I would like, through you, to express my sincere thanks to the "Leader" of the Libyan Revolution, "Brother MUAMMAR KADAFI, for the facilities and excellent working conditions put at our disposal to begin the process of creating the African Investment Bank in the medium term.
- ii) As regards the African Monetary Fund, the Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission and Cameroon has already been signed. The Authorities of the Republic of Cameroon have promised to invite the Commission, in the coming weeks, to take delivery of the offices as well as the equipment needed to enable this Committee's experts to carry out their activities under favourable conditions. Here too, I would like to express our thanks to President Paul BIYA and to the Cameroonian Authorities, and urge them to do their utmost to enable the Experts Committee to be operational in the next few days.
- iii) As for the African Central Bank, Nigeria, the host country, has just forwarded its comments on the Draft Memorandum of Understanding to the Commission. The country also invited the Commission to come over to negotiate and sign the Memorandum of Understanding. After this session, the Commission will respond favourably to the invitation of the Nigerian Authorities. In this connection, we would like to express to President UMARU YAR'ADUA our appreciation and encouragement.

167. Council will note that the creation of the financial institutions is not an easy task. Nevertheless, have no doubt that with the active leadership and strong political will of the Heads of State and Government, these Institutions will see the light of day in the

medium term as far as the African Investment Bank and the African Monetary Fund are concerned, and in a relatively longer term with respect to the African Central Bank.

168. These Institutions symbolise the sovereignty and autonomy of our continent in relation to the financing of its development. Their creation must be at the heart of the everyday concerns of the political and economic decision-makers of our continent. The Commission, under my authority, will fully play its part so that these Institutions, symbols par excellence of the independence, unity and solidarity of our continent, are indeed created.

### **c) Strengthening the Commission**

169. The Commission has now been in existence since 2001. Its current status, strength and level of effectiveness has exceedingly become important to the Members of the African Union as well as stakeholders and the peoples of Africa as a whole.

170. In its years of existence, the African Union has faced numerous challenges inherent in its transition journey from the Organisation of African Union to the African Union. It is currently faced with increasingly growing new global challenges that have an impact on the Union itself and the continent as a whole. The African Union's obligations and duties as well as expectations continue to grow irrespective of the Union capacities.

171. As you are aware, the Assembly, last year, decided to engage the High Level Audit Panel on the African Union. Its work was presented to the Executive Council in Arusha from 6 to 7 May 2008. The Panel made numerous recommendations on the Union, a number of which touched on the African Union Commission. Many weaknesses, (structural and administrative) were identified and recommendations made. Some of the recommendation were referred back to the Commission for consideration and presentation to the Executive Council at this forum.

172. In addition to the Panel, Member States and other stakeholders, including development partners have also expressed concern on the overall status and management of the African Union, especially on administration, human resources, especially recruitment, finance, budgeting, programming and accounting and conference services. Many audit reports and recommendations have gone unheeded or unresponded to.

173. I would like to end this section by indicating that, in accordance with the decision of the Assembly in January 2008, the Committee of twelve Heads of State and Government on the Union Government, met in Arusha, Tanzania on 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23 May 2008. The Committee examined the 11<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Session of the Executive Council which met also in Arusha on the Report of the Audit of the Union. The Report of the Committee of Twelve will be considered by the Assembly.

**d) Basic Principles and Approach**

174. Since the inception of the new Commission, we have taken up our new duties with focus, dedication and commitment. We appreciate all the challenges that have been brought to our attention and we have pledged to take decisive action to meet them and take the Commission to a whole new level.

175. To this end, as per the African Union Statutes, we have embraced, in totality, the principle of collegiality in our policy development decision-making and implementation. We have decided, as a Commission, to hold weekly meetings, and to date, we have done so without fail, every Tuesday morning. This, we believe, will build our team spirit, break down the walls between Departments, and increase dramatically the sharing of information and walk together towards meeting the expectations and requirements of the Member States.

176. We have consequently enhanced transparency and accountability in decision-making and implementation within the African Union. We are not there yet, but progress has been made and will continue to be made in next four years.

177. In terms of the concerns expressed by many on the management and systems of the African Union, we have all embraced the need to undertake comprehensive reforms. We are developing a reform programme with two (2) main facets. The short/medium term will involve a change in management approach and targets for the next six (6) months, especially in the finance and administration areas of the African Union.

178. The Member States place a high premium on the effective and efficient working of the African Union. This has been very evident from the past organ meetings at each level seeking greater accountability, integrity and transparency of the African Union to Member States and partners. In addition, many decisions and African Union policies remain un-implemented or have been implemented in a very slow manner.

179. To this end, as we have mentioned, it has become very urgent to positively reform and strengthen the various services offered by the African Union. In particular:

- Administration and Human Resources Development
- Programming, Budgeting, Finance and Accounting
- Conference Services

180. We are committed to strengthening the transparency and accountability of the African Union to Member States in the procurement and recruitment of staff. We are therefore currently finalising the African Union Procurement Manual, which we intend to put in place soon after the Summit. We have also put in place a new recruitment and deployment policy which is designed to reduce the inordinately lengthy period it takes to recruit, enhance transparency and equity based, as much as possible, on the quota system and more effective use of the talents within the Commission and ensuring

quality and merit are upheld. We are looking at the entire African Union Commission as currently staffed and pledge to ensure our resources are being well applied and continue to do so.

181. On Programming, Budgeting, Finance and Accounting, we are currently implementing the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) programme that will radically transform our accounting and presentation of financial obligations and commitments. We are aware of the numerous concerns expressed by Member States, auditors and development partners. We pledge that we will, henceforth, ensure the required PRC quarterly review is done regularly and within the required timeframe. The management accounts reports will also be availed to the African Union on a monthly basis, as well as all the required accounts by development partners as required by our obligations to them. We are looking at all the past internal and external audit reports and recommendations and are developing a strategy on immediate, medium and long-term implementation.

182. We cannot achieve these without the support of the Member States, development partners, various stakeholders and, most importantly, the workforce. If any change or reform programme, and indeed the entire African Union programme on integration are to succeed, the workforce must be an integral part of such plans. Consideration must be given to the working conditions, physical environment of the work place and terms and conditions of service. We are looking into the whole spectrum of human resource management and development with a view to having a motivated, efficient and effective workforce, whose welfare and well-being has been duly ensured.

183. The African Union will be approaching Member States through the in-built Union mechanisms for their goodwill and support to push our reform agenda forward for the general good of the Union and particular good of the African Union. We would like to enhance dialogue in order to benefit from the wise counsel and interaction of the Member States in our duties.

184. Another area of serious concern to Member States is that of Conference Services. We note the challenges in translation and interpretation, documentation quality and time lines, organisation and servicing of meetings, products of the meetings and so on. We have engaged development partners to provide immediate support to train and offer exposure to our staff in translation and interpretation services. We will engage on continuous capacity building to ensure quality and timely documentation, as well as actual meeting room translation services.

185. The substance of the meetings is also an area of concern on which we seek to enter into meaningful and constructive dialogue with Member States, with a view to having focused, quality, fewer and results-oriented meetings with clear and implementable outcomes. There has been a tendency to have numerous decisions passed with little done in terms of implementation or provision of resources for implementation.

186. Another area of concern is the budgeting process. We seek to improve the entire budgeting and programming process in the African Union Commission. We will propose, for consideration, the strengthening of the programming functions of the relevant Directorates to monitor and evaluate the programmes and operations of the Commission, their effectiveness, reports, implementation of policy and follow-up mechanisms.

**e) Cooperating with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs)**

187. The African Union attaches great importance to the Regional Economic Communities in Africa. The Union's integration is heavily dependent on getting the RECs to work closely together with each other and with the African Union.

188. To this end, we have placed the integration agenda at the top of our priorities and the strengthening of the African Union's linkages with the RECs is central to our approach. We have participated at the level of the African Union in each of their programmes and intend to deepen our interaction, sharing of information, policy development and implementation.

189. The High Level Panel on the state of the Union made several recommendations on RECs that were adopted by the Executive Council, which we have started implementing in earnest. Key to these is the need to develop the necessary internal mechanisms to strengthen the coordinating and harmonising role among RECs and leadership responsibility. We have arranged a consultative engagement to this end and will report on development in this area.

190. On the whole, the African Union Commission seeks to uphold rules and procedures, enhance accountability, integrity and transparency in the systems and procedures in the management and administration of the Commission. We are therefore committed to ensuring efficient and prudent use of the African Union resources, cut down waste completely and, on the whole, leverage them for the advancement of the African Union Commission and the Union.

191. To this end, the Commission plans to introduce in the medium term, performance-contracting mechanisms programme, based budgeting and develop strong and effective monitoring and evaluation mechanism. This would go a long way in increasing our productivity as an organisation and availing to the Member States a vehicle through which the Union aspirations are achieved at the earliest opportunity.

**V. CONCLUSION**

192. As we pointed out at the beginning of this report, our continent has the capacity to free itself of underdevelopment and thus play its full role in the profound changes taking place in the world today. We should develop and use the immense human, natural, and energy resources of our continent to fight the misery and poverty of our

people and create conditions for peace and security for all, in unity and solidarity. We have all agreed on the shared values that we need to promote both within our Member States and the Commission, namely, economic good governance, democratic governance, transparency, accountability and constant search for concrete results on the ground. We have endowed ourselves, often, with very advanced and courageous legal instruments, and we are in the process of adding more to the ones that already exist. We have also adopted numerous common positions on many different issues. While all this is laudable, our credibility will be measured only by our unwavering political determination and the decisions taken by each Member State to implement these commitments on the ground. In this regard, the Commission needs also to be endowed with the political, institutional, human and financial means to fully discharge the missions assigned to it. On its part the Commission should take the necessary measures to fulfill its part of the contract with Member States in a spirit of responsibility and good management that is always inspired by the quest for results and professionalism.

193. Our continent has many challenges to overcome in all areas of human activity. We need to take this into account in designing our institutional architecture so that in a spirit of subsidiarity, we may rationalize our actions at national, regional and continental levels so that they may coherently converge towards the realization of our common goals on the ground, whether it be in the area of economic and social infrastructures (roads, railways, electric dams, New Information and Communication Technologies (NICT), universities and centres of excellence, capacity building, the fight against endemic diseases, etc.), in the area of peace building, democracy, the rule of law, human rights or economic governance.

194. The ultimate goal of the continent's integration process which is the advent of the United States of Africa for future African generations can only be realised by resolute and coordinated actions at all levels.

195. The Commission, which I have the honour to lead, shall be attentive to all Member States; it shall cooperate fully with all stakeholders and be in constant dialogue with other organs of the Union, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and all our partners and thus fulfill its mandate with their full cooperation.



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**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**  
**Thirteenth Ordinary Session**  
**24 – 28 June 2008**  
**Sharm El-Sheikh, EGYPT**

EX.CL/438 (XIII)

**ACTIVITY REPORT OF THE COMMISSION FOR THE PERIOD  
JANUARY TO JUNE 2008**

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## VI. CONCLUSION

## I. INTRODUCTION

This report gives an account of the Commission's activities carried out by its various Departments and services, as well as its external Offices during the period January to June 2008. These activities were conducted pursuant to the Commission's mandate and several decisions and declarations adopted by policy organs of the Union. The volume of programmes and activities derived therefrom is very high and concern diverse areas of interest to the Continent. What remains is to objectively evaluate these activities, assess their real impact on the ground, in order to direct them towards the attainment of concrete results which our principals and our peoples expect. As can be seen and as usual, a good portion of this report is devoted to peace and security activities, since without peace and security, all development efforts will fail to yield convincing results. However, it is necessary to make concerted efforts and to deploy the necessary means for gradually orienting most of our programmes and activities towards economic and social development projects, which also constitute an indispensable condition for consolidating peace and security, eradicating poverty and for ensuring Africa's participation in world affairs.

That is why this report was designed in a spirit of balance between these two closely related aspects. The Commission intends to resolutely work in that direction, with a special focus on promoting the physical integration of the continent, through advocacy for infrastructural projects like roads, railways, dams and other major regional and continental projects; through the adoption and implementation by all stakeholders of common positions in areas of continental interest, such as in international negotiations like those on EPAs and with WTO; through close cooperation with RECs; through a harmonious integration of NEPAD into the Commission's structures and processes; through the use of the contribution derived from the mobilization of international partners to support these integration projects; and, through close monitoring of accelerators and benchmarks of integration by instituting an evaluation system that will be jointly defined by the Union and Member States, as was suggested in the Audit report of the Union.

It is thus necessary that, beyond adopting scores of often bold and far-reaching decisions that touch all areas of the continent's life, the Commission should be strengthened in terms of providing it with the financial and human resources to carry out its policies and that a reliable follow-up mechanism be established at the level of all stakeholders, especially to ensure greater involvement by each Member State, so as to ensure that these decisions are effectively implemented, before further decisions are adopted along similar lines. This is a crucial issue of credibility for the Union, the entire body of Member States and for the organs of the Union, including the Commission. In this regard, the demonstration of political will by each Member State will be decisive in ensuring that these decisions have a real impact on the field. For its part, the Commission undertakes to present realistic proposals on programmes and activities to be carried out within this context.

The report gives an account of activities carried out to strengthen the structures and organization of the Commission, with attention to financial and administrative management having pride of place. In this connection, the Commission is determined to put in place efficient instruments for transparency, performance evaluation and accountability, particularly in the management of

financial and human resources made available to it by Members States and partners of the Union.

During the past months, several crises and natural disasters have set the pace of world events. Council is bound, at this session, to examine these disturbing occurrences which assail the world today, namely the severe food crisis that generated social unrest and even hunger strikes in some of our countries; the soaring fuel price, with its attendant woes for our peoples and the reduction of the means for intervention for the weakest and non-oil producing African States; natural disasters like floods, earthquakes, cyclones and tornados which all cause the loss of human lives and massively destroy property at an alarming rate. Africa is at the forefront of concerns, since its level of preparedness for such cataclysms is very low. It is crucial to hold a serious reflection on plans for the continent's intervention in these very severe global phenomena. The Commission will provide any assistance to this effort and has already participated in important forums like the recent Summit in Rome, TICAD IV, the Johannesburg meetings and other similar initiatives. It intends to resolutely pursue efforts in that direction.

The Executive Council is thus invited to consider all pertinent aspects of this progress report in relation with my introductory report which is presented separately and which provides a diagnosis of the challenges ahead and strategies the Commission intends to use in a bid to attain expected results. The directives of Council given in light of this report would certainly help the Commission to enhance its performance in relation to the aspirations of the owners of the Union, namely the Member States.

## II. PART 1 : PROGRAMME EXECUTION

### A. PEACE AND SECURITY

#### A.I. INTRODUCTION

1. During the period under review, the Commission's activities were dominated by the pursuit and intensification of efforts to render the continental peace and security architecture fully operational and engagement in conflict prevention and resolution initiatives, including consolidating peace once it has been restored and reinforcing the international community's support to peace efforts on the continent. The Commission also undertook a number of other related activities geared towards enhancing the effectiveness of consultation and coordination with the United Nations, international or regional organisations and partner countries.

#### A.II. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CONTINENTAL PEACE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE

2. According to the Protocol relating to the establishment of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC), the continental peace and security architecture is based on the following structures: the PSC, the Continental Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise and the African Standby Force (ASF). Furthermore, the Protocol makes provision for closer cooperation ties between the AU and regional mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution. During the period under review, substantial progress was recorded in making these structures operational.

##### (a) Panel of the Wise

3. As indicated in the Commission's report to the Executive Council in January 2008, the Panel of the Wise was formally installed on 18 December 2007 during a ceremony at the AU headquarters. On 20 February 2008, the Group held its first meeting during which it elected its 2008 Chair, in the person of Mr. Ahmed Ben Bella, and adopted its Programme of Work.

4. Concerning the Programme of Work in particular, it includes a schedule of meetings of the Group (minimum of three sessions are planned annually) and of consultations with PSC. In addition, the Programme stipulates that the Group will identify and prioritize certain situations of conflict on which it will concentrate its efforts during a given year. Those situations of conflict will be selected using a number of criteria, among which are the level of attention they receive, whether or not the matter had been referred to PSC, the potential value added of the Group's contribution and risks of a quick and sudden degradation. Finally, the Group decided to initiate, each year, reflection on an issue relating to conflict prevention and peace consolidation in Africa. For 2008, the Group has chosen to dedicate that reflection to disputes and conflicts related to electoral processes. This choice is pursuant to the decision adopted by the Summit in January

2008 and to relevant PSC decisions, which emphasize the need to initiate collective reflection on the challenges linked to the tensions and protests which often characterize electoral processes in Africa, including capacity building for Africa in the area of election observation and monitoring.

**b) Continental Early Warning System (CEWS)**

5. During the period under review, the Commission has pursued its efforts aimed at operationalizing the CEWS in line with the decision of the 10<sup>th</sup> ordinary session of the Executive Council, held in Addis Ababa, in January 2007. That session endorsed the Framework for the Operationalization of the CEWS, adopted in Kempton Park in December 2006, and requested “the Commission to take all the necessary steps for the timely and full implementation of the CEWS by 2009”.

6. In order to enhance the data collection and analysis capacity of the CEWS, the Commission has continued to refine existing tools, such as the Africa News Brief and the CEWS Portal, and to develop new ones. The Commission is still in the process of acquiring the necessary IT infrastructure, which is expected to be in place by the end of 2008.

7. As Council is aware, the CEWS is made up of the AU Situation Room and equivalent structures of the Regional Mechanisms. Hence the need for close collaboration between the all the entities concerned. It is within this context that the Commission invited the Regional Mechanisms to a meeting held in Addis Ababa in March 2008. The meeting focused on IT and information sharing and on data analysis, and agreed on the convening of quarterly technical meetings to harmonise data collection instruments and discuss other relevant technical issues. The first such technical meeting took place in Abuja, at the Headquarters of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), on 20 and 21 May 2008.

8. The PSC Protocol provides that the observation and monitoring units of the Regional Mechanisms shall be linked directly through appropriate means of communications to the Situation Room. In pursuance of this provision of the Protocol, steps are underway to connect the early warning systems of the Regional Mechanisms to the Situation Room through the AU V-SAT. In this respect, site assessment missions have been undertaken to CEWARN (IGAD), ECOWARN (ECOWAS) and MARAC (ECCAS), between 14 and 27 May 2008, with the objective of facilitating connectivity between the CEWS and the regional early warning systems through the AU VSAT. At the time of finalizing this report, similar missions were being planned to CENSAD, COMESA, EAC and SADC.

9. The PSC Protocol calls on the Commission to collaborate with the United Nations, its agencies and other international organizations to facilitate the effective functioning of the CEWS. It is in this context that the Commission organized in Addis Ababa, in early April, a meeting with international organizations. The meeting adopted a number of recommendations on the use of existing tools and platforms, cooperation on data collection and analysis, training and best practices.

**c) African Standby Force (ASF)**

10. The period under review was marked by the convening of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ordinary session of African Ministers of Defence and Security, in Addis Ababa, on 28 March 2008, to review the progress made in the operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF) and the Military Staff Committee (MSC) and to identify the challenges ahead, in order to chart the best way forward. The meeting of the Ministers was preceded by the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of African Chiefs of Defence Staff (ACDS) and Heads of Security and a meeting of experts from 24 to 27 March 2008.

11. The meeting stressed the urgency of the operationalization of the ASF as an important component of the APSA designed to support African efforts at conflict prevention, management and resolution; undertook to ensure that police/gendarmerie and civilian components of the ASF are appropriately addressed and enhanced, in order to ensure balance in the development of all the ASF components; urged Member States to strengthen the capacity of ASF and peace support operations structures at both continental and regional levels and provide the required financial resources. The meeting further urged the Commission to adopt specific flexible procedures for the management of peace support operations and ASF related matters and to review the structure of AU Peace Support Operations Division (PSOD) as well as undertake urgent staff recruitment, while conforming the principles of accountability, transparency and equitable geographical distribution.

12. The meeting adopted the ASF draft policy documents on Doctrine, SOPs, Logistics, Training and Evaluation, C<sup>3</sup>IS and related recommendations as proposed by the Commission and reviewed by the respective meetings of experts and ACDS and Heads of Security and requested the Commission to convene meetings of Member States and RECs/RMs to review the policy documents by 2010. The meeting accepted, in principle, the additional documents formulated with respect to the ASF Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC) and the Logistics Depot Study Report and requested the Commission, in liaison with the RECs/RMs and Member States, to further continue developing these areas and submit proposals by 2010. The meeting took note of the proposed documents on the legal and medical aspects and the civilian dimension, and requested the Commission to further develop these documents in liaison with Member States, RECs/RMs and submit proposals by 2010.

13. A separate report on the outcome of the meeting of Ministers of Defence and Security is submitted to the Executive Council for approval.

d) **Memorandum of Understanding between the AU and Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution**

14. It is worth drawing the attention of the Executive Council to the fact that the Memorandum of Understanding on peace and security was signed between the AU and the Regional Mechanisms of Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Addis Ababa, in the margins of the deliberations of the 11<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive Council. This instrument, which was concluded in conformity with Article 16 of the Protocol Establishing the Peace and Security Council, lists the objectives pursued, the principles governing its implementation, and the areas of cooperation between the AU and the Regional Mechanisms. The



document also deals with the modalities for cooperation between the AU and the Regional Mechanisms.

15. Arrangements are being made for the recruitment, within the Conflict Management Division of the Peace and Security Department, of an expert mandated to follow-up on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding. The process will soon be completed. In the meantime, significant progress was made in the deployment of Liaison Officers from the Regional Mechanisms to the AU, thanks to the resources allocated for this purpose within the framework of the capacity building component of the African Peace Facility (APF). To date, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the East African Community (EAC), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), have deployed their Liaison Officers. In general, the relations between the AU and the Regional Mechanisms have been considerably strengthened in the past few years.

### **A.III. STRUCTURAL CONFLICT PREVENTION – IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AU BORDER PROGRAMME**

16. Last January, the Executive Council was briefed on the first steps taken by the Commission towards the implementation of the Declaration on the AU Border Programme (AUBP) and its implementation modalities, as adopted by the Conference of African Ministers in charge of Border Issues held in Addis Ababa on 7 June 2007, namely the organization in December 2007, of a workshop which facilitated the identification of activities to be undertaken and partnerships to be established. The Council will recall that the Declaration hinges on three points: the delimitation and demarcation of African borders that have yet been subject to this exercise; development of cross-border cooperation, especially local initiatives; and capacity building and resource mobilization.

17. In the Declaration on the AUBP, the Commission was requested, as part of initial measures to be taken for the launching of the Programme, to initiate a continental survey of borders through a questionnaire to be sent to all Member States, in order to facilitate the delimitation and demarcation of African borders. It was in this context that the Commission organized in Addis Ababa in mid-March, a small meeting of experts to finalize the questionnaire, which was subsequently officially transmitted through a letter from the outgoing Chairperson of the Commission to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs/External Relations of Member States. The questionnaire focuses on the status of land, river, lake and maritime borders. Namibia has already replied to the questionnaire and all the other Member States are encouraged to do the same as soon as possible.

18. The Declaration on the AUBP also mandated the Commission to conduct a campaign for the mobilization of resources and the development of partnerships, with a view to its implementation. In this regard, the Commission wishes to inform the Council that some of the AU's partners have already expressed willingness to provide financial and technical support towards the implementation of the AUBP. Accordingly, the Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, Dr. Frank-Walter Steinmeier, wrote on 13 February 2008 to the outgoing Chairperson of the Commission, to express the willingness of his country to support, through GTZ, the implementation of the AUBP, including the establishment of a

border information system, financing the remuneration of staff and other activities, as well as direct support to Member States implementing projects within the framework of the AUBP. In May this year, the Commission and GTZ agreed on activities to be supported for the year 2008. Germany will allocate up to 1 million euros to the AU; in addition, other resources will be allocated for direct support to Member States - already, GTZ has initiated contacts with a few Member States to provide financial support for their delimitation and demarcation efforts, as well as the maintenance of boundary stones.

19. The Declaration on the AUBP mandated the Commission to take all the necessary steps for its implementation, including the enhancement of the capacity of the Conflict Management Division of the Peace and Security Department of the Commission. It is within this framework that the Commission is establishing a unit responsible specifically for the implementation of the AUBP. The first elements of this unit should be recruited shortly. Italy, through the Italian-African Peace Facility, pledged to allocate the necessary resources to the Commission for this purpose, for a two-year period.

20. In the coming months, the Commission will work, together with the RECs, towards the holding of regional workshops to popularize the AUBP and facilitate the elaboration of regional plans of action. In the next few weeks, the Commission will organize a preparatory meeting bringing together all the RECs for the rapid planning and holding of these regional workshops. Furthermore, other activities will be carried out, including the launching of the evaluation of cross-border cooperation in the Continent and existing capacities in the area of border management, as well as an information campaign on the AUBP and the elaboration of a legal instrument for cross-border cooperation.

#### **A.IV. DEVELOPMENTS IN SITUATIONS ON THE GROUND**

21. The conflict and post-conflict situations continued to be the focus of attention of the Commission during the period under consideration. Many encouraging developments have been observed since the last Executive Council session. At the same time, a number of situations deteriorated, while new tensions emerged.

22. Worth mentioning is the signing on 26 May 2008, by the Burundian Government and the Palipehutu/FNL, the last armed movement remaining outside the peace and reconciliation process, of a Joint Declaration on the Cessation of Hostilities. This Declaration re-launched the process for the implementation of the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement of 7 September 2006 and strengthened prospects for the restoration of lasting peace and stability in Burundi. In the Comoros, the re-establishment of State authority in Anjouan, following the launching of the operation "Democracy in the Comoros", on 25 March 2008, ushered in new prospects. In Kenya, the crisis experienced in the country in the aftermath of the presidential elections of 27 December 2007, came to an end after the signing of a number of political agreements and other instruments, notably the document "*Acting Together for Kenya – Agreement on the Principles of Partnership of the Coalition Government and Law 2008 on national entente and reconciliation*" of 28 February 2008.

23. Although the security situation in Somalia remains precarious, thus contributing to worsening the humanitarian crisis in this country, it is encouraging to note the progress made in the political dialogue between the Somali actors. In particular, worth mentioning here are the talks initiated between the Transition Federal Government (TFG) and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS) in Djibouti, under the auspices of the United Nations, with the support of the AU and other members of the international community. Lastly, in Sudan, the parties to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) reached an agreement on the resolution of the Abeyi issue.

24. In spite of sustained efforts deployed by the AU and the United Nations, the peace process in Darfur is still in a deadlock. This crisis took on a new dimension with the attack by the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) against the Sudanese capital on 10 May 2008. In the aftermath of the attack, the relations between the Sudan and Chad further deteriorated. Moreover, towards the end of April, the Djiboutian Government accused Eritrea of occupying part of its territory and massing troops at the common border between the two countries. The AU undertook a number of actions to deal with this situation.

25. During the past few months, the Commission endeavoured to support, as much as possible, the different peace processes and work towards the consolidation of peace in the Continent. Accordingly, it remains actively involved in ongoing efforts in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR). At the same time, it tried to take react with the necessary promptness to the different crises that arose during the period under consideration, while taking preventive diplomatic initiatives. It was in this context that the Chairperson on the Commission, accompanied by the Commissioner for Peace and Security, undertook visits to Chad and the Sudan after another crisis broke out, which affected relations between these two countries, and held consultations in the Southern region of the Continent.

**a) The Comoros**

26. The sessions of the Executive Council and Assembly of the Union held in Addis Ababa in January 2008 took place in a context marked by the rejection by Colonel Bacar, at that time the self-proclaimed President of the Island of Anjouan, of all proposals to end the crisis submitted by the AU, and this in spite of the sanctions imposed by the PSC since 10 October 2007. In his intervention before the Assembly, the Comorian Head of State solicited the support of Member States for his country's efforts to re-establish, in a lasting manner, the authority of the Comorian State in the Island of Anjouan, and announced the determination of his Government to use, to this end, all means at its disposal. In its decision on the situation in the Comoros, the Assembly requested all Member States in a position to do so, to provide all the necessary support to the Comorian Government in its efforts to re-establish the authority of the Union in Anjouan as soon as possible.

27. In implementation of the decision of the Assembly, the Chairperson of the Executive Council, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania, to the initiative to convene in Addis Ababa on 20 February 2008, a meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Defence, as well as other senior officials of countries that had expressed their readiness to respond positively

to the request for assistance made by the President of the Union of the Comoros, namely, Tanzania, Libya, Senegal, and the Sudan. The Government of the Union of the Comoros was also represented at the meeting. The meeting considered the modalities for the implementation of the Assembly decision, and in this regard, decided on the practical, military and security measures. Subsequently, a planning team, composed of Tanzanian, Sudanese, Senegalese and Libyan experts, travelled to the Comoros from 25 February to 5 March 2008, with a view to finalizing the plan for military intervention in Anjouan. On 8 March 2008, Ministers and other representatives of the four countries mentioned above, as well as the Comoros, met in Dar-es-Salaam, and on that occasion, endorsed the report of the team of military and security experts. The next day, the Ministers and other representatives of the African coalition travelled to Moroni in order to inform the Comorian President of the results of the meeting held in Dar-es-Salaam.

28. At the Ministerial Meeting of the countries of the region on the Comoros held in Addis Ababa on 28 January and 1 February 2008, in the sidelines of the 12<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council, the principle of a high-level international mission to Anjouan, lead by the AU and comprising representatives of the United States of America and France, was agreed on. The aim was to convince the illegal authorities of Anjouan to abide by the framework for the resolution of the crisis in Anjouan, as decided on by the AU. It was in this spirit that an international mission called the “last chance mission”, composed of the Head of the AU Liaison Office in Moroni, the Ambassador of France to the Comoros, the Chargé d’Affaires of the American Embassy in Madagascar and a representative of the League of Arab States, visited Anjouan on 27 February 2008. The mission came up against the intransigence of Colonel Bacar. In the meantime, the 111<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the PSC held on 18 February 2008 decided to extend, for an additional period of two months, the sanctions imposed against the illegal authorities of Anjouan, as well as the mandate of the AU Electoral and Security Assistance Mission to the Comoros (MAES).

29. In conformity with the intervention plan agreed upon during the Dar-es-Salaam meeting, the Tanzanian troops to participate in the military operation in Anjouan started arriving as from 11 March 2008. They were joined shortly after by the Sudanese troops. Libya provided transport for the Sudanese troops; in addition, it provided assistance in terms of equipment to the AND. It should also be pointed out that France provided logistic support for the operation. The invasion of Anjouan called “Operation Democracy in the Comoros”, started on 25 March 2008. The following day, the Island was under the full control of the coalition, which did not suffer any losses. This intervention was welcomed with joy in Anjouan, where the population fraternized with the coalition forces, and in the rest of the Archipelago.

30. On 31 March 2008, the Authorities of the Union of the Comoros carried out the official installation of the Interim Chief Executive of the Island, in charge of the day-to-day management and the organization of elections for the new President of the Autonomous Island of Anjouan, scheduled to be held on 15 and 29 June 2008. In early April, the Comorian Head of State paid a visit lasting several days, to Anjouan. On that occasion, he called on the Anjouanese, and the Comorians in general, to lay to rest, once and for all, the separatism advocated by Colonel Bacar.

31. In a letter addressed to the outgoing Chairperson of the Commission on 7 April 2008, President Sambu, after reiterating his thanks and gratitude to the AU for the determination with which it accompanied the Comoros in its struggle against separatism, stressed that the hope arising from the re-establishment of the authority of the State in Anjouan could only endure if the many problems confronting the Island, which statistically, remains the poorest in the Archipelago, were considered and resolved. He made a solemn appeal to the international community as a whole to support, with the same determination, the reconstruction work that had to be undertaken in Anjouan.

32. At its 124<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 30 April 2008, the PSC, *inter alia*, renewed the mandate of the MAES for an additional period of 6 months and called on all AU Member States and the international community as a whole, to provide all the necessary support for the organization of the upcoming presidential elections in Anjouan, as well as the consolidation of peace, stability and reconciliation in the Comoros.

33. Pursuant to this decision, and the above-mentioned letter from President Sambu, the Commission dispatched to the Comoros, from 14 to 18 May 2008, a delegation comprising officials of the different Departments concerned and representatives of the AU's partners involved in providing assistance to the ongoing efforts in the Comoros, namely, the United Nations, the European Union, the League of Arab States, the International Organization of the Francophonie and the Indian Ocean Commission. The mission had a double objective: first to assess the situation in the Archipelago in order to better understand the challenges posed in the consolidation of peace and stability in the Comoros; and secondly, to make recommendations on the type of support that the AU could provide to the Comoros in this crucial stage of its political development.

34. On the basis of discussions that the mission had, it would appear that although the re-establishment of State authority in Anjouan marked a turning point in the recent history of the Comoros, many challenges still remain to be addressed in order to render the progress irreversible. In the short term, the focus will be on the effective conduct of the polls for the election of the new President of the Island of Anjouan; in the medium and long terms, efforts should focus on seeking a solution to the institutional dysfunctions of the New Comorian Entity (NEC) and improving the political and socio-economic governance of the Archipelago.

35. At the time of finalizing this report, the Commission was taking the necessary measures to support, in collaboration with the partners of the AU, the organization of elections to select the President of the Island of Anjouan, by providing financial assistance and sending observers, as well as security assistance for the elections. Beyond these elections, the AU will assist the Comorian parties in the consolidation of the achievements made in the process for stabilizing the Archipelago. The strengthening of the civilian component of MAES to enable it to successfully fulfil the various parts of its mandate comes under this context.

36. The Commission wishes to seize this opportunity to commend the determination of President Sambu and at the same time express its most sincere gratitude to Tanzania, and to the Sudan, as well as Libya and Senegal,

for having provided the necessary assistance to the Government of the Union of the Comoros, in conformity with the decision of the Assembly. The Commission also wishes to express, once again, its gratitude to the countries of the region, which under the leadership of South Africa, over the past ten years, spared no efforts to come to the aid of the Comoros and support the reconciliation efforts there.

**b) Somalia**

37. The period under review witnessed sustained efforts to promote an all-inclusive political process and national reconciliation, in line with the recommendations of the National Reconciliation Congress (NRC) held in Mogadishu in July – August 2007 and the programme of work of the Transitional Federal Government (TFG). This programme aims at furthering reconciliation, promoting peace and security, strengthening the Somali institutions and ensuring accountability in government revenue collection, as well as at implementing key transitional tasks relating to the Constitution and electoral issues.

38. From 11 to 13 March 2008, in Cairo, Egypt, and as part of the efforts to support dialogue between the TFG and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia (ARS), diplomats from some of the AU partners met with representatives of the ARS. While putting forward some preconditions to any dialogue with the TFG, the ARS delegation indicated that its objective was not to bring down the TFG. It also expressed its commitment to the promotion of good relations with all of Somalia's neighbours, based on international law.

39. On 23 March 2008, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) facilitated, at its Headquarters in Mogadishu, a meeting between Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein and Mr. Mohammed Hassan Haad, Chairman of the Hawiye Tradition and Unity Council. The meeting was part of the efforts aimed at putting an end to the violent activities of the armed elements opposed to the TFG in and around Mogadishu. Earlier on, on 22 February 2008, the Special Representative of the Chairperson of the Commission held talks in Mogadishu successively with the TFG Prime Minister and President Abdullahi Yusuf Ahmed, seizing the opportunity of that meeting to reiterate the need for an all-inclusive political process. Both Somali leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the reconciliation process.

40. In early April 2008, in Nairobi, a delegation of the ARS led by Sheikh Sherif Hassan, Chairman of the Alliance, met with several members of the international community, including representatives of the United Nations, the League of Arab States and the AU. The visit of the ARS delegation to Nairobi followed an appeal by the TFG Prime Minister to all Somalis to resort to dialogue to resolve the crisis in their country and a subsequent invitation by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General.

41. It is against this background that inter-Somali talks took place in Djibouti from 10 to 15 May 2008, at the invitation of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General. The talks were attended by representatives of the TFG and the ARS. The AU, together with other members of the international community, was also represented and played an active role in the talks. At the end of the talks, which were conducted separately as the UN Special Representative shuttled between the two delegations, the parties agreed to meet

again in Djibouti for further discussions. At its 132<sup>nd</sup> meeting held on 29 May 2008, the PSC welcomed the convening and outcome of these talks, and encouraged the parties to pursue their efforts in a spirit of compromise and mutual accommodation, while urging Somali non-participating parties to consider joining the process. The PSC called on the members of the international community and on the countries of the region, in particular, to fully support the talks.

42. As scheduled, the parties met again in Djibouti from 31 May 2008 to 9 June. The AU attended this second round. In a sign of further support to these talks, the Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, traveled to Djibouti to attend the opening ceremony and consult with the Somali and international stakeholders. It should also be noted that a delegation of the Security Council visited Djibouti in early June for consultations with the Somali parties. The Commissioner seized the opportunity of his presence in Djibouti to also meet and brief the Security Council delegation and offer the views of the AU on both the political process and the stabilization efforts in Somalia.

43. On 9 June 2008, the TFG and the ARS reached an Agreement. This document, which is due to be formally signed in Saudi Arabia, provides for the termination of all acts of armed confrontation by the parties, 30 days from its signing. Furthermore, the parties agreed:

- to request the United Nations, consistent with Security Council resolution 1814 (2008) and within a period of one hundred and twenty (120) days, to authorize and deploy an international stabilization force from countries that are friends of Somalia, excluding neighbouring states;
- that within a period of 120 days of the signing of the Agreement, the TFG will act in accordance with the decision that has already been taken by the Ethiopian Government to withdraw its troops from Somalia after the deployment of a sufficient number of UN forces; and that
- that the ARS shall, through a solemn public statement, cease and condemn all acts of armed violence in Somalia and dissociate itself from any armed groups or individuals that do not adhere to the terms of this Agreement.

44. This Agreement marks a significant step in the efforts aimed at promoting an all-inclusive political process and bringing about lasting peace and stability. The Commission hails the sense of responsibility and the spirit of compromise demonstrated by the two parties, and strongly urges all other relevant Somali actors to join this process. It is the Commission's hope that, with this Agreement, the international community will lend increased support to the efforts aimed at bringing to a definite end the violence that has plagued Somalia for nearly two decades. The AU will spare no effort in contributing to the successful implementation of this Agreement, whose principles and objectives are consistent with the efforts it has been making in the political process as well as in stabilizing the situation in Somalia through the deployment of AMISOM.

45. During the reporting period, the security situation in Somalia has continued to be of great concern. In Mogadishu, incidents are recorded almost daily. The insurgents have also continued to spread their activities in the countryside. In addition, there have been a number of attacks against AMISOM personnel. The Commission strongly condemns these attacks and, once again, pays tribute to AMISOM personnel for its commitment and sacrifice. In response to the prevailing situation, the TFG forces, with the help of the Ethiopian army, carry out regular search and cordon operations and other counter-insurgency measures aimed at routing out the armed elements from their hideouts. While some gains have been made, the overall situation remains difficult, especially in view of the many constraints facing the TFG army and security forces.

46. Piracy off the coast of Somalia continues to be a major problem, threatening both the delivery of humanitarian supplies - over 80% of the assistance to Somalia by the World Food Programme (WFP) is delivered by sea - and other maritime activities. It is against this background that the Security Council, in resolution 1816 (2008) adopted on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2008, decided that the states cooperating with the TFG would be allowed, for a period of 6 months, to enter the territorial waters of Somalia and use all necessary means to repress acts of piracy and armed robbery at sea, in a manner consistent with relevant provisions of international law.

47. The prevailing security situation and the general lawlessness have taken a heavy toll on the civilian population and further compounded the humanitarian situation. Other factors at play in the worsening of the humanitarian situation are linked to record-high food prices, hyperinflation and drought in many parts of the country. In spite of the very challenging environment in which they are operating – precarious security situation, targeting of aid workers, threat of abduction and actual kidnapping and looting of food relief, the UN agencies and NGOs continue to make sustained efforts to respond to the needs of displaced and vulnerable groups. On its part, AMISOM continues to provide limited humanitarian support to the civilian population, including medical services, such as treatment for common illness, surgery, gunshot wounds, pregnant women and children, and provision of water to communities located near its Headquarters.

48. During the period under review, no significant progress has been made regarding the deployment of AMISOM, whose mandate was extended by the PSC last January for a further period of six months. As at June 2008, the strength of the Mission stood at about 2,600 troops (two Ugandan battalions and one Burundian battalion), which is about 30 per cent of the authorized total of 8,000. The second battalion pledged by Burundi is ready to be deployed as soon as the required equipment and logistical support is secured. Nigeria, which pledged a battalion of 850, completed a one-week reconnaissance mission to Mogadishu in March. No new pledge of troops has been recorded during the period under review.

49. As Council is aware, AMISOM is confronted with serious financial and logistical constraints. The total budget for a fully deployed AMISOM, using United Nations standards, for a period of one year, amounts to US\$ 817,500,000. On 20 February 2008, and in pursuance of the request made by the PSC at its 105<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 18 January 2008, the then Chairperson of the Commission wrote to the UN Secretary-General for the United Nations to put in



place a financial, logistical and technical support package for AMISOM, covering the various needs of the Mission. In response, the UN Secretary-General, in a letter dated 23 April 2008, indicated the readiness of the United Nations to undertake a two-pronged approach, namely, building AU capacity to address the challenges related to the deployment and sustainment of AMISOM through the provision of additional UN technical advisors; and the enhancement of coordination between the AU, donors and Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs), with a view to ensuring that sufficient and qualitative bilateral partner funding and support is secured for AMISOM. In the meantime, the Mission has continued to provide support to the TFG, notably by securing major infrastructure. AMISOM also provides humanitarian assistance to populations in its immediate environment. In addition, AMISOM has established close contacts with key influential Somalis with the view to facilitating dialogue and reconciliation.

50. In mid-March 2008, the United Nations Secretary-General submitted to the Security Council a report containing a number of options leading to the possible deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation in Somalia. In his observations, he encouraged those Member States with the capabilities to take the initiative in the deployment of an international stabilization force to facilitate the withdrawal of foreign forces and prevent a vacuum thereafter. He further indicated that, in the meantime, contingency planning for an integrated peacekeeping operation should be continually updated so that the UN is prepared for deployment as soon as the conditions allow. At the same time, he stressed that an increased presence of UN personnel on the ground would assist the parties in the political process. In its resolution 1814 (2008) adopted on 15 May 2008, the Security Council gave support to the proposals put forward by the Secretary-General for an increased presence of UN personnel on the ground, in Somalia.

51. While the security and humanitarian situation remains of great concern, it is nonetheless encouraging to note the progress made in the promotion of an all inclusive process, as demonstrated by the recently concluded Agreement between TFG and the ARS. There is need to encourage the TFG and all the Somali stakeholders to vigorously pursue their efforts towards genuine reconciliation and lasting peace, and provide all the support required to that end.

### **c) Peace process between Eritrea and Ethiopia**

52. During the period under review, no progress has been made in the border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia and the overall implementation of the peace process. As Council will recall, in early September 2007, at The Hague, the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission (EEBC) met with the parties. In view of the lack of progress in overcoming the difficulties impeding the implementation of the April 2002 Delimitation Decision, the EEBC reminded the parties of its statement of 27 November 2006, in which it gave them one year to settle their differences, after which, if no agreement is reached on how to proceed with the demarcation, "the boundary will automatically stand as demarcated by the boundary points listed in the Annex hereto and the mandate of the Commission could then be regarded as fulfilled." Accordingly, the EEBC officially terminated its activities at the end of November 2007.

53. Eritrea declared the border demarcated by its acceptance of the EEBC November 2007 "virtual demarcation" decision. On 24 May 2008, President Isaias Afewerki, on the occasion of the 17<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the independence of his country, stated "our border has now been delimited and the file closed, thanks to the Commission's virtual demarcation decision". Hence, he continued, "there is no remaining issue at all, other than the withdrawal of the invading Ethiopian forces from sovereign Eritrean territories. The UN Security Council is duty bound to live up to its legal and moral obligation to put an end to such invasion and its dangerous consequences".

54. Ethiopia, on its part, has maintained its rejection of the "virtual demarcation" decision, dismissing it as "legal fiction" and insisting on the need to physically demarcate the border on the ground. It has also demanded that the legal sanctity of the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) be restored and respected by the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Eritrean troops inducted into the Zone and that of their heavy equipment, as well as by the lifting of the restrictions imposed by Eritrea on the United Nations Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNMEE).

55. As Council will recall, UNMEE has, since early 2004, been faced with increasing restrictions that made it difficult for the Mission to perform its mandate. The situation reached a critical point in December 2007, when all fuel supplies to the Mission in Eritrea were stopped. As a result, UNMEE was compelled to temporarily relocate its military personnel and equipment from Eritrea and to suspend the implementation of its operations on that side of the border.

56. In view of this situation, the UN Secretary-General, in his report to the Security Council dated 7 April 2008, submitted a number of options for the future of UNMEE, whose mandate is due to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> July 2008. These are as follows:

- bring UNMEE back in its full force, should Eritrea reconsider its position, resume fuel supplies to the Mission, lift all restrictions on its operations and allow it to continue to perform the tasks originally envisaged in the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities;
- terminate the mandate of the Mission in the absence of the conditions necessary for it to carry out its mandate;
- deploy a small observer mission in the border area, which would endeavour to defuse tensions, serve as the eyes and ears of the international community, and continue to report to

the Security Council on the situation;

- establish Liaison Offices in Asmara and Addis Ababa to maintain UN readiness to assist the parties in the implementation of the EEBC demarcation decision and the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of December 2000.

57. In a statement by its President dated 30 April 2008, the Security Council noted that the continuation of Eritrea's obstructions towards UNMEE had reached a level so as to undermine the basis of the Mission's mandate and had compelled UNMEE to temporarily relocate. The Security Council noted the underlying fundamental issues, and indicated that it stands ready to assist the parties to overcome the current stalemate, taking into account the interests and concerns of both of them. The Security Council stressed that it would, in the light of consultations with the parties, decide on the terms of a future United Nations engagement and on the future of UNMEE.

58. Against this background, the Commission cannot but reiterate AU's deep concern at the continued stalemate in the Ethio-Eritrea peace process and at its implications for peace, security and stability in the region as a whole. Once again, the need for more sustained and coordinated efforts to help the parties overcome the current stalemate in the demarcation process and normalize their relations should be emphasized. As in the past, the AU stands ready to assist Eritrea and Ethiopia in such endeavour.

**d) Djibouti – Eritrea Relations**

59. On 24 April 2008, Djibouti's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation sent a letter to the Chairperson of the PSC for the month of April 2008 informing him that since 16 April 2008, Eritrea has been occupying part of Djibouti territory, in the Ras Doumeira area. The Minister also stated that Eritrea was strengthening its military presence in certain areas along the common border between the two countries.

60. The 121st meeting of the PSC held the same day made a review of the situation. In follow-up to the meeting, and at the request of the PSC, the Commission, on 1 May 2008, formally seized the authorities of Djibouti and Eritrea to inform them that the PSC intended to meet the following day to consider the situation and, where necessary, take any decision deemed appropriate. In this respect, and in a bid to facilitate the deliberations of the PSC, the Commission requested the two countries to submit to it all information at their disposal, including any contacts that could have been made to solve the problem amicably. Djibouti replied the same day, forwarding to the Commission a document on the chronology of events and a copy of the letter sent on 18 April 2008 by the Djibouti Minister of Foreign Affairs to his Eritrean counterpart relating to the presence of Eritrean military forces in Djibouti territory.

61. As expected, the PSC met on 2 May 2008. At the meeting, the PSC noted that the Commission had formally written to the two countries, on 1 May 2008. It urged the two countries to show the greatest restraint and to use dialogue to settle any dispute between them, based on the principles laid down in the Constitutive Act of the African Union and other relevant AU instruments, including respect for borders existing at the time they gained independence and the promotion of good neighbourliness. The PSC encouraged the Commission to remain in close contact with both countries and to monitor developments in the situation so that any action deemed appropriate can be taken. This would include sending a mission, at the right moment, to evaluate the situation in the field and hold consultations with the competent authorities of both countries. The Commission formally forwarded copies of the Communiqué to the authorities of Djibouti and Eritrea. It also availed itself of that opportunity to inform the Eritrean Ministry of Foreign Affairs that it was still awaiting the information requested on 1 May 2008, which would be transmitted to the PSC.

62. On 12 May 2008, the Permanent Mission of the State of Eritrea to the United Nations in New York issued a Communiqué on the accusations by Djibouti, in which the Eritrean Government declared that it was perplexed by Djibouti's unfounded accusations. While stating that only time and other additional facts may enable full understanding of the grounds on which the accusations are founded, the Eritrean government stated that all of them had the ingredients of a deliberate attempt to trigger a new crisis in the region. The Communiqué concluded that in any case, the Government of Eritrea was not ready to get involved in futile, acrimonious accusations at that stage. The Commission forwarded the Communiqué to members of the PSC for information.

63. During the extraordinary session of the Executive Council held in Arusha on 6 and 7 May 2008, the Commissioner for Peace and Security met the Djibouti Foreign Minister with whom he held consultations on relations between Djibouti and Eritrea. Unfortunately, he was not able, as he had hoped, to meet the representative of Eritrea since that country did not attend the Executive Council meeting. For his part, the Chairperson of the Commission held a telephone conversation with President Omar Guelleh of Djibouti, and made contacts with other members of the international community on the situation in order to harmonize efforts towards finding a peaceful and early solution to the conflict.

64. On 23 May 2008, the Embassy of Djibouti in Addis Ababa forwarded a « Note on the crisis at the border between Djibouti and Eritrea » to the Commission. In the Note, the Government of Djibouti affirmed that Ras Doumeira and the Island of Doumeira were still under occupation and that the military engineering corps of the Eritrean forces was intensifying work, while there was increasing tension in the field where Djibouti and Eritrean military forces were facing each other and all initiatives for dialogue made by Djibouti had failed. The Government of Djibouti stated that it « will not bear responsibility for what will happen » if the crisis persists. In such conditions, Djibouti deemed it was necessary to urgently send an investigation mission to the AU. At the request of Djibouti, the Note was communicated to members of the PSC.

65. At its 130th meeting held on 26 May 2008, the PSC once more considered the situation, and underscored the urgent need for the envisaged mission to be sent to Djibouti and Eritrea. Thereafter, the Commission sent messages to the authorities of Djibouti and Eritrea informing them that it was taking the necessary steps to send the envisaged mission which will evaluate the situation and consult with the two countries. On 2 June 2008, Djibouti indicated its readiness to receive the AU mission at the dates proposed, namely 5 to 9 June 2008.

66. Accordingly, a mission from the Commission visited Djibouti during the abovementioned period. As stated, the mission was also expected to visit Eritrea, but by the time this report was finalized, Eritrea had not yet indicated its readiness to receive them.

e) **Burundi**

67. Concerning Burundi, the first half of 2008 was marked by the relaunch of the process to implement the Comprehensive Ceasefire Agreement of 7 September 2008. Indeed, since January, dialogue between the Facilitator, Charles Ngakula, South African Minister of Security and Safety and the Palipehutu-FNL has resumed, paving the way for the extension by the Regional Peace Initiative, of the Facilitator's mandate for one more year (January to December 2008). In order to carry through the process during the period assigned him, the Facilitator initiated what he called « Programme of Action to further the Burundi Peace Process ». The Programme was endorsed by the Special Envoys and Representatives, including Ambassador Mamadou Bah, Special AU Representative to Burundi, during a seminar organized in Cape Town, South Africa, on 22 to 23 February 2008, and then by the Government of Burundi and the Palipehutu-FNL.

68. Under the Programme of Action, it was planned that the deliberations of the Joint Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JVMM) would resume on 1 April 2008 and that the leader of the Palipehutu-FNL would return in early May. Unfortunately, this schedule could not be respected. Rather, the situation suddenly deteriorated while the Facilitator, with the backing of the Political Directorate, was struggling to get the process back on track, hostilities resumed between the Government Forces and the FNL in the night of 17 to 18 April 2008. Nine positions of the « Force de defense nationale » located in the outskirts of the capital and in the provinces of Bubanza (North Bujumbura) and Kayanza (north-east of the capital) were attacked simultaneously, forcing the government forces to counter attack. It should be recalled here that the Political Directorate, comprising the AU, the UN, the EU, the Ambassadors of Burundi, South Africa, Uganda and Tanzania as well as the representative of the Facilitator, was set up in October 2007 and is responsible for backing up the Facilitator's efforts; it is chaired by the representative of the Facilitator, while the AU Special Representative to Burundi acts as Deputy Chairperson and Secretary.

69. Following the resumption of hostilities, the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Regional Peace Initiative, Presidents Yoweri Museveni and Jakaya Kikwete, met in Kampala where they decided to request the Palipehutu-FNL leaders to honour their commitment to implement the Cape Town Plan of Action. They therefore mandated their respective Ministers of Foreign Affairs, accompanied by the Facilitator and the South African Minister of Foreign to transmit

to the Palipehutu-FNL leader the message that he and his associates should prepare to return to Bujumbura by 15 May 2008 latest. In preparation for this return, the Political Directorate dispatched its technical team to Dar-es-Salaam to finalize the practical modalities.

70. Palipehutu-FNL representatives within the JVMM and the Political Directorate arrived in Bujumbura. With the participation of the Government and the Palipehutu-FNL, the Directorate immediately set to work to bring the hostilities to an end. On 22 May, the parties accepted the principle of a joint declaration on the cessation of hostilities. The declaration was actually signed on 25 May 2008, and according to its terms, this meant that the war was had finally ended and all Burundians can take advantage of lasting peace and stability. In a communiqué issued on 27 May 2008, the Commission commended the signing of the Declaration. It encouraged the JVMM and its ancillary organs to spare no effort in support of the implementation of the Declaration, and reaffirmed the AU's commitment to pursue its assistance to the parties in their endeavours to achieve lasting peace in Burundi. During its 133<sup>rd</sup> meeting held on 6 June 2008, the PSC also hailed the signing of the Joint Declaration.

71. Since the signature of the Joint Declaration, the Directorate has been at work to mobilize the international community to lend support for the consolidation of the cessation of hostilities, particularly by providing humanitarian assistance to the combatants, even before the commencement of the DDR process. The European Commission and the Swiss Government financed this separate operation. Combatants have started receiving food and medical supplies, notably with the logistic backing of the WFP, GTZ-IS and the ICRC. The AU Mission in Burundi (AMIB) is coordinating the work of the committee in charge of monitoring the assistance. The AU Special Force and Military Observers in Burundi play a vital role in the handling of aid to combatants.

72. The Special Envoys and Representatives held their First Follow-up Meeting from 9 to 10 June 2008 in Magaliesburg, South Africa. The main aim was to inform the international community about developments in the situation and to canvas support. The Meeting produced a declaration according to which the Government of Burundi and the Palipehutu-FNL undertake to renounce violence and settle their disputes through dialogue, and to ensure the implementation of the 2006 agreements within stipulated time-frames.

73. The signature of the Joint Declaration undoubtedly marks a crucial stage in the peace consolidation process in Burundi since it paves the way for the implementation of the 2006 Agreements. It will facilitate the return, already underway, of Burundian refugees, and also enable Burundians to resolutely embark on the task of socio-economic revival. The Commission exhorts the parties to strictly honour commitments made, and assures them of constant AU support.

**f) Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**

74. Last January, the Commission gave a report on the encouraging political trends in the situation in DRC, which resulted from the significant improvement on the regional scene. It also informed the Assembly of the security and humanitarian situation in the Kivus, which continued posing a threat to

the peace process. Since then, the overall situation in the country has been constantly improving.

75. Regarding the situation in the Kivus in particular, it should be recalled that the Government of Congo, from 6 to 23 January 2008, in Goma, organized the Conference on Peace, Development and Security in the Kivus. The Conference brought together Government appointed moderators, representatives of national armed groups operating in the region and civil society organizations from the two provinces. It was facilitated by representatives of the international community (United Nations, African Union, European Union and delegates from many African and foreign countries).

76. The Conference dealt with all issues relating to the situation in the Kivus. The parties reached a consensus which was recorded in two documents: "Acts of engagement of the Parties". The Acts are aimed at restoring peace, security and stability in the two provinces, reinstating State authority and promoting development and reconciliation in the region. The AU signed the Acts as external facilitator, alongside, notably, the United Nations, the European Union, the Government of the United States, and the Executive Secretariat of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region.

77. Seeking to consolidate the encouraging developments in the country's overall political landscape, the Government of Congo held its Council of Ministers on 21 March 2008 in Matadi, in Bas Congo province. It should be recalled that the election of the Provincial Council of that region was marred by riots instigated by the political/religious/movement known as Bundu Dira Kongo (BDK). Police action to contain the riots resulted in many casualties. The Council of Ministers was chaired by the President of the Republic, and notably instructed the Minister of the Interior to withdraw the permit granted to BDK as a cultural organization. Proceedings were instituted against members of BDK who were presumed responsible for the riots as well as police officers who had acted beyond instructions given. The Council of Ministers took other decisions aimed at operationalizing the "Amani" programme (structure established towards the implementation of the Acts of engagement resulting from the Goma Conference).

78. Furthermore, within the scope of the monitoring of the Nairobi Joint Communiqué, the Joint Group established by the Tripartite Summit held on 5 December 2007 in Addis Ababa met on 2 April 2008 in New York. The meeting, inter alia, noted the engagement made by the Congolese authorities to settle the issue of the "Forces démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR) – (Rwanda Liberation Democratic Forces). In such context, the DRC Government took measures to sensitise and encourage FDLR elements to join the DDRRR process. The Government is also contemplating the option of using force, if necessary. Finally, the DRC representative informed the Meeting that an area in Katanga had been placed at the disposal of the DDRRR programme to receive, for from the Rwandan border, FDLR members who may want to remain in Congo. For his part, the Rwandan representative informed the Meeting of the measures taken by his Government to manage as best it can the voluntary returnees. The New York Meeting adopted several other recommendations aimed at limiting the activities and movements of FDLR members both in DRC and abroad.

79. There has been significant improvement in the security and humanitarian situation in the Kivus and Ituri. The various parties generally respect the ceasefire. The overall situation in Ituri is also under control. Elements of the armed militia continue giving themselves up in great numbers to the MONUC and the Congolese Army. However, Ugandan members of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) who have taken refuge in the region continue exacting tolls from the civilian population.

80. At its 119<sup>th</sup> Meeting held on 11 April 2008, the PSC considered the report of the fact-finding mission on the migration of Mbororo pastoral nomads, which was sent to DRC, CAR, Sudan and Cameroon pursuant to the decision of the 97<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Council held on 25 October 2007. The Mission met with representatives of the Governments concerned and those of the local populations, parliamentarians, officials of United Nations Missions and agencies, representatives of NGOs and other stakeholder involved. After considering the report and recommendations of the Mission, the PSC admitted the complexity of problems linked to the phenomenon of cross-boundary migration of Mbororo nomads, and underscored the necessity for a concerted regional approach that takes a comprehensive look at the issue so that an appropriate solution can be found. The PSC pledged total support for the holding, as soon as possible of a meeting among the countries concerned, under the aegis of the AU, with the participation of the various stakeholders in view of the promotion of a concerted regional approach.

## **g Sudan**

### **i) South Sudan**

81. One of the key developments in the implementation of the CPA during the period under review relates to the 5<sup>th</sup> Sudan National Census that took place from 22 April to 6 May 2008. This followed some disagreements on whether the process should go on or not. Citing a number of reasons, including the non-inclusion of ethnicity and religion in the census questionnaire and the continued war in Darfur, the Government of Southern Sudan (Goss) wanted the process to be delayed. However, on 13 April 2008, the Sudanese parties agreed to have the Census held as scheduled.

82. According to the CPA, and in view of the need to legitimize the arrangements agreed to in the Agreement, fair electoral laws shall be adopted, including the free establishment of political parties. Based on the implementation modalities of the CPA, national elections are supposed to be held no later than 9 July 2008. However, while the political parties' bill has been passed, the national electoral law had not yet been passed as of early June. The electoral law would pave way for the formation of the Electoral Commission, which has a very critical role to play for the successful conduct of the electoral process.

83. As of June 2008, the technical Ad Hoc Border Committee had not yet presented its final report. According to the CPA, the determination of North/ South border of 1/1/1956 was supposed to be completed during the pre-interim period after the adoption of the Interim National Constitution. So far, the Committee has drawn up a new time-table to produce its final findings. The



determination of the North-South borderline will have bearings on the Wealth Sharing, Power Sharing, as well as the Security Arrangements Protocols.

84. As Council is aware, following the deadlock in the implementation of the Abyei Protocol, the issue was referred to the Presidency. The combined effects of the lack of full military redeployment by the parties, the absence of a civil administration in Abyei and the inadequate capacity of the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs), as well as the activities of other armed groups (OAGs), created further tension in Abyei. Efforts by the Governors of South and North Kordofan, as well as the Ceasefire Joint Military Committee (CJMC), to de-escalate the tension were not successful. Subsequently, fighting erupted in Abyei on 18 April 2008 between the Sudan Armed Forces (SAF) and the SPLA, lasting for a number of days and causing casualties and mass displacement of the civilian population.

85. Following the clashes in Abyei, the Ceasefire Political Commission (CPC) met in a special session on 27 May 2008. The CPC reiterated the commitment of the two parties to the peaceful resolution of the conflict of Abyei and urged the Presidency to expedite the resolution of the issue, according to the Abyei Protocol. Furthermore, the CPC requested the Joint Defence Board (JDB) to reconstitute the Abyei JIUs from the elements not involved in the recent incidents and redeploy it to Abyei as soon as possible. Further progress was achieved on 8 June 2008, when the National Congress Party (NCP) and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) finally agreed on "The Road Map for Return of IDPs and Implementation of Abyei Protocol". This Roadmap marks a significant milestone towards resolving the Abyei impasse and ensuring the realization of the much needed security in the Abyei area. The Roadmap also sanctioned the appointment of an Interim Abyei Area Administration, and further approved free movement of the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) force and free access to the whole of Abyei to carry out its mandate as stipulated by the CPA.

86. In the meantime, from 15 to 20 May, in Juba, the SPLM held its second National Convention. The theme for the convention was "No to war, yes to New Sudan". The Convention, made up of over 1,500 delegates from across the country, unanimously elected Mr. Salva Kiir as its new Chairman.

87. During the period under review, the AU has continued to support the implementation of the CPA. On 15 February, the then Chairperson of the Commission appointed Ambassador Oluyemi Adeniji, from the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as the AU Special Envoy for the implementation of the CPA. At the same time, steps were taken for the opening of the AU Liaison Office in Khartoum, with an office in Juba. From 31 March to 2 April 2008, the AU Ministerial Committee on the Post-Conflict Reconstruction of the Sudan visited the country. The Committee met with President Omar Hassan Al Bashir, the First Vice-President, UNMIS officials, the World Bank and the Assessment and Evaluation Commission (AEC). The Committee also met with the GoSS in Juba. These meetings also provided an opportunity for the Sudanese parties to further highlight to the Committee areas in which support is needed. From 17 to 19 May 2008, the Chairperson of the Commission, accompanied by Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, Commissioner for Peace and Security, visited the Sudan. During that visit, he met with the highest Sudanese authorities, assuring them of the commitment of the AU to continue supporting the CPA. He visited Juba on May 19, where he had important exchanges of views with First Vice-President

Salva Kiir on the implementation of the CPA, as well as on other issues relating to Darfur and to Sudan's relations with its neighbouring countries.

88. It is worth mentioning that, from 6 to 7 May 2008, the third Sudan Consortium (SC) convened in Oslo. A total of 45 countries and organizations representing donors, international organizations and civil society, including the AU, participated in the meeting. The donor countries pledged a total of 4.8 billion dollars for the reconstruction and development of the Sudan, for the period of 2008-2011. In the meantime, in February 2008, President Al Bashir appointed a British diplomat, Sir Derek Plumbly, as head of the AEC, in replacement of Ambassador Tom Vraalsen of Norway.

89. The implementation process of the CPA has made significant strides. The two parties have demonstrated a clear commitment to dialogue and repeatedly vowed their determination to never resort to war as a way of resolving their differences. At the same time, a number of challenges are yet to be addressed. Hence the need for the parties to make continued and sustained efforts to deal with the outstanding issues in the implementation the CPA.

**i) Darfur**

90. During the period under review, the Joint AU-UN Mediation, under the leadership of the AU and UN Special Envoys, has continued to exert tremendous efforts with the view of starting an all-inclusive process that would lead to the resolution of the long-standing conflict in Darfur. Efforts have also continued towards the full deployment of the AU-UN Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID).

91. Council would recall that the meetings held in Arusha, in July, and N'Djamena, in August 2007, were meant to serve as platforms for the Darfur Movements to enable them arrive at common negotiating positions, short of agreeing to re-unite their ranks. The envisaged unity did not materialize. Subsequently, and in preparation for the resumption of the Talks, extensive consultations were carried out with several Darfur stakeholders and regional and international partners.

92. As noted in the last report of the Commission to Council, after the adjournment of the Sirte political talks in December 2007, the Mediation had to redefine its strategies and continued to encourage the then ongoing unification efforts in Juba and in the field in Darfur with the same objective of enabling the Movements to come to common positions and negotiating teams. At the same time, intensive consultations continued with the larger civil society, women's groups and tribal leaders. The efforts spearheaded by the SPLM yielded positive results. They succeeded in reducing the number of the splinter groups present in Juba from 18 to 2 major groupings: the United Resistance Front (URF), with 5 factions, and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLM-A) – Abdul Shafie, with 11 factions/personalities. After this development, the Mediation and the international partners considered that they could deal with five major coalitions, namely: SLM/A-AW; JEM-KI; URF; SLM/A-Unity and SLM/A-AS.

93. During the meetings held in Sharm-El-Sheikh, on 4 December 2007, and in Geneva, on 17 and 18 March 2008, the Mediation, as well

as the regional and international partners, assessed the situation of the peace process in light of the consultations undertaken by the Special Envoys and exchanged views on the way forward. In Geneva, the international community noted the high level of insecurity resulting from renewed clashes between the parties. The meeting expressed concerns about the large number of civilian casualties and of displaced persons, and agreed on the urgent need to reduce the level of violence and create conditions propitious for peaceful negotiations.

94. After additional consultations inside and outside the Sudan, the Mediation decided to call the parties to informal consultations on security-related issues. The aim was to address concerns on security issues raised by various stakeholders, including Mr. Abdel Wahid El Nour, Chairman of the SLM/A. The ultimate objective for the Mediation, after what was considered as a confidence-building exercise, was to bring the parties to gradually agree on cessation of hostilities. The informal consultations scheduled to take place at the end of May, however, had to be postponed at the last minute, as some of the Movements, in particular the SLM/A Abdul Wahid and the JEM-Khalil, after putting several pre-conditions to their participation, opted to stay out.

95. It is evident that the parties are not ready to engage in substantive negotiations at this stage. Continued mistrust between the parties and the Government, lack of strong leadership and a single vision and political structure within the Movements and their preference for a military solution have contributed to such hesitation. In addition:

- SLM/A-AW has continued to insist on the provision of full or minimum security (in both cases, with a full deployment of UNAMID and disarmament of the Janjaweed), return of IDPs and refugees to their places of origin, and payment of compensation, as preconditions for joining the negotiation;
- JEM-Khalil is still insisting on a military solution as its preferred option. This culminated in the attack on Omdurman on 10 May 2008. JEM-Khalil claims that it is the only credible Movement in Darfur and views other Movements as insignificant. JEM insists that it would not negotiate with any other party except the Government, but accepts the auspices of the AU-UN Mediation;
- URF is confronted with splinting moves by the SLM/A-Khamis Abdallah and the URFF, which issued statements announcing their departure from the URF umbrella. The remaining factions of the URF which expressed their readiness to go to the Geneva meeting, finally retracted;
- SLM/A-AS is having problems to enter Darfur and is stranded somewhere in South Sudan;
- SLM/A-Unity appears to be the only Movement that has continuously expressed its readiness to go anywhere for substantive talks than mere informal consultations on security arrangements;

- the Government of the Sudan, on its part, due to the recent attack on the capital by JEM, has indicated unwillingness to negotiate with this Movement, calling it a terrorist movement.

96. In the face of the current situation resulting from the refusal by some of the Movements to even attend informal consultations on security related matters, the Mediation held consultations with the regional and international partners on 4 and 5 June 2008 in Geneva. The meeting agreed that efforts should be intensified to obtain an all-inclusive cessation of hostilities. It also underlined the need for a holistic approach taking into consideration the national, regional and international dimensions of the Darfur conflict.

97. In the aftermath of the 10 May attack of Omdurman by JEM, the Commission issued a statement strongly condemning it. The Commission further called on all concerned to exercise utmost restraint and to refrain from any action likely to escalate the tension. On 14 May 2008, the PSC was briefed by the Commissioner for Peace and Security on the attack, as well as on the subsequent developments. At the end of its deliberations, the PSC strongly condemned the attack and expressed concern at the escalating tension in the relations between Chad and the Sudan, which resulted in the breaking of diplomatic relations and the closing of the common border.

98. Subsequent to the JEM attack on Omdurman, the Chairperson of the Commission, along with the Commissioner for Peace and Security, undertook visits to Chad and the Sudan from 15 to 19 May 2008. These discussions with the leaders of the two countries were cordial and constructive, highlighting the strong desire shared by all the parties to consistently promote the full realization of the principles and objective of the AU. The discussions also led to a convergence of the positions of the parties towards defusing the current tensions and resorting to peaceful means to resolve the bilateral disputes between the Sudan and Chad, in a spirit of good neighborliness and thorough the scrupulous implementation of the Dakar Agreement and other previous Agreements binding the two countries. Furthermore, these exchanges of views and perspectives provided an opportunity to underline the importance of reactivating the political process in Darfur within the context of the Abuja Agreement, as well as that of enhancing the effectiveness of UNAMID.

99. The general security situation in Darfur during the period under review remained volatile. The most significant clash between the SAF and the armed movements occurred at the beginning of the year when the JEM/Khalil attacked and occupied three villages in the area of Jebel Moon. Acts of robbery, murder, hijacking of cars, abduction, livestock theft and other activities were also on the increase. The total number of such acts documented so far increased from 130 in January to 325 in April 2008. A total of 113 hijackings of humanitarian vehicles, including WFP contracted vehicles, 10 attacks on other humanitarian convoys and 46 armed assaults against humanitarian compounds have taken place.

100. Despite this situation, some 14,700 humanitarian workers, including approximately 800 international personnel, continue to assist the 4.27 million conflict- affected people, including 2.45 million IDPs. Given the fact that the recent assessment of the food situation indicated that cereal production in Darfur is

lower than last seasons, more Darfurians are expected to flock to IDPs' camps for assistance, thus worsening the conditions in the camps.

101. The current UNAMID force strength in Darfur remains at 7,728, out of the 19,555 military strength authorized by United Nations Security Council resolution 1769(2007). Under the current deployment plan, it is envisaged that, at full strength, UNAMID will be composed of 20 battalions. South Africa, Tanzania, Ghana, Malawi and Burkina Faso would each have deployed one battalion. Senegal, Egypt and Ethiopia would have deployed two battalions each, while Nigeria and Rwanda would have deployed four battalions each. While many African countries are ready to participate in the UNAMID, however, most of them need third party support for logistics and the necessary equipment. A battalion from Thailand may also be deployed at a certain stage. It is also envisaged that a Force Reserve Company (Special Forces) will be deployed by Nepal, while the 3 Sector Reserve Infantry Companies will be deployed by Bangladesh, Nigeria and Nepal. It is also envisaged that the 3 Sector Reconnaissance Companies will be provided by Ethiopia, Malaysia and Nigeria.

102. With regard to Force Enablers, 2 of the 3 Multi-Role Logistics units will be provided by Bangladesh and Ethiopia, while the needed 3 engineering units will be contributed to the mission by China, Egypt and Pakistan. Critical gaps continue to exist in the area of Force Multipliers, i.e. aviation units (attack helicopters, utility helicopters and Arial reconnaissance), heavy and medium ground transport units, as well as multi-role logistics units.

103. The established strength of individual Police Officers (IPOs) for UNAMID is 3,772. Out of this, 1,596 elements are deployed in the mission area. Meanwhile, out of the 19 established Formed Police Units (FPUs), only one, from Bangladesh, has been deployed in the mission area, and is based in Nyala, South Darfur.

#### **h) Chad – The Sudan Relations**

104. The last Ordinary Session of the Council took place in a context fraught with tension in the relations between Chad and Sudan. This tension was the result of the attack carried out against Chad, in particular the capital, N'Djamena, between 28 January and 4 February 2008, by a coalition of rebel movements. Reacting to this situation, the Assembly of the Union adopted a decision condemning the attack and expressing the AU's rejection of any unconstitutional change. The Assembly mandated President Denis Sassou-Nguesso of the Republic of Congo and the Leader of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Muammar Al-Gaddafi, to make contact with the Chadian parties with a view to bringing an end to the fighting and taking initiatives to find a sustainable solution to the crisis prevailing in the country.

105. Following the Assembly decision, a team of representatives of the two mediators went to N'Djamena, where they met the Chadian Authorities, notably President Idriss Deby Itno, on 13 February 2008. At a later date, at the

regional level, an ECCAS Extraordinary Meeting, devoted to Chad, was held on 10 March in Kinshasa, convened by its incumbent President, President Joseph Kabila. The Summit expressed its *“firm condemnation of the resort to arms and other unconstitutional means as a way to seize power, as well as of all destabilisation of democratic institutions which reflect the will of the Chadian people”*. It also called on the parties to *“put all the previous agreements into force, notably those of Tripoli and Riyadh, between the Republic of Chad and the Republic of The Sudan”*. After having commended the Agreements concluded on 13 August 2007 in N’djamena and on 25 October 2007 in Sirte, in the framework of the Inter-Chadian policy dialogue, the Heads of State encouraged the Republic of Chad *“to continue, relentlessly, to put these agreements into force with a view to strengthening the Rule of Law and establishing sustainable and lasting peace in Chad”*.

106. In the framework of looking for a sustainable solution to the crisis involving Chad and The Sudan, President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal organised, in the margin of the Islamic Conference Organisation (ICO) Summit held in Dakar from 12 to 13 March 2008, a meeting between Presidents Idriss Deby Itno and Omar Hassan El Bashir. The two Presidents signed an agreement known as *“the Dakar Agreement”* on 13 March 2008, according to which they *“solemnly undertake to forbid all armed group activities and stop the use of their respective territories to destabilise one or the other State”*. In addition, the two Heads of State undertake to honour the commitments made previously. With a view to really implementing these agreements, *“the International Community, in general, and in particular, Libya, Congo, Senegal, Gabon, Eritrea, CEN-SAD, ECCAS and the AU,”* were requested *“to take all necessary measures with a view to setting up a Peace and Security Force so as to guarantee and observe the joint operations to secure the common border”*. In this respect, the Agreement set up a *“Contact Group”* made up of Foreign Ministers of the above-mentioned countries, so as to monitor its implementation. The Contact Group is jointly chaired by Libya and the Republic of Congo.

107. The first Ministerial meeting of the Contact Group took place in Libreville on 10 April 2008. In the final statement, the participants launched a solemn appeal to all the Chadian political players to persevere on the course of dialogue and negotiation. The Meeting also invited Chad and The Sudan to honour the Peace Agreement signed in Dakar and adhere to the commitments made prior to that. A second Contact Group meeting was held in Tripoli from 12 to 13 May 2008. Prepared by a defence, security and intelligence experts meeting, that took place in Tripoli on 28 April 2008, the objective of this second meeting was to adopt the training programme for the Border Observation Forces between Chad and The Sudan prepared by the experts.

108. It was in this context that the JEM attack occurred on Omdurman, on the outskirts of Khartoum on 10 May 2008. This attack prevented the Contact Group to consider its Agenda. Indeed, The Sudan accused Chad of complicity with the Rebel Movement and, from 11 May 2008, announced the breaking-off of diplomatic relations with Chad. In a statement on 10 May, the Chadian Government denied *“all involvement in this affair which it unreservedly condemns, whoever the perpetrators may be”* and on 12 May, it decided on *“the sealing off of the border so as to avoid all infiltration and suspicious traffic”*.

109. In view of these events, the Contact Group, noting the absence of The Sudan at the meeting, and after intense consultations, made a public statement in which it “*expressed its very serious concern and firmly condemned this destabilisation attempt made against the Government and legal institutions of The Sudan*”, and expressed its deep solidarity with the country. The Contact Group invited the PSC to meet as a matter of urgency on the events that took place on 10 May 2008 in The Sudan and carry out a diligent inquiry to identify the attackers and to place the responsibilities.

110. The attack on the capital of The Sudan was unanimously condemned by many African countries as well as by the rest of the International Community, including the United Nations, the European Union, the Arab League and CEN-SAD. The Commission firmly condemned this attack and launched an appeal to all parties to stop resorting to force and renew their commitment in favour of dialogue as being the only way to put an end to the Darfur conflict and the suffering inflicted on the civil population. On 14 May 2008, the PSC did the same and urged the two countries to show the greatest restraint, resort to dialogue to resolve their differences and renew their commitment for the scrupulous implementation, in good faith, of their obligations contained in the Dakar Agreement and the Agreements prior to that.

111. In order to defuse the rapidly mounting tension between Chad and The Sudan, gather first hand information from the leaders of the two countries, and directly call for calm and restraint by the leaders, the Chairperson of the Commission undertook diplomatic visits between the two countries during the period 15 to 19 May 2008, accompanied by the Commissioner for Peace and Security. The delegation met President Idriss Deby Itno on 15 May 2008. At the end of these meetings, the Government of Chad, in a statement, *commended the endeavours of the African Union which privileged diplomacy and reasserted its commitment to adhere to and apply the Dakar Agreement and previous Agreements*. The delegation met President Omar Hassan Al Bashir in Khartoum, on 18 May 2008, made the same appeasement speech. In its turn, the Sudanese Government declared, in a statement, that The Sudan “*had been the one who had most shown the will to maintain good relations with Chad and accept the mechanisms established to improve relations between the two countries*”. The statement also declared that “*The Sudan remained determined to maintain relations with all its neighbours but would not tolerate interference in its internal affairs...*” On 19 May, the delegation again went to see President Idriss Deby Itno in N’Djaména, to inform him of the substance of its meetings with President Omar Al Bashir.

112. The Commission urged Chad and The Sudan to continue to show restraint as they had been doing until now and re-establish their diplomatic relations as quickly as possible. It urged them to resume the dialogue they had started so well in the framework of the various agreements they had signed, notably the Dakar Agreement of 13 March 2008. To end, it encouraged the Heads of State to take the necessary initiatives to bring relations between the two countries to normal again.

113. In this respect, the Commission noted with satisfaction that, thanks to the efforts of African leaders in the margin of the TICAD IV meeting in Yokohama, Japan, The Sudan accepted to resume its seat within the Contact Group of the Dakar Agreement, thus enabling the fruitful holding of the third session of this

structure, in Brazzaville, on 9 June 2008, which was evidence of the willingness of the two Governments to renew dialogue.

**i) Central African Republic (CAR)**

114. The situation in the CAR has made very encouraging progress since February 2008. At the political level, the political dialogue process has continued. The Preparatory Committee for the All Inclusive Political Dialogue (PCAIPD) ended its deliberations on 31 March 2008, and submitted its final report to President Bozizé on 25 April 2008. It made several suggestions on the various aspects of its mission. The members of the PCAIPD recommended that the dialogue take place in Bangui, with the understanding that the Central African Authorities would take all the necessary measures, from a judiciary as well as a security point of view. The AU was proposed as international facilitator following the example of the UN and the IOF. The Central African Authorities buckled down to taking the necessary measures to organise the dialogue as such.

115. The People's Army for the Restoration of Democracy (APRD), which had been until then the most active group in the North of the country, finally joined the PCAIPD and took part in the deliberations. The participation of the APRD in the dialogue was the result of long negotiations with the main leaders of this political and military group, led with the support of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General, head of the United Nations Peace-building Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA), Mr François Lonsény Fall. These renewed contacts finally led to the signing, in Libreville on 9 May 2008, of a Cease-fire and Peace Agreement between the Central African Government and the APRD, under the aegis of President El Hadj Omar Bongo Ondimba. The Commission commended this Agreement, which enabled the next political dialogue to be contemplated in a calmer environment and on consensual and inclusive bases.

116. Despite the advances thus noted, the CAR remains confronted with the phenomenon of organised crime carried out by the *Zaraguinas*, or highway gangs. The activity of the *Zaraguinas* remains diffuse and difficult to define, but it tends to be concentrated around farming and mining areas. Indeed, a now chronic insecurity reigns over a large part of the hinterland provinces and on some major highways in the CAR. Confronted with serious constraints in terms of human and material resources, the Central African Government is finding it very difficult to tackle the situation.

117. Under these conditions, the population continued to flee to neighbouring countries, such as Chad and Cameroon, hide in the fields or organise themselves into self-defence groups. Except for the Vakaga prefecture, where a return to the villages had been noted, in the North-Western and Central Northern regions, the humanitarian situation had instead deteriorated. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR) thus noted that between August and October 2007, the number of Central African refugees in Cameroon had increased from 26 000 to 45 192. The overall number of Central African displaced persons was estimated at 197 000.

118. With the organisation in Bangui, from 14 to 17 April 2008, with the support of the UNDP and development partners, of a seminar on the Reform



of the Security Sector (RSS), the Central African Government hoped to implement the first pillar of its Poverty Alleviation Strategy. The objective of the seminar was to enable the Central African Government to determine inclusively the main lines of the new national strategy as concerned security, define the implementation modalities of this strategy as well as the coordination mechanisms which took into account the place of sub-regional, regional and international partners, and identify the intervention programmes and priority projects.

119. On the other hand, the CEMAC Multi-national Force (FOMUC) carried on with its activities of securing the country, supporting the Central African Defence Forces. It opened a fourth camp in Paoua, and a Cameroonian 119-men strong contingent has been deployed since 23 May 2008, bringing the total troupe number to nearly 500. Meanwhile, the process of transferring the supervision authority of the Force from CEMAC to ECCAS was at a very advanced stage and should soon be completed.

120. The establishment of the United Nations Mission in the CAR and Chad (MINURCAT) was continuing, and it should very soon set up in Bangui. The European Union (EUFOR) Operation intended to secure MINURCAT had reached its operational capacity since March 2008. In the CAR, the programme of Operation EUFOR had at first been to have the 200-men strong French troupes set up in Birao hand over command to EUFOR. It was planned that the operation would reach its full operational capacity with the deployment of all its strength, that is, 3700 men, by the month of June 2008, which will enable MINURCAT to carry on with the establishment of several police stations, including one in Birao.

121. The major difficulty facing the CAR was of an economic and financial nature. The Civil Servants general strike which took place at the beginning of 2008 showed the fragility of the economic and financial situation in the country. The Government's efforts, notably for the implementation of reform programmes decided upon with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the African Development Bank (ADB), with a view to raising the level of tax collection, have not yet enabled sufficient resources to be mobilised to cover the most pressing needs. Admittedly, the country has reached the decision point for a reduction of its debt under the reinforced Initiative in favour of Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC Initiative), following the adoption, in September 2007, of the Strategy Document on Poverty Alleviation (PASD). But for the CAR to receive an irrevocable reduction of its debt leading to the completion of the HIPC Initiative, the Authorities will have to continue and maintain the reforms begun in the framework of the IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF), continue with the implementation of the PAS and complete successfully some key reforms that will enable the management of public finances, governance and transparency, particularly in the mining and forestry sectors to be improved.

122. The Commission continued its activities in support of the Central African Authorities through notably the implementation of the statement of the 67th PSC Meeting on 7 December 2006. It was in this framework that the Commission made a contribution of 50 000 US dollars to help in the organisation of the All Inclusive Political Dialogue. In addition, my Special Envoy, Mr Sadok Fayala, went to Bangui from 3 to 6 March, to consider with the Central African Authorities and other concerned players, the role the AU could play in the organisation of the

Dialogue and evaluate the political and security situation in the country. Similarly, the Commission followed the seminar on the reform of the security sector. To end, the Commission maintained a fruitful collaboration with the European Commission, in the framework of the support brought to FOMUC through the African Peace Facility. Discussions were on-going to define the outline of a future joint AU-EU FOMUC evaluation mission.

123. The situation in the CAR was considered by the PSC during its 130th meeting held on 30 May 2008. On this occasion, the PSC encouraged the development partners to continue and strengthen their support with a view to contributing to the consolidation of peace and stability in the CAR, and asked the Commission to continue and intensify their efforts to ensure the adequate follow-up of the conclusions of the Solidarity Conference held in Addis Ababa in October 2007. The PSC also asked the Commission to continue to support the All Inclusive Political Dialogue and the efforts to consolidate peace in the CAR and to take the necessary measures to open a Liaison Office in Bangui.

**j) Liberia**

124. During the reporting period, President Johnson-Sirleaf and her Government have made tremendous progress in their efforts to consolidate peace and reconstruct Liberia, as it emerges from years of conflict and devastation. Liberia's bid to overcome its past, through relentless efforts to consolidate peace in the country, revitalize the economy, improve governance and the rule of law, and reconstruct, as well as improve infrastructure and basic social services of the country, has gained recognition from the international community. Bilateral and multilateral partners continue to express confidence in the country, as well as lend support through major investments in different sectors of the economy.

125. Currently, Liberia has in place its national police known as the Liberian National Police (LNP) and is in the process of finalizing the training of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). There is relative internal stability compared to the past, while relations with its neighbours are also stable. The recent initiative taken by Côte d'Ivoire to join the Mano River Union (MRU) is highly commendable, as this would go a long way to stabilize the most troubled spots of the West Africa sub-region.

126. Strides have been made on the political front as well, by ensuring that the policies, structures and processes of governance follow the tenets of good democratic governance based on transparent and accountable leadership and the inclusiveness of the citizens in the governance processes of the country. The various arms of government continue to play their respective functions, while the opposition also continues to dialogue with the Government. There are ongoing efforts to fight corruption in the country.

127. The work of the Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is steadily progressing, despite some challenges being experienced within the Commission. The issue of access to justice, and delays and corrupt practices in the justice delivery system, however, remain a challenge.

**k) Côte d'Ivoire**

128. The positive effects accruing from the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and its Additional Agreements made it possible for Côte d'Ivoire to experience a calm political climate. This new context was boosted by the good collaboration between President Laurant Gbagbo and Prime Minister Guillaume Soro, the implication of all political and civil society stakeholders in the process and the consensual approach adopted in Government decision-making.

129. In this context, and with a view to holding elections that would conclude the peace process, the main political parties intensified their activities throughout the country. Thus, from 1 to 3 February, the *Rassemblement des Republicains* (rally of the republicans - RDR) held its 2<sup>nd</sup> Congress in Abidjan, during which Mr. Alassane Ouattara was re-elected to head the party for another term of five years and was designated as the RDR candidate for the presidential election. For his part, the President of the *Parti Démocratique de Côte d'Ivoire–Rassemblement démocratique africain* (democratic party of Cote d'Ivoire – African democratic rally – PDCI-RDA), spoke at public meetings in several localities, one in April in Soubré, in the Fromager region, which is the Head of State's native region. Also, from 31 March to 26 April, the President of the *Front populaire ivoirien* (Ivorian popular front – FPI) criss-crossed the country's northern regions. From the Fekéssédou Division, the area of origin of the Secretary General of the *Forces nouvelles* (new forces), to those in Korhogo and Boundiali, under the control of the *Forces nouvelles* (new forces), passing through Kong village, the birth place of Alassane Ouattara, the FPI President repeatedly affirmed that the war had ended and urged hesitant civil servants to return to their duty stations.

130. In spite of a number of incidents here and there, as well as of a new wave of crime, mainly in the West, the security situation remained stable during the period under review. In fact, the Secretary General of the United Nations decided to reduce the levels of the security plan by lowering certain zones of the South and the North and in the Bondoukou-Bouna area to phase I and others in Guiglo area in the West to phase III. The level remained unchanged in the rest of the Northern areas of the country.

131. Concerning the humanitarian situation, it was marked the voluntary return by displaced persons to their villages of origin, with assistance from Government, humanitarian agencies and NGOs. However, lingering suspicion, the quest for control over land, mainly in the West, as well as inadequate resources and lack of basic social services still constitute an obstacle to be overcome. National authorities and the humanitarian community have spared no effort in speeding up this movement. It is in that context that seminars and workshops on social cohesion were organized, and a National Reconciliation Charter and an Observatory of solidarity and cohesion were adopted and established respectively to consolidate the dynamic for peace. In the same vein, last January, the AU granted Cote d'Ivoire a financial contribution of 100,000 American dollars through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (HCR) in Cote d'Ivoire.

132. Concerning the economy, it can be observed that the international financial community is gradually resuming cooperation with Cote d'Ivoire within the context of post-conflict assistance and that there is renewed

interest on the part of foreign investors. At the same time, banking institutions are increasingly returning to the centre, northern and western zones.

133. Significant progress was made on the implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and its additional agreements, though the initial schedule was not respected. Thus, in relation to the identification of persons, public hearings held for the purpose of obtaining remedial orders for birth certificates were properly conducted in all parts of the country. By 15 May, the last day of the operation, a total of 623,363 applications had been received, of which 592,474 had been approved and 28,224 rejected. However, special catch-up operations will be scheduled in localities as would be necessary. Furthermore, preparations for reconstituting lost or damaged civil status registers have been completed.

134. Concerning the electoral process, it is worth mentioning that the Government signed, on 27 March, a 66.7 billion CFA F convention with SAGEM Company for the establishment of an electoral list and voter's cards, in conjunction with the National Institute of Statistics (INS). In line with that agreement and following an extraordinary Council of Ministers meeting on 14 April, President Laurent Gbagbo signed a series of legislative and regulatory instruments necessary for implementing the Agreements, one of which is decree no. 2008-134 to convene the electoral college of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire for the purpose of electing the President of the Republic on 30 November 2008.

135. As part of the efforts to maintain a calm political atmosphere, a code of good conduct for political parties, groups and forces, as well as for candidates for elections in Cote d'Ivoire, was signed on 24 April at a ceremony attended by the Secretary General of the United Nations. By signing that instrument, the parties undertook, *inter alia*, to support free, open and transparent democratic elections, to respect the verdict of the ballot box and, in case of dispute, to recourse to the law. In the same logic, a guide on media coverage of elections was adopted on 31 May, following the National Forum that examined the mission of the media during elections.

136. Concerning the military aspects, mention should be made of the good understanding between the command headquarters of the two ex-belligerent forces and the smooth functioning of the Integrated Command Centre (ICC), which was responsible for security at the public hearings all over the country. It should also be mentioned that the regrouping of ex-combatants was executed within the stipulated time frame for Government forces, whereas logistical and financial difficulties delayed the regrouping of elements of the New Forces, which began the exercise in a significant manner only in May. Furthermore, the restructuring instruments for FDSCI which should have been available by 15 December 2007, as stipulated in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Additional Agreement of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, will have to wait till 20 June. Similarly, in comparison with the provisions of the abovementioned Agreement, the process of disarming and dismantling the militia and the national civic service has been slow.

137. In spite of the difficult working conditions for Prefects and Sub-Prefects, real progress was recorded in respect of efforts to restore State authority and to redeploy the Administration. A large number of civil servants and State employees have returned to their duty stations in the centre, north and west

zones, and the process of rehabilitating and equipping public buildings is under way, with donor assistance. Furthermore, it should be mentioned that mixed customs teams of customs employees and elements of the New Forces were being deployed in the centre, north and west zones, as a prelude to redeploying tax and customs administration in application of the single treasury principle.

138. The mechanisms for follow-up and joint action provided for by the Ouagadougou Agreement played an important role in maintaining a serene atmosphere between the main political actors. The Permanent Consultation Framework (PCF) whose members are the Facilitator, the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the President of PDCI-RDA and the President of RDR, met on 24 January and 9 May. The Evaluation and Accompaniment Committee (EAC), which is composed of representatives of signatory parties to the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, held meetings on 14 January and 21 March. These meetings, which were attended by representatives of the international community who are members of the International Consultative Organ (ICO), provide the occasion for making progress reports on the implementation of the Agreements and for formulating recommendations.

139. Beyond the praiseworthy efforts made by the Ivorian parties, the crisis exit process in Cote d'Ivoire received the constant attention of the Facilitator, the United Nations, countries and international organizations grouped under the ICO. In fact, in accordance with the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, the Facilitator chaired all PCF and EAC meetings and, considering the inclusive nature of the crisis exit process, other political leaders and representatives of other Ivorian civil society categories also attended regularly.

140. On 15 January 2008, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1795 (2008), which, among others, endorsed the Additional Agreements and extended the mandate of the UN Mission in Cote d'Ivoire (MINUCI) and of the French Forces supporting them, up to 30 July 2008. At the same time, in consultation with the Facilitator and Ivorian parties, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General in Cote d'Ivoire adopted the framework for certifying the electoral process, in accordance with his mandate granted by Resolution 1765 (2007) of 16 July 2007. For their part, during a press conference organized on 7 May, donors announced the mobilization of financial resources to the tune of 11 billion CFA F for the election and of 104 billion CFA Francs for the other crisis exit programmes. The Ivorian Government, however, felt that there were pending financing issues and requested the international community to provide the necessary assistance.

141. During the period under review, and through its Liaison Office in Cote d'Ivoire, the AU continued to encourage Ivorian political forces and civil society to make every effort to consolidate the peace dynamic initiated in the country and to contribute to creating conducive conditions for a proper organization of the presidential election within the agreed time frame. In addition, PSC had, at its 128<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 26 May 2008, examined the situation in Cote d'Ivoire. On that occasion, the PSC noted with satisfaction the progress made in the peace process, by mutual consent, towards fixing a date for the presidential election on 30 November 2008. At the same time, the PSC urged the Government, the political class and all Ivorian parties to intensify their efforts with a view to speeding up the

implementation of the Ouagadougou Political Agreement and its Additional Agreements. The Commission intends to send a multi-disciplinary pre-electoral evaluation mission to Cote d'Ivoire to assess the situation and make recommendations on the nature of the assistance the AU could provide within the electoral process, including observing the elections on the 30 November 2008.

142. In conclusion, the Commission was pleased with the significant progress made in the crisis exit process in Cote d'Ivoire. It encourages the Ivorian parties to persevere in their efforts. The Commission reiterates its appreciation to the Facilitator and assures him, once more, of AU's support. Finally, the Commission appeals to international partners to continue to accompany the Ivorian Government's efforts.

*l) Western Sahara*

143. Last January, in Addis Ababa, Council was updated on the attempts at direct negotiations between Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, aimed at breaking the stalemate in the peace process in Western Sahara. It is to be recalled that, in April and October of last year, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolutions 1754 and 1783, both of which had, in effect, taken note of the proposals put forward by the two parties and called for negotiations, without preconditions and in good faith, with a view to achieving a just and mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara.

144. It is on the basis of these resolutions that the UN Secretary-General has organized four rounds of negotiations between the two Parties, in June and August of last year, and then in January and March 2008, in Manhasset, New York. The talks were facilitated by Ambassador Peter van Walsum, the Personal Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for Western Sahara. A fifth round has been agreed upon, but no dates have yet been set for its holding. As Council is aware, Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO had submitted their respective proposals to the UN Secretary-General, with the Kingdom of Morocco offering autonomy, under its jurisdiction, as a solution to the conflict and the Frente POLISARIO proposing a referendum of self-determination, containing three ballot options: integration or autonomy, under Moroccan jurisdiction, as well as independence, with a privileged cooperation with Morocco, as another alternative.

145. So far, the talks, which also covered possible confidence-building measures between the two parties, have not resulted in any progress towards the search for a solution to the long outstanding dispute with respect to the final status of Western Sahara. It is against this background, that the Security Council considered the report of the UN Secretary-General, dated 14 April 2008, on the situation concerning Western Sahara. In its resolution 1813 (2008), adopted on 30 April 2008, the Security Council, inter alia, called upon the parties to continue to show political will and work in an atmosphere propitious for dialogue, in order to enter into a more intensive and substantive phase of negotiations.

146. In the meantime, the Security Council decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) until 30 April 2009. On its part, the AU Liaison Office in Laayoune

(Western Sahara), which is headed by Ambassador Yilma Tadesse, continues to function in the premises of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) and full cooperation with MINURSO, and to closely follow the activities covered by MINURSO's mandate.

147. In conclusion, the Commission would like to express the hope that the two parties will seize the opportunity of the planned fifth round of talks to make progress towards a solution consistent with international legality, in particular the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, as well as in the Constitutive Act of the African Union.

#### **A.IV. AFRICA PEACE FACILITY**

148. In January 2008, Council was informed of the conclusions of the Joint AU-EU Workshop on the lessons learnt regarding the implementation of the Africa Peace Facility (APF) for the period 2004 – 2007, held in Djibouti in November 2007. Council would recall that the APF was established for a period of three years by the EU, with a total financial envelop of € 250 million drawn from the 9<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF), to fund peace support operations conducted under the authority of the AU. The establishment of the APF, which became operational from May 2004, followed a request by the Assembly, in Maputo, in July 2003. Subsequently, and at the request of the AU, the APF was replenished both through the EDF and additional voluntary contributions of several EU member States. These replenishments made it possible to raise the total APF envelop from the initial amount of €250 million to nearly €440 million.

149. The conclusions of the Djibouti workshop were submitted to the 4th meeting of the Joint Coordination Committee (JCC) held in Addis Ababa on 4 February 2004, with the participation of representatives of the RECs/RMs, as well as of the respective Chairs of the PSC and the AU. It is to be recalled that the JCC is an organ co-chaired by the AU and the EU and established to review the operations of the APF.

150. The meeting stressed that, overall, the APF had proved to be relevant and generally effective, and therefore its core features needed to be maintained. At the same time, the meeting agreed that there is scope for some adjustments linked to the past experiences and the lessons learned, on the one hand, and the priorities of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and its Action Plan (2008-2010), on the other hand. In this respect, it was agreed that the future APF should, in the spirit of African solidarity, be a truly pan-African instrument that involves fully all African countries; be based on an enhanced "Africa-EU partnership" that includes strengthened dialogue, sharing of analysis and reports, joint fact-finding and assessment missions; ensure joint coordination mechanisms involving all relevant actors for each peace operation supported by partners; be informed by the APSA framework that will constitute the main reference for the APF and its set up; allow for providing a comprehensive support to peace-building; attach greater importance to the civilian component of relevant initiatives and actions; attach more importance to the strengthening of the capacity of relevant African institutions and structures; and increasing support for AUC-RECs/RMs cooperation.

151. On 13 May 2008, and in line with the rules governing the implementation of the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF, as well as the principle of ownership, the Commissioner for Peace and Security wrote to the Director-General for Development and Cooperation with ACP of the European Commission, to formally request the EU to take the necessary steps for the launching of the new APF for the period 2008 – 2010, which corresponds with the implementation period of the first Joint Africa-EU Action Plan. In the context of the funding sources identified under the Action Plan, an amount of €300 million from the EDF has been earmarked for the APF.

**A.V. FOLLOW-UP OF DECISION ASSEMBLY/AU/DEC. 145 (VIII) ON THE FUNDING OF AU-LED PEACE SUPPORT OPERATIONS**

152. In January, Council was briefed on the steps taken to follow up on decision Assembly/AU/DEC.145 (VIII), of January 2007, on the funding of AU-led peace support operations through United Nations assessed contributions. Council will recall that, on 28 March 2007, the Security Council adopted a Presidential Statement requesting the Secretary-General to provide a report, in consultation with the relevant regional organizations, in particular the AU, on specific proposals on how the UN can better support further cooperation and coordination with regional organizations on chapter VIII arrangements. This Presidential Statement sanctioned an initiative taken by South Africa, in pursuance of the Assembly's decision referred to above, to organize a debate on the theme "Relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security".

153. In its decision on the activities of the PSC and the state of peace and security in Africa, the 10<sup>th</sup> ordinary session of the Assembly welcomed the offer by South Africa to avail its presidency of the Security Council, in April 2008, to discuss the report that the Secretary-General was expected to submit. The Assembly requested the Security Council to consider that report with a view to achieving concrete results in further strengthening cooperation between the AU and the UN.

154. On 7 April 2008, the Secretary-General submitted his report on the relationship between the UN and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, in the maintenance of international peace and security. In that report, the Secretary-General, having considered the important issues that define the nature of the collaborative partnership in international peace and security between the United Nations and regional organizations, in particular the AU, and the division responsibilities between the United Nations and those organizations under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter, made a number of recommendations. These recommendations relate to the following aspects: nature and structure of the partnership; coordination and consultation mechanisms; strengthening and improvement of delivery for capacity-building for peacekeeping and peace support operations with regional organizations; conflict prevention and mediation; peace-building support and post-conflict reconstruction; human rights and humanitarian action.

155. On the specific issue of the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of financing regional organizations when they undertake peacekeeping operations under UN mandate, and building on a proposal made by the PSC in



November 2007 as a contribution to the report requested by the Security Council, the Secretary-General proposed the setting up, within three months, of an African Union-United Nations panel consisting of distinguished persons to consider in-depth the modalities of how to support, including financing, peacekeeping operations undertaken by regional organizations, in particular as related to startup funding, equipment and logistics, and make concrete recommendations. The Security Council, through its resolution 1809 (2008) adopted on 16 April 2008, welcomed the Secretary-General's proposal to set up such a panel. At their 2<sup>nd</sup> joint meeting held in New York, on 17 April 2008, the Security Council and the AU PSC expressed satisfaction with the ongoing efforts to strengthen their relationship through, among others, taking steps to identify predictable, sustainable and flexible resources for the AU in order to undertake peacekeeping operations in the context of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. At the time of finalizing this report, consultations were underway for the appointment of the members of the panel and the adoption of its terms of reference.

**A.VI. ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AU STRATEGIC LEVEL CAPABILITY FOR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT IN ADDIS ABABA, INCLUDING INFRASTRUCTURE**

156. As Council is aware, the role of the AU in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts on the continent has substantially increased over the past years. As a result of this situation, the AU has significantly increased and continues to increase the staff of the PSD. However, it is now clear that current office and operating space is no longer able to cope with the needs of the AU. There is simply no space for planned or approved staff increases. A new building, housing an AU Conflict Management Centre, is required to accommodate the needed number of staff, but also to provide the necessary tools for the PSD to effectively carry out its mandate.

157. During the Annual Consultation between the AU, the Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, the G8 member countries and other AU partners, held in April 2005, the partners agreed on the need to establish an AU strategic level capability for conflict management in Addis Ababa, including infrastructure. This was reiterated during the follow-up technical meeting held in October 2005. In the course of the preparations for the Annual Consultation held in May 2007, the issue was discussed with the German presidency of the G8. In August 2007, the Commission formally requested Germany to provide the required support.

158. On 28 April 2008, the German Foreign Minister wrote to the Chairperson of the Commission to formally confirm that Germany would build the required facility. On 13 May 2008, the Chairperson of the Commission wrote to the German Foreign Minister to thank his country for its support. In that letter, the Chairperson also indicated that the relevant services of the Commission would liaise with Germany to discuss the modalities for the implementation of the project.

159. Since then, the Commission has had preliminary discussions with the German side, including GTZ, which will be in charge of the implementation of the project. In the coming weeks, a number of steps will be taken that would pave the way for the commencement of the project, including the designation of focal

points within the relevant structures of the Commission and the identification of the site of the planned building.

## **B. POLITICAL AFFAIRS**

### **B.I. DEMOCRACY, GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

160. The promotion of democracy, elections, good governance and respect for human rights continues to be the central focus areas of the Commission within the mandates of Political Affairs. Of particular importance in this period is the monitoring of elections and the responses established to deal with the crisis in Kenya and the challenges experienced in Zimbabwe.

161. Whilst the Commission continues to respond to challenges and crises experienced in governance, the most important areas of focus have been the continued efforts to ensure ratification and implementation of Conventions and Charters approved by the Assembly. The Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption which came into force on July 2003 is in the process of implementation. In addition, attention has been focused on ensuring that the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance is popularized and ratified by Member States.

### **B.II. GOVERNANCE AND DEMOCRACY**

162. Efforts have been heightened over the past few months on the popularization of the Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. Within the ambits of its mandate the Commission has a comprehensive approach to issues of democracy and governance. In addition to initiating research activities on the architecture of governance interventions in the Continent, attention has also been focused on taking forward issues pertaining to the signing and ratification of the Charter and enhancing dialogue on African Constitutions.

#### *African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance*

163. A meeting of experts on the Charter, held in Namibia, in November 2007, provides the basis for the holding of regional meetings on the popularization of the Charter. The first of these was the Southern Region workshop held in Lesotho, between the 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2007. Collectively the experts meeting and the initial regional meeting served to establish a consolidated action plan on Charter popularization and ratification.

164. Following on the first regional meeting, a second regional meeting was held in Bujumbura, Burundi, between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> March 2008. Representatives of Member States that attended this meeting were from the Central, West and North Africa regions. Also included were representatives of partner organizations and civil societies. The workshop served to establish further the momentum towards Charter popularisation and ratification amongst Member States.

It also served to further strengthen the consolidated action plan that emerged from the experts meeting in Namibia.

165. As part of the Charter popularisation process, a further regional meeting for the Eastern Region was held in Kigali, Rwanda, from the 29<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2008. The success of the regional meeting on Charter popularisation and ratification is reflected in the momentum towards ratification amongst Member States. Prior to the workshops, only two Member States had signed the Charter. This has increased substantively and over 20 Member States have now signed the Charter. The commitment of all Member States is also reflected in the action plans that emerged from the regional meetings.

166. The signing of the Charter demonstrates commitment to its ratification. However, Member States are reminded that ratification is essential and will provide the African Union with the basis for engaging with Member States where unconstitutional changes in government are experienced and where there are concerns with state governance and democratic practices.

### ***Constitutionalism in Africa***

167. The momentum towards understanding the state of Constitutional practices in Africa was established at a workshop on African Constitutions in November 2007. This workshop provided a basis for reflection on the state of African Constitutions and developed strategies for enhancing Constitutionalism in Africa. The workshop also concluded that further work should be done to strengthen the application of Constitutions across Member States.

168. In preparation for a Continental Conference on Constitutions to be held in the last quarter of 2008, a brief brainstorming session was held on the margins of the Charter workshop in Kigali, Rwanda. The brainstorm of experts established a momentum for the planned conference by outlining the papers that need to be commissioned in order to reinforce the authority of Constitutions.

### ***Architecture of Governance Interventions***

169. To enhance cooperation with development partners and with other organizations active in 'governance', the Commission is proceeding with an initial study on the governance interventions in Africa and how these could be brought together and what the leadership role of the African Union would be in this context.

170. The preliminary study on the Architecture of Governance will be completed over the next few months and will feature in the dialogue with partners

and other organizations active in the 'governance' terrain in Africa. In this respect, a workshop with all relevant stakeholders will be held in the last quarter of 2008. It is envisaged that the study and the workshop will provide a basis for effective cooperation and would serve to ensure that there is African Union leadership and coordinated impact on 'governance' matters in the Continent.

### **B.III. PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

171. In discharging its responsibility on the promotion and protection of Human Rights, the Commission participated actively in the 7<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Human Rights Council with an address by the Commissioner for Political Affairs on the efforts deployed by the AU in the promotion of human rights and democratic values across the Continent. In addition, the Commission arranged a commemoration session on the Rwanda Genocide and arranged a workshop on Conflict Prevention through Democracy, Good Governance and Human Rights. To facilitate Human Rights a workshop was also arranged on Human Rights Education.

#### *7<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Human Rights Council*

172. In view of the session, the African Union needs to continue its crucial role in promoting and protecting human rights on the Continent, supporting the Human Rights Council and the Universal Periodic Review and actively participate in the commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in collaboration with its partners.

173. The Commission, in collaboration with the Government of the Republic of Burundi organized a workshop on Conflict Prevention Strategy through the Promotion of Democracy, Good Governance and Human Rights in Countries in or Emerging from Conflicts, which was held from 20th-22nd March 2008 in Bujumbura, Burundi. The Workshop, which was attended by Representatives of Member States, National Human Rights Institutions, UN Agencies, Humanitarian Organizations, African Union Organs, Regional Economic Communities and Experts, focused on Country Experiences, International and Regional Transitional Justice Systems as well as mechanisms for promotion of peace, human rights and good governance. It was noted that conflicts undermine the development of the Continent and that democracy, good governance, human rights and accountability were crucial elements in creating a favorable environment that forestall the prevalence or occurrence of conflicts on the Continent. The central recommendations of the workshop includes organizing a follow-up and comprehensive workshop on 'Transitional Justice, the Promotion of Democracy and Human Rights for Countries in or emerging from Conflicts'.

174. The Commission, in collaboration with the Swedish Embassy, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, and the Institute for Security Studies organized a Seminar on Ending Violence Against Women in Conflict Situations, on the theme: Lessons drawn from the Rwanda Genocide, which was held from 4th-5th April 2008 at the African Union Commission. The Seminar, which was attended by

Representatives of Governments, African Union Organs (PAP, ACHPR, AfCHPR) RECs, United Nations Organizations and Agencies, International Non-Governmental Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, academic institutions and experts, called for all efforts to be deployed in order to prevent conflicts and ensure that sexual gender based violence are adequately addressed in conflict and post conflict situations. The Representatives of the Rwanda Government expressed the desire to play host to a similar Seminar during the Commemoration of the 15th Anniversary of the Rwanda Genocide.

175. This event was followed by a commemorative event, which focused on the theme “Remember the genocide, fighting against its ideology, taking care of survivors and going forward in development”, was held on 7th April 2008 at the African Union Commission.

### ***Workshop on Human Rights Education***

176. The Commission, in collaboration with the Government of the Republic of The Gambia and the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights with the technical support of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, organised a Workshop on Human Rights Education for West Africa, on the theme: “Realising Women’s Rights Through Human Rights Education”, which was held from 14th–16th April 2008 in Banjul, The Gambia.

177. The Workshop was attended by Member States, African Union Organs, UN Agencies, National Human Rights Institutions, Civil Society Organisations and experts. The sessions focused on the World Program on Human Rights Education, Country Experiences, AU Education Program, AU Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality, Roles of the African Commission, African National Human Rights Institutions, Civil Society Organizations related to Human Rights Education as well as a review of the recommendations of the Beijing and Dakar Platforms for Actions and the Outcome of the 7th Regional Conference on Women.

178. The workshop acknowledged the diverse efforts by stakeholders at national, regional and international levels in furthering the realization of women’s rights through Human Rights Education. It underscored the centrality of the World Program on Human Rights, the AU Education Program, instruments and mechanisms related to women’s rights. The workshop noted that further efforts need to be deployed by all stakeholders to ensure the full realisation of women’s rights.

179. The key recommendations of the workshop include, encouraging the implementation of the World Program on Human Rights Education and the AU Education and Women’s Rights Programs. The workshop also encouraged building closer partnership between Member States, AU Organs, UN Agencies, National Human Rights Institutions and Civil Society Organizations in the implementation of the Programs.

## **B.IV. ANTI-CORRUPTION**

180. Implementation of the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption is in program, since its ratification by over fifteen Member States and entry into force. Within the ambits of the Convention, the process for appointing members of the Anti-Corruption Advisory Board has been initiated and nominations were received. The appointment of members of the Advisory Board is subject to approval by the Assembly.

181. During this period, the Bureau of the 2nd Anti-Corruption Bodies Meeting has been active and is in the process of developing a five-year 'action-plan' on the implementation of the Convention and other anti-corruption supportive efforts. A checklist and self-assessment tool to support Member State implementation of the Convention has been developed and sent to Member States, which have ratified the Convention, for utilisation. A process is also underway for securing an expert to draft a Legislative Guide on the implementation of the Convention.

182. As a further demonstration of commitment, the 3rd Anti-Corruption Bodies meeting will take place in the fourth quarter of 2008. This meeting will serve to add further momentum towards ratification and also enhance dialogue amongst Member States on the state of corruption and measures that can be instituted to prevent and combat corruption.

## **B.V. STATE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT**

183. The Bureau established by the 5th Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Public Service continues to be active in further establishing positive activities for enhancing state capacities for development and service delivery across Member States. The Ministerial Bureau that provides leadership over the activities met in Bujumbura, Burundi on the 7th April 2008. The meeting served to consider progress across all of the areas that fall within the ambits of the work established through the Addis Ababa Declaration of the 5th Conference of Ministers. The meeting also confirmed that the 6th Conference of Ministers of Public Service would be held in South Africa, from the 8th to 11th July 2008. The planned theme of the conference is: "Capacity building for the future capability of the African Public Service".

### ***All Africa Public Sector Innovation Awards***

184. The All Africa Public Service Innovation Awards was established to recognise good Public Service practices across Member States and serve as a framework for the exchange of experiences and practices. Under the leadership of Mauritius, nominations have been received in all of the established categories and the relevant adjudication panel will be meeting prior to the 6th Conference to decide on the winners in each category. The awards will be presented during the 6th Conference of Ministers of Public Service.

### ***The Charter for the African Public Service***

185. Under the leadership of Algeria, a meeting was held in Algiers in December 2008, to consider the current Charter for the African Public Service. This meeting served to reaffirm the commitment of Member States towards enhancing the state of their public services and ensuring that common standards are established across Member States. The Algiers meeting concluded that the Charter should be revised to ensure that it becomes a formal instrument of the African Union.

186. In keeping with the Executive Council decision on the Charter for the African Public Service, the document is being refined to ensure that it is in the correct AU legal language. The revised document will be submitted to the 6th Conference of Ministers of Public Service for consideration and finalisation before it is brought to the Executive Council and Assembly. The work on the Charter over the past few years reflects, in a very positive manner, the commitment of Ministers of Public Service in encouraging positive state capability development efforts.

### ***Africa Public Service Day***

187. Africa Public Service Day was established by African Ministers of Public Service on the 23rd June 2007. The day is celebrated across a number of Member States. It is indeed imperative that Africa Public Service Day is celebrated in all Member States and within the African Union Commission. This day provides an opportunity of enhancing the role of public service in the Continent and within African organisations, such as the African Union Commission. The theme for the 2008 Africa Public Service Day, as determined by Ministers of Public/Civil Service is: "From Policy to Results Based Implementation".

## **B.VI. DEMOCRATIZATION AND OBSERVATION OF ELECTIONS**

188. The Continent is still confronted with challenges of conducting free and fair elections for the consolidation of democratic values and principles of good governance as enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the African Union. In this respect, as recommended in the Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa, approved in July 2002 by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU), the Commission deployed observer missions to Djibouti and Zimbabwe. Generally, the conduct of the elections in these two countries was satisfactory. In Djibouti, the legislative elections of 8 February 2008 were held in a peaceful and transparent manner. An AU observer mission was also deployed to the Zimbabwe Presidential and Parliamentary elections held on 29th of March 2008.

189. For the first time in its history, the African Union Commission sent a pre-electoral assessment mission to Zimbabwe led by Justice Lewis Makame, Chairperson of Tanzania Electoral Commission, despite the fact that the invitation from the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) did not reach the Commission in the prescribed deadline. It is important to recall the Durban Declaration of July 2002 on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa stipulates that Member

States should ensure that invitations to the AU to participate in election observation or monitoring are sent at least two (2) months before the date of the Election. Member States are therefore called upon to ensure compliance with the relevant provisions of the Durban Declaration.

190. The objectives of the pre-election assessment mission were to gather relevant information on all aspects relating to the conduct of the Zimbabwe Harmonized Elections. This entailed meeting with election authorities, representatives of major Political Parties and Non-Governmental Organisations in order to assess the level of support for an African Union observer presence. It was on the basis of the pre-assessment mission that the AU decided to deploy an observer Mission to monitor the Zimbabwe Harmonized Elections of 29th of March 2008. The mission was led by the former President of Sierra Leone, Mr. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah.

191. In general, the Zimbabwe Harmonized Elections took place in a peaceful atmosphere without intimidations and there was a large turnout during the Election Day. Nonetheless, the delay to announce the results of the Presidential election by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) proved to be problematic. This delay was prompted by the requests for the recounting in 23 constituencies.

192. On 12 April 2008, SADC convened an Extra-ordinary Summit in Lusaka, Zambia, in order to find solutions to the impasse resulting from the delay in the announcement of the Presidential election. The SADC Summit Communiqué also urged ZEC to expedite the verification of the results and to release them in accordance with the electoral law. In addition, the SADC Summit stated its readiness to send observers to observe the re-counting.

193. It is important to indicate that in their observations, the AU Observer mission concluded that the Harmonized Elections in Zimbabwe were calm, peaceful and orderly. These conclusions were not divergent from those of other observer missions in Zimbabwe.

194. Following my three-day mission to the region, in particular to South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe from 3rd to 5th of May 2008, my delegation met with President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, SADC Facilitator, Dr Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, President of Zambia and current Chairperson of SADC, and President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. I also met with Hon. Justice George M. Chiwashe, Chairperson of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC). We had extensive discussions on the unfolding electoral process. Among other things, ZEC provided detailed information regarding the delay in the announcement of the result of the Presidential Poll.

195. The results were announced after the recount and were as follows: the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) of Morgan Tsvangirai obtained 47.9%, Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) of President Robert Mugabe 43.2% and Simba Makoni 8.3% of the votes cast. As the result did not produce a first round winner, a Presidential run-off was to be conducted on 27 June 2008, in accordance with the provisions of the Zimbabwe Electoral Act.



196. The African Union reiterates its commitment to fully endorse the SADC mediation efforts, led by President Thabo Mbeki. The African Union is committed to deploying an observer mission to monitor the run-off Presidential election in Zimbabwe in order to ensure the transparency of the vote, and improve the electoral conditions to enable the people of Zimbabwe to exercise their voting rights.

### ***AU/EU Partnership on Governance***

197. A series of AU/EU technical meetings have been organized since January 2008, within the framework of the implementation of the EU/AU joint strategy and its first Action Plan. The first took place on 4th February 2008 in Addis Ababa and enabled the two parties to engage on their plans of action and agree on the way forward. The African Union plan was based on the organization of regional seminars to define an African Concept of Governance. The EU plan envisaged the creation of 8 implementation working groups, each comprising the EC, the EU Council Secretariat and interested Member States. Both parties underlined the need to involve Member States in the process of consultations on the implementation of the partnership.

198. The second AU/EU meeting was held on 29 February 2008 in Addis Ababa to review the implementation progress of the annual work plan and achievements. This meeting stressed the need to accelerate project implementation. It also highlighted the need to organize a retreat for newly recruited experts under 55 Million Euro and process facility focal points to discuss EDF procedures.

199. The third meeting which took place on 18 and 19 April 2008 in Addis Ababa was that of the EU/AU Joint Task Force. During this meeting, the joint AU-EU working group on Governance discussed, amongst others, the existence of a governance platform, issues pertaining to the governance component of the EU 55 Million Euro Support Programme; and the possibility of exploring alternative sources of funds for the partnership on governance. The group concluded that there is a need for a continuous dialogue between Europe and Africa to reach a common understanding of the concept and scope of Governance. The African Union promised to engage as soon as possible with Member States and other stakeholder organizations to draft a clear definition and content of Governance to be harmonized with that of the European side before submission to the next AU/EU Troika in July 2008.

200. The meeting also noted with satisfaction that the Experts in charge of Governance and human rights under EU 55 Million Euro were already on post.

## **B.VII.HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS, REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS**

201. It is encouraging to note that thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons continued to return during the reporting period. The refugees returned mainly to Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and

southern Sudan. Additionally, some countries are also engaged in integrating the refugees into their societies, which as a result will ease the burden of the hosting countries, as this category will become self-reliant. There are also returnee prospects as the countries of origin abide by the peace agreements and continue to create conducive conditions for their nationals to be repatriated.

202. I would like to inform Council that although the number of refugees and internally displaced persons continued to decline, new cases of influx of refugees emerged mainly from Darfur, the west of Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Sudan. The victims of forced displacement, especially women and children continue to experience different forms of abuses such as beatings, abduction, sexual slavery, and rape which as a result leave them with physical and mental scars. The abuses should be addressed at the highest level. Africa is still with the largest number of victims of forced displacement in the world with close to 3 million refugees and over 15 million internally displaced persons.

203. Attention should also be drawn to the fact that quite a number of people are also counted as internally displaced because of the recurring natural and man-made disasters that engulf our Continent. In this regard, the African Union extended some financial contributions to two Member States to assist them cope with the victims of disasters. Madagascar received US\$75,000, while Rwanda was given US\$50,000. The African Union Commission on its part has started moving forward the process of disaster management in order to find mechanisms to manage such situations.

204. I wish to inform Council that the African Union cannot unilaterally tackle the numerous challenges it is faced with in addressing the problem of forced displacement. Therefore, the Commission together with the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons continued to work closely with the AU partners, mainly the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), World Food Programme (WFP), International Organization for Migration (IOM) and African Humanitarian Action (AHA) in implementing the decisions of the Executive Council and the Assembly.

205. During the reporting period, some of the most important programmes and activities that were carried out with our partners included the missions of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees to the East and Central regions, preparations for the November 2008 Special Summit of Heads of State and Government on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, and a Joint AU/ICRC Bi-Annual Session of African Ambassadors. The UNCHR also strengthened the capacity of the Commission by assigning officers who are solely involved in the preparations of the November 2008 Special Summit.

206. The PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, which is very crucial to the humanitarian issues of forced displacement, implemented its Programme of Activities for the year 2008 by holding its meetings and visiting some Member States that were affected by the problem of refugees, returnees and displaced persons. It visited Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic and Kenya. The missions met with Government Officials, Representatives of the African Union's Office, UNHCR and

other UN Humanitarian organizations, as well as refugees, returnees and IDPs. Lengthy discussions took place and some data was collected which was used to enrich the report. It was observed that in most cases the host countries that cater for victims of forced displacement lack financial support to look after them and as a result many programmes are under funded.

207. I am gratified to note that in accordance with the decision of the Executive Council which was adopted in July 2004, the Commission convened a second meeting of Member States Legal Experts on the draft AU Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa that was held from 2 to 6 June 2008 at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

208. Finally, I would like to recall Council's Decision taken at its July 2006 meeting to convene the first ever Special Summit of Heads of State and Government on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons scheduled to be held in November 2008. It is expected that this Summit would adopt the Draft Convention. I urge the International Community to continue providing assistance to IDPs who are the majority of victims of forced displacement. Once again, Member States are urged to participate in this very important Summit, whereby our African Leaders will take decisions in a form of a solemn declaration that will help the Continent to tackle the root causes of forced displacement and eventually Member States could concentrate on socio-economic development.

## **C. TRADE AND INDUSTRY**

### **C.I. INTRODUCTION**

209. Since the January 2008 Assembly held in Addis Ababa under the theme « Industrial Development of Africa », the Commission worked towards the implementation of the decisions and declarations of the Executive Council and the Assembly in the areas of trade and industry.

### **C.II. JOINT CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF TRADE AND FINANCE**

210. In conformity with the directives of Declaration Assembly/AU/Decl.2 (X) of the Heads of State and Government meeting in the 10<sup>th</sup> Session of their Assembly in Addis Ababa, in January 2008, the Commission organized a meeting of the Conference of African Union Ministers of Trade and Finance in Addis Ababa, on 3 April 2008, in preparation for consultations with the European Union on EPAs. The meeting was held pursuant to the Declaration of the

President of the European Commission at the Lisbon Summit in December 2007, which recommended the organization of a high-level meeting in order to find a favourable follow-up to the establishment of EPAs that primarily take African concerns into account. It also facilitated the harmonization and coordination of the EPA negotiation process, at a time when many African countries have initialled or signed individual interim agreements. The Conference also provided an opportunity to initiate discussions on the ongoing negotiation process at WTO, particularly the Aid for Trade Initiative.

211. The Conference considered issues relating to WTO, Aid for Trade and EPAs, and defined an African common position within the framework of UNCTAD XII, which was held in Accra, Ghana from 20 to 25 April 2008. It decided that the urgent need for the conclusion of Doha Round of negotiations should not be favoured over the conclusions of substantive discussions on development issues, transparency and cohesion. On Aid for Trade, the meeting decided to submit African projects at national, regional and continental levels for financing, and discussed innovative mechanisms for access to funds from donors. Concerning EPA negotiations, the meeting decided to resume negotiations on some unfavourable provisions of interim agreements, persevere in the realization of development goals and continue to sensitize the European Parliament and Member States in order to enlist support for the African position. The ministers also recommended the diversification of partnerships, particularly South-South.

212. Finally, the Conference facilitated the adoption of three Declarations on negotiations at WTO, the way forward concerning EPAs, and an African common position on issues under discussion at UNCTAD XII respectively.

### **C.III. INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE/CUSTOMS**

213. As part of the process for the harmonization of customs procedures aimed at the integration of Africa, the Commission organized a seminar for customs experts from Member States and RECs, from 21 to 22 April 2008, in order to coordinate their position on the rules of origin within the framework of EPA negotiations. Also in implementation of its work programme, the Commission set up an AUC/RECs Customs Coordination Mechanism whose principal task is to coordinate the programmes and activities of these communities with a view to the establishment of regional customs unions and the Continental Customs Union recommended by the Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community.

214. Furthermore, the Commission intensified talks with the Secretary General of the World Customs Organisation (WCO) with a view to signing a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at strengthening cooperation between the African Union and WCO.

### **C.IV. MULTILATERAL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS**

#### **1. WTO**

215. The Commission continued to provide technical and logistical support to the African Group in Geneva on WTO issues. In addition, the Commission participated in the Conference of Ministers of WTO LDCs that was held in Maseru, Lesotho in February 2008. The Declaration that was adopted by the Conference served as an input in the deliberations on WTO issues of the Joint Conference of AU Ministers of Trade and Finance that was held in Addis Ababa on 3rd April 2008.

216. Members of the WTO continue to engage in intensive negotiations with a view to completing the Doha Development Agenda (DDA) in 2008. The position of Africa in the negotiations has been consistent: that the Doha Round delivers genuine and tangible development benefits, as agreed in the Doha Ministerial Declaration of November 2001. While there is an urgent need to complete the Round, the urgency must be balanced with substance and delivery of significant development outcomes.

217. Satisfactory progress in the agriculture negotiations remains critical to the successful conclusion of the Doha Round. The current food crisis has made resolution of the outstanding issues in agriculture more urgent. Some of these issues relate to sensitive products, special products, cotton, and preference erosion. Other development issues such as the specific concerns of LDCs, Small and Vulnerable Economies, and Recently-Acceded Members have also to be dealt with earnestly. Before a WTO ministerial meeting can be successfully convened, the revision of the draft modalities in Agriculture and Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA) will have to be finalized. The developed countries will need to consider sufficient policy flexibilities for developing countries and adopt, inter alia, most ambitious formula possible for tariff reductions in agriculture and NAMA.

218. The adoption of the Aid for Trade Initiative is, up to date, one of the major development outcomes of the Doha Round. Some of Africa's development partners have made financial commitments towards the implementation of the Initiative. To derive maximum benefit from the Initiative, there is an urgent need for AU Member States and RECs to take necessary measures, as recommended in the Common African Position on Aid for Trade and in the Report of African region Aid for Trade review meeting.

## **2. Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)**

219. During the period under review, apart from the joint Conference of Ministers of Trade and Finance held in Addis Ababa on EPAs, the Commission participated in various meetings organised by other institutions during which it took the opportunity to consult widely on the implementation of the Declaration of the Ministers of Trade and Finance. The AU Commission, through the Brussels Office, organized a Retreat on 16-17 May 2008 in Dinant, Belgium on the way forward in the EPA negotiations for the Brussels Group of African Ambassadors.

220. In the Cotonou Partnership Agreement that was signed by the EU and ACP countries in 2000, the parties committed themselves to the conclusion of a WTO-compatible trade regime in the form of EPAs by 31st December 2007. Due to a number of problems, including divergence of positions on

some major issues, it was not possible, for any of the four African groupings that have been negotiating with the EU since 2002, to conclude full EPAs by the deadline of 31st December 2007. However, as at that date, eighteen African countries had initialed Interim EPAs with the EU. Some of them, mainly non-LDCs, have had to do so under pressure in order to avoid the disruption of the access of their exports to the EU market. The initialing of the Interim EPAs by the African countries concerned was done in a rush and outside the framework of the geographical groupings within which negotiations have been carried out with the EU.

221. The analysis of the eighteen Interim EPAs concluded by African countries indicates that they are all different and only in one region (the East African Community), does more than one country have the same trade liberalization commitments. The differences among African countries in the same RECs in time schedules and baskets of products for liberalization in the Interim EPAs will weaken Africa's regional integration initiatives rather than reinforce them as agreed in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement. In addition, the issue of development dimension including binding commitments on additional resources to meet adjustment costs and build supply side capacity has not been adequately addressed in the Interim EPAs. Moreover, the Interim EPAs that have been initialed contain a number of contentious issues such as the MFN clause, the non-execution clause, substantially all trade, transitional periods, export taxes, standstill provisions, free circulation of goods, national treatment, bilateral safeguards and Singapore issues.

222. The European Commission has been exerting pressure on the countries that have initialed Interim Agreements to sign and ratify these agreements. The Interim Agreements were undertaken as temporary measures to comply with WTO rules and avoid the disruption of trade. Notification of the Interim Agreements is sufficient for WTO compliance. Ratification of Interim Agreements that contain contentious provisions and that have not adequately addressed the development dimensions will make it difficult for these issues to be reviewed and re-negotiated in the context of comprehensive and full EPAs.

223. The AU is not a party in the EPA negotiations. It has however been given the mandate to coordinate and harmonize the efforts of African countries and regions negotiating EPAs with the EU so that Africa can speak with one voice. The AUC has been instrumental to the development and adoption of common African positions, Decisions and Declarations on EPAs by the Policy Organs of the AU. Based on the Report submitted to the AU Summit on the EPA negotiations, African Heads of State and Government had engaged their European counterparts on the issue of EPAs during the Africa-EU Summit that was held in Lisbon towards the end of 2007. It was agreed at the Summit that high-level consultations between the African and the EU sides should be held to address the contentious issues in the EPA negotiations.

224. The last Summit of the AU that was held in Addis Ababa directed the AU Commission to organize a Joint Conference of African Ministers of Trade and Finance to deliberate and make recommendations on the EPA negotiations. The Joint Conference which was held in Addis Ababa on 3rd April 2008; adopted a Declaration in which it called, inter alia, for the review and renegotiation of the contentious issues in the Interim Agreements within the framework of Comprehensive EPAs. It urged the European Union to provide adequate and predictable additional resources beyond the EDF to meet adjustment

costs, to support supply side capacity and build infrastructure, regulatory capacity, competitiveness and national and regional interconnectivity. The Joint Conference of Ministers of Trade and Finance directed the AU Commission to develop, in collaboration with the ECA and RECs, a model EPA that would serve as a template for African countries and regions in their negotiations of full and comprehensive EPAs with the EU.

225. Work on the development of the model EPA has commenced. The Chairperson of the AU Commission has written to the President of the European Commission on the holding of high-level consultations between Africa and EU, as agreed in the Lisbon Summit. The response of the EU Commission is being awaited. African countries in their engagement with the EU in the EPA negotiations must remain united and respect the common positions adopted by the policy organs of the African Union in order to have EPAs that will serve as instruments for the promotion of sustainable development, the eradication of poverty, the gradual integration of Africa into the global economy, and the re-enforcement of Africa's regional integration initiatives, as agreed in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement.

## **C.V. INDUSTRY**

226. The Tenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly directed the Commission, in the framework of the "Action Plan for the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa" to establish actionable priorities in collaboration with other stakeholders. In implementing this directive therefore, the Commission organized the first stakeholders meeting in Cairo, Egypt on 12 April 2008. The main objective of the meeting was to gather inputs from stakeholders for the operationalisation of the Action Plan. The meeting also discussed preparations for the 18th session of the Conference of African Ministers of Industry (CAMI 18) scheduled to be held in South Africa in November 2008.

## **C.VI. MULTILATERAL COOPERATION**

### **1. UNCTAD XII**

227. Prior to the holding of this major UNCTAD XII meeting in Accra from 20 to 25 April 2008, the Commission organized in Montreux, Switzerland, from 22 to 23 February 2008, a retreat bringing together the African Group in Geneva, the UNCTAD Secretariat, partners of the Commission and NGOs. The retreat enabled the African Group in Geneva to agree on all the major issues for African economies to be included in the text of UNCTAD XII currently being negotiated. Subsequently, the African Group in Geneva elaborated a draft Declaration on UNCTAD XII that was adopted by the Joint Conference of African Ministers of Trade and Finance on 3 April 2008. It is armed with this African common position at UNCTAD XII, that all the African delegations went to Accra and facilitated the effective participation of the African Group, particularly in the Round Table of LDC, and the Group of 77 and China.

228. The Commission itself also participated actively in the twelfth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XII), which was attended by delegates from 146 Member States of the Organization, including 44 Member States of the African Union. The theme of UNCTAD XII was “Addressing the opportunities and challenges of globalization for development”. A major feature of the Conference was a High-level segment on “Trade and Development for Africa’s Prosperity-Action and Direction”, which was chaired by the Secretary –General of the United Nations, moderated by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and in which the Presidents of Ghana, Brazil, Finland, Sierra Leone, former President Mkapa of Tanzania, and the Vice-President of El Salvador served as the panelists. This was followed by Roundtables on major issues within the theme of the Conference.

229. At the end of the deliberations of UNCTAD XXII, two major documents were adopted: the Accra Declaration and the Accra Accord, both of which acknowledge the continued relevance of UNCTAD, in an increasingly complex global economy, as an institution with universal membership and a mandate to serve as the focal point of the United Nations for the integrated treatment of trade and development and interrelated issues in the areas of finance, technology, investment and sustainable development. The Accra Accord has set out the actions required of UNCTAD to assist developing countries to address development opportunities and challenges so as to enable them reap the benefits of globalisation. UNCTAD was requested to give particular attention to the needs of Africa and least developed countries in the implementation of its enhanced mandate.

230. At the Conference of AU Ministers of Trade and Finance held in Addis Ababa prior to UNCTAD XII, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the AUC and UNCTAD was signed. The MOU provides a framework for cooperation between the two organizations and for securing the support of UNCTAD in the three pillars of its mandate. The AUC plans to organize an AUC-UNCTAD meeting to develop and prioritize a programme of cooperation that will assist Africa to address development opportunities and challenges and effectively harness the positive forces of globalization in accordance with the Accra Declaration and Accra Accord.

## **2. TICAD IV:**

231. TICAD is a multilateral process, jointly organized by Japan, the United Nations, UNDP and the World Bank with the participation of international organizations, donors and Asian countries, and not a Japan–Africa forum. In order to facilitate the preparation of TICAD VI, which was held in Yokohama, from 28 to 30 May 2008 and its integration into the relevant cooperation programme, the Commission participated in all the preparatory meetings for this Conference held respectively in Lusaka, Zambia in October 2007 for the East and Southern African regions, in Tunis, Tunisia in November 2007 for the North, West and Central African regions, and in Libreville, Gabon in March 2008 for the ministerial meeting.

232. Recommendations were made during the two regional meetings, which allowed for the elaboration of a draft Yokohama Declaration that was discussed in Libreville. The Libreville Ministerial Conference also enabled the



co-organizers and African States to hold lengthy exchanges on actions to be undertaken in implementation of the Yokohama Declaration. Furthermore, the proposed follow-up mechanism was discussed. The essential themes for TICAD IV were accelerating economic growth, ensuring human security through the achievement of the MDGs and the consolidation of peace and security, as well as environmental issues and climate change.

## **D. SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

233. The Commission continues to address social, political and economic challenges that constitute a barrier to the rapid integration of the African continental in the global economy. The Commission is contributing tremendously to this process by implementing programmes and activities in the areas of health, population, social welfare, employment, labour and migration.

### **D.I. HEALTH, POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

234. Following the endorsement of the Africa Health Strategy during the July 2007 Accra Summit, the Commission, in close consultation with the Bureau of the AU Conference of Ministers of Health (CAMH), elaborated an Implementation Plan which was adopted by that Bureau in November 2007. The Commission thereafter convened a Technical Committee Meeting in South Africa in February 2008, which drew up an implementation plan.

235. The Commission convened a Special Session of Conference of Ministers of Health (CAMH) in May 2008, Geneva to look at the implementation reports of the Abuja Declaration on HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and other related Infectious Diseases.

236. Plans are underway to convene a Conference on African Traditional Medicine in August 2008 in order to discuss a report on the Mid-Term Review of AU Decade on African Traditional Medicine.

237. Regarding the Africa Health Strategy, the Commission will submit an implementation status report before the end of the year 2008.

### **HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria**

238. For a long time, Africa will continue to face the immense challenge due to the impact of HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria on the continent's socio-economic development. For an effective response at all levels, the AU should ensure that the three diseases are kept high on its agenda as mandated by the Assembly, among other strategies to promote health and well-being.

239. During the period under review, in line with the Abuja Call for Accelerated Action towards Universal Access to HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria Services, the Commission with the help of WHO and UNAIDS prepared the continental

Progress Reports on the status of HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria and presented the reports to the Special Session of the Conference of Ministers of Health (CAM) in Geneva.

240. Regarding the 2008-2010 Implementation Plan for the AU Commission Strategic Plan and AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) Strategic Framework, plans are underway to review the functions and the structure of AIDS Watch Africa. The Commission continues to implement priority activities in the area of HIV/AIDS and the Militaries, ageing and HIV/AIDS and the orphans and vulnerable children (OVC). In the particular case of OVC, HIV/AIDS and Malaria were mainstreamed in the Cairo Call for Accelerated Action towards "Africa Fit for Children", the major outcome of the Mid-term Review of "Africa Fit for Children" held in Cairo, Egypt from 29 October to 2 November 2007.

241. In order to raise and sustain the momentum of the World AIDS Campaign and raise awareness, the Commission organised a programme of activities at the AU Commission and in some regional offices, and disseminated educational material and other memorabilia. In line with the AU Malaria Elimination Campaign/ Programme, Africa Malaria Elimination Campaign was commemorated on 25 April 2008 on the Theme "Fight Malaria: Africa goes from control to elimination by 2010".

242. Efforts continue at national and regional levels, and will be intensified towards elimination of Malaria by 2010 within the Malaria Elimination Campaign launched in April 2007.

#### Population

243. In the area of population and development in Africa, the Commission is making efforts towards raising awareness and sensitization among Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Member States, development partners and civil society organizations for the integration of population and demographic dynamics into national development and poverty reduction strategies. Some of the activities include:

- Organizing regional forums on population and development including the promotion of safe mother hood in Africa as part of the implementation of the MDGs;
- Organizing meetings of the biennial General Assembly of the African Population Commission (APC) and frequent meetings of the Bureau of the APC;
- Compiling the profile of the National Population Commissions of AU Member States;
- Compiling and publishing demographic and population information in the form of reports – e.g. the biennial "State of African Population Report which established in 2004 and being published every two years since then;
- Elaborating and disseminating population and reproductive health policies;

- Organizing a regional workshop on the follow up of the implementation of the Maputo Plan of Action on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in Africa;
- Preparation of the State of African Population Report 2008 due to be published in October 2008;
- Convening two subregional consultative fora on population and development with emphasis on maternal health in Central and Eastern African regions (in October and November 2008).

244. Moreover, efforts are being made to strengthen partnership with the UN Population Commission, the UNECA, UNFPA, and other UN Agencies both in Africa and elsewhere. For example, the AUC and ECA are collaborating to jointly facilitate Africa's implementation status of the Programmes of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (1994) (ICPD + 15 review).

## **D.II. LABOUR EMPLOYMENT AND MIGRATION**

245. In line with the 2004 Ouagadougou Extraordinary Summit on Employment promotion and poverty alleviation, the Commission has been developing a poverty alleviation programme. The informal sector economy was regarded as a major employer of the vulnerable groups such as women, youth and people living with disabilities yet with poor and unhealthy working conditions. In this regard, the Commission has finalized the Study on the Informal Sector in Africa, which identified four main policy areas for analysis: labour policies and laws, social security policies and practices, financial policies and practices and education and training policies.

246. Plans are underway to visit the Member States and RECs to sensitize them on the Regional Frameworks on Integration Policies and Programmes for the promotion of employment and poverty reduction adopted during the Regional Workshops with an aim to implement them. The Commission will organize a workshop on Labour Market information before the end of the year.

247. Regarding the proposals of candidatures for the International Labour Organization's (ILO) High Offices Chairs of Committee and Conferences, Member States adhered to the Decision and sent their proposals through the African Group, Member of the Governing Body, through the AU Office in Geneva to the LSAC for consideration.

248. Necessary measures to review the mandate and structure of the African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI) are in advanced stage between the Commission and ARI Governing Board and the report will be presented at the Meeting of the Ministers responsible for Social Development which will take place in Namibia in October 2008.

249. The Commission convened the 6th Session of AU Labour and Social Affairs Commission, whose report is submitted to the Executive Council in a separate document.

## Migration and Development

250. In pursuance to the Banjul Decision EX.CL/276.304 (IX) on Migration Policy Framework for Africa adopted in June 2006, the Commission undertook the implementation of the Migration Policy Framework for Africa (Banjul, 2006), the *African Common Position on Migration and Development* (Algiers, 2006), the Joint Africa-EU Declaration on Migration and Development (Tripoli, 2007), the Ouagadougou Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, Especially Women and Children (Tripoli 2006) and the African-EU Strategic Partnership and its First Action Plan (2008-2010) (Lisbon 2007). This includes the recruitment of a Programme Coordinator for Migration and the preparation of a Two Year *Migration Programme Plan of Activities* (2008-2009). The Plan proposes 35 activities to be implemented over the next two years.

251. Furthermore, based on the Tripoli Joint Africa-EU Declaration on Migration and Development and the Lisbon Africa-EU Strategic Partnership and First Action Plan 2008-2010 on Migration, Mobility and Employment, a project proposal/concept note to establish African Remittance Institutions was submitted to the EU on the 14th of February 2008 for funding. Several bilateral meetings were also held with the EU, International Organization for Migration (IOM), and International Centre for Migration Policy (ICMPD). Briefings were also prepared and presented to the Southern African Development Community (SADC), on irregular and illegal migration, and on the EU Commission proposal for Blue Card.

252. In a bid to improve inter-state and intra-regional cooperation on migration management in East Africa, government officials from countries in the region have met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 12 to 14 May 2008. The workshop sets the stage for the launching of a Regional Consultative Process (RCP) on migration for IGAD countries comprising Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda, so as to tackle widespread famine, ecological degradation and extreme economic hardship in East Africa.

### Promotion of Tripartism

253. In line with the principle of tripartism promoted by the Labour and Social Affairs Commission, the Commission in collaboration with Organization of the Pan-African Employers Confederation (PEC) is planning to organize a consultative workshop for Leaders with the aim of sensitising the Employers on the implementation of the 2004 Ouagadougou Summit on Employment and Poverty Alleviation.

## D.III. SOCIAL WELFARE

### 1. Child Survival, Protection And Development

### ***Ratification And Implementation Of African Charter On The Right And Welfare Of Child***

254. The Commission has continued its activities to promote the protection, development and survival of Africa's children in conformity with the provisions of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Efforts have been deployed to sensitize Member States, which have not yet done so, to ratify the African Charter. To-date, only 41 out of the 53 AU Member States have ratified the African Charter. It is imperative for all Member States to ratify the Charter in order to promote and safeguard children's rights and ensure their well-being and development.

### ***Call For Accelerated Action On The Implementation Of The Plan Of Action Towards Africa Fit For Children***

255. In the Call for Accelerated Action, Member States reaffirmed their commitments in achieving the targets of the Plan of Action. Moreover, the Commission was requested to develop a framework with appropriate baselines, targets and indicators for measuring progress on the implementation of the Call at country level, including, sharing of knowledge and good practices for scaling up interventions to achieve goals for children.

256. The Call for Accelerated Action was presented as Africa's contribution to the United Nations General Assembly Commemorative High-Level Plenary Meeting, devoted to the follow-up of the 2002 UN Special Session on Children, held in New York in December 2007.

## **2. Promoting The Welfare Of The Aged And Ageing**

257. It will be recalled that the 4th Session of the AU Labour and Social Affairs Commission requested the Commission to work out the financial implications of the establishment of the Advisory Council on Ageing as mandated in the AU Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing in Africa. In view of the high costs involved in the establishment of the Advisory Council, it is proposed that a Steering Committee be created in the meantime. The Commission, in collaboration with Help Age International – Africa Region, has prepared a document on the establishment of the Steering Committee. The document will be submitted for the consideration of the First Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development scheduled to be held in October 2008. If the document is adopted, the Steering Committee on Ageing will meet soon after the Conference.

258. In implementation of a resolution on the elaboration of a Protocol on the rights of older people, the Commission has requested Help Age International–Africa Region to assist it in developing a draft. It will report on this draft document in the near future.

## **3. Social Development Issues**

- a) Social Protection

259. Progress on promoting the rights and ensuring social actions for the empowerment and well being of the population, especially the vulnerable group, has been limited in the developing world. Similarly, sustainable development and humanitarian relief in lifting significant numbers of people, in particular the marginalised and disadvantaged group, out of poverty has been poor. Within the framework of the AU social policy agenda and follow-up to the Livingstone and Yaounde Calls for Action on Social Protection, the Commission in collaboration with Help Age International organised three Regional Experts Group Meetings on Social Protection on the theme: "Investing in Social Protection in Africa", to cover the five regions of the Continent. The meetings took place in Uganda, Egypt and Senegal during the period April to June 2008. During the meeting, countries presented their reports on progress made in social protection in their respective countries. Furthermore, awareness on social protection choices, opportunities and constraints, and resource issues were raised; good practices, experiences and pilot projects were highlighted; and a network on social protection with regional and international stakeholders was created. The reports of the Regional Meetings will be consolidated to one Report, which will be presented to the First Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development.

260. With a view to addressing poverty alleviation and vulnerability of large segments of the population; establishing the various existing models of social protection in Member States; and identifying the debates and policies promoting social protection in Africa, the Commission has contracted a Consultant to conduct a desk study on social protection in Africa. The study is funded by Norway and Sweden within the framework of existing partnership between the AU and Norway and Sweden. The study, which is a supplement to the Regional Meetings on Social Protection will also be presented to the Ministerial Conference on Social Development.

b) Social Policy Framework

261. The Draft Social Policy Framework for Africa has been debated by several sessions of the AU Labour and Social Affairs Commission. It was finally recommended and adopted by the Executive Council which requested the Commission to improve on the document by addressing all social development issues and submit it for the consideration by the Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development. In implementation that decision, the Commission, with the assistance of UNFPA, contracted a Consultant to review the Draft Social Policy Framework. This draft will then be submitted to the First Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development in October 2008.

c) First AU Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development

262. Preparations are underway to convene the First AU Conference of Ministers in Charge of Social Development in implementation of Decision EX.CL.290 (IX) adopted by the 9<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Council and endorsed by the 7<sup>th</sup> Assembly of Heads of State and Government in July 2006. The Conference was originally scheduled to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in May 2008. However, the Government of the Republic of Namibia has offered to host the Conference and requested more time to enable it make adequate preparations for

the meeting. It is envisaged that the Conference will take place in October 2008. The Conference also falls within the framework of the various instruments adopted by the African Union and more specifically the African Common Position on Human and Social Development in Africa which was Africa's contribution to the World Summit for Social Development in 1994 as well as the MDGs.

#### **4. Disability Issues**

a) The African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI)

263. It will be recalled that the African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI) was established to coordinate all disability issues on the continent and promote the development of prevention and rehabilitation services. However, due to administrative and financial problems, ARI has not been able to carry out its mandate effectively. In this regard, the ARI Governing Board has requested the Commission to assist in revitalizing and strengthening the Institute to enable it function effectively. Subsequently, the AU Commission contracted a Consultant to carry out a study and make concrete proposals on the revitalization exercise. The study of the Consultant will be presented to an Extraordinary Session of the ARI Governing Board to be held in September 2008. The outcome of the Extraordinary Session will be submitted to the First AU Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development for consideration.

b) African Decade of Disabled Persons

264. It will be recalled that 1999-2009 was proclaimed the African Decade of Disabled Persons and a Plan of Action was adopted to implement the Decade's objectives. In the Plan of Action, Member States were requested to accelerate actions at national level in implementing the twelve priority activities. At almost the end of the Decade, little progress has been achieved in implementing the objectives of the Decade and its Plan of Action. A progress report on the implementation of the Decade will be presented to the Ministerial Conference on Social Development for its consideration and guidance on the way forward.

#### **5. Family And Development**

265. The Commission has continued its effort to sensitise Member States on the 2004 Plan of Action on the Family and the matrix for its implementation. However, not much is known on achievements made in implementing the Plan of Action. The Commission is in the process of developing a questionnaire on the implementation of the Plan of Action to be sent to Member States for their action. The replies from Member States will be consolidated into a Report, which will be presented to the Ministerial Conference on Social Development for its consideration.

#### **6. Drug Control**

266. Among the development challenges Africa has to grapple with is the production and abuse of drugs, as well as being used as a transit for trafficking or stockpiling destination. Youths are at highest risk for both abuse and trafficking of drugs and the associated crimes of money laundering and trafficking in humans. It is also a fact that acts of violence and crimes against humanity in conflict situations are, to a large extent, compounded by drug abuse. Drugs are therefore a threat to human security and development.

267. In this regard, the Commission and the RECs, in collaboration with relevant partners, are engaged in following-up on and monitor the implementation of the Plan of Action on Drug with a view to controlling drug abuse.

## **D.IV. CULTURE AND SPORT**

### **Culture**

268. In the field of Culture, the Commission is actively engaged in the implementation of the Cultural Charter for Africa in light of the recommendations of the Conference of Ministers of Culture. The Commission is planning to carry out a study on different cultures in Africa as well as to assist in the harmonization of Cultural Policies and Programmes in Africa. In this regard, the Commission is organizing a Conference on Culture, in South Africa in July 2008. Moreover, the Commission will produce an inventory of Cultural Goods from Africa with the assistance of UNESCO. Similarly, the strengthening of the Historical Centre for Oral Tradition (CELTO) is higher on the Commission agenda.

### **Sport**

269. Member States, the African Sport Federations and International Sport Federations are expected to keep the development of sport on the Continent high on the agenda of their national development plans, in conformity with previous commitments at all levels. In this regard, the restructuring of the Specialized Technical Committee will have to take into account the activities of the Conference of Ministers of Sport in line with the decision on the Specialized Technical Committees in close consultation with the Bureau of the Conference of Ministers of Sport in accordance with its Addis Ababa Declaration of 8 June 2007.

270. The AU and Member States are implementing activities programmed to roll over to 2010, to popularize the International Year of African Football and the 2010 FIFA World Cup African Legacy Programme.

271. The Commission is developing an African Union Sport Policy Framework which will be submitted to the AU Organs in due course.

272. The Commission is coordinating the committee commissioned to restructure the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa, as well as the relations between Governments, National Sport Federations and International Sport Federations. The outcome of the work of the Committee will be reported to the Executive Council in due course.



## **E. RURAL ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURE**

### **E.I. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICA AGRICULTURE AGENDA WITHIN THE CAADP-SIRTE FRAMEWORK**

273. During the first half of 2008, the Commission continued to work with Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the NEPAD Secretariat, development partners and other regional and international institutions to implement the Africa Agriculture Agenda (AAA). The framework that underpins implementation of the AAA is the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Sirte Declaration on Agriculture and Water and existing Decisions and Declarations of the AU Summit of Heads of State and Government.

274. Significant progress was made in those areas of comparative advantage that accelerate the achievement of food and nutrition security, improved rural livelihood systems as well as sustainable environment and natural resource development in Africa. In particular, the coordination and implementation of the Africa Agriculture Agenda at national, regional and continental levels was consolidated with the convening of the Third CAADP-Sirte Partnership Platform and the AU-NEPAD-RECs and Lead Pillar Institutions Meeting on CAADP-Sirte Implementation in Seychelles from 17 to 22 March 2008.

275. Significant progress was also achieved in the implementation of the Climate Change for Development Strategy and Action Plan (Clim-dev-Africa); the CAADP Companion Document with respect to the establishment of strategic partnerships for sustainable fisheries; acceleration of the regional assessments and consultations for the joint AUC-ECA-AfDB Africa-wide Land Policy Framework and Guidelines Initiative; the establishment of the Specialist Task Force on Pastoral Policy Initiative that aims to develop a Pastoral Policy Framework for the continent; and capacity building in quality assurance of national and regional veterinary vaccine producing laboratories. Major progress was made in resource mobilization, particularly for the land policy framework and guidelines, the eradication of tsetse and trypanosomiasis and the control of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in Africa. What follows is a summary of the achievements obtained by the Department's three Divisions and the Specialized Technical Offices.

### **E.II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN AGRICULTURAL AGENDA WITHN THE CAADP-SIRTE FRAMEWORK**

276. The Third CAADP Partnership Platform meeting took place from March 19 – 20, 2008 in Mahe, Seychelles. It was agreed at the meeting that a special high level meeting be organized to draw attention to the achievements of the CAADP agenda over the past five years since its adoption and ensure engagements to scale up on these achievements and lessons. It was proposed that this high level

meeting should take place in October 2008 in Maputo, Mozambique. In addition, it was agreed that high-level prominent persons (such as a serving or retired Head of State with a passion in agriculture/food security) be identified and brought on board as CAADP “champions”.

### **E.III. IMPLEMENTATION OF CAADP: PILAR 1: Extending the Area under Sustainable Land Management and Reliable Water Control Systems**

#### **1. Framework and Guidelines for Land Policy in Africa**

277. During the period under review, the joint African Union Commission (AUC), United Nations Economic Commission (UNECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) consortium on Land Policy in Africa undertook a number of activities to accelerate the process of developing an Africa-wide Land Policy Framework and Guidelines. The consortium continued to strengthen its relationships with key development partners (FOA, IFAD, UNDP, Rockefeller Foundation), Regional Economic Communities and Civil Society Organizations in an effort to bring them fully on board and also raise funds to support the initiative. A total of US\$298,000 was raised through an FAO TCP support to ICARRD to follow-up the Africa Land Policy Initiative and regional stakeholders dialogue. These resources were used to fund the Regional Consultative Workshop on Land Policy in West Africa that took place in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from 15 – 18 April 2008. The remaining funds will be used to fund a similar workshop in Central Africa in July 2008. A grant of US\$700,000 was also approved in May 2008 by IFAD to support the initiative.

278. The main task accomplished was the completion of the Regional Assessments in North and West Africa and an inception workshop in Central Africa. A Regional Consultative meeting on Land Policy in Eastern Africa was organized in Kigali, Rwanda from 16 – 18 January 2008. A similar consultative meeting on land policy in Western Africa was organized in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso from 15 – 18 April 2008. The consultative workshops brought together a wide-range of stakeholders on land issues in the respective regions including high-level representation from national governments, civil society, private sector, centres of excellence and development partners. The regional consultations came up with key recommendations on the revision of the regional background document, whose elements will enrich the draft continental framework and guidelines of the land policy, and a road map for the development of benchmarks and indicators as well as mechanisms for assessing performance of land processes.

279. The Regional Assessments of land policy in Central Africa currently in progress will provide elements for discussions during the regional consultations that will take place in July 2008 in Yaounde, Cameroon.

#### **2. Climate for Development in Africa Program (ClimDevAfrica)**

280. Following the adoption of a Decision on Climate Change by the 8th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union in January 2007, the Commission embarked on the elaboration of a program of implementation of the Climate Change for Development Strategy and Action Plan. This program is being undertaken in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and African Development Bank (AfDB), to assist Member States to develop and implement home-grown solutions to climate challenges facing the continent.

281. The document of Climate for Development in Africa Program (ClimDevAfrica) has been developed by professional consultants with the supervision of the three institutions (AUC, UNECA, and AfDB). A Specialized Working Group (SWG) Meeting met from 18 - 19 March 2008 at the AUC and reviewed the zero draft program document and currently, the document is under detailed revision for final endorsement by the three institutions and the SWG.

### **3. Green Wall for the Sahara Initiative**

282. The Green Wall for the Sahara Initiative continues to achieve great progress since its adoption by the AU Summit in January 2007. Eminent African experts in the fields of agriculture, water, forestry, rural development and pastoralism had elaborated the draft implementation plan through consultative process in September 2007. The Commission is currently working closely with CEN-SAD to harmonise this document with one earlier on elaborated by OSS. Contact is also being kept with Senegal to streamline and better coordinate the implementation modalities and strategies. Sensitization missions were also undertaken to Burkina Faso, Senegal, Djibouti, Chad, IGAD and CILSS Secretariats to discuss the Initiative and future plans.

283. As part of the strategic partnership between AU and EU, the latter has agreed to support the Commission in the implementation of the Green Wall for the Sahara Initiative. Draft TORs for the feasibility Study on the Green belt is being prepared and the funding of the EU is being sought for this initiative.

### **4. Capacity-building for the Implementation of Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements**

284. On the EC's Programme on Capacity-building Related to Implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in African, Caribbean and Pacific, bilateral discussions are advanced between EU and AUC for the latter to serve as a regional hub or secretariat for the enhanced implementation of the African environmental conventions as well as UN Conventions on Chemical, Pesticides, Biodiversity, Desertification and Climate Change. This is a four-year Programme, which will be coordinated and facilitated by UNEP, and it will direct approximately EUR 3,000,000 over the next four years to the AU Commission as the African regional hub. The objective of the Programme is to improve the environmental situation in African countries in line with the Millennium Development Goal No. 7 on Environmental Sustainability while the specific objective of the African Regional Hub is to strengthen the capacities of the Commission of the African Union, Regional Economic Communities and also enhance the capacities of African

countries to effectively implement global and regional environmental agreements and other international legal instruments. The Commission participated at the Consultative Stakeholder Meeting (CSM) held in Brussels from 26 – 27 February 2008 where all stakeholders met to set a road map for the development of the EC Programme over the four-year period.

## **5. Africa Monitoring of the Environment for Sustainable Development**

285. The Commission is hosting the Africa Monitoring of the Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD) Project on behalf of five (5) participating Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Intergovernmental Organizations in Africa, namely: ECOWAS; CEMAC; IGAD; IOC and SADC. These implementing RECs and Intergovernmental Organizations have designated the AUC as the Delegated Regional Authorizing Officer (DRAO) of the 'AMESD' project. The project is being funded by the European Union (EU) through the 9th European Development Fund (EDF) for a total budget of 21 million Euros over a period of four years.

286. AMESD is an African program that promotes the use of appropriate Earth Observation monitoring systems in support of development policies, and ensures better dissemination and use of environmental information for improved policy and decision-making processes across a wide spectrum of policies and implementation.

287. The First Progress Meeting for the AMESD Project was successfully held in Addis Ababa from 6 – 14 February 2008 while the First AMESD operational workshops for the CEMAC and Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) Regions were successfully held in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo from 26 – 27 February 2008 and in Quatre Bornes, Mauritius, from 13 – 15 March 2008, respectively. These workshops identified the partners and beneficiaries for the implementation of the thematic network in their regions. Following these workshops, the Regional Implementation Centre (RIC) Technical Assistance Thematic Experts and their RIC counterpart staff carried out Needs Assessment missions in their regions and a total of 20 countries have been visited. The Needs Assessment is currently being validated in Regional Workshops in each REC.

## **6. Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Programme Development and Implementation**

288. Considering the negative impact of natural disasters on Africa's economic, social and environmental development, and given the global call for action contained in the Hyogo Framework of Action (HFA) for Disaster Reduction adopted by the Second World Conference on Disaster Reduction (WCADR II) in January 2004, one important line of Activity in the Division of Environment and Natural Resources is the promotion of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) in the Continent in order to protect lives and property for sustainable development in line with NEPAD objectives and in response to the call for action contained in the HFA.

289. The overall goal of the DRR programme is to reduce the social, economic and environmental impacts of disasters on the African people and

economy thereby facilitating the achievement of the MDGs and other development aims of NEPAD in Africa. The Report of the AU Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2006 is being printed as an advocacy material in all the AU languages. A Training Workshop for Sub-Saharan Africa on Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction and Assessing Disaster Damage and Losses in Development organized by the Joint Collaboration of the Commission of the African Union (AUC), Secretariat of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN ISDR), World Bank and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was held in Dakar, Senegal from 14-17 April, 2008.

## **7. Water Resources Management**

290. In the process of implementing of the Sharm El Sheikh Summit on Water and Sanitation, the Commission established contacts with the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW), the UNSGAB, UNEP and the African Development Bank to make necessary preparations for this Summit. The technical preparatory session was subsequently held in Cairo, Egypt from 5 – 11 May 2008.

## **8. Commemoration of the Africa Environment Day**

291. The 2008 event was commemorated in collaboration with the Bio-farm Enterprises on 3 March 2008 with as tree planting activities of the AU Commission, Embassies and the International communities.

## **9. Development of Fouta Djallon Highlands natural resources monitoring tools**

292. The main objective of this initiative is the establishment of the "Regional Fouta Djallon Natural Resources Observatory" designed to assess, evaluate, and monitor changes of the status of natural resources in the Fouta Djallon Highlands.

293. A regional consultant has been hired to further advance a detailed Action Plan for the establishment of the Regional Observatory. His assignment also includes an institutional review of key national and regional institutions and programmes in the field of natural resources inventory and monitoring. The draft Action Plan for the establishment of the Regional Observatory and the report of the institutional review was submitted for validation at a 2nd expert meeting held in June 2008 in Niamey, Niger.

## **10. Development and dissemination of land resource management policies and practices including livestock**

294. Support was provided to the Senegal River Basin Organisation (OMVS) and the River Niger Basin Authority (NBA) to organize two meetings in April 2008. The first meeting concerned the validation of the OMVS Strategic Action Plan in the area of environment. The NBA meetings included experts meetings, an extraordinary Session of the Council of Ministers and the 8th Summit of Heads of State and Governments. During the meetings, the 2008 – 2027

NBA Investment Programme and the Water Charter of the River Niger Basin were examined by Experts and Ministers and thereafter adopted by the Heads of State. The Fouta Djallon Office has made good advances in the area of communication and outreach. Two information pamphlets have been developed and disseminated. The first issue of "The Fouta Djallon", a quarterly news bulletin, came out in April 2008.

## **E.IV. IMPLEMENTATION OF CAADP: PILLAR 2: Improving Infrastructure and Trade-related Capacities for Market Access**

### **1. African Common Market for Agricultural Products**

295. Despite the importance of agriculture in the economies of most African countries, trade in agricultural products amongst the African countries remains at a relatively low level. One of the commitments made during the AU Extra Ordinary Summit on Agriculture and Water held in Sirte, Libya, in February 2004 was for the immediate establishment of "the African Common Market for Agricultural Products, according to the Lusaka Summit decision". The Commission, in collaboration with the FAO, has been working on a study for the establishment of an African Common Market for Agricultural Products. The study examines the key legal and economic issues involved in establishing the Common Market and in particular, how national and regional policies and instruments can be used to foster trade in strategic products and recommends strategies as to how the goal of a continental common market might be attained. The feasibility study was completed in November 2007 and a stakeholder workshop was held in January 2008 to validate the study. Recommendations from the validation workshop call for the development of an "Action Plan" for the implementation of the African Common Market for Agricultural Products. The centre-piece for the action plan is the development of a Protocol for the implementation of the Common Market.

### **2. Commodity-Based Trade**

296. Meaningful investment in the livestock sector is largely dependant upon market access. Until countries begin to see real income and poverty alleviation resulting from their livestock sectors, this sector will remain relatively marginalised and unsupported. Similarly, the private sector will not invest in the infrastructure, processing plants and good livestock production practices until market access is secured.

297. Africa needs urgently to consider technical barriers to trade (TBT) particularly Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures because animal health standards currently obstruct access of African livestock commodities to important markets. To promote a resurgence of livestock trade, the Commission, with the financial support of the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DfID), convened a meeting of an Expert Panel in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as part of the process of a longer term initiative to improve market access for livestock products produced in Africa into some of the growing markets in Asia and the Pacific Rim as well as the particularly lucrative EU market.

298. The workshop culminated in a number of recommendations and adopted an action plan with a sequence of actions that should commence immediately after the consultations as well as a medium-term (3-year) initiative to develop commodity-based trade policies for AU member States.

## **EV. IMPLEMENTATION OF CAADP: PILLAR 3: Increasing Food Supply and Reducing Hunger**

### **1. African Seed and Biotechnology Programme (ASBP)**

299. To further develop the proposed African Seed and Biotechnology Programme as requested, the Commission, in collaboration with FAO, convened several Expert Consultation Workshops on the proposed ASBP in 2006 and 2007 with representatives from Regional Economic Communities (RECs,) and other stakeholders and actors. A decision endorsing the ASBP programme was adopted at the January 2007 Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. With support from a Technical Cooperation Project (TCP) from the FAO, the Commission has developed project profiles for implementation of the ASBP and conducted sensitization missions to various RECs, including a stakeholder workshop on the establishment of necessary institutional arrangements for the ASBP held on February 19 – 21, 2008 at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa. The next steps involve the elaboration of the draft institutional arrangements developed during the workshop for the implementation of the ASBP.

### **2. Member State Experts' Meeting of the Conference of African Ministers of Agriculture (CAMA)**

300. The 4th Conference of African Ministers of Agriculture was planned on June 18, 2008 in Nairobi, Kenya. Earlier in the year from February 26 – 27, 2008, the agricultural experts' meeting took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Experts discussed the Plan of Action for the Abuja Declaration on Food Security, An African common position on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and the framework for CAADP Pillar III (Framework for African Food Security, FAFS) and other issues relevant to CAADP. Several recommendations were made at the experts' meeting and these recommendations will be presented at the 4th Conference of African Ministers of Agriculture (CAMA) in Nairobi, Kenya.

### **3. Establishment of an African Farmers' Forum (AFAFO)**

301. Progress was made in moving forward the initiative to establish the African Farmers' Forum (AFAFO). Consultants were identified to carry out the inventory and assessment of existing farmers' organizations. An inception workshop was held with two consultants in Yaounde, Cameroon to commence the

inventory and assessment in Central Africa. The assessment report is currently being revised.

## **E.VI. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAADP COMPANION DOCUMENT**

### **1. Strategic Partnership Investment Fund for Sustainable Fisheries**

302. The Strategic Partnership for a Sustainable Fisheries Investment Fund for the Large Marine Ecosystems of Africa is a new initiative to make additional financing from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other partners available to coastal countries in Africa to help support sustainable marine fisheries. The objectives of this initiative are to support country level strategic investment to; (i) reverse the depletion of fisheries in the large marine ecosystem; (ii) assist the individual coastal countries to meet the fisheries targets and poverty eradication goal of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD); and (iii) complement the ongoing LME initiatives.

303. The governance structure of this Strategic Partnership includes a Regional Advisory Committee (RAC) chaired by the African Union and consisting of regional stakeholders. The RAC held its second meeting on April 23-25, 2008 and reviewed proposals for funding from Kenya, Ghana and the Sub-regional Fisheries Council (SRFC) of west Africa. The main recommendations from the meeting were: (i) The proposals from Kenya, Ghana and the SRFC were reviewed and recommended for submission to the World Bank with comments to begin grant processing; (ii) The RAC members accepted the membership of Fisheries Committee of West and Central Gulf of Guinea (FCWC) to the RAC; and (iii) The project country note (PCN) process and the time frame for each step was reviewed and updated.

## **E.VII. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

### **1. Enhancing Regional Cooperation in the Fouta Djallon Highlands**

304. The main objective of this activity is to establish the legal and institutional instruments of regional cooperation that will strengthen the countries' commitment to sustainable land management of the Fouta Djallon Highlands (FDH) particularly with the aim of preserving its water resources. The affirmation of the international character of FDH will facilitate the resource mobilization and intervention coordination in the FDH.

305. A Meeting of the Regional Consultative Committee (RCC) was held from 6th to 9th February 2008. The meeting was attended by Focal Points from all Member countries (Gambia, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Sierra Leone), representatives of ECOWAS, CILSS, River Basin Organisations (Niger Basin Authority -, River Senegal Organization - OMVS, River Gambia Organization), The Global Mechanism for UNCCD and the African Union as well as by several actors.



306. At the end of the session, the following conclusions and recommendations were made:

- i. Finalization of appraisal documents of the Project for the Integrated Management of Natural Resources in the FDH and its submission to the GEF authorities in the shortest time possible;
- ii. formulation and effective formalization of a concerted and solidarity Vision for the FDH;
- iii. involvement of Regional Programme's development partners, namely the GM/UNCCD, in advocacy for the purpose of raising additional resources for the promotion and implementation of the Programme by taking into account biodiversity and climate change aspects;
- iv. approaching ECOWAS, a relevant Regional Economic Community and River Basin Organizations active in the Highlands for their greater involvement in the management of the Regional Programme for the Integrated Development of the Fouta Djallon highlands;
- v. holding a session of the Ministerial Conference of the Regional Programme in Conakry during which the FDH-INRMP will be launched effectively.

## **2. Resource mobilization**

307. Following recommendations of a Ministerial Conference, the African Union Coordination Office took the initiative, in collaboration with Member States and support from UNEP and FAO, to design a GEF project in support of the Fouta Djallon Programme. The "Fouta Djallon Natural Resources Integrated Management project " was developed and submitted to GEF Council that accepted to finance it to the tune of 11 millions dollars over two phases covering a period of 10 years. The appraisal documents of the project have been finalized and submitted to UNEP/GEF in April 2008. The position for the Chief Technical Advisor (CTA) has been advertised by FAO and more than 80 applications have been received. Authorization from GEF to start the project is expected in June 2008.

## **E.VIII. SPECIALIZED PROGRAMMES**

### **E.VIII.1. PATTEC (Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign)**

308. The implementation of the African Development Bank - supported PATTEC programme in six countries (Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Mali) has entered the third year and is now fully under way and progressing well. The role of the PATTEC Coordination Office in mobilising, organising and coordinating action is getting consolidated. Consultations were made with the governments of Angola and Zambia to ensure that the funds needed to carry out aerial spraying operations in the Kwando/Zambezi region during the second phase of the regional project in the PATTEC Programme. Zambia made arrangements to contribute US\$3.7 million and Angola US\$5.1 million to finance the aerial spraying operations and related activities, expected to begin end of May 2008 and render an area of 15,000 km<sup>2</sup> in Angola and Zambia tsetse-free by August 2008.

309. Efforts are being made to mobilise resources to augment the support being provided by the African Development Bank. The release of the support pledged by the African Development Bank during the Special Donors Conference on PATTEC to support the next group of countries is expected and will further boost the possibilities for success in the attainment of the objectives of PATTEC. A special donors' conference on PATTEC for countries in the Central African Region, now being planned, will be held in N'djamena, Chad in December 2008. A mission to 6 Gulf Arab States, led by the First Lady of Sudan, to mobilise support for PATTEC was being undertaken in May and June 2008. Responses to the approaches and requests for support to PATTEC made to IFAD and BADEA are expected. A mechanism to activate and manage the Trypanosomiasis Vector Research and Control (TVRC) Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charity organisation set up and registered in the USA to mobilise support for trypanosomiasis control in Africa and Latin America, is being developed. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 25 January 2008 between the Foundation for Innovative New Diagnostics (FIND) and the Commission on cooperation in support of PATTEC, worth USD850, 000 over the next 3 years. In addition, FIND has seconded an Advocacy Officer to the PATTEC Coordination Office.

310. The PATTEC Coordination Office has organised several technical planning workshops to discuss the details of project proposals in various countries as well as the modalities of cooperation between countries that will undertake joint action in areas of a common tsetse belt. Two multi-national tsetse eradication project proposals (involving Nigeria, Niger, Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo; and Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic and Nigeria) have been developed and efforts are under way to mobilise the resources necessary for their execution. A multi-national tsetse eradication project proposal is being developed for the four Southern African countries namely, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe covering an area of about 250,000 km<sup>2</sup> of their common tsetse belt. A joint tsetse eradication project concept has been prepared and discussed between Mozambique and South Africa and discussions are on-going on the development of a full business plan and possibilities for funding its execution. A concept for a joint project proposal between Ethiopia and Sudan on tsetse eradication in areas of the common tsetse belt along the border between the 2 countries has been prepared and efforts are under way to prepare a bankable project proposal for use in resources mobilization. An inter-ministerial meeting to discuss the plans for the implementation of PATTEC in countries along the West African Coast (Gambia,

Guinea Bissau, Senegal, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire) is planned to be held in July/August 2008 in Monrovia, Liberia.

311. The preparation of a monitoring and evaluation protocol to facilitate the supervision of project implementation is in process and consultations on the establishment of a PATTEC electronic network are on going. A comprehensive range of regional training courses designed to provide the technical capacity and cadres necessary to execute PATTEC projects have been planned and funding for the courses is being discussed with various partners.

## **E.VIII.2. AU-IBAR (Inter African Bureau for Animal Resources) (Nairobi Office)**

312. As the leading institution for the livestock sub sector of CAADP, IBAR produced a document on "Key Issues in the Livestock Sub-Sector for Inclusion in the CAADP Pillar Frameworks". This document will serve to mainstream the livestock sub-sector in the national and regional compacts. IBAR intends to assist countries and RECs during the roundtable processes leading to the development of these compacts. This document was presented and discussed during various CAADP meetings.

### **1. Support Programme for Integrated National Action Plans (SPINAP)**

313. Since its resurgence in South East Asia 5 years ago and subsequent spread and outbreaks in Africa from 2006, Avian Influenza (bird flu) has become an important priority for AU/IBAR. Since the disease affects both birds (domestic and wild) and humans causing serious disease and death, AU/IBAR has spearheaded a continental effort to prevent its spread and control bird flu through multiple channels, including the resource mobilization and capacity building of African countries in preparedness for early detection and rapid response to avian influenza outbreaks. These efforts have yielded positive results and now AU/IBAR is in the process of executing the €22.6M SPINAP program targeting all 47 ACP member countries. The program seeks to provide financial and technical support to enable these countries to establish and strengthen their national emergency preparedness and response plans. To date, 46 out of the 47 countries have submitted their funding applications. On its part, AU/IBAR has reviewed all the applications and is in the process of constituting funding contracts with those whose proposals have been successful.

### **2. Somali Ecosystem Rinderpest Eradication and Control Unit (SERECU)**

314. This project is concerned with the final eradication of the dreaded cattle disease, Rinderpest from Africa. The last pockets of the disease were suspected to be in the Somalia ecosystem for which phase I of the project has not found any evidence. Phase II which costs 4 million Euros has been signed with the EU and commenced in May 2008. It focuses on proving the absence of rinderpest,

guarding against resurgence and achieving OIE accreditation of freedom from rinderpest.

### **3. International Scientific Council for Trypanosomiasis and Control (ISCTRC)**

315. A proposal was put forward for the ITC office in Gambia to become a regional entity encompassing surrounding countries rather than having national country offices. This regional approach would be a positive way forward for the future control of Trypanosomiasis. The Gambian government is in the process of considering this proposal. AU/IBAR is to facilitate the establishment of this approach and has been recently pushing for more regionalizing in Trypanosomiasis control efforts for more efficient utilization of resources and dissemination of information.

### **4. The ALive Partnership**

316. International institutions such as the FAO, the OIE, ILRI and others are associated with IBAR since 2005 by a Partnership agreement within the ALive Platform. April 2008 witnessed the 11<sup>th</sup> Executive Committee meeting where a number of major decisions were taken. It was agreed that ALive should align its orientation, and proposed programs for TAP2 into the CAADP mainstream. It was also endorsed that the Presidency of the General Assembly will be held by the Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union; and that Chairmanship of the Executive Committee is to be elected by the Executive Committee members (of which AU/IBAR is now a permanent member), and permanently held by an African entity or institution with headquarters based in Africa. Recent developments also include the confirmation on the establishment of a Branch Office of the ALive Secretariat at the AU/IBAR Office in Nairobi, Kenya, within the next 12 months. During this interim period, funding for one staff member and logistics of this branch office are being sought. In addition, it has been resolved that the hosting of the ALive Secretariat be transferred from the World Bank to an African Institution effective April 2009 that coincides with the launching of the ALive 2<sup>nd</sup> Three-Year Action Plan (TAP2).

### **5. Multi-institutional collaborations**

317. In collaboration with ILRI, CDC, FAO, OVI and FAO/OIE Reference Laboratories, AU/IBAR executed advanced laboratory training courses in the diagnosis of highly pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI). The objective of these courses was to have a network of laboratories in Africa, capable of confirmatory diagnosis of HPAI as one of the crucial pillars of implementing national integrated action plans for the prevention and control of HPAI. These trainings which brought together public health and veterinary laboratory personnel were funded by the GTZ. Further, through collaboration with OIE and FAO and with the financial support of USDA/APHIS, AU/IBAR through the Bamako regional Animal Health Coordination Unit conducted training activities for countries in West Africa on bio-safety, the use of GPS and GIS in spatial epidemiology and conducted a detailed assessment of the regional laboratory network with the view of identifying capacity building gaps.

## **6. Regional Animal Health Desks**

318. In order to effect better “hands on” implementation of Livestock development activities on the African continent and also to be closer to countries and Regional Economic Communities, AU/IBAR has established, under SPINAP, Regional Animal Health Desks in Mali, Gaborone, and Nairobi. Another will be established in Tunisia in due course. The desks in Nairobi and Mali have commenced operationalization since the beginning of this year. The Botswana desk is fairly recently established and has already started working since last February pending the hosting agreement currently being vetted by the AU-HQ and the Botswana government. These desks work in collaboration with Technical counterparts from the OIE and FAO in order to harmonize strategies for the monitoring of Avian Influenza as a first step, and later on for other diseases within the region. This collaboration between the three organizations takes into account the mandates and inherent experience of each institution and respective capacities to carry out interventions.

## **7. The Dryland Livestock Wildlife Environment Project (DLWEIP)**

319. Between January and June 2008, the project continued with its activity of reseeding of degraded lands and training of pastoralist communities in livestock health, production and marketing in Kenya. Whereas in Burkina Faso disease dynamic between livestock and wildlife was assess and community leaders trained in leadership financial management and governance. The BMZ has approved a project on “Supporting the vulnerable: Increasing the adaptive capacity of agro-pastoralists to climatic change in West and Southern Africa using a transdisciplinary research approach” to be jointly implemented by ILRI, IBAR, IIMA in Mozambique and IER in Mali.

## **8. North Eastern Pastoral Development Program (NEPDP)**

320. Through the USAID funded NEPDP program, AU/IBAR has developed and piloted an innovative approach to the provision of services in pastoral areas. In its theme of increasing household incomes to pastoralists, the 3 year program has been working to address three key constraints to pastoralists access to markets; viz, poor access to animal health services along the market chain, weak capacity of pastoral associations to provide services and advocate for pastoralists and lack of access to financial and non financial services. The program has through targeted intervention on these constraints achieved tangible benefits and learned useful lessons on pastoralist programming. Through the provision of mobile laboratories and facilitating linkages between private and public sector animal health services providers at the grassroots, disease reporting and response to outbreaks has improved significantly. Building the capacity of local pastoral institutions through skills development and operational support has also greatly improved pastoralists representation and participation in policy dialogue, as well as their access to support

services. The program support to the veterinary department has enabled it to screen all market cattle moving through the regional livestock market to other parts of the country against CBPP, thus, preventing its spread to these areas and providing the much needed guarantees to the livestock market actors. The NEPDP approach has proved viable and with adjustments, it can be scaled up to spur livestock marketing in pastoral areas in the horn of Africa region.

321. A new editorial board of the quarterly journal "Bulletin of Animal health and Production in Africa" drawn from different renowned institutions in the continent has been appointed for two years.

## **9. Climate Change on Livestock in Africa;**

322. AU/IBAR is actively involved in the preparation of an international conference on The implications of Climate Change for Agricultural Productions Systems in ACP countries the implications of climate change for agricultural productions systems in ACP countries The implications of Climate Change for Agricultural Productions Systems in ACP countries The implications of Climate Change for Agricultural Productions Systems in ACP countries to be organized by CTA in October 2008 in Burkina Faso.

## **10. Participation of African Nations in Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standard-setting Organizations (PAN-SPSO).**

323. The project costing €3.86m has started the inception phase in May 2008. With the support of REC's, the ACP Secretariat authorizes AU/IBAR to implement this project which aims to reduce poverty and enhance food security in Africa through better access to international trade and markets. It will also facilitate the effective participation of Member States to meet international standards setting organizations and improve capacity building in the implementation of food safety standards and measures. In this regard, the project also covers aspects of CAADP pillar 3. Major activities in the inception phase include conducting situation analysis in four countries with different export orientation; and a comprehensive training needs assessment.

## **11. Somali Livestock Certification Project (SOLICEP)**

324. The Somali Livestock Certification Project, co-funded by the European Union and AU/IBAR for a total valued of Euro 3.1 million, seeks to improve the export performance of the livestock sector in the Somali eco-system through enhanced capacity of Somali public and private institutions; the development of an animal health certification system that is suitable for mobile livestock husbandry and internationally accredited; and the strengthening of regional cooperation among countries of the Somali eco-system and between trading partners. The intervention is designed for an initial period of 30 months, starting from February 2008, and will be implemented in partnership with Somali Veterinary Authorities, Terra Nuova and FAO.

### **E.VIII.3. IAPSC (Inter African Phyto-sanitary Council) (Yaounde Office)**

#### **1. IAPSC's 2008 Programme Workplan**

325. Under the strategic orientation of supporting the harmonization of the agriculture policies within the Regional Economic Communities, three approved lines of action for the 2008 budgeting year which involved the harmonization of registration of chemicals pesticides in Eastern and Southern Africa, the control phenomenon of the transboundary pest in Africa: Grain Eating Birds (*Quelea* sp.) invasions in Africa and the scoping study of impact of fumigation and inspection issues on the safe trade in plant and plant products in the economy of Western and Central African countries have started and on-going.

#### **2. Training workshops, Meetings and seminars,**

326. The Inter-African Phytosanitary Council of African Union organized the fourth training workshop session of the Phytosanitary Inspectors and plant quarantine controllers at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Ibadan (Nigeria) from 13-16 December 2007 where twenty five participants from eighteen countries member of UMA and ECOWAS sub-regions were present. This training helped these countries to better comply with SPSM for the improvement of agricultural trade; on common pests affecting West Africa and North Africa, inspection and control procedures, biosafety and biosecurity strategies, uses and abuses of agrochemical and their implications on public health and environment; pesticide management and share of experiences in the area of the implementation plant quarantine activities at pre and post entry points of countries of both sub-regions.

327. Three important meetings were undertaken. These include: the 1st meeting of experts, the 3rd Steering Committee of AU-IAPSC and the 23rd General Assembly of AU-IAPSC were held at the African Union Commission Headquarters, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 22-28 March, 2008. The meeting of experts considered solutions and methods of preventing continuous introduction and spread of the dangerous plant pests accompanying germplasm material into the continent. The second and third meetings were IAPSC statutory meetings, with a participation of 37 member counties of the African Union, some Regional Economic Communities and many observers from various partner organizations. They approved technical programmes of IAPSC and made pertinent recommendations, which will help the African Regional Plant Protection Organization to restructure, reposition and reinvigorate itself. The Inter-African Phyto-sanitary Council participated at the CPM3 Rome –Italy 7-11 April, 2008 and to the East African Phyto-sanitary Information Committee meeting, Lusaka, Zambia, from 20 - 25 April, 2008.

328. The AU-IAPSC, being one of the specialised technical offices of AU with a continental mandate of spearheading programs for Plant Health and Plant Protection within the Commission, needs to be strengthened to fulfil its

mandate. Indeed, the last Steering Committee and General Assembly recommended the implementation of a new organisational structure which involves the addition of new positions. The Terms of References of these positions have been prepared and are under consideration at the Commission.

329. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of May 2008, the government of Cameroon presented the letters of attribution of new properties to the African Union. Two (02) buildings comprising an ultra-modern office complex have been provided to the AU office in Cameroon for immediate occupation. This kind gesture on the part of the government of Cameroon underscores the continued support of the government for the AU office in Cameroon.

#### **E.VIII.4. PANVAC (Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Center) (Debre Zeit)**

330. The Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre of African Union (AU-PANVAC) is promoting the availability of safe, effective and affordable veterinary vaccines, facilitating the development and the introduction of improved or new vaccines and strengthening Africa's capacity building in veterinary vaccine development, production and quality assurance.

##### **1. International Independent Quality Control of Veterinary Vaccines in Africa**

331. The laboratories for the quality control of veterinary vaccines have been fully refurbished and the new equipment are in place and operational. PANVAC undertook Quality Control Certification of the following veterinary vaccines: Peste des Petits Ruminants (Ethiopia, Botswana and Jordan); Contagious bovine Pleuropneumonia (Ethiopia); Newcastle Disease (Ghana); and Infectious Bursal (Gumboro) Disease (Ghana).

##### **2. Standardization of veterinary vaccines production and harmonization of their quality control techniques in Africa**

332. The repository of biologicals has been maintained and cell lines and vaccines seeds were sent to national veterinary laboratory of Egypt and Sudan. PANVAC renewed its cells lines stock by acquiring the following cell lines from European Collection of Cell Cultures: Vero, BHK-21 and MDBK. Two new manuals for the quality control of vaccine against PPR and CBPP have been produced.

##### **3. Transfer of appropriate vaccine production technologies in Africa;**



333. PANVAC and the Vaccine and Injectable Business Unit based in France organised a workshop on the use of new adjuvants for the production of inactivated vaccines on 18 July 2008.

4. Training and technical support services to veterinary vaccines and quality control laboratories

334. PANVAC provided technical advices to the Department of Livestock of West African Economic and Monetary Union and Ghana. It also distributed essential biological reagents for animal disease diagnosis and surveillance. The laboratories for the production of reagent for animal diseases diagnosis and surveillance have been fully refurbished and the new equipment are in place and operational.

## **F. HUMAN RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

### **F.I. EDUCATION PROGRAMMES**

335. The Education programme has continued to be guided by the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006 – 2015). It is expected that strategic partnership will be a major hallmark of the second decade of education for Africa, as the Commission and AU Member States rally partners and other stakeholders to embrace the Plan of Action (POA) as Africa's home grown response to Africa's education challenges and opportunities. In this light, the Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.173 (X) of the AU Summit of January 2008 called on development partners to align their education programmes with the Plan of action for the Second Decade of education for Africa.

336. Indeed, the Commission has begun to establish strategic partnerships with key stakeholder institutions for the implementation of the POA in several areas of focus. A memorandum of understanding has been signed with the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA), with agreement for ADEA to place its technical expertise at the disposal of the African Union. Discussions are underway on MOUs with the Foundation for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) and the African Council for Distance Education (ACDE).

Implementation of MOUs with UNESCO, the Association of African Universities (AAU) and ADEA have begun to bear fruit as will be demonstrated in this report.

337. It is important to note also that the staffing situation in the Education Division has much improved with the addition of two senior professional officers, including one seconded by UNESCO. Further, the Commission has received funding from the European Union for supporting a number of education programmes, including recruitment of staff.

338. Implementation strategies have been developed in the areas of Higher Education, particularly in the areas of harmonisation and quality and scholarship; Technical and Vocational Education and Training; Education Management Information Systems; Educational Publishing (as a part of implementing the area of Curriculum and Teaching and Learning Materials); and Teacher Development.

339. The first issue of the Newsletter for the Second Decade of Education for Africa will be out in June 2008. The plan is to have two issues per year, increasing to a quarterly publication as information flow picks up from Member States, RECs and major partners in education development.

340. A robust publicity strategy will be developed to ensure that the second decade is well known and well owned across Africa, the Diaspora and among development partners. Collaborative support is expected from ADEA in this endeavour.

341. Meetings of the COMEDAF Steering Committee and COMEDAF III Bureau were held in March/April 2008, to consider progress made and plans for 2008 implementation of the Plan of Action. The Republic of South Africa offered to host the next set of meetings of the Steering Committee and Bureau in November 2008.

## **a. HIGHER EDUCATION**

### **i. Harmonisation of Higher Education in Africa**

342. The AU framework for the Harmonisation of Higher Education in Africa, and the African Quality Rating Mechanism for Higher Education, adopted by the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF III) in 2007, have been validated by stakeholders and Partners in a meeting co-hosted by the AAU in Accra, in March 2008. The meeting was co-chaired by the Commission, the AAU and UNESCO. CAMES, ACDE, SADC, ECCAS, ECOWAS and a number of experts from African countries were represented. The experts and partners agreed on a proposed way forward concerning the merging of the African Strategy for Harmonisation of Higher Education in Africa with the process of revision of the Arusha convention, and implementation of the Quality Rating Mechanism for African Higher Education. The participants signed a statement of

commitment, which includes close collaboration with UNESCO in the review of the Arusha Convention for harmonisation of African higher education.

## **ii. The Mwalimu Nyerere African Union Scholarship Scheme**

343. 42 young Africans were selected to benefit from the Mwalimu Nyerere African Union Scholarship Scheme. The students sent in their applications between November 2006 and January 2007. Due to the bureaucratic delays communicating with the successful students has been a challenge, as some have changed their addresses, and for most of them their student status has changed. Furthermore, a full time Co-ordinator for the Scheme is yet to be recruited, under the EU 55 million Euro programme. A contract will be signed between every student and the Commission, committing the students to excellent performance, completion of their study programme, and to work in an African country for at least three years after graduation.

344. The next tranche will involve students for postgraduate studies. Universities to participate at that level will have to undergo a quality assessment exercise to ensure that they offer study and research programmes of the highest quality. Meanwhile, the Commission is developing a collaborative programme with the European Erasmus Mundus programme, where the scheme will be expanded to cover ACP countries as well, and will also involve exchange programmes between African and European institutions of higher learning, with support from the tenth European development Fund (EDF10).

## **b. EDUCATION MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS (EMIS)**

### **i. EMIS Tools**

345. The African instrument for EMIS Capacity Assessment was prepared in collaboration with ADEA Working Group on Educational Statistics, UNESCO Institute for Statistics and SADC, and reviewed by experts from Member States. The tool is being pilot tested in twelve Member States. A range of indicators to be used in the monitoring and reporting of progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa are currently being developed, to be validated by the Working Groups of the Plan of Action for the Second decade of Education for Africa in June 2008.

346. Senior officials from Member States and RECs will be trained in the use of the tools for their implementation on the ground. The strategy for training will be a cascading system whereby those trained will be expected to train others in order to quickly build up a critical mass of highly skilled practitioners in EMIS.

347. Questionnaires to assist in data collection on the implementation of the Second Decade have been developed by the Commission and

sent out to Member States and RECs. These will be used in the interim period before a full range of performance indicators are validated. It is expected that country reports will be generated annually, and submitted to the AUC through respective RECs.

**ii. Education Observatory**

348. Meanwhile, some progress has been made towards capacity building of IPED in order for it to begin to implement its mandate as Education Observatory for Africa. A new structure has been developed and will be presented for consideration by AU Policy Organs. Thereafter, recruitment for qualified professional staff will be carried out and appropriate consultations with IPED will be undertaken to establish quality management systems for finance and human resources, and to equip the institution.

**c. CURRICULUM AND TEACHING AND LEARNING MATERIALS**

**i. Educational Publishing**

349. The Commission collaborated with the University of South Africa's Centre for African Renaissance Studies (CARS) to produce a database on educational publishers in Africa, and on updating science text books for schools, using new knowledge generated from academic journals from African Universities. A meeting of experts and stakeholders held in Pretoria in January 2007 proposed establishment of a biennial Conference on African Educational Publishing. Discussions are underway with ADEA and the East African Book Development Association (EABDA) to collaborate in the organisation and hosting of the First AU Pan-African Conference on Educational Publishing in Africa in 2008.

350. Subjects for discussion will include development of national and regional book policies; development of a reading culture; promotion of African writers and publishers; common African teaching and learning materials for core curricula; and publishing in African languages; among other topical issues. A planning meeting for the biennial conference was held in Nairobi in May 2008, bringing together the key partners including EABDA, UNESCO, UNICEF and ADEA, who made pledges for supporting the conference.

**ii. History of Africa**

351. Plans are also underway to hold a meeting of experts and stakeholders on the production of common teaching and learning materials on African History. The work will be anchored on work done by UNESCO in producing excellent volumes of books on African History. Preliminary meetings were held with UNESCO Assistant Director General for Africa in January 2008, and with the Director for the UNESCO Cluster Office in Addis Ababa in April. The Libyan Arab

Jamahiriya has offered to host the stakeholders meeting in Tripoli in August 2008. A planning meeting with Libya and UNESCO was held in Addis Ababa in May 2008.

## **d. TEACHER DEVELOPMENT**

### **i. Teacher Development**

352. An implementation strategy for Teacher Development was produced in collaboration with the UNESCO Institute for capacity Building in Africa (ICBA) in Addis Ababa and presented to COMEDAF Steering Committee and COMEDAF III in 2007. The strategy is holistic using contemporary and open and distance learning methods, for pre-service as well as in-service training of teachers and other educational professionals. NEPAD office for Education and Youth is expected to be a major implementing agency for this area of focus, in collaboration with IICBA. NEPAD will host a meeting of experts, stakeholders and potential partners in Pretoria in June 2008, to agree on the way forward and allocate roles and responsibilities for implementing the Plan of Action in this area.

### **ii. Enhancing Teaching of Science and Mathematics**

353. Collaboration discussions with the Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Africa (CEMASTEA) in Nairobi Kenya, with support from the Government of Kenya and Japan International Corporation (JICA), on enhancing the teaching and learning of Science and Mathematics in African schools were initiated in 2007.

## **e. GENDER AND CULTURE**

354. The Commission is currently soliciting consultancy support for a situational analysis of Gender and Culture in education in Africa. Based on the analysis, gaps will be identified, and a way forward proposed and discussed by a meeting of experts to be held later this year. A programme of action for the AU centre for Women and Girls' Education in Africa (CIEFFA) will be developed through this process. The Commission will audit the institutional capacity of CIEFFA and identify needs that the AUC should meet in order for CIEFFA to step into its full role.

355. Meanwhile, the Commission is discussing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Foundation for African women Educationalists (FAWE), to formalise collaboration in the implementation of this area of focus.

## **f. TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET)**

356. A Strategy to revitalize the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Africa was developed in 2006. The strategy aims

to revitalize, modernize and harmonize TVET in Africa in order to transform it into a mainstream activity for African youth development, youth employment and human capacity building in Africa; and as a high quality complementary education system. The strategy also covers the use of TVET in post Conflict situations, to ensure skills development among youth for their useful participation in reconstruction processes, and also to help them build capacity for entrepreneurship, job creation and self-employment. Pilot projects for TVET in post conflict situations will be implemented beginning later in 2008, in Congo, Liberia and Burundi. The most serious challenge is resource mobilisation and partnership building, considering the state of TVET institutions in post conflict countries, and the cost of quality equipment.

357. Publicity will be an important tool for popularisation and engendering ownership of the POA at every level. A sense of informed ownership of the POA is necessary for compelling alignment of continental and regional education programmes with the POA itself. Indeed an informed public will also be instrumental in the advocacy needed to keep education agencies focussed on the POA, and by extension, to enhanced resource allocation.

358. Response by international Partners is so far commendable, but much remains to be done to sustain interest and commitment among those already on board, and attract others. Of particular note are major resource mobilisation initiatives like the fast Track Initiative (FTI).

359. As recommended by COMEDAF meetings, the importance of the role of the Bureau of COMEDAF in keeping the POA on Africa's education agenda cannot be over emphasised. They are the best placed to provide linkages with RECs, and to advocate for the POA among partners. Member States have the most important role in owning and implementing the POA, and advocating it in their fora with bi- and multi-lateral agencies. Establishment of EMIS with a robust reporting mechanism will therefore provide impetus for implementation at country level, as Member States see qualitative reflections of their efforts.

## **F.II. HUMAN RESOURCES AND YOUTH PROGRAMMES**

### **a. Youth policy - Development and cooperation framework: African Youth Charter and related activities**

360. From 2006 to date, the adopted African Youth Charter is being popularised through various activities across the Continent in Member States through advertisement, sensitisation and advocacy.

361. Upon the request on the Ministers of the Bureau of the Conference of Ministers in charge of Youth (COMY I), the Commission organized the 2nd ordinary session of the AU Ministers in charge of Youth that was held in February 2008. This gave the opportunity to the Ministers to launch the Year of African Youth, as recommended in the Banjul Decision EX.CL/Dec.292 (IX) and to adopt the programme of activity to be implemented during 2008. The Ministers also committed themselves through a declaration to support the related activities in their respective countries during the Year of African Youth and to accelerate the

ratification process of the youth Charter. Many member States reaffirmed their commitment to the Charter and are in the process of ratification.

362. At the moment 21 Member States have signed the Charter, but only 4 have ratified. Member States are called upon to ensure a proper ownership of the Charter and to take necessary legal steps to facilitate its implementation at national levels.

363. In addition to strategies, workshops and actions developed to coordinate and support Member States and relevant actors regarding the process of popularisation of the African Youth Charter, including the following actions and outcomes:

- A Master Plan of Action covering the period from 2007 to 2015 was adopted by Ministers of Youth in February 2008. They recommended to Member States to use the Plan of Action to accelerate the ratification and implementation process of the Charter in their respective countries;
- The Ministers of Youth equally adopted the Programme of activities developed for the year 2008. With the support of Partners, various activities are being implemented involving the youth themselves: advocacy materials and communication supports are being developed to promote the charter and give it more visibility in the popularisation process.
- The Posters contest, launched on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2007 to improve youth contributions and creativity towards the Charter and to encourage the youth to be involved in its popularisation has been awarded. 11 young talented contestants (2 per region and 1 best of Africa) won the Award, Certificate and prizes. Some of them are working in network in order to better promote the Charter in their countries and regions.

**b. Capacity building: Youth development and empowerment for their meaningful participation in development process:**

*ii. Institutional Capacity building through the revitalization of the Pan African Youth Union*

364. The Pan African Youth Union (PYU), as an AU specialized institution in youth issues is considered as a continental youth structure. The Banjul Decision EX.CL/Dec.292 (IX) recommended its in-depth revitalization (rules and regulations, statutes, staff, etc) so that the Union could serve as interface of the Commission, regarding the African youth development and empowerment issues.

365. The main missions of the PYU are to work in close collaboration with the AUC in the field of Youth empowerment, to continuously advocate for the Charter, to ensure its popularisation and implementation, to lead and facilitate communication between the youth and the African Union Commission.

366. The proposed strategy includes proposals on measures to ensure sustainable technical and financial provisions for the Pan African Youth Union. The organizational structure, the procedure and the working process are reviewed in their content and form for a proper collaboration with the Commission and Member States. The current structure and statutes of the Pan African Youth Union are entirely reviewed and new propositions are included. A manual for Rules and procedures is also developed.

367. After the Executive Committee meeting held in December 2007, the Congress of the PYU will be held in Brazzaville from 20 to 23 June 2008. The Congress is expected to adopt the updated legal documents and elect the new youth representatives to be appointed in the Secretariat of the PYU. Not only the new staff will implement the new structure, but also fill the technical responsibilities as agreed on with the AUC and serve the continent through the National Youth Councils. In addition to the technical and financial support that the AUC should provide, a Memorandum of Understanding will be signed between the PYU and the AUC stating the conditions of collaboration and working relationship.

*ii. Youth empowerment through non-formal and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)*

368. As mentioned earlier, one of the key areas of the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2015) is Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET). If the developed strategy covered the area in general, specific needs are addressed through formal, non-formal and informal education programmes. In the non-formal education programme, TVET is presented as a means to address skills development for a large number of unemployed and out of school youth in Africa. TVET also addresses uneducated or low-educated youth to provide them with technical and professional skills and livelihoods.

369. Being involved in the area of post conflict reconstruction and youth empowerment and skills development to facilitate their involvement in the rehabilitation process, the Commission is lending its support to the elaboration of the pilot project, which was presented to the Ministers of youth during the last COMY II. The project is recommended for implementation in the three selected pilot countries. Authorisation is expected to launch the project and start its implementation. The pilot project aims the use of TVET in post Conflict situations, to ensure not only the skills development among youth for their useful participation in reconstruction processes, and but also to help them build capacity for entrepreneurship, job creation and self-employment.

370. The Commission is engaged in resource mobilization programmes so as to support the training programmes, provision of equipment and tooling development. Given the resource allocated by the 2008 budget to the described activities, strong partnerships are still needed for the planned pilot-projects, which include adult literacy in some countries.



371. An effective mechanism for concrete participation of the youth in decision-making process and development debate need to be developed or improved.

*iii. Framework for human resource's capacity building: Internship and AU Volunteers programmes*

372. The African Youth in the Diaspora is a very important target to focus on. A programme is being developed to ensure that the youth in the Diaspora participate and benefit from African youth activities and programme. In this regard, the Commission is in the process to organize a youth forum during the second part of 2008 that will gather youth leaders in the Diaspora and youth leaders in Africa. A framework for common actions or a Plan of Action, with mechanisms of collaboration and partnership will be some of the outcomes of the forum. This will facilitate the development of a comprehensive internship programme including the development of curriculum for Peace building skills.

373. The establishment of the African Union Volunteers programme is being discussed with the Commission. The conceptualisation of this programme (elements and structures for the recruitment of Volunteers) and the mobilization of financial resource are needed before commencing the programme and its implementation.

### **F.III. SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY, ICT, BIOSAFETY**

#### **a. BIOSAFETY UNIT: "Support to the AU in the Matters of Biosafety"**

374. The African Union Commission-German Technical Cooperation (AUC-GTZ) Biosafety Project was initiated within the context of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the African Union's commitment to put in place an Africa-wide Biosafety System (Decision EX/CL/Dec.26 (III), Maputo, July 2003).

375. Among the strategies that will be taken up in 2008 would be to conduct sub-regional workshops for discussions towards the implementation of the African Strategy on Biosafety and the revised Model Law. In the same token, a Parliamentarian Meeting has also been planned to take place. The main activities for 2008 are thus:

- Regional meetings will be held to discuss the implementation of the adopted African Strategy on Biosafety. It is intended to organize 5 regional meetings in collaboration with the RECs;
- A meeting will be held to discuss the revised African Model Law on Biosafety amongst the relevant ministries in charge;
- Development of various issue papers will be made on key issues regarding Biosafety that will be published and dispatched for the benefit of

Member States towards fulfilling their obligations in implementing the provisions of the Biosafety Protocol. A call for proposal has been made on the AU website regarding the same and proposals have been submitted from potential consultants so as to select suitable candidates to undertake these tasks;

- Maintaining the network of continuous information exchange between the National Biosafety Focal Points and the African Union Commission regarding issues of biosafety and biotechnology. This would be done through regular contacts with the focal points and updates of the AU Biosafety web page as appropriate;
- The provisions of strategic options to strengthen the existing technical and laboratory capacities to detect GMOs. This options would be drawn from the ongoing researches on two Africa-wide technical researches on the issues of genetically modified organisms (GMO) detection and GMO commodity flow in Africa;
- Support Member States in upcoming international negotiations relating to the Biosafety Protocol. Briefing documents will be prepared by the Commission which would guide Member States through the key items of negotiations thereby endeavouring to form African common positions. This support would be done by way of organizing African Preparatory Meetings before the negotiations in close collaboration with the Secretariat for UN Convention on Biological Diversity which is the global body responsible for organizing the international meetings.
- Follow up recommendation of the AMCOST III on submission of the African Model Law on Biosafety to others Ministers for their input, the leadership of AUC in Biosafety and the institutionalization of a Biosafety Unit.

376. During a meeting between the Commission and the GTZ in September 2007, it was proposed to put in place a five-year Strategic Plan in matters of biosafety for the AU. An independent consultant, financed by GTZ, will develop the Plan based on a Terms of Reference elaborated by the Commission. This plan should be established on a yearly activity plan culminating to the five-year plan including the provision of financial and human resources for the Unit.

377. On the issue of institutionalization of Biosafety in the AUC and the submission of the African Model Law on Biosafety to other Ministers, the Executive Council has adopted budget line on the "Integration of Biosafety Unit within the HRST department" in the Program Budget 2008, and Decision on the Report of the Third Ordinary Session of the African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology (AMCOST III) - DOC. EX.CL/385 (XII) requesting the AU Commission to submit the African Model Law to all relevant departments and sectors in Member States for their comments. The African Model Law has been sent to AMCEN for consideration by the African Ministers of Environment.

378. On the issue of leadership the Biosafety Unit have held a preparatory meeting for Members States Delegates to the Fifth Meeting of the Working Group on Liability and Redress under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, 10-11 March 2008 in Cartagena, Colombia. Another preparatory meeting is

scheduled for 10-11 May 2008 in Bonn, Germany prior the Conference of Parties to the Cartagena Protocol.

379. The following activities are ongoing:

- two Africa-wide technical researches on the issues of genetically modified organisms (GMO) detection and GMO commodity flow in Africa,
- the consultancy to produce Issues Paper on Biosafety to support Members States in the implementation of Biosafety,
- the preparation of a five-year strategic plan on biosafety for the AUC.

380. As a new issue taken on board in the first quarter 2008 the “Initiative of the First Pan African Bioethics Congress” is in discussion between the Commission, the Executive Secretariat of the Congress and relevant stakeholders, to see how to give shape to the initiative.

381. The regional approach taken is believed to be the best way to deal with biosafety issues in Africa. However at the AU level, implementing all planned activities demands time and the administration of such a project could be challenging. In spite of technical relevance, the activities of the Project also need strong political support from both the AU and its Member States to achieve more results at the regional level. Nonetheless it has been recognized that adequate preparation and collaboration among the concerned departments within the AU Commission is essential for fruitful results. For the smooth operation of such an initiative effective networking and communications is important. However, it has been experienced that within Africa communication and networking still demands a lot of improvement.

382. It is also necessary to strengthen the collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to facilitate the provision of relevant information on regional meetings related to Biosafety (Experts, Ministers, and Summits etc.).

383. Common positions on Biosafety and biotechnology could be a big challenge to attain within the continent. The best that could be done would be to have general guidelines on Biosafety and biotechnology and put strong emphasis on information sharing. Nevertheless it is increasingly becoming apparent these two issues need to be dealt with in a complementary manner and the Project will continue to work towards this.

## **G. INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY**

384. During the period under review, the Commission embarked on a number of activities of strategic importance in the area of infrastructure and energy. Priority was placed on the elaboration of policies and strategies in the fields of railway transport, electricity, oil and gas, Telecommunications and ICT, post as well as on the implementation of specific projects aimed at the development of ICT

infrastructure and services in Africa. These included the e-Governance VSAT project for the African Union Commission and its Regional Offices, the Pan-African e-Network project for Tele-education and Tele-medicine in cooperation with the Government of India and the Unified Telecommunication Numbering project.

385. The Commission organized consultative meetings with the African Development Bank (ADB) and the NEPAD Secretariat to discuss modalities for formulating a Common Infrastructure Programme for Africa based on the various initiatives of the organisations and within the framework of the Coordination Mechanism for Infrastructure Development adopted by African stakeholders.

## **G.I. TRANSPORT**

### **a. Air Transport**

#### *i. Meeting of Experts on Guidelines for negotiation of Air Service Agreements between African Union (AU) Member States and Economic Commission (EC) / European Union (EU) Member States*

386. A meeting of Experts on Guidelines for negotiation of air service agreements between AU Member States and EC/EU Member States was held at the headquarters of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in Addis Ababa from the 25 to 26 March 2008. The meeting was convened by the Commission in accordance with the Decision of the Third Conference of Ministers responsible for air transport held in Addis Ababa from 7 to 11 May 2007 as endorsed by Decision EX. CL/350 (XI) adopted in Accra, Ghana, in July 2007. The objective of the meeting was to reflect on the African common position on negotiations between Member States of the African Union and European Commission and/or European Union States highlighting the advantages and disadvantages of a legally binding versus non-binding position document and propose a common draft text. The meeting agreed on a non-binding text which was, subsequently, submitted to the First Session of the Conference of Ministers of Transport held in Algiers, Algiers from 21 to 25 April 2008.

#### *ii. Ninth Meeting of the Monitoring Body of the 1999 Yamoussoukro Decision*

387. The ninth meeting of the Monitoring Body of the 1999 Yamoussoukro Decision on the liberalisation of air transport markets in Africa was held at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa on 27 March 2008. The meeting reviewed the Study carried out by the Commission in relation to the implementation of the Decision of the Third Conference of Ministers responsible for Air Transport held in Addis Ababa from 7 to 11 May 2007 as endorsed by Decision EX. CL/350 (XI) adopted in Accra, Ghana, in July 2007 with regard to entrusting the functions of the Executing Agency of the Yamoussoukro Decision to the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC). The outcome of the meeting was submitted to the First

Session of the Conference of African Ministers of Transport. A report on the conference has been submitted as a separate agenda item to the Executive Council.

**b. Maritime Transport**

*i. Second Meeting on the Revision of the African Maritime Transport Charter*

388. The second meeting of Experts to finalise the review of African Maritime Transport Charter was held at the Headquarters of African Union in Addis Ababa from 19 to 20 March 2008 in accordance with the Decision of the First African Union Conference of Ministers responsible for Maritime Transport held in Abuja from 19th to 23rd February 2007 as endorsed by Decision EX. CL/ 349 (XI) adopted in Accra, Ghana, in July 2007. The revised African Maritime Transport Charter was submitted to the First Session of the African Ministers of Transport.

*iii. First Session of the Conference of African Ministers of Transport*

389. The Commission in collaboration with the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, organised the First Session of the Conference of African Ministers of Transport under the theme: "Transport, engine of integration and sustainable development in Africa". The Conference was held in Algiers, Algeria, from 21 to 25 April 2008.

390. The Ministers considered and made decisions on the major current issues in transport sector in Africa as contained in a separate document submitted to Council. The Conference of the African Ministers of Transport also adopted the Algiers Declaration which is also submitted along with its Report, which formulates the policy for the air transport, maritime and inland waterways, the railways, the road sub-sectors as well as the multimodal transport.

391. The Conference also updated Plan of Action for each sub-sector.

**G.II. ENERGY**

**a. Electric Energy**

392. The study on the formulation of a Continental Policy and Master Plan for the Development of the African Electricity Sector was launched. The major activities under implementation are as follows:

- Evaluation of the current situation of the Sector;
- Formulation of a Continental Policy;
- Preparation of the specifications for formulation of the Master Plan for the development of the sector.

393. The study will draw from the policies and programmes of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). To this end, missions to the RECs, the Regional Power Pools, River and Lake Basins Organizations and African Institutions working in the field of electric energy sector development were undertaken to West, Central, East and Southern Africa. Similar missions will be fielded to North Africa.

394. A report on the status of the sector, the framework for continental electric energy policy and the draft tender document for producing the Master Plan for African Energy Sector Development are being prepared. Subsequently, a validation workshop on this stage of the study will be organized and will bring together representatives of RECs, the Regional Power Pools and Specialized Institutions of the sector such as ECA, ADB, NEPAD Secretariat, AFREC, AFUR, AFSEC and UPDEA.

395. With respect to the establishment within the African Union of a Coordination Structure for the development of Major Hydro-Electric Integrating Projects, the Commission has launched a legal and institutional study to put in place an appropriate and safe framework for all the stakeholders involved in the development of major hydroelectric integrating projects. The Interim Report presented by the consultant in charge of the study has been examined by the Commission. The report taking into consideration the observations of the Commission was recently completed. A debriefing workshop on the outcomes of this study will be organized during the second half of 2008.

## **b. Hydrocarbons (Oil and Gas)**

396. The joint AU/ADB studies on (i) the impact of the oil price rise on African economies, (ii) prospects of the hydrocarbons (oil and gas) sector in Africa, and (iii) mechanisms for establishment and operationalization of the African Petroleum Fund, have been completed. The outcomes of all these finalized studies have been transmitted to Member States of the African Union, as directed by the 8<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union. Workshops to popularize the outcomes of these studies will be organized in the second half of this year 2008.

397. Regarding the establishment of an African Petroleum Fund, this Fund will be lodged at ADB and should be operational as soon as the necessary resources for its launching have been collected, that is, a minimum amount estimated at one hundred million US dollars. A Round Table of donors and other development partners will be organized during the second half of 2008. A contribution is also expected from African oil or gas producing countries. The Fund will utilize the resources mobilized from donors for assistance to low-income

countries that are net importers of oil, seriously affected by the rise in the price of oil. The objective of such assistance is to enable these countries to overcome their temporary balance of payments difficulties. The Fund will operate by offering non-refundable grants, concessional loans or a combination of these two types of instruments.

### **c. Official launching of the African Energy Commission (AFREC), 15-17 February 2008**

398. The Commission organized in Algiers, Algeria, on 17 February 2008, jointly with the Government of Algeria, the African Union Conference of Ministers in Charge of Energy on the official launching of the activities of the African Energy Commission (AFREC); the Convention on the establishment of this institution entered into force at the end of December 2006 with the obtaining of the required fifteen ratifications. To date, 19 countries have ratified the AFREC Convention and deposited the instruments with the Commission.

399. At the end of the deliberations, the Conference adopted a Declaration called the "Algiers Declaration". The Report on this topic is presented in a separate document for the consideration of the Executive Council:

### **d) Official launch of activities of the African Electro technical Standardization Commission and Constitutive General Assembly, Accra, Ghana, 27 to 28 February 2008**

400. The African Union Commission, in collaboration with the Government of Ghana, officially launched the activities of the African Electrotechnical Standardization Commission (AFSEC) on 27 February 2008 in Accra, Ghana. A Constitutive General Assembly was also held in order to put the statutory organs in place and adopt the Statutes and Rules of Procedure that will govern the running of AFSEC. AFSEC has as objectives, inter alia, to lay down technical standards for the electrical sector in Africa aligned with international standards, to foster cross-border trade in energy through interconnection of standardized networks and promote the manufacture of electrical materials and equipment and trade in such equipment, thus reducing costs and the dependence of our countries on manufacturers from other regions of the world.

401. The deliberations of the Constitutive General Assembly culminated in the following main decisions:

- adoption of the Statutes and Rules of Procedure of AFSEC;
- election of the AFSEC Management Committee comprising a Chairperson, three Deputy Chairpersons and a Secretary General;
- election of Chairpersons of Technical Studies Committees;
- approval of the draft budget for 2008;
- adoption of the AFSEC logo.

402. The General Assembly also adopted a Declaration establishing AFSEC as a subsidiary organ of the African Energy Commission (AFREC). The Declaration further urges each Member State to set up a National Electrotechnical Committee and to lend AFSEC active and financial support.

### **G.III TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES, AND POSTAL SYSTEM**

#### **a) Pan-African Network for on-line telemedicine and tele-education network project**

403. The project for the establishment by India of a Pan-African network for on-line services by satellite and optic fiber is designed to provide for the 53 Member States of the African Union mainly tele-education and tele-medicine services.

404. In the African continent, the network will be made up of a land hub station which will communicate by satellite with:

- 53 VSAT stations installed in 53 national hospitals (one hospital in each Member State) for tele-medicine; 53 VSAT stations installed in 53 national universities (one university in each Member State) for tele-education;
- 5 VSAT stations in 5 African universities known as regional lead universities<sup>1</sup> and 5 VSAT stations installed in 5 hospitals known as regional super-specialized hospitals<sup>2</sup> for provision of the network's tele-education and tele-medicine services.

405. In India, the network will also comprise one land hub station which will communicate with 6 Indian hospitals and 6 Indian universities for provision of the network's tele-medicine and tele-education services respectively.

406. The African land hub stations will be linked to India's land hub station by submarine fiber optic cable.

407. At the level of the African continent, the network will have:

- One land hub station; and
- 116 VSAT stations distributed as follows:
  - 5 VSAT stations for the regional lead universities;
  - 5 VSAT stations for the regional super-specialized hospitals; and
  - 2 VSAT stations for each country, that is 1 VSAT in a centre of learning and 1 VSAT in a hospital.

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<sup>1</sup> Regional lead universities: under the project, these universities which will be selected on the basis of set criteria, each with a studio to provide distance education to 53 universities in 53 States

<sup>2</sup> Regional super specialized hospitals: under the project, these universities will be selected on the basis of set criteria and will provide distance health care to 53 hospitals in 53 Member States



408. Two agreements in this regard have been signed between the Commission and India. The first agreement between the Government of India and the African Union Commission covers the general aspects of the establishment of the Pan-African network. The second was signed between the Commission and an Indian company called "Telecommunications Consultants India Limited" (TCIL) for the supply, installation, operationalization and maintenance of the network by TCIL over a period of five years.

409. A project participation agreement to be signed between this Indian company "Telecommunications Consultant India Limited (TCIL) has been presented to Member States.

**b) Project implementation**

410. The Commission contributed to the implementation of the project through the following major activities:

- Sensitisation of Member States and monitoring the signing of the project participation agreement;
- Selection of the country hosting the land hub station of the network;
- Land hub station installation works;
- Selection of five African universities and 5 African hospitals (one hospital and one university for each geographic region) which will serve as lead university and super-specialized hospital respectively;
- Conduct of a study on the trifling of services to be provided and on the modalities and management structures of the network to be put in place when the Indian assistance ends;
- Inspection of the sites of the VSAT stations in States having signed the participation agreement;
- Preparation of documents and organization of meetings of the Steering Committee.

411. The sensitisation of Member States and the signing of the project participation agreement were conducted by the African Union Commission and India. At the end of March 2008, the project participation agreement had been signed by the following 29 Member States:

Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, The Comoros, Cote d'Ivoire, Congo, D.R. Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, The Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

412. The African Union Commission, with the assistance of the Steering Committee and India conducted the selection of the country to host the land hub station of the network. The process culminated in 2006, with the choice of Senegal, that is, a site in Dakar to host the land hub station.

413. The task of realizing installation works for the land hub station and inspecting the sites of the VSAT stations in States having signed the participation agreement devolves upon the India company TCIL which is responsible

for engineering work and installing equipment. As at 30 April 2008, the following had been accomplished in respect of these two activities:

- Full construction in Dakar and successful testing with an Intelsat Satellite of the functioning of the network land hub station;
- Inspection of tele-medicine and tele-education VSAT sites in 14 of the 29 countries that have signed the participation agreement.

414. Selection of 5 African universities and 5 African hospitals on a regional basis.

415. Following a competitive bidding process, one hospital and one university will be selected from each geographic region. These 5 universities and 5 hospitals will, together with 6 universities and 6 hospitals from India, provide tele-education and tele-medicine services respectively, to African Union Member States.

416. Although the African Union Commission and the Steering Committee made efforts to sensitise Member States, only few bids were received. Furthermore, not all regions submitted bids. After analysing bids, the Steering Committee made the following selections:

- 2 Hospitals: Ibadan Hospital in Nigeria for the West Africa region and the Brazzaville University Medical Centre (CHU) in Congo for the Central Africa region;
- 3 Universities: the Kwame Nkrumah University and University of Ghana Group for the West Africa region, Makerere University in Uganda for the East Africa region and the University of Yaounde 1 in Cameroon for the Central Africa region.

417. It should be noted that India has already selected the Indian universities and hospitals involved in the provision of tele-medicine and tele-education services to the Pan-African network of online services, with which it has signed agreements.

418. The Steering Committee has already decided on studies to be carried out on service trifling and network management methods and structures to be put in place after the network is completed. In this regard, two ad hoc groups have been set up to study issues relating to the management and operation of the network once the installation is completed.

419. The primary mandate of the first ad hoc group is to study and propose a Business Plan with a tariff schedule applicable to tele-medicine and tele-education services provided by the Pan-African network. Tariffs have to be fixed on a non-profit basis, but should enable the network to meet its operating and maintenance costs when the Indian assistance ends.

420. The second ad hoc group is responsible for studying and proposing network management methods and structure. The outcomes of the work of this group will determine Africa's appropriate participation in the management of

the network during India presence, and its full and sustainable management after Indian assistance.

421. Consultants were called upon to assist the two ad hoc groups, and the outcomes of their work will be considered at the next meeting of the Project Steering Committee.

422. The Commission was responsible for preparing and organizing meetings of the Steering Committee. To date, four meetings have been held, while the fifth is scheduled for July 2008.

423. Activities to be carried out in 2008 will be guided by the following priorities:

- Pursuing the sensitisation of Member States to sign the agreement to participate in the project;
- Pursuing the process of selecting the remaining lead universities and super-specialized universities in the regions concerned;
- Monitoring the installation of VSAT stations in States having signed the agreement to participate in the project, whose sites have been validated;
- Finalizing and implementing the conclusions of the studies on service tariffs applicable and on the network management modalities and structures.

**c) E-Governance Project (VSAT)**

424. In furtherance of the institutional transformation of the African Union, the e-Governance project (VSAT) of the Union is designed to ensure full connectivity and provision of modern telecommunication services between the Headquarters of the Commission and regional offices, external missions, the Regional Economic Communities and Member States through a satellite interconnection network. The project will enable the African Union to avail itself of a communication system and, hence, greater autonomy in terms of services and service availability. An antenna will be installed at each of the sites to enable the African Union to provide video-conference services, access high speed Internet, telephony on Internet Protocol (IP) and an integrated data management facility.

425. The project implementation is at a very advanced stage. Construction of the hub station at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa has been completed and the network was officially inaugurated on 25 May 2007 on the occasion of Africa Day. Presently, the existing Internet communication of the Commission is carried out through this hub station. All needed equipment is already in place in all the sites. As at 30 November 2007, installation had been completed in 50% of the sites, and installation is underway in the other sites. All installation work on the network is expected to be completed in December 2007.

426. It should be emphasized that one of the cardinal reasons for the delay in project execution stemmed from obtaining VSAT licenses. Despite the resolution of the Heads of State and all the moves by the Commission to obtain these licenses on time, as at 30 November 2007 the requisite licenses were yet to be obtained in Egypt and Djibouti. The licenses so obtained were issued for only one

year, that is, 2007. We are concerned that the process of renewal of the licenses may have to recommence in 2008 and that the exemptions granted may be limited, whereas the project can be viable only if it is exempted from licensing fees.

**d) Harmonization of Telecommunications and ICT policies and regulatory frameworks**

427. The Commission carried out studies on elaboration of a harmonized policy and regulatory framework for coherent and speedy development of regional and continental telecommunications and ICT networks and services.

428. The major expected outcomes of the studies are:

- a harmonized policy reference framework for development of the telecommunications and ICTs sector as well as regulatory practices applicable at regional and, indeed, at continental level, particularly strategic guidelines, etc;
- identification of cross-cutting studies to be undertaken; and
- an appropriate mechanism for consultation and cooperation between the key players and partners especially to strengthen the community approach in the development activities of the sector.

429. A High Level Committee (HLC) comprising experts from the RECs, specialized regional and international organizations and institutions was constituted in July 2006 to support the Commission in the project implementation. The study report was adopted by the HLC at its 4<sup>th</sup> meeting held in Addis Ababa, from 3 to 5 October 2007. The conclusions of the study were submitted to the Second Ordinary Session of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for communications and information and communications technologies held in May 2008 in Cairo. A report on the Conference is presented to Council in a separate document.

**e) Project for establishment of a unified telecommunications numbering space in Africa**

430. The project for establishment of a unified numbering space (ATMS) is intended to enhance the interconnection of African ICT networks and enable the operators to build umbrella networks with African Internet exchange stations. This project also, and above all, represents a powerful symbol of African unity and integration.

431. The preliminary study as well as the economic feasibility study and the service potentials offered by this unified numbering space (ATMS) have been completed. They paved the way for identifying ATMS potential services, the advantages offered to the players of the sector and the model structure of the first ATMS network known as ARINET.

432. It is needful to obtain from the International Telecommunications Union a common code for individual African countries (+28 or 288) or group of African countries which will co-exist with the existing international country codes. To this end, an appropriate request has to be addressed to this

institution by a group of countries. In this connection, the Commission elaborated a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU-ATMS) for participation in the project and transmitted same to the States for signature.

433. As at 30 November 2007 only four (4) countries had signed the ATMS-MoU, and three (3) countries had notified the Commission of their decision not to participate in the project.

434. A reminder was sent to Member States with a view to obtaining a minimum of 10 States willing to participate in the project and, if possible, enough States representing the 5 geographical regions to constitute the Bureau of signatories to the ATMS-MoU.

*f) Harmonization of postal policies and regulations and strategies to strengthen the postal sector in Africa*

435. The Commission conducted a study on the harmonization of postal policies and regulations and formulation of strategies to strengthen the postal sector. After an exhaustive analysis of the under-developed state of the sector and of the need for reform, the study advocated strategic policies, guidelines and regulatory models for development of this vital sector. These guidelines and models relate primarily to:

- Requisites for a successful postal reform scheme;
- Modalities for financing the reform; and
- Guidelines of a structure to commercialise the postal enterprise.

436. The study was adopted by the Infrastructure and Energy Department. The conclusions and recommendations of the study will be submitted at the Second Ordinary Session of the Conference of African Ministers responsible for telecommunications and information and communication technologies which will take place in May 2008 in Cairo. A report on the Conference will be presented at the Summit.

#### **G.IV OTHER ACTIVITIES**

**a) Second Conference of African-Latin American and Caribbean Energy Ministers, Cancun, Mexico, 2- 3 April 2008**

437. The Second Conference of African, Latin American and Caribbean Energy Ministers (AFROLAC II) was held in Cancun, Mexico on 3 April 2008. AFROLAC is a Ministerial dialogue framework for the Africa, Latin America and Caribbean regions. Its objective is to foster cooperation and dialogue on current challenges confronting countries of the two regions in the energy sector. The aim of the Conference was to present a general vision on the challenges and opportunities in the energy sector as well as cooperation prospects in a bid to improve energy access and security in the two regions.

438. The Conference culminated in the adoption of a declaration focusing on the following main points:

- The urgent need for OLADE and AFREC to take advantage of the experiences and technologies developed in our respective countries through mechanisms for the exchange of information and expertise and the development of pilot training programmes;
- Implementation of joint programmes for which OLADE and AFREC have to draw up a Plan of Action for 2008 – 2010 before the end of 2008;
- Promotion of technologies best highlighting the potentials of the two regions while avoiding the non-rational use of resources;
- Appeal to cooperation agencies and Multilateral Funding bodies to define, together with countries of the two regions, strategies and action plans to boost energy access and supply;
- Necessity to speed up electricity access in urban and rural areas, by making use of renewable sources of energy in particular;
- Gradual replacement of biomass energy, particularly charcoal, with alternative sources of energy, especially in rural areas;
- Importance of promoting biofuels without jeopardizing national food security.

*b) International Conference on Renewable Energy in Africa, 16 – 18 April 2008, Dakar, Senegal*

439. The International Conference on Renewable Energy in Africa was held in Dakar, Senegal from 16 to 18 April 2008 under the distinguished patronage of Maitre Abdoulaye Wade, President of the Republic of Senegal. The main objective of the Conference was to discuss the wide-scale development opportunities offered by renewable energy in Africa, in a bid to increase the level of access to renewable energy in general and to boost energy security.

440. The Conference was jointly prepared and organized by the Government of Senegal the African Union Commission, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). Through the Conference, high level main stakeholders and decision-makers of the energy sector were brought together in order to lay down strategic guidelines and to make commitments under a plan of action, taking into consideration the energy situation in Africa, lessons to be learned from African experiences and those from elsewhere on renewable energy.

441. The Conference adopted, first a declaration known as the “Dakar Declaration” focusing on the need to:

- Encourage national institutions to focus on those renewable energy sources where they have a comparative advantage;
- Adhere to the principle of subsidiarity by prioritising the most viable initiatives at the appropriate levels;
- Level the playing field for renewable energy compared to conventional energy sources, such as fiscal incentives and other forms of subsidies;
- Elaborate sustainable development indicators for renewable energy acceptable to all stakeholders; and

- Ensure that renewable energy is taken into account in electricity production initiatives and for other applications.

442. The Conference furthermore discussed and provisionally adopted a plan of action (pending finalization) focusing on the following five programmes:

- Policies, regulations and institutional framework;
- Building of capacities and skills;
- Formulation of financial strategies;
- Renewable energies, particularly hydro-electricity, as the basis for the development of enterprises and industry;
- Cross-cutting activities.

**c) Conference on Electricity Sector Reforms in Africa, Brussels, Belgium**

443. At the invitation of the Union of Producers, Transporters and Distributors of electric Power in Africa (UPDEA), the Commission participated in the Conference entitled “Electricity in Africa: do reforms bring solutions to challenges in the sector?” held in Brussels from 27 to 28 March 2008.

444. The Conference had as objective to enhance reflection on ways and means of improving electricity access in Africa, based on the outcomes of a study conducted by UPDEA on the evaluation of reforms in 19 countries from various regions of Africa. The study was sponsored by the Business Climate Facility (BizClim), a programme of the ACP Group of countries and the European Commission.

445. In general, it was observed that reforms made in the electricity sector for over a decade have had mixed results, and have not significantly impacted on the electrification level in most African countries, nor on the mobilization of international investment. The main causes of the failure recorded include: haste in the reform preparatory phase; lack of realism on the part of decision-makers, especially in setting contractual obligations, and unconcerted management of the restructuring process in the sector.

446. The Conference adopted the following major recommendations:

- The reform of the electric sector is vital in all African countries to enhance the quality of service and the development of the sector;
- Since reform does not necessarily mean the privatisation of capital or management, each country should instil discipline in the management of the sector, defining and clearly observing the roles and duties of the various actors;
- Private sector involvement is highly recommended; however, governments should negotiate good contracts for the conclusion of “win-win” partnerships.

447. The Brussels Conference ended on a note of satisfaction on the part of participants and yielded useful information on this important issue of reform of the electricity sector as a public service. Such reform can contribute to the formulation of strategies that will help to improve similar reforms in various infrastructure sectors.

448. The Commission urges Member States to carry out or pursue structural reforms in public services, notably within the scope of a public-private partnership, drawing inspiration from successful experiences noted here and there in Africa and elsewhere in the world. States will maintain their sovereignty, depending on their specific cases, to choose the type of reform they want, based on the principle that the privatisation of public services is not a panacea for reforms to succeed. The public-private partnership to be encouraged should be “win-win”.

**d) 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the G8 Infrastructure Consortium for Africa**

449. The Commission attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the G8 Infrastructure Consortium for Africa, which is an initiative of former British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, launched in 2005. It is intended to boost the mobilization of financial resources for the implementation of the NEPAD Short Term Action Plan (STAP). Following the launch of the Consortium, three meetings have already been held, notably in Tunis, Tunisia in 2005, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in June 2006 and Berlin, FRG in January 2007. The 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting in Tokyo should usher in a new impetus for resource mobilization to foster infrastructure development in Africa.

450. The aim of the Meeting was to enhance the mobilization of financial resources for the implementation of the NEPAD Short Term Action Plan (STAP).

451. The African stakeholders held a consultation ahead of the Meeting, particularly to discuss issues relating to collaboration among the African partners. As resources are rare, projects in the continent have to be jointly financed in partnership with financial institutions having different procedures. These procedures need to be flexible so that the African parties will not have to satisfy the procedures of each institution separately. Another issue was to bring in resources from the emerging countries (China, India, Korea and Brazil) and other available Funds (Arab Funds: Kuwait, Saudi...).

452. The Tokyo Meeting further underscored the importance of considering Public-Private Partnership (PPP) as another form of funding for which implementation conditions have to be rapidly determined in Africa namely political will, institutional framework and capacity building in order to avert the failures of previous initiatives during the last decade, especially poorly controlled privatisations.

453. The African Parties informed Members of the Consortium of the initiative to merge all African infrastructure development programmes in one single programme. This initiative stems from the need for coordination linked with the new context of the African Union Commission which has to play a coordination, harmonization and leadership role in the continent. In light of such coordination, it



will be necessary to elaborate a set of criteria for prioritising regional projects for African priorities to be better assessed.

454. Furthermore, during the Meeting, the Japanese Party informed participants of the imminent meeting of the G8 and the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) on the theme "Towards a Vibrant Africa", in which infrastructure plays on fundamental role.

455. The Steering Committee of the study on the Africa Infrastructure Country Diagnostic (AICD) conducted by the World Bank met on the fringe of the Meeting to assess progress on the study. The aim of the AICD study is to gather data that can give information on the status of infrastructure in various African countries. It is planned to end in June 2008. It is a true monograph covering unfortunately only 24 (twenty four) countries; hence a second phase covering the remaining countries was recommended.

**e) Saly Portudal, Senegal, Round-table**

456. Senegalese President Me Abdoulaye Wade, Coordinator of NEPAD Infrastructure, on 24 January 2008 organized a Round-table in Saly Portudal, Senegal on the funding of NEPAD infrastructure. This was a follow-up to the announcement he made at the EU-Africa Lisbon Summit in December 2007. A meeting of experts was held on 23 January 2008 ahead of the Round-table.

457. The main objective of the Round-table was to:

- agree on a list of top priority regional and continental infrastructure projects;
- secure the commitment of donors to finance studies and the execution of the said projects over the next five years.

458. At the Meeting, President Wade presented a top priority programme comprising mainly hydroelectric, road and rail infrastructure including integration bridges.

459. The programme was submitted to donors invited to the Meeting for consideration. The main donors included: the World Bank, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), the West African Development Bank (WADB), the European Union (EU), the French Development Agency (AFD) and the Community Investment and Development Bank (CIDB). The West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA) also attended as a financial contributor.

460. The outcome of the Round-table showed that donors are quite interested, as evidenced by their contributions, current and future, amounting to about 25 billion US dollars. This amount was not specifically assigned to the various projects submitted, and is still to be reconsidered by the African Union Commission with the assistance of the African Development Bank.

461. The Round-table was concluded on the necessity, notably:

- for the African Union Commission to convene a coordination meeting with the other stakeholders (AfDB, NEPAD Secretariat, RECs, etc.) to consider the modalities for finalizing and implementing the programme;
- to take into account, within the scope of integration, the specific case of island countries such as Mauritius, Madagascar, the Comoros, Cape Verde and Seychelles, through the development of air transport, maritime transport, telecommunications and the ICT;
- to implement traffic facilitation measures in order to overcome the numerous bottlenecks recorded;
- for the African Union Commission to coordinate infrastructure development in conformity with its mandate. This should include the RECs and other stakeholders in infrastructure projects in the continent in order to know “who does what?” and “who finances what”, and to put things in order;
- for regional projects to be incorporated in the African Union programme;
- to involve the African private sector.

**f) Partnership with the African Development Bank**

462. Within the context of the Protocol Agreement signed in February 2006 between the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA), there has been increasingly sustained cooperation between the AUC and the AfDB, notably with the preparation of the single programme based on the merger of common infrastructure development initiatives in Africa (Master Plans and the NEPAD Medium to Long-Term Strategic Framework (MLTSF).

463. Similarly, it is also worth mentioning some actions resulting from the EU-Africa Lisbon Summit and the Saly Portudal, Senegal Round-table as indicated above.

**g) EU-Africa Partnership for Infrastructure Development in Africa**

464. As part of the implementation of this partnership, a Financing Agreement for the amount of 10 million Euros was signed on 20 February 2008 between the European Commission and the Secretariat of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). The agreement falls under the 9<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund (EDF), and is intended to finance preparatory activities and studies on concrete projects in the fields of transport, energy and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

465. Moreover, and in conformity with the agreement reached during the official launch of the EU-Africa Partnership for Infrastructure Development in Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 24 to 25 October 2007 the African Union Commission launched an international call for tenders for the recruitment of a design consultancy to assist the Infrastructure and Energy Department in the implementation of programmes and activities adopted under the Partnership. The recruitment process is underway, in collaboration with the European Commission.

## **H. ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**

### **H.I. AFRICAN PRIVATE SECTOR FORUM**

466. The African Private Sector Forum, on the theme: *Africa's Industrial Drive: The Private Sector and Corporate Citizenship*, organized jointly by the African Union Commission and the UN Global Compact, was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 22-23 January 2008. A separate report has been submitted to the PRC for consideration.

467. The objectives of the Forum were to assess the case for Africa's economic development and consider lessons from other regional experiences; highlight the significance of good corporate governance and corporate citizenship as promoted by the UN Global Compact for business development; examine the potential role of the private sector in accelerating Africa's economic development & showcase private sector good practices that contribute to sustainable development; and promote partnerships between the public and the private sector (PPP). Three topics were discussed, namely (i) Accelerating Africa's Industrial Development with Corporate Governance and Corporate Citizenship Instruments; (ii) Achieving Economic Transformation in Africa: The Role of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs); and (c) The Role of the Private Sector in Supporting the Promotion of Regional Integration in Africa. The key outcome of the Forum was a private sector declaration with a set of recommendations for each of the three topics discussed. For each of these, clear responsibilities of both the public and private sector were allocated and it is expected that the implementation of these recommendations will go a long way in reinforcing the important role of the private sector in helping the continent accomplish its socio-economic development aspirations.

### **H.II. AFRICA-EU DIALOGUE**

468. Following the adoption of the Africa-EU Joint Strategy and its First Action Plan at the Lisbon Summit, held on 8-9 December 2007, the Commission took a number of measures aimed at ensuring effective implementation. Key among these is the development of a proposed approach to implementation which was presented to Member States and other stakeholders for necessary input and further guidance.

469. The proposed approach has the following elements:

- i) The formation of an inter-departmental Task Force at the AU Commission;
- ii) The formation of an Experts Groups for each of the eight partnerships of the First Action Plan. Member States were requested to express interest in the various partnerships and make experts available;
- iii) The creation of a technical coordination function to serve as a link between the Joint Experts Groups and the Troïka. Three possibilities are (a) Maintain the existing Classical Troïka format; (b) Form a Steering

Committee, comprising one African and one EU representative per partnership; one AUC, EC and EU Council representative; the Chairperson of the PRC and representatives of the RECs; and (c) Distribute the partnerships among the five regions and develop a coordination structure by region, each one comprising the relevant REC, the AU Troika and the EU Troika.

470. The Commission organized two regional consultations to present the proposed approach and build consensus on the way forward. The first was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso on 19-20 March 2008 for the Northern, Central and Western Regions; and the second in Maseru, Lesotho, on 14-15 April 2008, for the Eastern and Southern Regions. The expected outcomes were (a) to help in the establishment of Joint Experts Groups on the African side; (b) identification of concrete projects to be financed; (c) an initial indication of Member States' interest in the various partnerships; and (d) identification of resources to be made available by Member States for the implementation of the First Action Plan.

471. Among the key recommendations were:

- i) The African side should adopt a structure which has worked effectively in the past, namely the Troika. This can be improved to make it function better. The involvement of the RECs was also recommended;
- ii) Some role should be given to the RECs in the implementation of the Action Plan;
- iii) The dialogue should be inclusive. In this regard, efforts should be made to ensure the participation of RECs and civil society at future engagements;
- iv) Assurance should be made to mainstream women and gender concerns into all the programmes, projects and activities in the implementation of the First Action Plan.
- v) It was suggested that in the event that there is difficulty in implementing all the eight partnerships within the given timeframe, it might be helpful to prioritize and focus on the implementation of a selected few partnerships. Priority should be given to projects/programmes that are currently ongoing; and
- vi) On the issue of chefs de file, it was suggested that there would be wisdom in retaining them given the expertise accumulated over the years. However, creative means of making the system work more effectively should be explored.

472. The African side will hold discussions with the EU side with a view to harmonizing the approaches to implementation. The adoption of an effective implementation mechanism is a prerequisite for the attainment of the objectives set out in the eight partnerships of the First Action Plan. In this regard, the Commission will continue to do all it takes to achieve these objectives.

### **H.III. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

473. The process of creating the African Financial Institutions stipulated in Article 19 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union made progress

recently, particularly with respect to the African Investment Bank (AIB) and the African Monetary Fund (AMF). As regards the African Central Bank (ACB), additional efforts will have to be made by the end of the year.

474. Indeed, concerning the African Investment Bank, following the signing of a Protocol Agreement between the Great Libyan Jamahiriya, host country of the Headquarters of the institution, and the Commission, the Steering Committee responsible for carrying out preparatory work for the creation of this institution should begin work in early June 2008, its members having been appointed. The premises and equipment needed for the functioning of the Committee and provided by the Great Libyan Jamahiriya, were taken delivery of at the end of April 2008.

475. It must be noted that the mandate of the Committee is in principle for a year and will end in June 2009. After its deliberations, the Committee is expected to present its report and recommendations which should focus mainly on: the organisational structure of the AIB; the registered capital and subscription modalities; the programmes and activities of the Bank; the Draft Protocol establishing the AIB; etc.

476. As regards the African Monetary Fund, the Protocol Agreement relating to the Steering Committee responsible for its preliminary work was signed between the Government of Cameroon, host country of the AMF, and the Commission in April 2008. The Commission launched, at the end of May, the procedure for the recruitment of members of this Committee which should start its activity in the last quarter of 2008.

477. Concerning the African Central Bank, contacts are continuing with the Authorities of Nigeria, host country of this Institution, to finalise and conclude the Protocol on the establishment and functioning of its Steering Committee. In addition, the study on the ACB strategy, agreed by the Commission and the Association of African Central Banks (AACB), will be launched by July 2008.

#### **H.IV. THE PAN-AFRICAN STOCK EXCHANGE**

478. The feasibility study on a Pan-African Stock Exchange, undertaken in pursuance of Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.109(VI) adopted in Khartoum in 2006 will be examined by experts from Member States as well as the relevant institutions by August 2008. The conclusions and recommendations of this experts meeting will then be presented for validation at a Finance Ministers meeting before being submitted to the African Union Assembly in January 2009.

#### **H.V. STUDY ON THE ELABORATION OF A ROADMAP FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MICROFINANCE IN AFRICA**

479. The AUC commissioned a study on the Elaboration of a Roadmap for the Development of Microfinance in Africa. The primary objective of the study is to propose a minimum set of policies and strategies including the legal, regulatory and operational framework, for the development of micro-finance infrastructure and services in Africa. This study takes cognisance of the critical role that micro-finance plays in engaging the poor in productive and income generating and sustainable ventures, which invariably would contribute to economic growth in Africa.

480. The study progressed satisfactorily during the first half of 2008 and a draft report has been submitted. This will be validated at an Experts' workshop to be organized soon. It is expected that the Roadmap will create opportunities to address existing bottlenecks to microfinance in the continent, thereby helping in the ongoing poverty alleviation efforts across the continent, among others.

## **H.VI. THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON STATISTICS**

481. The Draft African Charter on Statistics has been considered by the First Joint Annual Meeting of the AU Conference of African Ministers of Economy and Finance and the ECA's Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 1-2 April 2008. The Conference approved the draft charter and recommended that it should be reviewed by Legal experts and submitted to the Executive Council of the AU in due course. This meeting of Legal experts is planned to be held in October 2008. Thereafter, the Draft Charter will be submitted to the Executive Council in January 2009.

482. In the mean time, two studies have been commissioned. These are (i) Implementation mechanism for the implementation of the Charter; and (ii) Feasibility of establishing a Fund for the development of statistics in Africa. The report of these two studies will be presented to a validation meeting of the African Statistics System in July 2008 in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.

## **H.VII. AU DATABASE**

483. The development of an AU statistical Database has been carried out. The skeleton, as well as the interface, of the AU database is ready. The database will comprise five parts including geographic and climatologic statistics; demographic and social statistics; economic statistics; statistics on governance, participation and peace and security; and statistics on African integration. The database will be available by the end of August 2008.

## **H.VIII. YEARBOOK OF ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL DATA**

484. The 2008 Yearbook on Economic and Financial Data will be published by the end of September 2008. This Yearbook will guide policymakers,

researchers and others on economic development and integration issues on the continent.

485. A questionnaire was sent to all central banks of AU Member States to request financial and economic data on their countries, and, as of 13 May 2008, the Commission received data on fourteen countries. Reminders have been sent to countries, which have not responded to the Commission's request. Member States that have not yet done so are called upon to submit the necessary information in this respect.

## **H.IX. AFRICAN POPULATION REPORT**

486. The elaboration of the 2008 African population report is underway. Several meetings with representatives of the Commission and representatives of UNFPA have been held to discuss the terms of reference of the report. The report will contain two parts including descriptive and analytical parts. The Commission has drafted a proposal for the theme and a structure of the report. The proposal will be considered and the team will start the elaboration of the report, which is expected to end by October 2008.

## **H.X. FIRST JOINT MEETING OF THE AU CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS OF ECONOMY AND FINANCE AND THE ECA CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS OF FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

487. The proposal to hold joint annual meetings of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and the Economic Commission for Africa's Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was endorsed by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union at its meeting in Accra in July 2007. Following this, the first joint meeting on the theme '*Meeting Africa's New Challenges in the 21st Century*' was held at the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 31 March to 2 April 2008. This was preceded by a technical preparatory meeting of the Committee of Experts from 26 to 29 March 2008.

488. The objective of the Joint Meeting, amongst others, was to provide a streamlined and coherent arrangement for bringing the relevant Ministers together and also provide a framework for strengthened collaboration between the AU and the ECA, as well as, to provide Africa the opportunity to address its immediate and long term challenges in order to improve the human condition of its people and accelerate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

489. Among the outcomes of the meeting were: (i) Ministers reiterated their commitment to make employment creation an explicit and central objective of their economic and social policies at the national, regional and continental levels, for sustainable growth and poverty alleviation; and (b) Ministers

endorsed the establishment of the Africa Climate Policy Centre to serve as the policy arm of the Clim-Dev Africa Programme, an initiative of the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank (AfDB).

## **H.XI. ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF FINANCING THE AFRICAN UNION**

490. The inception of the African Union (AU) has highlighted the need to review the financing of the activities of the institution given its new expanded mandate. The Maputo Summit recognized the need to identify new alternative sources of financing the African Union and requested that studies be carried out. A number of proposals on sustainable financing have been made. Extensive studies have been carried out on some of the proposals such as the levy on ex-union imports, levy on insurance and levy on passenger airline tickets.

491. The Commission has been tasked with reviewing the various proposals and come up with recommendations for necessary decisions by the relevant organs of the Union. The Commission is taking the necessary measures to submit the results to the January 2009 Summit.

## **H.XII. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

492. In collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission undertook a review of the attainment of the MDGs in Africa. The Report was presented to the first Joint Conference of the Conference of AU Ministers of Economy and Finance (CAMEF) and the ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

493. Recent evidence suggests that progress in Africa in meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) by the target date of 2015 is picking up although a lot remains to be done. Significant progress has been reported for indicators such as universal primary education and gender equality. According to the review, Africa is off-track in meeting the MDGs despite some countries having made progress in meeting some of the MDGs. Concentrated efforts will, therefore, need to be taken by both Africa and partners to ensure that Africa achieves the MDGs by the target date of 2015.

494. The UN Secretary General set up the MDG Africa Steering Group and the MDG Africa Working Group after having launched an initiative to mobilize the full resources of the UN system and its partners in support of achieving the MDGs in Africa. The initiative underscored the primary responsibility of African governments in meeting the Goals and the need for international organizations to support country-led strategies. It focused on addressing shortcomings in the way the international system supports African countries in meeting the Goals. The Chairperson of the Commission is a member of the Steering Group while the Commissioner for Economic Affairs is a member of the Working Group.



495. During the first half of 2008, the Commission participated in the meetings of both the Working Group and the Steering Group. The third meeting of the MDG Africa Working Group was held on 28 February 2008 in New York, and provided the opportunity to review and finalize the recommendations of the thematic groups, namely, Agriculture and Food Security, Education, Health, Infrastructure and Trade Facilitation, Statistics, Aid Predictability, and Country Level Implementation of the MDGs.

496. The Second meeting of the MDG Africa Steering Group was held on 10 March 2008, in New York. The meeting reviewed, revised and endorsed the recommendations and provided comments on the draft business plans, which were proposed by the meeting of the Working Group held on February 28, 2008. The meeting also decided on how the group will organize its outreach work in the run-up to the G8 Summit, the September UN Summit on the MDGs, and other key international conferences.

### **H.XIII. FRIDAYS OF THE COMMISSION**

497. During the first half of 2008, the Commission continued its quarterly Friday Discussions at the Commission Headquarters in Addis Ababa. This event was conceived to create a platform for discussion of topical economic, political, and social issues.

498. The Second Friday Discussions was held on Friday 18 January 2008, on the theme "*The Chinese Presence in Africa: An Opportunity or an Obstacle to the Development of Africa?*" The third conference debate was held on Friday, 4 April 2008, on the theme "*Democracy and Development in Africa*". The fourth, on the theme "*Agriculture and Development in Africa*" was scheduled for 6 June 2008.

499. After each conference debate, articles on the theme are published in a Bulletin of the Fridays of the Commission. The first bulletin on "*The Quest for a United States of Africa: Top-Down or Bottom-Up approach*" was published in January 2008. The Second issue on "*The Chinese Presence in Africa: An opportunity or an Obstacle to Development of Africa*" will be published in June 2008.

### **H.XIV. AFRICAN INTEGRATION REVIEW**

500. The third issue of the African Integration Review (Vol. 2 No. 1) was published in January 2008. It contained seven articles, three in English and four in French. The themes of the articles focused on diverse topics such as: the relationship between crime and development, development financing, performance of RECs; the African integration progress; the use statistical harmonization; emerging economies, their definition and measure; and globalization. Preparations are under way for the publication of the fourth issue.

## **H.XV. COOPERATION WITH REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES**

501. The Abuja Treaty recognizes the RECs as the building blocks of Africa's integration. Hence, closer collaboration between the AU and the RECs and better coordination of their activities is key to the attainment of the objectives of continental integration. A major development during the period under review was the signing of the Protocol on Relations between the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities, which took place on 27 January 2008.

1. The Protocol aims at, among others:

- Formalizing, consolidating and promoting closer cooperation among the RECs and between them and the AU through the coordination and harmonization of their policies, measures, programmes and activities in all fields and sectors;
- Establishing a framework for coordination of the activities of RECs in their contribution to the realization of the objectives of the Constitutive Act and the Abuja Treaty; and
- Establishing a coordination mechanism of regional and continental efforts for the development of common positions by its members in negotiations at multilateral level.

2. It is expected that implementation of the Protocol will go a long way in enhancing Africa's ongoing continental integration efforts.

## **H.XVI. OTHER ACTIVITIES**

### **1. The 10<sup>th</sup> Africa Partnership Forum (APF)**

502. The Commission attended the 10<sup>th</sup> Africa Partnership Forum (APF), which was held in Tokyo, Japan, from the 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> April 2008. The Forum discussed Environmental Issues and Climate Change; the African Union (AU)/NEPAD Africa Action Plan; and Boosting Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction with focus on Agriculture, Infrastructure, ICT and Gender issues.

### **Environmental Issues and Climate Change:**

503. The meeting recognized that African countries depend heavily on sectors such agriculture, fisheries, forestry and tourism, among others, despite these sectors being very vulnerable to climate change. It was noted that climate change remains one of the major threats affecting economic development in Africa despite Africa contributing only 3.8 per cent to global carbon emissions.

504. The meeting, among others, recommended (i) supporting development of mechanism to facilitate in providing information and early warning systems; (ii) supporting the implementation of existing initiatives in NEPAD Environment Action Plan developed in 2003 by NEPAD in collaboration with United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), to address Climate Change in Africa; (iii) providing technical, financial and capacity building assistance in the negotiation of a post-2012 Climate Change regime; (iv) and supporting the participation of African countries in the global carbon market, including through the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).

### **The AU/NEPAD Africa Action Plan:**

505. The Africa side re-presented the AU/NEPAD Africa Action Plan for the third time seeking support by the Forum, taking into account that the Plan is the basis for engagement and strategic partnership between Africa and her development partners, including the G8/Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). While supporting the Action Plan, a number of development partners made the following observations and comments, among others, that (i) some programmes and activities outlined in the Action Plan are also being supported by the development partners, hence the need to update the estimated figures in the Action Plan; and (ii) there was need to find alternative financing measures, including taking on board the private public partnerships.

### **Boosting Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction:**

506. The Forum appreciated Africa's recent economic growth over the past four years. However, it was observed that the growth rates were below the 7 percent required to reduce poverty and attain the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Forum called upon both African countries and development partners to put emphasis on investing in growth sectors to ensure sustainable economic development as well as poverty reduction.

## **2. The G8 Development Ministers' Meeting**

507. The Commission attended the G8 Development Ministers' Meeting in Tokyo, Japan, from 5-6 April 2008. The main purpose of the meeting was to prepare and give political input to the 4<sup>th</sup> Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD); the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit; the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra, Ghana; the UN High Level meeting on the Millennium Development Goals; and Follow-up Conference of Financing for Development in Doha. The meeting was divided into three outreach sessions focusing on expanding partnership including cooperation with new donors; human security and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); and climate change and development.

### **Expanding Partnership including Cooperation with New Donors:**

508. The meeting outlined the importance of expanding partnerships, including cooperation with new donors such as China and India, which would, among others, increase the volume of ODA to Africa. In this respect, the meeting emphasized on the need to strengthen cooperation between the G8 and non-DAC donors as well as the emerging economies, which would enhance aid effectiveness and the impact of cooperation.

#### **Human Security and the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):**

509. The meeting noted with concern, Africa's slow progress towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) despite recent impressive and remarkable economic growth rates of at least 5 percent per annum by many African countries. Many challenges contributing to the slow progress were cited, including inadequate resources, poor governance, and the prevalence of HIV and AIDS. Among the recommendations made, African countries were urged to put more efforts in mobilizing additional domestic resources, which could complement the declining levels of ODA. The development partners were also urged to reaffirm their commitments to increase their financial support to Africa.

#### **Climate Change and Development:**

510. The meeting expressed concern over the negative impact being posed by climate change in the world, particularly the African region. It was noted that Africa is the most vulnerable region to climate change, which has negatively affected the attainment of the MDGs. The meeting also took note of the tremendous efforts currently being undertaken by both African countries and development partners in mitigating the impact of climate change. The meeting recommended, among others, the promotion of long-term development assistance to strengthen adaptation capacity as well as integration of climate change adaptation into national strategies and development plans; support by both African countries and partners of the implementation of existing initiatives in order to address climate change in Africa as well as other regions of the world; and The involvement of the private sector in the mobilization of resources and implementation of policies which are key to accelerating economic growth.

### **III. PART 2 : PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT**

#### **A. STRATEGIC POLICY PLANNING, MONITORING, EVALUATION AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION (SPPME)**

##### **A.I. INTRODUCTION**

511. The Directorate of Strategic Planning Policy, Monitoring, Evaluation and Resource Mobilisation (SPPMERM) has the mandate, to initiate, develop and manage strategies for sustainability, self-financing, incoming generation and investment; to promote internal best practices concerning the strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation; to assist Directorates and offices to develop strategic planning skills; to design and implement monitoring and Evaluation system for assessing programmes / projects achievements and effectiveness; to promote and prepare the mid and annual reporting system of the commission; to facilitate logistical support to coordinate inter-action with partners.

512. A Monitoring and evaluation system has now been created and approved in the process. Moreover, the directorate started to build and develop constructive and productive institutional relationship with other AU departments according to its mandate and responsibilities. In this context, the SPPMERM has been involved in a series of activities, notably, the work of the Ad Hoc Ministerial Committee on the Scale of Assessment; proposals on alternative modalities of financing the African Union; and on discussions aimed at enhancing the partnership between the AU and International Partners.

## **A.II. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION ACTIVITIES**

513. During the period under review, the activities of the Commission in the area of Resource Mobilisation focussed on following up on commitments made by Partners for the implementation of the AU's priority activities for 2008 as reflected in the approved programme budget. At the same time, the Commission continued to engage International Partners on ways and means of improving cooperation arrangements as well as the effectiveness in the delivery of development assistance, with the ultimate objective of increasingly moving towards pooled funds with a view to reducing transaction costs on the part of the Commission.

### **1. Responses and Framework for Implementation**

514. In this context, several key activities were undertaken as follows:

- The monthly dialogue meetings with International Partners established under the new partnership framework were continued. The dialogue focused on exploring common support mechanisms to introduce predictability and flexibility of resource flows for the implementation of the AU Strategic Plan. As approved by the PRC, Member States actively participated in these meetings through the Chairpersons of the Advisory Sub-Committee on Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Matters, the Sub-Committee on Contributions, and the Sub-Committee on Multilateral Cooperation.
- The 2008 Annual Work Plan for the implementation of the Euro 55 million EC Support Programme was finalized and amounted to US\$15,946,333.00. This

amount has been included in the approved 2008 budget and will finance various activities in all the four Axis of the Strategic Plan. Some US\$4,722,240.00 will finance approved priority programmes of the three other AU Organs (PAP, the Court, and the ACHPR).

- The First Annual Review Meeting on the implementation of the Euro 55 million EC Support Programme was held in February 2008.
- Training on the use of the tools and templates developed in the context of the Process Facility was completed. The revised Procurement Manual was also finalized together with its tools, templates and formats. Training for Headquarters staff on the use of the revised manual has also been initiated.
- The acquisition of the Fund Accounting Software is at an advanced stage and training of staff will follow.
- Following an intensive dialogue and negotiations with a small group of Partners, a Joint Financing Arrangement was signed on 26 March 2008 between the African Union Commission and Norway, Sweden, Denmark, United Kingdom and GTZ. This agreement will finance three components of the Institutional Transformation Programme (Process Facility, Integrated Management Information System and VSAT). The Joint Financing Agreement brings with it benefits in the form of reduced transaction costs as well as predictable and flexible funding and represents a significant milestone on the gradual journey towards direct budget support.
- Regular financial and narrative reports were prepared and submitted to International Partners in fulfilment of obligations emanating from ongoing financing agreements.
- New contacts were made with International Partners with a view to securing funding for the 2009 Budget. In this context, the United States of America has pledged a sum of US\$2 million for activities in the Peace and Security and Political Affairs Departments.

## **2. Constraints and related Issues**

515. The greatest challenge continues to be the slow absorptive capacity of the Commission, in the sense that Partners funds allocated for the implementation of activities in the approved 2008 Budget are not being utilized in the anticipated pace. This is mainly due to capacity constraints in most of the Commission's Departments (in terms of staffing), and some complicated procurement procedures imposed by some Partners. A related challenge has been difficulties in producing quality and timely narrative and financial reports on Partner funded programmes.

516. The approval by the Commission for the recruitment of short-term experts under the auspices of the Process Facility and the Euro 55 million EC Support Programme has gone a long way towards arresting the capacity problem. The completion and approval of the revised AU Procurement Manual will allow its use for Partners funds and address the inherent delays that come with following Partners procedures.

517. The intake of Departmental Planners as well as the use of the tools and templates developed in the context of the Process Facility has also gone a long way towards strengthening the Commission's capacity to develop and implement robust programmes and provide timely and quality progress reports.

518. In general, the ongoing administrative and financial management systems reforms under the auspices of the Institutional Transformation Project have played a great role in enhancing the credibility of the Commission and it is expected that this will result in increased resource inflows for the AU's priority programmes.

### **A.III. PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

519. During the period under review the Commission carried out the following activities.

#### **1. Planning Activities**

- **2008 Program Budget Preparation**

520. The preparation of the 2008 Program Budget was based on a common format that was developed through the Process Facility. In order to ensure that the entire AUC budget was realistic, a Budgeting Workshop involving all departments and Regional Offices was held at Headquarters and a Budgeting Retreat coordinated by the Office of the Deputy Chairperson followed this. In January-February 2008, the AUC Program Budget was approved to the tune of US\$143,470,000. The partner's fund out of this was US\$ 29,849,000 and the balance funded from assessed contributions on Member States. The Commission was on several occasions called upon by other AU Organs such as the Pan-African Parliament, the African Commission on Human and People's Rights and the African Court on Human and People's Rights; to assist in 2008 program budget preparations. Some on-job training took place within the 1st quarter to the above-mentioned organs and AUC Departments for planning process and M&E system as well.

- **2008 Program Budget Work Plans**

521. Unlike in previous years, in 2008 all program officers were required to prepare work plans for their respective Program Budget components which shows what is to be done, by whom and by when it has to be done and which assists in forecasting disbursements of funds as well as laying the basis for Reporting, Monitoring and Evaluation.

- **Strategic Planning Manual**

522. Some planning tools were developed like a Strategic Planning Manual to be used by all AUC Departments and Regional Offices. The final editing of the Manual was distributed to all Departments and Regional Offices to help them for preparing 2009 program budget.

- **Formulation of Next AU Strategic Plan 2008-2011**

523. The AU Strategic Plan expired in 2007. The next AU Strategic Plan needs to be developed as a matter of priority. The Road Map for the formulation of the next AU Strategic Plan has been submitted to the AUC Chairperson and was approved. This Strategic Plan will be developed as outlined in

the new vision for the new Commission as well as the rest of the pending projects out of Horizon 2007, with the assistance of a Consultant to be recruited.

## **2. Monitoring and Evaluation Activities**

524. Notable achievements by the Commission during the past one year, include but not limited to the following:

- Production of the 2006 and 2007 Programme Budget Monitoring and Evaluation Report. The former was released in May 2007, while the latter was published in March 2008.
- Production of the Monitoring and Evaluation Manual will go a long way towards reducing the programme/project planning problems/bottlenecks that have been Afflicting departments.
- With the technical assistance from UNPFA, the Commission engaged Consultants to develop a computer based Monitoring and Evaluation tool, which is called the African Monitoring and Evaluation and Reporting Tool (or AMERT for short).
- A Demo for AMERT has since developed and presented to amongst others, the UNPFA headquarters in New York, AUC Departments and AU organs such as Pan African Parliament (PAP) and all expressed satisfaction with the product.
- AMERT should be fully operational before September 2008. Once operational AMERT will certainly improve the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the AUC programmes and policies.
- The Process Facility Task force developed templates for project proposals, interim reporting formats and the final reporting formats. These formats are now in use across departments.

## **3. Constraints and related Issues**

525. The new budget preparation formats contributed to delays in finalization of program budget. Much of the delays were due to the continued disregard of the budget calendar by most departments. The preparation of the next AU Strategic Plan had to be shelved to some point in time.

- Project planning, monitoring and evaluation continue to pose challenge to many a department within the African Union Commission (AUC).
- Capacity constraints. For the Monitoring and Evaluation team to efficiently and effectively discharge its core responsibility, there is an urgent need for additional manpower.
- The delay in the issuing of a contract extension to the Consultant engaged to develop AMERT, adversely affected its completion.
- The planned workshops for Result Based Management (RBM) could not materialize due to the difference of opinion (in terms of approach), between the sponsor GTZ, Consultants engaged and the SPPMERM Directorate. Consultations between the DSPPMERM and GTZ are currently on going to resolve the problem.

## **4. Activities envisaged**



526. In its quest to enhance and improve project and programme monitoring within the AUC, the Commission plans to undertake the following during the 2008 fiscal year:

- Finalize the development of the Monitoring and evaluation manual. This will be followed by a series of training workshops, targeting Programme Managers aimed at sensitizing them on the importance of programme/project monitoring and evaluation.
- Finalize the development of AMERT. This will also be followed by a training workshop, targeting all its users.
- Fill the vacant post of Policy Officer (Monitoring and Evaluation) and the vacant post of Planning Officer. This will facilitate the cooperation with Departments as well as Regional Offices.
- Any submission of the Programs Budget or work plans after any deadlines should not be entertained.

#### **A.IV. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND INFORMATION SHARING, LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES AT THE AFRICAN UNION**

527. The ultimate goal of the knowledge management system is to save time and enhance AUC personnel productivity. In fact, some studies have revealed that knowledge workers spend up to 25% of their time looking for information they need and 40% of them fail in their search. The portal will enable the personnel to quickly access information available within the AUC, irrespective of their author or location.

528. Software has been developed for the Africa-km portal which is now in use and has a user-friendly general menu. It supports all the languages used at the AUC and has a storage capacity of over 10 million documents, with automatic archival storage on an “archive” server.

529. The main activities carried out between January and June 2008 are as follows:

- Visits to model libraries and archives – following visits to Cairo and Alexandria, Egypt in 2007, two staff members visited libraries in Teheran, Iran and Ottawa, Canada in February 2008;
- Participation of the Head of Unit, the archivist and catalogers to the intensive seminar and workshop held at the end of April 2008 on the “GREEN STONE” software package;
- Training, in June, of 15 Commission staff members, librarians, archivists, documentalists and catalogers (6 from regional offices) in the use of "INMAGIC SOFTWARE GENIE", the state-of-the-art software in library management so as to kick-start the digitisation of archives.

## **Constraints and related Issues**

530. As concerns knowledge management portal security, the recovery time is: 15 minutes for software failure, 2 hours for hardware failure with no data loss and 24 hours in the very unlikely case of a combination of the 2 previous cases with loss of data.

531. The Library and Archives unit, apart from collecting and preserving the cultural memory of the AUC and the African continent, is responsible for facilitating access to it and its availability by means of the most modern tools and methods. The unit has increased its staff and carries on with its modernisation.

532. The modernisation of the unit continues on the basis of harmonious and rational management of a mix of electronic and documentary resources, with no indiscrimination. However, the inadequate office space hinders the attainment of set objectives of the plan. The unit will greatly benefit from the imminent construction of new offices.

## **The way forward**

533. The knowledge management system should cover both the Commission Headquarters and the Regional offices as well as the representational offices. Then, it must be extended to embassies and Regional Economic Communities. Finally, access, albeit limited, must be granted to the various development partners.

534. The numerous requests for cooperation received by the unit attest to the interest it arouses, not only among Member States and the African people, but also among international partners, some of whom have even insisted on signing agreements, notably Ethiopia and China.

535. In addition, the United States Representational Office at the Commission also expressed its readiness to help the unit reach its objectives and fulfil its mandate.

## **A.V. POLICY ANALYSIS & RESEARCH**

536. The Commission has given comments and points of view on various topics related to the challenges faced by the African countries.

537. In addition, taking into account the importance attached today to the approach of the action of development based on the aptitude to exert functions, to solve problems, to lay down and achieve goals, the Commission aims at proposing reinforcement and training schemes of the capacities.

### **1. Activities and Achievements**

538. During the period under review, the Commission focused on studies that characterize the specificity of the current international environment.

539. Some background papers (Growth, Poverty Reduction and the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), The Impact of oil prices on the African economies, Food Crisis in Africa: How and Why? "Vision et Mission de l'UA",) etc were prepared as contributions to the next brainstorming meeting for the next AUC 2008-2011 Strategic Plan.

540. Some documents, related to the issues of interest for Africa, like EU Strategy for Africa, Fonds de l'UA sur les effets des fluctuations du prix du pétrole, Funding Modalities for the African Union, AU-UN Cooperation Framework for a Ten Year Capacity Building Programme, have been analysed with a view to having a common understanding of the issues.

## **B. PROGRAMMING, BUDGETING, FINANCE AND ACCOUNTING**

### **B.I. BUDGET EXECUTION**

541. A total budget of US\$ 140,037,880.00 was approved for the financial year 2008, with US\$ 92.968m regular budget and US\$47.069 for programs budget. Out of the total appropriation for the Union, US\$ 106.6 million was assessed as contributions by Member States based on the basis of the approved scale of assessment, US \$1.1million was from arrears, and US\$ 32.4 million was approved for programs to be financed by development partners.

#### **B.I.1. Contribution from Member States**

542. For the period covering January to 15 May 2008, the Commission received US\$ 8.3million towards the current period's assessed contributions and US\$ 7.1 million from arrears of contribution of previous years. This gives total receipts of US\$ 15.4 million.

#### **B.I.2. Expenses**

##### **(i) Regular Budget**

543. During the budget period 1 January 2008 to 31 March 2008, a total amount of US\$ 17.1 million was spent from the Commission regular budget and transfers to other organs of the Union, representing 18% of the total regular budget allotment.

##### **(ii) Programs**

544. Expenses incurred on programs for the Commission during the reporting period amounted to US \$6.6 million, which represents 15.4% budget

execution of the total amount of US\$ 43.5 million allocated for programs for the Commission.

545. The total budget expenditure of the Union on both regular and programs budget in the 1st Quarter amounted to US\$ 23.7 million representing 17% of total budget for the year 2008.

## **B.II. IMIS PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT**

546. The Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) is an integrated system for Financial and Human Resource Management that will be used by the African Union Commission (AUC) to undertake accounting, financial management and human resource (HR) functions. It will provide AU staff in Addis Ababa, and in the regional and representational offices with real time online access to finance and HR functions. It will be used for the financial management processes from programming and budgeting to auditing and reporting, and from recruitment and selection to separation for HR processes.

547. The progress of the project is going on well as contracts for both hardware and software were signed. The hardware was delivered and is being configured, whilst training on the software has started on 19th May 2008 with project team and sub-committee members for key implementing departments.

548. The installation and implementation of the project will start in June 2008 and the system is expected to Go Live at the beginning of 2009.

## **B.III. IMPROVEMENT OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

549. The Commission has made improvements in financial management through the implementation of Ernst & Young, the Internal and External Auditors' recommendations.

550. Improvements made include:

- i. The implementation of the Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS), which is now on the installation stage and will be in operation before end of 2008.
- ii. The budget calendar and guidelines developed in 2005 are helping in the budget preparation process.
- iii. The bringing of the Peace and Security Fund Unit under PBFA is helping in Partner Fund financial management and reporting.
- iv. The internal controls have been enhanced and expenditure monitoring is done using a daily statement of allotment system.

## **B.IV. CHALLENGES**

551. Among the challenges are the following:

- i. Late or non-payments of contributions by Member States. Since a decision has been made by the Executive Council following recommendation from the Audit Panel to have a deadline for payments, the Commission should seek authority to enhance follow up mechanisms for example visiting Embassies or making telephone calls instead of using only the current authority of making reminders through Note Verbales.
- ii. Problems in coordinating budget execution because Departments have no internal systems to monitor their individual budget implementation. As recommended by the Audit Panel on paragraph 154, Directors should have spreadsheets on the approved budget for each activity and monitor their departmental expenditures and have an idea of how much funds are available before requesting for another workshop or mission.
- iii. The problem of meeting the Partner reporting format requirements, which cannot be achieved using the current Peach Tree Accounting System.
- iv. The current staffing level in PBFA, which cannot meet the increasing demand of financial functions following the increasing activities and budgets of the Commission.

## **C. ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

552. During the period under review, the Commission undertook the following activities in the areas of administration and human resource development.

### **C.I. HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

#### **C.I.1. Structural and administrative matters**

553. The Commission had continued with the implementation of the Post Maputo Structure Part A & B and the recruitment and placement of staff members. Moreover, the Commission has also drafted a proposal of a Revised Quota System for approval by the competent organ and had completed the study on the review of the Social Security Scheme.

554. Following the preparation of the Revised Maputo Structures - Part C, the Commission had submitted the revised document for consideration by the Sub-Committee on Structure. Moreover, the Commission has also submitted the revised African Union Draft Staff Regulations and Rules for consideration by the competent organs.

555. As far as recruitment is concerned, the total number of staff in all categories at post as at 15 May 2008 is 638. The Commission is awaiting the assumption of duties of 6 more staff. Moreover, the Commission is in the process of re-launching the interview process for the remaining 292 positions of which 192 belong to the professional category.

## **C.I.2. Other Human Resources Management Related Activities**

### *(i) Training and Staff Development*

556. During the period under review and in line with the budget allocation 2008, the Commission has been implementing the revised Training Policy and carrying out various training activities for staff members at the Headquarters as well as in all Regional/Representational Offices. The Commission is waiting for the allocation of the plot of land from the host government for the implementation of a Training Centre. Moreover, the Commission has organised a two (2) days Orientation Training for new staff recruited since November 2007 as well as special training programmes for Filing Clerks and Project Management for Managers.

### *(ii) Joint Disciplinary Board*

557. During the period under review, the Board met and submitted its recommendation on disciplinary cases in AU-IAPSC Office, Yaoundé and is working on some new cases arising from Internal Audit findings as well as the Audit Report of the Commission and the outstanding cases related to the Dakar Conference.

### *(iii) Performance Appraisal System*

558. The Commission has launched the new Results-Based Management Performance Appraisal System followed by training and orientation sessions to staff members at the Headquarters and the Representational/Regional Offices with the view to improve service delivery, understanding of the individual, divisional and departmental goals and measurement of performance in general.

## **C.II. AFRICAN UNION PASSPORT UNIT**

559. The Commission is in the process of finalising the Implementation of the Passport Unit responsible for the Passport Data capture, verification, Quality Control, Personalisation and issuing processes. Likewise, the Commission is finalising the procurement activities of the African union Diplomatic and Service Passports, installation of the Personalisation Equipment and training of personnel of the Unit.

## **C.III. MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM**

### **C.III.1. Upgrading of AU Network Infrastructure**

560. The Commission has completed the network installation in the two rented buildings where some offices of the Commission would be re-located. Moreover, the Commission is implementing its new Server Farm Project in close working collaboration with the technical staff of UNECA. Similarly, the Commission is installing new network cabling and outlets in the new offices where expansion had been made. The Commission had completed the upgrading of its PABX System that allow the VoIP Communication through the VSAT. The Commission had also completed the installation of Wireless equipment to facilitate public Internet access near the Committee rooms of the Conference Centre.

### **C.III.2. Implementation VSAT/Earth-station connectivity Project**

561. Under the e-Governance Project, the Commission is completing the Testing, and commissioning of the installation and integration of other sites with the main HUB/Earth-station along with the operationalisation of the new IP Telephony Services in its network.

### **C.III.3. Implementation of an Integrated Management Information System (IMIS) 2007**

562. The Integrated Management Information Systems Project encompasses necessary modules for the Financial, Accounting and Human Resources Management. It is divided into two lots namely Lot 1 – Software and Systems components and Lot 2 – Hardware components.

- Lot 1 (Software):

563. The Commission had signed a contract with Deloitte consultancy firm and is implementing the modules under SAP.

- Lot 2 (hardware):

564. Following the signing of the Contract with Agresso in December 2007, the server equipment had been delivered and installed in the Server Room. The Go-live processes are under processed prior to final testing and acceptance.

#### **C.III.4. Bulk Purchase of hardware, applications and spare-parts**

565. The Commission is completing the delivery, configuration and deployment of the equipment in various offices. The remaining activities of deploying ICT equipment to Member States Embassies represented in Addis Ababa are under way.

#### **C.III.5. Procurement and implementation of a translation system for Conference Services Directorate**

566. Following the launching of Request for Proposals (RFP), Bids had been received and the Commission is carrying out the bid evaluation and award.

#### **C.III.6. Microsoft Premier Support**

567. The Commission is in the process acquiring the necessary Microsoft software, licenses and licenses for the Headquarters as well as for its Regional/Representational Offices. The Tender process had been completed and the signing of the Contract with Microsoft was expected in June 2008.

### **C.IV. ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

#### **C.IV.1. Procurement and Travel**

568. The new Procurement Manual had been completed. In summary, it outlined in detail both policies and procedures applicable to procurement in the Commission; in line with internationally accepted principles and best practice.

569. Two new buildings (B&B and Zelalem) have been rented within the vicinity of the AUC to accommodate not only Process Facility staff, but other Project staff as well as other departments of the AUC that are scheduled to move out of the AUC premises. Necessary Network installation has been completed to ensure that the two buildings are connected to the AUC Network as well as to the facilities provider under VSAT Project.

570. Moreover, training of staff both at the AU Headquarters and Regional Offices is currently going on with the view to familiarize staff members with the new AUC Procurement manuals.



571. Under the Canada fund, the following items have been procured:

- a) For the Printing Unit: The Commission had signed two contracts for the procurement of Printing Equipment and Desktop Publishing equipment with the view to improve the productivity of that Unit. The Project is expected to be completed by November 2008.
- b) For the Medical equipment for the AUC Medical Centre: The Commission is in the process of procuring the equipment which would be the major improvements and modernization of the facilities at the Medical Centre. Completion is expected in December 2008.

#### **C.IV.2. Building, Equipment & Transport Services (BETS)**

572. Following the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Commission and the People's Republic of China for the construction of Conference Centre and Offices Complex on the 12 Hectares of plot adjacent to the existing premises, Construction is scheduled to start in October 2008.

573. Different maintenance works, modification and alteration of office space were undertaken by the Commission with the view to improving the existing facilities. The Office spaces were modified and repartitioned to accommodate new staff members. The renovation of AUC Cafeteria, and façade maintenance works are on-going.

574. The Unit had been working in close collaboration with MIS Division in the Upgrading of the PABX system for VoIP communications.

#### **C.IV.3. Security Services Unit**

575. The major constraints and challenges of the Unit are the shortage in human resources, the lack of policy, procedures and written guidelines in the area of security and safety. During the period under review, the Unit has been preparing the bid document for the procurement of Security and Safety equipment such as CCTV camera, Short-range radio sets, immobilisation kits, mail and package x-ray machine, bullet proof vest and other office equipment.

576. Moreover, the Commission is implementing an Integrated Physical Security Plan, a Fire Hazard Protection Plan, a Contingency and Evacuation Plan, Physical Security Plans for all important meetings and Conference.

577. The Commission had been able to improve its Security Warden System and Security Network in collaboration with the Security Services of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. The Commission continues to issue Monthly Security Updates that may assist staff members and their dependants on matters related to Security.

## **D. CONFERENCE SERVICES**

578. The Commission continued to provide conference services for a large number of African Union meetings (interpretation, translation, editing and proofreading of documents, printing, reproduction and distribution).

579. Indeed, during the period January to June 2008, the Conference Services Directorate carried out the following activities:

### **1. The Conference Services Directorate (CSD)**

580. During the period January to June 2008, the Commission organised and serviced 108 meetings in Addis Ababa and 17 meetings abroad. In order to cope with this large number of meetings, the Commission, apart from its permanent staff, called on outside human resources, namely freelance interpreters and translators in order to reinforce its workforce who remains woefully inadequate with regard to the ever increasing number of meetings and documents. Thus, for the period May to December 2008, the Commission is expected to cover 253 statutory meetings.

### **2. The implementation of modernisation and capacity building programmes and projects**

581. Within the framework of the modernisation programme of its conference services, the Commission undertook the following:

- Purchase of 80 computers, 12 printers and 1 scanner at the beginning of the year. The printers and scanner are being distributed by the MIS department.
- Recent purchase of 20 laptops being distributed. These laptops will enable the secretaries and translators to be immediately operational during missions.
- Publication of the invitation to tender for the purchase of computer-aided translation tools on the Union website. The procedure for selecting the highest bid is underway.
- Taking delivery of a donation of computers and software from the Embassy of Portugal, which will enhance the capacity

building of Portuguese-speaking interpreters, translators, secretaries and proofreaders. However, there is a problem of where to stock these items. A solution is being worked out.

- Launch of the establishment of a database on all the texts of the organisation since its inception, in the four working languages of the Union.
- Participation of the Conference Services Directorate in the deliberations of the Technical Committee on the construction project of the Union Conference Centre financed by China. To this end, it is important to make sure that the interpretation booths for interpreters are designed according to required standards.

### **3. Establishment and follow-up on partnerships**

- Establishment of a partnership with the Conference Services of the United Nations, with membership of IAMLADP which is the International Annual Meeting of Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications. Through this participation, the Conference Services Directorate is kept regularly updated on various events and training organised by the United Nations on conference services. In this regard, English and French revisers took part in a training session offered by the United Nations in Addis Ababa in May 2008.
- At the invitation of the Conference Services of the United Nations, the Conference Services Directorate plans to go to Nairobi, Kenya, during the course of 2008 to visit the installations of that service and will have exchanges on the best working methods.

- Within the framework of the partnership with the Directorate-General for Translation and the Directorate-General for Interpretation of the European Union Commission, the Conference Services Directorate received delegations from both Directorates-General during the first semester of 2008. During this visit, the exchanges with the two Directorates-General of the European Commission made it possible to identify the problems in the various conference services and the possible ways of tackling them. In particular, concrete proposals were made such as sending staff on training sessions, staff exchanges, creating a computerised environment as well as a planning and programming unit.

#### **Problems and constraints of the CSD**

582. The problems and challenges facing the Department include:

- The non-filling of posts provided for in the post Maputo structure. It is urgent to carry out the recruitment of qualified staff for these various posts. It is also important to restructure the Directorate so as to enable it to properly discharge its managerial as well as technical functions.
- The serious shortage of human resources compounded by retirements. For example, there are no more than 2 to 3 translators and one reviser per language, while the Arabic language has no reviser at all. The same goes for interpretation which functions with one or two interpreters per working language. It is urgent to speed up the recruitment process so as to reinforce the existing personnel, reduce the

pressure and replace staff members due for retirement with new recruits well-versed in new information technologies.

- The lack of consultation with the CSD when planning meetings organised by Departments and Directorates is a major handicap. Similarly, the volume of documents produced a few days before meetings is a serious problem, more so as these documents have to be translated in the four working languages within the prescribed deadline, while at the same time ensuring quality. In this regard, the creation of the planning unit as suggested by the European Commission partners is highly recommended.

## **E. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION**

583. The information and communication sector pursued its efforts to promote the visibility of the African Union and to ensure the widest possible popularization of the Union's vision, missions and activities at both continental and international levels.

### **E.I. COMMUNICATION AND ADVOCACY STRATEGY**

584. The communication and advocacy strategy document for 2008-2011, which was drafted with support from the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), was finalized and forwarded for review and comment to all Departments of the AU Commission. It will be submitted to a group of experts representing Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and other organs of the Union with a view to its validation and ownership by the various stakeholders in charge of information. Similarly, the Communication and Information Division has elaborated a quadrennial Plan of Action (2008-2011) which defines media actions to be taken.

### **E.II. MEDIA COVERAGE OF COMMISSION ACTIVITIES**

585. The Commission ensured maximum dissemination of information on activities carried out during this period by all departments of the Commission, on the basis of specific media plans for each activity organized in Addis Ababa or outside the Union's headquarters.

586. This media coverage was achieved by means of:

- Press releases forwarded to all African and international media houses, especially those which specialize in African issues, operating in Africa or elsewhere in the world (news agencies, newspapers, Radio and television and E-media);
- organization of press briefings, interviews and press conferences during Summits, ministerial conferences and at meetings;
- creation of specific web pages with information and photo feeds. For a short time now, audio feeds of speeches made by the leadership of the Union have equally been posted to the Union's Site.

### **E.III. CONTENT PRINTING AND PUBLICATION ACTIVITIES**

587. Within the framework of its printing and publication policy, the Commission continued to produce information documents bearing the logo of the Union, such as:

- **THE AUC NEWSLETTER** which will be published in the three AU working languages, as from the beginning of the year. A printed version will also be produced.
- **2007 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMISSION:** the Commission has finalized its second annual report for 2007. This annual publication presents a summary of actions undertaken by various Departments of the Commission. The report, which so far has been published in English and French, will also be published in Arabic this year.
- **2008 DIARY:** The Commission produced and distributed the 2008 edition of the Diary to all staff members of the Commission, representatives of Member States and to partners. This document, which focuses on one theme each year, was dedicated to a brief presentation of each of the Member States of the AU.
- **LEAFLETS:** Three new leaflets are under preparation. They will help to enrich the press kit of the Commission, whose content is distributed to journalists and other users of the Union, for the purpose of further popularizing the vision and missions of the Organization.
- **AUC BOOKLET: FOUR YEARS AFTER:** The Commission has, in collaboration with the services of NEPAD, produced a book which takes stock of the first Commission's actions. This publication provides a fairly broad overview of the programmes and achievements of various organs and structures of the Union during this period.

### **E.IV. RESTRUCTURING THE WEB SITE**

588. In January 2008, the Sub-Committee on Structures recommended staff complement for this unit. Therefore, competent organs should provide this Unit, which is currently has only two employees on short-term contracts, with adequate personnel.

### **E.V. AUDIOVISUAL ACTIVITIES AND PHOTOS**

589. The Commission's audiovisual and photography service covered the activities of the Commission by means of photos, video and sound recordings, as well as CD-ROMs. In addition to archiving the recordings, copies of cassettes or CDs and photos were forwarded to some requesting States. The Commission also finalized the script of a first-ever documentary in the Union's history. This 13-minute long documentary presents the Union, its men (and women), its achievements, organs and vision for tomorrow's Africa. The documentary, which was produced in four languages (English, French, Arabic and Portuguese), will be used to spotlight activities of the Union.

## **E.VI. ESTABLISHMENT OF A PAN-AFRICAN RADIO AND TELEVISION CHANNEL**

590. In accordance with Executive Council decision adopted at the Banjul Summit, the Commission recruited two experts to conduct a comprehensive study on the establishment of a Pan-African channel. Once the Commission receives the study, it will be submitted to the meeting of Experts from Member States which will precede the Conference of Ministers of Information and Communication to be held in the course of 2009.

## **E.VII. ORGANIZING A COMPETITION FOR A NEW FLAG FOR THE AU**

591. In accordance with decision Assembly/AU/Dec.151 (VIII) on the launching of a competition for the selection of a new flag for the African Union, which was adopted by the Eighth Ordinary Session of the Assembly held in Addis Ababa from 29 to 30 January 2007, the Commission set up a Committee composed of Experts from the five major regions of the Continent. This Committee was scheduled to meet from 12 to 14 May 2008 to consider the various entries. The results of the competition will be submitted to the AU Policy Organs in Sharm El-Sheikh in June/ July 2008.

## **E.VIII. REGISTERING THE AU WITH INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION NETWORKS**

592. The AUC Communication and Information Division has been admitted as an active member of the Communication and Advocacy Cluster that was set up by the United Nations' Coordination, Advocacy and Programme Development Unit (CAPDU), which is under the supervision of the Special Adviser on Africa. The Division is also a member of the Bonn Network, which works mainly to promote the role of the media in conflict situations. The Communication and Information Division is equally a stakeholder in the "Re-branding Africa" programme, which was initiated by Africa's International Media Summit (AIMS) in collaboration with "Speak Africa" Movement, a multimedia platform for African youth and children.

## E.IX. PARTNERSHIP IN COMMUNICATION MATTERS:

593. It is worth mentioning that the Commission received logistical support, consisting of communication tools and equipment for its Press Centre, from the United States Permanent Representation to the Union. Similarly, the Commission reached agreement on a multi-component programme for cooperation on communication and information matters with the European Union, which already provides salaries for two journalists it had recruited.

594. The Communication and Information sector is also included in the priority programmes of the new partnerships engaged by the African Union, notably countries of South America, India and Turkey.

## IV. PART 3: GENERAL POLICY AND GUIDELINES

### A. INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITIES

595. Since the Addis Ababa Summit in January 2008, the audit activities undertaken by the Office of Internal Audit include the review of:

	DETAILS	STATUS
1	AU Military Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)	Final Report issued
2	Accounts Payable and Receivable - HQ	Final Report issued
3	AU Geneva Office	Final Report issued
4	AU Cairo Office	Final Report issued
5	AU Washington DC Office	Final Report issued
6	AU Lagos Office	Final Report issued
7	AU Yaounde Office	Final Report issued
8	Recruitment - HQ	Field Work in Progress
9	AU Burkina Faso Office*	Draft Report issued
10	Personal records - HQ	Draft Report issued
11	Transport Operation and Related Expenses - HQ	Field Work in Progress
12	Procurement of Goods and Services -HQ	Draft Report issued
13	African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism	Draft Report
14	Budget Execution and Expenditure Control - 2007	Field Work in Progress
15	Contributions and General Fund - HQ	Field Work in Progress
16	Peace Fund, Special Fund, Contributions and Donations- HQ	Field Work in Progress
17	Directorate of Conference Services	Field Work in Progress

596. During the period, the Office of Internal Audit has also provided audit services to one of the AU specialized agencies, African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI), and it is actively engaging in the AMIS Liquidation Monitoring Team.



Following requests by management, the OIA has also participated in handover exercises at Regional Offices and year-end stock count at the Headquarters.

597. With support from partners, the process of acquiring audit software is well in advance. Currently, evaluation of prospective suppliers is completed and Tender Board is considering approval of the most responsive supplier.

598. The OIA continues to assist management in the achievement of the vision, missions and plans of the Commission by promoting efficient and effective internal control systems as well as evaluating the adequacy and effectiveness of the Commission's risk management system so as to support the building of an efficient, transparent and accountable Commission.

599. In terms of manpower, it should be noted that one senior auditor and two auditors were recruited, still leaving five positions vacant, that is the post of Deputy Director and two auditors under the Maputo and Post-Maputo revised structures and two additional auditors under the EC capacity building project.

## **B. LEGAL MATTERS**

### **B.I. DEPOSITARY FUNCTIONS**

600. I wish to inform the Executive Council that since the submission of the last report in January 2008, some Member States have made considerable efforts to sign and ratify OAU/AU treaties. However, I would like to draw the attention of Council to the fact that to date, out of the thirty three (33) treaties adopted under the aegis of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Union (AU), only two (2) treaties have been ratified or acceded to by all Member States, namely the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981) and the Constitutive Act of the African Union (2000).

601. As you are all aware the Treaty Establishing The African Economic Community (Abuja Treaty) (1991) forms part of the basic legal instruments of the Union and its provisions are still valid, as indicated in the Constitutive Act of the African Union, except to the extent of any inconsistency with the latter. Accordingly, the importance of the Abuja Treaty cannot be overemphasized. In this regard, I would like to call on the four (4) Member States which have not yet ratified or acceded to the Abuja Treaty, to do so expeditiously.

602. I need not point out the importance of the organs of the Union in working towards the achievement of the objectives of the Union. Thus, it is imperative for the five (5) Member States which are yet to ratify or accede to the Protocol establishing the African Economic Community relating to the Pan-African Parliament (2001) and the ten (10) Member States which are yet to ratify or accede

to the Protocol relating to the establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union (2002) to do so as soon as possible.

603. I would also like to draw the attention of Council to the fact that only nine (9) Member States have ratified the Non-Aggression and Defense Pact (2005) while not one (1) Member State has ratified the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (2007) adopted more than a year ago. This demonstrates that a lot still remains to be done. I would like to once again stress the need for Member States to give utmost priority to Treaties adopted under the aegis of the OAU/AU, which, by definition, address issues of specific concern to Africa.

## B.II. ACCREDITATION OF NON-AFRICAN STATES TO THE AFRICAN UNION

604. In accordance with Part II, Section II (3) of the *Criteria for Granting Observer Status and for a system of Accreditation within the African Union* (the Criteria), adopted by the Executive Council in July 2005, the Commission has continued to receive and consider requests for accreditation from various non-African States, bearing in mind the supreme interest of the Union. I wish to inform Council that since the last reporting period, five (5) non-African States and one (1) international organization in addition to those that were accredited earlier in line with the provisions of Part II, Section II (3) of the Criteria for the granting of AU Observer Status and a System of Accreditation within the AU. The names of the representatives accredited since my last report and their respective States/organizations are listed in the table below:

<b>NON-AFRICAN STATES</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Name &amp; Title</b>	<b>Country</b>
1	Dr. Turki M. Saqr, Ambassador of the Syrian Arab Republic in Khartoum	<b>Syria</b>
2	Monsignor Ramiro Moliner Inglés, Titular Archbishop of Sarda and Apostolic Nuncio in Ethiopia	<b>Holy See</b>
3	Mr. Jaroslaw Szczepankiewicz, Ambassador of the Rep. of Poland in the Federal Dem. Rep. of Ethiopia	<b>Poland</b>
4	Comrade Ri Song Mok as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the African Union	<b>Dem. Republic of Korea</b>
5	H.E. Mr. Norman Ling, Ambassador Extraordinary and	<b>United</b>

	Plenipotentiary of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the Fed. Dem. Rep. of Ethiopia	<b>Kingdom</b>
	<b>REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS</b>	
6	Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons (RECSA)	

605. The total number of non-African States and international organizations accredited to the Union is now fifty-three (53): forty-nine (49) non-African States and four (4) Regional Integration and International Organizations.

### **B.III. PROTECTION OF NAMES, ABBREVIATIONS, AND EMBLEMS OF THE AU AND NEPAD**

606. As I have reported to Council previously, the AU paraphernalia (logo, emblem, flag, abbreviations, etc.) has been registered with the World Intellectual Property (WIPO) and is protected in conformity with the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property (Paris Convention). However, the Commission continues to face the challenge of actualising this protection because Member States are yet to enact appropriate national legislations for the protection of the Intellectual Property Rights of the African Union in their various countries.

607. Council will recall that I had brought to its attention that the Commission continuously receives reports of attempts at defrauding members of the public particularly business entities by wrongly using the names of the AU and its programme NEPAD or their paraphernalia or misrepresenting that they are officials of AU or NEPAD. It is, therefore, very important for Member States to enact the enabling legislation at national level to protect the AU paraphernalia and to inform the Commission of measures taken. I regret to report again that the Commission is yet to receive information from any Member State on actions taken in this regard. I wish therefore to take this opportunity to reiterate this appeal to all Member States.

### **B.IV. AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE AFRICAN UNION AND THE FEDERAL DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ETHIOPIA ON THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE AFRICAN UNION AND OF THE COMMISSION**

608. As the Executive Council is no doubt aware, Article 24 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union provides that the Headquarters of the Union shall be in Addis Ababa, in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Council will also recall that the Third Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 6 to 8 July 2004, decided that the Commission of the African Union is an integral part of the Headquarters of the Union as stipulated in Article 24 of the Constitutive Act. Additionally, Article 19 of the Statutes of the Commission, provides that the Headquarters and other organs and administrative and technical offices of the African Union shall enjoy the privileges and immunities stipulated in the OAU General Convention on Privileges and Immunities, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Privileges and Immunities, the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties between States and International Organisations or between International Organisations.

609. It is to be noted that even with the launching of the African Union, in Durban, South Africa, in July 2002, the relations between the Commission and the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia were governed by the provisions of the Headquarters Agreement signed between the Government of Ethiopia and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) on 6 July 1965.

610. It is with this the foregoing in mind that the Commission initiated discussions with Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia with a view to updating the Headquarters Agreement in order to take into account new developments as well the changed nature of the Organization. It is my great pleasure to inform Council that a new Headquarters Agreement between the African Union and the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, which is available on the AU Web site, was signed between the then Chairperson of the Commission Prof. Alpha Oumar Konare and the Foreign Minister Mr. Seyoum Mesfin, on 25 April 2008.

611. The new Headquarters Agreement takes into account new developments and crucial elements that are necessary to the operations of the African Union and its staff as well as their welfare. It provides for facilities and services as well as privileges and immunities that will no doubt contribute to the achievements of the objectives of the Union. To this end, I would like to take this opportunity to thank, through Council, the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for its fraternal spirit displayed during the negotiations that led to the conclusion of a new Headquarters Agreement. This is a demonstration, once again of the commitment of the government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to the achievements of the objectives of the Union. Above all, I have to thank personally, through Council, Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and Foreign Minister Seyoum Mesfin for their personal involvement in making sure that the negotiations are completed as expeditiously as possible and that the best possible conditions are made available to the African Union and its staff.

## **B.V. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL LAW**

612. Council will recall that it had endorsed the proposal for the establishment of an African Union Commission on International Law (AUCIL), whose establishment is also provided for in Article 14 (a) the African Union Non-Aggression and Common Defence Pact adopted by the Fourth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union in Abuja, Nigeria in January 2005. Council will further recall that it had requested the Commission to elaborate proposals on the mandate, structure and financial implications of the establishment of an AUCIL [Decision EX.CL/Dec. 129 (V)]. In terms of the Non Aggression and Common Defence Pact, the objectives of AUCIL include the study of “all legal matters related to the promotion of peace and security, including the demarcation and delineation of African borders”. I believe that the AUCIL should allow the Union to remain abreast of international legal developments, to continue to engage in standard setting in areas of importance and thus assist the Union in ensuring that it remains faithful to its objectives as set out in the Constitutive Act of the African Union.

613. I would like to inform Council that a draft legal instrument has been elaborated on the mandate, functions and structure of AUCIL which was submitted to the Meeting of Ministers of Justice/Attorneys General held at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 14 to 18 April 2008. However, due to time constraints, the Meeting was unable to finalise consideration of the matter and deferred it to a follow up meeting scheduled for October/November 2008. It is expected that the Draft Statute of AUCIL will be submitted to the policy organs for consideration and adoption in January 2009.

## **B.VI. HARMONIZATION AND RATIFICATION PROCEDURES OF TREATIES**

614. Council will also recall that by Decision EX.CL/Dec. 128 (V) adopted at its Fifth Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in July 2004 the Commission was requested to conduct a study on the procedures for ratification of OAU/AU Treaties in Member States as well as how to harmonise them with a view to speeding up the ratification process.

615. I wish to inform Council that the Commission, based on the information it had received from Member States and from public sources, finalized the study and submitted it to the Meeting of Ministers of Justice/Attorneys General held at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 14 to 18 April 2008. However, due to time constraints, the Meeting was unable to finalise consideration of the matter and decided to defer it to a follow up meeting to be held in October/November 2008. In the meantime, and in view of the fact that not all Member States have submitted the required information with regard to their

ratification procedures, I would like to appeal once again to those Member States that have not yet done so, to take action expeditiously in order to enable the Commission finalize and submit a comprehensive study to the next meeting of Ministers of Justice/Attorneys General.

## **B.VII. MERGER OF THE AFRICAN COURT ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS AND THE COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE AFRICAN UNION**

616. I would like to inform Council that the Draft single legal instrument on the merger of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Court of Justice of the African Union was submitted to the Meeting of Ministers of Justice/Attorneys General held at the AU Headquarters from 14 to 18 April 2008.

617. The draft Protocol was finalized by the Meeting and it is recommended to Council for consideration and for onward submission to the Assembly for consideration and adoption. Thereafter, the Protocol which will be the thirty-fourth Treaty to be adopted under the aegis of the OAU/AU will be open to signature and ratification/accession by all Member States. The Draft single legal instrument requires fifteen instruments to enter into force.

## **B.VIII. ELECTION OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR RURAL ECONOMY AND AGRICULTURE**

618. Council will recall that the Assembly of the Union meeting in its Tenth Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in February 2008 elected and appointed the members of the Commission, namely the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson and the Commissioners. However, in the absence of female candidates from the Eastern Region, the election of the Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture was deferred and in this regard, the Assembly by Decision Assembly/AU/Dec. 190 (X) mandated the Extraordinary Session of the Executive Council to elect and appoint the Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture from among female candidates from the Eastern Region.

619. As Council is aware, the Extraordinary Session of the Executive Council meeting in Arusha, Tanzania, from 6 to 7 May 2008, elected Mrs. Tumusiime Rhoda Peace from Uganda as Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate her on her election.

## **B.IX. ELECTRONIC VOTING SYSTEM**

620. Council will recall that I had previously reported that the Commission was in the process of finalizing a study on the possibility for the Union to use an electronic voting system that would still have the necessary features of transparency and fairness both in fact and in perception. This proposal was necessitated by the increasing number of elections by the Executive Council, which takes a lot of its time. Traditionally, Council conducted elections for some of the Members of the Commission, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights as well as Members of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. However, since the establishment of the Peace and Security Council, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the Advisory Board on Corruption, the Executive Council has to conduct elections for these bodies as well.

621. The current system of voting has the advantage of being seen as fair and transparent but has a major disadvantage of being cumbersome and time consuming. In the light of this, the Commission has been looking into the possibility of acquiring an electronic voting system that would speed up the process of elections whilst at the same time retaining the overriding features of fairness and transparency.

622. The difficulty encountered in acquiring such a system has been that there are no electronic voting systems that allow Member States to vote in various languages. To this end, the Commission has contacted the various manufacturers to ascertain the possibility of increasing the number of languages to four or at least two against whatever additional costs may be charged, if any. It is hoped that a report shall be made to Member States in due course, and if possible the proposed system could be acquired for use in January 2009.

## **B.X. ELECTIONS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY BOARD ON CORRUPTION**

623. Council will recall that following the entry into force of the AU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Corruption (the Convention) adopted in Maputo in July 2003, it became necessary to put in place the Advisory Board on Corruption provided for in Article 22 of the Convention. Council will further recall that since the Board is composed of 11 members and only five (5) Member States had submitted candidatures, the elections had to be postponed to the July 2008 session of Council.

624. I would like to inform Council that the Commission had requested Member States to submit nominations for the posts of Members to the Board. However, I would like to point out that only twenty-six (26) Member States have ratified the Convention and only seven (7) nominations from States Parties were received before the deadline of 30 April 2008. The Commission has had to inform Member States that elections would have to be postponed to the January 2009 Ordinary Session of the Executive Council and that candidatures that have

been submitted, do not need to be resubmitted. Furthermore, I would like to draw the attention of Council to the fact that although it is not expressly provided for in the Convention, in conformity with AU principles of geographical and gender representation, no two nationals of any State Party can be members of the Board.

#### **B. XI. INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL FOR RWANDA (ICTR)**

625. The Commission would like to draw the attention of the Executive Council to some issues arising out of the Completion Strategy of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (“ICTR”), and which call for the attention of Council.

626. In its Resolution 1503 (2003), the UN Security Council called upon the Tribunal to “take all possible measures to complete investigations by the end of 2004, to complete all trial activities at first instance by the end of 2008, and to complete all work in 2010.”

627. The latest report to the UN Security Council shows that the ICTR has substantially complied with its Completion Strategy, while continuing its capacity-building programmes for the Rwandan judicial sector and conducting studies and consultations related to its legacy. It has consequently embarked upon a process of progressive reduction of its staff. Two permanent judges and one *ad litem* judges will resign by November 2008 upon completion of their assigned cases.

628. There have been however new developments beyond the Tribunal’s control since the Resolution 1503 (2003). Two accused were arrested at the end of 2007 and one early in 2008. The Tribunal still awaits the completion of the domestic proceedings relating to the transfer of one of them from the country of apprehension to the Tribunal. Because the three newly arrested are considered high-level accused, their trials should take place at the Tribunal. Taking into account the current Trial Chamber’s workload and courtrooms occupancy rate, their cases could be completed, at best, in the first half of 2009, with judgement delivery in the second half of 2009.

629. In light of these new developments, the ICTR submitted a request to the attention of the Security Council and General Assembly to consider an extension of the terms of office of seven permanent and eight *ad litem* judges so that they may complete the cases at trial. It is further indispensable that the ICTR be provided with adequate resources to respond to the new additional workload.

630. It would be recalled that Member States cooperation, including for the arrest of the 13 remaining fugitives, the relocation of acquitted or released persons, is paramount to the successful accomplishment of the Tribunal’s mandate.

631. There is no doubt that the ICTR has contributed to the fight against impunity particularly for the crime of genocide. It has also contributed to scholarship and knowledge by hosting scholars to undertake research and for law students to undertake their internships.



632. Finally, the attention of Council is drawn to the issue of the ICTR archives, which constitute the largest collection of materials, records of proceedings and case-law of its kind on the continent. In collaboration with its sister body, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the ICTR has set up a panel of experts led by Justice Richard Goldstone to review, in anticipation of its closure, issues and challenges related to the future of the records and archives of the ICTR, including possible locations, long term preservation and use in the course of future prosecutions. There are indications that the options under consideration in terms of the location of the records and archives include African and European countries or UN institutions located in Africa or in Europe. Whilst the Commission does not express a preference for any of the African options, it is strongly of the view that these records and archives should remain in Africa, in anticipation of the residual functions that they will be relied upon to perform, including future prosecutions.

633. The genocide that took place in Rwanda is a scourge on the conscience of all Africans and the records and archives ought to remain in Africa, where they would be easily accessible to Africans in general, including victims, lawyers, students, scholars, national judicial authorities, civil society organizations, etc. Council is, therefore requested to endorse the recommendation on the archives of the ICTR remaining in Africa.

### **C. WOMEN, GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT**

634. As a member of the Steering Committee for the NEPAD-Spanish Fund, the Commission participated at the second AU/NEPAD/RECS consultation on the development of Regional Business Incubators in January 2008 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The meeting, which was attended by the Gender focal points from the RECs, discussed the business incubator concept and specifically focused on the role of the RECs and the AUC in the initiative and addressed the capacity needs of the RECs Gender Focal Points to host the Regional Business Incubators project.

635. In the implementation of Council decision requesting the AU to assist the Pan African Women Organization (PAWO) in the process of redefining its mandate, the Commission co-sponsored the 9<sup>th</sup> Congress of PAWO that was held in Johannesburg, South Africa in February 2008.

636. In recognition of the technical nature of the theme of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, held in March 2008 in New York, USA, which is Financing for Development, the Commission organized a *Capacity Building Workshop on Financing for Gender Equality and the Paris Declaration*. Over 80 participants attended the Workshop from 26 AU Member States, including 10 Ministers of Women, Gender and Community Development and CSOs, development partners and resource persons, including UNIFEM, ECA and ILO.

637. In the operationalization of the Article 11 of Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA), and implementation of Assembly Decision Dec.134-164 (VIII) of January 2007, the first ever Regional Conference on Economic Empowerment of Women was held in Malawi in March 2007. The meeting explored strategies to evaluate the economic status of African Women, including the establishment of the African Trust Fund for Women.

638. To enhance its principal mandate the empowerment of African women and the raising of their living standards, the Commission has to ensure that gender is mainstreamed in all policies and programmes of the AUC and AU Organs, RECs and Member States; and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment are promoted within these institutions. It was in this regard that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Stakeholders consultation on AU Gender Policy was held in April 2008.

639. The African Union Women's Committee (AUWC), which serves as an Advisory Body to the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) on gender and development-related issues, is monitoring the progress of the implementation of the SDGEA. The Committee held its Third Meeting in Tunis, Tunisia in April 2008. At the end of the two day meeting, the Committee adopted its Work Plan for 2008-2009; drew up pertinent recommendations with regard to annual reports of AU Chairperson and those of Member States with regard to the implementation of the SDGEA.

## **D. CITIZENS AND DIASPORA ORGANIZATIONS (CIDO)**

640. The activities of the Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO) in the period under review were focused on the following: a) Institutionalization of ECOSOCC, b) Continuous mainstreaming of CSO activities through a programme of active engagement with sectoral groups on a wide range of concerns including the AU-EU Joint Strategy c) Operationalization of Article 20 of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) Protocol on civil society participation in the work of the PSC, d) Consolidation of preparations for the African Diaspora Summit in South Africa in October 2008.

### **D.I. INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF ECOSOCC**

641. Council will recall that its 12th Ordinary Session held in January 2008 extended the mandate of the Interim ECOSOCC Assembly until 30 April 2008 to facilitate its task of organizing elections into the Permanent General Assembly of ECOSOCC and authorized the AU Commission to make appropriate arrangements for the same.

642. Subsequently, steps were taken to accelerate the process of elections in Member States of the Union. Accordingly, elections were held in Malawi, Niger, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Mauritius and Benin. In addition, the

Presiding Officer of the Interim ECOSOCC, Prof. Wangari Maathai, in consultation with the Chairperson of the AU Commission, directed that there should be a composite elections for remaining Member States and regions that are ready for election and that would not have held elections by 1st April 2008. These included Tanzania, South Africa, Uganda, Guinea, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Republic of Congo, Mali, Ghana, Madagascar, Burundi, Nigeria and Zambia and regional elections for the Southern and Western Africa. Arrangements were finalized accordingly and the composite elections were held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 15-17 April 2008 under the auspices of the Kenya National Electoral Commission. The process was overseen by observers and monitors including Members of the Diplomatic Corps, representatives of the AU Commission and Interim Standing Committee of ECOSOCC, Kenya Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Civil Society organisations and the local and international media. Participants reported that the process was free, fair and transparent.

643. With the conclusion of the composite elections, the Interim Standing Committee of ECOSOCC in tandem with the Commission had successfully concluded the assignment given the Executive Council in its decision EX.CL/Dec.384. Hence the Commission embarked on preparations to launch ECOSOCC. However, the date of 30 May 2008 set by Council for the launching of the Permanent General Assembly of ECOSOCC was difficult to meet because the Chairperson of the Commission who was expected to preside over the event would then be involved in the process of the TICAD Summit. Hence, the Chairperson of the Commission initiated a process of consultations with the Chairperson of the Union with a view to ensuring that the Assembly of ECOSOCC can be launched in early June 2008 to facilitate a positive report to this meeting of Council.

## **D.II. SECTORAL ENGAGEMENT WITH SOCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL GROUPS: AU-OATUU PARTNERSHIP FORUM**

644. Furthermore, as part of the process of continuous mainstreaming of CSOs in the activities of the Union, the Commission intensified its policy of active engagement with sectoral, social and professional groups. As a follow-up to the 1st AU-Organisation of African Trade Union (OATUU) Forum, the 2nd annual meeting of the Forum was held in Abuja, Nigeria, from 31 March-2 April 2008. The Forum was attended by leaders of the African Trade Union movement at national, regional and continental levels as well as facilitators from the academia, the private sector and the media. It proposed a work agenda and framework of action for the strategic partnership between the labour movement and the Union as elements of a long-term strategic plan that would be further developed. In this context, it requested the AU Commission to organize a special session of consultation on labour issues at the Assembly of the Union in 2009, at which its Steering Committee members and prominent labour leaders would participate.

645. The Forum also established a concrete framework for effective labour engagement, intervention and support for the institutionalization of ECOSOCC including an appraisal of labour involvement in ongoing election processes and its contribution towards inaugurating the Permanent General Assembly of ECOSOCC as well as plans for effective labour role in the post-inauguration context, with specific emphasis on the activation of the social cluster that deals with the interests and concerns of organized labour. It also reviewed the progress made in regard of the AU-EU Joint Strategy signed in Lisbon in December 2007, the challenge of implementation and labour role in this regard, with prominent emphasis on the logic of the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA). Finally, the Forum reviewed significant developments in the AU system including the new Commission, Union Government, the Audit of the Union and proposed concrete measures on how the Partnership Forum can feed effectively into the development of these processes and wider AU efforts.

### **D.III. INTERFAITH DIALOGUE**

646. In the same vein, the Commission is proceeding with plans to convene an interfaith dialogue of religious leaders from all disciplines to foster the process of reconciliation, peace and development within the framework of the AU system sometime in August or September 2008, in Pretoria, South Africa.

### **D.IV. CONSULTATIONS ON AU-EU JOINT STRATEGY**

647. As a complement to the above, the Commission organized a follow-up African Civil Society consultation on the implementation phase of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership in Bamako, Mali, from 3-5 March 2008. Participants included representatives of Africa CSO groups in their wide diversity, social and professional groups including research institutes, academia, youth, women and the media etc as well as representatives of the AU and European Commission. The meeting assessed and reviewed the outcome document signed by African and European leaders during the Lisbon Summit of December 2007 to enable the Civil Society to appraise it in order to determine if its aspirations are reflected in it and to fashion out appropriate strategies of engagement in the implementation phase. It decided on a framework of action for engaging the process in the implementation stage, particularly on mapping of CSOs, the platform for research institutes and think-tanks, support and engagement with Ministerial Troika meetings, the creation of web portal to facilitate CSO consultation ahead of key policy decisions and procedures and processes for expanding spaces for CSO interaction with the wider process of implementation of the strategy.

### **D.V. DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRICAN VOLUNTEER CORPS**

648. With the support of UNDP Grant, the Commission is in the process of finalizing the framework for the development of an African Volunteers

Corps. The work has attracted the attention and concern of the Japanese Government and its Volunteer Agency which arranged a visit to Japan in February 2008 to see how the processes can reinforce, build upon and support each other. A technical expert meeting is to be held soon to finalize the document at a preparatory stage for consideration of the PRC and executive organs of the Union.

## **D.VI. OPERATIONALIZATION OF ARTICLE 20 OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL (PSC) PROTOCOL**

649. In order to establish a framework for effective civil society participation in the work of the Union, the Commission hired a consultant to produce a framework document which, after its review, was transformed into a policy proposal. The proposal shall be examined by an Advisory Group of Experts on Peace and Security from prominent CSO groups working actively on the area in Lusaka, Zambia, in early June 2008. The expectation is that their deliberation will help to improve and refine the document, which will then be submitted to a meeting of experts from Member States and the Permanent Representative Committee (PRC) and thereafter to the Executive Council for consideration. In this respect, the Commission would like to acknowledge and appreciate the support of the Danish Government under the Danish Peace fund.

## **D.VII. PREPARATIONS FOR THE AFRICAN DIASPORA SUMMIT IN SOUTH AFRICA, OCTOBER 8-11, 2008**

650. Council will recall that an AU-Caribbean Diaspora Ministerial Conference was held in Midrand, South Africa from 16-18 November 2007 as part of the process of preparation for a Diaspora Summit. Following consultations between the Government of South Africa and the AU Commission, the dates for the Summit has been set as follows:

- 8 October 2008 for Senior Officials meeting
- 9 October 2008 for the Ministerial meeting
- 10-11 October 2008 for the Summit.

651. The Summit is expected to review and improve the Plan and Programme of Action developed by the Ministerial Conference for the consolidation of the Diaspora Programme and come out with a comprehensive blueprint for action that will set the pace for concrete actions to enable the effective reunification of the global African family and its concerted effort in the building of the African Union. The Commission is working closely with the Government of South Africa to conclude arrangements for the Summit.

652. I would like to appeal to all Member States to support the process and to participate effectively in the Summit at various levels so that the African Union can have an effective platform for action for the Diaspora.

653. Finally, I would like to refer to the pertinent recommendation of the Report of the Audit of the Union which calls for strengthening the CIDO Directorate in order to fully engage the CSOs and Diaspora in the work of the Union. This recommendation that was endorsed by Council should be implemented without delay.

## **E. EXTERNAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION**

### **E.I. AFRICA'S STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**

#### Introduction

654. Council will recall its Decision EX.CL/Dec.397 (XII) at the 12th Ordinary Session, held in Addis Ababa, from 28-29 January 2008 on Africa's Strategic Partnership, which directed the Commission to continue working with the relevant organs of the Union to enhance and support the process of partnership with emerging powers of the South. The decision also "requested the AU Commission to undertake a global review of all existing partnerships in order to effectively implement strategies and action plans.... rationalize the number of Summits and identify criteria for such partnership to ensure coherence between and within these partnerships and make necessary recommendations to Council and Assembly". That same Decision "requested the Permanent Representatives Committee to submit its recommendations on the above-mentioned study before initiating any new strategic relationships".

655. Within this context, the AU Commission took steps to implement the directives of the Executive Council as it relates to the partnerships with the emerging powers of the South and other partnerships including those with developed countries and traditional centres of powers.

#### Follow-up on the Africa-South America Summit

656. Council will recall that the first Africa-South America Summit was held in Abuja, on 30 November 2006. The Summit adopted three outcome documents: a Declaration, Plan of Action and Resolution. The Summit also established a Follow-up Mechanism comprising the current and incoming co-chairs (Nigeria, Venezuela) along with Brazil, the AU Commission and the Secretariat of South American Nations (UNASUR) to facilitate the implementation of the cooperation programme in the context of Plan of Action that was adopted by the leadership of the two continents.

657. Prior to the period under review, the Coordinating Mechanism had held a series of meetings. The first meeting was in Caracas, Venezuela from 16-18 July 2007. That meeting discussed the general aspects of the Declaration and Action Plan as well as steps towards their implementation. It came up with a schedule of preparatory meetings for the 2nd Africa-South America Summit, seven core areas of cooperation, as well as programmes and projects that could be implemented under the partnership.

658. The 2nd meeting of the Coordinating Mechanism took place in Abuja, Nigeria from 29-30 November 2007. It reviewed the progress made since the Caracas meeting, particularly the follow-up activities in each region and considered effective ways and means of moving the process forward. The meeting revised the calendar of activities that was proposed in Caracas, prioritized goals and actions and proposed methods of streamlining and enhancing the performance of the Coordinating Mechanism. It also reflected on the Brazilian, Venezuelan and African Union proposals that were based on the consultations that had taken place in the interim and recommended the need to make necessary arrangements for a Trade Ministers conference in Morocco in accordance with decision of the 1st ASA Summit in accordance with the decision of the 1st ASA Summit.

659. In the period under review, the Commission was engaged in ensuring effective preparation for holding the 2nd ASA Summit in Venezuela in November 2008. As part of this process, the Commission in consultation with the PRC and Member States, made necessary arrangements to support the Trade Ministers Meeting in Marrakech, Morocco, from 17-20 June 2008. Planning for the Trade Ministers meeting involved close consultations with the government of the Kingdom of Morocco and our partners in South America.

660. A second aspect of the preparation focused on the implementation of key aspects of the cooperation agreement through concrete activity proposals. The two meetings of the Coordination Mechanism had discussed details and elements of these proposals including the establishment of the Bank of South, the University of the South and Radio/TV network of Telesur, etc. In furtherance of these proposals and based on the decisions of the Coordinating Mechanism, the Government of Venezuela convened an International Seminar on the Poles of the South in Caracas from 20-21 May 2008 as part of the process of preparation for the second ASA Summit. State parties in both regions as well as the Commission of the African Union and UNASUR, as well as Africa's RECs, were invited to send representatives to this Seminar and the Commission sent four experts from finance, energy, communication and education sectors respectively.

661. A final aspect of this preparation also focused on the decision of the meeting of the Coordinating Mechanism held in Abuja, Nigeria, in November 2007 to hold a meeting of High Officials of Africa South America, in Brazilia, Brazil from 9-11 June 2008. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss and foster agreement on the implementation plan discussed by previous meetings of the Coordination Mechanism held in Venezuela and Abuja respectively, and to accelerate the process of preparation for the 2nd ASA Summit in Venezuela in November 2008. Among other things, the meetings of the Coordination Mechanism had agreed on the need to strengthen and streamline the Coordination Mechanism to facilitate quicker action and recommended the establishment of a "Secretariat Pro

Tempore” (rotational Secretariat) hosted by the country hosting the next Summit for the period of its Presidency. The meeting of High Officials took place in Brazilia as scheduled and the outcomes as well as that of the Trade Ministers meeting in Morocco are presented separately for consideration of Council.

662. In the period under review therefore, considerable progress has been recorded in this area. It remains work in progress and I wish to assure Council that I will take all necessary measures to ensure the effective success of this cooperation agreement. In accordance with the directive of Council, the Commission will work closely with all relevant organs of the Union as well as instrumental tools and structures set up under the ASA arrangement.

## Africa-India Cooperative Forum

663. Council will recall that the Africa-India cooperation process began with the visit of my predecessor to New Delhi, India in December 2006. During that visit, he held discussions with the Indian Prime Minister and both agreed on the need to establish a Cooperative Forum through a Summit of leaders to be held in New Delhi at a date to be agreed upon. As part of this process, the two leaders also agreed to set up a joint task force to prepare the forum while the AU Commission undertook to prepare the terms of reference (TOR) for the task force and framework of the Forum.

664. Subsequently, preparatory meetings were held in New Delhi and Addis Ababa at various times in 2007 and 2008 to discuss and agree on a draft declaration and the agreed areas of cooperation, as well as the format and structure of the Summit, which was agreed to be held at three consecutive levels – Senior Officials, Ministers and Heads of State and Government. It was also agreed that the model of representation would conform to the framework by the AU Banjul Summit on continent – single country partnership. Both sides further agreed that the Forum Summit would hold on 8-9 April 2008.

665. I am happy to report to Council that the first Africa-India Forum Summit was held in New Delhi, India on 8-9 April 2008 as scheduled. The Summit was co-chaired by the Indian Prime Minister and the President of the United Republic of Tanzania as Chairperson of the African Union. Also in attendance were seven Heads of State and Government; six Heads of Delegation (two Vice-President's, three Minister's and a former Prime Minister), and the former Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union. The Summit had two outcome Documents, namely, the Delhi Declaration and Framework for Cooperation.

666. Another major highlight of the Summit was the announcement by the Indian Prime Minister to grant:

- i. Duty-free tariff preference scheme to Least Developed Countries, 34 of which are in Africa. This will allow cotton, cocoa, aluminium ores, copper ores, cashew nuts, cane sugar, ready-made garments, fish fillets, etc. from Africa to gain free access to Indian markets;
- ii. Lines of credit to Africa doubled to US\$5.4 billion over the next five years;



- iii. Enhanced quota of 1600 seats annually for Africans under India's flagship technical training scheme; and
- iv. The execution of projects in excess of 500 million dollars over the next 5-6 years in the areas of railways, IT, telecom, power generation and physical connectivity in Africa.

667. Moreover, according to the terms of the Delhi Declaration, Africa and India are to develop jointly, within a period of one year, a joint plan of action at a continental level and an appropriate follow-up mechanism to implement the agreed framework of Cooperation.

### **Africa-Turkey Summit**

668. Preparations are also being intensified to ensure the successful conduct of the Africa-Turkey Summit as directed by Council. The meeting is scheduled to take place in Istanbul from 18-21 August 2008.

669. In this regard, the Commission has been working in close consultation with the Multilateral Cooperation Sub-Committee of the PRC, to develop and improve the draft outcome documents proposed by Turkey with the view to ensuring a coordinated African position that will inform the deliberations at the Summit. The process would also involve consultations with the Group of Africa's Ambassadors/Heads of Mission in Turkey. The African Union made up of the Member States and the Commission met a Turkish delegation in Addis Ababa in March 2008 and another one will take place in Turkey to finalize the outcome documents ahead of the Summit.

670. Significantly, the model of African representation at this meeting will be in consonance with the Banjul decision on continent-scale country partnerships. It is important that all Member States should take necessary steps to support this process and ensure the success of the Summit.

### **Tokyo's International Conference on Africa's Development (TICAD IV)**

671. Preparations continued apace also on developing relations with Japan within the framework of the TICAD process. The preparations fed into the TICAD IV meeting held in Yokohama, Japan, from 28-30 May 2008. TICAD IV – the fourth in the series preceded the G8 Summit that will take place also in Japan later in July 2008. In line with tradition, the meeting addressed issues in priority areas of Africa's development, namely, accelerating economic growth, ensuring human security including the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the consolidation of peace and democracy, as well as issues pertaining to environmental issues and climate change. The substantive outcome of the meeting is to be presented separately to Council and the Assembly. The process of preparation for participation in the TICAD IV process however raised a substantive issue about the importance of the Banjul decision regarding continent – single country partnerships. Contrary to the case with India, the Japanese sent invitations to various African Heads of State who attended the Summit. Questions were then raised by some

Member States about the implication of this situation for the Banjul decision. It would be necessary for this Summit to assess the situation and make an appropriate follow-up decision as to whether or not the Banjul Decision should remain applicable in future situations and how to ensure that Member States act in accordance with the decision.

## The Global Review Process

672. The final aspect of Council Decision focused on the need to undertake a global review of all existing partnerships in order to effectively implement strategies and action plans agreed upon between Africa and its international partners, rationalize the number of Summits and identify criteria for such partnerships and make necessary recommendations to Council and Assembly. Similarly, the PRC is to submit its recommendations on the aforementioned study before initiating any new strategic partnership.

673. Since the assumption of office by the Commission in April 2008, it has commenced preparatory work on this global review process. As part of this process, we shall be consulting closely with the PRC with a view to formulating common perspectives for consideration of Council.

674. It is also necessary to emphasize that while the Commission would continue to acknowledge request of intending partners for programmes of cooperation, we shall be placing greater premium on assessing the added value of any intended cooperation agreements as a pre-condition for discussion with the PRC and relevant organs of the Union. Within the context, the Commission sent an exploratory mission to Iran on 25-26 February 2008, at the request of the Government of Iran to discuss prospects and feasibility of a partnership agreement. The objective of the mission was to obtain information and explore prospects and possibilities of Africa-Iran Cooperation in line with decision and objectives set by Council. The Foreign Minister of Iran met the delegation and it held working sessions with the two Deputy Ministers for Foreign Affairs in all areas along with technical experts in the different areas proposed for partnership. The outcome of this meeting will be considered in detail with the PRC and placed within the larger concern of the wider evaluation process in the context of the decision of the Executive Council regarding the initiation of new partnerships.

675. The framework of Africa's strategic partnership increases the profile and bargaining strength of Africa and serves as a pole of influence for Africa to maximize its global reach. However, in order to fully realize the intended outcomes of the policy on strategic partnerships, there is a need to ensure internal and external coherence between and within partnerships and, in particular, to emphasize the requirement that emerging partnerships must add value to what already exists.

## **E.II. AFRO-ARAB COOPERATION**

676. Institutional cooperation between the AU Commission and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States experienced marked improvement in implementation, and is continuously expanding, with the inclusion of new cooperation programs and consolidation of existing ones. Both sides are now working closer with determination towards more tangible and productive cooperation.

677. Pursuant to Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.363 (XI), on the Afro-Arab Cultural Institute, the study on "Development of an Institutional Mechanism for Afro-Arab Strategic Studies/Redefinition of the Role of Afro-Arab Cultural Institute in Bamako, Mali", conducted in collaboration with the League of Arab States has been accomplished. The African and Arab consultants have submitted their report which was considered by the 3rd AU/LAS Inter-secretariat Consultative Meeting, held in Addis Ababa from 14 to 16 December 2007. The meeting, among other things, agreed to set-up a multi-sectoral Task Force, to be composed of relevant Departments of the African Union Commission and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, to critically review the report, and guide and facilitate the transformation process. The transformation would be done without affecting the on-going cultural program of the Institute. The first meeting of the Task Force has taken place in the first half of March 2008,

678. As also agreed during the 2nd AU/LAS Inter-secretariat Consultative Meeting held in Cairo, Egypt, in December 2006, a framework and modalities for the establishment of a standing Afro-Arab Development Forum was developed by the two parties. The document was reviewed and endorsed by the 3rd AU/LAS Inter-secretariat Consultative Meeting for adoption by the respective Policy Organs.

679. In this connection, it will be recalled that the decisions of the 19th Arab Summit held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in March 2007 (Summit Decisions: 386 Ordinary Session (19), 29/3/2007) requested the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and the African Union Commission, to continue the study on the establishment of a Forum in which shall participate academicians, experts, researches, civil society organizations and private sectors of the two sides.

680. In light of the Cairo Declaration on Afro-Arab Cooperation and decisions on the subject, the Commission, in collaboration with the League of Arab States initiated the establishment of Committees of Afro-Arab Ambassadors in selected capitals / cities such as Addis Ababa, Cairo, Brussels, Geneva and New York. Consideration is being given to include other important capitals such as Washington. The aim is to encourage regular meetings and consultations for the purpose of coordinating actions and positions on issues of common concern to the two regions.

681. Efforts are underway to create direct working relations between the Commission and Arab specialized institutions, as was recommended by the 2nd Inter-secretariat Meeting. The Commission in this regard signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Arab Fund for Technical Assistance to African Countries, while negotiations on similar instruments with the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD) and the Arab Authority for Agricultural Investment and Development (AAAID) have been finalized / concluded.

682. Unlike the previous six editions of the Afro-Arab Trade Fairs which have been organized every two years since 1993, to facilitate direct contacts between African and Arab businessmen and develop trade and investment links between African and Arab countries, the 7th edition originally planned to take place in Khartoum, Sudan, in 2005 was postponed due to low level of confirmations by African and Arab countries. Consequently, the African Union Commission and the League of Arab States agreed to undertake an in-depth evaluation of the performance of the Fair, with the aim of rectifying organisational problems and improving the impact of the Fair in the future. The Commission, in collaboration with the League of Arab States, has fully accomplished the necessary background work for this task and submitted a proposal to BADEA for financial assistance to undertake the evaluation. In the meantime, the Commission will soon start preparations for the 7th edition of the Fair, which is now scheduled to take place in Djibouti in 2009. All Member States of the African Union are urged to participate at the event.

683. The foregoing achievements notwithstanding, sustained effort is required to enhance Afro-Arab Cooperation. To this end, in light of the Decisions of the 6th AU Summit held in Khartoum in 2006 and the 19th Arab Summit held in Riyadh in 2007, to hold the 2nd Afro-Arab Summit as soon as possible, the Commission will intensify consultations with the League of Arab States to determine the dates and venue for the Summit and start the preparations for its successful organization.

## **V. REPRESENTATION PROGRAMMES**

### **A. BRUSSELS OFFICE**

#### **A.I. INTRODUCTION**

684. During the period January to May 2008, the African Union's Permanent Mission in Brussels set out to implement its activity programme for 2008 budget year. Essentially, these activities were conducted within the following institutional and community framework:

- African Union (AU) - European Union (EU) cooperation ties
- Implementation of the Cotonou ACP-EU Agreement
- The African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels
- Civil society associations, including the African Diaspora
- Representation actions.

#### **A.II. AU/EU AND AU/ACP COOPERATION TIES**

685. During the period under review, the Mission continued efforts to develop fruitful institutional relations between the AU and EU, the AU and ACP Secretariat, as well as with other development partners in Brussels.

686. The Mission also worked to promote a common African position at these meetings, during international negotiations and to ensure that Africa is considered as a single and indivisible entity.

**a) Implementation of the EU/Africa joint strategy**

687. The Office participated actively in the implementation of the EU/Africa Joint Strategy and the related Plan of Action which were adopted by the 2nd Africa-EU Summit held in Lisbon, Portugal, in December 2007. The office was thus involved in several meetings and seminars organized within that framework jointly or either party, such as:

- the coordination meeting on the AU/EU partnership on infrastructure and energy held in Brussels from 20 to 21 February;
- the Round Table on 'Prospects for the EU-AU Partnership: Institutional Aspects' organized in Brussels on 1st April by the European Commission, with the AUC and several African experts participating;
- the Conference, organized on 6 March 2008 by Konrad-Adenauer Foundation on the theme: "*EU and Africa: Emerging Priorities, Opportunities and Challenges*".

688. Similarly, the Office attended consultation meetings on the implementation of the EU/Africa Joint Strategy organized by the AUC from 19 to 21 March and from 14 to 16 April in Ouagadougou and Maseru, respectively.

**b) Inter-agency Contacts**

689. The Mission established a monthly meeting with the European Commission for the purpose of discussing, following up and strengthening the relations binding the two Organizations. It held regular consultations with the General Secretariat of the ACP Group of States to examine and better defend the interests of Africa within this Group.

690. Within the framework of Afro-Arab cooperation, the Mission continued to work on modalities for establishing a Committee of African and Arab Ambassadors in Brussels, in accordance with the instructions of the Commissioner for Political Affairs.

691. The Mission held a working session with the President of the European Parliament on 9 April to exchange views on EU/AU relations and on the ways and means of strengthening them. The President of the Parliament expressed his intention to meet the AU Chairman and the AUC Chairperson during his next visits to Tanzania, Addis Ababa and the Headquarters of the pan-African Parliament. The Mission was also involved in planning for an African week, which the European Parliament intends to organize in Brussels from 8 to 12 September.

692. The Mission also collaborated with the Slovenian EU Presidency to organize, on 26 May in Brussels, an AU/EU Consultation Meeting on Human Rights.

693. In addition to these one-time activities, the Mission maintained relations daily with the various EU institutions as part of its routine working relationship.

### **A.III. IMPLEMENTING THE COTONOU ACP-EU PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

#### **a) ACP and ACP-EU parliamentary assemblies**

694. The Mission took part in the 12<sup>th</sup> session of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly and the 15<sup>th</sup> session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly held from 21 to 24 January in Brussels and from 12 to 20 March in Ljubljana (Slovenia), respectively. As usual, the Mission seized the occasion to contribute to harmonizing the positions of African Member States on these institutions with those adopted by the AU, notably with regard to political questions, in particular those relating to the resolution of certain conflicts in Africa which are regular agenda items at sessions of the two Assemblies.

695. On topical issues, the question of ACP-EU negotiations for the signing of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) was discussed at the two Assemblies. The Mission took advantage of its attendance to recall the AU stance on EPAs that foster the development and integration of African economies.

#### **b) ACP-EU negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)**

696. The Mission continued to monitor progress on ACP-EU negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) by working with the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels to assist in harmonizing the positions of African negotiators. This falls in line with AU decisions on the subject, notably Declaration 2(X) of the 10th AU Summit of January 2008. In that connection, the Mission, in close cooperation with the AUC Department of Trade and Industry, encouraged representatives of the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels to actively participate in the Conference of African Minister of Trade and Finance which the AUC organized in Addis Ababa from 1 to 3 April.

697. The Mission is currently working to implement the Declaration on EPAs which was adopted by that Conference and which reaffirms, on the one hand, the determination of African countries to have EPAs geared towards development and which preserve African economic integration strategies and, on the other hand, the appropriateness of an AU leadership during these negotiations. In that context, the Mission organized, from 16 to 17 May, a retreat for the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels, essentially dedicated to consideration of the ways and means of resuming the negotiations, in accordance with the spirit of the above-mentioned Declaration.

#### **A.IV. AFRICAN GROUP OF AMBASSADORS IN BRUSSELS**

698. The Mission ensures, on a daily basis, the coordination of the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels. It thus contributes to harmonize and advance its action within the ACP Group of States, and even within the context of specific relations with the EU, with the strategies and positions of the AU considering international relations for the preservation of Africa's best interests.

699. During the period under review, the Mission mobilized the Group, essentially, to implement the Africa-EU Strategy and, above all, AU Decisions on ACP-EU negotiations on Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs). The Mission would thus like to bring the African Group to adopt common positions at these negotiations, in accordance with relevant AU decisions and in a desire to harmonize EPAs with AU strategies for integrating African economies and properly integrating them into the global economy.

700. That is the goal of the series of retreats and seminars periodically organized by the Mission for the African Group. Thus, the programme of the retreat held from 16 to 17 May 2008 was as follows: analysis of EPA negotiations; review of interim agreements signed by certain African countries; search for a common African position, with a view to resuming negotiations; and, strategy to be adopted in order to comply with relevant AU decisions.

#### **A.V. CIVIL SOCIETY ASSOCIATIONS, INCLUDING THE AFRICAN DIASPORA**

701. The Mission continued to mobilize the African Diaspora in Europe, in accordance with the AU strategy, with the aim of encouraging the Diaspora to actively participate in building the African Union. The Mission is thus pursuing the action it initiated with a view to organizing and structuring the Diaspora ahead of the Summit on the African Diaspora to be held in South Africa this year. To that end, it organised a meeting on 8 March in Brussels, which was attended by representatives of associations in the following countries: Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Italy, Switzerland, Luxembourg, etc.

702. The Mission also participated in a number of activities (symposia, seminars, cultural events, etc.) organized by associations of the Diaspora in EU member countries. The Mission also continued to maintain working relations with developmental NGOs and other associations that promote global cooperation with Africa. During the period under review, the Mission attended, alongside African and other experts from various countries, a seminar organized on 18 April in Germany by the Marshall Centre, on the theme "*Migration and International Security: Challenges and Opportunities*".

#### **A.VI. REPRESENTATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

703. In this connection, the Mission actively pursued its representation role. It is for that purpose that the Mission seized the occasion of the celebration of the 2008 “African Day” to organize on 25 May a lecture forum on the Africa-EU Joint Strategy for Africans living in Belgium and other persons who are interested in the subject of EU/Africa cooperation.

## **A.VII.PURCHASE OF A NEW BUILDING**

704. The Mission contributed to properly implementing Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec. 403 (XII) to authorize the Commission to purchase a new building to house the AU Permanent Mission in Brussels. The Mission’s premises lack space, especially for offices of REC representations in Brussels, as had been decided by AUC authorities. The Mission has identified a building which meets the set criteria.

705. The acquisition process has been duly initiated by the AUC Administration, in compliance with the procedures in force. The Mission hopes the process will be completed within the time frame set by the vendor.

706. Since the building which currently houses the Mission’s offices is AU property, the Mission, as directed by AUC Administration, is taking the necessary steps to put it up for sale, in strict compliance with relevant AU regulations.

## **B. CAIRO OFFICE**

707. The Permanent Delegation continued to follow up the activities of the Arab League and to foster close cooperation relations with the League in the various political, economic, social and cultural fields. The Delegation attended statutory meetings convened during the period under review, that is, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Council of Ministers as well as the Summit of Sovereigns and Heads of Arab States held in Damascus, Syria, from 29 to 30 March 2008. These meetings adopted Decisions of interest to the African Union on the following issues:

### **E.III. PEACE AND SECURITY**

- **On Sudan**

708. The 20th Arab Summit expressed appreciation for the efforts by the AU, UN and LAS to support peace in Sudan and was satisfied with the signing of the Agreement on the Hybrid Force, as well as with measures taken to ensure its full implementation in Darfur. The Summit also called on Arab African countries to increase their participation in the Force. The Summit equally called for greater cooperation between the three Institutions in order to speed up efforts to unify the



negotiating positions of the various non-signatory Groups of the Abuja Peace Agreement, with a view to resuming negotiations as soon as possible. It also invited the UN Security Council to consider sanctions against dissenting parties.

709. Concerning the situation in Southern Sudan, the Summit was pleased with the measures taken for the implementation of the Peace Agreement between Sudanese Government and the SPLM (Kenya, 2005) and urged all the parties to ensure its effective implementation. The Summit invited Arab countries, the Arab Fund and Institutions to pursue their efforts, particularly in the field of post-war reconstruction, and to effectively participate in organizing the upcoming meeting on Investment and Development in Southern Sudan.

- **On Somalia**

710. Concerning Somalia, the Arab Summit was pleased with the Somali Government position which is to conduct dialogue with the Somali Opposition in and outside the country and also encouraged it to implement the Resolutions of the 2007 National Reconciliation Assembly of Mogadishu. The Summit expressed its strong support to the AU mission in Somalia and condemned all military actions against the AU Force in Somalia. It invited African Arab countries to contribute to the building of its financial and logistical capacities.

- **On The Comoros**

711. The Summit expressed its full satisfaction with and support to the AU military intervention which put an end to the illegal Government in Anjouan and lauded the measures taken by the Comorian Government and the General Secretariat of the Arab League to organize by the end of this year the Arab Conference for Development in the Comoros Islands.

- **Palestine and the Middle East**

712. The 20th Arab Summit lauded African Union's support to the Palestinian cause and the Arab peace initiative, as stipulated in Decision No. Dec.428/XX of 30 March 2008 of the Conference. The Summit renewed its commitment in favour of the Peace Initiative in Palestine and invited Israel to stop ignoring that Initiative. The Arab Leaders affirmed that the Arab party should continue to insist on the fact that the Peace Initiative is strictly linked to the discharge by Israel of its commitments as a basic instrument for lasting peace in the region. On the whole, the Summit adopted important decisions on the Palestinian struggle against Israeli occupation and expressed its solidarity with Syria and Lebanon in their quest to regain sovereignty over their territories that are occupied by Israel. Concerning more specifically the Arab initiative for the resolution of the internal conflict in Lebanon, the Summit invited Lebanese politicians to resolve their differences.

#### **E.IV. STRENGTHENING AFRO-ARAB COOPERATION**

713. Council will recall that the 20th Arab Summit which the Chairperson of the African Union Commission addressed on the important issue of Afro-Arab brotherhood took important decisions on the subject. The Summit was pleased with the efforts made by the African Union Commission in that direction and stressed the need to consolidate them in order to overcome impediments to Afro-Arab cooperation and the organisation of meetings of its organs. The Summit was also pleased with the decision of the 10th Assembly of the Union in favour of organizing the 2<sup>nd</sup> Afro-Arab Summit and invited the two organisations to take the necessary steps as soon as possible. The Damascus Summit also endorsed all joint programmes of action to promote Afro-Arab brotherhood that had been initiated by the two organisations and adopted by the Executive Council.

714. The Permanent Delegation thus initiated consultations with various Departments of the League's General Secretariat with a view to implementing the decisions and recommendations of the 3<sup>rd</sup> AU/LAS Inter Secretariat Consultative Meeting held in Addis Ababa in December 2007, notably on the following aspects:

- **Signing procedure for memorandums of agreement between the AUC and Specialized Arab Institutions.**

715. Council will recall the preparation by the League and the Commission, during the past financial years, of a series of "memoranda of understanding" for consolidating cooperation ties between specialized African and Arab agencies. In that connection, two memoranda will, very soon, be signed, namely those between the Commission and the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) and between the Commission and the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD).

- **Implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Arab Fund for Technical Assistance to African countries**

716. Within the framework of this memorandum, the Permanent Delegation held a series of meetings with the Arab Fund for Technical Assistance to African Countries with a view to reaching agreement on joint priority actions as well as on the modalities for implementing them in 2008. A proposed training programme in two parts was thus submitted to the Commission for adoption and implementation, as follows:

- Three training sessions under the bilateral cooperation between the Fund and the Commission, and
- Under the tripartite AUC-LAS-Civil Society cooperation, three training for workers' organisations and four for women's organisations.

- **Establishment of an Afro-Arab Development Forum**

717. As an ongoing activity since 2004, the Afro-Arab Development Forum has regularly received constant attention from the two

organisations during their various discussions. It would be recalled that the concept paper on the establishment of the Forum was finalized, adopted and submitted to the last Council session. As the last Arab Summit in Damascus also adopted it, the Commission and the League are currently holding consultations for the organisation of the constitutive meeting of the Forum which should gather the main stakeholders of the two regions before the year ends.

- **The transformation of the Afro-Arab Cultural Institute into an Afro-Arab Institute for Culture and Strategic Studies**

718. As in the past, the Office continued to follow up the efforts of the two Organisations aimed at ensuring the transformation the Afro-Arab Cultural Institute into an Afro-Arab Institute for Culture and Strategic Studies. In this connection, the Office participated, from 14 to 20 April 2008 in Bamako, Mali, in a joint meeting of the Working Group on the establishment of practical means for that transformation

**NEW ACTIVITIES:**

719. According to its mandate and the main directions for intervention adopted in the AUC Strategic Plan of Action, the Delegation embarked on the implementation of actions to mobilize African and Arab citizens as well as to popularize the African Union in a bid to make the Afro-Arab brotherhood more effective. These actions include, *inter alia*:

- **Organisation of a High-level Experts Meeting to promote Agricultural Development and Food Security in Africa and in the Arab world**

720. Pursuant to the recommendation of the 3rd AU/LAS Inter-Secretariat Consultative Meeting in Addis Ababa in December 2007, the two Organisations set up an Organizing Committee which held its first meeting from 9 to 10 March 2008 at the Office of the Delegation. The Committee adopted the calendar of events and the modalities for organizing the proposed high-level meeting. It also set up a Sub-Committee responsible for technical matters, notably the preparation of working documents for the meeting. The Sub-Committee, which is composed of experts representing the AUC, the LAS and the Arab Organisation for Agricultural Development (AOAD), also met from 8 to 9 April 2008 in Khartoum, Sudan, and adopted the general theme and proposed programme of work for the High-Level Experts Meeting. The sub-committee also recruited experts to conduct the evaluation study on the state of agriculture and food security in the two regions and to prepare the working documents for the meeting. It is expected that the findings of that study would be considered by the organizing committee next August, before it is submitted to the meeting itself in October.

- **Mobilization of Cairo-based African and Arab Organizations for joint action for the promotion of “Afro-Arab Brotherhood”**

721. After identifying the major African and Arab organizations operating in Cairo, the Delegation undertook a series of contact and sensitization visits to facilitate the understanding of the objectives pursued by each party and to open the way for mutually beneficial cooperation. These contact visits were followed by the holding, during the months of April and May 2008, of a series of working sessions at the Delegation's Office. At these meetings, which mobilized dozens of student, women and youth organizations, the fruitful discussions held on the mandates, objectives and Action Plans of each organization enabled the identification of areas of common interest and to reach agreement on the priority directions for intervention with a view to a mutually beneficial cooperation in future. This cooperation immediately translated into an active involvement of all the institutions concerned in the organisation of Africa Day (25 May 2008).

- **Identification and discussion with major Arab and Islamic Development Organizations/Institutions for enhancing the framework for cooperation with the AU.**

722. The Delegation pursued the process of identifying African and Arab Organizations for the promotion of Afro-Arab brotherhood. It therefore targeted the under mentioned Arab and Islamic organizations, not only for their importance in Africa and the Arab world but also for their exceptional cooperation potential:

- The Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Jeddah, Saudi Arabia,
- The Islamic Development Bank (IDB), Jeddah, Saudi Arabia,
- The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Riyadh, Saudi Arabia,
- The Arab Centre for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD), Damascus, Syria, and
- The General Union of Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries (GUCCIAAC), Beirut, Lebanon.

723. For most of these Organizations, the initial contacts made during the Arab Summit in Damascus were followed by exchange of information and documents designed to prepare a legal and formal framework for cooperation. A precise programme for visits and working sessions, including the relevant Departments of the Commission, has already been drawn up by the Delegation.

- **Creating synergy between Specialized African and Arab Institutions**

724. In its 2008 programme of action, the Permanent Delegation intends to contribute to the creation of synergy between similar Arab and African institutions such as parliaments, peace and security councils as well as human rights commissions. Initial contacts in that direction were made by the Delegation during the Arab Summit in Damascus, Syria, in March 2008, notably between the two Parliaments. These were followed by consultations and the sensitization of the highest officials of the organisations concerned, as well as by the holding of working sessions to formalize their cooperation framework.

725. As for the activities of the Group of African Ambassadors, the Delegation continued to host and provide assistance not only to the ordinary meetings of the Group, but also to those of Regional Groups (SADC, Commonwealth, etc.) at which issues of common interest were examined.

726. Concerning relations with the host country, Egypt, the Delegation maintained close cooperation ties with the host country, with which it assisted delegations from the Headquarters in the organisation and facilitation of meetings such as:

- The meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of African Ministers of Industry (CAMI).
- The preparation of this Summit (Sharm El Sheik, Egypt, 2008).

### **C. GENEVA OFFICE**

727. During this first half of 2008, highly intensive activity occurred on the international diplomatic scene in Geneva, marked by multilateral negotiations on issues of major importance to the international community, the top strategies and approaches of which remain the eight Millennium Development Goals that the UN, through its Member States, has undertaken to achieve by 2015.

728. From WTO, whose current round of negotiations has a strong development aspect, to WIPO which places emphasis on the development agenda and the relation between Migration and development, to Human Rights, where the right to development is becoming increasingly important, all the organizations of the United Nations system and inter-governmental organizations are now addressing these key issues and it is up to Africa to take effective action in order to play a decisive role in negotiations and derive considerable benefits from this difficult, complex and arduous process.

729. The future strategy of the African Union's internal relations will largely depend on changes in the international arena which will have direct consequences at continental level on the future of regional and sub-regional Organizations and groupings, as well as at the level of African States and their political and economic choices.

730. In order to facilitate a common, coherent and interdependent African vision as regards various topical issues and to better address the challenges at diplomatic level, the Geneva Office focused its action on two types of activities, namely, coordination of and assistance to the African Group on the one hand, and representation of the African Union Commission (AUC) on the other hand.

731. In this respect, the Mission took the initiative to expand the possibilities for cooperation between the African Group and the leadership of International Organizations and Institutions based in Geneva and elsewhere by organizing regular encounters and meetings for exchange and consultations, as well as with the Representatives of the regional groups.

## **C.I. REPRESENTATION OF THE AUC**

### **HUMAN RIGHTS, HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS, PEACE AND SECURITY**

#### **Human Rights**

732. The 7<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Human Rights Council (HRC) was marked by the participation of H.E. Mrs. Julia JOINER, the Commissioner for Political Affairs, in the High-Level Segment, and Mrs. Sanji Mmasenono Monageng, the President of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights in the deliberations of the session. Their participation gave greater visibility, at the level of the International Community, to the work of the African Union (AU) and its human rights organs, particularly concerning the human rights situation in Africa in general and above all, the efforts deployed in Somalia and in Kenya.

733. The Mission provided support to the African Group in all the relevant meetings. In this context, the African Group particularly distinguished itself at the 7<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Human Rights Council by playing an active and decisive role on extremely important and sensitive issues relating to racism and racial discrimination, the modalities of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the review, rationalization and improvement of mandates (thematic and according to country) and in many other areas.

734. In fact, the African Group expressed itself with a single voice on issues of common interest to Africa, which facilitated the election by consensus of all the African candidates to the HRC Advisory Committee and the adoption of many resolutions, among which those on the following issues can be mentioned:

- The Sudan, under the terms of which the international community remains extremely concerned by the human rights situation in Darfur, while encouraging the efforts of this State to persevere with a view to obtaining more concrete results in the improvement of human rights conditions in this region. It is important to note that the African Union's efforts were fully recalled by the interventions of the Permanent Representation. In this regard, the Agreement on the establishment of the African Union and UN Hybrid Forces was greatly welcomed by the international community and moreover, served as a negotiation point for the African Troïka and the Sudan, which supported and presented it as a reasonable source of improvement in the

situation in Darfur. It was decided that the HRC should reconsider the situation in Darfur at its September 2008 session;

- The renewal of the mandate of the Independent Expert on Somalia who revisited the Declaration of Heads of State and Government of the African Union adopted at its 10<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa from 31 January to 2 February 2008, particularly concerning support to the call for the deployment of United Nations peacekeeping forces to take over from the African Union;
- The mandate of the Independent Expert on the DRC was not renewed according to the wish of the country concerned;
- Racism and racial discrimination; two resolutions were unanimously adopted by the HRC despite a few reservations, one on the Durban Review Conference and the second on the mandate of the Special Rapporteur.

735. Within the framework of the new mechanism, which is the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), nine (09) African States (Algeria, South Africa, Morocco and Tunisia for the 1<sup>st</sup> session, and Gabon, Ghana, Bénin, Zambia and Mali for the 2<sup>nd</sup> session) were considered. South Africa and Algeria certainly benefited from their experience acquired at the level of the African Peer Review Mechanism, which they voluntarily chose to undergo. It is important to note that African countries have also succeeded in taking up the challenge by subjecting themselves to this new international mechanism in complete confidence and serenity just like the countries which take the high moral ground or pose as judges as far as human rights are concerned.

736. The Mission, on behalf of the African Union Commission, during its interventions in the deliberations of the HRC, underscored the efforts made by the AUC in the promotion and protection of human rights. Thus, the Representation aroused the interest of the international community regarding the different African mechanisms in the area of human rights.

### **Humanitarian Affairs**

737. While providing increased support to the African Group throughout the deliberations, the AU Permanent Representation in Geneva followed with interest the 41<sup>st</sup> Session of the Standing Committee of the Executive Committee of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees held from 4 to 6 March 2008. The deliberations focused essentially on refugees and internally displaced person, the programme budgets and financing, international protection, regional activities and global programmes.

738. In their presentations, the HCR officials highlighted the cooperation of the HCR with the African Union Commission, particularly concerning the preparation of the Summit of African Heads of State and Government, which would focus on the issue of forced displacement in Africa and could adopt a legal instrument for the protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons in Africa. This new regional instrument will be the first of its kind in the world, in addition to the 1969 Convention on Refugees, and show the pioneering efforts of the African Union to overcome the challenges of the Continent.

## **Peace and Security**

739. In implementation of the recommendations of the last Assembly of the African Union held in Addis Ababa in February 2008, which called for the launching of substantial consultations on pending issues, the diplomatic scene in Geneva witnessed an important consultative meeting led by Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim and H.E Mr. Jan Eliasson, Special Envoys of the AU and the UN to the Sudan respectively, with different international and regional partners last March.

740. During his visit to Geneva, Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim met with the African Group to brief them on the security situation in Darfur. The AU Special Envoy reviewed the challenges that the joint mission encountered and the expected results, which could only be achieved with the participation of all the Sudanese actors.

### **B. ECONOMIC ISSUES, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

741. The activities were characterized mainly by the end of the crisis at the WIPO and enhanced cooperation between the ITU Secretariat and the African Group.

### **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**

742. WIPO activities were marked by four major events namely: the first session of the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP), the Twelfth Session of the WIPO Inter-governmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore, the forty-fourth series of meetings of Assemblies of WIPO Member States and the process leading up to the designation of a new Director General for WIPO. The main outcomes of these events were as follows:

743. For its first session, the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP) had the main task, among others, of drawing up a programme of work for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the 45 agreed Recommendations under the WIPO Development Agenda and to discuss issues pertaining to intellectual property and development agreed upon by the Committee and other issues decided by the General Assembly. These recommendations are intended to give a major thrust to the development of intellectual property in developing countries.

744. At its Twelfth Session, the WIPO Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore, reviewed progress made in order to agree on traditional cultural expression or the expression of folklore and traditional knowledge so that the WIPO Secretariat can prepare in view of its next session, documents on the assessment of existing international obligations, provisions and possibilities on the protection of these resources. The assessment will also cover existing shortcomings and options



available or likely to be drawn up to overcome the shortcomings recorded, particularly legal and other options at international, regional or national levels. The document will be made available in draft form by the Secretariat, and Committee members will be able to make their observations on the draft instrument before 30 June 2008. A final version will be published on 15 August 2008 for consideration by the Committee at its thirteenth session.

745. The Forty-fourth series of meeting of Assemblies of WIPO Member States and the process leading up to the appointment of a new Director General for WIPO paved the way for the adoption of the WIPO programme and budget for the 2008-2009 financial year and for progress in the process of selecting a new Director General of WIPO who will assume duty at the end of September 2008. The new Director General elected for a six-year term is of Australian nationality. He replaces Mr. Kamil Idriss of Sudanese nationality who has held the post since November 1997. The African Group was solicited by the fourteen candidates running for the post, and had the honour to receive them before the election.

### **International Telecommunications Union (ITU)**

746. Through the Geneva Office, cooperation between the International Telecommunications Union and the African Group has been significantly enhanced since the election of Mr. Hamadoun Touré as Secretary General of the ITU in 2006. The Geneva Office organized three meetings between Mr. Touré accompanied by his main associates and the African Group.

747. A briefing seminar for African Ambassadors and Experts was organized on 30 April 2008. During the session which recorded the attendance of many African Ambassadors and Experts, the ITU Director General, elected Directors of ITU Sectors and many other ITU officials, the following four topics were treated: outcomes of the World Radio communications Conference 2007, preparations for the World Radio communications Conference 2011, the "Connecting Africa" Summit and the "ITU Africa Telecom" Forum. ITU officials presented papers which were followed by contributions and reactions from members of the African Group, which showed appreciation for being better informed of ongoing activities at the ITU.

748. ITU officials called on the Group to mobilize and raise the awareness of African capitals so that African countries can get more involved in ITU activities.

749. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the ITU and the African Union Commission during the WSIS organized in November 2005 in Tunis. Mr. Touré's dynamism can serve as a catalyst for the implementation of that Agreement which not only fosters telecommunications development in Africa but also contributes to the consolidation of the integration process through continental level activities and projects.

## C. TRADE ISSUES

750. Trade related issues include activities of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the International trade Centre (ITC).

### **World Trade Organization (WTO)**

751. Since the beginning of the year 2008, there has been significant progress in the two main subjects under negotiation namely, agriculture including cotton and Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA). Indeed, new negotiating instruments were published in February and May 2008. Although relatively significant progress has been recorded in Agriculture where some concerns of the African Group have been taken into consideration and the number of topics of disagreement has reduced, the case has been different with the instrument on NAMA. The African Group is still worried about the need for greater market access, the reduction of agricultural subsidies, more substantial technical assistance, special and discriminatory treatment for developing countries, and the sustainable use and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of biodiversity resources especially.

### **United Nations Conference on Trade and Development**

752. The 12<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XII) was held from 20 to 25 April 2008 in Accra, Ghana on the theme "Addressing the opportunities and challenges of globalisation for development". The deliberations resulted in the adoption of a Declaration and an Agreement enshrining the principle of global partnership especially towards Sub-Saharan Africa where the gap in respect of forecasts on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals is most glaring. The Accra Agreement underscores the necessity for developing countries to concentrate their efforts in a global development partnership and a vibrant United Nations System that can fulfil the needs and concerns of all countries. The Accra Agreement calls for the strengthening of the three pillars of UNCTAD action namely, research and analysis, intergovernmental consensus building and technical assistance. It highlighted the importance of basic commodities, while identifying measures intended to mitigate the impact of the high fluctuation of the prices thereof. In this respect, the African Group expressed satisfaction with the establishment of an independent unit to be responsible for issues relating to basic commodities in order to find a rapid solution to the cyclical and structural problems experienced in the sector. UNCTAD XII was a success for Africa in terms of both the organization and the full dress debate. The African Group in Geneva was well prepared for the Conference and made considerable efforts that culminated in the consideration of African priorities adopted at the workshop organized last February in Montreux, Switzerland, by the African Union Permanent Representation as well as the Conference of African Ministers of Trade and Finance held on 3 April 2008 in Addis Ababa.

### **International Trade Centre (ITC)**

753. The International Trade Centre (ITC) is gradually adopting a pragmatic approach towards developing countries and economies in transition so that they can improve their exports. Accordingly, it is building a special relationship with Africa. The ITC collaborates closely with the AU Permanent Representation in Geneva in a bid to support and provide services to African countries. For now, the focus is on the improvement of productive capacity and the corporate spirit in Africa, while not sidelining the gender issue. Such collaboration is in line with the implementation of the Protocol Agreement signed between the AUC and the ITC in February 2007.

754. Regarding the JITAP Programme, the Geneva Representation has constantly supported the launch of a new phase of the programme (JITAP III). The UNCTAD II Accra Accord underscored the importance to African countries of the JITAP Programme with respect to paragraph 90.d thereof.

#### **D. SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

755. Social affairs concerned mostly activities by the World Health Organisation (WHO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

##### **World Health Organisation (WHO)**

756. Important meetings were organized by WHO during the first half of 2008, notably the 122<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Executive Council, the 1<sup>st</sup> session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body on a Protocol on Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products, the Intergovernmental Meeting on Pandemic Influenza Preparedness (IGM/PIP), the Interdisciplinary Working Group and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property (IGWG2). There were issues on which no agreement was reached, so these items were postponed for discussion either during the intersessional period or at subsequent sessions. The Permanent Representation, as usual, was engaged in coordinating activities, accompanying the African Group and building the capacities of the Group.

##### **International Labour Organisation (ILO)**

757. Activities were essentially marked by the 301<sup>st</sup> session of the Governing Body (GB) of the International Labour Office (ILO), whose discussions on Africa's concerns have continued to the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the Labour and Social Affairs Commission (LSAC) of the AU in Addis Ababa in April 2008 with a view to adopting a common African stance. In that connection, the issue of representation on the Governing Body remains one of the African Group's major concerns. To date, the Group has no titular member on the Board, despite the large number of African Member States of the ILO. Discussions on the issue will continue and the ILO Secretariat has been mandated to present, at the 303<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Governing Body, a new document on an option which will allow an increased in the number of non-elective seats, so that a fair geographic representation can be achieved. During the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the Labour and Social Affairs Commission (LSAC), apart from a to support the candidacy of the current Director General of the ILO for a third

term, the common position was adopted in respect of Africa's representation on the Board for the period 2008-2011. The AU Permanent Representation in Geneva assigned the duty of reporting regularly to the LSAC on activities of African GB members. The AU Permanent Representation in Geneva was involved in many of the meetings cited through its facilitation of the Geneva-based African Group's work.

### **International Organization for Migration (IOM)**

758. The migration issues concern a panoply of intricate topics and challenges, some of which are directly related to Africa's concerns. In that connection, the Group underscored the need for increased financial, administrative and technical support to IOM's work on the continent. The African Group highlighted several themes such as migrants' rights, migration and health, and offered concrete proposals, notably on the creation of an IOM Mission with regional scope (MRF) in the Central Africa region and of a capacity building centre in Africa. These concerns were forwarded to IOM, which reacted by setting up a special internal task force on Africa to explore the way forward. 2008 will be marked especially by the election of a new IOM Director General during the extraordinary session scheduled from 18 to 19 June 2008. Four candidates are vying for that position, including the outgoing Director General who is seeking a third term, and the African Group has not yet adopted a position on the issue.

## **C.II. AFRICAN GROUP ACTIVITIES AND CAPACITY BUILDING**

759. True to its main missions, the Geneva Mission focused its activities on coordination and support to the African Group and on strengthening their capacities. In that connection, it took and supported several initiatives by facilitating and organizing contacts, discussions, meetings and sessions between the African Group and other Regional Groups, on the one hand, and between the African Group and Principal Officers of international organizations and institutions based in Switzerland.

760. In addition to regular contacts by the Group's Coordinators with other regions, the Group strengthened its cooperation ties with members of the OIC, the Western Group, GRULAC and the Arab Group. These meetings enabled the African Group to harmonize its views on various issues with most of the other Regional Groups and to reach a consensus which led to either the adoption of common positions on issues under discussion and to strengthen a consensus position when resolutions were being adopted, or to win majority votes during elections.

761. With our Representation's support, the African Group's Troïka was able to strengthen its cooperation ties with the European Union's Troïka in Geneva by establishing regular dialogue and fruitful exchanges on issues of common interest, such as the human rights situation at HRC, WTO negotiations, migration, peace and security and particularly, the follow-up in Geneva of the EU-Africa joint conclusions adopted at the Lisbon Summit, held from 8 to 9 December 2007, and strengthening of partnership relations between the two Regional Groups.

762. On the other hand, the Mission, with support from Member States, was granted, for the first time since its creation, a programme budget for 2008. The purpose is to build the capacities of the African Group as they negotiate. This will enable them to better face the issues and challenges inherent in their efforts to enhance the knowledge of Group Members with a view to preparing them for new challenges and for the complexity inherent in a changing international diplomatic environment. In that regard, several workshops and seminars on a variety of subjects were organized for the Group, notably:

- **Human rights:** In preparation for the Review Conference in Durban, a seminar on the subject was organized on 5 April 2008, during which the Group reached agreement on a policy position that is currently serving as a real reference basis for the Groups work in that area.
- **WTO Trade negotiations:** Several seminars and workshops were organized for the Group. These included:
  - In order to give a strong political signal to WTO negotiators, the African Group, with support from the Representation in Geneva, prepared a Declaration which was adopted at a Joint Conference of African Ministers of Trade and Finance held in Addis Ababa on 3 April 2008. That Declaration was presented to various negotiating partners and is serving as a basis for African negotiators.
  - To prepare the proposals of the Group, in light of the instruments under discussion, the Permanent Representation, with support from the AU Commission, organized two seminars for the African Group. The proposals adopted are serving as a framework for action for the ongoing negotiations.
  - In other respects, and in partnership with the WTO Secretariat, the Representation in Geneva organized two training sessions, one in French and the other in English, on WTO issues for African diplomats who were not well acquainted with trade negotiation issues. At the end of these sessions, participants expressed their interest and the wish that such initiatives be renewed. In that connection, other training sessions are planned, including one session for African diplomats based in Addis Ababa.
- **Preparations for UNCTAD XII:** The African Group in Geneva made considerable efforts which resulted in the recognition, by partners, of African priorities adopted by the Permanent Delegation of the African Union in Montreux, Switzerland, at the Workshop held from 22 to 23 February 2008, and confirmed in the Declaration by the Conference of African Ministers of Trade and Finance held in Addis Ababa on 3 April 2008 and later included in the Accra Agreement.
- **Preparations for the 61<sup>st</sup> World Health Assembly:** With support from the AU Commission, the Permanent Delegation organized a workshop on health issues, a major discussion theme of which was the IGWG process and their importance in the search for solutions to issues of access to essential drugs, as well as of research and development in respect of diseases which

disproportionately affect developing countries. During these meetings, the Group underscored the need for a framework for action between the major agencies and institutions which deal with intellectual property and public health issues. In that connection, it was recommended that a platform for collaboration between WHO, WIPO and WTO should be established.

763. In addition and for the period under review, the Office organized over 64 meetings at ambassadorial level, 85 meetings at expert level and covered about 350 meetings organized by the United Nations and other International Organizations based in Geneva and Berne. In terms of correspondence, the Office received more than 2,364 letters and fax messages, and sent out over 680 letters and 12,259 fax messages. As for electronic mail, the Secretariat of the Office alone received over 3,988 e-mail messages.

### C.III. CONCLUSION

764. The Mission in Geneva, which serves as an interface between the Commission and International Organisations, has as far as possible fulfilled a good part of its mission of representing and defending the interests of the Commission and the African continent. Thus, a re-evaluation of the missions and means of regional Representational Offices, of a political and diplomatic nature, seem to be pertinent and urgent in the light of the international situation and the development of the course of events on the global scene. A pride of place is envisaged, for decades to come, for multilateral cooperation and diplomacy at the regional as well as international level.

765. Indeed, Geneva is gaining ground at the international level for multilateral negotiations, particularly on issues of international trade and development, human rights, health, labour and employment, migration, refugees and displaced persons in Africa.

766. At the level of this Mission, tangible results have been obtained despite the limited resources. To enable this Representational Office to carry out its programmes and activities more effectively, it is necessary that the African Union Commission provide it with:

- Premises that can fittingly receive the African Group and all the African missions based in Geneva, the number of which exceeds 45 missions;
- A programme budget enabling it to permanently strengthen the capacity of African negotiators in Geneva and consolidate the common positions of the African Group;
- An efficient workforce, as regards quality as much as quantity;
- The resources to enable it to backstop the Group in its numerous activities covering various fields;
- Financing enabling it to participate in meetings and conferences organised by the African Union Commission on issues of interest at the level of different organisations based in Geneva.

767. For our Organisation, the moment is very propitious to invest in the medium and long term by reinforcing its Representational Offices of a political and diplomatic nature to be able to face up to the challenges, defend the interests of the Continent, promote the corporate identity of the Organisation and occupy its rightful place in accordance with the spirit and letter of the new Vision of the African Union, its new dynamics and its various support mechanisms within the different international fora.

#### **D. SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL OFFICE (SARO) - LILONGWE**

768. In the framework of its mandate, the African Union Southern Africa Regional Office (AU-SARO) monitored the political, economic, and social development as well as integration processes in the region. The Office elaborated and promoted African Union integration agenda with all stakeholders in the region in the context of developments in the region and in the world.

#### **D.I. POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SITUATION IN THE REGION**

769. During this period, the Southern Africa region continued largely to maintain political stability and economic growth. The countries in the region continued to take measures to enhance good governance, democracy, human rights and accountability. The augmentation of democracy in the region was partly illustrated in the smooth transition of power in Botswana within the ruling party, the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), on 31 March 2008, ahead of the general elections scheduled for October 2009. On 29 March 2008, Zimbabwe had a peaceful and orderly Harmonized Elections and is in the process of completing the Presidential aspect which requires a run-off on 27 June 2008. Other elections scheduled for 2009 are, Angola (between May & August), South Africa (April), Malawi (May) and Mozambique (November/December 2008).

770. The region as a whole sustained the economic growth level which it attained at the end of 2007. The average economic growth rate for the region is about 7 per cent. The principal objective of the countries in the region is to improve on this performance, in order to attain the targets of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, there are concerns over the possible adverse impact of the rising world oil price and increases in food price on future economic growth. Rising oil price could necessitate increase in external borrowing and lead to higher cost of production. Increases in food prices could also have the undesirable effect of accentuating poverty if there are no corresponding

increases in wages. Broadly, individual actions by countries are directed at mitigating the adverse impacts of both on economic growth process.

771. Health issues continue to remain high in the agenda of most countries. HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other infectious diseases are accorded priorities nationally and receiving the support of the international community. For the first time, the International Candlelight Memorial Commemoration was held in Lilongwe, Malawi on 18 May 2008. This is generally an event to give hope to people affected by the pandemic worldwide. The decision to hold the event in Southern Africa amounts to substantial confidence and moral support for the efforts of the countries in the region in their fight against the pandemic.

772. Migration and refugees are important issues defying solutions in the region. The destination of immigrants and refugees essentially continue to be South Africa the most developed country in the region. Migration derives from poor economic conditions at home and the need for greener pastures, employment opportunities and better standard of living; in housing, food and health. Refugees originate from areas of internal political crisis such as civil war and or inter-state conflict. Like migrants, the rationale for movement is the desire to live in politically and economically stable environment where they could secure employment and better standard of living.

773. The major countries of origin in both were Somalia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Rwanda and Zimbabwe. In the movement towards South Africa, some migrants and refugees end up in some countries in the region, especially in Malawi and Zambia as a result of lack of resources to proceed further. Besides, it has also been noted that there are movements of migrants from Malawi and Mozambique to South Africa.

774. Most of the countries in the region are signatories to the United Nations and AU Conventions on refugees. However, the problem is the extent to which these countries are prepared to absorb the migrants and refugees. Some countries have developed additional national policies and institutions to cope with issues related to emigrants and refugees. They have also coordinated with the related United Nations agencies and AU Commission to solve these problems. However, these notwithstanding, the conditions of migrants and refugees in transit and country of destination are still far from satisfactory. Migrants and refugees are raising a host of issues in destination countries: employment, housing, security, and health. At the extreme, they could lead to social upheavals, if their presence is strongly resisted by the deprived section of the population, as noted recently in South Africa, the outburst of attacks on migrants in Alexandra on 12 May 2008. The South African government has strongly condemned these attacks and is taking action towards its termination. There would be a need to assist those countries that cannot do so, in the development or enhancement of relevant and institutional arrangements, to cope with these problems.

775. Natural disasters generally influence the character of economic growth. Following heavy rains early in the year, there were massive floods in the Zambezi basin region. The countries that were particularly affected were Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. This necessitated the movement of



large population in these countries from low areas to higher grounds. Some countries received the support of the international organizations to address this problem. In addition to this, an earthquake hit the Eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Western part of Uganda in February 2008. The earthquake which measured 5.4 on the Richter scale resulted in major damages to houses and the loss of life. But it is clear that the countries in the region would require improved Early Warning Systems and better contingency plans to address natural disasters.

## **D.II. INTEGRATION IN SADC AND COMESA**

776. The cooperation with the AU and deepening of integration continued in both integration arrangements. In January 2008, the Protocol on Relations of the RECs with the AU was signed by both RECs. In SADC, integration activities among other things included, (a) the Meeting of SADC Ministers Responsible for Land and Land Reform, which met in Johannesburg, South Africa, 25 -27 March 2008, to discuss progress on the establishment of land reform facility, (b) the SADC Summit on Poverty and Development was held in Pailles, Mauritius, 18 – 20 April 2008. The concluding Declaration, inter alia, called for urgent attention to achieve food security, address climate change and accelerating development, rehabilitation and maintenance of infrastructure for regional integration. In COMESA, the deepening of integration was further advanced through the Joint Meeting of the Ministers of Trade, Finance and Industry, which was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 4 – 5 April 2008. The Joint Meeting essentially discussed preparatory activities for the establishment of Customs Union in December 2008.

## **D.III. ACTIVITIES WITH AU DEPARTMENTS, RECS AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

777. The harnessing of the synergies of AUC Departments, RECs and Regional Organizations with those of AU-SARO are vital to the latter's execution of its mandate. Cooperation was basically in the promotion of better understanding and implementation of AU Declarations and Decisions on integration and development in Africa and in the articulation of regional positions on integration and development.

778. The Office was engaged in a number of economic activities where regional or continental economic policies were evaluated and articulated, such as the Consultative Meeting on the Implementation of the First Action Plan of the Africa-EU Joint Strategy, held in Maseru, Lesotho, 14 – 15 April 2008. Further, the Office represented the Commission at the "2008 Annual Meetings of the African Development Bank Group", held in Maputo, Mozambique, 13 – 15 May 2008. One of the events at the meetings was the Ministerial Symposium on the theme "Fostering Shared Growth: Urbanization, Inequalities, and Poverty in Africa". It was acknowledged that many cities in Africa are in the throes of rapid urbanization but that slums are the unacceptable concomitants of this development. The trend would

be intensified in the coming years. African countries are encouraged to take appropriate policy measures to address the related social infrastructure problems.

779. The report on the overall continental economic performance for 2007 was encouraging, an average growth of 5.9 percent. This, among other things, reflected consistency in sound macroeconomic performance, good commodity prices and favourable climatic conditions. The continent has not been significantly affected by USA sub-prime mortgage crisis that has hit other regions of world. Generally, shareholders expressed satisfactions on the performance of AfDB and urged it to intensify its capacity building, expand its decentralization, support urbanization projects to address poverty and increase support for African integration.

780. In the area of Women, Gender and Development, the Office lended support to the Directorate of Women, Gender and Development, which, in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Republic of Malawi, organized the first AU Continental Conference on the “Economic Empowerment of African Women in the Context of Integration”, in Lilongwe, Malawi, 17 – 19 March 2008. The objectives of the Conference included the re-examination of the status of implementation of Action Plans on the Empowerment of Women and to propose mechanisms for the creation of an African Women Trust Fund.

781. In the political field, the Office worked with the Department of Political Affairs and was appointed as the Co-ordinator for the Pre-election Assessment Mission of the Harmonized Elections in Zimbabwe, 3 – 11 March 2008 and the AU Observer Mission during the conduct of the elections on 29 March 2008.

782. The Office further interacted with the African Commission on Human & Peoples Rights during its promotional mission to Malawi. The purpose of the mission was to increase awareness on the function of the AU African Commission on Human & Peoples Rights in the relevant government departments, institutions and civil societies in Malawi.

783. In relation with RECs, the Office provides regular information on integration and development activities of the AUC to all RECs in the region, while maintaining close working relationships with the UNECA-Southern Africa and other relevant regional organizations in support to RECs and the region in their integration and development programmes.

784. In this connection, the Office was invited to participate in the Southern Africa Development Forum on Progress and Prospects in the Implementation of Protocols in Southern Africa, organized by the UNECA-SA from 29 to 31 May 2008 in Lusaka, Zambia. The Forum discussed the extent and difficulties in the implementation of Protocols in Southern Africa RECs and came up with proposals on the elimination of the bottlenecks in the implementation of Protocols in the region.

785. The Office participated in the Regional Workshop on Land Administration organized by World Bank Institute (WBI) and SADC in Lilongwe, Malawi, from 12 – 15 May 2008. As is known, land is a critical issue in the economic development process of Southern Africa countries and efforts are constantly being made by the countries and independent research bodies to find solutions to its

diverse problems. The Workshop focused on international experience on land administration, formulation, implementation of land policies, using conventional and alternative approaches to provide land tenure and security.

786. With regard to the Guidance, Counselling and Youth Development Centre for Africa (GCYDCA), the Office continued to facilitate the activities of GCYDCA as appropriate. The Office participated in the courses on Regional Training on Peer Health Education on 15 January 2008 and on Mental Health Training for Facilitators on 22 February 2008. Both courses aim at building the capacity of African youth for sustainable development in the continent.

787. Concerning the activities of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in the region, the organization convened the One Village One Product (OVOP) International Seminar from 22 to 24 January 2008. The Office was invited to present a statement at the Opening Session. The OVOP, first developed in Japan in 1975, is a classical example of how focus on the production of one product in a given village location, can through cooperative effort, rapidly expand production, and lead to the alleviation of poverty in that location. The Seminar brought together the exponents of OVOP from Japan and several African countries including those that have established OVOP or its variations to share experiences in program implementation. The main purpose was to ensure how this program could be more effectively implemented in Africa as part of the strategy for the reduction of poverty in the region.

788. In respect to the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA), the AU-SARO continued to cooperate with the MIDSA, a body that seeks greater understanding of the related problems and the articulation of possible solutions. The Office participated in the Workshop on “Regional Protection Mechanisms for Victims of Human Trafficking” organized by MIDSA in Durban, South Africa, from 23 – 25 April 2008. The Workshop examined the current mechanisms, needs and challenges confronting Southern Africa countries in their efforts to protect the victims in human trafficking.

789. In the field of advocacy in Southern Africa, the Office took actions to promote the AU in the region during this period through delivering, on 2 May 2008, a Public Lecture on “African Union (AU): A Vital Strategy for Africa’s Development in a Changing international Economic Environment” at the Mzuzu University, Mzuzu, Malawi. The paper stressed the importance of collective continental approach to multilateral negotiations in World Trade Organization (WTO) in order to secure trade benefits, the need for a strengthened continental regional economic integration in view of the lack of progress in the WTO Doha Round.

790. Finally, the Office continued to organize the monthly meetings of the African Group and SADC Group in Lilongwe. The discussions were centred on the political, economic and social development in Africa and the trends in international economic issues, international trade and capital transfer and their implications for African countries especially those in the Southern Africa region.

## **E. NEW YORK OFFICE**

791. The Mission continued its activities in various fields as follows:

## E.I. PEACE AND SECURITY MATTERS

792. Regarding the issue of Darfur, the AU Mission facilitated cooperation between the AU and the UN on the transition from AMIS to UMAMID and monitored the Council's consideration of the two Reports of the Secretary General on 8 February 2008 and on 11 March 2008. The AU Mission contributed to the three Meetings of Troop and Police Contributing Countries held at the UN. The Mission also followed up the briefing by the Joint Special Representative of UNAMID, Rodolphe Adada, and the UN Under Secretary-General, John Holmes, in the Security Council on 22 April 2008 which discussed progress and constraints in the deployment of UNAMID. During the meetings of the Sudan Contact Group in New York, the AU Mission continued to re-iterate the crucial need to support the deployment of the outstanding pledges of African TCCs. In their letter dated 11 April 2008, the Contact Group urged the UN Secretary General to appoint the Joint Chief Mediator to lead the UN/AU peace process in Darfur and to work with all stakeholders. The Mission also participated in meetings of the "Friends of UNAMID" during which clarification on assistance needed to help African TCCs was provided.

793. Regarding Somalia, the Mission briefed the UN Security Council on 15 February 2008 on the situation of AMISOM and on the proposals of the AU PSC endorsed by the AU Assembly in Addis Ababa. It also reiterated the need to refocus international attention on Somalia and to ensure that concerted efforts are conducted with a view to promoting lasting peace. The Security Council adopted Resolution 1801 (2008) of 20 February 2008, authorizing the extension of AMISOM for a further six-month period and Resolution 1811 (2008) of 29 April 2008 extending the mandate of the Monitoring Group for a further six months. Further to the Secretary General's report of 14 March 2008, the Council adopted Resolution 1814(2008) on 15 May 2008, which among other things, welcomed the comprehensive integrated UN Strategy for peace and stability and contingency planning for the possible deployment of a UN Peace-keeping operation to succeed AMISOM, as proposed by the Secretary General.

794. The AU Mission also continued to monitor **Security Council and other UN efforts towards addressing the situations in Chad, Western Sahara, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Great Lakes Region and the situation between Ethiopia and Eritrea.**

795. Regarding the role of the regional organizations in maintenance of international Peace and Security, the AU Mission facilitated the participation of the African Union in the UN Security Council high-level debate held on 16 April 2008, chaired by the President of the Republic of South Africa. The debate discussed key issues, particularly, the funding of peacekeeping operations mandated by the UN and conducted by regional organizations. In this connexion, the Secretary-General proposed to set up an African Union –United Nations panel to consider the modalities of such support and Resolution 1809(2008) was adopted in

this respect. On 17 April 2008, the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council held their 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting in New York to share work experience and information on current conflicts and to seek means of preventing them. The meeting agreed to enhance the relationship between all the relevant structures of the UNSC and the AUPSC and welcomed the AU Peacekeeping support Team established by the UN.

796. Regarding the Palestinian question, the AU Mission continued to monitor the UN efforts, particularly those of the UN Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which organized the Seminar on Assistance to Palestinian people in Amman in February 2008, and the International Conference on Palestine Refugees in April 2008 in Paris, where the AU Mission represented the Commission. The meeting reiterated that a durable solution to the Palestine refugee problem could only be achieved in the context of their inalienable right of return to their homes, and called on the UN to exercise its permanent responsibility as a custodian of international legitimacy. The meeting also welcomed the generous assistance pledged by the international community towards the peace process.

## E.II. PEACEBUILDING AND POST CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

797. The Mission continued to monitor and support the efforts of the Peace-building Commission (PBC) on the three African pilot countries under its consideration. In January 2008, the PBC country-specific configuration on Sierra Leone adopted an action plan for the implementation of its Cooperation Framework for the January-June period. The field mission conducted by the PBC in April 2008 and the high-level meeting of stakeholders and international institutions held on 19 May 2008 in New York were significant steps in the process. It is to be noted that the Security Council in accordance with resolution S/RES/1793 of 21 December 2007, which extended the mandate of UNIOSIL until 30 September 2008, is considering the drawdown of this Mission, as well as specific proposals on the successor office in Sierra Leone.

798. The major developments in the new Guinea-Bissau country-specific configuration include its exploratory visit to the country in January 2008 and the adoption of the two-track approach (peacebuilding efforts coupled with the development of quick impact projects). On 21 February 2008, Mr. Martinho N'Dafa Cabi, the Prime Minister of Guinea Bissau briefed the PBC on the situation in Guinea Bissau and described the priorities and challenges of peace consolidation, notably the security sector reform, combating corruption and restoring fiscal discipline, rebuilding public administration and improving the climate for private investment.

799. The **Burundi Configuration** pursued its work, including the field mission of May 2008 and visits to international financial institutions and donor countries towards strengthening awareness on the need to support the country. The AU Mission continued to highlight the efforts of the African Union through the African Mission in Burundi, the South African Facilitation, the AU Special Forces in Burundi and the Regional Peace Initiative for Burundi.

### **E.III. POLITICAL AFFAIRS**

800. With respect to the UN Security Council Reform, the President of the General Assembly convened a meeting for the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters related to the Security Council on 10 April 2008 aimed at setting the groundwork for intergovernmental negotiations. He appointed the Permanent Representative of Djibouti as a new member of this Task Force which initiated rounds of consultations with all Member States. In implementation of the Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.184 (X) on the Security Council Reform, several brainstorming sessions were organized within the African Group in New York. The Committee of Ten at Permanent Representatives level also continued to work towards the promotion of the African Common position.

801. The Mission also took part in the meeting of the Joint Monitoring Group (JMG) of the Special Representatives of the signatories of the Nairobi Communiqué of 9 November 2007 held in New York on 18 April 2008. The meeting was briefed on the military and humanitarian situations. The MONUC was encouraged to make the reports of the Joint Verification Mechanism (JVM) investigations available to the Members of the JMG. The Governments of DRC and Rwanda, as well as the United Nations committed themselves to immediately initiate the JVM investigations, and international partners pledged to consider further funding to support the ongoing activities.

### **E.IV. NON-PROLIFERATION, DISARMAMENT AND COUNTER-TERRORISM**

802. The AU Mission worked closely with the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs in preparation for the Sub-regional seminar organized through the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa on the theme "Promoting the Universality of certain conventional Weapons (CCW) and its annexed protocols for West and East Africa" in April 2008 in Lome, Togo. The Mission held various exchanges with the three UN Counter-terrorist bodies, (namely the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), United Nations Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) and the 1540 Committee, during which the strengthening of cooperation towards assisting African Member States in implementing the UN counter-terrorism resolutions was stressed. The Mission also continued to re-iterate the call by the AU for support towards its Counter-terrorist efforts, including those of the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACRST) in Algiers. The office continues to monitor the deliberations of the substantive session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations which opened on 4 April 2008.

### **E.V. FACILITATION OF THE WORK OF THE AFRICAN GROUP**

803. The AU Mission facilitated the organization of more than 40 meetings of the African Group at ambassadorial level and at expert level. On 8 January 2008, the African Group was briefed by the UN Secretary General on his

priorities regarding Africa, namely the MDGs and Peace and Security in Africa. The Group was also briefed by several representatives of various UN agencies and departments. The African Group mainly focused on items on the agenda of the 62nd session of the General Assembly. This included thematic issues such as the MDGs, Climate Change, Food Crisis, HIV/AIDs, Counterterrorism, UN mandate review, Genocide in Rwanda. The Group held several brainstorming sessions on UN Security Council Reform.

804. The AU Mission further facilitated other African Group activities. This included working luncheons with the UN Deputy Secretary General on 26th and 27th March 2008 on the work of the MDG Africa Steering Group, consultative interaction between the Troikas of the African Group and the European Union on 12 March 2008 which discussed reform within various UN departments, the allocation of resources for African development and preparations for the celebration of Africa Day at the UN on 28 May 2008.

## **E.VI. AFRICAN CANDIDATURES IN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM**

805. The AU Mission facilitated African Group activities on African candidatures in the international system. Africa was successful in elections already held during the 62nd Session in 17 subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC. During this reporting period, Ambassador Cheick Diarra (Mali) was appointed as UN Under Secretary General, Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (UN-OHRLLS). Ambassador Said Djinnit (Algeria) was appointed to the high post of Special Representative of UN Secretary General for West Africa. The AU Mission also presented the African regime on candidatures in the international system in a meeting organized by UNITAR in April 2008, which noted the success of Africa for elective posts, and its persisting under representation in appointive positions.

## **E.VII. ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**

806. The AU Mission followed up various meetings pertaining to economic issues at the UN General Assembly (GA), and the UN ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies. On 10-11 February 2008, the General Assembly's high-level debate on "Addressing Climate Change" highlighted the need to support the negotiating process launched in Bali and to focus on immediate practical action through effective partnerships, bearing in mind the ongoing commitment to support the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The severe effect of climate change on Africa was stressed and its threat on efforts for poverty eradication and on sustainable development achievements.

807. The 39th session of the High-level Forum on Official Statistics organized by the UN Statistics Division from 26 to 29 February 2008 focused on the relevance, integrity and innovation of "official statistics". The 41st Session of the Commission on Population and Development in April 2008 focused on the special themes of population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and

development. During the session, the growing urbanization of the world population and its implications for development issues such as poverty and the environment were discussed. The UN Commission on Sustainable Development held its 16th Session from 7 to 16 May 2008, and opened a two year-cycle aimed at tackling issues critical to increasing the global food supply. The session addressed thematic issues including agriculture; rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa.

808. With regard to the Millennium Development Goals, the Mission facilitated the participation of AUC delegation to the Africa Working and Steering Group meetings in New York, in 28 February and 10 March 2008. The key international commitments and opportunities for scaling up were discussed, as well as support for African Governments towards achieving MDGs. The Africa Steering Group identified the specific achievable results, organizations that can provide policy leadership and multilateral financing mechanisms. The lack of aid predictability and the sustainability of the process were stressed. The UN General Assembly also held a thematic debate held from 1 to 4 April, 2008 on the theme "Recognizing the achievements, addressing the challenges and getting back on track to achieve the MDGs by 2015". The meeting focused on the poverty and hunger, education and health MDGs and emphasized the high-level General Assembly meeting on Africa's development needs on 22 September 2008 and the high-level event on MDGs on 25 September 2008. These meetings are expected to provide critical opportunities to rally global support, announce concrete new initiatives, or provide detailed timetables towards achieving MDGs.

## **E.VIII. SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

809. The AU Mission monitored various meetings pertaining to social issues at the UN General Assembly (GA). The 46th session of the Commission for Social Development (COSD) held from 6 to 15 February 2008 in New York. The two-week review and policy cycle meeting assessed, inter alia, progress and challenges of the relevant UN plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups. The side event was organized by the European Union on the 6th February 2008 entitled "stronger partnership for extending social protection coverage", during which the AU Mission presented the perspectives from the AU, on behalf of the Commission. The COSD session adopted 7 resolutions, including the one on the Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD).

810. The UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) held its 52<sup>nd</sup> session from 28 February to 7 March 2008, on the priority theme "Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women". The AU Mission facilitated the participation of the AUC delegation in the CSW and the organization, in collaboration with UNIFEM, of the AU ministerial capacity building workshop on 27 February 2008. Six Resolutions were adopted including the Agreed conclusions on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women, and the Resolution on Ending Female Genital Mutilation.

811. The AU Mission participated in the World Autism Awareness Day on 2nd April 2008 in accordance with Resolution A/RES/ 62/139 which



encouraged all stakeholders to raise public awareness of autism and discussed the challenges, responsibilities and actions of various parties, in particular the need to eliminate stigma associated with autism. The AU Mission also attended the meeting on Diabetes, Women and Development on 8 April 2008 which spotlighted the adverse relationship between diabetes and women and the need for public policy community to incorporate these critical concerns into international protocols. The meeting discussed policy recommendations on diabetes relating to MDGs pertaining to the empowerment of women, maternal health and infant mortality. The AU further attended the presentation on the “Follow-up to the 10th anniversary of the International Year of the family and beyond” on 6th May 2008 in accordance with the Resolution 62/129, which introduced the Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development. The AU Mission continued to follow up humanitarian issues and, in this regard, participated in the debate on human trafficking held on 3 June 2008 which addressed the way forward in the global fight against trafficking. Proposals were made towards improving cooperation and coordination of actions on combating trafficking in persons.

812. The AU Mission followed up and facilitated the participation of the AUC in the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS of 10-11 June 2008 in accordance with the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS adopted in June 2006 pertaining to annual reviews of the progress achieved in realizing the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS entitled “Global Crisis-Global Action”. The meeting also considered the Secretary General’s report, the progress made, outstanding challenges and sustainable ways to overcome them.

## **E.IX. MULTILATERAL INTERACTION.**

813. The AU Mission took active part in the preparation of the first annual worldwide commemoration of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade on 25 March 2008 jointly organized with CARICOM, the UN and other stakeholders, as a contribution to the implementation of AU the decision EX.CL/Dec.408 (XII). On this occasion, the decision to erect a permanent memorial at the United Nations was taken. The event featured a keynote address on “The 200th anniversary of the Abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade in the United States” by Harry Belafonte, artistic performances and a reception hosted by the AU and CARICOM.

814. The AU Mission also took part in the interactive forum on languages for peace jointly organized by the Organization Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) and the United Nations University (UNU) on 18 March 2008 and in the panel on the World Report on regional integration on 9 April 2008, organized by the UNU. The AU Mission also represented the Commission in Fort de France, Martinique to pay tribute in the memory of the late legendary author of negritude and politician, Aimé Césaire, who relentlessly fought against colonialism. The AU Mission had also various contributions to events organized by NGOs, CSOs and educational & research institutions.

## **E.X. DOCUMENTATION/ COMMUNICATION**

815. The AU Mission further developed its website which greatly facilitated the communication with the public. The establishment of a Documentation Centre is in progress. The AU Mission duly serviced all meetings of the African Group and the Summit decisions and various communiqués of the AU Peace and Security Council were made available to the concerned UN organs and the African Group in New York. The persisting challenge of meeting the great demand of AU documents remains to be addressed and requires the use of skills offered by the modern technology.

## **F. WASHINGTON D.C. OFFICE**

816. During the period under review, a major focus of the Mission's efforts was on the implementation of Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.39 (XII) on the purchase of property to accommodate the Mission. All relevant documentation and information related to properties identified for purchase have been submitted to the AU Commission for further guidance.

817. The Mission also continued to consolidate its presence and carry out its advocacy functions. The Permanent Representative featured at various foras and Universities in Washington and other States delivering keynote statements on the activities of the AU Mission as well as the African Union programmes and initiatives. In this respect, the Permanent Representative carried out a working visit to the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Cancer Society and the Carter Centre in Atlanta, Georgia.

818. Within the framework of its mandate, the Permanent Representative briefed the African Group of Ambassadors accredited to the United States of America on the outcome of the January 2008 AU Summit Meetings and disseminated all decisions and reports related thereto. The Mission continued to monitor developments both at the level of the African Group and the US Congress on PEPFAR, High Education and the new Trade Legislature proposed as a successor to AGOA. The Mission strongly advises on the need for a more coordinated and coherent African approach under the ambit of the AU Commission to ensure Africa's collective leadership and ownership.

819. The Mission participated in the annual Spring Meetings of the World Bank and IMF and provided necessary support to the AUC Representative. The Mission remained engaged with the World Bank on the various areas of cooperation identified in the impending AU/World Bank MOU. A timely finalization and signing of the MOU is strongly recommended.

820. The Mission co-organized a Briefing with the International Foundation on Electoral Systems (IFES) with several African Ambassadors and/or

their representatives. The IFES Chief of party Mr. Carl Dundas briefed the meeting highlighting the following:

- Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec 300(X) adopted in Banjul in June 2006 which led to the establishment of the USA-AU Democracy and Electoral Assistance Unit (DEAU),
- He further outlined the objectives of the DEAU, the envisaged work plan as well as the Electoral Assistance Fund. On this latter point, the IFES Chief of Party elaborated on the goals and modus operandi of the fund.

821. The Mission in collaboration with the World Bank Group-IMF African Society, organized events to commemorate the Africa Environment Day on the theme: "Will Africa's Commitment to Global Environmental agreement undermines its economic growth?"

822. In conclusion, it cannot be overemphasized that the effective functioning of the Mission requires the speedy acquisition of a permanent accommodation, the full complement of staff stipulated by the Maputo Decision and, a review of the current structure of the Mission.

## **VI. CONCLUSION**

823. The Report has endeavoured to cover all aspects of the activities carried out by the Commission during the last six months. As we mentioned right from the outset, many programmes and activities were undertaken in accordance with the mandate of the Commission. Evaluating their real impact remains a challenge to be taken up so as to move forward on sound and solid bases, thus enabling us to achieve the results expected by the AU policy organs and the people of Africa. Indeed, the objective sought is to ensure that in future the Commission is judged by its true contribution in concrete terms and not by decisions that are often repetitive and ineffective on the ground. The challenge is fully shared with Member States who, while expecting results in a sort of delivery contract concluded between them and the Commission, must provide the latter with the necessary resources to enable it to fully honour its part of the contract. Similarly, Member States must show commitment to the decisions taken within the Union and ensure their effective implementation on the ground. In this way, the Union will be able to move resolutely forward with the continental integration project. The Commission reaffirms its unfailing commitment to play its part and thereby achieve with the full support of Member States, the tasks assigned to it.

2008

# Introductory note of the chairperson to the activity report of the commission

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