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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

P. O. Box 3243

Telephone: 5517 700

Fax: 5517844

Website: [www.Africa-union.org](http://www.Africa-union.org)

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**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE**

**Twentieth Ordinary Session**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**PRC/8(XX)**

**REPORT ON THE  
SPECIAL EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUND  
FOR DROUGHT AND FAMINE IN AFRICA  
(SEAF)**

## REPORT ON THE SPECIAL EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUND FOR DROUGHT AND FAMINE IN AFRICA

### Background

1. The decision to establish the Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa (SEAF) was taken by 20<sup>th</sup> Ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the then Organization of African Unity (OAU) held in Addis Ababa, in November 1984. The Statute of the Fund was adopted during the 21<sup>st</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 18 to 20 July 1985.
2. The principal objectives of SEAF are to provide emergency assistance to African countries affected by drought and/or famine and to provide immediate financial and material assistance in support of national activities and programs which are designed to reduce the impact of drought and/or famine in Africa. The token support by the Fund is meant to express solidarity with affected countries and urge the international community to provide the necessary support to avoid human sufferings and damages.
3. The resources of the Fund come from voluntary contributions by Member States, organizations, associations and individuals as well as statutory contribution by the African Union. To date, the Fund was able to generate a total of **US\$40,005,165** from the above sources. Financial resources of the Fund are managed and administered by the African Development Bank (ADB).
4. The supreme organ of the Fund is the PRC-Sub Committee on SEAF composed of 15 Member States. The Sub-Committee is responsible, among others, for determining the policy of the Fund; approving emergency relief assistance and determining terms and conditions for awarding grants or loans and formulating programs of financial resource mobilization in and outside Africa. The Sub-Committee so far held 26 ordinary and 16 extra-ordinary sessions.
5. The Fund gives assistance by way of grants and/or loans. According to the new criteria for granting loans and/or subventions approved during the 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Policy Committee of SEAF, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in June 1999, the maximum grant to be approved for a request submitted by governmental institutions is US\$500,000 while the ceiling for grants accorded to Non-Governmental Organizations (Village Cooperatives, Associations for Drought Control) is fixed at US \$150,000. The maximum amount to be granted for an exceptional food aid shall not exceed the sum of US \$200,000.
6. Any Member State wishing to benefit from the Fund should transmit its request, together with detailed project proposal, to the AU Commission. The African Union Commission, having received the request will further process it and present it for the consideration of the Sub-Committee. If the request is approved by the Sub-Committee, the same will be communicated to the beneficiary country and it would be invited to sign grant/loan Agreement with the African Union. The Agreement

elaborates duties and obligations of each of the parties. The Commission will then forward copy of the grant Agreement, together with bank details and other necessary documents, to the African Development Bank and officially request the Bank to release the approved amount to the beneficiary country.

7. Consistent with the above procedure, to date, the Sub-Committee approved 83 projects in 34 African countries (60% of the AU member states) and two regional organizations. The total cost of these projects reached US\$37,741,130. Projects financed by the Fund included direct food aid, water development, reforestation, locust control, irrigation development and other programs targeted at enhancing agricultural production and ensuring food security in the beneficiary countries.

8. Quarterly financial reports received from the African Development Bank indicate that no new contributions were received for the past several years while the number of requests for grants from the Fund during these times was continuously on the increase side. As a result of these paradoxical situations the resources of the Fund are continuously depleting. The net operation balance of the Fund at the moment is US\$2,515,174.

#### **ACTIVITIES SINCE JANUARY 2010**

9. Since January 2010 the PRC Sub-Committee on the Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa held two Extra-Ordinary Sessions to consider requests from Burundi, Uganda and Niger.

#### **15<sup>th</sup> Extra-Ordinary Session of PRC Sub-Committee on SEAF**

10. The 15th Extra-Ordinary Session of the PRC Sub-Committee on the Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa (SEAF) was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 26 March 2010, to consider the request from Burundi and Uganda.

11. Having considered the request, the 15th Session decided to award to the Government of Burundi, a grant for food aid in the sum of US\$200,000 to mitigate **the plight of the 14,600 families in Bugabira and Busoni, affected by recurrent drought and famine.**

12. The Sub Committee also awarded the Government of Uganda, a grant for disaster management and food aid in the sum of US\$500,000 to alleviate the sufferings of the survivors of the devastating mud-land slide in Bududa, Eastern part of Uganda, which left about 350 people killed and more than 700 families displaced.

13. The Sub-Committee conveyed its deepest condolences to the Governments and peoples of the two sisterly countries and called upon Member States of the African Union, Regional and International Organizations as well as donor agencies and the international community at large to provide the required financial and material support to the Governments of Burundi and Uganda to enable them comprehensively address the aftermath of the devastating situations in their respective countries.

### **16<sup>th</sup> Extra-Ordinary Session of the PRC Sub-Committee on SEAF**

14. The PRC Sub-Committee on the Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa (SEAF) held its 16<sup>th</sup> Extra-Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 12 May 2010 to considered the alarming food shortages in Niger, which put more than 3.5 million people under a very critical situation, and agreed to allocate a grant in the sum of US\$200,000 for food aid to mitigate the plight of the affected people.

15. The Sub-Committee conveyed its deepest condolences to the peoples of Niger and called upon Member States of the African Union, Regional and International Organizations as well as donor agencies and the international community at large to provide the required financial and material support to address the huge food deficit in Niger. The Sub-Committee requested the African Union Commission to explore the most appropriate way to channel the approved grant to the affected people in Niger.

16. The 16<sup>th</sup> Session also considered the worsening financial situation of the Fund and decided on provisional measures to reduce the amount of support for disaster management from US\$500,000 to US\$200,000 and for food aid from US\$200,000 to US\$100,000, until the financial situation of the Fund improves.

17. The Session appealed to all Member States to make voluntary contributions to sustain the Fund, which is an instrument of solidarity created through the political wisdom of African Heads of State and Government. The Session also underscored the need to revisit the modality of operation of the Fund with a view to making it more effective and proactive.

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