

AFRICAN UNION



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الاتحاد الأفريقي

UNIÃO AFRICANA

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**REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON ON ACCREDITATION
OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

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OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Throughout its existence the OAU established collaborative relations with International Organizations, particularly the UN and its Specialized Agencies with which it had close working relations. Thus, most of the UN Agencies have already established vibrant relations with the African Union.

2. These relations have been regulated by Cooperation Agreements or Memoranda of Understanding concluded between the AU and the concerned organization. Through that mechanism, the OAU accredited international organizations by granting them and being granted permanent observer status on a reciprocal basis.

3. In addition, some of the international organizations have appointed Special Representatives or Senior Liaison Officers to the AU separate and distinct from their missions to Ethiopia, who operate as permanent observers. For its part, the AU has permanent observer status with some of the international organizations, notably the United Nations and its Agencies.

4. While this mode of cooperation should continue, it is desirable to formalize it within the African Union.

**II. ISSUES AND CURRENT SITUATION RELATING TO GRANTING
OF PERMANENT OBSERVER STATUS TO INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS**

5. It is proposed to provide a formal accreditation procedure to be followed in respect of Missions of the UN and its Specialized Agencies as well as other international organizations and Intergovernmental organizations, to whom it is desirable to grant permanent Observer Status to the African Union. Such status of permanent observers would help to intensify the already well-established cooperation with some of them as well as with those that close collaboration has yet to be established.

III. ISSUES RELATING TO THE GRANTING OF PERMANENT OBSERVER STATUS TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

6. Under the OAU, International Intergovernmental Organizations such as the various United Nations Agencies were given Observer Status through Co-operation Agreements concluded with the OAU. It is envisaged that such agreements as are currently in force will continue to provide Observer Status to such Organizations.

IV. THE WAY THE COMMISSION PROPOSES TO EXTEND OBSERVER STATUS TO INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

7. An International Organization or inter-governmental Organizations not already enjoying such status, and wishing to be considered for Permanent Observer Status shall communicate its request to the Chairperson of the Commission who shall notify the Member States for their comments and observations. If there is no objection within a period of sixty (60) days, the Chairperson shall accept the credentials of the Permanent Observer. In the event that an objection has been raised, the Commission shall not process the request and shall place the matter on the agenda of the Executive council.

8. The same procedure shall be followed for African intergovernmental organizations that are not recognized as RECs but whose involvement or partnership in the work of the Union are considered beneficial.

9. An International Organization enjoying Permanent Observer Status shall be invited to participate at all the public sessions of AU meetings.

V. ACHIEVEMENTS, PROGRESS AND CONSTRAINTS

10. It will be beneficial to establish a clear basis for the extension of observer status to international organizations. Extending the observer status to international organizations will not result in straining the physical facilities of the AU, since their representatives are normally invited and attend formal public occasions of the meetings of the AU and sectoral meetings on matters on which they have direct relations with Member States.

11. The Commission is of the view that it would be beneficial to extend accreditation to International Organizations and intergovernmental Organizations with which the AU enjoys close working relations.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

12. The Executive Council is therefore invited to consider the proposal and authorize the Commission to extend Permanent Observer Status through the proposed procedures to appropriate International and intergovernmental Organizations.

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