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**ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION**  
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**Assembly/AU/13(XXIV)**  
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**REPORT OF HER EXCELLENCY MRS. ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF, PRESIDENT  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE HIGH LEVEL  
COMMITTEE ON THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

## **I. Background**

1. The 22<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary session of the Assembly of the Union held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on January 30-31, 2014 adopted the Common African Position (CAP) on the Post 2015 Development Agenda (Assembly/AU/Dec.503 (XXII)). The Assembly mandated the High Level Committee (HLC) supported by AUC in collaboration with Member States to commence engaging in the negotiation process with the rest of the world and build regional and inter-continental alliances on the priority areas of the Common African Position and ensure that the priority areas identified in the Common African Position are integrated into the post-2015 development agenda, including in intergovernmental deliberations related to the work of the Open Working Group on SDGs; the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing and the final Global Post 2015 Development Agenda.

## **II. Progress made in the implementation of the Summit decision**

### **II.1. Outreach and Promotional activities of CAP**

2. The CAP was launched by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on June 3, 2014 in the presence of all African and non-African diplomatic community, international organizations, UN agencies CSOs and other stakeholders residing in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with the objective to raise awareness and build strategic alliances.

3. A meeting was organized from 3-5 July 2014, with the African Group of Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives in Geneva and Brussels under the theme “Common African Position on Post-2015 Development Agenda: ensuring ownership and speaking with one voice”. The objective of the meeting was to promote CAP and enhance the involvement of the Ambassadors in Geneva and Brussels in view of their strategic positions in the negotiation process in capitals that host the most important organizations including WHO, UNCTAD, ITC, UNHCR, UNAIDS, ILO, IOM, and EU among others.

4. A side event on the Common African Position (CAP) was held in September 2014 in the margins of the UN General Assembly to officially introduce the CAP to the international community in New York, USA. The international community reaffirmed its support of the priority areas identified by CAP.

5. The Chair, represented by the Vice President of Liberia, and the Chairperson of AUC, accompanied by Dr. Mothae Maruping, Head of HLC Secretariat at the AUC held discussions with the US Post-2015 Adviser, Mr. John Podesta, to President Obama in Washington, DC, in the margins of the US-Africa Leadership meeting on August 3, 2014. The meeting was also attended by the President of Guinea H.E. Prof. Alpha Conde as a member of the HLC and several African Ministers.

6. Bilateral consultations were also held with representatives of Canada, EU, UK and US on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in September 2014. All of the partners

expressed and reaffirmed their interest to support the different pillars of the Common African Position on the Post 2015 development agenda.

7. Furthermore, the Brussels G7 Summit Declaration welcomed the CAP and committed to continue promoting inclusive and resilient growth in Africa and working with Africa.

8. The Chair of the HLC sent a letter to SG asking for inclusion of issues in CAP to the synthesis report

## **II.2. Strengthening and Consolidating CAP's ownership**

9. The HLC prepared an advocacy and negotiation strategy to be used to promote Africa's aspirations through CAP. One such advocacy tool is key messages extracted from the CAP for the use of all Heads of State and Government on all occasions to communicate what Africa wants in the next development agenda. These documents were reviewed with the African Group in New York and used to inform the work of the OWG in order to bring Africa's perspective into the discussion.

10. The 23rd Assembly of the Union, held in June 2014 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, took note of the Strategy for Advocacy and Negotiation which aims at building strategic alliances with the other regions and entities with the ultimate goal of having Africa's unified voice meaningfully reflected in the global Post-2015 Development Agenda. The Assembly also requested the HLC to adopt the advocacy strategy after further consultations with the African Permanent Representatives in New York and to explore the emerging issues of accountability and how to align it with the CAP framework to ensure consistency.

11. The Secretariat held a preliminary consultative dialogue in August 2014 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia to identify key elements of the accountability framework on the Post-2015 Development Agenda. The meeting provided an opportunity to review existing mechanisms and also to share experiences at regional level that will help to build on existing accountability frameworks.

12. The Sherpas and the experts of the New York African Group met on 18 September 2014 in New York to discuss the outcome of the accountability meeting, formation of a group of negotiators and the way forward. The Sherpas decided to reconvene in early 2015 to discuss and finalize Africa's preparedness for the intergovernmental negotiations and agree on all issues related to Africa's contribution to the Post-2015 process.

13. The Commission in collaboration with UNDP organized a side event on 26 September 2014 under the theme "Africa and a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda: Peace, Governance and Rule of Law". The side event provided an opportunity to convey the message from Africa to the world that peace, governance, and the rule of law are key elements for development and that their measurement is not only possible

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and already being pursued in innovative ways on the continent, but also essential to inform decisions on sustainable development.

### **II.3. Outcomes of the promotion and advocacy activities**

**14.** The CAP was used to inform Africa's contribution to the process of formulating the work of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWGSDGs). The report of the Open Working Group which includes 17 goals, targets and means of implementation integrated most of the CAP priority areas. However, there are areas of divergences among negotiating groups on issues such as *sexual orientation, peace and security, comprehensive sexuality education*, colonial domination, foreign occupation.

**15.** Africa highly contributed to the various global thematic consultations and reports on the Post-2015 development agenda.

### **II.4 Outcome of the Sherpas meeting January 24-25, 2015 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**16.** The Sherpas took note of the SG's synthesis report. While discussing the Open Working Group outcome document, the Sherpas reiterated that the CAP should remain the blueprint for Africa's engagement in the Post-2015 negotiation process. The Sherpas supported the proposal of the OWG on SDGs as the main basis for negotiations on the Post-2015 development agenda as it captures essential elements of the CAP. The Sherpas emphasized that the proposal on the SDGs of the OWG should not be reopened for further discussion. The meeting also reiterated the need to ensure that issues of major concern to Africa are fully taken into account in the P2015 intergovernmental negotiations.

**17.** The meeting discussed and endorsed the Terms of Reference of the African Group of Negotiators on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (AGN-P2015) which would serve to coordinate Africa's efforts to speak with one voice. The meeting also agreed:

- a. The AGN-P2015 in New York are commended and entrusted to engage on behalf of Africa, with the HLC providing broad support and guidance;
  - b. The AGN-P2015 will constitute a Bureau of five (5) PRs, one from each region, including a Chief Negotiator, chaired by the PR of Liberia in New York on behalf of the Chair of the HLC, assisted by the Chair of the African Group 2<sup>nd</sup> Committee Experts (Coordinating Negotiator);
  - c. Communication lines between Addis Ababa and New York should be strengthened;
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- d. The AGN-P2015 will be supported by technical expertise from the AUC and technical partners, including NEPAD agency, UNECA, UNDP, UNFPA and AfDB;
- e. The AGN-P2015 will report as follows: i) the Bureau of the AGN will report to the entire African Group; ii) the Chair of the Bureau of AGN will report periodically to the Chair of the HLC through the Secretariat of the HLC; and iii) the Chair of the HLC will report to the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the Union.

**18.** The meeting discussed preparation for the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD) which will be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in July 2015. The meeting agreed on the importance of anticipating and preparing Africa's engagement in the upcoming FfD conference which has implications on the Means of Implementation of the SDGs, through:

- a. Supporting Ethiopia as host and chair of the Conference;
- b. Participating in special sessions on Means of Implementation including Financing for Development in the margins of the joint AUC and ECA Conference of Ministers (Specialized Technical Committee on Finance Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration).

**19.** The meeting endorsed the following roadmap:

- a. Presentation of HLC report to the AU Summit – January 2015;
- b. Update on the negotiation process by the African Group to the HLC – June at AU Summit;
- c. High level meeting on domesticating SDGs in Africa – September 2015 (UNGA);

### **III. Conclusion**

**20.** It is important to ensure that the priorities of the continent are reflected in the SDGs intergovernmental negotiations, the July 2015 Addis Financing for Development 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference (FFD3), culminating in the United Nations General Assembly in September 2015.

**21.** This will depend (i) first and foremost on the necessity for CAP to remain central as the unique African negotiating document; and (ii) on the cohesion and discipline of the African Group of Negotiators.

**22.** Therefore, on behalf of my peers in the HLC, I reiterate my call in Malabo to inform our citizens in strategic positions to take ownership of the process and advocate

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the CAP. Very importantly, I urge you to instruct your Permanent Representatives and Ambassadors in New York, Geneva, Addis Ababa and other strategic capitals to support and advocate for the CAP. New York is the frontline in the current global negotiations and we must make use of all our assets and contacts to ensure that the CAP finds its rightful place in the global post 2015 development agenda.

**23.** Finally, the HLC requests each of you colleagues to own, champion and support the CAP and speak with one voice throughout the Post-2015 process.

**24.** The following is the proposed decision for consideration by Assembly:

**The Assembly,**

- 1. TAKES NOTE** of the report of the High Level Committee (HLC) on the Post 2015 Development Agenda;
  - 2. COMMENDS** the Heads of State and Government serving on the HLC for their commitment, dedication and leadership in facilitating evidence generation, advocacy, negotiation and mobilization activities to articulate Africa's input into the Post-2015 Development Agenda;
  - 3. ACKNOWLEDGES** that negotiations by the global community has entered a critical phase and that continued strategic engagement is necessary to facilitate the evolution of a Post-2015 Development Agenda that is compatible with Africa's development objectives;
  - 4. SUPPORTS** the decision to use the proposal from the OWG on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as the main basis for negotiations as it captures the essential elements of the Common African Position (CAP) priorities and should not be reopened for further discussion;
  - 5. ENDORSES** the formation and the Terms of Reference of the African Group of Negotiators on the Post 2015 Development Agenda which shall be the single negotiating body acting on behalf of the continent;
  - 6. REAFFIRMS** that the CAP remains the sole negotiating document for Africa and **CALLS UPON** all African Member States to adhere to its provisions during all negotiations relating to the Post-2015 Development Agenda;
  - 7. REQUESTS** the HLC to ensure Africa's participation in the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Financing for Development to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in July 2015 as informed by the outcomes of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development (STC) and **CALLS UPON** all Member States to participate at the highest possible level to ensure that Africa's voice is heard;
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8. **REAFFIRMS** full support to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and commends this sister country for the ongoing preparations towards the successful hosting of the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Conference on Financing for Development in Africa for the first time;
  9. **RECOMMENDS** the convening of a special session of the HLC during the next Summit for stocktaking and to provide strategic guidance to deepen Africa's political leadership and stakeholder engagement to ensure both the Financing for Development and Post-2015 Development Agenda outcomes reflect Africa's priorities;
  10. **REQUESTS** the HLC to report to the June/July 2015 Assembly on the progress of negotiations.
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**Assembly/AU/13(XXIV)  
Annex**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE  
OF THE AFRICAN GROUP OF NEGOTIATORS  
ON THE POST 2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

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**TERMS OF REFERENCE  
OF THE AFRICAN GROUP OF NEGOTIATORS  
ON THE POST 2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

**January 2015**

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## I. Background

1. The post 2015 development agenda provides a unique opportunity for Africa to actively participate in the global debate in addressing key global issues facing the world today and shaping an ambitious agenda that is truly transformative to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development in all its three dimensions. The Common African Position (CAP) on the Post 2015 Development Agenda; which is Africa's contribution to this discussion; was adopted by the 22<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Union in January 2014. The CAP is the result of a series of wide ranging multi-stakeholder intergovernmental consultations and starts from the premise that the continent's most pressing priority is poverty eradication achieved within the framework of inclusive development and transformative sustainable growth. Poverty reduction must however be sustainable over time, hence empowering people and ensuring their active and productive participation in all spheres of economic, social and political activity is paramount. CAP prioritizes interventions that complete the unfinished business of the MDGs, strengthens the productive capacities of the citizenry and transforms African economies in ways that encourage the active participation of broad segments of society in the development process.

2. In adopting the CAP, the Assembly requested the High Level Committee (HLC) on the post 2015 Development agenda supported by the Commission in collaboration with member states to ensure that the priority areas identified in the CAP are fully integrated into the ongoing Post-2015 Sustainable Development intergovernmental deliberations, including the report of the Open Working Group on SDGs, the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing and the final Global Post-2015 Development Agenda.

3. Take note of the report of the UN Secretary-General Synthesis Report (SR) entitled "The Road to Dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet".

4. Consideration should be given to the fact that according to the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A.69/L46, the outcome of the intergovernmental negotiations may include the following main components: declaration; sustainable development goals and targets; means of implementation and global partnership for sustainable development; and follow-up and review.

5. Experiences from the Climate Change and Rio+20 negotiations showed that establishing a core group of negotiators is an important step in ensuring that we negotiate with a common objective and unified voice. The setting-up of a negotiation team and strategy to coordinate Africa's negotiation efforts is critical in ensuring that Africa voice is heard. It is against this background that the HLC proposed the creation of an African Group of Negotiators (AGN) on the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

## **II. Objective**

6. The primary objective of the AGN -Post 2015 Development Agenda is to provide a coordination mechanism for the negotiation process and to assist the Chair in performing her tasks.

7. The strategy will be to build strategic alliances with the ultimate goal of having Africa's priorities form integral part of the final outcome of the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

## **III. Structure and Membership**

8. The AGN-P2015 will comprise of lead coordinators at expert level and facilitated by the Chair of the African Group 2<sup>nd</sup> Committee Experts who will serve as the Coordinating Negotiator. The lead coordinators should have technical expertise in the priority areas/pillars of CAP and issues related to the Post 2015 Development Agenda. The following list of lead coordinators may be put in place:

- Lead Coordinator on Declaration;
- Lead Coordinator on Sustainable Development Goals and targets;
- Lead Coordinator on Means of Implementation and Global Partnership for sustainable development;
- Lead Coordinator on Follow-up and Review;
- Lead Coordinator on Financing for Development process.

9. The work of the Lead Coordinators in the group will be guided by the CAP and supported by one Co-Coordinator.

10. The African Group in New York will nominate a Chief Negotiator, at the level of PR.

11. The African Group should constitute a Bureau of five (5) PRs, one from each region, including a Chief Negotiator, chaired by the PR of Liberia in New York on behalf of the Chair of the HLC, assisted by the Chair of the African Group 2<sup>nd</sup> Committee Experts (Coordinating Negotiator).

12. The Bureau of the AGN-P2015, in consultation with the African Group in New York, may appoint an expert as a lead coordinator in any other emerging critical area.

13. The AGN-P2015 will be supported by technical expertise from the AUC, the NEPAD Agency, UNECA, UNDP, AfDB, UNFPA and other technical partners. The HLC will ensure coordination with the AGN-Post2015. The AU Observer Mission shall facilitate the interaction between Addis and New York and keep the AUC abreast of development in the negotiations.

14. The AUC will serve as the Secretariat to coordinate partners support (including NEPAD Agency, ECA, UNDP, AfDB, and UNFPA) and to interface with AGN in New

York, and other strategic capitals (Brussels, Geneva, among others). AUC will set up an interdepartmental committee of experts (who will serve as focal points) in accordance with the portfolios of the lead coordinators and give the necessary support to the AGN, through an interactive communication channel.

#### **IV. Reporting**

15. The Bureau of the AGN will report to the entire African Group.

16. The Chair of the Bureau of AGN will report periodically to the Chair of the High Level Committee (HLC) through the HLC Secretariat.

17. The Chair of the HLC will report to the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the Union.

#### **V. Mandate**

18. The AGN-P2015 is mandated by the HLC to carry out the functions outlined herein.

19. The AGN-P2015 shall be the single negotiating body acting on behalf of the continent. The AGN-P2015 must advance the Common African Position and ensure effective coordination on the post 2015 development agenda negotiations in the period leading to September 2015.

#### **VI. Accountability**

20. The AGN-P2015 shall be responsible and accountable to the entire African Group in New York and the Heads of State through the HLC.

#### **VII. Meetings and Quorum**

##### ***Frequency of meetings***

21. The Chief Negotiator will convene meetings to ensure effective coordination. The Chair of the African Group 2<sup>nd</sup> Committee Experts will convene coordination meeting of lead coordinators, as necessary.

##### ***Quorum***

22. The AGN-P2015 will hold meetings and take decisions in accordance with the required quorum.

#### **VIII. AGN-P2015 Functions**

23. The AGN-P2015 shall carry out the following functions in delivering its mandate:

- Facilitate the work of the African Group in New York and promote unity among delegations on the post 2015 development agenda;
- Create awareness and adopt the strategy to ensure that Africa's concerns and positions are fully agreed upon and taken into account in the negotiations;
- Increase political preparedness and momentum to address Africa's priority concerns and positions at the negotiators level;
- Engage and work collaboratively with fellow African Leaders, Diplomats, Policy-Makers and any African Asset in sustaining the commitment of Africa to speak with one inspirational, succinct, authoritative, and credible voice to influence the process based on the CAP;
- Ensure coordinated and coherence messaging on the road to the final adoption of the post 2015 development agenda;
- Build alliances and increase cooperation and partnership with other countries and regional groupings, in particular, G77 + China;
- Advise the Chair on issues of major interest to the African Group, as relevant to the Common African Position, and as arising in the ongoing negotiation process;
- Facilitate coordinated communication between the negotiators, the HLC, the AUC, and the African Union Decision Organs (PRC, Executive Council and Assembly);
- Assist the Chair in coordinating the affairs of the African Group; and
- Provide accurate and timely information to increase visibility and impact throughout the negotiations.

**IX. Deliverability**

**24. Based on the CAP:**

- Develop a common position on key issues to push for during the intergovernmental negotiation on the Post 2015 development agenda.
- Ensure that African priorities are fully addressed.
- Draw conclusions on the final outcome of the negotiations and the implications for Africa.

2015-01-30

# Report of her Excellency MRS. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, president of the republic of Liberia and chairperson of the high level committee on the post-2015 development agenda

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