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EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Thirty-Sixth Ordinary Session
06 - 07 February 2020
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

EX.CL/1196(XXXVI)
Original : English

REPORT OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

ON

**THE OFFERS BY MEMBER STATES TO HOST THE AFRICAN
INCLUSIVE MARKET EXCELLENCE CENTER (AIMEC)**

I. Background and introduction

The thirty second Ordinary Session of the Executive Council held from 25-26 January 2018, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (EX.CL/ Dec.986-1007(XXXII)), adopted the establishment of the African Inclusive Market Excellence Center (AIMEC) and requested the Commission to submit the relevant structural, financial and legal implications, in line with the AU rules and procedures; as well as to ensure that the selection of the Member State to host AIMEC be carried out in conformity with the relevant criteria.

The main objective of the AIMEC is to become the recognized pan-African public-private platform on inclusive business (IB) and inclusive market (IM) policy and programming, identifying, promoting and facilitating the replication and development of best practice in policy and programming across the entire continent. In order to achieve this mission, AIMEC will need to undertake a range of activities, which are grouped into three pillars:

- Pillar One: IDENTIFY and analyze best practice policies and programmes in IB and IM by collecting existing knowledge and evidence on what works and what does not. This will include conducting a detailed mapping of IB and IM policies and programmes, developing analytical products and case studies, and disseminating information via a flagship annual publication and online information platform.
- Pillar Two: FACILITATE the replication, adoption and development of this best practice by acting as a platform for coordination and collaboration between stakeholders: brokering linkages and organising dialogue forums and by hosting an annual conference that brings together key players from across the continent.
- Pillar Three: REPLICATE best practice by providing financial incentives for the scaling of existing IB/IM programmes and for the piloting of innovative solutions where existing approaches are not effective. This will be done through the establishment of a Catalytic Fund which will competitively award grants aimed at policy makers, development actors and the private sector.

Pursuant to the Decision of the Executive Council the Commission contacted Member States interested to host the Center. The Countries which offered to host the Center are the Republic of Benin and the Republic of Tunisia.

In this regard and based on the offer made by the above mentioned countries to host the

AIMEC Center, an assessment team composed of representatives of the Office of the Bureau of the Chairperson, Department of Economic Affairs, , and Administration and Facilities Management Unit, undertook missions to the Republic of Benin and the Republic of Tunisia to discuss with the relevant authorities and evaluate the facilities the proposed host countries are putting forward with regard to hosting the Center in line with the AU selection criteria. The visit to the Republic of Benin was done on 15-17 November 2019, and to the Republic of Tunisia on 20-23 November 2019.

1.1. CRITERIA FOR HOSTING THE AIMEC

1. The Executive Council at its 7th Ordinary Session held in Sirte, Libya on 1-2 July 2005, noted in Decision EX.CL/195(VII) that the hosting of an organ of the Union in a Member State entails rights and obligations for the African Union as well as for the host country. It thereby adopted a set of minimum basic criteria for the hosting of AU organs, in order for the organ to carry out its functions effectively in an enabling atmosphere, not only for the Member States who will be utilizing their services, but also for the members of staff as well as their families. These criteria were also endorsed by the 5th Ordinary Session of the Assembly held in Sirte, Libya, on 4-5 July 2005.

2. The minimum criteria are the following:

- (i) The host country shall provide, at its expense a secure structure with furnished and equipped office premises for the seat of the organ on the basis of the objective requirements of office space;
- (ii) The premises offered by the host country should be such that the organ shall be easily accessible;
- (iii) The host country shall meet the requirements of a conducive political atmosphere and adequate logistical facilities;
- (iv) There should be appropriate and efficient modern infrastructure especially telecommunication facilities to enable the office to function efficiently;
- (v) There shall be available housing, hotel accommodation and health infrastructure to meet the functional needs of the organ;
- (vi) A Member State hosting or wishing to host any of the organs of the Union should have ratified the General Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the OAU, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations;
- (vii) It should be noted that the Decision expressly states that the above criteria are a set of minimum criteria, but does not preclude Member States from offering more facilities, including providing, at its expense, an appropriate furnished and equipped official residence for the head of the organ.

3. In terms of procedure, the criteria for hosting AU Organs provides for the following:

- (i) The Commission shall communicate these criteria and the model Headquarters Agreement it shall elaborate to all the Member States.
- (ii) An independent team shall be set up by the Commission and shall make a fact finding mission to Member States offering to host organs of the Union,

to inspect the proposed site and submit a report thereon to the Executive Council.

- (iii) All the offers for hosting the seat of an organ of the Union shall be submitted to the Executive Council for consideration. Selection of the host country shall be made, in accordance with the Rules of the Executive Council, by consensus, failing which, by a two-thirds majority. The Executive Council shall select a host country and submit a recommendation thereon to the Assembly for decision.
 - (iv) The Assembly shall decide on the seat of the organ in accordance with its rules, by consensus, failing which, by a two-thirds majority.
 - (v) Thereafter, the Commission shall ensure that the Host Agreement is signed between it and the Member State concerned.
4. To ensure transparency and avoid any conflict of interests, the selection of members of the Team was guided by the following principles:
- a) The nationals of the candidate countries (Benin and Tunisia) were not permitted to participate in the Technical Evaluation Team;
 - b) The membership was to remain the same and participate in all missions and other deliberations of the Team until the end of the exercise.
5. The following are the members of the Technical Evaluation Team:

S/N	Names	Title	Department/Institution	Nationality
1.	Amb. Rossette Nyirinkindi Katungye	Advisor on Regional Integration	Bureau of the Chairperson	Uganda
2.	Mr. Islam Swaleh	Acting Head, Private Sector Development	Department of Economic Affairs	Kenya
3.	Mr. Ewnetu Ferede	Structural Engineer	Facilities and Management Unit	Ethiopia

6. The Technical Evaluation Team was led by Amb. Rossette Nyirinkindi Katungye who is Advisor on Regional Integration in the Office of the Chairperson.

1.2. TIMELINES OF EVALUATION MISSION TO CANDIDATE COUNTRIES

7. The Commission proposed a roadmap for undertaking evaluation missions and communicated it to the two candidate countries as follows:

8.

Country	Travel Dates	Meeting Dates	Return Dates
Benin	14 November 2019	15 – 16 November 2019	17 November 2019
Tunisia	21 November 2019	22 – 23 November 2019	24 November 2019

1.3. METHODOLOGY

1.3.1. Preparatory sessions

9. Before undertaking the assessment mission, the Technical Evaluation Team received guidance from the Commissioner for Economic Affairs Prof. Victor Harison. Subsequently, the members of the team held their own preparatory meetings to agree on the following:

- (i) Understanding of the evaluation criteria;
- (ii) Program of the visits; and
- (iii) Method of scoring.

1.3.2. Method of scoring

10. In order to gather relevant information, the Technical Evaluation Team prepared a questionnaire comprising 86 specific questions to be answered by each candidate country. A copy of the Questionnaire is attached to this report as **Annex I**. The questionnaire was prepared in English and French to ensure that it is well understood by the respondents.

11. The technical scoring of the bids was guided and indeed derived from the 7 criteria elaborated above where each criterion was accorded equal weight of 10 marks. The scoring of the bids was done by consensus of team members on each and every criterion.

1.3.3. Technical Evaluation Missions

12. The technical evaluation missions were undertaken in each of the candidate countries. The following principles were applied to the candidate countries:

1. A questionnaire was submitted to the candidate country and briefing session was organized on the first day of the visit to explain the context of the assessment and provide guidance on the questionnaire to be completed;
2. The Technical Evaluation Team spent two full working days in each candidate country;
3. The answers provided by candidate countries in the questionnaire were required to be supported by evidence;
4. All supporting documents were to be submitted to the Technical Evaluation Team
5. During the mission to each candidate country, the Technical Evaluation Team visited the proposed facilities for hosting the AIMEC ; the proposed residential facilities for the Head of the Centre; the meetings and conferences facilities; in the cases where this was facilitated by the candidate country, hospitals and health facilities, as well as other facilities related to the hosting of AU organs;
6. At the end of each technical evaluation mission, the completed questionnaire that was submitted and supporting documents was initialed by the representative of the bidding country on one hand and the leader of the Technical Evaluation Team on the other hand to verify authenticity.

1.3.4. Summary of the program of work

13. The program of work that was generally followed in each candidate country is summarized as follow:

- (i) Day One: Introductory meeting, meetings with government officials, and visits to the proposed facilities;
- (ii) Day Two: Continuation of visits to proposed facilities and a wrap up meeting at the end of the technical evaluation mission.

II. National Authorities and organizations visited

14. With a view of reviewing and validating the capacities proposed by the Member States which offered to host the AIMEC Center, the assessment team visited the following Authorities and organizations in the Member States: Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Trade, and other relevant Agencies of Government. Besides, the delegation also visited various institutions including Hotels, medical centers and national and international institutions.

15. **Republic of Benin:** On behalf the Minister of Economy and Finance, Mr. TOBOULA Jean, Technical Advisor on Tax Affairs, Office, of the Minister of Economy and Finance. gave an overview of the potential bid offered by the country if selected by the AU organs. He noted the progress made by Benin in the perspective of building a cohesive society through providing business opportunities to the population and noted that the Centre will benefit from national experience to shape the future of African countries. Benin informed the Commission that it is an attractive country for hosting the Centre given the Country's overall peaceful and secure environment, financial inclusion, and agricultural development through value chains development. It assured the Commission of its willingness to host the Centre and to become Africa's laboratory for inclusive and sustainable transformation.

16. **Republic of Tunisia:** H.E Omar Behi, Minister of Trade welcomed the AUC delegation to Tunisia and informed the delegation that the Government of Tunisia is ready to host the AIMEC since it was among the first countries to express interest and readiness to host the Centre. He emphasized that, given Tunisia's proven vast experience in hosting regional and international centers such as Pan-African Institute for Statistics (STATAFRIC) and other UN Affiliated organs, it was important that Tunisia be allowed the opportunity to host the AIMEC. He stated that Tunisia has a number of Private Universities and the AIMEC will be linked to the Universities. It has also advance network/server system and Cyber security.

Observations of the assessment team

- i. **Juridical and legal matters including immunities and exemptions of taxes and custom duties**

17. With reference to paragraph 4 of the Executive Council Decision EX.CL/195(VII) Rev.1, *“the Member State hosting or wishing to host any of the organs of the Union should have ratified the General Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the OAU, the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations”*.

18. Based on additional information regarding judicial and legal matters, the delegation has noted the following facts in the respective Member States.

19. **Republic of Benin:** The Government indicated that it is committed to extending the diplomatic and legal immunity and privileges for the staff of AIMEC and their families, the Head and Members of the Committee and visitors who will be travelling to Benin to participate in any of the activities of the AIMEC. Benin has ratified the General Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the OAU; the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relation. Benin agreed that details of the rights to be accorded the Secretariat will be developed in a subsequent host agreement if Benin is awarded the offer to host the Secretariat. Besides, the Government also confirmed that it is committed to providing customs exemption and taxes for the staff of AIMEC Secretariat and their families, the head and members of the committee. Finally, the assessment team observed that entry visas are not required from staff of the African Union Commission travelling to the Republic of Benin on an official business with the AU official travel document.

20. **Republic of Tunisia:** The Government confirmed that it will extend diplomatic immunities and privileges to the Members of the Committee, Secretariat staffs, experts and consultants who will be working for the AIMEC, as well as family members of the staffs and persons invited to attend the staff. Tunisia has also ratified the General Convention on Privileges and Immunities of the OAU; the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relation. Finally, the assessment team observed that entry visas are required but granted for staffs of the African Union Commission who would be travelling to the Tunisia on an official business with AU official travel documents. However, upon negotiation with the Government, it was revealed that this could soon change and the Commission and staff could travel without visa. Government also confirmed that it is committed to providing customs exemption and taxes for the staff of AIMEC and their families, the head and members of the Board.

ii. Financial arrangements, including financial suitability, and Reforms favourable for doing business

21. The fact-finding mission was able to gather the following findings on Reforms favourable for doing business.

22. **Republic of Benin: Reforms favourable for doing business:** many reforms and measures to strengthen (social) businesses have been taken in the past and are still under way. Below are examples.

- Dealing with Construction Permits: Benin increased the transparency of dealing with construction permits by publishing regulations related to construction online, free of charge.
- Registering Property: Benin made registering property less costly by eliminating tax registration. It also improved the transparency of the land administration system by publishing documentary requirements and fee schedule required for property transactions.
- Getting Credit: Benin improved its credit reporting system by introducing regulations that govern the licensing and functioning of credit bureaus in the member states of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA).
- Starting a Business: Benin made starting a business easier by eliminating the need to notarize company bylaws to activate a bank account after incorporation.
- Resolving Insolvency: Benin made resolving insolvency easier by introducing a new conciliation procedure for companies in financial difficulties and a simplified preventive settlement procedure for small companies.

23. **Republic of Tunisia:** The country was observed to have considerable suitable monetary and fiscal policies for similar international organization.

- **Support of IB and IM Reforms favourable for doing business:** many reforms and measures to strengthen (social) businesses have been taken in the past and are still under way. Below are a few examples. Tunisia strengthened credit reporting by starting to distribute historical credit information and credit information from a telecommunications.
- There are a number of initiatives that demonstrate the increased interest and support of the government towards the social entrepreneurship concept as part of the broader agenda on social solidarity economy such as the following:
 - The contract signed by the Government of Tunisia stating the construction of a solidary-based and integrated economy which promotes economic recovery and creation of more employment opportunities. This aims to improve business climate, investment, innovation, entrepreneurship and the creation of sustainable enterprises with high added value, competitiveness and employability. This contract also refers to the strengthening the role of mutual societies in order to alleviate social gaps.
 - The Five-Year Development Plan of Tunisia 2016 – 2020 which includes a section on how to foster the development of the social economy in the country.
 - The declaration of employment by the Tunisian government on March 29, 2016 in presence of the Secretary-General of the UN, the President of the World Bank and the Director-General of the ILO.
 - The Carthage Agreement which defines the priorities of the government on July 13, 2016 by the General Union of Tunisian Workers (UGTT), the Tunisian Union of Industry, Commerce and Trade Crafts (UTICA), the

Tunisian Union of Agriculture and Fisheries (UTAP) and the main political parties.

- The Ministry of Investment Development and Cooperation has announced in the 1st Forum on Crowd funding in October 27-28, 2016 that the draft law that is being prepared in Tunisia on the participatory financing mechanism (e.g. crowdfunding etc.) in the context of financing social enterprises and finding innovative financing mechanisms

iii. **Logistical support in terms of office facilities and residence**

24. With reference to paragraphs 3a) and 3b) of Executive Council Decision EX.CL/195(VII) Rev.1, the assessment team evaluated the offers from the respective Member States. The main element of logistical support considered by the AU hosting criteria is the offering Member State's capacity and commitment to offer appropriate and secure premises for the Organ. The Member States have extended their offers in terms of premises and physical condition assessment report was done by the assessment team. The physical condition assessment report was done with a view to determining the general condition of the facilities and it includes an assessment of the extent to which repair and replacement on the components of the facilities is required. The physical condition assessment report also evaluates the spatial adequacy of the facility with regard to the present needs and future demands of the Center. The report analyses the general situation, structure, electrical system, plumbing, fire protection system and interior components of the facilities. The following paragraphs briefly present the type of offers with regard to office facilities and residences by the Member States.

25. **Republic of Benin:** The Government of Benin has offered an office facility which will be put at the disposal of the AIMEC and visited by the AU assessment team. The property is located near the Airport where various diplomatic missions are located. The building is located within 1 kilometers radius from the airport on the main highway. The GPS coordinates are 6.349514, 2.380460. The area is observed to be in an upcoming high scale neighborhood where various diplomatic and international organizations are also situated. The building is a new facility under construction, but near completion. Most of the finishing works such as flooring, painting and external finishes are finalized. The ceiling, IT, security and firefighting systems were under installation during the time of the assessment. The building, is a ground plus three facility designed for commercial/office use. Each floor has an area of 500 square meters. The layout of the building is flexible with a combination of closed and open offices. Floor plans are attached herewith for reference. The total area of the building is much more than the required area for the AIMEC needs and will give allowance for future expansions. There are spaces, shops and restaurants as part of the facility at the northern side of the premise. From the design and construction, it can be witnessed that the building is equipped with all modern building service infrastructure/system such as security (CCTV), firefighting (both sprinkler and hose), IT and standby power generator.

The parking space inside the compound, however, is observed to be insufficient and staff members might be required to park alongside the streets or in front of the of the restaurant/ shops area which is vacant at the moment. Republic of Benin also showed

two residences proposed for accommodating the Head of the Center. Both buildings are located near the office and the Airport.

Observations

The team has made the following six observations that need to be considered for the assessment:

- i. The building is a privately owned property which is developed for commercial purposes. It is expressed by the Benin officials that the property is not as such reserved for the AUC and the property may or may not be available depending on the time of decision;
- ii. The property is located adjacent to the main road where the building is situated just at the boundary of the road. Special arrangements shall be made with the government to block walkways to ensure security of the facility.
- iii. On the 3rd floor of the building portion of the floor is rented out to another company. The proposed AIMEC office is only separated by a wall and a locked door with the rented office. This is a potential security risk
- iv. In the adjacent compound there are townhouse residences here the windows of the houses open towards the proposed AIMEC offices. This is also a potential security concern.
- v. There are commercial cafes and restaurants attached to the propose AIMEC premises. This is a potential security risk
- vi. The compound accommodated 4 vehicles only. This is very small number compared with the expected staff size.

26. **Republic of Tunisia:** The Government of the Tunisia indicated that it is committed to provide, at its expense, a secure, dedicated, equipped and furnished permanent structure for the Secretariat of the AIMEC and an appropriate and furnished official residence to the Director of the Center. It was also mentioned that the furniture and equipment for the Headquarter of the Center will meet the requirements of the African Union Commission. Pending the provision of the permanent premises, it was also indicated that the Government will make available a suitable temporary premises. The Government also confirmed that the premises will be equipped with the necessary facilities including water, electricity, telephone, fax and internet.

27. Assessing the general physical condition of the facilities offered for the Center, the delegation notes that the office facility is located at the CEPEX, Tunisia Export Building in Urbain Nord, new city center about 15 minutes' drive from the old town. It is the whole floor. There are about twenty eight office rooms of various sizes. In addition to the office spaces, the building has common facilities such as conference rooms, meeting halls, cafeteria and parking garage which provide additional service to facilitate the work routines of the different organizations contained in the building. . In addition to the office

space, the building has: Three conference rooms, each with 400 seats, with wireless system which can be combined to form one big conference room; Round table meeting room with 38 seats and Cafeteria.

28. The visible evidence suggests that it was constructed quite recently, with in the range of the last 10-15 years. It is located in a highly promising environment in terms of development of urban structures. The building is located within an upscale area where many new developments are coming up. The GPS coordinates are 36.849312, 10.196112 .There are a number of international organizations and Embassies located in the area such as Turkish and Qatar Embassy, Earnest and Young. The area is easily accessible with Metro and other public transportation systems. Moreover, there are big hospitals, apartment complexes, shopping and sport facilities within walking distance from the building. It also enjoys a sizable area of its own site with a covered parking space which is also conducive for future expansion. All the necessary amenities like, power supply, water supply, telecom services, drainage and very good road network are readily available and provided. Fire extinguisher all installed.

III. Conducive political atmosphere and adequate logistical facilities including transportation in to and out of the Country

29. **Republic of Benin:** Benin is observed to be a peaceful and safe country hosting a number international and regional Organization. The delegation also notes the availability of sufficient public facilities including the undergoing urban road network development. In term of infrastructure, the capital city has all the necessary and basic facilities like international schools, Medical Centers as well availability of various standard houses. There is one international airport, Cadjehoun Airport, in Cotonou. There are international jet service to Accra, Niamey, Monrovia, Lagos, Ouagadougou, Lomé, and Douala, as well as other cities in Africa. Direct services also link Cotonou to Paris, Brussels, and Istanbul.

30. **Republic of Tunisia:** Looking at the political atmosphere, the assessment team observed that Tunisia is peaceful, secure and safe. Public utilities such as local transportation, local and international schools, hotels, hospitals conference centers, religious worship centers are available. The delegation also notes the availability of adequate and modern conference center equipped with the necessary conference facilities and technologies. The team was told the Secretariat can use the Center for meetings and conferences as the need arise. Tunisia has 9 international airports, International departures include selection of direct connections: all major cities in Europe (e.g. Paris, Moscow, Berlin, Zürich, Brussels, etc...), Amman, Algiers, Casablanca, Doha, Dubai, and Cairo. 470 international flights per week out of which 145 come from Africa.

IV. Modern infrastructure, especially telecommunication facilities

31. **Republic of Benin:** The country has the following infrastructure:
 4G capabilities: UMTS 900, UMTS 2100
 Type of mobile networks 4G capabilities: GSM 900, GSM 1800
 Number of mobile providers: 5 MTN, Moov, Glo, Libercom, BBCom
 Number of mobile phone users: Mobile cellular subscriptions per 100 person: 82

Mobile money providers: 3, Mobile Money, Flooz, Afrimarket

32. **Republic of Tunisia:** The Country has the following infrastructure:
 4G capabilities: UMTS 900, UMTS 2100
 Number of mobile providers: 3, Ooredoo, Tunisie Telecom, Orange
 Number of mobile phone users: Mobile cellular subscriptions per 100 person: 125
 Mobile money providers: 6 Mobiflouss, mdinar, MobiMoney, MobiDinar, Orange Money, MobiCash

V. Housing, hotel accommodation, health infrastructure and other facilities

33. **Republic of Benin:** It is noted that in Benin there are conference rooms which has already enabled the country to host various international and regional events. The team visited several residential neighborhoods for Hotel accommodation and was informed by the Government that there is no Five Star Hotel but 7 Four Star Hotels and 4 Three Star Hotels are available in the City of Cotonou. The average rate of the Four Star and Three star hotels are USD 168.27 and 100.962 respectively which are all secured and located at strategic areas. It was also mentioned that there are a number of public health infrastructures and private clinics in Cotonou. In addition, it was indicated that there are a number of international schools which could ensure quality education for the children of the Secretariat staffs of the Center.

34. The team noted that there were a number of international schools which could ensure quality education for the children of the Secretariat staff of the Center. On the part of the financial sector, there are 15 local commercial banks and 15 international Banks in the city where the office is to be located. In addition, Money Gram, Western Union, Wari, Sigué Money transfert, Money Express, Money Trans, Ria, Small World Financial, MTN Mobile Money, Moov Mobile Money are also operational.

35. **Republic of Tunisia:** The assessment team notes the existence hotels, medium to high standard and conference facilities which enables the Country host international meetings. The team visited residential neighborhoods for hotel accommodation, where there are 19 Five Star Hotels, 17 Four Star Hotels and 23 Three Star Hotels in the City of Tunis. The average rate of the Five Star, Four Star and Three star are USD 120, 80 and 40 respectively. They surrounding area is secured and not far from the city. A tour to the Country's hospital also confirms that Tunisia is in a position to meet the health needs of the Members of the AIMEC and its Secretariat as the Hospital is equipped with modern and high tech health infrastructures. There are 17 public hospitals in the City and 39 Private Hospitals near the Center. These include specialization in Traumatology, ophthalmology, Neurology, Orthopedics, Maternity and Neonatology, Pneumo-Phtisiology, Cancerology, Nutrition and Food Technology. No offer was made by Tunisia on housing. The team noted that there were a number of international schools which could ensure quality education for the children of the Secretariat staffs of the Center. On financial sector, there are 23 local commercial banks and 11 international Banks in the city where the office is to be located.

Concluding remarks

36. The Commission would like to note that this Report does not, in anyway, serve to rank the offers from the two Member States; rather, it seeks to confirm and validate important features of each offer. In this way, the purpose of this technical report is to facilitate consideration and decision by the AU Executive Council regarding which Member State should be selected to host the Secretariat of the AIMEC. However, below are the marks that were awarded on each of the criteria for the two bids in order to assist the Executive Council to arrive at an informed decision.

Summary facts offered by the two countries

Type of offer/criteria	Benin	Tunisia
Ratification of the General Conventions	Ratified the General Convention on the privileges and immunities of the OAU, ratified the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations of 18 April 1961 and the Vienna Convention on consular relations.	Ratified the General Convention on the privileges and immunities of the OAU, the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations of 18 April 1961 and the Vienna Convention on consular relations.
Diplomatic immunity and privileges	Pledges to provide diplomatic immunity and privileges to the Members of the Committee, Secretariat staffs, and to persons attending the Committee sessions during the time of the business.	Pledges to provide diplomatic immunity and privileges to the members of the Committee, Secretariat staffs, and to persons attending the Committee business
Tax and custom exemptions	Pledges for customs and tax exemption for the committee and the staff of AIMEC secretariat and their families, the head and members of the committee.	Pledges for customs and tax exemption for the committee and the staff of AIMEC secretariat and their families, the head and members of the committee.
Office facilities		
Arrangement of office facility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pledges to provide an equipped and furnished building. • The selected building is facilities privately owned and availability is not confirmed at the time of final approval. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pledges to provide an equipped and furnished building. • The building is clearly identified. It is government owned building and Government will pay all rental and operational expenses.
Quality of architectural space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The architectural floor layout is convenient for the intended use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The architectural floor layout is convenient for the intended use. • Additional facilities such as meeting halls and conference room and cafeteria are also included to be used AIMEC as required.
Site Layout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The building is very close to the main road and additional security arrangements shall be done with the government • Not enough parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The building is well secured • Limited parking space in the basement • Additional parking structure available close to the building
Safety and Security provisions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCTV camera is installed • Fire hydrant and sprinkler system installed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CCTV camera is installed • Fire hydrant and sprinkler system installed
Backup power and water supply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backup generator installed • Water reservoir installed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Backup generator installed. However, power interruption is very rare.

		• Water reservoir installed
Adequate logistical facilities including transportation in to and out of the Country	Public utilities such as local transportation, local and limited international schools, hotels, religious worship centers are available. However, limited number of airlines flying in to the Country	Public utilities such as local transportation, local and international schools, hotels, religious worship centers are available. Several airlines (national, sub-regional and international) run daily in Tunisia
Modern Infrastructure, especially telecommunication facilities	Appropriate and efficient telecommunications facilities and IT services exist.	Appropriate and efficient telecommunications facilities and IT services exist.
Health facilities	Adequate, and equipped medical facilities exist	Adequate, modern and equipped medical facilities exist
Requirement of entry visas	Entry visas are not required to persons travelling for official business with AU official travel documents	Entry visas required to all persons but Diplomats including AU could easily obtain their Vizas in their original destinations
Banking sector and financial transfers	Various Commercial banks exist and no challenge observed with regard to international money transfers.	Various Commercial banks exist and no challenge observed with regard to international money transfers.
Residence to the Director	Pledges to provide an appropriate and furnished official residence to Director of the Center.	No pledge was made to provide an appropriate and furnished official residence to Director of the Center.

**DRAFT DECISION ON HOSTING OF THE AFRICAN INCLUSIVE MARKET
EXCELLENCE CENTER (AIMEC)
Doc. EX.CL/1196(XXXVI)**

The Executive Council,

1. **TAKES NOTE** of the Recommendations of the Executive Council on the Technical Evaluation Mission Report on the Hosting of the African Inclusive Market Excellence Center (AIMEC);
2. **DECIDES** that the Republic of Tunisia shall host the AIMEC;
3. **CONGRATULATES** the People and the Government of the Republic of Tunisia;
4. **REQUESTS** the Commission, in collaboration with the Republic of Tunisia, to finalise the host-country agreement in accordance with the Executive Council Decision EX.CL/195 (VII) Rev.1 of July 2005 on hosting AU Organs;
5. **MANDATES** the Commission to submit a progress report on the operationalization of the AIMEC to the Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the AU in February 2021.

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