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**ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION
Twenty-Fifth Ordinary Session
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Assembly/AU/13(XXV)

**H.E. MR. JOHNSON SIRLEAF, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF LIBERIA AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN
PEER REVIEW MECHANISM (APRM)**

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1. The 23rd Summit of the Committee of Heads of State and Government Participating in the African Peer Review Mechanism [APR Forum] was held on 13 June 2015 at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa. H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia, Chairperson of the APR Forum, presided over the Summit.

2. The following are the discussions and decisions taken:

Host Country Agreement

3. President Jacob Zuma announced that South Africa will be signing the Host Country Agreement with the African Union in August 2015.

APRM Integration in the AU

4. The Representative of the AUC recalled the mandate and achievements of the APRM and assured the Forum that the process of integrating the Mechanism into the AU System is progressing as expected and that the APRM Stakeholders can count on the the African Union Commission in creating synergies for the development of Africa.

Recent Elections in APRM Participating States

5. The Forum heard statements from newly-elected or re-elected Heads of State or Government, namely H.E. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique and H.E. Pakalitha Mosisili, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho. Representatives of Nigeria, Sudan and Egypt also delivered the statements of their newly elected/re-elected Presidents.

6. They pledged their commitment to the APRM and undertook to ensure the smooth functioning of the Mechanism so that it fulfils the continental mandate conferred on the Mechanism by the founding Fathers in March 2003.

The future of APRM

7. Dr Mayaki, interim CEO of the APRM Secretariat, observed that APRM was a critical institution for Africa, and had the methodological tools necessary to monitor common African goals emanating from Africa's global commitments, including the United Nations Summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda.

**Progress Report by Ambassador Fatuma Ndangiza, Chairperson of the APR
Panel of Eminent Persons**

8. The Chairperson of the Panel highlighted the three key focus areas of the Panel. The first first is in strengthening the peer review process, including improving APRM institutions, processes and tools, and fast-tracking the implementation of the APRM. The second is in strengthening synergies and partnerships with APRM

Strategic Partners, NEPAD, the Regional Economic Communities and other AU organs and international organizations. The third focus area is in designing and implementing a robust communication strategy for public awareness. The Chairperson noted that the APRM has launched a new and comprehensive website, and enhanced its social media platforms.

9. In 2014 and the first half of 2015, the Panel has carried out numerous APRM activities in Member States. The Zambia country review report was launched, and the Panel hosted expert's technical workshops on integrating the APRM National Programme of Action into the national budget in Zambia and in Lesotho. The Panel undertook missions to Chad, Mauritania, Senegal, Sudan and Tunisia to assist countries to establish national APRM structures, sensitise stakeholders, or, in the more advanced countries, finalise production of country self-assessment reports and preliminary national programmes of action.

10. The APRM has engaged the Pan African Parliament, which is in the process of establishing the PAP APRM Network (PAN). Four APRM reports, namely those for Algeria, Burkina Faso, Lesotho and Uganda are due to be tabled and discussed at the next PAP Session in October. Popularisation and discussion of APRM reports will also be spearheaded by PAP parliamentarians in their respective RECs and national Parliaments. The APR Panel is in contact with the East African Legislative Assembly, and looks forward to tabling APRM reports at EALA and all other RECS, in line with article 25 of the Base Document of the APRM.

11. The Panel is collaborating with the UN Office of the Special Advisor for Africa (OSAA) in promoting the international visibility of the APRM. The APRM has participated in the Africa- NEPAD Week which takes place on the margins of the UN General Assembly debate on Africa in New York in October every year.

12. In January 2015, the Panel held its first ever Retreat with Strategic Partners, namely UNECA, AfDB and UNDP, to enhance partnership and collaboration on APRM. The outcomes of the Retreat included a commitment by Strategic Partners to focus on enhancing the effectiveness of the APRM, institutional development of the APRM Secretariat, strengthening partnerships and resource mobilisation, and promoting APRM as a key monitoring and accountability tool for AU Agenda 2063 and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Partners also agreed to conduct an APRM Impact Assessment in reviewed countries in 2015, and design an APRM communication strategy in alignment with an APRM Knowledge Management system.

13. In line with its goal to share experiences and for peer learning, the APR Panel held a joint workshop with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Johannesburg, South Africa in March this year, where the two organisations exchanged experiences on governance review processes and member state self-assessment exercises.

14. The APRM has also focused implementing a robust communication strategy for public awareness, and increasing the momentum of APRM implementation throughout the continent. This year, the APRM has launched a new and comprehensive website, and has also enhanced its social media platforms. The new communication and Knowledge Management activities will also assist in peer

learning and sharing of best practices and cross-cutting issues at all levels beyond the peer review process at the Forum.

15. In this context the Panel has embarked on regional sensitisation workshops. The first regional workshop for countries in the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) Region was organised in Chad in May 2014, and was instrumental in popularising APRM within the sub-region, as well as galvanising APRM processes in Chad and Equatorial Guinea amongst others. From 20 to 21 May 2015, the Panel, in partnership with civil society organisations based in SADC, convened a SADC Regional Workshop in Gaborone, Botswana.

16. For the remainder of 2015, the APR Panel will be carrying out the following activities: (i) Base review missions to Djibouti, Senegal, Sudan and Chad; (ii) Preparatory and support missions to Tunisia, Equatorial Guinea and Mauritius; (iii) Preparation for the second reviews of Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa and Nigeria; and (iv) Completing an impact assessment of APRM in the seventeen reviewed countries.

Conduct of the Peer Review of Annual Progress Reports on the Implementation of National Programmes of Action

Sierra Leone

17. H.E. Ernest Bai Koroma, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, presented the Progress Report on implementation of the National Plan of Action for 2013- 2014. He observed that the Government has provided adequate and sustainable budgetary support to the APRM National Governing Council and Secretariat, and this has led to timely submission of progress reports.

18. Sierra Leone has created a national constitutional review committee, and tasked it to revise the 1991 Constitution, and citizens of Sierra Leone will be given the opportunity to contribute their input to the revision process. Since 2007, the Government has been promoting a zero tolerance policy on corruption. In this regard, the Anti-Corruption Act of 2008 was passed. Sierra Leone's government has also paid keen attention to gender empowerment, with the enactment of several Gender Acts since 2007. Sierra Leone is committed to accountable government, and informing the public on how the country's resources are being managed. Public servants working at ministries, departments and agencies as well as local councils are required to sign yearly performance contracts.

19. H.E. President Koroma noted that in recent years Sierra Leone's ranking in the "Doing Business Index" of the World Bank has improved from 149th position in 2009 to 140th in 2013, out of 183 economies. In the socio-economic development, one of the key budget priorities in 2013 was to continue to expand provision of health, energy, sanitation and water to citizens.

20. The APR Forum congratulated President Koroma on the presentation of Sierra Leone Progress Report on implementation of its NPOA. The Forum extended their appreciation for the efforts Sierra Leone has made to combat Ebola, and noted that one of the challenges for the Continent is to invest more in medical research. Sierra Leone was also commended for its efforts to promote peace both nationally and regionally.

Uganda

21. H.E. Yoweri Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, congratulated the Forum and in particular the 17 peer reviewed countries for their commitment to this homegrown initiative.

22. President Museveni presented the highlights of the 2013/2014 Progress report. He observed that the Anti-Corruption Courts successfully completed 76.7 per cent of cases before them in the 2013-2014 reporting period, and underlined the necessity for a mindset change towards corruption in society, and an end to the glorification of the corrupt. Uganda has focussed on compliance in harmonising national laws with COMESA and EAC community protocols. Inflation had been reduced from a high of 30.6 per cent in 2011 to 12.9 per cent in June 2014. Economic growth averaged 4.1 per cent between 2011/12 and 2013/14. President Museveni noted his support for developing infrastructure including electricity, railways and roads. He reiterated that this was the only way in which to build a modern state.

23. The APR Forum further congratulated President Yoweri Museveni and the people of Uganda for the remarkable achievements as reported in the Uganda Progress Report in implementation of its National Plan of Action, particularly for Uganda to have met the Millennium Development Goal of “halving the people living in poverty” before the deadline of 2015.

Progress Report on the Administrative & Financial Matters of the APRM

24. Efforts are underway to strengthen the Secretariat through appointment of senior level personnel recruited through a competitive process, and the retention of junior staff guided by an empirical assessment of their suitability and performance. The Chair of the Committee of Focal Points, the Ad-Hoc Focal Points Committee on Recruitment and the Interim CEO are scheduled to meet in Johannesburg in late July to resolve outstanding issues in this direction

25. Administrative and operational constraints stem in large part from Member States' struggle to fulfil their financial obligations to the APRM. This has impacted the pace and number of review activities taking place. The Forum, however commends Dr Mayaki for stabilising APRM finances since his appointment as interim CEO and establishing the current positive trend in Member States contributions and the Secretariat's positive financial status.

Key resolutions of the APR Forum

26. The Chairperson of the APR Forum commended all the Member States who have made their contributions, in particular those countries which have made special contributions to the APRM. She urged the Member Countries to make their financial contributions to the APRM, in order to strengthen the spirit of African ownership of the APRM, and allow the Panel of Eminent Persons to fully implement the 2015 APRM Work Programme.

27. The Forum approved an Extraordinary Summit of the APR Forum in the first week of September 2015 to i) discuss the future of the APRM and its role in the post

2015 sustainable development goals, which are due to be approved by the UN General Assembly in September 2015; ii) agree on models for sustainable financing of the APRM; iii) discuss cross-cutting issues and the backlog of Progress Reports on implementation of APRM National Programmes of Action.

28. The APR Forum requested the Chair of the Committee of Focal Points to meet with Dr Ibrahim Mayaki, the Interim CEO of the Secretariat and the Ad Hoc Committee on recruitment to address the issue of staffing at the APRM Secretariat, and adopted the Progress Report on Administrative and Financial Matters.

Election of the Chairperson of the APR Forum

29. The Forum unanimously elected H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya, as the new Chairperson of the APR Forum of Heads of State and Government.

Appointment of the leadership of APR Panel of Eminent Persons

30. The Forum has endorsed the nominations of Dr Mustapha Mekideche as Chairperson of the APR Panel of Eminent Persons, and Professor Mahmoud Youssef Khayal as Vice Chairperson of the APR Panel of Eminent Persons.

31. In light of the sudden and untimely passing away of Chief Aseka, late Member of the Panel of Eminent Persons appointed in January 2015, the Forum has requested the Federal Republic of Nigeria to nominate a new Panel Member.

Appointment of the Chief Executive Officer of the APRM Secretariat

32. The APR Forum noted that the CEO for the APRM Secretariat whom they had approved at the 22nd Summit of the APR Forum in January 2015, had declined the offer.

33. The Forum endorsed the recommendation from the Committee of Focal Points on the recruitment of a substantive CEO for APRM Secretariat by the 1st of September 2015.

34. The Forum has also extended the mandate of Dr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, NEPAD Agency CEO, as Interim APRM CEO, until the permanent CEO has been appointed.

2015

H.E. Mr. Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia and Chairperson of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

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