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WG22181

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Thirty-Third Ordinary Session
25 – 29 June 2018
Nouakchott, MAURITANIA

EX.CL/1084(XXXIII)Rev.1
Original: English

**REPORT OF THE 3RD MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE AFRICAN
UNION SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (STC) ON
GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT (GEWE),
7 – 11 MAY 2018**

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**THIRD MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE
AFRICAN UNION SPECIALISED TECHNICAL
COMMITTEE ON GENDER EQUALITY AND
WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT
07 - 11 MAY 2018,
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

**REPORT MINISTERIAL MEETING
10 - 11 MAY 2018**

INTRODUCTION

1. The third (3rd) Ministerial meeting of the African Union (AU) Specialised Technical Committee (STC) on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment was held from 10 - 11 May 2018, at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

ATTENDANCE:

2. The following Member States were in attendance:

Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Ethiopia, Republic of Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sao Tome and Principe, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, The Gambia, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

SESSION 1: OPENING CEREMONY

Opening remarks, H.E. Dr. Jean A.N. Kalilani, Minister of Gender, Children, Disability and Social Welfare, Republic of Malawi and Outgoing Chairperson of the Bureau of the STC on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

3. The outgoing Chairperson of the STC Bureau, H.E. Dr. Jean A.N. Kalilani welcomed the Ministers and their delegations to the meeting and thanked the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for its warm hospitality.
4. The STC is crucial to guide the Commission on how to deliver on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) commitments and should be used to identify areas needing further support and development.
5. The outgoing STC Bureau members, DRC, Togo, Mauritania and Sudan were congratulated for the achievements during their tenure, which includes, among others, evaluation of the 2009 Gender Policy, development of the new AU GEWE strategy, development of the new AU GEWE communication strategy and development of the report on the implementation of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA).
6. The Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD) under the leadership of Director, Mrs. Mahawa Kaba-Wheeler, was acknowledged for the unfailing support to the outgoing Bureau and for the high quality of working documents and the new Bureau was congratulated and wished success for their new responsibilities.

Welcome Remarks, H.E. Yalem Tsegaye, Minister of Women and Children Affairs, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

7. In her welcome remarks, H.E. Yalem Tsegaye , welcomed all participants, on behalf of the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, to Addis Ababa and to the Ministerial meeting of the 3rd STC on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.
8. Women in African Union (AU) Member States have been disadvantaged and the time has come to ensure their social and economic empowerment.
9. This STC will identify possible avenues of cooperation among Member States to work together to achieve GEWE in Africa and to implement the new AU GEWE strategy.

Introductory Remarks by Mrs. Mahawa Kaba-Wheeler, Director of the Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD)

10. The Director welcomed all delegates to the 3rd STC on GEWE and thanked everyone for contributing to the design of the documents which were submitted to the STC's appreciation
11. Member States and the outgoing STC Bureau were thanked for their support and commitment to the work of the Directorate and appreciated for their decision to develop the new AU GEWE strategy.
12. All stakeholders, including the consultants, UN and international partners, the Commission, CSOs, RECs, NEPAD, PAWO and WGDD staff were all thanked for their work and dedication towards the design of the AU gender strategy and all working documents under examination by the STC
13. The AU Chairperson and Commission through AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, H.E. Ms. Josefa Correia Sacko, representing the African Union Commission Chairperson was thanked for their continued support towards the mandate of WGDD

Statement on behalf of H.E.Mr. Mousa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission

14. H.E, Ms. Josefa Correia Sacko, the AU Commissioner of Rural Economy and Agriculture read the statement on behalf of H.E. Mr. Mousa Faki Mahamat, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission.
15. Participants were welcomed to the AUC and to this 3rd AU STC on GEWE and Ministers were thanked for responding positively to the invitation despite their heavy schedules.
16. WGDD was thanked for the quality of its work and leadership on GEWE in the Commission
17. The design of the new AU gender strategy was hailed as a landmark achievement by the Commission and Member States and the Commission were urged to own its outcomes as the AU's roadmap to GEWE on the continent
18. The AUC will work towards the historic decision to achieve Gender parity by 2025 and Member States were, likewise, encouraged to commit to do the same in the spirit of solidarity.
19. The AUC also congratulates the launch the African Women's network and the establishment of a Fund
20. The Commissioner officially declared the STC opened.

SESSION 2: ELECTION OF THE NEW BUREAU OF THE STC

21. The meeting validated the Bureau of the STC designated by the Expert meeting as follows:

- a) Chairperson: Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Central Africa
- b) 1st Vice Chairperson: Burkina Faso, West Africa
- c) 2nd Vice Chairperson: Mauritania, North Africa
- d) 3rd Vice Chairperson: Ethiopia, East Africa
- e) Rapporteur: Angola, Southern Africa

SESSION 3: HANDOVER CEREMONY BETWEEN THE OUTGOING BUREAU OF THE STC AND THE INCOMING BUREAU OF THE STC

22. The Commission thanked the outgoing Bureau of the STC for the exceptional leadership demonstrated during their 2 years mandate and officially welcomed the new Bureau.

SESSION 4. PRESENTATION AND ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT AGENDA AND DRAFT WORK PROGRAM

The meeting adopted the draft agenda and draft work programme as amended (attached)

Organisation of Work.

23. The meeting adopted its organisation of work as follows:

Day 1: Afternoon: 14.30 – 18.00

Day 2: Morning: 09.00 – 13.00

Afternoon: 14.30 – 17.30

SESSION 5: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE EXPERTS' REPORT ON THE AFRICAN GENDER SCORECARD

24. The meeting received a presentation on the Experts report on the African Gender Scorecard

25. Following the presentation, the Ministers:

- a. **TAKE NOTE** of the decision to expand the membership of the Steering Committee on the African Gender Scorecard to include representatives of the STC and the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) on a rotational basis;
- b. **REQUEST** the Commission to regularly report to the STC on the work of the Steering Committee;

- c. **TAKE NOTE** of the new cycle of the presentation of the AU Gender Scorecard to the AU January Summit to align with the institutional Reforms;
- d. **FURTHER TAKE NOTE** of the proposal to present the Score card once every two years;
- e. **ENCOURAGE** Member States to consider sharing the costs of the development and publication of the Gender Scorecard with the AU Commission;
- f. **FURTHER REQUEST** the AU Commission to consider developing mechanisms to harmonise different gender indexes of the AUC, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Development Bank (AfDB) to address multiple reporting challenges experienced by Member States

SESSION 6: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE EXPERTS' REPORT ON THE SOLEMN DECLARATION ON GENDER EQUALITY IN AFRICA

26. The meeting received a presentation on the Experts report on the Implementation of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA).

27. Following the presentation, the Ministers:

- a. **CONGRATULATE** the Member States that have submitted reports on time and encourage those who have not done so, to submit reports timeously.
- b. **ENCOURAGE** Member States who have not yet submitted their initial reports to do so;
- c. **REQUEST** the Commission to publish the dates for submission of reports on the AUC website;
- d. **ENCOURAGE** Regional Economic Committees (RECs) to submit their reports on the implementation of the SDGEA to the AUC Chairperson;
- e. **FURTHER REQUEST** the Commission to provide capacity building training for Member States on SDGEA reporting and the new reporting template;
- f. **FURTHER REQUEST** the Commission to explore mechanisms to align the SDGEA report with Agenda 2063 and its 10 year implementation plan and the gender strategy;
- g. **ADVISE** the Commission to include a glossary of terminologies in the report;
- h. **ADOPT** the SDGEA reports in preparation for presentation to the AU Policy Organs during the 31st AU Summit in June 2018.

SESSION 7: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE EXPERTS' REPORT ON THE FUND FOR AFRICAN WOMEN

28. The meeting received a presentation on the Experts report on the Fund for African Women (FAW)

29. Following the Presentation, the Ministers:

- a. **TAKE NOTE** of the progress made on the implementation of the FAW;
- b. **DECIDE** to upgrade the FAW to a Trust Fund;
- c. **REQUEST** the Commission to accelerate the transformation of the FAW into a Trust Fund and develop its governing instruments that integrates other stakeholders in its governance, to ensure its sustainability;
- d. **FURTHER REQUEST** the Commission to ensure that the Trust Fund is in compliance with AU reforms;
- e. **URGE** the Commission to realign the FAW to the objectives of Agenda 2063 with regards to financing the priority areas of the New AU Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy;
- f. **FURTHER REQUEST** the Commission to create a structure under the supervision of WGDD in charge of the implementation of the Fund, guided by the rules of procedure of the AU;
- g. **ENSURE** equitable distribution of Fund among RECS and Member States.

SESSION 8: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE EXPERTS' REPORT ON THE EVALUATION REPORT OF THE 2009 GENDER POLICY

30. The meeting received a presentation on the Experts report on the Evaluation Report of the 2009 AU Gender Policy

31. Following the presentation, the Ministers:

- a. **TAKE NOTE** of the Evaluation Report of the 2009 Gender policy;
- b. **REQUEST** the Commission to use the outcomes of the evaluation to establish a monitoring and evaluation system for the new AU Strategy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, including operational guidelines and tools that enable its implementation and evaluation;
- c. **FURTHER REQUEST** the Commission to strengthen the capacity of gender focal persons in Member States in close coordination with Ministries of Gender and AU respectively and to ensure that the AU Strategic and Planning Department is involved in the process;
- d. **FURTHER REQUEST** the Commission to harmonize the national Gender policies with the new AU Gender Strategy;
- e. **FURTHER REQUEST** the Commission to share the detailed evaluation report of 12 pages with AU Member States before the June/July Summit
- f. **ADOPT** the Evaluation Report of the 2009 Gender Policy.

SESSION 9: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE EXPERTS' REPORT ON THE NEW AU GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT STRATEGY

32. The meeting received a presentation on the Experts report on the new AU Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Strategy

33. Following the presentations, the Ministers:

- a. **TAKE NOTE** of the New AU Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Strategy;
- a. **FURTHER TAKE NOTE** of the reservations made by some Member States on the interpretation of terminologies, such as “inheritance” as well as “reproductive and sexual rights”.
REQUEST the Commission to harmonise the language of the document in conformity to the provisions of Maputo Protocol on Women’s Rights;
- b. **ADOPT** with amendments above cited, the New AU Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Strategy in preparation for presentation to the AU policy organs for endorsement;
- c. **REQUEST** the Commission to disseminate the AU GEWE Strategy to Member States to facilitate its alignment to all AU and national procedures, programmes and reporting processes.

SESSION 10: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE EXPERTS’ REPORT ON WGDD POLICY PLATFORMS

34. The meeting received the Experts report on enhancing the performance of WGDD policy platform

35. Following the presentation, the Ministers:

- a. **TAKE NOTE** of the Project to enhance the performance of the WGDD Policy Platforms;
- b. **REQUEST** the AU Commission to reinforce the staffing capacity of the WGDD for it to be able to perform its mandate;
- c. **FURTHER REQUEST** the AU Commission to share with Member States the full report on the Study on Enhancing WGDD policy Platform;
- d. **ADOPT** the report on enhancing the performance of WGDD policy platforms

Date, Venue and Agenda of next STC

36. The next STC will be held in October 2019 in Cote d’Ivoire, at the invitation of the Minister of Gender of the Republic of Cote d’Ivoire.

SESSION 11: PRESENTATIONS

37. The meeting received presentations on some of the flagship projects of the AU and updates on key developments in the AU gender work:

A. ICT literacy for girls /gender specific indicators in result framework for every project in infrastructure, Energy and Tourism sectors

38. The Ministers :

- a. **TAKE NOTE** the progress made on the digital inclusion of women and girls, including in coding and digital entrepreneurship, and encouraged the use of ICT in the education system.

- b. **ENDORSE** the recommendation to work with Ministers responsible for ICT towards addressing the gender digital divide through developing policies for attracting, retaining and promoting women within the ICT sector and into decision-making positions.
- c. **URGE** the Commission to support all initiatives that will fast track the integration of gender into initiatives led by the Department of infrastructure

B. Pan African Women's Organisation (PAWO)

39. The Ministers :

- a. **APPRECIATE** the role PAWO plays in promoting and protecting the rights of women and girls;
- b. **RECOMMEND** to support and fast track the transformation of PAWO into a specialized agency

C. Gender and Development Initiative for Africa (GADIA)

40. The Ministers:

- a. **CONGRATULATE** H.E President Nana Akufo Addo for the achievements made so far and reaffirm their support to his mandate.

D. Network of Women Leaders

41. The Ministers:

- a. **TAKE NOTE** of and the African Women Leaders Network.

E. Continental Free Trade Area

42. The Ministers:

- a. **TAKE NOTE** of the detailed background information on the establishment of the Africa free trade area and the conditions required for its effective operationalization.
- b. **EXPRESS** their full support to initiatives that will promote GEWE in the context of the CFTA

F. Free Movement of People

43. The Ministers:

- a. **TAKE NOTE** of the recommendation to facilitate the ratification and domestication of the protocol on free movement of people.
- b. **FURTHER TAKE NOTE** of the recommendation to appoint a champion, preferably a woman for the free movement of people.
- c. **URGE** the Commission to ensure gender continues to remain a priority in the Free Movement of People protocol

SESSION 12: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE DRAFT STC REPORT

44. The Ministerial meeting report was adopted, with amendments.

SESSION 13: CLOSING CEREMONY

45. Delegates thanked and acknowledged the excellent work of WGDD in designing the gender strategy and preparing a very successful STC.

46. The Chairperson of the STC Bureau, H.E. Mme Safou Lopusa Chantal thanked the AU Commission and the WGDD the excellent work in organising the STC, and making available high quality documents and all stakeholders who contributed to the success of the STC.

47. Gratitude was expressed to the former STC Bureau for their leadership in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in the Continent.

48. Special appreciation was extended to the Experts for facilitating the adoption of the new AU GEWE strategy and encourages the new Bureau to support the efforts of the Member States towards the implementation of the new Strategy.

49. Member States were encouraged to submit SDGEA reports within prescribed deadlines

50. The new AU reforms, including the transformation of the FAW and the realignment of the WGDD policy platforms will provide a fresh impetus to the work of WGDD.

51. The Chairperson declared the 3rd STC officially closed.

2018-06-29

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