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**OUTCOME OF THE MINISTERIAL WORKING GROUP MEETING
ON AFRICAN TOURISM SECTOR DEVELOPMENT
HELD IN SEYCHELLES ON
13 AND 14 MARCH 2014
*(Item proposed by the Republic of Seychelles)***

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INTRODUCTION

1. The meeting of the Ministerial Working Group on Tourism Development Strategy in the context of the AU Agenda 2063 was held on Thursday, 13th March 2014 in Victoria, Seychelles at the Kempinski Resort hotel. It was jointly organised by the Government of Republic of Seychelles in collaboration with the AUC Department of Infrastructure and Energy under the theme: ***Tourism: a transformative force for Africa***. The Ministerial meeting was preceded by a preparatory session of Experts early in the same day at the same venue.

PARTICIPATION

2. The Ministerial Working Group was selected to represent the five regions of the African Union. To that end, the following Member States were invited to the Working Group meeting:

Region	Countries	Number
North Africa	Algeria	1
	Egypt	1
	Tunisia	1
East Africa	Kenya	1
	Tanzania	1
	Seychelles	1
West Africa	Ghana	1
	Gambia	1
	Burkina Faso	1
Central Africa	Cameroon	1
	Gabon	1
	Equatorial Guinea	1
Southern Africa	Angola	1
	Namibia	1
	South Africa	1
Total countries by Regions		15
Former Chair of AU	Ethiopia	1
Current Chair of AU	Mauritania	1
Chair of NEPAD HOSGC	Senegal	1
TOTAL		18

3. In terms of actual participation the Ministers responsible for tourism, representatives and experts from the following Member States participated in the meeting: Angola, Gabon, Gambia, Kenya, Namibia, Senegal, Seychelles, Tunisia and

South Africa. Also, the following organisations were represented at the meeting: NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA), African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the Africa Travel Association (ATA).

4. The meeting was opened by Mr. Jean-Paul Adam, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Seychelles and chaired by Mr. Alain Saint-Ange, the Minister of Tourism and Culture.

AGENDA AND OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

5. Discussions of the Ministerial Working Group and their experts were guided by the following agenda items:

1. The African Agenda 2063;
2. Status, Challenges and Proposals for Long-Term Strategies for Tourism Development in Africa; and
3. Implementation of the 2004 AU-NEPAD Tourism Action Plan.

6. The main objectives of the meeting were to obtain political and technical guidance on:

- i) The overall goal of Africa's Tourism initiatives within the context of the attainment of the seven (7) **African Aspirations** contained in Agenda 2063;
- ii) Areas for action in the African Aspirations that were seen as essential for the growth of the tourism industry in Africa;
- iii) Tourism sector's contribution to achievement of the African Aspirations; and
- iv) Key components of a comprehensive African Tourism Policy and Strategy to be developed within the framework of the African Agenda 2063.

OUTCOME OF THE MEETING

7. The Working Group of Ministers and experts discussed at length the African Agenda 2063 framework in relation to the tourism sector in Africa and observed that of the seven aspirations of the Agenda 2063, four (4) are seen as necessary for the growth and sustainability of the tourism sector in Africa. These are Aspirations number 2, 3, 4 and 7. They read as follows:

2. An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan Africanism;
3. Peaceful and secure Africa;
4. Africa of good governance with respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law;
7. Africa as strong and global player and partner.

8. In that context, aspirations number 1, 5 and 6 were seen as those which the tourism sector can contribute to their achievement. They are as follows:

1. A prosperous Africa with inclusive growth and sustainable development;
5. Africa as a strong cultural identity, values and ethics;
6. An Africa whose development is people driven, especially relying on the potential offered by the youth and women.

9. In terms of sector strategies, the Ministers agreed that the main goal of the tourism sector in the African Agenda 2063 should be: ***TO MAKE AFRICA THE PREFERRED DESTINATION FOR TOURISM IN THE WORLD.***

10. To achieve the overall tourism goal for Africa, the meeting concluded that it would be essential to build capacity and speed up implementation of the AU/NEPAD Tourism Action Plan. Finally, they made the recommendations on the following actions whose implementation is to be mainly facilitated by the African Union Commission:

1. **Enhancing** the importance and profile of tourism in the AU decision making structures and processes;
2. **Activating** the Ministerial Conference on Tourism within the framework of the AU Specialised Technical Committees (STCs) as a platform for the development of tourism in the continent;
3. **Extending** the work of the Ministerial Working Group as an interim measure prior to the operationalisation of the Ministerial conference;
4. **Continuing** consultations under the auspices of the African Union in order to strengthen the role of tourism in the political and socio-economic development of the continent in the context of Agenda 2063; and
5. **Signature** of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the African union Commission and the UNWTO on technical cooperation in tourism development in Africa.

CONCLUSION

11. The EXECUTIVE COUNCIL is invited to note and adopt the enclosed **Seychelles Final Communiqué** of the meeting of the Ministerial Working Group on Tourism and endorse its main outcomes. The EXECUTIVE COUNCIL is also requested to adopt the enclosed draft Decision in order to enable the AU Commission to facilitate implementation of the recommendations of the Ministerial Working Group.

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Annex**

SEYCHELLES FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ

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We, Members of the AU Ministerial Working Group on Tourism designated by the African Union (AU) Commission to discuss and further agree with a view to consulting all African Ministers responsible for tourism on strategic measures to strengthen the contribution of the tourism sector in Africa within the context of the AU Agenda 2063 held our meeting in Victoria, Seychelles on 14 March 2014 under the theme: “Tourism: A transformative force for Africa”;

- Express our sincere gratitude to the government of the Republic of Seychelles for hosting the first AU Ministerial Working Group on Tourism and for the excellent facilities and hospitality;
- Recognize and appreciate the tremendous potential of tourism to Africa’s socio-economic development and transformation, in particular GDP and job creation as well as regional integration and the need for Africa to capitalize on anticipated growth in world tourism;
- Acknowledge the AU Agenda 2063, the AU/NEPAD Tourism Action Plan and various national and regional as well as international initiatives in Africa;
- Take note and appreciate the report of the experts’ session that took place on 13 March 2014 in Victoria, Seychelles;
- Appreciate the orientations provided in the opening remarks of Ministers of Seychelles, Gabon and South Africa, as well as the AUC Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy.

Agreed to:

- **Enhance** the importance and profile of tourism in the AU decision making structures and processes;
- **Activate** the Ministerial Conference on Tourism in the context of the operationalization of the AU Specialised Technical Committees as a platform for the development of tourism in the continent;
- **Extend** the work of the Ministerial Working Group as an interim measure prior to the operationalization of the Ministerial conference and use existing fora for consulting, for example, the forthcoming 56th UNWTO CAF meeting of April 2014 in Angola and the Tourism Indaba of May 2014 in South Africa;
- **Make Africa the Preferred Destination for Tourism.**

- **Continue** consultations under the auspices of the African Union in order to strengthen the role of tourism in the political and socio-economic development of the continent in the context of Agenda 2063.

To create an African brand of tourism, we further agree to consult on:

1. Review the NEPAD Tourism Action Plan in the context of the AU Strategic Plan 2014-2017 and the Africa Agenda 2063;
2. Stock taking and assessment of national touristic assets;
3. Establishment of data / information management system;
4. Harmonizing Policies and regulatory environment;
5. Build and Strengthen Institutional capacity;
6. Promote Research and development;
7. Promote Investment in tourism infrastructure and products;
8. Capacitate Human resource, as well as quality assurance in the touristic activities;
9. Create a task Team to develop the key milestones, targets and strategies for tourism in the Agenda 2063 framework taking into account the requirement to submit the Agenda at the next AU Summit;
10. Strengthen the Africa platform for sharing experiences, as well as harmonize Africa's voice in global engagements;
11. Identify potentials for job creation through tourism activities - Value Chain; Green Jobs and Blue Economy;
12. Document and exchange good experiences and best practices for peer learning;
13. Better coordinate and monitor tourism developments in the continent;
14. Adopt a code of Conduct & Ethics for tourism;
15. Strengthen the essential role of the private sector and the civil society in tourism;
16. Use tourism as an instrument to mainstream gender participation, women and youth empowerment;

17. Strengthen the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in tourism services, such as the use of e-visas;
18. Improve air connectivity in the continent in collaboration with Ministers responsible for air transport;

We request the African Union Commission to engage with the UNWTO to sign a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in tourism development strategies in Africa;

Finally, we appreciate the spirit of openness and cordiality that prevailed during our deliberations in the Meeting.

Done in Seychelles, on 14th March 2014

The Ministerial Working Group on Tourism

2014

Outcome of the ministerial working group meeting on African tourism sector development held in Seychelles on 13 and 14 March 2014 (Item proposed by The Republic of Seychelles)

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