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**REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON MULTILATERAL
COOPERATION**

2020 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

Introduction

1. During the period under review and despite the peculiar situation characterized by the Covid-19 pandemic, the PRC Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation (SCWMC) under the Chairmanship of His Excellency Mr. Fafré CAMARA, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Mali held five (5) Meetings as follows:

- (i). The 44th Meeting of the SCWMC, held on 9 January 2020, during which, Member States considered the Draft 2019 Annual Report of the Sub-committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation as well as the Draft decisions on Multilateral Cooperation in preparation for the February 2020 AU Summit;
- (ii). The 45th Meeting of the SCWMC, held on 25 February 2020, which provided an opportunity to Member States to consider the initial Draft Working Documents for the 2nd AU-EU Ministerial Meeting;
- (iii). The 46th Meeting of the SCWMC, held on 13 and 27 May 2020, which reviewed the draft working documents for the 5th Africa – Arab Summit as well as the Draft Communique, Draft Agenda and Programmes for the 2nd AU-EU Ministerial and Senior Officials' Meetings;
- (iv). The 47th Meeting of the SCWMC, held on 28 July and 06 August 2020, during which, the Sub-Committee considered the draft Communique for the 2nd AU-EU Ministerial Meeting, the draft Report of the Retreat of the Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation held on 13-15 December 2019, in Mombasa, Kenya, and received a briefing by the Department of Trade and Industry on the preparations for the 7th Edition of the EU-AU Business Forum to be held on the margins of the 6th EU-AU Summit;
- (v). The 48th Meeting of the SCWMC, held on 06 November 2020, during which, Member States were briefed on the post-2020 ACP-EU negotiation process; the implementation of the TICAD 7 2019 Yokohama Action Plan held in 2019, in Yokohama, Japan as well as the status of partnership meetings planned for 2020, and the development of the AU Partnerships Strategy and Policy Framework.

2. The Sub-Committee mainly focused its work on the consideration of the implementation of Executive Council Decisions that ranged from the preparations for the 5th Africa – Arab Summit to be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, the 2nd African Union (AU) – European Union (EU) Ministerial Meeting, the 15th Meeting of the Senior Officials of the Africa - Arab Partnership Coordination Committee held virtually on 27 August 2020, to the

commitments made during the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) Summit, held in Yokohama, Japan, on 26 – 31 August 2019.

3. In addition to the above and in line with Executive Council Decision No.: EX.CL/Dec.1073(XXXVI), taken during its thirty-sixth Ordinary Session held on 06 – 07 February 2020, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, *“Requesting the PRC, in close collaboration with the Commission, to develop a Partnership Strategy and Policy Framework document to be considered by the Thirty Eighth Ordinary Session of the Executive Council in February 2021”*, the SCWMC was briefed on the steps undertaken by the Commission for the development of a draft Strategic Framework for AU partnerships.

4. This Report, which is divided into two parts, summarizes the issues discussed and conclusions reached at the above-mentioned meetings. The first part addresses general issues related to Partnerships, while the second part summarizes the deliberations regarding each Partnership.

Part I. General issues on Partnerships

1.1 Development of an AU Partnerships Strategy and Policy Framework

5. The Executive Council in 2014, requested that the Commission through the Partnerships Management and Coordination Division (PMCD), in close collaboration with the PRC Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation (SCWMC), embark on a comprehensive evaluation of the African Union’s Partnerships with the rest of the world. This process was undertaken, however, following submission of the Evaluation Report for consideration by Member States, it became clear that the Report did not exhaustively address all issues related to Partnerships.

6. Following various consultative processes with Member States at different levels, the Retreat of the PRC Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation (SCWMC), which was held from 13-15 November 2019, in Mombasa, Kenya, reviewed all Partnerships of the African Union and made specific recommendations. Most importantly, the three-day Retreat recommended the development of an African Union Policy and Strategy Framework, which will guide the AU’s engagement with the rest of the world.

7. It is in line with this recommendation that during the Thirty-Sixth Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, held on 6 - 7 February 2020, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Decision No.: **EX.CL/Dec. 1073 (XXXVI), paragraph 81**, was taken requesting that *“the PRC, in close collaboration with the Commission develop a Partnership Strategy and Policy Framework document to be considered by the Thirty Eighth Ordinary Session of the Executive Council in February 2021”*.

8. Following the Decision, the Commission begun the process of recruiting two (2) consultants who would work on the development of the Partnerships Strategy and Policy Framework under the guidance of the Commission. Though the process has been

severely hampered by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission has been able to:

- (i). Finalize the Terms of Reference for publication and the Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) was advertised on the AU Website on 20 October 2020, with the deadline set as 6 November 2020;
- (ii). Collaborate closely with AUDA-NEPAD in identifying the structure and processes needed in the development of a holistic document;
- (iii). Communicate with RECs, AU Organs and Specialized Agencies and technical Departments of the Commission to sensitize them on the process. The aforementioned stakeholders have also been requested to nominate focal points who will serve as resource persons; providing relevant information as requested and liaising with the Consultants, when necessary;
- (iv). In collaboration with AUDA-NEPAD, prepared the necessary background information in line with the directives of the SCWMC, which will serve as a guide to the Consultants in the development of the Framework.

9. During the 48th Meeting of the Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation (SCWMC), Member States agreed to establish a Joint Working Group with the Commission with a view to providing substantive contribution that will guide the technical expertise of the consultants hired to develop the AU Partnership Strategy and Policy Framework. The Working group will work in accordance with principles and clear mandate to be developed by the Commission for consideration by the SCWMC.

10. It is expected that the Partnerships Strategy and Policy Framework will be ready and finalized for submission to the Executive Council in July 2021.

Recommendations

11. The Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation proposes that the PRC recommends to the Executive Council to:

- (i). Request the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, AUDA-NEPAD and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to finalize the development of the Draft Partnership Strategy and Policy Framework document for submission to the executive Council in January/February 2022;
- (ii). Further request the PRC to ensure that the Commission prepares a comprehensive road map with specific timeline, during the first quarter of 2021, for the development and finalization of the Partnership Strategy and Policy Framework;

Part II. Partnerships Specific Issues

2.1 AU – EU Partnership

12. The SCWMC followed up on the preparations for the 2nd African Union (AU) – European Union (EU) Ministerial Meeting, which was initially scheduled to be held on 4 – 5 May 2020 in Kigali, Rwanda.

13. On 25 February 2020, the SCWMC started reviewing the draft Communiqué initiated by the Commission as well as the Draft Agendas and programmes of Work for the Ministerial Meeting and its preparatory Senior Officials Meeting for the 2nd AU-EU Ministerial Meeting.

14. However, subsequent to the surge of the COVID-19 pandemic, the momentum for the preparations for the 2nd AU-EU Ministerial meeting slowed down and eventually the rapid spread of the pandemic led to the postponement of the said Meeting.

15. Despite all the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, Member States continued their work using virtual means and in July 2020 they adopted the draft Communiqué for the 2nd AU-EU Ministerial Meeting, and authorized the Commission to share the document for the consideration of the European Union. The draft Communiqué was subsequently transmitted to the EU, which reviewed the document and sent its first feedback to the Commission in early September 2020.

16. During the same period of July – August 2020, and following consultations between the Chairperson of the AU Executive Council and EU Leadership, it was agreed that the 2nd AU-EU Ministerial would be held virtually on 28 September 2020, while the 6th EU-AU Summit was to take place on 28-29 October 2020, preceded by its preparatory Senior Officials and Ministerial Meetings. The Note Verbale from the Embassy of South Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which communicated the above-mentioned dates was then transmitted to all AU Member States.

17. In preparation for the virtual AU-EU Ministerial Meeting as indicated above, a Joint Steering Committee Meeting of the AU-EU Partnership was convened on 14 September 2020, and considered the draft Communiqué as well as other practical arrangements for the Ministerial Meeting and Summit preparations. During the said meeting, EU informed the Joint Steering Committee that its Leadership had agreed with the Chair of the Union for the postponement of the 6th EU-AU Summit to allow for the possibility of holding a physical Summit. Accordingly, EU noted that because of this new development, it was logical that the Ministerial Meeting be postponed as well.

18. The Joint Steering Committee Meeting held on 14 September 2020, also considered the draft Communiqué for the 2nd AU-EU Ministerial Meeting and agreed that since the Ministerial Meeting would likely be postponed, it would be important for EU to review its comments and amendments and work on the draft document proposed by AU. Furthermore, the Chair of PRC (Co-Chair of the Joint Steering Committee) emphasized

that the Ministerial Meeting should mainly focus on the follow-up of progress made since Abidjan and therefore not preempt on the areas of cooperation for the 6th EU-AU Summit. Accordingly, EU agreed to work on the basis of the draft Communique proposed by AU. It is hence expected that both sides will continue engaging through the Joint Steering Committee Meetings to resolve any contentious issues and agree on a draft Joint Communique for the 2nd AU-EU Ministerial Meeting.

19. It is important to indicate that the Chair of the Union, H.E. President Cyril Ramaphosa, in accordance with a Letter to the President of the European Council, has agreed, in consultation with the Bureau of the Assembly, on the postponement of the 6th EU-AU Summit to 2021.

Recommendations

20. The Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation proposes that the PRC recommends to the Executive Council to:

- (i). Request the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission to agree with the EU on a suitable date for the 2nd AU-EU Ministerial Meeting to be held in 2021, in Kigali, Rwanda, subject to improvement in public health conditions caused the COVID-19 pandemic and to explore the possibility of holding the Ministerial Meeting by virtual means after consultations with EU.
- (ii). Request also the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels and the EU to agree on suitable dates for the 6th EU-AU Summit and its preparatory statutory meetings to be held in 2021, in Europe, subject to improvement in public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and in line with relevant decisions of the AU governing partnerships meetings.
- (iii). Further request the PRC to commence the preparatory processes of the above-mentioned Meetings and invite the Commission to avail to Member States all relevant documents in this regard.

2.2 Africa – Arab Partnership

21. In accordance with Executive Council Decision No. EX.CL/Dec.1073(XXXVI), taken during its 36th Ordinary Session held on 6- 7 February 2020, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which: (i) Took note of the postponement of the 5th Africa-Arab Summit and the proposal by the League of Arab States (LAS) to hold it on 16 March 2020; and (ii) requested the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States to develop the working documents of the 5th Africa-Arab Summit and to adopt the Draft Joint Africa-Arab Partnership Action Plan and its financing mechanism for consideration by the 5th Africa-Arab Summit, the SCWMC in close collaboration with the Commission embarked on the preparatory process for the 5th Africa – Arab Summit to be held in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

22. It is in that context that the SCWMC considered and adopted the draft working documents, prepared by the Commission, for the 5th Africa – Arab Summit:

- a) Draft priorities of the African Union for the 5th Africa-Arab Summit Declaration;
- b) A Draft Progress Report on the implementation of the Resolutions of the 4th Africa-Arab Summit held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, on 22 - 23 November 2016;
- c) Draft Agendas and Programmes of Work for the 5th Africa–Arab Summit and its preparatory statutory Senior Officials and Ministerial Meetings.

23. The above-mentioned draft documents prepared by the African Union have been shared with the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States (LAS) who is in charge of initiating the draft documents as the host of the 5th Africa–Arab Summit.

24. To follow-up on the preparations of the 5th Africa–Arab Summit, the progress made in the implementation of the Resolutions of the 4th Africa–Arab Summit held in 2016, in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, as well as to undertake a review of the situation in African and Arab countries with regard to the COVID-19 pandemic and exploring possible cooperation areas, the 15th Joint Senior Officials Meeting of the Coordination Committee of the Africa-Arab Partnership was held virtually on Thursday 27 August 2020.

25. Regarding preparations for the 5th Africa – Arab Summit, LAS informed the Meeting that consultations were ongoing with the host country, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, on suitable dates for the Summit as well as the draft working documents and would promptly give feedback to AU when proposals were made. AU responded that it had developed its positions concerning the draft Declaration and the Agendas and Programs of Work for the Summit, which had been submitted for consideration by LAS. LAS reacted stating that it had taken note of AU documents but would not discuss them as it was still consulting with the host country for the finalization of the Arab side draft documents.

26. During the 15th Senior Officials Meeting of the Joint Coordination Committee of the Africa – Arab Partnership, both sides agreed on all points of discussion and adopted the following outcomes:

- a) They appreciated the efforts made by the two secretariats to finalize the Joint Africa-Arab Action Plan, in preparation for its adoption in accordance with Resolution (7) of the 4th Africa-Arab Summit;
- b) They recognized the importance of the financing mechanism of the Africa-Arab Partnership programmes in consolidating the partnership process and appreciated the efforts exerted in its preparation, keeping in mind that its endorsement would only take place after the adoption of the Joint Africa-Arab Action Plan. The meeting also took note of the request of the Republic of

- Tunisia to host the 1st Africa-Arab Coordination Meeting, to discuss the financing mechanism;
- c) They recognized the importance of urgently setting a date for the Summit, and for the need for the Preparatory Committee to resume preparations for the Summit, while underscoring the important role that the Summit can play in elevating the Africa-Arab Partnership. The meeting also welcomed the offer made by BADEA to be part of the Summit preparations and reiterated the need for all AU and Arab Member States to participate in the Summit;
 - d) The meeting called for the concerned experts within the two Organizations to follow-up on new developments relating to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and to coordinate plans and strategies in response to this.

27. It is important to note that since the 15th Senior Officials Meeting of the Coordination Committee held on 27 August 2020, no substantial progress has been made. The Commission is also yet to receive any formal Communication from LAS or the host country on the postponement of the 5th Africa-Arab Summit as well as on new proposals for the dates of the said Summit.

Recommendations

28. The Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation proposes that the PRC recommends to the Executive Council to:

- (i). Take note of the work undertaken by the AU with regard to the development of the AU priorities as well as on the proposed draft working documents for the 5th Africa – Arab Summit;
- (ii). Request the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and the host country of the 5th Africa–Arab Summit, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to agree on suitable dates for the holding of the 5th Africa–Arab Summit and its statutory preparatory Meetings in 2021, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, subject to improvement in Public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.3 Africa – India Partnership

29. The Africa-India Partnership Mid-Term Review Meeting held in New Delhi, India, on 11-12 September 2019, evaluated the status of implementation of projects agreed upon during the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit, which was held in 2015, and recognized the need for the Partnership to focus on the multilateral aspects of cooperation based on the African Union Agenda 2063.

30. With regards to the holding of the 4th Africa-India Summit, the Thirty-Third Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union held on 9 - 10 February 2020, directed the

PRC in collaboration with the Commission to commence preparations for the 4th Africa-India Summit to be hosted by the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, in 2021.

31. In this regard, work on the next Joint Action Plan, taking into account the perspective and priority areas of cooperation of the African Union, is currently being compiled. The draft Action Plan is being initiated by AU and shall be presented to India during the preparatory meetings.

Recommendations

32. The PRC Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation proposes that the PRC recommends to the Executive Council to:

- (i). Recall Assembly Decision No.: Assembly/AU/Dec.762(XXXIII), taken during the 33rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held on 9-10 February 2020, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which “endorsed the offer made by the Islamic Republic of Mauritania to host the 4th Africa-India Summit to be held in 2021 and requested the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission and India to agree on the date of the said Summit” subject to improvement in Public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- (ii). Request the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, the African Diplomatic Corps in New Delhi and India to join effort for the strengthening of Joint Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms of the Africa-India Partnership through regular consultations and engagements.

2.4 Africa – Turkey Partnership

33. In line with the Communiqué of the Second Ministerial Review Conference of the Africa - Turkey Partnership, held on 12 February 2018, in Istanbul, Turkey, both sides committed to holding the Third Africa - Turkey Summit in the second quarter of 2020. However due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Summit did not hold. As a result, the Summit has been rescheduled to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, starting in 2021, as directed by the Thirty-Third Ordinary Session of the Assembly Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.762(XXXIII).

34. Similarly, a series of planned Summit preparatory activities were not held. Accordingly, the annual financial budgetary support contribution of USD\$ 1 million to the African Union was realigned to support COVID-19 activities under the Africa-CDC.

Recommendations

35. The PRC Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation proposes that the PRC recommends to the Executive Council to:

- (i). Recall Assembly Decision No.: Assembly/AU/Dec.762(XXXIII), taken during the 33rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held on 9-10 February

2020, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which “directed the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission and Turkey to propose new dates starting in 2021, for the hosting of the 3rd Africa-Turkey Summit, in line with Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.899 (XXVIII)Rev.2, paragraph 209 of January 2016” and Recommend to the Assembly to request the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission to agree with the partner Turkey on convenient dates for the holding of the 4th Africa – Turkey Summit in 2021, subject to improvement in Public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.5 Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD)

36. The activities focused on the follow-up of the outcomes of the TICAD 7 Summit held in Yokohama, Japan, in August 2019, including the finalization of the 2019 Yokohama Action Plan and preparations for the TICAD 8 Summit to be held in the Republic of Tunisia, in 2022.

37. The finalization of the 2019 Yokohama Action Plan was marked by a deadlock between the Commission and Japan on the role of the African Union in the TICAD process, as well as the inclusion of the African Union Initiatives/Measures in the said Action Plan. It should be noted that the Commission rejected Japan’s proposal to delete the African Union’s Initiatives/Measures from the Action Plan. Moreover, Japan’s deletions were grounded on a provision in the said Action Plan, which states that ‘measures/initiatives should be limited to those to be carried out under the responsibility of each actor and with solid financial resources.’ As a result, Japan indicated that new Initiatives/Measures from AUC, to be incorporated in the Action Plan be discussed with Japan Mission to AU.

38. As part of the finalization of the Action Plan, a monitoring strategy, which would be managed through a designated website was also considered. In addition, a Guidance Note on the management of the said strategy and on the modality of monitoring the 2019 Yokohama Action Plan was developed. Unfortunately, the adoption process of the above-mentioned Guidance Note was also marked by a deadlock. The African Union maintained its position on the need to finalize the 2019 Yokohama Action Plan, (inclusive of AU Initiatives/Measures), at the same time as the Guidance Note as the two documents complement each other. This contravenes Japan’s position, which is to adopt the Guidance Note before the finalization of the Action Plan.

39. With regard to the TICAD 8 Summit to be held in Tunisia, in 2022, preparations have commenced in collaboration with Tunisia. Discussions are underway for the holding of a Ministerial Meeting in Japan in the second half of 2021, after the Tokyo Olympic Games, scheduled for July-August 2021, subject to the evolution of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Recommendations

40. The Subcommittee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation proposes that the PRC recommends to the Executive Council to:

- (i). Underscore the importance of TICAD in the development processes of Africa and to Emphasize the need to further strengthen the African Union's role in the TICAD process, as follows:
 - a) The full involvement of AU in the TICAD process as well as recognition of its rightful role in defining the priority areas of an appropriate Plan of Action including a timeline for implementation and also to have pragmatic approaches to ensure a balanced role of all stakeholders involved;
 - b) Strengthening alignment of the TICAD process to systemic changes in Africa as defined notably, through the AU's integration agenda, which emphasizes engagement at the regional and continental levels, in order to satisfactorily contribute to the AU Agenda 2063.
- (ii). Indicate the African Union's position on the need to finalize the 2019 Yokohama Action Plan while ensuring that the African Union interests are well accommodated;
- (iii). Reiterate the African Union's availability to ensure a smooth and successful preparatory process for the upcoming TICAD 8 Summit, in Tunisia, in 2022.
- (iv). Endorse the second half of 2021 for the holding in Japan of the follow-up TICAD 7 Ministerial Meeting at a date to be determined, in consultation with Japan, subject to improvement in Public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and if necessary to explore the possibility of holding the Ministerial Meeting by virtual means after consultations with Japan ;
- (v). Directs the Commission to circulate the working documents for the meeting in a timely manner.

2.6 Africa - Korea Partnership

41. The 4th Africa–Korea Ministerial Forum and its preparatory Senior Officials Meeting were held on 6 – 8 December 2016, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The 4th Africa–Korea Ministerial Forum adopted the 2016 Addis Ababa Declaration for the Africa–Korea Partnerships, the 2017-2021 Africa–Korea Framework of Cooperation and requested both sides to undertake regular consultations for the gradual implementation of programmes and projects within the Framework of Cooperation.

42. In line with the above, both sides established the Africa–Korea Policy Consultation Meetings. The first Africa-Korea Partnership Policy Consultation Meeting was held on 11 - 13 September 2017, in Seoul, Korea, while the second Policy Consultation Meeting was organized in Seoul, Korea, on 10 - 11 October 2018.

43. It is worth indicating that, during the 4th Africa–Korea Ministerial Forum held in 2016, both sides adopted a five-year cycle of the Ministerial Forum and agreed that the 5th Africa–Korea Ministerial Forum will be held in 2021, in Seoul, Korea.

44. On 17 November 2020, the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, through Note Verbale No.: KE/288/2020 informed the Commission of Korea's proposal to hold the 5th Africa–Korea Ministerial Forum in 2021 and its preparatory meetings during the first or second week of November of 2021.

Recommendations

45. The Subcommittee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation proposes that the PRC recommends to the Executive Council to:

- (i). Approve the holding of the 5th Africa–Korea Ministerial Forum during the first or second week of November 2021, in Seoul, Korea, subject to improvement in public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and if necessary to explore the possibility of holding the Ministerial Meeting by virtual means after consultations with Korea;
- (ii). Request the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, the African Diplomatic Corps in Seoul and Korea to agree on the exact dates for the 5th Africa–Korea Forum and to start preparations for the said Forum as soon as possible.
- (iii). **Direct** the Commission to develop and circulate the working documents for the meeting in a timely manner.

2.7 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)

46. The 2018 FOCAC Summit held in Beijing, China, on 3 - 4 September 2018, adopted the 2018 Beijing Declaration and the 2019 – 2021 FOCAC Action Plan. Paragraph 8.3 of the above-mentioned FOCAC Action Plan states that: *“In accordance with the procedures of the FOCAC follow-up mechanism, the two sides decide to hold the 8th Ministerial Conference in Senegal in 2021 and, before that, the 14th and 15th Senior Officials Meetings respectively in 2020 and 2021”*.

47. To review progress made in the implementation of the FOCAC 2019 – 2021 Beijing Action Plan, a FOCAC Ministerial Coordinators Meeting was held on 24 – 25 June 2019, in Beijing, China. The Meeting took stock of the implementation of the 2018 FOCAC Summit resolutions in each African country and at regional and continental levels and considered the way forward for strengthening of the partnership between Africa and China.

48. In accordance with the above-mentioned paragraph 8.3 of the 2018 FOCAC Action Plan, the 14th Senior Officials Meeting of FOCAC was held in Beijing, China, on 10 December 2020. The Meeting reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the 2018 FOCAC Action Plan, discussed cooperation in the fight against the COVID-19 Pandemic and considered the preparatory process for FOCAC Meetings to be held in 2021.

Recommendations

49. The Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation proposes that the PRC recommends to the Executive Council to:

- (i). Request the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, the African Diplomatic Corps in Beijing, China, and Senegal, the host country of the 8th FOCAC Ministerial Conference, to agree on a suitable date and to start the preparatory process for the 8th FOCAC Ministerial Conference to be held in 2021, in Dakar, Senegal subject to improvement in Public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

ANNEX
TABLE ON UPCOMING PARTNERSHIPS SUMMITS

No.	Names of the Partnerships	Initially Scheduled Dates	Postponement if any
1.	6th African Union – European Union Summit	2020 As per the 5 th AU-EU Summit Declaration adopted in 2017 in Abidjan, para, 1, which reaffirms: <i>“that the Joint Strategy adopted ten years ago at the Lisbon Summit remains the Framework for our Partnership”</i> , while the Joint Strategy states in paragraph 91, states that: <i>“In the future, starting from the Lisbon Summit, Meetings of the Heads of State and Government will be organized every three years, alternately in Africa and the EU”</i> .	Yes, Postponed to 2021
2.	4th Africa – India Summit	2020 As per the 3 rd Africa-India Summit Declaration adopted in New Delhi in 2015, paragraph 33, which reads as follows: <i>“The next India-Africa Forum Summit will be held in the year 2020”</i>	Yes, Postponed to 2021 As per Executive Council Decision No: EX.CL/Dec.1073(XXXVI), of February 2020, which states that: <i>“TAKES NOTE of the request of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania to postpone the 4th Africa-India Summit to 2021 and RECOMMENDS to the Assembly to approve its request;”</i> and <i>“REQUESTS the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, India and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania to propose suitable dates for the 4th Summit, in 2021, and to commence preparations for the Summit in cooperation with the African diplomatic corps in New Delhi”</i>
3.	5th Africa – Arab Summit	2019 As per Resolution 6 of the 4 th Africa-Arab Summit held in 2016, in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, which: <i>“Also Welcomed the decision of the League of Arab States accepting the offer made by the Kingdom of</i>	Postponed for 2020 but No information received on the postponement of the Summit to 2021

		<i>Saudi Arabia to host the Fifth Africa-Arab Summit in Riyadh; Saudi Arabia in 2019”.</i>	
4.	3rd Africa – Turkey Summit	<p>2019</p> <p>As per the 2014 Africa-Turkey Declaration, paragraph 21, which states that: “<i>Agree to hold the 3rd Africa-Turkey Partnership Summit in 2019 in Turkey</i>”</p>	<p>Yes, Postponed to 2021</p> <p>As per Executive Council Decision No: EX.CL/Dec.1073(XXXVI), of February 2020, which states that:</p> <p><i>“TAKES NOTE of the postponement by Turkey of the 3rd Africa-Turkey Summit from 2019 to 2020, as well as its proposal to hold the Summit on 20 April 2020, in Istanbul, Turkey”;</i></p> <p><i>and</i></p> <p><i>“DECIDES in close collaboration with the Commission and Turkey to propose new dates, starting in 2021, for the holding of the 3rd Africa-Turkey Summit, in line with Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.899 (XXVIII) Rev.2, paragraph 204 of January 2016”.</i></p>
5.	5th Africa – Korea Ministerial Forum	<p>2021</p> <p>As per paragraph 4.3 of the 4th Africa – Korea Forum Declaration adopted in 2016, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which states that: “Hold the next Forum for Korea – Africa Cooperation in Korea, in 2021”</p>	Not Postponed
6.	Forum on China – Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)	<p>2021</p> <p>As per paragraph 24 of the 2018 FOCAC Summit Declaration, which, “<i>welcomed the Republic of Senegal as the next co-chair of FOCAC and agreed that the Eighth FOCAC Ministerial Conference will be held in the Republic of Senegal in 2021</i>”</p>	Not postponed

DRAFT DECISIONS ON MULTILATERAL COOPERATION

A. On General issues

1. The PRC Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation proposes that the PRC recommends to the Executive Council to:
 - (i). **Request** the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, AUDA-NEPAD and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), to finalize the development of the Draft Partnership Strategy and Policy Framework document for submission to the Executive Council in February 2022;
 - (ii). **Further request** the PRC to ensure that the Commission prepares a comprehensive road map with specific timeline, during the first quarter of 2021, for the development and finalization of the Partnership Strategy and Policy Framework;
 - (iii). **Approve** the criteria for hosting partnerships Summits, Meetings and Events as annexed to this decision and **Request** the PRC in collaboration with the Commission to ensure its implementation;

B. On Partnerships Summits and Meetings

2. In consideration of the COVID-19 Pandemic in the purview of Force Majeure, which disrupted various programmes and events scheduled for 2020, of which some of the scheduled Partnerships Summits were affected, leading to the need to postpone them to 2021, the PRC Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation proposes that the PRC recommends to the executive Council to:
 - (i). **Recommend** to the Assembly, to request the Chairperson of the Union in collaboration with the Bureau of the Assembly, the Chairs of the Regional Economic Communities and the Chairperson of the Commission, to undertake consultations with Partners and Member States designated to host partnerships Summits to agree on the Partnerships Summits to be held in 2021 and to inform all Member States on the outcomes of their consultations, as soon as possible, subject to improvement in public health conditions caused the COVID-19 pandemic, taking into consideration the Executive Council Decision No.: EX.CL/Dec.899(XXVIII), of January 2016, which states as follows: “APPROVES a five (5) year cycle and to organize two (2) partnership meetings per year as from 2017 for all Strategic Partnerships and REQUESTS the Commission to adopt its gradual implementation taking into consideration the need to reschedule previously adopted Partnership meetings accordingly, including at the Summit level, and in consultation with the respective Partners and host countries”;

- (ii). Recommend to the Assembly to decide that the holding in 2021 of Partnership Summits (namely: European Union (EU) – African Union (AU), Arab-Africa, Africa-India and Turkey-Africa Summits) is subject to the outcomes of the above mentioned consultations at the level of the Bureau of the Assembly of the Union extended to the Chairs of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and the Chairperson of the Commission.

C. On Specific Partnerships

3. Subject to the outcomes of the consultations undertaken by the Chairperson of the Union as indicated in the above-paragraph B.2, the PRC Sub-Committee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation proposes that the PRC recommends to the Executive Council to:

On AU-EU Partnership

- (i). **Request** the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission to agree with the EU on a suitable date for the 2nd AU-EU Ministerial Meeting to be held in 2021, in Kigali, Rwanda, subject to improvement in public health conditions caused the COVID-19 pandemic and to explore the possibility of holding the Ministerial Meeting by virtual means after consultations with EU.
- (ii). **Request** also the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels and the EU to agree on suitable dates for the 6th EU-AU Summit and its preparatory statutory meetings to be held in 2021, in Europe, subject to improvement in public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and in line with relevant decisions of the AU governing partnerships meetings.
- (iii). **Further request** the PRC to commence the preparatory processes of the above-mentioned Meetings and invite the Commission to avail to Member States all relevant documents in this regard.

On Africa – Arab Partnership

- (iv). **Take note** of the work undertaken by the AU with regard to the development of the AU priorities as well as the proposals of draft working documents for the 5th Africa – Arab Summit;
- (v). **Request** the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States and the host country of the 5th Africa–Arab Summit, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, to agree on suitable dates for the holding of the 5th Africa–Arab Summit and its statutory preparatory Meetings in 2021, in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, subject to improvement in Public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Africa – India Partnership

- (vi). **Recall** Assembly Decision No.: Assembly/AU/Dec.762(XXXIII), taken during the 33rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held on 9-10 February 2020, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which “endorsed the offer made by the Islamic Republic of Mauritania to host the 4th Africa-India Summit to be held in 2021 and requested the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, the Host Country and India to agree on the date of the said Summit” subject to improvement in Public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- (vii). **Request** the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, the African Diplomatic Corps in New Delhi and India to join efforts for the strengthening of Joint Monitoring and Evaluation mechanisms of the Africa-India Partnership through regular consultations and engagements.

On Africa-Turkey Partnership

- (viii). **Recall** Assembly Decision No.: Assembly/AU/Dec.762(XXXIII), taken during the 33rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union, held on 9-10 February 2020, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which “directed the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission and Turkey to propose new dates starting in 2021, for the hosting of the 3rd Africa-Turkey Summit, in line with Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.899 (XXVIII)Rev.2, paragraph 209 of January 2016” and **Recommend** to the Assembly to request the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission to agree with the partner Turkey on convenient dates for the holding of the 4th Africa – Turkey Summit in 2021, subject to improvement in Public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

On Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD)

- (ix). **Underscore** the importance of TICAD in the development processes of Africa and to emphasize on the need to strengthen the African Union’s role in the TICAD process, as follows:
- a) The full involvement of AU in the TICAD process as well as recognition of its central rightful role in defining the priority areas of an appropriate Plan of Action including a timeline for implementation and also to have pragmatic approaches to ensure a balanced role of all stakeholders involved;
 - b) Strengthening alignment of the TICAD process to systemic changes in Africa as defined notably, through the AU’s integration agenda, which

emphasizes engagement at the regional and continental levels, in order to satisfactorily contribute to the AU Agenda 2063.

- (x). **Indicate** the African Union's position on the need to finalize the 2019 Yokohama Action Plan while ensuring that the African Union interests are well accommodated;
- (xi). **Reiterate** the African Union's availability to ensure a smooth and successful preparatory process for the upcoming TICAD 8 Summit, in Tunisia, in 2022.
- (xii). **Endorse** the second half of 2021 for the holding in Japan of the follow-up TICAD 7 Ministerial Meeting in 2021, at a date to be determined, in consultation with Japan, subject to improvement in Public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and if necessary to explore the possibility of holding the said Ministerial Meeting by virtual means after consultations with Japan ;
- (xiii). **Direct** the Commission to develop and circulate the working documents for the meeting in a timely manner.

On Africa - Korea Partnership

- (xiv). **Approve** the holding of the 5th Africa–Korea Ministerial Forum during the first or second week of November 2021, in Seoul, Korea, subject to improvement in public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and if necessary to explore the possibility of holding the said Ministerial Meeting by virtual means after consultations with Korea;
- (xv). **Request** the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, the African Diplomatic Corps in Seoul and Korea to agree on the exact dates for the 5th Africa–Korea Forum and to start preparations for the said Forum as soon as possible.
- (xvi). **Direct** the Commission to develop and circulate the working documents for the meeting in a timely manner.

On Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)

- (xvii). **Request** the PRC in close collaboration with the Commission, the African Diplomatic Corps in Beijing, China, and the host country of the 8th FOCAC Ministerial Conference (Senegal), to agree on a suitable date and to start the preparatory process for the 8th FOCAC Ministerial Conference to be held in 2021, in Dakar, Senegal subject to improvement in Public health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

ANNEX**CRITERIA FOR HOSTING AN AFRICAN UNION
PARTNERSHIPS SUMMITS, MEETINGS AND EVENTS****I. INTRODUCTION**

1. During its 36th Ordinary Session held on 6 – 7 February 2020, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Executive Council, under Decision No.: EX.CL/Dec. 1073(XXXVI), “Requested the PRC to work closely with the Commission to finalize the criteria for hosting Partnership Meetings and Events for submission to the Thirty Seventh Ordinary Session of the Executive Council in July 2020”.
2. The hosting of an African Union (AU) Partnerships’ Meeting, Event or Summit (“the Conference”) whether at Senior Officials’ level, Ministerial level or at the level of Summit of Heads of State and Government, in a Member State of the Union, entails rights and obligation for the African Union as well as for the host country.
3. The principle of rotation whereby Partnerships’ Meetings are hosted alternatively by an AU Member State and the Partner shall apply in the determination of the venue of a Conference concerning the African Union Partnerships.
4. Pursuant to provisions of the AU Financial Rules and Regulations, and Rules 6 (2) and 5 (2) of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council and the Assembly, respectively, the host country Government, shall bear the additional expenses incurred by the African Union Commission (“the Commission”) arising from the holding of the Conference outside of the Headquarters of the Union, in accordance with the Host Agreement for the organization of the Conference signed between the host country and the Commission.

II. SET OF CRITERIA

5. Pursuant to Executive Council Decision No.: EX.CL/195 (VII) Rev.1 Annex III taken during the 7th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, held in Sirte, Libya, on 1-2 July 2005, adopting the criteria for hosting or proposing to host AU Organs, which specified the minimum basic requirements, and In line with the minimum basic requirements set by the above Decision, the criteria for hosting Partnerships’ Conferences will also aim at ensuring that the Conferences are held under the best possible conditions.
6. The principle of equitable geographical distribution of Partnerships’ Conferences between and within the five (5) AU regions (East, Central, North, South and West) shall apply in such a way that Regions and countries that have hosted fewer Conferences shall be prioritized for subsequent Conferences unless there are no alternatives

7. In this regard, Member States hosting or proposing to host a Partnership Conference shall meet the following minimum basic requirements:
- (i). It shall provide, at its expense, a secure venue for the Conference with a furnished and equipped conference center, which can accommodate the expected number of participants;
 - (ii). The Conference Center offered by the host country shall be easily accessible, secure and with sufficient capacities;
 - (iii). There shall be, in the city proposed to host the Conference, appropriate infrastructure especially adequate airport capacity, telecommunication facilities and health care infrastructure and services to meet the need of all participants and particularly the High Level Officials at the level of Heads of State and Government;
 - (iv). There shall be housing facilities and hotel accommodation (depending on the estimated number of participants) sufficiently available for the expected participants;
 - (v). The host country shall provide all the necessary facilitations for the entry to and exit from the host country to all participants and/or those performing duties connected with the Conference. Entry visas shall be granted to them and without delay preferably before the opening of the Conference. Furthermore, the host country shall ensure that visas may be issued to participants on arrival at the airport, especially those coming from countries where the host country does not have diplomatic missions as well as those participants who were unable to obtain visas prior to their travel.
 - (vi). Officials and Staff members of the Union and all participants attending the Conference shall enjoy the privileges and immunities as set forth in the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961 and the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and Sections C and D, Articles V and VI of the General Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the Organization of African Unity of 1965.
 - (vii). The representatives of the organizations invited by the Commission and the Partners attending the Conference shall enjoy the necessary immunities and privileges as stated in the Vienna Convention referred to in (v) above, and subject to the same conditions as stipulated in the said paragraph as follows:
 - (viii). Notwithstanding the provisions of the preceding paragraphs, all participants and all persons performing duties within and in connection with the

Conference shall enjoy facilities and courtesies as are necessary for effective performance of their duties.

- (ix). Officials and Staff members of the African Union holding service passport shall not be required to obtain entry visas as per the decision **No.: AHG/OAU/AEC/Dec.1 (II)**, paragraph 5, on the “Free Movement of Person” adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in June 1998.
 - (x). Without prejudice to these criteria, nothing in these criteria shall be taken to preclude a Member State from offering more facilities. In this regard, a Member State offering to host a Partnerships Conference is encouraged to provide, at its expense, hospitality measures to the Heads of delegation.
8. The Commission shall communicate the present criteria and the model Host Agreement to all Member States.
 9. The present criteria shall be reviewed when deemed appropriate by the Policy Organs.

III. DECISION MAKING PROCESS

10. An assessment team shall be set up by the Commission to undertake an assessment mission to Member States offering to host a Partnerships Conference to inspect the proposed facilities and submit a report thereon to the Chairperson of the Commission. The Partnerships Office shall serve as the Secretariat of this process. The assessment Mission shall be conducted at least one year before the holding of the Partnership Conference.
11. All the offers for hosting an AU Partnership Conference shall be submitted to the Commission, for transmission to the Subcommittee of the Whole on Multilateral Cooperation, for consideration and recommendation to the Permanent Representatives’ Committee (PRC), which will in turn review and submit recommendations to the Executive Council for decision and subsequent transmission to the Assembly for consideration and endorsement. In the case of Summit of Heads of State and Government, the final Decision to select the host country will be made by the Assembly of the Union.
12. The Commission shall prepare a draft host agreement for review by the concerned Member State. Thereafter, the Commission shall ensure that a Host Agreement is signed with the concerned Member State.
13. The Assembly of the Union or the Executive Council may decide on the transfer of an AU Partnership Conference to the AU Headquarters or any other Member State offering to host the Conference in the event that the Member State concerned is in

breach of these criteria or the host country agreement, or is under sanction, or in case of natural or other disaster rendering the hosting of the Conference in the Concerned Member States impossible.

14. In a situation whereby no AU Member State is proposing to host a particular Partnership Conference, the Conference shall be held at the Headquarters of the Union.

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