50TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION – MAY 2013

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE OAU AND AU

The Organization of African unity (OAU) overcame internal and external challenges, persevered in the quest for continental unity and solidarity; contributed to the liberation of Africa from colonialism and apartheid; provided a political and diplomatic platform to generations of leaders on continental and international matters; and elaborated frameworks for Africa's development and integration agenda through programmes such as NEPAD and APRM.

The African union carried forward the struggle for self-determination and drive development and integration; formulated a clear vision for the Union; agreed that the ultimate goal of the Union is the construction of a united and integrated Africa; instituted the principle of non-indifference by authorising the right of the Union to intervene in Member States in conformity with the Constitutive Act; and laid the ground work for the entrenchment of the rule of law, democracy, respect for human rights, solidarity, promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of Women and Youth in Africa.

The implementation of the integration agenda was started through the 2004-2007 Strategic Plan; followed by the 2009-2012 Strategic Plan. The 2009-2012 Strategic Plan of the African Union Commission was based on four strategic pillars as shown in the box below.

The 2009-2012 AUC Strategic Plan:
The Four Strategic Pillars for Program Intervention

I.   Peace and Security;
II.   Integration, Development and Cooperation;
III.   Shared Values, and
IV.   Institution and Capacity Building.

The report on the review of the 2009-2012 Strategic Plan of the Commission concluded that the Plan was highly relevant and collectively its programs addressed all the issues identified as priorities for Africa under the Constitutive Act. The Plan overall was judged a good response to the vision of the Union of "*an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena.*" The review recognized that the Commission had made a good effort to implement the various programs identified. These actions fall under three broad categories: (i) Consensus Building; (ii) Capacity building; and (iii) Regime formation and implementation (development and ratification of legal instruments.

Thematic Programme implementation: The African Union is still in its formative stage, but among its significant achievements in the first decade of existence can be listed: the socio-economic development plan under the NEPAD umbrella; the establishment of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) to strengthen governance and accountability and reduce impunity; and the setting up of key organs to underpin the African Union vision, including a Peace and Security Council to manage inter-African conflicts based on negotiations, dialogue and peaceful settlement of disputes. For the AU, a key challenge remains the economic integration of the continent as envisioned in the Abuja treaty, and lack of sustainable funding for the programmes of the Union;.

Peace & Security: The African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), whose main Pillar is the Peace and Security Council, Supported by the Continental Early Warning System(CEWS); the African Standby Force (ASF);the Panel of the Wise, and others, has been under implementation since 2004.A Security Sector Reform Policy has been adopted. Progress has also been made in terms of promoting and coordinating a program on Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development and engendering the APSA.

Development, Integration and cooperation: the AUC has taken measures to boost intra-African trade with Ministerial meetings and the dedication of the 18th Ordinary Session of the Assembly to boosting intra African Trade, and fast tracking the establishment of the Continental free trade Area (CFTA) by 2017. Good progress has been registered in advancing the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development(CAADP) agenda, in terms of mobilisation of political commitment, supporting the formulation of evidence-based policies and strategies including their harmonization and mobilization of investment resources for implementation as well as in successful implementation of other flagship programmes such aspromotion of livestock health and productivity.

In the area of Infrastructure, the AUC, in partnership with NPCA, ECA, AfDB, has developed the Program on Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) which covers transport, energy, and telecommunication/ICT and water sectors. Progress was also registered in developing and sustaining human capabilities through increased access to health, education, nutrition, shelter, sanitation and employment. The Commission has set up the Pan African University, established the MwalimuNyerere African Union Scholarship Scheme, put in place an African Regional Nutritional Strategy, launched the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, Infant and Child Mortality in Africa (CARMMA), and stepped up follow-up actions regarding the Abuja Call for Accelerated Action Towards Universal Access to HIV/AIDs, TB and Malaria Services and other Infectious Diseases.

Youth Development and Women Empowerment has been promoted through the African Youth Charter, a Plan of Action of the Decade for Youth Development in Africa (2009-2018), a program on Youth Empowerment through Non-Formal and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), and African Women's Decade and Funds for African Women. The African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology (AMCOST) has been established, including the development of Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA) and the establishment of African Union Research Grant Program. An African Charter on Statistics was also developed in 2009.

To strengthen continental integration, a decision of the Assembly in Banjul in 2006 reduced the number of inter-state bodies recognized as a REC from 16 to 8. This move seeks to promote the rationalization of the RECs, as well as promote the coordination and harmonization of their activities.

The AUC has also developed a Minimum Integration Program (MIP) with the RECs and an Action Plan. Areas covered under the MIP include: trade, infrastructure development, free movement of people as well as peace and security, but challenges remain with respect to implementation, and overlaps with other frameworks such as BIAT – thus the need to clarify the way forward.

The AUC has established extensive strategic partnerships across the world such as: Africa-India Forum, Africa-South America Partnership, Africa-European Union Partnership, Africa-Turkey Partnership, AUC-Australia Cooperation, AUC-USA Cooperation, Afro-Arab Cooperation, AUC-OIC Secretariat Partnership, AUC-OAS General Secretariat Partnership, Africa-Japan partnerships, Cooperation between the AUC and the Commonwealth Secretariat. Measures taken to promote African Common position in multilateral and regional forums include the development of African Common Position on the EPAs, WTO and AGOA, in close collaboration with the UNECA and other partners. This led to improved coordination and the development of common position during AU-EU dialogue and in the Doha Rounds of Trade negotiations and AU-UN Post 2015, Rio+20 and ICPD beyond 2014 and AU-USA etc.

However, enhancing Africa's share of global trade remains a monumental challenge especially with respect to increased exports of value added products, which highlights the nexus between trade policy and industrial policy.In this regard, the AU has endorsed the Action Plan for the Accelerated Industrial Development for Africa (AIDA) as well as the Action Plan for the Africa Mining Vision whichpromotes the harnessing of mineral resources for sustainable development. North-South as well as South-South Partnerships provides an opportunity to implement continental frameworks such as CAADP, PIDA, AIDA, and BIAT in a prioritised and strategic manner.

Rinderpest, a disease which has caused havoc among livestock communities, has been eradicated from the World in general and Africa in particular with the internationally recognition of the contributions of the African Union Commission as a whole and the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture in particular through its Technical Offices, the Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources (IBAR) and the Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre (PANVAC), together with International partners: the OIE, FAO and IAEA, in the realization of this success.

Similarly, an African Common Position on Climate Change was developed in 2008, based on which Africa has since been negotiating in international climate change fora with a single voice facilitated by the streamlined coordination mechanism that is in place at technical, ministerial and summit levels. Such an experience was later to serve as a model for Africa to develop common positions which were advanced with a single voice. Together with RECs and partners, institutional mechanisms are in place to enhance Member States capacities in the areas of access to climate information, resilience and preparedness to disaster risk – the establishment in 2012 of African Risk Capacity as a specialised AU agency could be mentioned.

Shared Values

The Commission has established the African Governance Architecture and Platform as the overall political and institutional framework for enhancing coordination, interaction and synergies among AU organs, institutions and RECs in promoting good governance and democracy in Africa. The AGA Platform coordinates implementation of AU shared values instruments, review and assessment of compliance with

AU norms and provision of technical support to Member states on governance and consolidation of democracy.

.With regards to the rights-based approach to development, the Commission has put in place a number of instruments, including the Ouagadougou Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment and Poverty Alleviation and the AU Social Policy Framework which provides guidance to member states in the promotion of the rights and ensuring the welfare of marginalized and excluded groups. The African Union has developed a draft Humanitarian Policy Framework, aimed at promoting greater legal preparedness of member-states to overcome regulatory barriers to effective cross-border disaster assistance. The Commission has led efforts todevelop and adopt a Program of Action for the implementation of the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (2006-2015) and the establishment of the *African Risk Capacity project*.

The Commission has sought to promote African Cultural Renaissance and the protection of Africa's cultural heritage. The AUC has drawn up a Charter for Cultural Renaissance and a Plan of Action for Cultural and Creative Industries, and there are plans to translate the charter into cross-border African languages. In addition, a preliminary feasibility study on the establishment of the Pan African Cultural Institute has been conducted.   The objectives of the Pan-African Media Network (PAMEN), which the AUC launched in Cape Town in 2011, include taking steps to rectify the distorted image of Africa. This followed earlier attempts by the Commission, in collaboration with Egypt, to establish Pan African Radio and Television station. An Africa Citizens Directorate, (CIDO), has been established and a Diaspora task team set up.

The African Union Youth Volunteer Corps was launched in 2010, under which over 200 young professionals (youths) have been trained for volunteer work and are being deployed in institutions, public sector including the AUC. In furtherance of youth participation and contribution the 17th Ordinary Session of the African Union Heads of State and Government was devoted to the theme '*Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development'*; and its decision positioned Africa to deliver as one for youth through a Comparative Statistical database on the status of youth in Africa.Actions have also been taken to promote the ratification and entry into force of all outstanding legal instruments adopted by the Assembly of the Union.

Efforts to promote gender mainstreaming led to the adoption of AU Gender Policy in 2009, the declaration by the Assembly of 2010-2020 as the African Women's Decade, the development of the 10 Year Gender Action Plan and Road Map and the location of the Gender Directorate in the Office of the Chairperson of the Commission.   Related initiatives include capacity building programs such as "Gender Response Economic Policy Making in Africa", aimed at promoting gender sensitive planning and programming at the national level. Furthermore, AU's commitment to fight gender based violence, as enshrined in the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) and a series of decisions and measures taken over the years, partially accounts for measures several member-states have taken to outlaw gender-based violence, although some cultural practices such as female genital mutilations remains a challenge across the continent.

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50th Anniversary celebration – May 2013 achievements of the OAU and AU

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