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SC13747

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Twenty-Sixth Ordinary Session
23 – 27 January 2015
Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA

EX.CL/893(XXVI)
Original: English

**THE 7TH CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF
INTEGRATION (COMAI VII), EZULWINI, SWAZILAND,
17-18 JULY 2014**

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COMAI/MIN/RPT (VII)

**SEVENTH CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN
MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF INTEGRATION
17-18 July 2014
Royal Swazi Convention Center
Ezulwini, Swaziland**

REPORT

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Seventh Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Integration took place on 17-18 July 2014, in Royal Swazi Convention Center, at Ezulwini, Swaziland.

II. ATTENDANCE

2. The following Member States were present: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe

3. Also attended the meeting were the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the World Bank, International Maritime organisation (IMO), representatives of the African private sector and Civil Society. The list of participants is in annex.

III. OPENING CEREMONY

Opening remarks by H.E Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission

4. In her opening remarks, Her Excellency Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, welcomed participants to the Seventh Conference of African Ministers in charge of Integration (COMAI VII). She thanked His Majesty the King, his government and the people of the Kingdom of Swaziland for the hospitality accorded to all delegations since their arrival and for the excellent facilities and arrangements accorded to the Conference.

5. H. E. Dr. Dlamini Zuma informed the meeting about the consultations on Africa Agenda 2063. She said that during consultations, Africans from different walks of life had related their aspirations on the Africa they want, that is integrated and prosperous, peaceful, democratic and inspired by the values of Pan Africanism, and an Africa that takes her rightful place in the world. She noted that Agenda 2063 was a framework that brought together continental, regional and national plans, setting out milestones to be achieved at various time intervals. The Malabo AU Summit held in June 2014 had allowed more time for further consultations with Member States and RECs for finalisation and adoption of the framework and the first ten-year plan by January 2015. She, therefore, called upon Ministers in charge of Integration to make their inputs into the draft framework document.

6. On the theme of the Conference, H. E. Dr. Dlamini Zuma stressed that infrastructure development remains key to an Africa that is peaceful and prosperous. In

that regard, the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and the infrastructure master plans of the RECs seek to connect African capitals and commercial centres through road, rail and ICT. She emphasised that infrastructure are the hardware without which economic and social development, industrialisation, agriculture and intra-African trade on the continent would remain slow. In addition, investment in human resources in the form of education and access to basic services and health was equally important.

7. She noted that the pace of continental integration was slow and that it needed to be scaled up in order for Africa to enjoy the benefits and synergies of integration, including larger markets and economies of scale, greater efficiency in the allocation of factors of production and investments, and more effective use of economies. It is in light of this realisation to fast track the integration process that the continent has undertaken to launch the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) by 2017. Further, she noted that the Common African Position on the post 2015 development agenda and Africa Agenda 2063 were critical drivers of the integration process. She, however, cautioned that there would be need to step up domestic resources mobilisation to finance Africa's development. In conclusion, she called upon Member States, RECs and continental institutions to all play their role in the integration drive.

Keynote Address by H. E. the Right Honourable Dr. Sibusiso Barnabas Dlamini, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland

8. The keynote address was delivered by H. E. the Right Honourable Dr. Sibusiso Barnabas Dlamini, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland, on behalf of His Majesty King Mswati III, Ingwenyama of the Kingdom of Swaziland. He welcomed participants to the Kingdom of Eswatini and said that it was a pleasure for them to host COMAI VII. He thanked the African Union for entrusting the Kingdom with hosting this important Conference, the outcome of which would form the basis for African integration.

9. H. E. the Right Hon. Dr. Dlamini noted the promotion of trade related infrastructure in Africa, including customs single windows and the utilisation of computerised customs networks across Member States as a means to integrate, digitise and accelerate customs clearance procedures. He commended the choice of theme, stating that it was appropriate for accelerating Africa's economic integration agenda. In that regard, the adoption of the PIDA was relevant for accelerating growth and increase efficiency, facilitate integration in the world economy and improve the continent's living standards.

10. On the Common African Position on the post-2015 development agenda and Africa Agenda 2063, H. E. the Prime Minister said these would provide Africa the opportunity to speak with one voice, thus strengthening the continent's bargaining power and increasing the likelihood of full integration of the African position on the global development agenda. He said that the Kingdom of Eswatini supports agenda 2063 because it calls for action and a strategic framework and roadmap to achieve

continental development goals. Further, it provides an opportunity for Africa to regain its power to determine its own destiny.

11. H. E. the Prime Minister called for enhancement of intra-African trade for positive spin-offs of the envisaged common markets to be realised. This would require investment in trade-related infrastructure including transport, communication and energy at national, regional and continental levels. He noted that there would be need to involve the private sector at all levels in the decision-making on policy matters relating to trade as this had the potential to boost intra-African trade. He called on African governments to support small and medium enterprises as they formed the backbone of African economies and had the potential to enhance domestic investment and create employment.

12. He concluded by wishing participants successful deliberations and declaring the Conference officially opened.

IV. COMPOSITION OF THE BUREAU

13. The meeting constituted its Bureau as follows:

- i) Chair: Swaziland (Southern Africa);
- ii) First Vice-Chair: Ghana (West Africa);
- iii) Second Vice-president: DRC (Central Africa);
- iv) Third Vice-Chair: Tunisia (Tunisia); and
- v) Rapporteur: Tanzania (East Africa).

V. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

14. The meeting adopted the following Agenda:

- i) Opening Ceremony;
- ii) Election of the Bureau;
- iii) Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work;
- iv) Activity Report of the Chairperson of COMAI VI;
- v) Overview on the status of Integration in Africa and implementation of the COMAI VI recommendations;
- vi) Panel Discussions on the theme of the Conference: “ Infrastructure and integration in Africa”;
- vii) Briefing on the Common African Position on Post 2015 Development Agenda;
- viii) Briefing on the Africa Agenda 2063;
- ix) Consideration and adoption of the recommendations of the Experts Meeting;
- x) Any Other Business;
- xi) Consideration and Adoption of the Ministerial Report;
- xii) Consideration and Adoption of the Draft Ministerial Declaration;
- xiii) Date and Venue of the Next Conference; and

xiv) Closing Ceremony.

VI. PROCEEDINGS

15. The meeting was chaired by HRH Prince Hlangusemphi Dlamini, Minister of Economic Planning and Development, Swaziland. Items on the Agenda were presented, followed by discussions and recommendations.

a) Activity Report of the Chairperson of COMAI VI

16. The Activity Report of the Outgoing Chairman of COMAI VI, Hon. Arvin Boolell, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius, was presented by the representative of Mauritius. In his presentation, he recalled the activities carried out by the Member States, the AUC and the RECs as well as by the Stakeholders in conformity with the recommendations of the Sixth Session of the Conference of African Ministers in charge of Integration, which took place in Balaclava, Mauritius in April 2013. He also recalled the status of integration of the continent and urged the Member States as well as all stakeholders to effectively implement the recommendations, decisions and legal instruments pertaining to the integration process in order to accelerate the implementation of the Abuja Treaty.

b) Report on the Status of Integration in Africa and Follow-Up on the Implementation of Recommendations from the Sixth Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Integration (COMAI VI)

17. This item was presented by H. E Anthony Maruping, Commissioner for Economic Affairs, African Union Commission. The presentation highlighted the status of regional integration in Africa and the progress in implementing recommendations from the Sixth Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Integration. The presentation outlined the progress made in the implementation of the Abuja Treaty by each REC and the stages reached. It was mentioned that RECs are moving towards implementing the Abuja Treaty with different rhythms. EAC is the most advanced Community having launched its Common Market in 2010. COMESA launched its Customs Union in June 2009. ECOWAS and SADC have made progress in building their FTAs and are planning to launch their Customs Union in 2015 and 2013, respectively. ECCAS have launched its FTA in 2004 but is facing enormous challenges in its implementing. UMA, CEN-SAD and IGAD are moving slowly and still in the stage of cooperation amongst their Member States. Regarding the free movement of people, he informed the meeting that enormous results have been achieved in certain regions such as ECOWAS, EAC and AMU; on the other hand some RECs namely: SADC, ECCAS, CEN-SAD, IGAD and COMESA are still facing challenges to ease movement of persons.

18. Regarding the follow-up on recommendations of the previous COMAI, the meeting was informed that most of the recommendations are under implementation. It was stated that despite the progress achieved in all sectors, Africa is still faced with several difficulties, among others, difficulties stemming from harmonization of policies; inadequate political will to implement integration decisions; apprehension on the part of

States to cede some of their competencies; the absence/ inefficiency of compensation mechanisms for the temporary losers in the integration process; the inadequacy of the physical integration infrastructure; lack of ownership of regional projects at the grassroots level; lack of ownership of regional programmes at national level; inadequate financial resources; and inadequate human resources.

19. The meeting received a briefing from COMESA representative on the overview of integration in the COMESA region. In this regard, the meeting was informed on the progress made in building COMESA Free Trade Area as well as on putting in place the adequate mechanisms to report on Non-tariff barriers (NTBs), namely the online NTB reporting mechanism. In order to facilitate trade in the region, especially towards boosting small scale trade, the Community adopted an electronic certificate of origin and a simplified trade regime.

20. The meeting was also informed that COMESA is working closely with the AUC and within the framework of the tripartite arrangement to push forward the implementation of infrastructure projects. The Community had put in place key institutions, such as PTA Bank, Leather products institute, etc...

21. The meeting also received a briefing from SADC representative on the overview of integration in SADC region. On trade issues, it was mentioned that SADC launched its FTA in 2008 and currently 85% of goods are traded duty free. The Community is working on trade facilitation; and customs harmonisation and procedures, putting in place One stop Boarder Posts, Integrated border management. The meeting was also informed on the progress made on free movement of persons in the region and the work currently undertaken towards building the SADC Economic Space based on financial and Market integration. On infrastructure development, it was stated that SADC is working in synergy with regional and continental institutions, especially within the tripartite master plan and PIDA. It was reported that work is on progress on building the tripartite and Africa infrastructure data bases.

c) Panel Discussion on the theme of the Conference: “*Infrastructure and Integration in Africa*”

Session I: Infrastructure and Integration: Tracing Your Logistics Performance.

22. This session was moderated by Honourable Mr. Asumani Kiyingi, Minister of Foreign Affairs in charge of Regional integration Cooperation, Uganda. A presentation on Infrastructure and Integration: Tracing Your Logistics Performance was made Dr. Yves Ekoué Amaïzo, Director Afrocentricity Think Tank.

23. The presenter observed the need to move away from static to dynamic concept of integration. It was also noted that lack of financial commitment by Member States was serious obstacle to closing infrastructure gaps to regional integration. In this regard, he focused on the importance of enhancing and tracing the logistical performance in infrastructure. He also called for better effectiveness of public expenditure of the Member States. To address this problem, he identified various sources of funds to

support regional integration including: voluntary contributions; trust funds; and budgetary resources; as well as public-private partnerships. He called for reconsidering the role of the African Private Sector in improving infrastructure logistics performance. He urged member States to increase the efficiency in process and delivery of quality infrastructure service. He also observed that enhancing the quality of statistics was key to evaluating the progress attained in the area of regional integration.

Discussion

24. It was observed during the discussions that regional integration should not be measured as a linear process. Furthermore, it was noted that significant progress had been achieved in regional integration and significant investments had been made in infrastructure development. Delegates stressed the importance of making financial commitments in support of AU Agenda 2063.

Recommendations

25. The meeting recommended the following:

- Need to enhance productive capacity in the area of infrastructure development;
- Need to reform customs, trade and investment laws; strengthen corridor development and enhancement of local content;
- Need to harmonize education curricula with the view to deepen the regional integration Agenda;
- Stressed the importance of adopting appropriate policies to foster regional integration as well removal of man-made barriers to regional integration;
- Need to mobilize long term resources to support infrastructure development;
- Need for quality statistics to assess progress in regional integration;

Session II: Infrastructure development, intra-African trade and acceleration of integration in Africa: What challenges for Africa?

26. The session was moderated by Hon. Samuel J. Sitta, Minister for East African Community, Tanzania. The First presentation was by Dr. T. Boubié Bassole, from University of Ouaga II, Burkina Faso, on the challenges faced by Infrastructure Development and Regional Integration.

27. The presenter underscored the importance of infrastructure development in Africa if regional integration is to succeed, stating that it was for this reason, therefore, that initiatives both at the continental and international levels needed to be undertaken. However, despite the recognition of the role that infrastructure can play, Africa is faced with a huge deficit in this area and this has greatly hampered the efforts that are being made to achieve its regional integration and the other related goals.

28. The presenter further stated that the advent of ICTs and other new concepts such as good governance, there the concept of regional integration has been redefined to

include infrastructure development in three dimensions: i) material infrastructure (hard infrastructure) including the development of regional transport, power and telecommunication networks; ii) non-material infrastructure (soft infrastructure) which relates to removal of all intangible barriers to the free movement of goods, capital, services and labour. It also includes institutional frameworks aimed at promoting national market integration, and; iii) the dimension that involves joint action to address trans-border challenges that are regional or continental in nature such as water management, climate change adaptation, trans-border sanitary issues, among others.

29. Dr. Boubie Bassole presented an overview of the status of infrastructure in Africa and the progress that has been made in recent times. He based himself on an illustration of the infrastructure that has been put into place in the countries that fall under the Franc Zone (UEMOA and CEMAC). He also made reference to progress made in achieving the integration objectives in Africa. In comparison, the Franc Zone appears to be significantly lagging behind in the achievements made so far.

30. The presenter stated that three major challenges with regard to infrastructure today are the huge amount of funding required, good governance and difficulty in adopting a regional approach to addressing these issues. He recalled the funding requirements as follows: i) PIDA: 368 billion US dollars over the period 2012-2040, and ii) a set of 61 PIDA PAP projects and programmes that are estimated at 68 billion US dollars during the period 2012-2020.

31. Dr. B. Bassole informed the conference that in the short term, the solution would, among others, entail sourcing private investments through Public-Private Partnerships and innovative financing and in the medium and long term, the establishment of financial institutions such as the African Investment Bank, obtaining financial resources from the African Integration Fund and Africa Fund 50 at AfDB for support to infrastructure projects.

32. The other challenges relating to infrastructure projects are mainly good governance and the adoption of a regional approach for the implementation of trans-border projects. These projects require that a consensus be reached on institutional matters, the harmonisation of regulatory frameworks and tariffs. They also require proper mastery of issues pertaining to shared costs and the advantages to be derived from the projects.

33. In brief, the presenter stated that the African continent had not yet succeeded in adapting its infrastructure to meet its regional integration objectives notwithstanding the policy statements that clearly recognise the role that infrastructure plays as a key factor for integration. He noted that:

- progress had been made over the recent decades to promote integration;
- these achievements, however, remain insufficient considering the number of financial and institutional challenges;

- the main challenges include low financial resource mobilisation, good governance and the adoption of an appropriate regional approach.

34. A second presentation on Infrastructure development, intra-African trade and acceleration of integration in Africa was made by Pr. Malick Sané, Director of trade policies laboratory, Dakar University.

35. In his presentation he mentioned that Intra-African trade stands at about 12%, well below the intra-regional level in Europe, North America and ASEAN countries. The meeting was informed that Africa is plagued by huge infrastructure deficit (roads, power, railways, ports, airports ...) and less than a third of Africa's population had access to a motorable road all year round, while transport costs and goods delivery time along the road corridors are two to three times higher than in other regions of the world.

36. He noted that infrastructure deficit is one of the key factors preventing the Continent from realizing its full potential for economic growth, blunting its competitive prowess on the global markets. He highlighted that the main obstacle to deeper market integration remains, without doubt, the high costs that add up all the way along the marketing chain: transport and, more generally, logistics costs, and also the costs generated by cumbersome administrative procedures. In this regard, a proactive infrastructure building and modernization policy should be adopted to address this problem. The countries should implement trade facilitation policies capable of eliminating the barriers to trade.

37. Finally, he observed that physical infrastructure is only part of the solution and soft infrastructure is equally important, taking into consideration the range of activities linked to physical facilities. Regulation is one of its important dimensions that must also find a regional and continental expression to limit the transaction costs partly resulting from national institutional weaknesses.

Discussions

38. The conference acknowledged the need to create a favourable environment aimed at attracting the private sector to promote infrastructure development mainly through Public-Private Partnerships. However, governments are expected to explore all possible innovative financing mechanisms. They should also be good negotiators with the private sector: 1) to secure longer loan repayment periods; ii) to ensure that the cost to be borne by the consumers is as low as possible bearing in mind that the prevailing low purchasing power among the people.

39. It was noted that priority should be given to material infrastructure such as transport and power because of their great impact on integration and socio-economic development.

Recommendations

40. The conference urges Member States to:
- Explore all possible innovative financing mechanisms and to skilfully negotiate with the private sector to ensure that: i) loan repayment periods are sufficiently long; ii) to ensure that the cost to be borne by the consumers is as low as possible bearing in mind that the prevailing low purchasing power among the people;
 - Take advantage of the opportunities offered by the Blue Economy, and;
 - Find appropriate mechanisms to ensure that funds from the diaspora are used to contribute to infrastructure financing.

Session III: Participation of Women-owned businesses in African Regional Infrastructure initiatives: An assessment.

41. The session was moderated by H. E. Dr. Elham Mahmoud Ahmed IBRAHIM, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, AUC. A presentation on Participation of Women-owned businesses in African Regional Infrastructure initiatives: An assessment was made by Dr. Nathalie CHINJE, Founder and Director of Upbeat Marketing.

42. The presenter informed participants that several studies had been carried out that highlight the challenges women owned businesses are faced with, including limited access to markets. She noted that women owned businesses have a role to play in Africa's transformative, accelerated and sustained economic growth. She cited some initiatives that women owned businesses could participate in, including the PIDA which envisaged to invest about US\$360 billion by the year 2040. She, however, noted that most of the women owned businesses were not empowered enough to participate in sectors such as transport/logistics and energy, mainly due to limited awareness of regional infrastructure initiatives and lack of adequate funding.

Discussion

43. Participants expressed their support for participation of women owned businesses in African regional infrastructure initiatives, stating that women are drivers of the economy. They cautioned that women in the informal sector should not be excluded, citing some ad hoc barriers that may impact their productivity, including risks facing cross-border traders. Participants further noted that involvement of women in the transport/logistics sector requires opening up infrastructure services on the continent. The meeting noted the need to have more women representatives in Parliament and decision making positions in Government in order for them to influence legislation and policies that promote Women's empowerment.

Recommendations

44. The following recommendations were made:

i. Request the AUC to:

- Encourage women participation in PIDA as first, second or third tier suppliers;
- Create a database of women owned businesses in Africa in energy, ICT, transport and water and certify such businesses;
- Build capacity for women in business in the above-mentioned sectors;
- Enact preferential procurement policies that encourage sourcing goods and services from women in business;
- Develop PIDA-women owned business metrics for better monitoring and evaluation of women owned businesses participation in economic development;
- Develop legislation in support of affirmative action for women owned businesses

ii. Urge Member States to ensure implementation of African Union Protocol and policies on empowerment of Women, in particular the 30% representation of Women in Parliament and decision making positions.

a) Africa Agenda 2063

45. Presentation on the Agenda 2063 process was made by Mr. Mandela Mandolsa, African Union Commission. The Presenter provided key highlights on the genesis of the Agenda 2063 process, methodology, broad goals, key enablers and the implementation architecture. He informed the meeting that Agenda 2063 process started in the context of the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the founding of the OAU/AU where the 21st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government adopted a Solemn Declaration which, among others, pledged their commitment to make progress in Africa in the next 50 years. To implement this decision, the AUC engaged in broad-based consultative process with a variety of African stakeholders at all levels to determine “the future Africans want in 2063”. This was followed by a technical process which involved detailed technical situational analysis out of which a draft Agenda 2063 framework document was developed.

46. Agenda 2063 is a strategic framework for the socio-economic transformation of the continent over the next 50 years which builds on and seeks to accelerate the implementation of the past and existing continental initiatives for growth and

sustainable development. The framework document has goals that represent key aspirations of the African Stakeholders distilled from the consultations. In this regard, Africans aspire for:

- A strong and influential continent which is global player and partner;
- A continent pursuing people centered development;
- A prosperous Africa;
- A politically united and integrated continent;
- A peaceful and secure Africa;
- Africa with strong cultural identity and values;
- A democratic society fully embracing the principles of good governance, justice, rule of law and human rights.

47. Agenda 2063 will be accompanied by a robust implementation mechanism with monitoring and evaluation frameworks underpinned by strong knowledge management system that enhances the quality of delivery. It will also provide a clear delineating of the roles of each stakeholder including the RECs, Member States, Civil Society and Private Sector in the formulation and implementation. The meeting was informed that consultations have reached a very critical stage where Member States would conduct national consultations on the draft Agenda 2063 document and that the deadline for submission of the inputs is the 31st October 2014. The African Union Commission in collaboration with the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) will then finalize the document for submission during the January 2015 meetings of the AU Policy Organs.

b) Common African Position on Post 2015 Development Agenda

48. Presentation on Common African Position on post-2015 development agenda was done by H. E Anthony Maruping, Commissioner for Economic Affairs, AUC. The meeting was informed that Africa is ahead of other regions of the world in developing its own position on post-2015 development agenda. The process began in 2012. To implement this decision, the AUC engaged in consultations with African Stakeholders to determine their aspirations on the agenda the world should pursue post the MDGs. Based on the aspirations expressed by a wide spectrum of African Stakeholders and a detailed technical situational analysis a draft Common African Position on Post-2015 Development Agenda (CAP) was developed. Draft CAP was adopted by the 22nd Ordinary session of the Assembly of the Union held in Addis Ababa on January 30-31, 2014. CAP is based on six pillars namely, (i) Structural Transformation and Inclusive Growth; (ii) Science, Technology and Innovation; (iii) People-Centered Development;

(iv) Environmental Sustainability, Natural Resources and Disaster Management; (v) Peace and Security; (vi) Finance and Partnerships.

49. The development of CAP is spearheaded by the High Level Committee (HLC) of Ten Presidents representing the five regions of the continent as follows: (i) Southern Africa- Namibia and South Africa; (ii) Eastern Africa- Ethiopia and Mauritius; (iii) Central Africa- Congo and Chad; (iv) West Africa- Liberia and Guinea; (v) North Africa- Algeria and Mauritania . The HLC is chaired by HE President Helen Johnson Sirleaf, the President of Liberia.

50. As part of the popularization process, CAP was officially launched in Ndjamena, Chad on 28th February 2014 by the HLC. The Chairperson of the HLC, HE President Sirleaf also launched CAP at the national level in Monrovia, Liberia on May 26, 2014 to inform Liberian Stakeholders. She also presented CAP during the Seventh Joint African Union Conference of Ministers of Finance and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Conference of Ministers of Finance and Economic Development held on the 29th March 2014 in Abuja, Nigeria. The Chairperson of the AUC, HE Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma presented CAP in the margins of the Ministerial Conference of Non-Aligned Movement in Algeria on May 29. HE Dr Nkosazana Zuma also launched CAP in Addis Ababa in the presence of all African and non-African Diplomatic Community, international organisations, UN agencies, Civil Society Organisations.

51. A retreat was organised on April 25th-26th, 2014, in New York for the African Group of Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives to strengthen ownership and to ensure that the group will speak with one voice when the inter-governmental negotiations begin in the UN Headquarters. Similar meetings have been held in Geneva, Brussels and Washington.

52. A review of the work of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development goals by the AUC has revealed that the elements of CAP have been adequately and significantly captured in the current set of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Recommendations

53. The meeting recommended that the

- i) AUC to take the necessary measures to ensure the wide dissemination and popularization of Agenda 2063 and Post 2015 CAP at all levels(Continental, regional and National) and to all stakeholders, especially to cascade these instruments to the grass roots, and cement ownership of these important Africa instruments. The AUC to develop a communication strategy on Agenda 2063 that includes among others dissemination of messages through Radio, TV and other channels;
- ii) Urge Member States to hold national consultations with a view to enriching Agenda 2063 document, as it was still work in progress, and to submit inputs to the AUC by 31 October 2014 as requested by the Executive Council in Malabo,

in June 2014. The National Workshops should also identify concrete measures to ensure linkages between Agenda 2063 and national development plans of Member States;

- iii) Urge Member States to manifest strong financial commitment to ensure full implementation of Agenda 2063;
- iv) AUC and Member States to facilitate strong educational set up, harmonize curricula and establish an African Qualification Authority to ensure a skills revolution, and encourage the free movements of students and youth;
- v) AUC to ensure robust Monitoring and Evaluation Framework linked to Member States, in order to ensure effective tracking of progress of the implementation of Agenda 2063;
- vi) Urge Member States to put in place appropriate institutional arrangements (e.g. National unit in the appropriate Ministry) to ensure visibility of Agenda 2063 and put in place the appropriate support framework;
- vii) AUC to ensure that Agenda 2063 provides a coherent and comprehensive framework that integrates all regional and continental programmes (e.g. PIDA, CADDP, BIAT/CTFA, etc.);
- viii) Urge Member States to take necessary measures for removal of entry visa requirements for African citizens and work towards issuing the African Passport.

VII. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERTS MEETING

54. The Conference considered the Report of the Meeting of Experts and endorsed the recommendations formulated.

VIII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

55. Under this item, no issues were raised.

IX. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

56. The Conference adopted its report with amendments.

X. ADOPTION OF THE MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

57. The Conference considered and adopted its Declaration with amendments.

XI. CLOSING CEREMONY

58. The Commissioner for Economic Affairs, H. E. Dr. Anthony Maruping delivered closing remarks on behalf of H. E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma. He recalled the recommendations and resolutions made during the Conference and encouraged participants to keep committed to implementing them. In particular, he observed the centrality of resource mobilization to support infrastructure development and regional integration. He emphasized the critical role that women can play in achieving the overall objectives of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa. He concluded by thanking His Majesty King Mswati III, the Government and the people of the Kingdom of Swaziland for successfully hosting COMAI VII.

59. In his closing remarks, HRH Prince Hlangusemphi Dlamini, Minister of Economic Planning and Development, Swaziland, the Chair of the Conference stressed that accepting to host the Conference was the manifestation of the commitment of the Government and people of the Kingdom of Swaziland to Africa's economic emancipation and development through, among others, the integration of its economies and peoples.

60. He expressed the gratitude of Swaziland to all delegations for honoring the invitation to take part in the Conference as well as for their frankness and openness during the discussions and that led to tangible outcomes. He called upon Member States to associate all the stakeholders namely the Private Sector, Youth and Media with decision making process and seriously and effectively implementing the Conference recommendations for a fast and successful integration of the Continent.

EX.CL/893(XXVI)
Annex

DÉCLARATION

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**SEVENTH CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN
MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF INTEGRATION
17-18 July 2014
Royal Swazi Convention Center
Ezulwini, Swaziland**

COMAI/Decl. (VII)

DECLARATION

We, African Ministers in charge of Integration meeting in our Seventh Ordinary Conference held from 17 to 18 July 2014 at the Royal Swazi Convention Center in Ezulwini, Swaziland;

Recalling the commitment of our Heads of State and Government to the development and integration of our continent, as stipulated in the Constitutive Act of the African Union (2000), the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (AEC) of 1991, the Sirte Declaration of 9 September 1999 and the Accra Declaration of July 2007;

Considering Decisions Assembly/AU/Dec.112 (VII) and Assembly/AU/Dec.113 (VII) of the Seventh Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union regarding the moratorium on recognition of the RECs and institutionalization of our Conference;

Recalling also the recommendations put forward by the Ministers of Integration at their Third Conference, inviting Member States to put in place a structure to address integration issues, if they have not already done so;

Taking into account the Decision of the Joint EAC, COMESA and SADC Summit of the Heads of State and Government held in June 2011, launching the negotiations for the Tripartite Free Trade Area (FTA) and the resolve to expeditiously implement a Free Trade Area integrating the three communities;

Considering Decisions Assembly/AU/Dec.392 (XVIII) and Assembly/AU/Dec.394 (XVIII) regarding, respectively, the formation of a second block of RECs and the establishment of a Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) slated, for information purposes, for 2017;

Determined to fast track the integration process in accordance with the relevant decisions of our Heads of State and Government and the aspirations of our peoples;

Having taken note of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Meeting of Experts,

Having deliberated on the theme "Infrastructure and Integration in Africa" and

Expressing our appreciation for the frank and cordial nature of our deliberations;

Infrastructure and Integration in Africa

i) **Invite** Member States to:

- appropriate the funding of PIDA, particularly with regard to mobilization of resources for projects preparation and implementation;
- address the challenges regarding governance of PIDA implementation such as monitoring, evaluation and reporting to ensure greater visibility;

- establish public-private partnerships (PPP) at national, regional and continental levels to conceptualize, develop and mobilize resources for implementation of infrastructure integration projects;
- facilitate the financing of infrastructure projects by mobilizing resources on the financial markets;
- prioritize in their national development plans, trade-related infrastructure, including transport and trade facilitation measures, such as one-stop window border posts, border efficiency boosting projects, and integrated border management systems.
- Implement the Protocol and policies on empowerment of women, particularly the 30 % representation of women in parliament and in decision making process.

ii) **Request** African Union Commission, working closely with relevant stakeholders, to:

- assist Member States to establish institutional, legal, economic and financial frameworks for the PPP units;
- develop infrastructure projects specific to landlocked as well as island countries;
- develop a communication strategy to popularize implementation of PIDA;
- support regional power pools to ensure that the continent becomes autonomous in energy by providing electricity to the majority of the population;
- engage in an interactive manner, the private sector, SET industry and other concerned stakeholders to assess and quantify for each PAP project identified, the number of qualified SET personnel required for effective implementation of the said projects, and then set goals and identify activities working closely with SET industry, academic institutions and other stakeholders to speed up the formation, growth and development of the human capital and personnel required in Africa;
- evaluate the implementation of PIDA to address the causes of the existing gap between policy decisions and their implementation, as illustrated by the lack of and/or non-compliance with the common rules. This activity should also lead to the identification of possible remedial measures;
- encourage women's participation in PIDA as first, second or third tier suppliers;
- create a database of women-owned businesses in Africa in the energy, ICT, transport and water sectors, and certify such businesses;

- build capacity for women in business in the above mentioned sectors;
 - enact preferential procurement policies that encourage sourcing goods and services from women in business;
 - develop women-owned business metrics for more effective monitoring and evaluation of participation of such businesses in economic development;
 - develop legislation in support of affirmative action for women-owned businesses.
- iii) **Urge** Member States and other stakeholders to take ownership and implement the conclusions of the Dakar Financing Summit on Africa's Infrastructure held on 14 and 15 June 2014, in particular the Dakar Plan of Action, which were approved by the 23rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in Malabo on 26-27 June 2014.

Report on the Status of Integration in Africa and Follow-Up on the Implementation of Recommendations from the Sixth Conference of African Ministers in charge of Integration (COMAI VI)

- i) **Request** the AUC to:
- promote and facilitate the training of Member States' and RECs' officials in regional integration, among other things, within the framework of AU Pan African University;
 - ensure that the ongoing consultations with Member States on alternative sources of financing, through Economy and Finance Ministers, are concluded and that a report thereon is submitted to the Heads of State and Government;
 - rationalize the number of decisions taken at AU Assembly sessions and study their applicability for the purpose of implementation. In this regard, AUC is also requested to develop a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation at all levels for implementation of AU decisions.
- ii) **Urge** Member States to:
- ratify AU treaties and protocols and incorporate them into national legislation for policies harmonization at national level;
 - fast track the integration process through a gradual transfer of some competencies to regional and continental structures;
 - imitate the best practices and existing successful integration models in different regions of Africa;

- seek appropriate solutions to the issue of free movement of persons, goods and services to promote growth and development in Africa;
 - implement AU Assembly decisions to create Ministries/Departments in charge of regional integration.
- iii) **Urge** the continent's civil society and private sector to take greater ownership of the African integration agenda;
- iv) **Call upon** banks to share risks with African businesses to facilitate the promotion of the Africa infrastructure development Agenda;

Study on the Regional Integration Fund

- i) **Request** AUC to clearly determine the value-addition of the FIA (pre-feasibility and financial feasibility studies) in relation to the rest of the fund and identify the linkage between the FIA and other existing funds, especially Africa Fund 50;
- ii) **Recommend** the establishment of an African Integration Fund with a view to speeding up implementation of MIP and AU priority programs;
- iii) **URGE** Member States to ensure that resources are allocated to the Integration Fund for preparation of projects and building capacities at both regional and national levels , and give priority to PPP, AfDB and to Africa 50 Fund.

African Regional Integration Index (ARII)

- i) **Approve** ARII methodology and set of indicators; and
- ii) **Request** AUC and ECA to:
- use the following three criteria when developing index: simplicity; value-addition in relation to the current system of qualitative and quantitative evaluation of the progress achieved in RI evaluation; and decision-making tool for the AU/AUC, RECs and Member States;
 - integrate gender parity elements in the index;
 - conduct extensive consultations with Member States on regional integration indicators and criteria, in selecting the priority areas.

Report on Intra-African Trade and the Creation of Continental Free-Trade Area

- i) **Urge** Member States to:
- establish regular institutionalized dialogue frameworks for all integration process stakeholders, including between Governments, the private

sector and the civil society to get them more involved, and thus enable them to more effectively take ownership of the integration agenda;

- adopt a global strategy for strategic partnerships negotiation;
- develop synergy between capacity building, infrastructure and intra-African trade promotion;
- encourage bilateral and regional approaches to boost intra-African trade.

ii) **REQUEST** AUC to:

- embark upon sequencing and synchronization of CFTA negotiations taking into account, *inter alia*, the lessons learned from the region's tripartite free trade negotiations in terms of "key achievements" and "variable geometry";
- establish a capacity building program for Member States, RECs and AUC to enable them engage substantially in regional, continental and international trade negotiations;
- establish synergy between capacity building, infrastructure and intra-African trade promotion.

Common African Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and Africa Agenda 2063

i) **Request** AUC to:

- take the necessary measures to ensure wide dissemination and popularization of Africa Agenda 2063 and the Post-2015 Development Agenda at all levels (continental, regional and national) and to all stakeholders, particularly in rural communities to solicit their inputs and for ownership of these crucial Africa's instruments. AUC should develop a communication strategy for Agenda 2063 which should include, among others, information dissemination through radio, television and other communication channels;
- develop appropriate monitoring and evaluation framework to be made available to Member States for effective monitoring of the progress achieved in the implementation of Agenda 2063;
- ensure that Agenda 2063 provides a coherent and comprehensive framework that integrates all regional and continental programs (e.g PIDA CAADP, BIAT/CTFA, etc.).

ii) **Urge** Member States to:

- hold consultations with a view to enriching Africa Agenda 2063 as this document is still work in progress, and to submit their inputs to AUC

before 31 October 2014 as requested by the Executive Council in Malabo in June 2014. Workshops organized at national level should identify concrete measures to ensure linkages between Agenda 2063 and Member States' national development plans;

- manifest appropriate financial commitment to ensure full implementation of Agenda 2063;
- put in place appropriate institutional mechanisms (e.g. a national unit within the competent Ministry) to ensure visibility of Agenda 2063 and establish an appropriate support framework;
- take the necessary measures to eliminate entry visa requirements for African citizens and work for establishment of African passport;

iii) **Urge** AUC and Member States to work towards development of appropriate educational curricula, harmonize them and establish an African Qualification Authority tasked to control professional qualifications to ensure skills revolution, and encourage free movement of students and youth.

iv) **REQUEST** AU Commission to convene, next year , a meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee on Financial and Monetary matters, Economic Planning and Integration .

Vote of Thanks

Express to Swazi authorities our most sincere gratitude and appreciation for the warm welcome accorded to all delegations and for the facilities placed at their disposal, all of which contributed in no small measure to the successful conclusion of their deliberations.

Finally, **invite** each Member State and all stakeholders to implement the recommendations of our Conference.

Done at Ezulwini, Swaziland, this 18th day of July, 2014.

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