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## **ASSEMBLY OF THE AFRICAN UNION**

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**Sharm El-Sheikh, EGYPT**

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## **THE REVIVAL OF AFRO-ARAB COOPERATION**

***(Item proposed by the Arab Republic Egypt)***

## **THE REVIVAL OF AFRO-ARAB COOPERATION**

The African relations with the Arab world is of particular significance compared to relations with other African regional groups because ten (10) African countries belong to the Arab States league and represent about 70% of the entire population of the Arab world. Moreover, these Arab countries and particularly Egypt, Algeria and Libya, have played a vanguard role in the liberation struggle of the continent and then in strengthening the common African action.

In 1977, Cairo hosted the first Afro-Arab summit whose work was crowned by a political declaration, an action plan for Afro-Arab cooperation and a declaration for the Afro- Arab economic and financial cooperation. Despite the interruption in the organization of the Afro-Arab summit since then, several institutions of cooperation between the two sides continue to work. Also, many initiatives have been undertaken to revitalize and activate Afro-Arab dialogue. Regarding the institutions of cooperation, we cite for example the Standing Committee of Afro-Arab cooperation, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, the Afro-Arab Cultural Institute and the Afro-Arab Trade Fair.

Many consultative meetings were also held between the Arab States League and the African Union to monitor, coordinate and boost the Afro-Arab cooperation programme. The most recent was held in Addis Ababa in December 2007, during which the current programmes were revised, and a concept note was passed for the creation of an Afro-Arab conference for development. The meeting also reaffirmed the importance of establishing direct relations between the peace and security Councils, the Human Rights Councils in both parts and between the Arab and African parliaments.

Under the revival of Afro-Arab cooperation, the African Union, during its last session held in Addis Ababa in January 2008, urged the President of the Union Commission and the General- Secretary of the Arab States League to take all measures necessary to hold the second Afro-Arab summit.

The resolution taken in this regard also includes clauses on the General Convention for cooperation between the African Union and the of Arab States League signed in March 2008 in Riyadh and entered into force upon adoption by the tenth ordinary session of the Executive Council and the 128th session of the Foreign Ministers Council of the Arab League, according to Article 5 of the said Convention.

Accordingly, Egypt stresses the need to accelerate the holding of the second Afro-Arab summit. Convinced of the need to revive the Afro-Arab cooperation and the vital importance of the role of this summit to give new direction to the Afro-Arab cooperation to achieve the aspirations of peoples and governments of both sides, we invite the African Union Commission and the Arab League to pay any interest for this issue and propose new cooperation mechanisms between the two parties.

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# The Revival of Afro-Arab Cooperation (Item proposed by the Arab Republic Egypt)

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