

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA

P. O. Box 3243

Telephone : 517 700

Fax : 5130 36

website: www.africa-union.org

ASSEMBLY OF THE AFRICAN UNION

Nineteenth Ordinary Session

15 - 16 JULY 2012

Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA

Assembly/AU/9(XIX)

Original: English

**REPORT OF H.E. MR. DENIS SASSOU NGUESSO, PRESIDENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF CONGO AND AFRICA'S
COORDINATOR ON THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (Rio +20)**

**REPORT OF H.E. MR. DENIS SASSOU NGUESSO, PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF CONGO AND AFRICA'S COORDINATOR ON
THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT (Rio +20)**

I. Introduction

1. This Report is prepared pursuant to AU Assembly Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.400(XVIII) on Africa Consensus Statement to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20), held from 13 – 22 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

2. The 18th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 23 to 30 January 2012 adopted a decision on “Africa Consensus Statement to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)” (Assembly/AU/Dec.400 (XVIII)).

3. The Assembly, through this Decision, approved the Africa Consensus Statement to Rio+20 as the African Common Position on Rio+20, and urged the African Group, including the Permanent Representatives of African countries in New York, to continue to speak with one voice in the negotiations leading to the Rio+20 Conference to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012; The decision urged the Rio+20 Conference to adopt concrete measures, together with appropriate implementation tools to speed up the achievement of the commitments made towards sustainable development. It requested the AUC, ECA, AfDB, UNEP, UNDP, UNITAR, and other concerned partners, to organize a training of African Rio+20 negotiators to strengthen their engagement in the Rio+20 negotiation process and further requested the Republic of Congo, with the support of AUC, ECA and other partners, to prepare a report on implementation of the Decision and the outcomes of Rio+20 for presentation at the next Ordinary Session of the Assembly in June 2012.

4. The objectives of the Rio+20 Conference were to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assess the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development, and address new and emerging challenges. The Conference focused on two substantive themes: (a) A Green Economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and (b) The Institutional Framework for sustainable development. The conference convened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 20 – 22 June 2012, during which four parallel high-level roundtables for Heads of State and Government on a common theme: “Looking at the way forward in implementing the expected outcomes of the Conference” were held in addition to plenary meetings.

5. The Rio+20 conference was attended by some 100 Heads of State and Government / Heads of Delegation from 191 UN member states and observers along with thousands of representatives from non-governmental organizations, the private sector and civil society, all seeking to help shape new policies to promote global prosperity, reduce poverty and advance social equity and environmental protection. The conference featured Statements, High level Roundtables, a Partnerships Forum,

Sustainable Development Dialogues, SD-Learning, as well as an estimated 500 side events and exhibitions that attracted more than 40,000 people. Government delegations concluded the negotiations on the Rio+20 outcome document, titled “The Future We Want.”

6. Africa spoke with one united voice and collectively defended the Africa Consensus Statement as the Africa common position and used it as the basis of negotiation at all levels at the Rio+20.

7. This Report covers Africa’s preparation on the road to Rio+20; Africa at Rio+20; Key outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) (Rio+20); analysis of the Rio+20 Outcomes vis-à-vis Africa’s expectations from Rio+20; and **Conclusions and Way Forward**. The report also proposes a Draft Decision for the Assembly’s consideration.

II. Africa’s Preparation on the Road to Rio+20

A. Actions and initiatives taken by the Republic of Congo in discharging its mandates:

8. Diplomatic efforts undertaken by the Coordinator for Africa to Rio+20, in accordance with the mandate issued by the Assembly of the African Union, have included:

- i) The participation of the President of the Republic of Congo, together with H.E.M. Mahamadou Issoufou, President of the Republic of Niger, to the francophone preparatory forum for Rio+20, held in Lyon on February 8th and 9th, 2012, which helped to broaden support for the African Common Position, whose positions on Green Economy and the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development, were widely reflected in the recommendations of the International Organization of la Francophonie for Rio +20;
- ii) A meeting in February 2012 between H.E.M. Henri Djombo, Minister of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy and Environment of the Republic of Congo, and H.E.M. Janez Potočnik, European Union Commissioner for the Environment, to discuss the African Common Position for Rio+20, during which several points of convergence emerged among the respective positions of Europe and Africa;
- iii) The participation of the President of the Republic of Congo, and H.E.M. Mwai Kibaki, President of the Republic of Kenya, to the 12th Special Session of the UNEP Governing Council and Global Ministerial Environment Forum, from February 20th to 22nd, 2012, in Nairobi, Kenya, which served to show Africa’s support to strengthening the environmental pillar of Sustainable Development. As the last global ministerial meeting before Rio+20, a call was made for a more ambitious quest for consensus, as well as for greater support for the African Common Position to Rio+20;

- iv) Moreover, a high level ministerial delegation, led by the Minister of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy and Environment of the Republic of Congo, travelled to most Latin American, Asian and African countries in March and April 2012, to mobilize support and further stimulate partnerships between Africa and other regions ahead of Rio+20.

9. Less than two weeks ahead of the Rio+20 Summit, and under the theme: "What strategic partnership for Africa, 20 years after Rio?" someone hundred independent journalists, from all African countries as well as from Europe and Asia, met in Brazzaville, Congo, for a conference organized by ANEJ, the largest Media network on the continent and UNEP affiliate. In a statement known as the Brazzaville Declaration, journalists reaffirmed their determination to support the continent and its leaders in the battle for sustainable development. This statement was widely distributed in Rio, among delegations from the northern hemisphere, as well as amongst some of the most influential environmental activist communities.

10. Much gratitude is due to all African negotiators, and especially to the permanent representatives in New York whom, under the leadership of the Ambassador of Kenya in his capacity as chief negotiator for the African Group, have done outstanding work to ensure that Africa's interests are heard – particularly within the G-77 plus China – and fully reflected in the negotiations document. This work, as well as that of African governments and partner institutions, has enabled Africa to speak with one voice in defense of the Common Position throughout the negotiations. In sum, Africa can commend itself for the commitment and solidarity it has sustained through three rounds of informal negotiations and the 3rd Intersessional meeting, which enabled the continent to reach Rio with a strong and united front.

B. Actions and initiatives taken under the guidance of the Steering Committee

11. In line with the January 2012 Assembly, a Steering Committee was established to provide overall guidance for Africa's effective participation at the Rio+20. The Commissioner of Rural Economy and Agriculture of the AUC, and the Deputy Executive Secretary of ECA co-chaired the Committee, which was composed of representatives of the Embassy of the Republic of Congo in Addis Ababa, AUC, ECA, AfDB, UNEP, UNDP and UN-OSAA. It was supported by three sub-committees on technical, communication and resource mobilization matters. The Steering Committee and its sub-committees met regularly to ensure effective planning and preparations for Africa's participation in Rio+20, as well as the provision of the required technical support to the African Ambassadors and negotiators in New York. The committee also engaged the Brazilian Embassy in Addis Ababa. Three institutions, AUC, UNECA and AfDB dedicated websites / webpage for Rio+20.

12. On 15 March 2012, the AUC, ECA, AfDB, UNEP, UNDP and UNITAR organized a Consultation and Capacity Building event for African Ambassadors and negotiators in New York, in the margins of the first round of 'informal' negotiations on the zero draft of the Outcome Document. The event was aimed at complementing the knowledge and experience of African negotiators by building on their negotiating skills and supporting the organization of the African Diplomatic Corps to consolidate

Africa's strategies. It also aimed at providing the contextual analyses of Africa's common position in order to achieve a more effective definition and presentation of Africa's priorities and expectations at Rio+20.

13. In response to a request made on behalf of the African Group by the Republic of Congo in preparation for the meeting of the African Permanent Representatives and Rio+20 Negotiators held on 20 April 2012 in New York, and the Second Round of Informal-Informal Discussions held from 23 April to 4 May 2012, ECA, AfDB and UNEP prepared analytical papers on the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development (IFSD), Means of Implementation (MoI) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The first two papers were presented at the meeting and all three were circulated widely among African negotiators. Furthermore, ECA carried out an analysis of the latest negotiating text at the time, which it shared with key African negotiators in New York. The various analyses carried out enabled African negotiators to effectively prepare for the coordination meetings of G77 and China, which contributed greatly to informing the Group's negotiating strategy and positions.

14. During the third round of "informals" held in May/June 2012, the Ambassador of Kenya in New York in his capacity as Africa's lead negotiator at the expert level, requested ECA to provide the negotiators with an estimate of the level of financial resources required for Africa's sustainable development agenda. In this regard, ECA carried out a "quick" analysis which indicated that an annual financing requirement of US\$ 198.40 billion (roughly US\$ 200 billion) was required for all components/dimensions of sustainable development in Africa. A succinct note was provided with details and explanations on the indicative figure.

III. Africa at Rio+20

A. Negotiation Process

15. Africa spoke with one united voice and collectively defended the Africa Consensus Statement being the Africa common position as the basis for negotiation at all levels at the Rio+20:

- i) The experts of the African Group met under the leadership of Kenya, Coordinator of African Group (Experts) and the Republic of Congo (Political Coordinator) during the negotiations to harmonize positions in accordance with the Africa Consensus Statement approved by the AU January 2012 Summit;
- ii) The Ministers also met under the leadership of the Republic of Congo with the participation of the AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture. The Ministers deliberated on the emerging issues and discussed the way forward in presenting the negotiated outcomes for the political guidance of the African Heads of State and Government and Heads of Delegation;
- iii) The African Heads of State and Government and Heads of Delegation subsequently met at Rio under the leadership of Africa's Spokesperson and Political Coordinator for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), and President of the Republic of

Congo, together with the Chairperson of the African Union and President of the Republic of Benin, and with the participation of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, to consider the report of the African Ministers and finalise Africa's position based on the emerging issues at the conference prior to final adoption of the Conference outcomes at the closing plenary. The meeting deliberated on the report of the Ministers presented by the Minister of the Republic of Congo, reflected on the African Union Assembly Decisions on the Rio+20 conference and related previous decisions on international conferences on climate change (Assembly/AU/Dec.236(XII)/ Assembly/AU/Dec.342(XVI)) and sustainable development (Assembly/AU/Dec.234(XII)/Assembly/AU/Dec.381(XVII)) that resolved for Africa to speak with a united voice. The meeting came to a close on the conclusion that Africa agreed not to re-open the outcome text adopted at the experts' level in the spirit of flexibility shown by the various groups that negotiated the text; current political experiences and pressure from some groups to reopen other parts of the texts if any part of the text was to be reopened.

B. Joint events

16. Under the guidance of the Steering Committee, partner institutions jointly organized the following events at Rio+20:

- i) Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development: Integrating the three pillars;
- ii) Financing Sustainable Development: Transition towards a Green Economy in Africa;
- iii) Promoting Inclusive Green Growth and building a Green Economy as a means of achieving sustainable development;
- iv) The Africa Day- comprised of a high-level round table, a press conference and reception;
- v) Private Sector Dialogue in the context of Green Economy;
- vi) Engagement of African Youth and their role in the post 2015 MDGs Agenda;
- vii) NEPAD and Sustainable Development in Africa;
- viii) Brochures on Africa's participation, including the speech delivered by Africa's Political Coordinator and Spokesperson for Rio+20, as well as electronic copies of AU decisions, the Africa Consensus Statement, and publications on the objective and themes of Rio+20, were made available and widely distributed at the conference. A joint exhibition space was also secured to showcase various products of the Africa preparations for the conference.

17. Furthermore, the Steering Committee provided technical back up and logistical support to the African Group meetings at the conference.

18. Other African side events at the Rio+20 were organized by: Angola; Chad; Ethiopia; Kenya; Namibia; Mozambique; Senegal; Nigeria; Niger; Republic of Congo; South Africa; with Regional Economic Communities (ECOWAS and EAC) and Regional Organizations, such as: the Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) also organized a number of side events in the margins of the conference.

19. The speakers and audience at these side events included: African Heads of State and Government, Heads of delegation, Ministers, Parliamentarians, Experts, RECs, Member States, representatives of African institutions; UN Agencies, bilateral and multilateral development partners, private sector, Media, NGOs, Civil Society organizations and major Groups.

IV. Key Outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) (Rio+20)

20. The Conference was preceded by the third and final meeting of its Preparatory Committee and by Pre-Conference Informal Consultations facilitated by the Host Country.

21. At the Rio+ 20, government were expected to adopt clear and focused practical measures for implementing sustainable development that could reduce poverty while promoting green and inclusive growth, and a more sustainable and fair use of resources.

22. The Rio+20 conference concluded with the adoption of the outcome document, titled “The Future We Want”, (United Nations document Ref: A/CONF.216/L.1) without objection. However, a few countries expressed reservations on some sections of the documents at the closing plenary: namely, Bolivia, Ecuador, Venezuela and USA. The document has six sections: (I) Our common vision; (II) Renewing political commitment; (III) Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; (IV) Institutional framework for sustainable development; (V) Framework for action and follow-up; and (VI) Means of implementation. The outcome document is attached as Annex 1 to this report; the summary of the key points for each section is attached as Annex II and Africa’s expectations from Rio+20.

23. While falling short of expectations, the Rio+20 outcome document has set the stage for future goals and targets post 2015, at the expiration of the MDGs as well as for a reformed institutional framework for sustainable development.

24. The “Future We Want” calls for the UN General Assembly (UNGA), at its next session in September 2012, to take decisions on a number of important issues, including:

- i) Designating a body to operationalize the 10-year framework of programme on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP);

- ii) Identifying the format and organizational aspects of the High-Level Forum, which is to replace the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD);
- iii) Strengthening and upgrading the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);
- iv) Constituting a working group to develop global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be agreed by UNGA;
- v) Establishing an intergovernmental process under UNGA to prepare a report proposing options on an effective sustainable development financing strategy;
- vi) Considering a set of recommendations from the Secretary-General for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies;
- vii) Developing in two years an international instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea regarding marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- viii) Launching of a programme of work on broader measures to complement gross domestic product, and system encourages the UN system to, as appropriate, support industry, interested governments and relevant stakeholders in developing models for best practice and facilitate action for the integration of sustainability reporting;
- ix) Considering the text in the outcome document on trade-distorting subsidies, fisheries and fossil fuel subsidies.

V. Rio+20 outcomes vis-à-vis Africa's expectations

25. Africa's expectations from Rio+20 are contained in the Africa Consensus Statement to Rio+20, adopted as Africa's common position on the objective and themes of Rio+20 at the level of Heads of State and Government.

26. Worthy of note is that Africa is the only region of the world to which the outcome document dedicates a specific section. The main elements of the "Future We Want" of relevance for Africa are summarized below:

- i) On Common vision and renewing political commitment, the outcome document:
 - a) Reaffirms the Rio Principles, in particular the Principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibility (CBDR), past actions plans and the need to accelerate implementation of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);

- b) Acknowledges the need to mainstream sustainable development at all levels, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects, as well as recognizing their interlink ages;
 - c) Recognizes poverty eradication as the greatest global challenge and a key overarching objective of sustainable development, as well as the need to promote sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth;
 - d) Reaffirms the commitment of the international community on accelerating the achievements of the MDGs and to addressing new and emerging challenges;
 - e) Underscores support to Africa's sustainable development efforts by the international community as a key priority. In this context, it reaffirms commitment to NEPAD, and recommits to fully implement the internationally agreed commitments related particularly to the MDGs and those contained in the United Nations Declaration on NEPAD, the Monterrey Consensus, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, as well as the 2008 political declaration on Africa's development needs;
 - f) Welcomes the efforts by development partners to strengthen cooperation in the implementation of NEPAD.
- ii) Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication:
- a) The section on the green economy as regards the role of this economic model in promoting sustainable development is in line with Africa's thinking, in the sense that it emphasizes that the model is but one tool/ pathway for achieving sustainable development.
 - b) The outcome document recognizes the main elements of a green economy as elaborated by Africa, such as; the need for the green economy to be rooted in national priorities and plans, to ensure that the green economy does not become a barrier to trade, the provision of adequate means of implementation, and the promotion of sustainable production and consumption patterns.
 - c) Africa called for land management to be squarely set in the green economy context, and in this regard a commitment to a land degradation neutral world, with targets towards achieving zero net land degradation. The outcome document stops short of this, though recognizing the need for urgent action to reverse land degradation it does not refer to targets, but encourages countries to strive towards achieving a land-degradation neutral world.
 - d) Africa also called for the establishment of an international investment strategy to facilitate the transition towards a green economy, but the Rio+20 outcome document though recognizing

the need for stepped up international support and the provision of adequate means of implementation, is silent on how the green economy is to be financed in developing countries.

- e) The outcome document adopts the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns and invites the General Assembly, at its sixty-seventh session, to set up a body made up of member States and to take necessary steps to fully operationalize the framework – which is in line with Africa’s position on the same.
 - f) Furthermore, the text champions the active participation of the private sector to facilitate transition to green economy through public-private partnerships which is equally emphasized in the Consensus Statement.
- iii) Institutional framework for sustainable development:
- a) Africa supported efforts to reform the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to promote a balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development. It emphasized the importance of increased synergies, coherence and coordination among and between the UN system, International Financial Institutions and Rio Conventions.
 - b) While the “Future We Want” recognizes the critical role of ECOSOC as the principal body for policy review, dialogue and recommendations, and follow-up to the MDGs and commits leaders to strengthening ECOSOC, in particular to foster the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, it establishes a universal intergovernmental high level political forum for the balanced integration of the three dimensions building on, and eventually substituting, the CSD. In this regard, the Conference launched an intergovernmental process under the UNGA to define the format and functioning of the forum, with a view to convening the first meeting of such forum at the beginning of the 68th UNGA.
 - c) The region strongly supported the strengthening of international environmental governance within the context of the institutional framework for sustainable development, in order to promote a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development. In this respect, Africa called for strengthening, consolidating and transforming the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) into an international specialized institution on the Environment based in Nairobi, Kenya, and for such an institution to be provided with the required political leverage and means of implementation to enable it effectively deliver on its mandate.

- d) The outcome document stops short of taking a decision on establishing an international specialized institution on the environment, but invites the UNGA, at its 67th session, to adopt a resolution on strengthening and upgrading UNEP. Nonetheless, the principles on which such strengthening and upgrading is to be based are largely aligned to Africa's position – such as universal membership; secure, stable and adequate financial resources; a strengthened role of UNEP within the UN system; and consolidation of its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.

iv) Means of implementation

- a) Africa called for the adoption of concrete measures, supported by adequate means of implementation that would ensure accelerated implementation of sustainable development commitments, including those to be adopted at Rio+20. It called on developed countries to fulfil previous commitments and pledges. However, the outcome document falls short of providing firm commitments on additional financial resources, capacity building and technical assistance, and green technologies, to support developing countries in implementing sustainable development commitments. The text does, however, reaffirm previous commitments, including on means of implementation.
- b) On financial resources, the outcome document establishes an intergovernmental committee, comprising 30 experts nominated by regional groups, with equitable geographical representation, to assess financing needs, consider the effectiveness, consistency and synergies of existing instruments and frameworks, and evaluate additional initiatives, with a view to preparing a report proposing options on an effective sustainable development financing strategy to facilitate the mobilization of resources and their effective use in achieving sustainable development objectives. The work of the committee is to conclude by 2014. United Nations Agencies are called upon to support the process at the technical level. It is noteworthy that in the section on Africa, the outcome document recognizes the need for the international community to make continued efforts to increase the flow of new and additional resources for financing development.
- c) On technology development and transfer, the outcome document requests relevant UN agencies to identify options for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies, and requests the Secretary-General to make recommendations regarding the facilitation mechanism to the Sixty-Seventh Session of the General Assembly.

- d) On capacity building, the outcome document emphasizes the need for enhanced efforts for sustainable development, calling for strengthened technical and scientific cooperation, and highlighting the importance of human resource development, including through raining and knowledge transfer. It calls for the continued and focused implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building. Relevant UN agencies and other international organizations are called upon to support developing countries in capacity building for developing resource-efficient and inclusive economies.
 - e) The outcome document reaffirms the role of trade as an engine for development, and the importance of an equitable, rules-based, and non-discriminatory trading system and of meaningful trade liberalization. It reaffirms commitment to address, among others, trade-distorting subsidies and trade in environmental goods and services. Finally, it urges members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to step up their efforts to successfully conclude the Doha Development Agenda and, in this regards, it recognizes the need to provide assistance to enable developing countries to participate meaningful in the work programme of the WTO.
- v) Framework for action and follow up – thematic areas and cross-cutting issues
- a) The Rio+20 outcome document identifies a number of key thematic areas and cross-sectoral issues that need to be addressed, and sets out key actions to be implemented, supported by adequate means of implementation. The areas identified are: poverty eradication; food security and nutrition and sustainable agriculture; water and sanitation; energy; tourism; transport; cities and human settlements; health and population; employment, decent work and social protection; oceans and seas; disaster risk reduction; climate change; forests; biodiversity; desertification, land degradation and drought; mountains; chemicals and waste; sustainable consumption and production; mining; education; and gender equality and the empowerment of women. These are in line, and even go beyond areas identified in the Africa Consensus Statement.
 - b) This section also addresses regional efforts and specific needs of country groupings, including Small Island Developing States (SIDS); Least developed countries; landlocked developing countries; and Africa. Africa is the only region with a dedicated section.
- vi) Sustainable Development Goals
- a) Africa's common position was silent on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which was introduced late in the process. However, during the negotiations, the region called for such agenda to complement rather than substitute the MDGs. Also

stressed on the need for monitoring and reporting by each country and the output should be informed by scientific findings. Africa expected Rio+20 to lay the basis for the elaboration of SDGs, to be linked to the MDGs; establishing goals that become part of the post-2015 development agenda.

- b) The outcome document underscores the importance of the MDGs, and the commitment of the international community to their achievement. The document further recognizes the important role that sustainable development goals, based on Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, could play in pursuing sustainable development, coherent with and integrated in the post-2015 development agenda, and without diverting focus on efforts to achieve the MDGs.
- c) The “Future We Want” resolves to establish an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process on sustainable development goals that is open to all stakeholders, with a view to developing global sustainable development goals to be agreed by the General Assembly.
- d) In this regard, it calls for the constitution of an open working group before the 67th session of the UNGA, comprising 30 representatives, nominated by Member States from the five United Nations regional groups. The group is to submit a report to the sixty-eighth session of the Assembly, containing a proposal for sustainable development goals for consideration and appropriate action.

27. Voluntary commitments - Participants at Rio+20 were encouraged to make voluntary commitments for actions to implement the conference’s goals, and almost 700 had been received by the close of the Conference, with financial commitments from governments, the private sector, civil society and other groups reaching US\$500 billion. Africa stands to benefit from these commitments, which include afforestation, energy and waste management projects, greening the desert and supporting women entrepreneurs in green economy businesses. African countries should be encouraged to further engage in this process, as a way of gathering support and showcasing the multitude of national and regional initiatives that are already underway with regards to Sustainable Development.

VI. Conclusions and Way Forward

28. Many expected the outcomes of Rio+20 to have been bolder and ambitious, with new commitments commensurate with the scale of the problem, launching new, concrete processes and significantly altering the international framework for sustainable development. While falling short of expectations, the document does nonetheless set in motion several intergovernmental processes aimed at reforming institutional framework for sustainable development, establishing facilitative mechanisms for more effective and efficient means of implementation, and establishing sustainable development goals. Moreover, while not all the expectations

of Africa have been met, the Future We Want does not contradict Africa's views and development vision.

29. It is critical that Africa fully engages in the processes set in motion under the UNGA, to ensure that they take into account Africa's specific needs and priorities. In this regard, facilitation and support from the AUC, AfDB, UNECA and all partners are crucial. Other actions for consideration include:

- a. African countries and RECs to prioritize sustainable development in the allocation of domestic resources and in the mobilization of resources from a variety of sources;
- b. Africa to ensure that each country should be able monitor and report on the SDGs and the output is informed by scientific findings in the constituted working group to be established at the 67th session of the UNGA.

2012-07-16

Report of H.E. MR. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of Congo and Africa's Coordinator on the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20)

African Union

DCMP

<https://archives.au.int/handle/123456789/9077>

Downloaded from African Union Common Repository