

AFRICAN UNION

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BACKGROUND PAPER

THEME OF THE SUMMIT: “*Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development*”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PREFACE

About 62% of the total population of Africa are below the age of 35 years and over 20% are between 15 and 24. By 2020, more than 70% of the African youth will be twenty years old, which means that out of 4 people, 3 will be less than 20 years old. About 10 million young Africans youth arrive each year on the labour market that is not yet ready to receive such a high number of young people seeking employment. In addition, many of our young people are not well prepared for the labour market, given the weaknesses of the education systems in our continent. As an immediate consequence, 71% sub-Saharan youth survive on less than \$2 a day.

The development of the Arab uprising, especially in Tunisia and Egypt also confirmed that solutions must be made to address priority and legitimate concerns of the youth, who are becoming poorer, more angry and violent, while the same energy could be used for innovation and constructive creativity in order to meet their aspirations. Africa cannot afford to ignore the potential of the youth that is also the driving force, a useful and essential resource for sustainable development at both national and continental levels.

The African Union, through the theme of the Summit “**Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development**” confirms the engagement of the African leaders to continue their efforts for the creation and promotion of proper conditions for a better support and response to the needs of the African youth. The AU Member States are organizing and implementing national actions to promote a meaningful dialogue with young people and to consolidate understanding of the importance of their involvement in various activities, with the objective of channelling their energy, enthusiasm and resources to development issues and to improve inter-generational understanding and cultural diversity for sustainable projects.

The adoption in 2006 of the African Youth Charter and its entry into force in 2009, marked the starting point of a strong and dynamic era towards the promotion of the participation of youth and to a wide range of dialogues, policies and initiatives for developing policies to ensure that the views of young people are taken on board, discussed and considered for implementation in these processes. Celebrating the Year of the African Youth in 2008, the institutionalization of the African Youth Day, which this year is in its fifth year, the declaration of a decade for Youth development (2009-2018) with its ten-year action plan all prove the continent's readiness to address the Youth development agenda fairly and squarely. Finally, the decision to devote the July 2011 Summit of Heads of State and Government on the theme “**Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development**”, underscores the importance of this area of focus.

The Commission seeks to promote continuous dialogue and communication between the various youth organizations and to play its pivotal role in promoting exchange programmes to share experiences and to identify and provide concrete

answers, in collaboration with leaders and officials in charge of youth and development partners, to the challenges at hand. The Commission, has engaged in various programs and projects aiming at building the capacity of the youth and their meaningful participation, such as the creation and implementation of the African Youth Volunteer Corps, the elaboration of the Plan of Action for the Decade for youth development, the promotion of technical and vocational training, the implementation of the African Youth Charter, the creation of a database of youth organizations and many other initiatives.

Due to the high rate of unemployment among young Africans, a special session on youth employment was devoted to the theme "**Promoting employment for social cohesion and inclusive growth**" by Ministers of Labour and Social Welfare in April 2011. Important recommendations were made to the Summit for the need in all Member States to create a conducive environment for job creation, additional resources for the implementation of employment policies, among other things. In addition, the establishment of the Pan-African University and centres of excellence meeting international standards, the framework of the development of Science and technology and ICT are some of the propositions to fight and win the struggle; strengthening of the education institutions, and knowledge acquisition at all education levels, as well as the attainment of lasting peace and human dignity. These projects and others initiated across the continent by various stakeholders will help give our youth the skills and knowledge that will enable them to become the vectors of the emergence of the Africa of our dreams.

Allow me to insist on two additional conditions of success for the acceleration of youth empowerment in Africa: **increased investment in youth has become an urgent need and appears paramount and mandatory for the future of our society**. It is an obligation for young people to **fulfil their responsibilities** as full participants in the civic life and **perform their duties**, as stated in the African Youth Charter.

I conclude my statement with a Call to all the stakeholders for urgent action, action and more action and allocation of adequate resources for a successful acceleration of youth empowerment in Africa.

Prof. Jean-Pierre EZIN
Commissioner
Human Resource, Science and Technology

BACKGROUND PAPER

THEME OF THE SUMMIT: “*Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development*”

I. INTRODUCTION

“Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development”

Imagine: that the youth in Africa are able to effectively contribute and benefit from Africa’s development and live the African dream of prosperous , integrated, peaceful, stable and are in charge of their own destiny.

Consider making opportunities available: for this youthful generation to help shape our collective future.

Imagine: the impact where a young African would wake up one day and has the means and freedom to fully realize his/her potential and be a positive force for development.

1. The African Population is estimated to be more than a billion people of whom over 60% are young men and women under the age of 35. The majority of African youth continue to face: illiteracy, unemployment, underemployment, lack of skills, irrelevant education, lack of access to capital, poverty, unmet needs for health-related information and services including HIV and, above all, prevention of new HIV infections.
2. This situation is even more accentuated among youth in rural areas along with other groups including young women, youth living with disabilities, youth in post conflict and crisis situations, and marginalized youth.
3. This comes at a time when Africa, more than ever, is in dire need for skilled and capacitated human resource base in order to find innovative and home grown solutions for the various challenges the continent is facing which includes: civil wars and insecurity, HIV, financial turmoil, food crisis, climate change, bad governance and others. In addition, many disadvantaged youth are unwittingly conscripted into armed struggle, abused to settle political scores and are exposed to various negative media that erodes their positive heritage- leading them to delinquency, drug use, and other risky behaviours. Furthermore and as it is well known, most youth that migrate to foreign countries or even within the continent, in search of greener pastures, also face exploitation, extreme abuse, and mistreatment and are often victims of human trafficking.
4. It is to be recalled however, that the dramatic transformations in the economic destinies of South East Asian countries "Asian Tigers", came about only after these countries had invested heavily in youth empowerment and capacity building and

creating an enabling environment, which includes access to quality education and financial resources, promoting home grown research and innovation; and nurturing youth leadership at multiple levels of the society.

5. Africa however, despite being the richest continent in youth population, it is also the poorest in terms of utilizing its youth demographic bonus. This is why, Africa's leaders are devoting the 17th ordinary AU Summit to Young people under the theme: **“Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development”**.

6. **Youth Empowerment:** Young people are empowered when they realize that they have or can create choices in life, are aware of the implications of those choices, make informed decisions freely, take action based on those decisions and accept responsibility for the consequences of their actions. Empowerment also means having the ability for supporting enabling conditions under which young people can act on their own behalf, and on their own terms, rather than on the direction of others. These enabling conditions fall into major categories such as:

- ✓ A stable environment of equality, peace democracy and positive value system.
- ✓ An economic and social base;
- ✓ A strong political will,
- ✓ An equal access to knowledge, information and skills,
- ✓ An adequate resource allocation and supportive legal and administrative frameworks;

7. **Sustainable Development** can only be achieved when young people join hands in partnership with adults to ensure continuity of existing development works long after current decision makers are no longer in office. This is done through meaningful youth participation, mentorship, human capacity building and creation of an enabling environment - summing up to youth empowerment, within frank dialogue and mutual understanding.

8. The adoption in 2006 and coming into force in 2009 of the African Youth Charter marked the starting point of a new, strong and dynamic approach to promote youth participation and youth empowerment in Africa. This was followed by the declaration of a decade for youth development (2009-2018) with its ten-year action plan developed by the African Union Commission and already approved by Member States.

9. In response to the call of the Heads of State and Government and in collaboration with leaders and officials in charge of youth and development partners, the African Union Commission, has engaged in developing programs and policies aimed at improving the capacity of young people. These include the creation and implementation of the African Union Youth Volunteer Corps (AU-YVC) and establishing the road map to facilitate the implementation of the Youth Decade Plan of Action.

10. An **African Youth Forum, as part of pre-summit events**, was held from 1-9 of April, 2011 in Addis Ababa, involving over 250 Youth from all parts of the continent and from the Diaspora to deliberate on the key issues young people regard are affecting them the most. The outcomes addressed the following:

- i) lack of employment;
- ii) lack of access and unavailability of quality formal and non-formal education and technical and vocational training - including recreational areas;
- iii) lack of access to financial capital for young people including entrepreneurial skill building mechanism;
- iv) low allocation of resources for research, innovation and protection of intellectual property;
- v) low protection of youth rights and promoting their responsibility by involving youth in decision making especially on issues affecting young people directly.

11. Also in this context, the high rate of youth unemployment in Africa led the Eighth Session of the Labour and Social Affairs to focus its ministerial panel on the topic "**Promoting youth employment for social cohesion and inclusive growth**" targeting youth capacity building and modernization of labour market institutions - particularly public employment services, strengthening of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and microenterprises; and making rural employment more profitable.

12. Apart from these, Africa also wants to fight and win the battle to strengthen the competitiveness of its youth in the international arena in the globalised world. This calls for a review of existing education systems including quality assurance, the establishment of a Pan-African University and centres of excellence that will meet international requirements and at the same time, ensure the vitality of mankind, serving the community, and the continent at large; enabling youth to become the vectors of the emergence of the Africa of our dreams.

13. In conclusion, investing in youth empowerment is paramount and mandatory for achieving peace and sustainable development in Africa. This requires firm commitment and dedication from Africa's leaders, government officials, civil society, public sector, development partners and various stake holders and Africa's youth at large in achieving these goals. Above all, implementation of youth targeting development policies and agendas and allocation of significant amount of resources for youth development are crucial for achieving youth empowerment and by virtue sustainable development.

II. BACKGROUND

14. The call for investment in young people now is more than clear. About 62% of Africa's overall population fall below the age of 35 and more than 35% are between 15 and 35 years old¹. More than half of youth survive on less than US\$ 2 a day. Six

¹ World Bank's African Development Indicators Database, 2009

thousand (6,000) young people are infected with HIV/AIDS everyday all over the world; most of them are girls in Sub Saharan Africa². These are not just numbers. These are the realities of young people, and this is the moment of truth. The gap between the MDGs targets and its interconnection to the current state of the young people leaves no time for questions.

15. It is hence argued that increased investment in youth development yields greater economic growth and social wellbeing for generations to come. Missed investments in young people's intellectual and human potential are a missed opportunity for generations and also costly to reverse, both for youth and for society. In order to achieve the positive outcomes in the areas of education, employment, health and citizenship, to fight poverty among the youth, a holistic approach to youth development has become an urgent matter that should focus, not only on young people themselves, but also on all the related factors that help shape their behaviours, such as families, communities, schools, media, the legal environment and different established systems of values and social norms.

16. The issue of youth development, empowerment and leadership is increasing in importance through the development agenda of national governments, regional entities and international development organizations, that include the AU Commission's efforts to build youth capacities for quality and meaningful participation in development and decision making processes. Most notably, there is a new and strong momentum to promote the participation of youths and youths groups, in a wide range of policy dialogues and policy development initiatives to ensure that youth perspectives are addressed in these processes and taken into account for implementation. The African Youth Charter and its rapid entry into force, the celebration of the Year of African Youth in 2008 and the annual celebration of the African Youth Day every 1st November, the declaration of a Decade (2009-2018) for Youth development, and its approved 10 year-plan of action, the decision to devote the July 2011 Heads of State and Government Summit on youth empowerment in Africa are convincing evidences that confirm the continental impetus to the African youth development.

17. The year 2011 will also mark the 5th year since the adoption of the African Youth Charter that was adopted by the Ministers in Charge of youth and approved by the AU Heads of State and Government in July 2006. Therefore, the African Union acknowledges the principles and significance of these decisions in order to capacitate the youth and thereby enable Member States to fully benefit from their contributions, in addressing the continent's social and developmental constraints.

18. At a global level, the year 2010 was declared by the UN General Assembly as the International Year of the Youth (August 12, 2010 – August 12, 2011) and all youth related activities and events to be held during the Year 2011 in reference to the United Nations Plan of Action.

² UNFPA's State of World Population Report 2003 and 2005

19. During the 15th Ordinary Session of the African Union Heads of State and Government, held in Uganda in 2010, the Assembly adopted “**Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development**” as the theme for the next Summit.

20. It is under this backdrop that the African Youth Forum is held in order to accord the youth an opportunity to deliberate and have their young voices be heard.

III. THE PRE-SUMMIT ACTIVITIES

21. As pre-Summit events, the African Youth Forum held from 1 - 9 April 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia included three various meetings: i) A high level consultation with major actors and partners in youth development area and representatives of the Pan African Parliament, dealing with Youth issues, ii) the youth forum implemented with more than 250 young leaders from all over the Continents and Diaspora Youth leaders, finally the Bureau of the African Union Ministers in charge of Youth Development that reviewed and endorsed the recommendations made by the youth leaders and the participants to the high level consultation before submission to the statutory structures.

22. The following sub-themes guided the debates:

- ❖ **Youth empowerment and socio-political stability:**
 - ✓ Youth and issues concerning democracy, governance, climate change, etc.;
 - ✓ Youth and peace and security matters, conflict and post-conflicts involvement and responsibilities.
- ❖ **Youth empowerment and socio-economic stability**
 - ✓ Education, science and technology, relevant training and employment;
 - ✓ Skills and life skills development;
 - ✓ Livelihoods and entrepreneurship and poverty reduction.
- ❖ **Youth empowerment and social and individual welfare**
 - ✓ Youth facing Health challenges, HIV/AIDS;
 - ✓ Youth rights, obligations, responsibilities and legal issues.
- ❖ **Youth empowerment and sustainable development**
 - ✓ Youth participation – Policies, decisions and practices (actions and approaches that worked);
 - ✓ Opportunities and challenges;
 - ✓ Way forward for sustainable responses.

23. Some of the key issues for the debate arising from the pre-summit African Youth Forum addressed the following domains:

3.1 Laws, Policies and Programmes:

- ✓ One important obligation upon states parties under the African Youth Charter is Article 12, requirement to develop comprehensive and coherent national youth policies that are cross-sectoral in nature, informed by extensive consultation with young people and by baseline evaluations of the priority issues for youth development.
- ✓ It is especially noteworthy that part of the obligation is to ensure that the policies developed are adopted by the national parliaments and enacted into law.
- ✓ The development of the Charter recognizes important distinction between law and policy. This distinction was highlighted in the case of *Rapula Jimson v. Botswana Building Society* wherein the Botswana Industrial Court noted that policy and law operate at different levels and that courts can only enforce the law since policy is in the nature of moral, not legal, persuasion.
- ✓ Yet, Most governments in African countries do have youth policies that aim to empower youth. These policies in most are not accompanied by costed Action Plans for implementation, monitoring and accountability.
- ✓ Where they exist, they are not cross-sectoral, comprehensive, and integrated and lack the appropriate institutional framework and implementation arrangement.
- ✓ Various programmes targeted at youth are offered by governments and also by civil society. However, these programmes are largely uncoordinated due to weak frameworks on linkages of youth development to broader development objectives. Consequently it has been difficult to account for inputs, outcomes and impact for these programmes.

3.2 Administrative Structures:

- ✓ Some countries have established Youth Ministries charged with the responsibility of coordinating youth affairs. However, these ministries do not have adequate structure that target remote districts. In most cases, these ministries are under-staffed, and more often than not ill-equipped with technical capacity to work with a youth analysis framework.

- ✓ Most of these administrative structures do not receive adequate funding from 3.3 government resources to effectively implement youth empowerment programmes.

3.3 Youth Unemployment in Africa

- ✓ In Africa, the ratio of the youth-to-adult unemployment rate equals three (ILO 2006), which clearly points out the substantial difficulties of youth participation in the labour market.
- ✓ Yet, the youth employment elasticity to GDP growth is low. As a consequence, youth made up 43.7% of the total unemployed population in the world, despite accounting for only 25% of the working population.
- ✓ In Sub-Saharan Africa, 3 in 5 of the total unemployed are youth (ILO 2006) and on average 72% of the youth population live with less than \$2 a day. Furthermore, about 70% of this youth population is concentrated in rural areas (FAO).
- ✓ *Youth make up 36.9% of the working-age population, but 59.5% of the total unemployed, which is much higher than the world's average for 2005 (43.7%), reflecting serious labour demand deficiencies in the region (ILO 2006).*
- ✓ *Women work more hours than males and are more likely to engage in non-market activities.* In Ethiopia they work 48 hours a week versus 32 for males. Of those hours they spend 36 in household activities in contrast to the 15 males work in these tasks (Ethiopia LFS 2005).
- ✓ Young women have lower levels of school attainment and school enrolment.
- ✓ Those who enter the labour market directly are unprepared, making them more vulnerable to demographic and demand changes. Thus, they are more likely to be stuck in low productivity jobs.
- ✓ Agriculture represents about 30% of GDP in Africa and provides 70% of employment and 30% of Sub-Saharan Africa's GDP.
- ✓ In 2003, the African Union adopted the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP), calling on African governments to dedicate 10% of their national budgets to agriculture and to seek 6% annual agricultural growth, up to now, in the CAADP

implementation there is no systematic inclusion of youth and decent employment.

3.4 Youth Leadership and Participation

- ✓ Lack of access to information that would empower youth to understand the decision-making processes and substantively contribute to policy formation.
- ✓ In the development of national strategies for sustainable development, young people were not included on advisory bodies or in other aspects of the decision-making process.
- ✓ Youth engagement continues to be fragmented and sporadic at best. A bit of participation here and there will not serve any useful purpose and can be interpreted as involving youth only for the purpose of satisfying a requirement or as a symbolic act without real consequences or recognition of youth as partners in the development of solutions.
- ✓ Youth are often incorporated in the later stages of policy and decision-making. Often, their work takes place in “parallel events” and is not integrated into official processes.

3.5 Peace and Security in Africa: A Youth lens

- ✓ During the past fifteen years, almost US\$300 billion has been squandered on armed conflict in Africa, capital that could have been used to lift the continent out of extreme poverty and to prevent continued disease epidemics, notes a study by the International Action Network on Small Arms, Safer World and Oxfam International. The study indicates that 23 African nations have been involved in armed conflict, including; Algeria, Angola, Burundi, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Republic of Congo, Cote d’Ivoire, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan and Uganda.
- ✓ This leads us to the issue of Post **Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD)**, as the AU, PCRD policy defines it, it’s a comprehensive set of measure that seek to: address the needs of countries emerging from conflict, including the needs affected populations; prevent escalation of disputes; avoid relapse in to violence; address the root causes of conflict; and consolidate sustainable peace.³

³ AU Policy on PCRD, 2006

24. Each post-conflict recovery requires an integrated human security framework, developed in full partnership with the national and local authorities. Post Conflict Reconstruction period could serve as **an entry point** for the positive engagement of young people in:

- Pragmatic, complementary and constructive involvement of the young people in the broad programs and frameworks like the PRCD in countries that emerge from war.
- Developing efforts to build an effective and accountable state and empower the young people in their respective communities.
- Enhancing youth empowerment and participation and build a sense of self-confidence and involvement by enabling excluded groups and individuals to challenge their confinement to the margins of society.

3.6 Sexual Reproductive Health and Right

- ✓ With clear focus on youth sexual and reproductive health and rights as a key deliverable; the SRHR Policy Framework was designed as Africa's contribution to the implementation of the Programmes of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD); accelerating action on the attainment of the MDGs 4, 5 and 6.
- ✓ Following which the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa was established towards a common ground between global/continental initiatives and their triggering effect of local action enshrined in the aforementioned continental policy frameworks and programmes.
- ✓ A review of the Implementation of the MPoA was conducted in December 2009 to April 2010. The report identified among others main challenges, lessons learnt and recommendations that were presented to the 15th Ordinary Session of the African Union. Some of the challenges included that incidence where most countries have yet to integrate youth in the delivery processes of community-based STI/HIV/AIDS and SRHR services. In the decision of the July 2010 Summit extending the Maputo Plan of Action. to 2015, the involvement of young people in all levels of planning and implementation; in the position of youth -friendly SRHR services and the recognition of their roles in reversing the trends were identified as critical for better results.

3.7 Achieving an HIV free youth generation

- ✓ Significant progress has been made towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but we have yet to achieve the universal access for HIV prevention, treatment, care and support:
 - 5 million young people are living with HIV in the world today and young people accounted for 41% all new HIV infections in 2009.
 - Although HIV-related knowledge among young people has increased slightly since 2008, only 34% of young people demonstrated accurate and comprehensive knowledge of HIV in 2009, well below the 95% target identified in the 2001 Declaration of Commitment.
 - In sub-Saharan Africa, 3.9 million young people are living with HIV; out of which 72% are young women and the remaining 28% are young men.
 - In sub-Saharan Africa, the lower the household income, the less likely both young men and young women are to have accurate knowledge of HIV and AIDS.
 - Access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support is limited and the special needs of young people, particularly young women, young people within the key populations (young sex workers, young people who inject drugs and young men having sex with men) and young people living with HIV is inadequately addressed within the national AIDS response.
 - Discrimination in families, community, health care settings and other settings act as barriers to access age- and gender-appropriate reproductive health services including to HIV/STI prevention and treatment.

There is evidence of progress- but not enough:

- HIV Prevalence has **dropped more than 25%** among young people in 15 out of 21 countries (13 African countries) most affected by HIV. This is because young people are leading by example by choosing to have sex later, have few partners and are using condoms.

3.8 Enforcing and Protecting the Rights and Responsibilities of Youth

- ✓ There appears to be no avenue for enforcement of the rights and freedoms under the African Youth Charter although, conceivably the

Charter can be interpreted and applied by the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights under Article 3 (1) of its statute.

- ✓ This is especially striking given that in other parts of the Charter, specifically Article 16 (right to health) and 23 (rights of women and children) states are required to take legislative measures without the requirements to go through the law-after-policy process. Indeed, Article 23 contains a reference not merely to legislation but to 'special legislation' which perhaps should have been the term employed in Article 12.
- ✓ Another potential obstacle to enforcement of the Charter may be the provisions of Article 1 (2) under which states parties are required to effect the Charter, among other things, 'in accordance with their Constitutional processes', as well as under Article 14 (right to an adequate standard of living) which requires implementation thereof to be in accordance with the national laws of state parties. As drafted, these provisions leave it opens to states parties to raise their constitutional or legal orders as defenses to non-implementation of the Charter.
- ✓ On the whole the Charter contains a number of important human rights provisions. It is timely and foresighted in many respects and should serve as an important framework for advancing the rights of youth on the continent. Any failings in the Charter are remedied in the interim by Article 29 which provides that nothing in the Charter shall be taken as minimizing higher standards and values contained in other relevant human rights instruments ratified by states concerned or national law or policies.

3.9 The Adolescents: A critical stage in life

- ✓ Many adolescents between 15-19 years are pushed into adult roles before they are mature. They face threats from sexual violence, abuse, exploitation and discrimination without sufficient access to protection mechanisms, including migrants, street children, child labourers, and those most at risk and vulnerable for HIV/AIDS, drug and tobacco use and depression.
- ✓ Poor adolescent girls, in particular, are vulnerable to kidnapping or being sold and trafficked into prostitution, and further face female genital mutilation/cutting and early/forced marriages. Many end up parenting either younger siblings or their own children and heading households. If the wellbeing of adolescents between 15-19 years is not addressed, this inevitably affects their healthy development into youth, and further erodes their competitiveness and active participation in

nation building. Therefore, any action on protection must be backed by a set of legislative measures, policies and programmes that address this very critical stage in life.

3.10 Funding for Youth Development is unclear

- ✓ Funding for youth development is presently unclear in many respects. There is a vague and often conflicting understanding of what constitutes youth development. Youth development moves beyond the disparate expenditures on education, health, patriotism, moral values, etc., but should consist of a holistic vision of all facets of the lives of young people. In all governments there has to be clear, deliberate strategies aimed at equipping young people for leadership, global competitiveness, exposure to ways and cultures other than their own and active volunteerism to prepare them for the work force early and imbibe a sense of responsibility.
- ✓ With regards to funding, there are currently a wide range of donor sources, which support young people's efforts in various countries on the African continent. However, given the difference in the concept of youth development and the absence of a coherent, consistent, continent-wide strategy to address the development of young people, it is often difficult to assess the level of effectiveness of the various efforts and funds dispersed. There are many instances when members of the youth movement in a single country do not know what each other are doing and the coordination of these efforts are either poor or non-existent.

Multiple frameworks and fragmentation of actors make it difficult to mobilize resources

- Multiple frameworks lead to lack of clarity, varying definitions of youth by different bodies makes it difficult to create a collective youth position (*UN 15-24, Commonwealth 15-29, AU 15-35*).
- Consolidation of data for the youth cannot be comprehensively done due to the varying ages stipulated by different actors and the different indicators of youth development.
- There is a programmatic gap between the implementers and the actors leading to an inaccurate reflection of impact of youth programmes.

Specific net growth emphasizes support to youth development spending in national account

- Africa's demographic bonus aided with ODA is likely to bring development to Africa due to increased labour force.
- Africa faces the challenge of transforming the potential of youth into growth and development, thus ODA would assist in creating opportunities for young people to realise their potential leading to their individual development and that of their nation and the continent at large.
- Through ODA, youth programmes could be funded, hence leading to results oriented programmes and sustainability.

25. As expected, the outcomes following the debate during the pre-summit meetings, resolutions/recommendations to be submitted to the Assembly are formulated. They sound like a **Call to the Heads of State and Government to prioritize implementation of youth development and empowerment programs in respective Member States and to invest in Youth development to ensure quality participation.** The detailed outcomes are shown in the attached annex documents reflecting the recommendations from the pre-summit events.

26. Also a draft decision, reflecting the main concerns of the pre-summit debates is attached for consideration.

IV. ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION 30 JUNE- 1 JULY 2011

4.1 Introduction

27. During this Summit, AU Heads of State and Government will debate the Theme on ***Accelerating Youth Empowerment for Sustainable Development***. Ultimately, the debate should define Africa's strategic policy and political milestones on the specific actions required to achieve self-reliant, empowered and Pan-African youth; whose contribution will be the epicentre in reversing the trends in social and human development outcomes.

4.2 Structure of the Debate: Public Session

- **Interactive Discussion:** The main aim of this interactive session is to frame the issues for the debate by the Heads of State and Government. Each panelist will have an opportunity to respond to the questions which will be posed by the moderator.
- **Moderator:**(to be confirmed)

- **Introductory remarks:** Prof Jean Pierre Onvehoun Ezin, Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology will introduce the overall thrust of the theme.

- **Short Video Presentation on the theme:** " African Youth At Work" – 10min.

- **Main Presenter on the theme:**
 - H.E. Ato Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

- **Panelists - Respondents:**
 - H.E. Mr Amadou Toumani Toure, President of the Republic of Mali
 - H.E. Mr Amrmando Emilio Gebuza, President of the Republic of Mozambique

 - Mr. Andy Roland NZIENGUI, PYU Representative from Central African Region
 - Ms Fedia Gasmi, - Youth Representative from North African Region

 - Mrs. Helen Clark, Administrator, United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
 - Prof. Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
 - Dr.Frannie Leautier, Executive Secretary of the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)

4.3 Debate on the Theme

28. Following the interactive session, the discussion will be opened to all Heads of State and Government who would wish to make an intervention. Five (5) Pre-identified youth representatives of the African Regions, who attended the Pre-Summit Africa Youth Forum, will also intervene, as discussants during the debate. It is expected that these interventions will be focused on the key issues addressed during the interactive session by the panellists. These discussions should lead towards the identification of key actions, which the Heads of State and Government will agree upon and commit themselves to.

29. The key question is what Heads of State and Government will do as a collective effort in policy making, enforcements and protection, resource allocation, and leadership in their respective countries to achieve the intended accelerated empowerment and development of young people, guided by the targets set forth in the Youth Decade Plan of Action (2009- 2018).

V. ADOPTION OF DECISION TO ACCELERATE YOUTH EMPOWERMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA.

30. Since the adoption of the African Youth Charter in 2006, the African Union has further strengthened, through several other decisions; its Political will to position youth empowerment and development at the centre of Africa's socio-economic and political growth and sustainability. However, the challenges remain: resource availability, implementation arrangement and monitoring, Aid effectiveness, scaling-up, an institutional framework underpinned by a benchmark of fairness including lack of integrated, comprehensive, cross-sectoral coordination and harmonization of national youth development programmes and plans.

31. During 2010, the Division of Capacity Building and Youth Development in the African Union Commission (AUC) launched the African Union Youth Volunteers Corps (AUYVC) and finalized the Plan of Action for the Youth Decade (2009-2018) declared by the 2009 January Assembly. This Plan of Action was adopted by the 3rd Conference of African Ministers in charge of Youth within a Mid-term priority action.

32. In order to achieve the effective implementation, follow up and peer review of the expected AU commitments with bearing on Youth and establish a Pan-African Youth Comparative Statistical database, the Division further conducted progress reviews of both the African Youth Charter and National Youth Policies in Member States and prepared a Continental Report on the Overall Status of Youth in Africa, including Good Practices in Youth development.

33. Given the above, the outcome of the debate will lead to the adoption of Urgent Actions through a decision as attached, addressing among other issues:

- a) Ratification and acceleration of the implementation of the African Youth Charter, as an optional protocol to enforce the youth component of the African Charter on Democracy, Human and People's Rights including as a standard and indicative criteria of the NEPAD and APRM;
- b) Results based case for the Scaled-up Implementation of the AU Youth Volunteers Corps (AU-YVC); and to endorse a Joint Donor Basket for financing Youth development in Africa;
- c) Mobilize buy-in, build international cooperation and strategic alliances, deepen integration and promote shared values within the framework of the Decade Action Plan on Youth (2009-2018) and its Mid-term priority actions;
- d) Recommend resources allocation to the Pan African Youth Union, as a continental youth focal institution, to facilitate and enable the organization to develop and implement activities within its mandate;

- e) Recommend the overall strengthening (financial and human resource) of the AUC division in charge of the continental agenda for youth development and empowerment.

VI. SUMMIT SIDE EVENTS JUNE 13 - JULY 2, 2011

6.1 Pre-deployment training for the 2nd Batch of AU Youth Volunteers

34. Launched in Abuja, Nigeria on December 03, 2010, the African Union Youth Volunteers Corps is a continental programme that recruits, equips and deploys African youth as volunteers to work in any of the 53 countries in Africa comprising the African Union.

35. The AU-YVC promotes volunteering to deepen the status of young people in Africa as key participants in the delivery of Africa's human development targets and goals. Batch II training hosted by the government of Equatorial Guinea, will accommodate 130 youth mobilized primarily with support by Member States and those of multi-lateral and international development partners. The Orientation training will consist of 6 modules focused on Developing a Pan-African Orientation, Multi-cultural and language learning skills; Professional competency and leadership building; Application of a Youth analysis framework and knowledge in problem solving; Managing for Results and Survival skills with several sessions comprised of interactive group activities, modelling and familiarization with field work and tools.

6.2 Youth Innovative Fair and Media Parley on Youth Employment.

36. This is a Joint activity between the Department of Social Affairs and the Division for Capacity Building and Youth Development under the Department of Human Resources Science and Technology in partnership with the UN-AU Regional Cluster Mechanism on Social and Human Development. This Side event will create a high-level Media platform where Young people from across the continent demonstrate their skills and entrepreneurship. It will also be attended by the **UN Youth Champion** appointed by the UN Secretary General in New York. This event affirms that Africa's youth can contribute to Africa's development, as well as highlight challenges they face.

6.3 Exhibition

37. Advocacy and Policy briefs on Youth Development will be available for dissemination. Copies of the "Status of African Youth Report" the "Youth Decade Plan of Action" and other youth related publications and factsheets will also be available in partnership with international development partners, working on implementing the African Union Youth Agenda.

VII. CONCLUSION

38. This a given opportunity to African leaders, youth leaders and organizations, to development partners, Civil Society Organizations, Public and Private Sectors and allies to support the implementation of the outcomes of this particular Summit on youth Empowerment and integrate it into the collaboration agenda for coordinated and coherent actions that will contribute to fast track interventions and achievements of the set goals. I call upon the members States and the Pan African Youth Union to establish strategies and mechanisms that facilitate not only the acceleration process, but also the monitoring and reporting dimensions of the actions.

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