

AFRICAN UNION

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DIASPORA –FOR- DEVELOPMENT TECHNICAL WORK SESSION WITH THE AUSTRALIAN PAN-AFRICAN DIASPORA NETWORK

CIDO Diaspora Division Mission to Australia

21-25 November 2016



Ag. Director of CIDO in a meeting with Hon. Robin Scott, Minister of Multicultural Affairs and Trade in Victoria.

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Acronyms

AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CIDO	Citizens and Diaspora Organization
D4D	Diaspora for Development
PAADN	Pan African Australasia Diaspora Network
RCC	Regional Consultative Conferences
SBS	Special Broadcasting Service (SBS)

I. Context

The Diaspora Division of the Directorate of the Citizens and Diaspora Organizations (CIDO) is designed to facilitate the involvement of the diaspora in the affairs of the union. The diaspora division uses a phased approach to engage the diaspora.

The process starts with a desk study of the countries with a large population of the African Diaspora; the modes of arrival to the country and the numbers are studied in depth. The second step includes visits to the country, where meetings are organized with the diaspora, the destination country government and the African diplomatic corps. The third step is encouraging the diaspora to organize into Networks. The fourth and fifth steps include organizing of Regional consultative Conferences (RCC) where the division facilitates extensive dialogue, and accordingly develop appropriate frameworks to enable the participation of the diaspora in the affairs of the union, in addition to diaspora for development (D4D) projects that are relevant to both the diaspora and the AU, **as per Agenda 2063**.

Proudly, I would like to state that committed to its own new strategy of engagement of diaspora and all sectors of continental non-state actors in the affairs of the union, CIDO since the beginning of 2016 has decided that **Agenda 2063 and its implementation progress** to be a standing item in all of the Department's missions for the purposes of advocacy, popularization and engagement of all segments of civil society and Diaspora communities in its operation process. To effectively do this, we involve an expert from Strategic Planning Department; SPPMERM, to give an expert talk and presentation on this legacy program.

In 2015, the diaspora division succeeded in launching the Pan African Australasia Diaspora Network (PAADN). The network has proved to be an effective network comprised of over a 100 organizations and divided into specific groups such as Education, Women and Gender, youth and Community engagement to name a few.

In this year the division has been planning for an initial RCC with various groups in addition to the tripartite meetings of the three different stakeholders. The visit was scheduled in November since it is considered the official Diaspora Month.

II. Objective of the visit to Australia

In understanding the current dynamics in play when it comes to the diaspora, the division decided to visit two cities, namely Canberra (the Capital) and Melbourne (home to the largest and most diverse African communities).

The main objectives included 1) Ensure continuous engagement with the Diaspora, African Diplomatic Corps, and Government of the destination country; 2) pinpointing diaspora for

development projects that is relevant to the Diaspora community and AU agenda, and has the backing of both the African diplomatic missions and the Government of Australia.

III. Outcomes of the Visit to Australia

a. Meetings with the Government of Australia:

The meeting with the government of Australia are usually held with both the party in power, Liberal Party, and the Opposition, currently the Labour Party. Dialogue with both parties is key to ensure that even with elections and expected change of power that the dialogue is continuous particularly that the division is guided by a long term agenda which is Agenda 2063.



The meetings in Canberra consisted of meetings with the Federal Minister of International Development, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in particular the division responsible for Africa, in addition to the directors and heads of division of the department of Immigration, department of community engagement and the department of non governmental organizations.

The meetings in Canberra consisted of meetings with the Minister of Trade and Multi Cultural Affairs, the shadow minister of multicultural Affairs, the speaker of parliament and the president of parliament.

The meetings discussed a variety of issues, chief amongst them was supporting the integration of some of the African communities particularly south Sudanese where CIDO is to

share some of the reintegration lessons learned and good practices; the facilitation of reunion visas, i.e. Spouse visa to Africans; and Deliberated on D4D projects which were mainly centered around trade, education and volunteerism.

b. Meeting with the African Diplomatic Corps:

Following a meeting request with the Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps, currently Tunisia, and the rest of the diplomatic community; CIDO met with the Ambassadors and high commissioners of over 12 countries.

The meeting provided an overview of CIDO and the diaspora division mission, in addition to a short presentation on agenda 2063 which was delivered by strategic planning.



The meeting deliberated on a few matters such as creation a Skill Database through both the African Missions and the communities; utilizing the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) a national multicultural public television network to provide positive images of Africa in general and Africans living in Australian particular.

c. Meeting with the Diaspora

The meetings with the diaspora were divided into three main groups. Meeting with the **youth**; meetings with the **academics** and **skilled diaspora**; meeting with the community; and meetings with **PAADN**. Similarly to the **African diplomatic Corps**, presentations about **AU**, **CIDO** and **Agenda 2063** were put in place.

The main outcomes of those meetings were: 1) the importance of pioneering African Studies curriculums in universities, to allow the students and citizens of Australia including the african communities to have an understanding of Africa. 2) Academics to create a skill database to allow for the creation of a knowledge transfer project through the Pan African University. 3) Design of a Diaspora Volunteerism programme with a specific focus on youth. 4) create linkages between diaspora and local Entrepreneurs as we aim to create jobs.

IV. Key challenges

Representation of Women is more visible in the second and subsequent generations than in the first generation. **CIDO** has internalized a rule of only signing MOUs with organizations that respect the principles of gender equality and women empowerment to ensure that efforts are always put in place to incorporate women.

V. Lessons learned and way forward

Youth; holding a separate RCC with the youth has allowed us to understand the mindset, challenges and opportunities of the youth; entrepreneurship and volunteerism were the main two aspects which youth has shown interest in, in addition to advocacy on governance, human rights and the AU theme of 2017.

Meeting with both **the Government and the opposition** has proved to be a fruitful track since it allows for continuity even in the event of a change in government.

Support in creating D-4-D projects focused on Education, Volunteerism and Entrepreneurship. Committees are already in place in designing the education and Volunteerism projects. Meetings with Trade and Industry will be necessary in the creation of entrepreneurship and business projects.

E- Communication; Frequent meetings and consultations will be held via the **video-conferencing** equipment at CIDO, to ensure that physical meetings are more concise and more effective.