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| **AFRICAN UNION** |  | UNION AFRICAINE |
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**REPORT OF THE CONTINENTAL VALIDATION WORKSHOP**

**ON TOURISM STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND**

**AFRICAN TOURISM ORGANISATION**

**21ST – 22ND March 2019, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

The continental validation workshop on the African Tourism Strategic Framework and African Tourism Organisation was held on the 21st and 22nd March 2019 at the Headquarters of the African Union Commission (AUC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

1. **ATTENDANCE**

Delegates included Tourism Senior Officials drawn from Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The following Countries, RECs and institutions participated in the validation workshop:

1. ZIMBABWE (Chair of the STC on Tourism)
2. ALGERIA
3. BENIN
4. BURKINA FASO
5. EGYPT
6. EQUITORIAL GUINEA
7. ETHIOPIA
8. GUINEA
9. KENYA
10. MALAWI
11. MAURITANIA
12. MAURITIUS
13. MOROCCO
14. NIGER
15. RWANDA
16. SEYCHELLES
17. SIERRA LEONE
18. SOUTH AFRICA
19. THE GAMBIA
20. ZAMBIA
21. AUC
22. UNECA,
23. COMESA
24. UMA
25. ECCAS
26. NEPAD AGENCY
27. IATA

The list of delegates is attached as **Annex I.**

1. **OPENING ADDRESS OF MR. CHEIKH BEDDA, DIRECTOR OF INFRASTRUCTURE AND ENERGY OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

Mr. **Cheikh Bedda**, Director of Infrastructure and Energy of the AUC, welcomed the delegates to the Validation workshop. To showcase the importance given to the sector by the AUC, the Director noted that the Sub-Committee on Tourism is one of the three Sub-Committees that were created under the Specialised Technical Committee on Transport, Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructure, Energy and Tourism (STC-TTIIET). The Sub-Committee on Tourim was created to address major challenges facing the tourism sector in Africa. The Sub-Committee was set up during the First Meeting of the STC-TTIIET which took place in Lomé, Togo in March 2018. During its First Ordinary Session that took place from 1st – 2nd October 2018 in Nairobi, Kenya, the Sub-Committee on Tourism spelled out key targets for the tourism sector and **called for the formulation and full implementation of the Continental Tourism Strategy and establishment of the African Tourism Organisation as key prerequisites**.

Towards realisation of the above goal, Mr Bedda informed the workshop that the AUC in collaboration with the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) has initiated the elaboration of the continental tourism policy strategy including a proposal for establishment of a continental tourism body. Besides reviewing the draft tourism policy strategy document and the proposal for the establishment of the continental tourism organisation, the Director called upon the senior officials to deliberate and exchange views on the regional programmes and other important initiatives such as the linkage between tourism and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) andthe Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM). All these would be valuable in the effort to boost and enhance the Tourism sector in Africa.

He finally notified senior officials of the presence of the AUC legal counsel, to advise and guide the deliberations of the Validation Workshop particularly on the establishment of the African Tourism Organisation.

1. **REMARKS BY THE CHAIR OF STC ON TOURISM**

**Mr. Douglas E.S. Mavhembu** chaired the workshop on behalf of Zimbabwe. The Chairperson welcomed the senior officials and invited guests to the Validation Workshop. He expressed his gratitude to Member States, AUC, RECs and other International Cooperating Partners (ICPs) for their commitment, support and interest to develop the African Tourism Strategic Framework (ATSF) and the African Tourism Organisation (ATO) within the roadmap agreed to by African Tourism Ministers, in their first meeting which was held in Nairobi Kenya, in October 2018. He further highlighted that the objective of the validation workshop was to reflect on the draft documents which were prepared during the Experts Workshop, held in December 2018.

The meeting was invited to discuss regional and global developments and trends in order to come up with workable solutions that would impact on the formulation and implementation of the ATSF and ATO. He further noted that the development of the ATSF and ATO would maximise the developmental growth trajectory of African Tourism through increased arrivals, tourism receipts, employment creation and an improved market share on the global landscape, whilst promoting intra-and inter-regional travel, among other key deliverables.

1. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAM**

The proposed Agenda was adopted and is herein attached as **Annex II.**

Delegates felt that the presentation by IATA on ‘Taxation on Aviation and potential challenges for Tourism in Africa’, though relevant, should not be included during this validation workshop owing to the scope of work and tight timeframe as more time was needed to discuss ATSF and ATO. The representative for IATA was thus requested to share the presentation with the Member States through the secretariat.

Further, delegates felt that there was a need to add an agenda item on profiling tourism at a high level within the AUC as recommended under the Lomé’ Declaration of March 2017.

While adopting the Agenda for the meeting, delegates took note of the great loss of life and damage to property occasioned by the unfortunate impact of Cyclone Idai in the Southern Africa affecting a number of Member States including Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe. Of great significance to the workshop is the destruction of key tourism resources resulting from the disaster. Subsequently, the meeting conveyed a message of solidarity with and condolence to the affected Member States and families. Delegates observed a moment of silence in honour of the departed people.

1. **STATUS OF TOURISM IN AFRICA: CHALLENGES, AU AGENDA 2063 TARGETS**

The presentation by UNECA provided an overview of the challenges and opportunities for tourism development in Africa. It was indicated that tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing sectors of the world economy and a key economic sector within the African region, significantly contributing to the region’s GDP and job creation. As a result, tourism has been identified as a key sector in the realisation of the UN Agenda 2030, and Africa’s economic transformation and continental integration. Africa’s tourism industry however, faces a number of challenges that have limited the full realisation of the sectors potential. In this regard, the AU Agenda 2063 Framework identifies *‘making Africa the preferred destination for tourism’* as one of its flagship projects. Subsequently, the First Ten Year Implementation Plan (FTYIP) of the Agenda 2063 (2013-2023) spells out targets for the tourism sector including increasing the sector’s GDP contribution by 100% and doubling of intra-regional tourism levels by 2023.To achieve the above targets, the FTYIP proposes the formulation and implementation of anAfrican Tourism Strategy and the establishment of an African Tourism Organization**.**

1. **PRESENTATION AND VALIDATION OF THE CONTINENTAL TOURISM STRATEGY DOCUMENT**

The African Tourism Strategic Framework 2019-2028 (ATSF 2019-2028) was presented and discussed. Key among the areas presented included the

* Rationale for the ATSF 2019-2028
* Aim and Objectives of ATSF 2019-2028
* Guiding Principles for ATSF 2019-2028 formulation
* SWOT Analysis of Africa’s Tourism Industry
* Strategic Direction for the ATSF 2019-2028 including Mission, Vision, Growth Targets, and Strategic Directions
* ATSF 2019-2028 Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The meeting acknowledged the scope of the Strategic Framework and noted that some observations and inputs from the 1st STC-TTIET held in Nairobi Kenya on the 1st to 3rd October, 2018 were incorporated in the Draft Framework.

Delegates further highlighted the following areas that need to be addressed before finalising the ATSF 2019-2028 in preparation for the STC meeting scheduled for Cairo, Egypt in April, 2019:

*Under the Strategic Direction:*

1. Ensure professional editing of the document.
2. The role of International Cooperating Partners (ICPs) should be well articulated within the Framework
3. The UNWTO Code of Ethics should be included in the Framework as a tool for sustainable tourism development in Africa. Ethical practices should also focus on issues pertaining to the relationship between Member States particularly on matters of marketing narratives.
4. The benefits, application and costs of ICTs in Africa’s tourism industry should be more emphasised in the Framework
5. There is need to articulate the African Diaspora as key opportunity for tourism development in Africa
6. There is need to have a stand-alone Strategic Pillar on ‘*Resource Mobilisation Strategy’.*
7. Provide a recommendation for ‘Tourism Education’ at all levels of formal schooling and the need for harmonisation of tourism qualifications.
8. The philosophical basis of the ATSF should embrace Africa’s source markets.

*Implementation, monitoring and evaluation:*

1. The implementation plan be broken into two 5-year phases.
2. Specifically identify the role of the private sector within the implementation of the ATSF
3. Provide an institutional framework identifying the role of each lead agency/organisation
4. Make a case for ‘Ambassadors of Goodwill’ as an advocacy arm for the implementation of the ATSF
5. Be clear on what specific programmes require to be implemented at the continental level that would form the primary rationale for the buy-in of member states e.g. Knowledge and experience sharing, technical assistance, seminars, colloquiums, profiles using same data sources, key publications, among others. The ATSF should identify key priorities for collective implementation by member states. This should follow a similar example of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Tourism Committee.
6. The ATSF should be costed to understand its financial implications.
7. Member states should provide adequate financial resource for tourism development.

1. **LEGAL DIRECTION ON THE AFRICAN TOURISM ORGANISATION STATUTES**

The AUC Legal Counsel enlightened the delegates on the relevant steps required to establish a Specialised Agency within the AU structures irrespective of whether it has a financial implication to the AUC or not as it still affects the Member States. Key to her presentation was the requirement that any organ/agency would require a decision from the AUC Executive Council for its establishment. Subsequently, the legal officer noted that the decision to establish the ATO had not been passed by the Executive Council. She indicated the preparedness of the AUC legal office to support and advise the process to its logical conclusion and gave an indication of the possible steps. In this regard, the officer advised on first having in place a strong rationale and justification (business case including financial implications) for the ATO and getting the African Tourism Strategic Framework adopted as key strategic justification for the establishment of the ATO as the dedicated implementation agency.

In this regard and underlining the existence of a moratorium on the creation of new organisations by the different SCTs as mentioned in the Executive Council Decision in its 32th meeting, she recommends to follow a crucial steps in the aim to reach a decision by the Executive Council and the Summit on this matter as follow :

* prepare impacts studies on the financial, structural and legal aspects on the African Union and Member States;
* present the rationales and impact studies to the Executive Council;
* present the legal document pertaining to the ATO to the STC on Justice Affairs;
* raise the issue to the AU Summit

In responding to the Legal advice, delegates noted that the matter of ATO establishment is an AU Summit decision espoused in the AU Agenda 2063 First Ten Year Implementation (2013-2023) and further affirmed by the STC Ministerial declaration of Lomé, Togo in March 2017 and the First Ordinary Meeting of the STC in Nairobi, Kenya in October 2018 that specifically requested the AUC legal office to advise on the legal implications and procedural requirements for establishing the ATO. Subsequently, presentation of the proposal for Executive Council decision should have been undertaken by the AUC.

The delegates noted with concern that the tourism sector is not adequately represented at senior AUC levels to strongly articulate matters relating to the sector, a matter that they noted as requiring urgency to address.

1. **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE AFRICAN TOURISM ORGANISATION STATUTES**

The statutes of the proposed ATO was presented and discussed. The following way forward was agreed upon. That:

* The rationale/justification of ATO be strengthened taking into consideration clear roles and objectives, innovative and sustainable funding mechanisms which will be tabled at the STC in Cairo for approval and onward submission to the Executive Council.
* A Tourism Working Group be established with a political championship to push the tourism agenda in the AU.
* The business case for ATO and the ATSF be redefined, including how the strategic framework will support member states’ common priorities and what type of institutional mechanism is needed to implement the framework. This should include costing and funding mechanism for the strategic framework and ATO. The proposed tourism levy to fund ATO would not work, thus the business case should include a common source of funding to be applied universally to all member states.
* Align the Host Country selection process, exposed in the draft statute, with the applicable rules in the African Union.
* An advance meeting of the senior officials, followed by a tourism ministerial meeting be convened, if possible, two days before the main STC meeting in Cairo in April 2019.
* A summary of the revised documents (rationale/justification/business case) be availed to the Member States by 5th April 2019.
* The record of the workshop will be adopted during the advance meeting of the senior officials to be convened two days before the main STC meeting to be held in Cairo on 14-18 April 2019.
1. **ELEVATION OF TOURISM WITHIN THE STRUCTURES OF AFRICAN UNION**

The meeting acknowledged the recruitment of a Senior Policy advisor for tourism within the AU. However, noting the evident lack of prioritization of tourism within the AU structures, the delegates revisited the need to have a Senior level official within the AU structures at the level of a Division as articulated in the Lomé Declaration 2017 and the AU Plan of Action for Tourism 2017-2019. The meeting subsequently agreed that the matter be presented to the STC in Cairo to take a decision.

1. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS AND CLOSING REMARKS**
* Members noted the inhospitable treatment accorded to the delegates and meetings for the tourism sector in terms of support and facilitation. Delegates recommended that the concern be presented to the Directorate. The inadequate support provided by the AUC to the validation workshop affected the efficiency of the senior officials.
* On the second day of the workshop, delegates of the Islamic Faith had to request for a break to attend Friday Prayers because the programme did not cater for diversity of the delegates.
* The chairperson noted with appreciation of the active participation of members during the meeting despite the time constraint. He further thanked member States for the support accorded to Zimbabwe during her tenure as the Chair of the STC.
1. **WAY FORWARD AND ROADMAP**

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| **S/N** | **Item** | **Activities** | **Actors** | **Timelines / Deadlines** | **Remarks** |
|  | Finalization of Continental Tourism Strategic Framework | Submission of the rationale and justification (business case) for ATSF 2019-2028 and ATO to Member States | AUC, ECA | 5th April, 2019 |  |
|  | Final Preparatory meeting | Finalise all draft documents in preparation for the STC Ministers meeting in Cairo, Egypt | AUC, NEPAD, ECA, Technical working group | 14-18th April 2019 | Finalized draft documents |
|  | First AU African Tourism Ministers Meeting | Facilitate Senior Officials and Ministers’ Meetings before the STC meeting | AUC, NEPAD, ECA, Technical working group |  | Approval of the strategy and institutional framework documents by Tourism MinistersApproval of tourism working group |