

**AFRICAN UNION**

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STC-EST2 CONCEPT NOTE 1

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Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: +251 11 551 7700 Fax: +251 115 517844

Website: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int)

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**2<sup>nd</sup> SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL  
COMMITTEE MEETING ON  
EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (STC-EST)  
21 to 23 October 2017  
CAIRO, EGYPT**

**HRST/STC-EST/Exp/2 (II)**

**English**

**SPECIALISED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE  
ON EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**CONCEPT NOTE**

**Background**

The adoption of Decision EX. CL/Dec.420 (XIII) by the Executive Council during its thirteenth Ordinary Session held in Sharm El Sheik, Egypt in June 2008, called on reconfiguration of STCs taking into account related sectors, hence Education and STI were merged together under the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Education, Science and Technology..

Education, Science and Technology as drivers to Africa economic development provides a window of opportunity to re-order the scientific and human resource capacities towards the Africa we want. The use of STI as a tool for sustainable development of Africa is only effectual if specific capacities are met through Education. A recent ACBF study of the capacities needed to implement Agenda 2063 shows serious gaps in critical technical skills to implement STISA 2024. It further suggests that Africa may be short of 4.3 million engineers and 1.6 million agricultural scientists and researchers, partly because African higher education institutions are not producing enough professionals to meet market demands in science and engineering. At University level, only 30% of students graduate in STEM areas. This means that the STEM pipeline from early childhood primary and secondary education must be reinforced. At the same time, Africa is short of over 1 million teachers at primary and secondary levels, with greater gaps in STEM subjects, and for hard-to-staff geographic regions. The situation is even worse for Technical and Vocational Education and Training, which is seen as an engine for employability of Africa's large youthful population. Furthermore, when viewed in the context that school enrolment is only at 80%; access to secondary education at 50% and to TVET and University less than 10% each, one realises the uphill task, and therefore the need for comprehensive multi-sectoral approaches to meeting Africa's human capacity development needs. The STC-EST therefore offers the needed platform of policy dialogue on how to channel the complementarity of the two sectors in Africa development.

The first joint STC-EST that was held in Addis Ababa from 12-16 October 2015 provided updates and insights on the continental policy frameworks that were adopted, including STISA-2024 and the TVET Strategy. The Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25) and the continental strategy for Space that had been developed by the commission together with experts were also deliberated on. Two years down the lane, CESA and the African Space policy and strategy have been adopted by the AU Assembly. It is therefore an opportune moment to convene again to assess implementation progress, and to determine how to better reposition Education, Science and Technology as means for the prosperity of Africa.

Other matters that are due for consideration include the Agenda 2063 Flagship projects of the Africa Space Agency and the Pan African Virtual and E-University, the Statute of the newly revitalized AU Centre for the Education of Women and Girls (CIEFFA), the challenging status of the AU Education Observatory, other major projects that position Education, Science and Technology as the most important instruments for unlocking Africa's potential for achieving Agenda 2063, the Africa We Want.

### **Meeting Objectives**

The proposed ordinary session of the 2<sup>nd</sup> STC-EST will elect a new Ministerial Bureau to direct the affairs of the STC in the next two years, and specifically:

- i. Update the ministers on the status of on-going programmes, and on the performance of RECs and Member States in education, science and technology sectors
- ii. Discuss AU Summit Decisions relevant to the conduct of education, science and technology on the continent, and their implementation
- iii. Consider the statutes of the Africa Space Agency and of CIEFFA
- iv. Establish precedence for conducting of AU continental business in the fields of education, science and technology
- v. Take stock of the implementation of STISA-2024 priority areas with forward looking focus on the issues of biotechnology for food and nutrition security, and emerging technologies and skills development
- vi. Revitalisation of the Pan African Conference on Teacher Development as a key mechanism for implementing the CESA Teacher Development Cluster.
- vii. Review the process towards operationalization of the Committee of Ten Heads of State Champions for Education Science and Technology

### **Expected Outcomes:**

1. Endorsement of the statutes of the Africa Space Agency and of CIEFFA
2. Report on the second meeting of the STC on Education, Science and Technology, indicating agreement on key points of the agenda
3. Actions for decision during the next AU Summit of Heads of State and Government in January 2018

### **Participation**

The STC-EST is the statutory meeting that brings together all Member States Ministers responsible for Education, Science and Technology, and their relevant senior officials, and Regional Economic Communities. Key Development Partners are also invited as observers

### **Meeting Structure**

There will be sessions where Education and STI are discussed in plenary to enhance common understanding of both sectors by all participants; and there will also be parallel sessions to enable more in-depth discussions separately for Education and for STI. A session of the Pan African Conference on Teacher Development will be held; as will be a meeting of development partners.

**Date and Venue**

The second joint STC on Education, Science and Technology will be held at Fairmont Towers Heliopolis located near the Cairo International Airport in Egypt from 21 - 24 October, 2017.

**Logistics arrangement**

The logistic support will be provided by the Arab Republic of Egypt together with the AUC department of Human Resources, Science and Technology. Further information will be provided in letters of invitation.

For any enquiries, kindly contact Ms Kedija Seid and Ms Woudase Abebe at [KedijaS@africa-union.org](mailto:KedijaS@africa-union.org) and [woudaseA@africa-union.org](mailto:woudaseA@africa-union.org)