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**THE 3RD ORDINARY SESSION OF THE SPECIALISED
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (STC) ON MIGRATION,
REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS
(MR&IDPS –STC)
4 – 8 NOVEMBER 2019
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

***Theme: The Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons:
Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa.***

CONCEPT NOTE

1.0. INTRODUCTION

Juxtaposing the African narrative of the refugees and migrants against global and continental development strategic frameworks, the SDGs and Agenda 2063 respectively invokes a tapestry perspectives regarding the root causes and respective migration and refugee drivers. Research contends that individuals decide to leave their country 'irregularly', in distress, to escape extreme poverty, climate induced population mobility, conflicts, human rights violations and fragility outside established regulatory or legal frameworks, and they become exposed to a myriad of risks to their safety and wellbeing. This includes, inter alia, exploitation and extortion by illegal human smugglers and traffickers; detention in transit / at points of destination; destitution; reduced access to essential services, such as health care; and death in transit, whether on land or sea. Libya and Mediterranean perilous see crossing epitomizes these risks and defines the African contemporary context of Refugees and Migrants. Cogently, the obtaining and emerging political instability, fragile peace and security particularly in the Sahel region culminates to insurmountable conundrums and exacerbate the already worse conditions in contexts of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), irregular migrants in Africa.

While the aforesaid is true, wide consensus exists, that migration is an international phenomenon that connects people and places. In the contemporary globalized world, it is both a reality, on a large scale, *and* a contributor to the wellbeing of migrants and the societies to which they migrate, *if well planned and regulated*. Migrants can improve their economic situation and their lives, as well as the lives of those they leave behind, through remittance flows, particularly in poverty stricken migrant sending communities. Against evidence that 80% migration occurs intra-Africa bound and 20% accounts for other migratory routes, however, the desperation that characterises migration across the Mediterranean has reinforced the perception that African migration is a South to North movement, with African migrants taking extreme measures, often at the risk of life and limb, to harvest the promise of Europe.

Over a third of the world's forcibly displaced persons are in Africa, including 6.3 million refugees and asylum seekers and 14, 5 million IDPs, thus Africa has no option but to double its efforts to address these phenomena. Accordingly, the adoption of Global Compacts on Refugees and Migration respectively, underscores the recent global shift to put the refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs and migration topics at centre stage in policy discourse in Africa and beyond. Furthermore, to advance the aspirations of Agenda 2063, the AU Assembly adopted the Common Africa Position on Humanitarian Effectiveness, which articulates Africa's new humanitarian architecture with a view to address the root causes and achieving durable solutions. It is by no accident that the AU annual theme is: "*The Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa.*" Given the refugees and migration discourse dominates global policy discussions, the

current AU theme could not be more fitting. It is therefore expected that the Migration, Refugees, and Internally Displaced persons) – the fourth Specialized Technical Committee (MR&IDPs) will address inter alia, persisting myriad misconceptions, myths and fears around migration and refugees. The MR& IDPs – STC) has a unique opportunity to underscore and propagate the African Refugees, IDPs and Migration perspective and demonstrates the continent's ardent desire to take control of managing these phenomena in a manner as to maximise its benefits for the citizens of the continent, while also addressing the negatives that continue to jeopardise an opportunity to harvest and harness the socio-economic dividends of migration and development nexus.

2.0. BACKGROUND TO THE AU STC ON MIGRATION, REFUGEES AND IDPs

The African Union's Specialized Technical Committees are statutory policy organs of the Union in accordance with Article 5 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union. Functions of Specialized Technical Committees are elaborated in Article 15 of the Constitutive Act and are among others, the preparation of projects and programmes of the Union and its submission to the Executive Council; to ensure the supervision, follow-up and evaluation of the implementation of decisions taken by the organs of the Union. Respectively, the meeting of the ordinary Session of STC on Migration, Refugees and Internally Displaced persons to be convened from 4 – 8 November 2019 in Addis Ababa, will focus on an important legal instrument that will contribute to the Migration governance within and outside the continent, progress report on the implementation of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in Africa and the African Passport and also the establishment of the African Humanitarian Agency which will help to coordinate and manage humanitarian situations on the continent as well as on the realization of the Aspirations of the Agenda 2063 of the African Union and its first 10 years implementation plan.

The Ordinary AU Assembly Decision, Assembly/AU/Dec.227 (XII), adopted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, February 2009, considered reconfiguration of Specialized Technical Committees (STCs) and further decided that each STC should meet at the level of Ministers and Experts once every two (2) years, with the possibility of organizing an Extraordinary Session if required. Consistent with the Decision above, the AU Assembly determined that there shall be STC on Migration, Refugees, and Internally Displaced Persons (MR&IDPs – STC). Congruently, the African Union Commission organized the first meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Migration, Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in November 2015 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia during which the STC was operationalized. The Common African Position (CAP) on Humanitarian effectiveness was considered and adopted as well.

The second meeting of the STC on Migration, Refugees and IDP was convened from 16th October to 24th October 2017 in Kigali, Rwanda and adopted the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment and its implementation roadmap, the Migration Policy Framework for Africa (MPFA), as well as other relevant policies. In 2018, AUC organized an Extraordinary Session of the MR&IDPs-STC in Equatorial Guinea, Malabo, to consider the remaining subjects on the agenda including, The draft Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Right on the Specific Aspects of the Right to Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa and monitor the implementation of previous important decisions for the implementation of the Agenda 2063 and its ten years plan of action.

The fourth Session of the STC on Migration, Refugees and IDPs is scheduled to be held on 4th-8th of November, 2019 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The meeting will be preceded by Senior Officials meeting and later on with the Ministerial session on the last two days. It is anticipated that there will be a number of side events in the meeting as well that will be related to the theme of the STC and agenda of the meeting as well.

3.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE MEETING

The main objective of the meeting is to consider and recommend to the Executive Council several key policy and operational documents in the field of Migration, Refugees and IDPs.

Specifically, the meeting will seek to achieve the following:

- I. Consider and validate the report on the implementation of the Theme of year “ The Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa ”
- II. Consider and Validate the Report on the implementation of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and the Roadmap for its implementation.
- III. Consider and decide on the Draft Structure and budget for the establishment of :
 - a) The African Centre for the study and Research on Migration, in Mali;
 - b) The African Migration Observatory ,in Morocco
 - c) The Continental Operational Centre for Information sharing, in Khartoum
 - d) The African Humanitarian Agency
- IV. Consider and adopt the following:
 - a) On the Implementation of the Global Compact on Migration in Africa:
 - i. Report of the Senior Officials meeting Draft Plan of action for the implementation of Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Position.
 - ii. Draft Plan of Action on the implementation of Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Position in Africa.

b) On the Pan African Forum on Migration (PAFOM):

- i. Reports of the 5th Pan African Forum on Migration (PAFOM) that was held in Cairo, Egypt on 14-16th September, 2019.
- ii. Draft Terms of Reference of the Pan African Forum on Migration (PAFOM)

4.0 EXPECTED OUTCOME

The Expected outcome of this meeting will include the following:

- I. Validated the report with inputs on the implementation of the Theme of year.
- II. Validated Report with inputs of the implementation of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and the Roadmap for its implementation.
- III. A decision on the Draft Structure and budget for the establishment of :
 - a. The African Centre for the study and Research on Migration, in Mali;
 - b. The African Migration Observatory in Morocco.
 - c. The Continental Operational Centre for Information sharing, in Khartoum
 - d. The African Humanitarian Agency
- IV. Adoption of the following:
 - a. On the Implementation of the Global Compact on Migration in Africa:
 - i. Report of the Senior Officials meeting Draft Plan of action for the implementation of Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Position.
 - ii. Draft Plan of Action on the implementation of Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Position in Africa.
 - b. On the Pan African Forum on Migration (PAFOM):
 - i. Reports of the 5th Pan African Forum on Migration (PAFOM) that was held in Cairo, Egypt on 14-16th September, 2019.
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5.0 MEETING MODALITIES

This Forum will be conducted and guided by the AU Rules and procedures.

Simultaneous interpretation and translation services of the proceedings into the 4 official languages of the African Union (Arabic, English, French, and Portuguese) will be arranged.

6.0. DATE AND VENUE

The following will be dates for the Meeting:

- Ministerial meeting: 7 – 8 November 2019,
- Member State Experts: 4 – 6 November 2019.

The meeting will be held in **Addis Ababa at the African Union Commission**

7.0. PARTICIPATION

The STC meeting will be attended by Member State Ministers and Experts in-Charge of Migration, Labour, Free Movement, Refugees and Forced Displacement Matters.

8.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

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