

**Press Release N°18/23<sup>rd</sup> AU SUMMIT****The 23<sup>rd</sup> Ordinary Session of the African Union ends in Malabo**

**Malabo, Equatorial Guinea 30 June 2014** - The 23<sup>rd</sup> Ordinary Session of the Summit of the African Union concluded in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea on 27 June 2014. The summit's Assembly, comprising Heads of State and Government of the African Union, was held from 26-27 June 2014. In their Assembly organised under the theme: "2014 Year of Agriculture and Food Security", the Heads of State and Government adopted a number of key decisions with a view to enhancing the socio-economic and political development of the continent, notably in the areas of education, health, agriculture, trade, women and youth development.

The Assembly adopted the AU Budget for 2015 which amounts to a total of US\$ 522,121,602.00, including US\$142,687,881.00 for operational costs and US\$379,433,721.00 for programmes.

The Assembly received an update report on the development of Agenda 2063: the fifty year vision for Africa. The popular version of Agenda 2063; the Africa we Want was tabled, and the Assembly instructed the Commission and the NEPAD Agency, together with the UNECA, the African Development Bank to popularise it widely and solicit further inputs from the African citizenry. Member states who have not yet made their submissions on Agenda 2063, further undertook to have national consultations and submit inputs on behalf of their countries as soon as possible. The Assembly further mandated the AU Commission to explore Agenda 2063 flagship programmes, such as the Continental Free Trade Area, free movement of people, the continental integrated high speed rail network, and to report to the Summit in January 2015. The Summit in January 2015 will also adopt Agenda 2063 and its first ten year plan.

The Assembly adopted **the Protocol and the Statute for the Establishment of the African Monetary Fund**. It further called on Member states to sign and ratify that Protocol as expeditiously as possible, for its early entry into force.

Regarding the **Post-2015 Development Agenda**, the Assembly considered the **report of the High Level Committee (HLC) on the Post 2015** development agenda and requested Member States to mobilize together, to ensure that the agreed Common African Position (CAP), which is to eradicate poverty in all its forms, is the key message for all African representatives in the intergovernmental negotiation process on that crucial subject for Africa. In this regard, the Assembly mandated the HLC to coordinate Member States with the support of the secretariat and in collaboration with partners and other relevant African stakeholders, as Africa engages in the negotiation process with the rest of the world on CAP. The CAP will serve as the basis for Africa's input at the global level into the on-going post-2015 sustainable development intergovernmental deliberations, including the work of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing and the final phase of intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda. The assembly further requested Member States to enhance their statistical capacity to enable them to effectively monitor progress in the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and urged them to speedily ratify the African Charter on Statistics.

The Assembly called for the enhancement of **the Pan-African Productivity Association**, to provide it with the capacity enabling it to act as a regional think-tank, catalyzer, research and knowledge developer and policy adviser on productivity at the continental level. Additionally, it called for the establishment and enhancement of productivity organizations at national and

regional levels, which would eventually become members of the Pan-African Productivity Association.

**The Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa -2024 (STISA-2024)** was adopted as the continental framework for accelerating Africa's transition to an innovation-led, knowledge-based economy within the overall framework of the AU Agenda 2063.

Similarly, **the Statute of the African Observatory on Science Technology and Innovation (AOSTI)** was considered, with the Heads of State and Government calling upon Member States and development partners to avail the necessary technical and financial support for sustaining the AOSTI. Further, the Assembly, while recognizing ARIPO and OAPI as building blocks of the Pan African Intellectual Organization (PAIPO), welcomed and endorsed the offer of Tunisia to host the Headquarters and Secretariat of the PAIPO.

A proposal by Republic of Congo to organize in Brazzaville every two years, an **International Salon on Invention and Innovation** under the auspices of the African Union; and to host a high level Ethics and Bioethics Forum in Brazzaville was welcomed and endorsed by the Assembly.

The Assembly underscored the importance of **Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)** to Africa's development, particularly for youth empowerment, employment and entrepreneurship and adopted the ten-year AU Continental TVET Strategy.

The Summit in Malabo decided that **the APRM** shall be an autonomous entity within the AU system. In this regard, the African Union Commission and the APRM Secretariat were requested to consult on the practical modalities for the integration of the APRM into the African Union system.

**The following legal instruments were adopted in Malabo:** Protocol on the Establishment of the African Monetary Fund; African Convention on Cross border Cooperation (Niamey Convention); African Union Convention on Cyberspace Security and Protection of Personal Data; African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralization, Local Governance and Local Development; Protocol on Amendments to the Protocol on the Statute of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights; Protocol to the Constitutive Act of the African Union on the Pan-African Parliament. Furthermore, Member States were called upon to speedily sign and ratify the above legal instruments as well as all the other legal instruments they have not yet ratified.

The Assembly, while considering the Report of the High Level Committee on African Trade (HATC), directed the AU Commission to prepare Draft Terms of Reference of the **Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) Negotiating Forum** based on best practices in the regional economic communities (RECs)/Tripartite, refined draft Guiding Objectives and Principles as well as Institutional Arrangements to be submitted to the next AU Trade Ministerial Conference for consideration, along with other negotiation-related issues, and subsequent endorsement by the Assembly in January 2015 so as to facilitate the effective launching of the CFTA negotiations in June/July 2015. In this regard, the Assembly called upon Member States to maintain the momentum to fast track the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) as scheduled by providing the necessary financial and technical resources at national, regional and continental levels.

On the UN Reforms, the Assembly considered the Report of the Committee of Ten on that issue, and endorsed its recommendations, notably heeding the call for Africa to speak with one voice on this crucial matter, for it to be adequately represented in the UN system, and for the intensification of efforts towards building alliances with diverse interest groups engaged in intergovernmental negotiations, with a view to gathering support of the African Common Position.

On climate change, the Assembly considered the Report of the Committee of African heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSSC) and endorsed the Framework Work programme on Climate Change Action in Africa as a continental framework that will guide the African Union, its Member States and the RECs in addressing climate change in the near future. It further reaffirmed that adaptation is a priority in all actions on Climate Change in Africa. In this regard, the Assembly urged all Member States to urgently complete the development of their

National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and put in place systems and structures for Africa to take full advantage of the global mechanisms in support of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures. The Assembly moreover took note of the global events on climate change to be convened by the UN Secretary General in the months ahead, notably in New York on 23 September 2014 and in Lima, Peru in December 2014.

The decision was made that the **Thirty-First Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Union will be held in Dakar in June/July 2018** following an offer by the Republic of Senegal to host it.

**The Conference of Ministers in charge of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and the Conference of Ministers of Communication**, with the participation of national and international regulatory entities for the broadcasting sector, were directed to take up the issue of migration from analogue radio/television broadcasting to digital transmission, and to work in concert to protect the interest of the public broadcasting services of the AU Member States. The Commission, in collaboration with the African Union of Broadcasting and the African Telecommunication Union (ATU) was requested to expeditiously establish an African Technical Committee for the Information and Media Society, to accompany Member States in their transition to full digital broadcasting, while at the same time stimulating economic recovery in Africa.

The offer by **Togo to host a Regional Conference on Maritime Piracy and other Criminal Acts Committed at Sea** was welcomed and as such, Member States and their appropriate Administrations, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms, African and International Institutions specializing in maritime and related activities, as well as development partners, were encouraged to participate actively in the Conference when it is convened.

The **mandate of the African Union Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan (AUCISS)** was extended for an additional three (3) months in order to enable it complete its work.

**Regarding the Report of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) and the State of Peace and Security on the continent**, the Assembly called for renewed efforts by the AU Member States and the Commission, as well as by the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (RECs/RMs) towards achieving the objective of **a conflict-free Africa by 2020**, as provided for by the Solemn Declaration adopted at its 21<sup>st</sup> Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa, on 25 May 2013.

At the same time, the Assembly welcomed the continued progress in post-conflict reconstruction and development and peace building processes in the Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. It expressed satisfaction at the continued positive evolution of the situation in Madagascar. The Assembly welcomed the completion of the transition and restoration of constitutional order in Guinea-Bissau following the presidential and legislative elections held on 13 April and 18 May 2014, and the resumption of the participation of Guinea-Bissau in AU's activities, following the decision taken by the PSC at its 442<sup>nd</sup> meeting held on 17 June 2014.

It further welcomed the restoration of constitutional order in Egypt following the constitutional referendum and the presidential election held in January and May 2014, respectively and noted, with satisfaction, the resumption by Egypt of its participation in AU's activities. The positive developments that have taken place in Somalia were welcomed by the Assembly.

Concerns were raised at the prevailing situation in Libya and its impact on the conduct of the ongoing transition and the cohesion of the country, as well as on regional security and stability.

**The cowardly kidnapping by Boko Haram of over two hundred young girls in northern Nigeria** elicited outrage from the Heads of State and Government who also welcomed the ongoing AU efforts to address the scourge of terrorism, notably through the cooperative mechanisms being implemented by the African Centre on the Study and Research on Terrorism (ACSRT), the Nouakchott Process, the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA. It hailed the AMISOM achievements in Somalia. For each of these issues, the Assembly recognised efforts being exerted to resolve them and made further recommendations towards consolidation of gains.

Heads of State and Government at the Malabo Summit also adopted some declarations related to accelerated agricultural growth and transformation for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods; ending preventable child and maternal deaths in Africa; support of small island developing states ahead of the third international conference on small island developing states; and nutrition security for inclusive economic growth and sustainable development in Africa. The Assembly also adopted a Resolution calling for the lifting of embargo of the USA against the Republic of Cuba.

Finally, the Assembly agreed to hold its 24<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 30-31 January 2014 under the theme: “Year of Women’s Empowerment and Development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063”.

(All the decisions of the 23<sup>rd</sup> AU Assembly will be posted shortly on the AU website: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int) ).

**WZM/EAT/HMC**

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