



**FIFTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE SPECIALISED
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT,
LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (STC-SDLE-5)
29 July- 02 AUGUST 2024
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

STC-SDLE-5/MIN/RPT

***Theme: "SOCIAL AGENDA 2063: PROMOTING SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY
ECOSYSTEMS"***

**REPORT OF THE MINISTERS' MEETING
01-02 AUGUST 2024**

REPORT OF THE MINISTERS' MEETING

INTRODUCTION

1. The Ministers' Meeting of the Fifth African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour, and Employment (STC-SDLE-5) was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 01 – 02 August 2024. The meeting was held under the theme: ***“Social Agenda 2063: Promoting Social and Solidarity Economy Ecosystems”***.

ATTENDANCE

2. The Ministerial Meeting was attended by delegates from the following AU Member States: Algeria, Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Sahrawi Republic, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
3. The following AU Organs, Regional Economic Communities, Inter-Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations and cooperating partners were represented: ACERWC, ARLAC, East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), CENSAD, IGAD, SADC, African Regional Organisation of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITU-Africa), Business Africa Employers' Federation, Organisation of African Trade Union Unity,(OATUU), Pan African Productivity Association (PAPA), Ethiopian National Association of the Blind (ENAB), International Labour Organisation (ILO), GIZ, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Catalyst 2030, World Vision, National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC), Ethiopian Diaspora Association, Plan International, UNESCO, UNDP, World Economic Forum, Africa Disabilities Forum, ICRC.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING CEREMONY

4. In her welcoming statement, H.E. Amb. Minata Samate Cessouma Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs, and Social Development, African Union Commission, welcomed everyone to the African Union Commission and to the Ministers' Meeting of the STC SDLE-5. The Commissioner expressed gratitude to the Honorable Ministers and Deputy Ministers for taking time to be a part of the meeting to consider the policy frameworks on social issues affecting vulnerable groups and labour and employment which the experts had been reviewing, making inputs to for the Ministers Meeting esteemed consideration and adoption. She highlighted the critical role and uniqueness of the tripartite nature of the STC-Social Development Labour and Employment and how it provides an opportunity for the three sectors to critically engage and provide policy guidance to advance the work of the Commission. Her Excellency also acknowledged the commitment of the experts in making sure that all presented documents had been approached from a human rights perspective aimed at enhancing the lives and welfare of our children, girls, workers, persons with disabilities and

older persons by scaling up social protection schemes including decent livelihoods also for migrant workers.

5. ILO Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Africa, Ms. Fanfan Rwanyindo Kayirangwa, in her opening remarks highlighted the recent global recognition of SSE and its alignment with Agenda 2063. She also noted that SSE has given rise to policy initiatives, with which the ILO is honored to be associated, addressing decent work on the Continent. Ms. Kayirangwa emphasized the importance of the Global Coalition for Social Justice and urged engagement in upcoming global events like the G20 and the Summit of the Future. On behalf of the ILO, she appreciated the longstanding partnership with the AU, highlighting key outcomes of the AUC-ILO collaboration including the Youth Employment Strategy for Africa (YES-Africa), the Fair and Ethical Recruitment Strategy, and work on minimum wage dynamics.
6. On behalf of the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU), Mr. Areski Mezhoud in his opening remarks emphasized the importance of upholding Pan-Africanism as Africa strives for socio-economic development and prosperity. Mr. Mezhoud underscored that efforts should align with moral and environmental values, ensuring freedom and equality for all. He further emphasized the key role of social dialogue, which strengthens democracy and fosters trust between governments and social partners, whose independence must be protected. He highlighted that OATUU plays a vital role in protecting the needs of workers, aligned with the ideals of the African Union. Mr. Mezhoud recommended that social partners should contribute to developmental objectives in line with Agenda 2063.
7. The Secretary General Business Africa Employers Federation, Ms. Jacqueline Mugo, in her opening remarks emphasized the importance of tripartism and social dialogue in addressing continental issues. Ms. Mugo highlighted the need for a conducive business environment to create jobs, formalize economies, and harness opportunities in SSEs as a vehicle for Africa businesses to access markets. She stressed the importance of strategic human capital development, focusing on skills relevant to the 4th and 5th Industrial Revolutions. Ms. Mugo called for a unified African approach in international negotiations and the protection of the continent's collective interests. She further urged for the implementation of adopted strategies and frameworks, emphasizing the need for solid financing mechanisms.
8. In Chad's capacity as Chairperson representing the outgoing Chairperson of Bureau STC-SDLE4, under the designation of Chairperson of the STC-SDLE5, Mr. Abdoulaye Mbodou Mbami - Minister of Public Employment and Social Dialogue of the Republic of Chad welcomed the Honorable Ministers to the STC. He highlighted that Social Solidarity Economy (SSE) is a useful tool in contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Social Agenda 2063 particularly on promoting sound employment policies and decent work, provision of better social services, such as those related to education, skills training, health care, and environmental protection, including promotion of sustainable economic practices, gender equality and empowerment of women, access to affordable finance and local economic development. The Chairperson also commended the collaboration between the Commission, Member States and RECs which led to the development of some of the documents, guidelines, and strategies being considered for endorsement.

AGENDA ITEM 2: PROCEDURAL MATTERS
--

9. In conformity with the Rules of Procedure of the STC-SDLE, the representative of the Legal Counsel presented the nominations for the STC-SDLE5 Bureau as proposed by the Experts' Meeting as follows:

Chairperson	Government	Central Africa	Chad
1 st Vice Chairperson	Government	Southern Africa	Zambia
2 nd Vice Chairperson	Employers	North Africa	Libya
3 rd Vice Chairperson	Workers	West Africa	Liberia
Rapporteur	Government	East Africa	Uganda

10. The Ministers' endorsed the Bureau for the STC-SDLE5 as proposed by the Experts' Meeting.
11. The Ministers adopted the Agenda and Programme of Work.

AGENDA ITEM 3: MINISTERIAL PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE THEME OF THE STC-SDLE-5

12. The panel moderator, H.E. Amb. Minata Samate Cessouma Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs, and Social Development, introduced the panel in a discussion on ***“Social Agenda 2063: Promoting Social and Solidarity Economy Ecosystems”***
13. The panel was composed of the Minister of Labour of the Kingdom of Eswatini, Honourable **Phila Buthelezi**; Minister of Labour, Employment & Relation with Public Institutions of the Republic of Senegal, Honourable **Yankoba Dieme**; Minister of Public Service, Labour and Employment of the Republic of Burundi, Honourable **Venuste MUYABAGA**; General Secretary, Ministry of Economic Inclusion, Small Businesses, Employment and Skills of the Kingdom of Morocco, Honourable **Mme ASRI Wafa**; Deputy Minister of Labour, Youth, Employment and Persons with Disabilities, of the United Republic of Tanzania, Honourable **Patrobas Paschal Katambi**.
14. The Ministers Meeting of the STC-SDLE-5 made the following decisions:
- a. **COMMENDS** Governments for advancing the SSE agenda and empowering communities and local economy;
 - b. **RECOMMENDS** that Member States develop appropriate legislative frameworks needed to create an enabling environment for SSEs
 - c. **CALLS UPON** Member States to consider transformative education to promote skills development on SSE and also consider including in school curricula;
 - d. **FURTHER CALLS UPON** Member States to establish specific interventions to support communities, taking into account challenges such as climate change and migration of youth through risky routes in search of work opportunities;
 - e. **URGES** Member States to make social protection and social security a priority with integrated approaches that also covers people working in the informal economy;

- f. **REQUESTS** Member States to uphold the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining of SSE organizations;
- g. **EMPHASIZES** the need for Member States to develop a system for subsidies and loans with reduced or no interest rates for youth start-up businesses;
- h. **URGES** the inclusion of vulnerable groups in the workforce for skills training to enhance their contribution to economic growth;
- i. **ENCOURAGES** peer learning and sharing of best practices among Member States on SSEs;
- j. **CALLS UPON** Member States to develop monitoring and evaluation frameworks to monitor progress, challenges and gaps on scaling up SSE programs;
- k. **RECOGNIZES** the significance of SSE and **CALLS UPON** the AU to declare SSE as theme of the year in the near future;
- l. **REQUESTS** the AUC to collaborate with Member States on the development of an SSE financing strategy;
- m. **REQUESTS** the International Labour Organization to support Member States on mapping SSEs as well as knowledge and experience sharing;
- n. **CALLS UPON** the Regional Economic Communities to promote advocacy and data collection on SSEs and to popularize the SSE Strategy among their Member States

AGENDA ITEM 4: CONSIDERATION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING OF EXPERTS OF THE STC-SDLE-5

- 15. The Report of the Experts' meeting of the STC- SDLE-5 was presented by the Rapporteur of the STC SDLE-5.
- 16. The Ministers commended the experts for a well drafted Report with key recommendations from the two Parallel Sessions.

SECTORAL SESSIONS OUTCOMES- SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

ON ENDING HARMFUL PRACTICES AND ON CHILDREN

- 17. **TAKES NOTE** of the report.
- 18. **ENDORSES** the Roadmap of the 2nd International Conference on Female Genital Mutilation (ICFGM2) held in Dar-es-Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, from 9-11 October 2023
 - a. **FURTHER ENDORSES** the declaration of an **Africa Day on Ending Female Genital Mutilation and Child Marriage** with a date to be determined by the AUC.
 - b. **CALLS for the Inclusion** of ILO Convention 190 in the roadmap for the implementation of the ICFGM2 declaration.
 - c. **EMPHASIZES** the need for cultural and mindset changes, especially in countries with a high prevalence of FGM.
 - d. **URGES** for country-level implementation and accountability, in addition to expanding awareness-raising efforts at a wider level, including promoting free education to tackle harmful practices.

- e. **ADVOCATES** for the Improvement of preventive measures, focusing on changing mind-sets and targeting influential societal figures such as traditional, religious, and community leaders.
- f. **REQUESTS** for the establishment of Legal frameworks and education to protect girls while investing in education to improve human capital.
- g. **FURTHER CALLS** for the enhancement of data collection and information sharing to make informed decisions, tailor interventions effectively and measure progress accurately on ending FGM.
- h. **FURTHER ADVOCATES** for the provision of strategic technical support to Member States experiencing conflicts through specialized interventions aimed at mitigating gender-based violence, with a particular focus on harmful practices such as FGM and Child Marriage

ON THE AU HARMFUL PRACTICES ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

19. TAKES NOTE of the report.

- a) **ADVOCATES** for the enhancement of Technology Utilization to digitize and improve the efficiency of reporting processes for harmful practices.
- b) **CALLS** for the “Elimination of Harmful Practices” to be designated as the theme of the Year of the African Union by 2030, following AU procedures.
- c) **DIRECTS** the AUC for continuous inter and intra-agency collaborative efforts to facilitate joint meetings and briefings among various AU organs and Member States, and the strengthening of Regional Partnerships

On the AU Campaign to End Child Marriage and the AU Saleema Initiative on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation

- a) **ENDORSES** the Extension of the Strategy of the AU Campaign to End Child Marriage and the AU Saleema Initiative on the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation from 2024 to 2030 and calls for a biennial evaluation of the strategies

ON SOCIAL POLICY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

20. TAKES NOTE of the report.

- a) **CALLS UPON** the AUC to expedite the Appointment of the Special Envoy on Albinism to advocate for the rights and protection of People with Albinism.
- b) **URGES** Member States to fast track the processes of ratification of the following instruments the Protocol on the Rights of Older Persons, Persons with Disabilities, and the Protocol on Social Protection and Social Security to ensure that they enter into force.
- c) **DIRECTS** the AUC to facilitate the engagement of Stakeholders and individuals impacted by issues concerning persons with disabilities, older persons, persons with albinism, and the AU Social Agenda 2063, as well as the Plan of Action on the Family in Africa by raising awareness regarding relevant laws and policies,

ON THE AU CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

21. **TAKES NOTE** of the report and **RECALLS Decision Ex.CL/Dec.1201(XLII)**, whereby the **Executive Council** requested the **African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child** develop a **Child Safeguarding Policy**.
22. **ENDORSES** the **Child Safeguarding Policy and Requests** its onward transmission to the AU Executive Council for further approval.

SECTORAL SESSIONS OUTCOMES- LABOUR & EMPLOYMENT

On the African Union Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) Strategy and Implementation Plan (2023-2032)

23. Takes note of the Report

- a) **CALLS** on the AUC and Member States to facilitate the development of a coordination and monitoring mechanism on SSEs
- b) **FURTHER CALLS** on the AUC and Member States to lead the establishment of an observatory to track progress of SSE Initiatives at national level; when the moratorium of the establishment of new structures is lifted
- c) **CALLS** for the AUC/ILO to support to Member States in developing a sustainable financing mechanism including domestic and external sources,
- d) **FURTHER CALLS** for the provision of technical assistance to Member States on the SSE Strategy
- e) **CALLS** on the AUC and Member States in collaboration with ILO to mobilize resources for the implementation of the strategy.
- f) **ENDORSES** the Draft African Union Social and Solidarity Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan (2023-2032).

On AU/ILO Youth Employment Strategy for Africa (YES-Africa)

24. Takes note of the Report

- a) **CALLS** on the AUC and Member States to implement a tripartite approach to achieve the objectives of YES-Africa;
- b) **FURTHER CALLS** on the African Union to support Member States to establish/strengthen integrated labour market information systems for skills anticipation, matching and forecasting future skills needs including harmonization of skills qualification frameworks.
- c) **REQUESTS** Member States to strengthen public private partnership for job creation, decent jobs and upskilling of the youth to meet labour market demands.
- d) **FURTHER REQUESTS** the AUC and Member States in collaboration with ILO to mobilize resources for the implementation of the strategy.
- e) **ENDORSES** the Draft AU/ILO Youth Employment Strategy for Africa (YES-Africa)

On Fair and Ethical Recruitment (FER) Strategy for Africa

25. Takes note of the report

- a) **REQUESTS** the AUC and Member States to incorporate the experiences of the diaspora in refining recruitment strategies and establishing protection mechanisms for migrants.
- b) **FURTHER REQUESTS** Member States to pay attention to addressing specific vulnerabilities of migrant domestic workers
- c) **CALLS** on Member States to leverage existing mechanisms for portability of social security benefits for migrant workers.
- d) **FURTHER CALLS** for the implementation of the Strategy to consider specificities in national legislations which may contradict some provisions in the Strategy.
- e) **CALLS** for the African Union to ensure that FER Strategy aligns with the African Continental Free Trade Area and the AU Protocol on Free Movement
- f) **ENDORSES** the Fair and Ethical Recruitment Strategy for Africa

African Labour and Employment Council (ALEC)

26. Takes note of the report

- a) **ENDORSES** in principle the expanded mandate of LMAC into a tripartite plus (social partners, civil societies and diaspora organizations) format African Labour and Employment Council (ALEC) and develop terms of reference for ALEC.

Establishment of the Africa-GCC, Lebanon and Jordan Dialogue on Labour Migration (Doha Dialogue)

27. Takes note of the report

- a) **CALLS** for the dialogue to incorporate other thematic areas like skills development and mutual recognition of skills and qualifications, portability of social security.
- b) **FURTHER CALLS** for tripartism to be clearly reflected in the dialogue and to consider establishing similar dialogue with other regions such as Europe
- c) **RECOMMENDS** that the Doha dialogue considers ways to synergise with similar initiatives like the Abu Dhabi Dialogue
- d) **ENDORSE** the establishment of the Africa-GCC, Lebanon and Jordan Dialogue on Labour Migration (Doha Dialogue)
- e) **REAFFIRMS** the principle of rotation highlighting that the chairpersonship of the Doha Dialogue will rotate between Africa and the Gulf

BRIEFINGS ON LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT

Progress Report on Labour Migration

28. Ministers noted Progress Report on the implementation of the AU-ILO-IOM-ECA Joint Programme on Labour Migration Management for Development and Integration (JLMP).

- a) **CALLS** upon the African Union to extend the JLMP to other Member States building on lessons learned.
- b) **FURTHER CALLS** on Member States to complement donor funding by allocating resources to the programme for sustainability.

Regional Guidelines for Orientation Programmes for Labour Migration Between the East and Horn of Africa and the Gulf Countries.

29. Ministers noted the Regional Guidelines for Orientation Programmes for Labour Migration Between the East and Horn of Africa and the Gulf Countries

- a) **CALLS** on Member States to facilitate institutional arrangements to enhance the use of such instruments.

AGENDA ITEM 5: COMPLIANCE OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURES OF THE STC SDLE

30. Ministers reaffirmed the importance of Compliance to the Rules of Procedures of the STC SDLE:

- i. **URGES** all Member States to ensure effective tripartite representation (governments, workers and employers) in future STC SDLE sessions, in line with rules of procedure and international labour standards.
- ii. **REQUESTS** the African Union Commission to establish a dedicated team within the Secretariat for verifications of Member States delegation prior to the meeting and present a credentials report in future sessions.
- iii. **ACKNOWLEDGES** the request of the social partners to be consulted in the constitution of the Bureau.
- iv. **ENDORSES** the recommendation for better streamlining of national, regional and continental consultative mechanisms, for effective monitoring and implementation of commitments related to the continent.

AGENDA ITEM 6: DATE AND VENUE OF THE 6TH MEETING OF THE SPECIALISED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT

31. The Ordinary Session of the 6TH Meeting of the Specialised Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment will be held in 2026

32. The Ministers endorsed the offer from Namibia to host the STC-SDLE-6 on a date to be discussed and agreed upon between the Commission and the proposed host country.

AGENDA ITEM 7: BRIEFING BY GENEVA AFRICA GROUP

33. **Takes Note of the Briefing**

34. **RECOMMENDS** Member States to efficiently identify and harmonize their positions prior to global meetings

35. **FURTHER RECOMMENDS** that these positions be subject of more sustained coordination with delegates from AU Member States at the ILO level in Geneva

AGENDA ITEM 8: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

36. There were no issues discussed under this segment

AGENDA ITEM 9: ADOPTION OF MINISTERS' REPORT OF THE STC-SDLE-5

37. The Ministerial Report on Social Development, Labour and Employment endorsed the draft report of the STC-SDLE 5.

AGENDA ITEM 10: CLOSING SESSION

38. In her closing remarks, H.E Amb. Minata Samate Cessouma expressed her gratitude to the Ministers and delegates for their participation and valuable contributions throughout the Ministerial Meeting of the STC SDLE-5. She underlined the need for Member States to optimize Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) as a means to address unemployment and foster inclusive growth in Africa. She emphasized the need to leverage the African Continental Free Trade Area, harmonizing policies, and empowering vulnerable groups. She further urged Member States to ratify the African Union Free Movement Protocol and to implement necessary changes for improvement of the lives of African citizens.
39. ILO Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Africa, Mrs. Fanfan Rwanyindo Kayirangwa expressed gratitude to the African Union and the Ministers for the endorsement of three key strategies: the Social and Solidarity Economy 10-year Strategy, the AU/ILO Youth Employment Strategy for Africa, and the Fair & Ethical Recruitment Strategy for Africa. She emphasized the importance of tripartism and social dialogue, immediate implementation of the strategies, raising awareness, capacity building, and forming strategic partnerships. On behalf of the ILO, she committed to providing technical assistance and advocacy to support these efforts for decent jobs and sustainable development in Africa.
40. In his closing remarks, Secretary-General of the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU), Mr. Arezki Mezhoud appreciated the tripartite format of the STC SDLE and encouraged Member States to ensure the involvement of social partners at all levels of governance. He highlighted the need for the implementation of the outcome document. He commended the participants for their active participation and the secretariat for efficiently organizing the meeting.
41. In their closing remarks, Business Africa Employers Federation, Head of Advocacy, Communications and Partnerships, Mr. Stephen Obiro commended the AUC and Member States and underlined that employers are committed to developing the Social Solidarity Economy (SSE), recognizing its potential for Africa. He expressed hopes for executive council approval of the outcomes and report of the meeting. He urged participants to work together to translate strategies for SSE, youth, and other areas into action, with resources mobilized and capacity built for effective implementation. He further recommended the development of robust

monitoring framework to track progress. Finally, he reaffirmed the support of employers, with Business Africa ready to mobilize efforts across the continent.

42. In his closing remarks, Honourable Abdoulaye Mbodou Mbami, Minister of Public Service and Social Dialogue of the Republic of Chad in his capacity as the Chairperson of the STC-SDLE5, thanked Ministers and social partners for their active participation and commitment to socio-economic transformation. He noted that important policy and strategy documents advancing the AU's Social Agenda 2063 have been reviewed and approved for the Executive Council's consideration. He implored Member States to ensure that they implement these policies and ensure the involvement of social partners in the process, backed by a strong monitoring and evaluation framework. He declared the meeting officially closed and wished delegates safe returns.