

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: 251-115-517 700 Ext. 251

COMAI/Decl. (VI)

**Sixth Conference of African Ministers
In Charge of Integration (COMAI VI)
Intercontinental Hotel
18-19 April 2013
Balaclava Fort
Mauritius**

DECLARATION

We, African Ministers in Charge of Integration, meeting in our Sixth Ordinary Conference in Balaclava Fort, Mauritius, from 18 to 19 April 2013,

Recalling the commitments of the Heads of State and Government to the development and integration of our continent, as stipulated in the Constitutive Act of the African Union (2000), the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (AEC) of 1991, the Sirte Declaration of 9 September 1999 and the Accra Declaration of July 2007,

Considering Decisions Assembly/AU/Dec.112 (VII) and Assembly/AU/Dec.113 (VII) of the Seventh ordinary session of the Assembly of the Union on the moratorium on the recognition of RECs and the institutionalisation of our Conference respectively,

Taking into account the decision of the joint EAC-COMESA and SADC Heads of State Summit of June 2011 launching the negotiations for the Tripartite Free Trade Area (FTA) and the resolve to expeditiously establish a Free Trade Area integrating the three Communities,

Considering the Assembly of the Union Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.392 (XVIII) and Assembly/AU/Dec.456(XX), respectively on the formation of a Second Bloc of combined RECs and the institutionalisation of the Assembly of the Union on Development and Integration in June/July from the year 2014,

Following an in-depth exchange of views on the Status of Integration on our continent, the Status of Implementation of the COMAI V

Expressing our appreciation to the Mauritian Competent Authorities for their decision to exempt from visa citizens from almost all African countries,

Recognising the importance of empowering the Regional and Continental organizations,

Having taken note of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Meeting of Experts,

Having deliberated on the theme “**Governance of Integration**”, and

Expressing satisfaction at the frank and cordial nature of our deliberations,

Governance of Integration

Call upon the Member States to:

- i. Develop and promote a new form and spirit of Pan-Africanism to address global current challenges by incorporating practical measures to maximize the benefits of the continent and achieve emancipation of its development and consolidate its economic transformation;

- ii. work towards reinforcing mutual confidence and trust in order to deepen the integration process;
- iii. strengthen the cohesion and solidarity between themselves to enable them facing the external threats;
- iv. Work towards progressively pooling together their sovereignties by domesticating regional and continental decisions in line with the Constitutive Act and the Abuja Treaty;
- v. enhance their cooperation taking into account the globalization phenomenon in order to derive maximum benefits from the various partnerships;
- vi. empower the regional and Continental institutions in order to enable them play their role in coordinating and accelerating the integration process;
- vii. put in place national forums to discuss issues of integration with the various stakeholders, including, private sector, media, youth associations, and civil society;
- viii. transform the linguistic, ethnic and cultural diversities into a dynamic opportunity to accelerate the integration process;
- ix. develop common convergence policies in key sectoral integration areas;
- x. promote skilled labor mobility across the continent;
- xi. include , through the Conference of African Ministers of Education (COMEDAF), the teaching of African history, African languages and regional integration into educational curricular;
- xii. Mobilize domestic resources to support financing of regional and continental infrastructure projects that promote integration from various sources, including, the AUC alternative sources of funding and the African Infrastructure financing facility being planned by the African Development Bank;
- xiii. Accelerate the free movement of people through liberalizing their visa regime; and
- xiv. Adopt a new inclusive model of development and economic growth.

Request AUC to:

- i. put in place an interdepartmental mechanism in order to coordinate both regional and continental integration;
- ii. accelerate the issuance of the AU passport for African citizens, emulating the ECOWAS and EAC experiences; and
- iii. develop, in consultation with the RECs and Member States, a continental driving license and motor vehicle insurance scheme, to be recognized and accepted in all African countries;

Status of Integration

- i. **Request AUC to:**

- Organize, pending the full implementation of the pertinent decisions on the operationalization of the Special Technical Committees (STCs), an Extra-ordinary Joint Conference of African Ministers in charge of Integration and the Ministers of Economy and Finance in order to ensure better involvement in the decision making process and mobilization of the necessary funding to implement the various integration programmes;
 - Develop a harmonized framework to scientifically assess the implementation of the integration process, using integration indicators and Common Benchmarks of evaluation and assessment, based on the AU wide Development Plan,
- ii. **Also request** the AUC, in collaboration with RECs and other stakeholders, to develop a specific policies and programmes on sharing experiences and exchange of skilled labors between African countries.

Implementation of Recommendations from the Ordinary Sessions of the Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Integration (COMAI)

Request AUC to:

- i. invite representatives of civil society and private sector to future meetings of the COMAI;
- ii. organize an integration forum as a platform for public private dialogue on integration matters and help foster accelerated implementation and responsive policy making;
- iii. design a programme that promotes the interest of African youth to African integration and development issues; and
- iv. establish an integration observatory as a M+E tool and this should be within current AUC efforts to develop a M+E framework for the integration process.

Peculiar situation of Island and Landlocked countries

Request the AU Commission to undertake a study on the integration needs of island and landlocked countries with a view to developing a special assistance programme to accelerate their integration; and

Also Request AUC, in collaboration with the RECs, Member States and relevant partners, to convene a consultative meeting on “Blue Economy”.

Formation of the Second Bloc

Urge ECOWAS, ECCAS, CEN-SAD and UMA and their Member States to accelerate their consultations for a rapid formation of the Second Bloc in accordance with the Decision Assembly/AU Dec.392 (XVIII) of the Assembly of the Union.

Request the AUC to expedite the finalisation of the Concept Note on the formation of the Second bloc and forward it to the concerned RECs.

Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA)

Underscore the importance of mainstreaming the implementation of the CFTA and the Action Plan for boosting Intra-African trade at the national and regional levels through various measures and actions taking into account the need for dedicated technical and financial resources from Member States, RECs and development partners.

First Assembly of the Union on Development and Integration

Request AUC:

- i. to address, in close consultation with the RECs, the development and integration concerns affecting island states in the sub-theme on LDC and LLDC development and graduation; and
- ii. to work in close collaboration with RECs, in the preparation of the Summit on Development and Integration and ensure synergy in its preparations with the AU Strategic Plan.

Hosting of the next Conference

Accept with gratitude the offer from the Competent Authorities of Uganda to host the Seventh Conference of African Ministers in charge of Integration (COMAI VII).

Vote of Thanks

Expressed to the Mauritian Authorities our deep gratitude and appreciation for the warm welcome granted to various delegations and for the facilities put at their disposal, which contributed highly to the fruitful conclusions of the deliberations.

Finally, **invite** each Member State and all stakeholders to effectively implement the recommendations of our Conference.

Done in BalACLava Fort, Mauritius, on 19 April 2013.