



Notice and Information for CSOs on the January 2013 Summit

The Citizens and Diaspora Organization Directorate of the African Union Commission (CIDO) has the honor to inform African Civil Society and Diaspora Community that the January 2013 Summit of the African Union will be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 21st to 28 January 2013. The theme of the Summit will be “***Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance***”

The schedule of meetings is as follows:

- a) Permanent Representative Committee of Ambassadors (PRC): 21-22 January 2013
- b) 22nd Ordinary Session of the Executive Council: 24-25 January 2013.
- c) 20th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Governments: 27-28 January 2013.

This is to kindly invite interested members of the African Civil Society Community whose presence and contribution would be of a great relevance and value addition vis-à-vis the themes being discussed, to apply for Observer Status at the Summit. It is important to note that access to AU meetings is based on rules and procedures of the AU as authorized by the Chairperson of the Commission in accordance with the Statutes of the Commission.

CIDO has to submit a list of CSOs for accreditation to the Secretary of the Commission by 31st October 2012 and we therefore insist that all interested applicants must submit their application before this date, in order to enable us collate properly and send the list in time for processing and for the Commission

to release the invitations at least two months before the Summit. No application will be considered after the deadline mentioned above.

It is important to underline that our emphasis is on having a people-driven organization but the composition of “the people” is multivariate. There are several important actors and CSOs have to correlate with other actors and share available facilities with them. Our Summit is a meeting of government leaders that come together twice a year to make policy decisions affecting the Continent. Each State therefore has a delegation of 1+4 at various meetings. The Commission and other organs will also be represented as of right. There would also be representatives of various countries, invited guests and partner institutions- the Arab League, OAS, the UN, WHO, ILO etc. CSOs must compete with such organizations, for the limited positions that are available. The meetings venues of PRC, Executive Council and Conference which will be held in Addis Ababa have very limited seating prospects. All of this will impact on the number of CSOs observers that can be accredited.

The Office of the Chairperson and the Secretary of the Commission will direct CIDO on the number of accreditation vacancies available to CSOs. However, we have been informed that due to the limited space and accommodation constraints and the serious inconveniences faced during the previous Summits with the ever-expanding lists of observers and invitees beyond the Commission’s capacities to accommodate them, only those observers / invited guests whose presence and contribution would be of great relevance and value addition vis-à-vis the theme of the Summit could be accommodated. In addition, we shall have to make choices based on the timing of application, role envisaged in Summit, activities related to the theme of the Summit and carried out by the organization during the last two years, history of association with AU etc. The bottom line is that not all applicants can be accredited. We shall however, do our utmost to

ensure that we can get accreditation for as many CSOs as possible. We urge a sense of realism among willing participants in this regard.

It is important to note that the AU will bear no responsibility for travel and maintenance costs of CSOs accredited through our Office. CIDO remains available to assist CSOs or Diaspora representations with seeking appropriate facilities.

It is our expectation that this short notice will assist the African Civil Society Community in preparation for the Summit. Accreditation for the Summit is open to both local and international NGOs, with preference given to relevant grassroots organizations, where required.

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