

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

P. O. Box 3243

Telephone: 5517 700

Fax: 5517844

Website: www.Africa-union.org

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Fifteenth Ordinary Session
24 - 30 June 2009
Sirte, Libya

EX. CL/520 (XV)

REPORT OF THE CHAIRPERSON
ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMISSION
COVERING THE PERIOD JANUARY TO JUNE 2009

	<u>Page</u>
FOREWORD	
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
II. PEACE AND SECURITY	8
III. REGIONAL INTEGRATION, DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION	42
III.1 Integration and Human Capital Development	42
1. Education	42
2. Science & Technology	44
3. Information Society	46
4. Health and Sanitation	46
5. Human and Social Welfare	48
6. Children, Youth and Sport	54
III.2 Integration and Development of Interconnectivity	57
1. Transport (roads, railway, air, water)	57
2. Energy (energy crisis);	60
3. Telecommunications, Posts and ICT	64
III.3 Integration and Climate Change and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources	66
1. Impact of Climate Change and General Issues of Concern (Forest Resources Management, Water Resources Management, Soils Management, Livestock)	66
III.4 Integration and Development of Financial Market and Assets (the Financial Institutions...)	71
III.5 Integration and Development of Production Capacities	77
1. Agriculture (CAADP, Food crisis)	77
2. Industrial and Mining Development	80

III.6	Integration and Trade Capacity Building	82
1.	Market Access Capacity Building	82
2.	Multilateral Trade Rules and Negotiations (EPA,WTO)	
III.8	Partnership and Relations with the World	89
1.	On-going Partnerships	89
2.	Afro-Arab Cooperation	92
3.	Representational Offices	94
4.	Africa's Share in Global Exchanges	
IV.	SHARED VALUES	119
IV. 1	Democracy, Elections and Governance	119
IV. 2	Human Rights	126
IV. 3	Humanitarian Affairs, Refugees and Displaced Persons	127
IV. 4	Gender and Development	128
IV. 5	Culture	129
IV. 6	Legal Matters (Legal architecture of the Union)	130
V.	STRENGTHENING THE INSTITUTIONS	136
V.1	The Commission	136
1.	Follow-up on the Recommendations of the High-Level Panel on the Audit of the African Union	136
2.	Administrative and Human Resource Management	140
3.	Financial Management	142
4.	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation	143
5.	Conference Services	143
6.	Audit Activities	145
7.	Integration of NEPAD	147
VI.	CONCLUSION	147

FOREWORD

This report which is submitted for due consideration by the Executive Council and the Assembly of the Union is the third that I have presented to these august organs since I assumed office at the helm of the African Union Commission. It embodies the major activities undertaken by the Commission during the past six months, since January 2009.

Since the last Assembly Session in January 2009, the Commission has, drawing from the rich and very positive inputs by Member States, reviewed the Strategic Plan 2009-2012 which is structured around four pillars, namely: Peace and Security; Integration, Development and Cooperation; Shared Values; and Institutional and Capacity Building. The Commission also organized with the PRC a very successful retreat in Nazareth, Ethiopia, in March 2009, to further enrich the draft Strategic Plan. This document has now been submitted to the present Session of the Council following its endorsement by the PRC, for adoption by the Assembly of the Union. Once adopted, the document will inspire all the Programmes and Action Plans of the Commission and guide their implementation. With this invaluable tool, Member States will be in a position to evaluate, in a clear, scientific and transparent manner, the activities of the Commission using precise performance indicators.

The report covers all aspects of the activities deployed during the past six months. I would like, at this juncture, to draw the attention of Council and the Assembly on the most important and urgent issues relating to Africa's current priorities. I am referring, in particular, to the efforts invested to address the global economic and financial crisis and its impact on the continent; the deteriorating situation in certain conflict areas in the continent, such as Somalia and Guinea Bissau; the phenomenon of unconstitutional changes of Government which, within a short period of time, affected three Member States that have, according to the rules, been suspended from the activities of the Union; participation in and preparations for important continental and international meetings on issues of crucial importance to the continent such as the last G20 Summit held in London, the next G8 Summit to be held in Italy, the Africa-South America Summit slated for September 2009, the Copenhagen Summit on Climate Change due to take place in December 2009, the Special Summit on Refugees scheduled to hold in Kampala, Uganda, in October 2009, the Diaspora Summit expected to convene before the end of the year and the Afro-Arab Summit also due to take place before the end of the year. All these high-level gatherings are, no doubt, of crucial importance for the continent; and so, it is best for us to look into the possibility of our leaders attending all these meetings.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of the entire Commission to deploy its utmost efforts to ensure that the objectives set forth in the Strategic Plan are achieved in accordance with the established timeframe. On this score, we count on the usual support and collaboration of all our Member States in synergy with all the stakeholders – the RECs, the civil society and other non-State players such as the private sector and our development partners.

Once again, I would like to express my sincere hope that the African Union will achieve its legitimate ambitions in the coming years.

Jean Ping

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

1. This report relates the activities carried out during the period from January to June 2009. As I indicated in my last report in January 2009, the Commission intends to promote programmes and activities oriented to concrete actions aimed at making the continent's physical integration a reality. In accordance with the directives of the last January/February Summit, the Commission worked closely with the PRC to finalize the draft 2009-2012 Strategic Plan which is now being submitted to Council for consideration and adoption prior to adoption by the Assembly. It is with this strategic document that the Commission will henceforth map out the actions required to achieve the set objectives, through the formulation of logical and coherent annual programmes and budgets for the period covered by the Plan. In this Plan, the four strategic pillars, namely peace and security; integration, development and cooperation; shared values; and institution and capacity building, have been highlighted with clear benchmarks on the basis of which competent organs would evaluate the progress made in a regular and continuous manner. It is thus vital that this Plan receive the required support from all Member States in raising adequate resources for its implementation through prompt payment of their contributions, mobilization of extra-budgetary resources, as well as the search for alternative sources of financing. In fact, it is crucial for the Union to have predictable resources from credible and regular sources of financing in order to avoid the hazards of the recurrent phenomenon of contribution arrears which seriously hamper the effective implementation of approved programmes.

2. In the lines that follow, this report presents a general overview of the activities carried out under the four pillars of the Plan mentioned above, namely:

- Peace and Security ;
- Integration, Development and Cooperation;
- Shared Values ; and
- Institution and Capacity Building.

II. PEACE AND SECURITY

3. During the past few months, the efforts of the Commission were geared more particularly towards concluding the establishment of the Continental Peace and Security Architecture, supporting conflict prevention, management and resolution efforts, monitoring the Prodi Report on modalities for support to African Union led peacekeeping operations. I am pleased to mention in that regard that the Panel of the Wise is now operational as indicated in the report on their activities submitted with that of the Peace and Security Council on the general situation of peace and security in Africa. In particular, the Group conducted in-depth brainstorming on strengthening the role of the African Union in the prevention, management and resolution of election-related crises which sometimes develop into violent conflicts. Similarly, the Continental Early Warning System recorded progress with the acquisition of appropriate tools, equipment and software which will enable the Commission in the near future to liaise with the regional

early warning systems through the VSAT system. The Ministers of Defence met from 14 to 15 May 2009 to take stock of the progress made towards achieving this objective by 2010 at the latest.

4. The Commission equally devoted effort to implement the African Union Border Programme by organizing two regional workshops for West Africa and Central Africa in April and May 2009, respectively. These activities, coupled with other initiatives, made it possible to closely monitor the efforts of Member States to conclude the process of delimiting and demarcating their borders. In that regard, resource mobilization efforts have continued in a bid to provide appropriate assistance towards this important programme of the Union. Similarly, a legal instrument on cross-border cooperation is being drafted and could be considered by the 2nd Conference of African Ministers in charge of border issues slated for Cairo, Egypt, in November 2009.

5. The Commission continued to monitor the crisis situations on the ground, with special emphasis on the highly worrying issue of unconstitutional changes of government which took place over the past few months in Mauritania, Guinea and Madagascar, and the equally disturbing situation in Guinea Bissau with the assassination of the Head of State and the preceding and ensuing violence. The Commission is paying special attention to other conflict areas such as Somalia, as well as to the Djibouti-Eritrea relations, the situation in Darfur, in The Sudan, the relations between Chad and The Sudan, the situation in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire, and developments in Western Sahara. This report also analyzes other issues related to peace and security in Africa, such as maritime security which has been sorely tested by the events taking place on the coast of Somalia, the process towards the formulation of a Union policy on Security Sector Reform (SSR), and arms control. Lastly, this report gives an overview of the African Peace Facility (APF), and the actions taken to implement the Decisions of the Assembly on the financing of the Union's peacekeeping operations in Africa.

III. REGIONAL INTEGRATION, DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION

6. With regard to the three dimensional pillar - integration, development and cooperation, - and as pointed out in this report, numerous and important initiatives were taken by the Commission to come up with and propose a new gradual approach comprising a continental architecture for the full integration of our continent, similar to that established for the Peace and Security sector, and also to propose appropriate ways for Africa to tackle the effects of the current global economic and financial crisis. In line with this, the Commission continued with its efforts to strengthen the human capital in the development process, through education, gender balance and culture and particularly in carrying on with the essential actions of the Action Plan of the Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2015). Similar efforts were deployed in the key sectors of Science and Technology and the Information Society the service of development. The sectors of health and hygiene were also given close attention as pointed out in the report, resulting in the 4th Session of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Health held in Addis Ababa in May 2009 during which major public health challenges were analysed in depth, such as the actions required to face up to the new

AH1N1 pandemic, universal access to quality health services with particular emphasis on maternal and child health. The report also analyses the measures taken to promote the welfare of the more vulnerable groups such as old people and persons with disabilities, for which the 1999-2009 Decade declared by the OAU Heads of State and Government did not achieve all the expected goals. This was the reason the Ministers in charge of Social Development recommended in December 2008 that the Decade be extended to 2010-2019 period so that the set objectives may be attained. Issues relating to global social development also claimed the full attention of the Commission during the period under consideration, the aim being to promote the Social Policy Framework for Africa and the common African position on social integration adopted by the Ministers for Social Development. Other issues such as population, decent jobs, employment, migrations, drug control and crime prevention in Africa, child protection, youth support and the development of sports, were actively and closely monitored by the Commission during the past months. Faced with the increase in drug trafficking in some of our regions, it is important that the Union adopt appropriate measures to face up to this extremely dangerous scourge for our societies.

7. The Commission continued its efforts at promoting continental interconnectivity, in the light of the highly appreciated outcome of the Assembly debate in February 2009 on the theme "Infrastructure Development" and the Declaration adopted on the issue. This trend is indeed confirmation of a greater awareness of African leaders that no integration can take shape without the physical integration of the means of intermodal transport (road, railway, air and sea transport, port and airport infrastructure), energy resources, communication and telecommunication. This is a report on the activities carried out during the past months, including the contacts made with all the stakeholders and our development partners so as to move towards concrete actions aimed at the physical and infrastructure integration of our continent.

8. Aware of the irreplaceable role of conserving our environment and the rational management of the numerous abundant natural resources in the continent, the Commission got down to implementing the Decisions of the last Summit of February 2009, on sustainable development particularly that relating to climate change which highlights the need to find tune the common African position to be defended at the World Summit in Copenhagen in December 2009 as well as the proposals on the system of Africa's representation at this important forum to enable the continent to speak with one and an only voice. A separate report is being submitted to the Assembly for consideration and appropriate directives.

9. Concerning the economic and financial crisis, the Commission in concert with all the Member States, the AfDB and the ECA pursued efforts to promote the interests of the Continent in the international consultations in the G20 Summit held in London in April 2009. It actively prepared for the participation and contribution of Africa's representatives at the next G8 Summit due to hold at the beginning of July in Italy to discuss the financial crisis as one of the major topics alongside climate change, peace and security and governance. I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the significant contribution made by the Conferences of the Ministers of Finance and Trade which were held in January and March 2009 respectively; these contributions made it possible for Africa to further advance its common position on the global financial and economic crisis. I am also pleased about the contribution of the African Ministers of the

Environment who met within the context of AMCEN which reflected on the common African position in preparation for the Copenhagen Summit on climate change scheduled to take place in December 2009.

10. The issue of establishment of the three financial institutions provided for in the Constitutive Act of the Union namely: the African Investment Bank, the African Central Bank and the African Monetary Fund was given sustained attention. Significant progress was made with regard to the African Investment Bank to be based in Tripoli, the Protocol of which was adopted at the last Assembly Session. Progress is expected within the next few months on the other two institutions thanks to the cooperation of Nigeria and Cameroon respectively.

11. To facilitate regional integration, the Commission, in close collaboration with the RECs continued its evaluation of the Minimum Integration Programme (MIP) to establish a convergence mechanism between the RECs based on their comparative advantages and their respective experiences.

12. On the agricultural sector, it is important to point out that Africa needs to increase its capacity for production, first of all by increasing food production and thus become less dependent on imports and food aid. The CAADP framework now enables our Organization to reflect on and turn our enormous agricultural resources to good account to dispel once and for all the ugly specter of cyclical food crises. The theme of this Summit which is "Invest in Agriculture for Growth and Development" was very carefully prepared by the Commission with a view to collecting all the useful data to enable our leaders to discuss the best ways and means of reviving agriculture, stimulating food self-sufficiency and food security based on the execution of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). I take this opportunity to congratulate certain Member States which have made great strides in implementing the CAADP which, in some cases, have yielded promising results. Despite the efforts made in several areas, it should be noted, unfortunately, that the African continent remains fragile and unable to feed its populations. It is important for us to refocus our activities on the promotion of agriculture through agricultural inputs and human support in order to guarantee food self-sufficiency. I am once more appealing to all Member States which have not yet drawn up plans of action as agreed in the CAADP to take the necessary steps to mobilize all possible means for the development and rehabilitation of our agriculture, threatened not only by climate change but also by food imports and food aid which have not been addressed in our policies for sustained agricultural development.

13. Multilateral trade negotiations were also given full consideration by the Commission which initiated important activities to reinforce the position of Africa at both the EPA or the WTO. The last Conference of the Ministers of Trade held in March 2009 adopted an important Declaration - the Addis Ababa Declaration on the EPA. It also adopted guidelines using an EPA model which could be an inspiration for all the regions that are in the process of negotiating with the EU.

14. The Commission has pursued efforts to strengthen existing partnerships with the rest of the world, on the basis of the relevant decisions of the Assembly; these include the follow-up on the Africa-India Summit of April 2008, the preparation of the 2nd Africa-South America Summit which has now been scheduled to hold from 18 to 19 September

2009 in Caracas, Venezuela, the consolidation of Afro-Arab cooperation, Africa-EU relations, the strengthening of cooperation with the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the follow-up on the implementation of the Yokohama TICAD IV Plan of Action and finally a general review of the strategic partnerships with Africa, the study of which will be submitted to the competent organs in the months ahead. The Commission has also brainstormed the issue of the Representational Offices of the Union. A study has been initiated to evaluate all the existing diplomatic missions and to examine the possibility of setting up new ones according to the needs observed in pursuance of the relevant recommendations of the 2007 High-Level Audit Panel of the Union. This study will be submitted to the competent Organs as soon as possible.

SHARED VALUES

15. Over the last few months the Commission has intensified its efforts to promote the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, in a bid to have the largest possible number of Member States sign and ratify this important instrument which has been ratified by only two Member States and signed by 27 Member States. I take this opportunity to urge Member States to pay the necessary attention to this Charter which is perfectly in line with efforts to consolidate shared values among our peoples. Similarly, the Commission hopes - with the involvement of all Member States, RECs and other stakeholders and partners of the Continent, including the civil society - to promote the creation of an architecture for interventions in the area of democratic governance. In this regard, we also plan to carry out an in-depth brainstorming on local governance, as evidenced by the meeting that was recently held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, which recommended, among other things, the drafting of a Charter on Local Governance aimed at deepening and consolidating shared values at the grassroots.

16. Other important activities deployed in regard to the "Shared Values" Pillar include the launch, in May 2009, of the African Union Anti-Corruption Advisory Committee that was established by the Assembly in February 2009, preparations for the celebration of the Africa Public Service Day, brainstorming on election-related challenges to which the Panel of the Wise made a significant contribution on 23 June, as mentioned above.

17. The Commission closely monitored elections in several Member States during the period under review. These include the presidential and/or parliamentary elections in Algeria, South Africa and Malawi, in April and May 2009. The Commission is getting set to observe elections in Guinea Bissau, which will take place under rather disturbing circumstances, given the climate of violence and targeted killings that has prevailed in recent weeks. By December 2009, some 13 Member States will be organizing presidential and/or parliamentary elections, requiring the unwavering attention of the Commission which will be called upon to provide the usual assistance in terms of the elections observation and monitoring.

18. The human rights situation in the Continent continues to receive special attention from the Commission, as indicated in the report. The Commission is also closely monitoring the humanitarian crises on the continent. These crises, which have continued to generate concern, are still raging in such conflict zones as Somalia where we are witnessing the appalling suffering of a population victimized by senseless violence at the hands of groups of lawless fanatics.

19. The Commission is also striving to implement the Gender Policy adopted by the last Summit of the Union, by stepping up its efforts at promoting gender equality at all levels of the Union. Promoting the culture of the identity and history of Africa has also been major focus of the Commission which is working to enhance the capacity of CELTHO in Niamey and ACALAN in Bamako.

STRENGTHENING UNION INSTITUTIONS

20. It goes without saying that all the good ideas and programmes developed in this report cannot be achieved unless they are strongly backed and supervised by robust institutions and appropriate implementation mechanisms. As regards the Commission, we will continue insisting on good internal governance by putting in place management mechanisms and instruments guaranteeing transparency and accountability, especially in the management of the available human and financial resources and the implementation of decisions taken by the supreme organs of the Union. At its weekly meetings held every Tuesday, the Commission regularly assesses the status of implementation of programmes adopted and other activities undertaken by the Union, and gives relevant directives on the way forward to all its internal structures.

21. I am pleased to present in this report the updated status of the measures taken towards implementation of the recommendations of the High Level Panel on the Audit of the Union, which were endorsed by the Assembly following the 11th Extraordinary Session of the Executive Council held in May 2008. As the report shows, many of the tasks assigned to the Commission have been carried out. Others could not be implemented due to lack of resources. I hope the needed resources will be mobilized in the near future so that the relevant recommendations may be implemented.

22. The report gives an account of the progress of the project to construct a new conference and office complex which is supposed to be completed by 2011. It also gives an account of the status of payment of contributions. In this respect, I wish to underscore the build up of contribution arrears and the improved management tools, including the Procurement Manual which is already being implemented, and the Draft Audit Charter which, once adopted by the relevant organs, will more efficiently regulate all audit activities and implemented by all actors in the field.

23. As attested by the progress report made by the Commission on the integration of the NEPAD into the Union's structures and processes, the issue is receiving all due attention. Despite the significant delay in the implementation in relation to the initial deadline, we hope the process will soon start with the incorporation of NEPAD structures and its budget in the African Union, and will be finally completed before the end of 2009, in line with decisions taken by the Assembly at its various sessions held

over past years. For our part, we believe the Commission is an ideal framework within which the programme could develop and to efficiently discharge its assigned missions.

24. The rationalization of RECs and the growing role they are called upon to assume in the acceleration of the regional and continental integration process continued to receive all due attention from the Commission, which is determined to work in close collaboration with the RECs, particularly by actively participating in their Summits, so that together they could move forward the Minimum Integration Programme as already mentioned. This will enable us to assess the progress achieved in the integration drive, on regular basis.

II. PEACE AND SECURITY

25. During the period under review, the Commission continued to deploy efforts to promote peace, security and stability in the continent. More specifically, the Commission's efforts focused particularly on the conclusion of the establishment of the Continental Peace and Security Architecture, support to conflict prevention, management and resolution initiatives, and on following the Prodi report on support to AU peacekeeping operations and other related issues.

a) Establishment of the Continental Peace and Security Architecture

26. As provided by the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union, the Continental Peace and Security Architecture is structured around the following components: the PSC which is the key decision-making body; the Panel of the Wise; the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS); the African Standby Force (ASF) and the Protocol on Relations between the AU and the Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. Significant progress has continued to be achieved in terms of operationalization of these components.

i) Panel of the Wise

27. The Panel of the Wise, established pursuant to Article 11 of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the PSC, with the mandate to support the efforts of the Chairperson of the Commission and those of the PSC, particularly with regards to conflict prevention, is now operational. A comprehensive report on the activities of the Panel is submitted to the Assembly.

ii) Continental Early Warning System (CEWS)

28. The Commission has pursued its efforts towards the implementation of the Framework for the Operationalization of the CEWS, as endorsed by the Executive Council in January 2007. In this respect, and in order to enhance the data-collection and analytical capacity of the CEWS, the Commission has continued to refine existing tools, including the indicators module and the CEWS Portal, as well as the development of CEWS customized softwares. The Commission is also in the process of acquiring the necessary equipment to support the CEWS IT infrastructure, as well as ensure the connectivity of the early warning systems of the Regional Mechanisms to the AU Situation Room through VSAT. Finally, and as part of the efforts to enhance coordination and collaboration with the Regional Mechanisms, the Commission, jointly with the East African Community (EAC), convened the third technical quarterly meeting with these institutions, in Arusha, from 27 to 30 April 2009.

iii) African Standby Force

29. The period under review was marked by the 6th meeting of Chiefs of Defence Staff and Chiefs of Security Services, and by the 3rd meeting of African Ministers of Defence and Security held on 14 May and 15 May 2009, respectively. The meetings offered opportunity to present an account of the progress made regarding operationalization of the ASF and to agree on the measures to be taken to achieve this objective by 2010 at the latest. A separate report on this issue is being submitted to the Executive Council.

iv) Memorandum of Understanding between the AU and the Regional Mechanisms

30. During the period under review, progress has continued to be made in the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Cooperation in the area of Peace and Security between the AU, the Regional Mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution signed in Addis Ababa on 28 January 2008. The main objective of the MoU is to enhance the partnership between the AU and Regional Mechanisms in the promotion and maintenance of peace, security and stability in Africa and to facilitate the operationalization and effective functioning of the African Peace and Security Architecture.

31. The Commission has continued to work closely with RECs and the Regional Mechanisms, five of which namely, COMESA, EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS and IGAD, have appointed Liaison Officers who have reported for duty in Addis Ababa. The first meeting of Senior Officials on the implementation of the MoU is scheduled to take place from 8 to 9 July 2009 in Addis Ababa.

b) Status of implementation of the African Union Border Programme (AUBP)

32. In January this year, Council was briefed on the initial measures taken by the Commission to implement the Declaration on the AU Border Programme and the modalities for implementation thereof, as adopted by the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Border Issues held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 7 June 2007. That Declaration focused on three key areas: delimitation and demarcation of African borders that are still undemarcated; development of trans-border cooperation especially the initiatives undertaken at local level; capacity building and resource mobilization. For its part, Council, in its decision on the issue, expressed satisfaction at the progress achieved in implementation of the AUBP and encouraged the Commission to persevere in its effort. It invited Member States of the Union to take all appropriate measures to fully play their role in the implementation of the AUBP.

33. Pursuant to that decision, the Commission continued with its initiatives in organizing a series of regional workshops launched last year with a view to popularizing the AUBP and facilitating formulation of regional action plans. Thus, two regional workshops were staged in Ouagadougou for the West Africa region, from 23 to 24 April

2009; and in Libreville for the Central Africa region from 21 to 23 May 2009. The two workshops led to a review of the progress so far made in the implementation of the AUBP. At the workshops, the Member States of the two regions that had not already done so were urged to speed up the transmission of their duly completed questionnaires on the status of their borders, to the Commission before the end of the year 2009. The information provided in this regard will enable the Commission to gain full insight into the status of African borders in the perspective of their delimitation and demarcation. On this score, the Commission is intent on mobilizing the requisite financial and technical resources.

34. The Commission continued to closely monitor the efforts invested by Member States to bring to a conclusion the process of delimitation and demarcation of their borders, offering assistance each time it considers such assistance necessary, including experience sharing with the countries that have been through similar situations. The Commission intends, in the coming months, to intensify its activities in this domain. Meanwhile, I call on Member States to enter into and pursue negotiations on all the issues pertinent to delimitation and demarcation of their borders and come up with appropriate solutions.

35. Efforts have continued to be deployed to mobilize resources and establish partnerships for implementation of the AUBP. Noteworthy in this regard is that the German Government, through the GTZ, has remained the major donor of the programme. The German Government has renewed its financial commitment towards implementation of the AUBP. To this end, Germany provides direct financial and technical support to some Member States with regard to delimitation and demarcation of their borders and for trans-border cooperation. Given the magnitude of the activities to be executed, the Commission is exerting its best efforts to mobilize other partners.

36. The Commission will, in the coming months, organize the last of the regional workshops on implementation of the AUBP, that is, for the Southern Africa region. Furthermore, several other activities have been scheduled, particularly the organization of experience-sharing among the RECs; formulation of a legal instrument for trans-border cooperation with the convening of an experts' meeting in Tunis in October 2009; and the 2nd Conference of African Ministers responsible for border issues to be held in Cairo, Egypt, in November 2009.

c) Envolving situations on the ground

37. The period under review continued to be dominated by the problem of unconstitutional changes of Government. After the coup d'état in Mauritania on 6 August 2008, and in Guinea on 23 December 2008, Madagascar took its turn in experiencing unconstitutional change on 17 March 2009; with the Head of State of Guinea Bissau, Joao Bernardo Vieira, assassinated earlier that same month. These developments reinforced the concern expressed by the 12th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union over the resurgence of coups d'état and the grave political downturn that these incidents represent for the democratization process set in motion in the Continent since the early 90s. It was in this context and in furtherance of the decision adopted by the Assembly, that the

Commission prepared an interim report on the question of unconstitutional changes of Government. The Commission intends to enrich this document in light of the discussion to be held by the Heads of State and Government, and thereby submit more exhaustive recommendations in January 2010.

38. Since the last session of Council, there have been encouraging developments in the sphere of promotion of peace, security and stability in the continent. At the same time, many other situations continued to generate concern. Clearly, greater efforts will have to be deployed to overcome these difficulties and consolidate the progress towards peace.

I. Comoros

39. The period under consideration was characterized by continued efforts to consolidate the progress achieved in the promotion of stability and reconciliation in The Comoros. It should be recalled that, in its various decisions on the situation in The Comoros, the PSC had agreed on the need, once State authority was restored in the Autonomous Islands of Anjouan – and this has been achieved thanks to the operation “Democracy in the Comoros” of 25 May 2008 – to find effective solutions to the problems arising from the poor operation of the existing institutions, power sharing between the Executives of the Union and the Autonomous Islands, as well as to matters relating to good governance.

40. In this connection, my special envoy for The Comoros Francisco Madeira, visited the Archipelago on four occasions between January and April 2009. During those visits, the special envoy held talks with the representatives of The Comorian entities, both of the Union and of the Autonomous Islands, as well as the representatives of the political parties, the civil society and opinion leaders with a view to arriving at the widest possible consensus on the institutional reform project submitted by President Ahmed Abdallah Mohamed Sambi through inter-Comorian talks which brought together all the concerned parties.

41. In broad terms, the constitutional review project proposed by the presidency of the Union reinforces the authority of the State and, at the same time, preserves the two fundamental principles of the 2001 Constitution on autonomy of the Islands and rotational presidency. The new text of the Constitution introduces several vital amendments particularly on the status of the Executive Heads of the Autonomous Islands who will bear the title of Governor elected by universal suffrage rather than the title of president, and will be assisted by a small cabinet of five to six commissioners, instead of ministers. The text provides for 4 to 5 years extension of the tenure of the president of the Union and governors of the Autonomous Islands. It confers, provisionally, on the future assemblies of the Union and of the Autonomous Islands, meeting in congress, the constitutional power to set the calendar for election of the Executive Heads of the Union and of the Islands, as a way of resolving the thorny issue of harmonization of mandates. The text clarified the areas of competence of each of the Comorian entities and also modified the distribution of the 33 seats in the National Assembly as follows: 24 elected officials of the Union and 9 representatives from the Islands - 3 for each Autonomous Islands - as against 18 deputies representing the Union and 15 for the Autonomous Islands.

42. It was against this background that the inter-Comorian talks took place in Moroni from 3 to 7 March 2009. The talks for which the Commission provided an expert, was attended by all Comorian entities. In this regard, it should be emphasised that the reactivation of the inter-Comorian dialogue was made possible following the annulment of the presidential decree which had unilaterally set the date for the referendum for 22 March 2009. The postponement was the key demand of the Comorian opposition which accused President Sambi of having implemented a programme of institutional reform without meaningful consultation with the Executive Authorities of the Islands.

43. Deliberations continued during the several meetings between President Sambi and the Executive Heads of the Autonomous Islands in March and April 2009. At those meetings, The Comorian parties reached agreement in principle on issues relating to the functioning of the institutions and good administrative and economic governance. The talks however faltered on the question of rationalization of the institutions emanating from the 2001 Constitution and, more especially, on the question of harmonization of mandates and election of the President of the Union and the Presidents of the Autonomous Islands. After making provision for harmonization of the presidential mandates with effect from 2011, thus extending his own 4 year mandate by one year, President Sambi proposed that the election date could be readjusted to take place in 2010, but on condition that the Executive Heads of the Islands agree to also cut short their mandates, expected to expire in 2012 for Ngazidja and Mohéli, and in 2013 for Anjouan. While accepting the need to modify the 2001 Constitution and harmonize the elections and the presidential mandates, the opposition held the view that constitutional review could be envisaged only at the expiry of the existing mandates and on acceptance of the rotational presidency of the Union which would devolve on the Autonomous Island of Mohéli in 2010. Differences also emerged among the Executive Heads of the Islands: whereas the presidents of the Autonomous Islands of Ngazidja and Mohéli agreed to cut short their mandates, the president of Anjouan stood by his decision to stay in office up to the end of his mandate which expires in 2013.

44. Faced with the above difficulties, the President of Union decided to go for a referendum despite threats of boycott and acts of intimidation. It was in this context that the referendum on amendment to the 23 December constitution was held on 17 May 2009. This exercise came off without major incidents. The final results which were endorsed on 19 May 2009 by the Constitutional Court gave a wide margin of victory to “Yes” advocates with 93.90% of the votes, as against 6.09% for the “No” supporters. The turnout was given as 51.76%.

45. What the Comorian Authorities should now focus on is the key challenge of the upcoming elections for the National Assembly and for the three legislative organs of the Islands, mandates of which have expired. The elections, for which the Government of The Comoros is seeking the technical support and financial assistance, are scheduled to take place in August 2009. I wish, in conclusion, to encourage all the Comorian parties to engage in consensual action with a view to implementing the institutional reforms they have approved.

II. Madagascar

46. During its last ordinary session, I had called the attention of the Council to the situation in Madagascar, marked at the time by a series of incidents which pitted the capital city's mayor, Andry Rajoelina, against the President of the Republic, Marc Ravalomanana. The crisis came to a head on 17 March 2009, when the President of the Malagasy Republic, under pressure from the civilian opposition and the army, resigned from office and handed power over to a Military Directorate which, in turn, passed it on to Andry Rajoelina. I issued several Press Releases through which I, among other things, highlighted my deep concern at the situation and the danger it posed for the country's stability, as well as the necessity for the quick return of constitutional order through a consensual process involving all Madagascar's political players and based on compliance with the relevant provisions of the Malagasy Constitution.

47. I have also sent emissaries to the *La Grande Ile* (Madagascar), since February 2009, for talks with the concerned parties on the modalities for a speedy and consensual return to constitutional order. In this respect, I successively sent to Madagascar Mr Amara Essy, who had been, inter alia, Minister of Foreign Affairs in Côte d'Ivoire and Interim Chairperson of the AU Commission from 2001 to 2003, the Commissioner for Peace and Security, Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, and Mr Ablassé Ouedraogo, former Minister of Foreign Affairs in Burkina Faso, among others, and currently my Special Envoy to Madagascar.

48. For its part, the PSC held several meetings on the situation in Madagascar. In the communiqué of its 181st meeting held in Addis Ababa on 20 March 2009, the PSC noted that following President Marc Ravalomanana's resignation, which took place, as mentioned previously, under pressure from the civilian opposition and the army, the handing over of power was carried out in flagrant violation of the relevant provisions of the Malagasy Constitution, and that subsequent decisions to confer the duties of President of the Republic to Mr Andry Rajoelina was tantamount to unconstitutional change of Government. The Council strongly condemned this unconstitutional change.

49. The PSC decided, in accordance with the Lomé Declaration and the AU Constitutive Act, to suspend Madagascar from participating in AU activities until constitutional order has been re-established in the country, and expressed, furthermore, its determination to take all measures laid down in that connection, including sanctions, against the perpetrators of unconstitutional change and all those helping to sustain the illegal situation. The PSC also requested all the AU Member States and the international community at large to unequivocally reject this change and abstain from taking any measure that could strengthen the current illegal regime in Madagascar. Lastly, the PSC requested me to work closely with SADC and all AU partners to achieve speedy restoration of constitutional order and to take such initiatives as I may deem fit in this regard.

50. As a follow-up to this decision, and for more effective coordination of international community initiatives, I set up, under the aegis of the AU, an International Contact Group

on Madagascar. The inaugural meeting of the said Group took place in Addis Ababa on 30 April 2009. Apart from the AU, the meeting brought together the following countries and organisations: the five permanent member countries and the African members of the Security Council, the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), SADC, COMESA, the United Nations, the OIF and the EU. Libya, in its capacity as the country that is the current Chairperson of the AU, and Burundi, on behalf of the PSC, were also represented.

51. The participants strongly condemned the unconstitutional change of Government that took place in Madagascar, and requested members of the International Community to abstain from taking any measure that could complicate efforts aimed at restoring constitutional order in the country. They reaffirmed their respective organisations' and countries' readiness to accompany, under the auspices of the AU, the process of re-establishing constitutional order consistent with the following objectives and principles: a precise timetable with a view to holding free, fair and transparent elections involving all stakeholders, under the supervision of a neutral electoral body; contribution of all political and social players in the country, including President Marc Ravalomanana, as well as other national figures, to the search for a solution; promotion of consensus among the concerned Malagasy parties; respect for the Malagasy Constitution, as well as relevant AU instruments and Madagascar's international commitments. To this end, it was agreed that my Special Envoy, in close collaboration with representatives of the international community in Antananarivo, should get in touch with all parties in Madagascar to agree with them on the ways and means to bring about a speedy return to constitutional order.

52. In line with this decision, my Special Envoy, in close collaboration with the Special Envoys of SADC, the UN and OIF, resumed mediation efforts since 13 May 2009. Negotiations among the four political movements supporting former Presidents Albert Zafy and Didier Ratsiraka, President Marc Ravalomanana and Mr Andry Rajoelina, were centred on the principles of an inclusive political agreement aimed at a neutral, peaceful and consensual transition. To this end, the international mediation team drew up a draft Transition Charter which it has already submitted to the members of the four political parties for consideration. A number of problems, however, remain to be solved; hence the need for an even greater mobilisation to help Madagascar find its way back to legality.

53. In addition, in pursuance of the above mentioned decision by the International Contact Group on Madagascar, part of the Group is at present operational in Antananarivo and has already held three meetings chaired by my Special Envoy to the country.

III. Somalia

54. During the period under review, and despite President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and his Government's efforts to bring on board some influential clan leaders, elders and Islamic clerics in order to broaden domestic support for the stabilization of the country, there have been unrelenting attempts by anti-peace elements to derail the political process in Somalia. Beginning early May 2009, increased attacks by insurgents on the capital have threatened to reverse the important achievements made by the President and his Government since relocating to Mogadishu in January 2009.

55. Nonetheless, thanks to the continued goodwill and support demonstrated by the international community towards the Government and people of Somalia, the Djibouti peace process has generally remained on course. In this respect, the most significant development was the pledging conference on Somalia held in Brussels, Belgium, from 22 to 23 April 2009, which generated US\$213 million dollars in pledges, in addition to in-kind and other services pledged in support of AMISOM and the Somali Security Sector Institutions. The conference was hosted by the EU and co-chaired by the United Nations and the AU. I participated in the conference, which was also attended by representatives of 60 countries and regional organizations, including President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon.

56. On 18 May 2009, the UN Security Council adopted a presidential statement in which it reaffirmed its support to the TFG as the legitimate authority in Somalia under the Transitional Federal Charter (TFC), and condemned the recent renewal in fighting led by al-Shabaab and other extremists. The Security Council expressed its concern over reports that Eritrea has supplied arms to those opposing the TFG, in breach of the arms embargo, and called on the UN Monitoring Group for Somalia to investigate the matter. In its resolution 1872 (2009) adopted on 26 May 2009, the Security Council called on all Somali parties to support the Djibouti Agreement.

57. On 20 May 2009, the IGAD Council of Ministers held its 33rd Extraordinary Session in Addis Ababa, to deliberate on the situation in Somalia. The meeting noted with grave concern the aggression perpetrated against Somalia and, recognizing that the assailants have exploited the porous borders of the country, called upon the Security Council to impose a no-fly zone over Somalia's airspace, as well as a sea blockage of the ports of Merka and Kismayo, except for humanitarian purposes. The meeting also condemned all individuals and countries, in particular the Government of Eritrea and its financiers, who continue to instigate, train, fund and supply the criminal elements in Somalia and called on the Security Council to impose sanctions on the Government of Eritrea.

58. At its 190th meeting held on 22 May 2009, the PSC considered the situation in Somalia in light of the outcome of the IGAD Council of Ministers. Council endorsed the IGAD communiqué and requested the Security Council to impose a no-fly zone and blockade of sea ports. Furthermore, the PSC requested the imposition of sanctions against all those individuals and foreign elements providing support to the armed groups engaged in destabilization activities in Somalia, attacks against the TFG, the civilian population and AMISOM. The PSC also appealed to all the AU Member States to urgently provide all the required support, including military, to the TFG, in order to enable the Government neutralize the armed elements carrying out attacks against it.

59. The International Contact Group on Somalia, meeting in Rome, on 9-10 June, issued a statement supporting IGAD's and PSC decisions. The Contact Group also expressed support for the Government of President Sharif Ahmed and recognized the important role of AMISOM and the TCCs. The ICG further requested members of the international community which made pledges in Brussels to speedily disburse them.

60. During the reporting period, the TFG has continued with its efforts to enhance its capacity. The TFG and the Transitional Federal Parliament (TFP) have made some significant progress in rebuilding functioning state institutions in Mogadishu and other regions under its control. The Government has held regular cabinet meetings, re-established revenue collection mechanisms, signed trade and cooperation agreements with neighbouring/friendly countries, established an anti-corruption commission and begun the reorganization of its security forces. In April 2009, the Government approved a three-month budget for priority areas. In that same month 343 members of the TFP, sitting in Mogadishu, endorsed the implementation of Sharia throughout Somalia, a move that received domestic support as it was one of the key demands of the opposition groups. On 13 May 2009, Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed signed the instrument legalising Sharia in Somalia and promised to appoint a committee of experts to reconcile the TFC with the implementation of Sharia.

61. The security situation in Somalia and in Mogadishu, in particular, remains volatile. The beginning of the month of May witnessed unprecedented attacks by Al Shabaab and Hizbul Islam targeted mainly at the TFG, with sporadic shelling of AMSIOM positions in Mogadishu. Despite the determination of insurgents to overthrow the TFG, evidence indicates that both Al Shabaab and Hizbul Islam are embroiled in internal conflicts, resulting in significant defections to the TFG and fragmentation of the armed groups. A large number of foreign fighters, calling themselves Mujahedeen, are engaged in the current offensive and, in most cases, are leading the attacks in Mogadishu and other regions.

62. The recent heightening of insurgent activities and the resultant clashes between the latter and government forces have led to heavy civilian casualties and massive displacement of persons. As at 25 May 2009, an estimated 60,000 people had been displaced from Mogadishu to various locations. Humanitarian actors have continued to provide critically needed assistance under increasingly life-threatening conditions. The humanitarian situation has been compounded by the drought conditions.

63. The current AMISOM military strength in Mogadishu stands at 4,274 soldiers, comprising 3 battalions from Uganda UPDF and 2 from Burundi. AMISOM is still 4 battalions short of its mandated strength of 9 Infantry battalions, plus maritime and air components. The current strength of the AMISOM police component includes a leadership team of six officers and 89 police trainers, advisers and mentors who are scheduled for deployment to Mogadishu within the coming weeks to commence the crucial task of training the 10,000 all inclusive Somalia Police Force in line with the Djibouti Agreement.

64. In its troop generation efforts, the Commission is currently engaged with AU Member States and partners to ensure the speedy deployment of one battalion each from Sierra Leone. In the meantime, steps are underway for the deployment of the third Burundian battalion, as well as for the commencement of the relocation of the AMISOM civilian mission leadership from Nairobi to Mogadishu.

65. In its resolution 1863 (2009), the UN Security Council requested the Secretary-General to provide his assessment in advance of its decision regarding the establishment of a UN peacekeeping operation in Somalia as a follow-on force to AMISOM. In his report to the Security

Council dated 16 April 2009, the Secretary General indicated that, while the deployment of a United Nations multi-dimensional peacekeeping operation should remain the UN goal, realistically achieving that goal would require fulfilling certain conditions. He, therefore, recommended an incremental approach. In the meantime, the Security Council requested the AU to maintain and enhance AMISOM's deployment. It welcomed the efforts of the Mission to protect key strategic areas in Mogadishu and encouraged it to continue to assist the TFG in the establishment of the Somali security institutions.

66. Pursuant to resolution 1863 (2009), the UN Secretary-General, in a letter dated 30 January 2009 to the Security Council, outlined the details of support to be provided to AMISOM and to be funded from UN assessed contributions, comprising the logistical, equipment and mission support services normally provided for a UN peacekeeping operation of the same size, and financial support from UN Member States, through a Trust Fund. I am pleased to inform Council that, on 7 April 2009, the General Assembly approved the first phase of the UN logistical support package for AMISOM, to the amount of US\$ 71.6 million. I also would like to inform Council that the Commission and the UN Secretariat are in the process to finalizing the Memorandum of Understanding that will define the modalities for the implementation of the support package.

67. Significant progress has been made in the political process over the past months. The inclusive Government of President Sheikh Sharif Ahmed is making sustained efforts to broaden the political process and consolidate the gains made towards reconciliation. In this respect, I call on all the Somali stakeholders to demonstrate the necessary spirit of compromise and accommodation to further peace, security and reconciliation in their country. At the same time, the TFG continues to be faced with huge challenges, ranging from the relentless attacks carried by armed groups opposed to weak institutional capacity and serious financial constraints. Against this background, the importance of continued support by the international community hardly needs to be over emphasized.

iv) Relations between Djibouti and Eritrea

68. Council will recall that, on 14 January 2009, the Security Council adopted resolution 1862(2009), in which it urged Eritrea and Djibouti to resolve their border dispute peacefully. At the same time, the Security Council, noting that Djibouti had withdrawn its forces to the *status quo ante*, demanded, *inter alia*, that Eritrea, no later than five weeks after the adoption of the resolution, withdraw its forces and all their equipment to the positions of the *status quo ante*, acknowledge its border dispute with Djibouti and engage actively in dialogue and diplomatic efforts to reach a solution.

69. In a letter to the Security Council dated 30 March 2009, the Secretary-General indicated that he has no information that Eritrea has complied with the demands contained in resolution 1862. He also indicated that Eritrea continues to insist that it has not occupied any land that belongs to Djibouti and cannot accept a resolution that demands the withdrawal of its forces from its own territory.

v) Sudan

• **Implementation of the CPA**

70. During the period under review, the Commission has continued to closely follow and support the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). Despite the

challenges facing the process, the Sudanese parties have remained steadfast in their commitment to ensuring the successful implementation of the CPA. In January, the Sudanese people celebrated the fourth anniversary of the CPA in Malakal, Southern Sudan. The celebrations were attended by both President Omar Hassan Al Bashir, and First Vice President Salva Kiir Mayardit, who displayed a spirit of camaraderie that is essential for the successful implementation of the CPA.

71. Despite a few skirmishes that took place in the Upper Nile and Jongeli States, the Ceasefire Protocol continues to hold between the North and the South. In addition, the CPA has enabled the continued functioning of the Government of National Unity (GoNU) and the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS). In the meantime, the Interim National Assembly (INA) has continued to pass national legislation. Similarly, the Southern Sudan Interim Legislative Assembly (ILA) has been passing laws that govern the South Sudan region.

72. As one of the major objectives of the CPA is the transformation of the Sudan into a democratic state through elections, the enactment of the Electoral Act and the subsequent establishment of the National Electoral Commission (NEC) are important milestones in the implementation of the Agreement. In this regard, the electoral process, as indicated in the “Timeframe for Elections”, commenced in April 2009, with the demarcation of geographical constituencies, and will conclude with the organisation of elections and announcement of their final results in February 2010. The GoNU, through the NEC, has invited all concerned and interested international institutions to assist and observe the electoral process. In this respect, the Commission will make necessary arrangements for the full participation of the AU in the observation of the elections in close cooperation with the NEC.

73. As Council will recall, the Abyei boundaries have yet to be agreed on. Within the context of the “Abyei Roadmap” signed in June 2008, the parties agreed to resolve their dispute by referring it to the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) in The Hague. They have pledged to respect the outcome of the PCA and implement it faithfully. The Court is scheduled to make its ruling on 22 July 2009. In a press statement issued on 20 May 2009, I urged the parties to abide by the decision of the PCA as final and binding.

74. The demarcation of the North-South border has also experienced some difficulties and is yet to be completed. The *Ad Hoc* Border Committee has, thus far, only been able to delineate one third of the North-South border. However, in May 2009, the Sudanese Presidency instructed the Committee to complete the border delineation by September 2009 and the demarcation by December 2009.

75. The completion of the 5th Population Census of the Sudan in 2008 marked an encouraging step in the implementation of the CPA. The Agreement states that representation of the North and the South at the national level shall be based on population ratio. When the Census results were published in May 2009, the GoSS disputed them. Meanwhile, the Sudanese 5th Population Census Council reported that the Census process was professionally conducted in the entire Sudan. Consequently, it handed the results to the NEC to commence constituency demarcations in preparations for elections. The parties are working towards finding common ground on how to proceed with the matter.

76. The other challenge to the CPA relates to the Referendum Law that was to be passed by the INA at the beginning of the third year of the implementation process. To date, this law has not been passed. However, the Sudanese parties have informed the Assessment and Evaluation

Commission (AEC) that the Referendum Bill is now before the National Constitutional Review Commission (NCRC), indication that progress on the law is being made.

77. The rise in insecurity in South Sudan is another threat to the CPA implementation process. This situation is reportedly caused by the proliferation of small arms among the civilian population. It is further compounded by the lack of a well trained and disciplined security apparatus capable of addressing insecurity in some areas in the South. The ongoing DDR process is reported to have left some of the ex-combatants with their arms in South Sudan. While funds have been pledged by both the GoNU and the international community, the process is yet to achieve the desired results.

78. Council will recall that the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs) are intended to form the nucleus of the future Sudanese National Armed Forces, should the result of the referendum confirm the unity of the country. The CPA provided that the formation, training, tasking and deployment of the JIUs be completed no later than 21 months following the signing of the CPA. While the JIUs have been formed, their training and deployment has been delayed. Significantly, the hostilities that erupted in Abyei in 2008, as well as in Malakal in February 2009, are reported to have originated within the JIUs.

79. Council will recall that, in 2003, in Maputo, the AU instituted a Ministerial Committee on the Post-Conflict Reconstruction of the Sudan. In its efforts to fulfil its mandate, the Committee, at Senior Officials level, undertook an assessment mission to the Sudan from 24 to 31 May 2009. The objective of the mission was to assess the activities undertaken since its formation, as well as to recommend how best the AU member states could assist the efforts of Sudan in post-conflict reconstruction and development within the context of the CPA implementation.

80. The CPA implementation process has reached one of its decisive moments. The Sudanese general elections are scheduled for February 2010. In the interim, a number of issues need to be concluded to facilitate free and fair elections. Furthermore, the 2011 Referendum that will decide the future of the country is only 19 months away. While the parties have the primary responsibility for the achievement of the objectives of the CPA, it is crucial that the international community give the same support to the current implementation process as was the case during the negotiation phase in Kenya.

- ***Darfur***

81. One of the major highlights of the period under review was the decision by Pre-Trial Chamber I of the International Criminal Court (ICC), on 4 March 2009, to issue an arrest warrant against President Omar Hassan Al Bashir for war crimes and crimes against humanity. In a communiqué issued the same day, I expressed deep concern at the far reaching consequences of that decision, which came at a critical juncture in the process to promote lasting peace, reconciliation and democratic governance in the Sudan. I underlined that the search for justice should be pursued in a way that does not impede or jeopardize the promotion of peace. I recalled that it was because of these concerns that the PSC has requested that the UN Security Council, in accordance with the provisions of article 16 of the Rome Statute, to defer the process initiated by the ICC. On March 8, 2009, I led an AU delegation to Khartoum to meet with the Sudanese President and other high ranking officials to discuss developments relating to the ICC process.

82. In the meantime, the PSC met on 5 March 2009 to review the situation. On that occasion, the PSC expressed deep concern at the decision of the Pre-Trial Chamber, and urged all the Sudanese stakeholders, including the Sudanese Government, to exercise utmost restraint, to

uphold all their international obligations and to remain committed to the search for peace and stability in Darfur. The PSC deeply regretted that, despite the risks posed by the ongoing ICC process to the search for lasting peace and stability in the Sudan, the Security Council had failed to consider with the required attention the request made by the AU for it to invoke article 16 of the ICC Statute. The PSC appealed, once again, to the Security Council to exercise its powers of deferral and requested the Commission to continue engaging the Security Council and mobilizing support for the AU's position. Finally, the PSC reiterated the AU's call to the Government of Sudan to take immediate and concrete steps to investigate the human rights violations in Darfur and bring their perpetrators to justice.

83. A few days after the ICC decision, the Government of the Sudan expelled 13 humanitarian international NGOs and three local NGOs from Darfur on the grounds that they had communicated information to the ICC. A joint assessment mission composed of representatives of the Sudanese Government and various UN agencies was put in place to assess the situation. It concluded that four areas of assistance were especially affected: (i) food, (ii) health and nutrition, (iii) non food items and emergency shelter, and (iv) water, sanitation and hygiene. Emergency measures were suggested and implemented thereafter and sustainable measures, including the registration of new INGOs, were agreed upon between the various humanitarian agencies and the Government.

84. It would be recalled that, at its 12th Ordinary Session, the Assembly of the Union gave its full support to the decision taken by the PSC, at its 142nd meeting held in Addis Ababa on 21 July 2008, to request the Commission to establish an independent High-Level Panel made up of distinguished African personalities, with the mandate to examine the situation in Darfur in depth and submit recommendations on how best to address the issues of accountability and combating impunity, on the one hand, peace, reconciliation and healing, on the other, in an effective and comprehensive manner. The Panel was inaugurated on 19 March under the leadership of its Chairperson, former President Thabo Mbeki. Subsequently, the Panel travelled to the Sudan from 1 to 4 April 2009, holding a series of meetings with various stakeholders, including the President of the Sudan. The Panel undertook a second visit to the Sudan from 15-23 May 2009, for intensive engagement with the Sudanese parties. The Panel also visited Libya, Egypt, Chad, and Qatar, from 23 April to 4 May 2009, for consultations on issues relevant to its mandate. As part of its work programme, the Panel is convening public hearings, in Khartoum and Darfur, from 16 to 25 June 2009, to listen to the views of Sudanese stakeholders, and will consult with international stakeholders, early July 2009, in Addis Ababa. The Panel is expected to submit its report at the end of July 2009.

85. As a follow-up to Decision 221(XII) adopted by the Assembly at its 12th Ordinary Session, the Commission convened, in Addis Ababa from 8 to 9 June 2009, a meeting of the African countries that are States parties to the Rome Statute, in order to exchange views on the work of the ICC in relation to Africa, particularly in the light of the processes initiated against African personalities, and to submit recommendations thereon. A comprehensive report on the outcome of the meeting is being submitted to the Executive Council.

86. The period under review was also marked by continued efforts to reinvigorate the peace process. On 17 February 2009, the GoNU of the Sudan and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) signed an Agreement of Good Will and Confidence Building for the Settlement of the Problem of Darfur, as a result of the peace talks that took place in Doha under the mediation of the AU-UN Joint Chief Mediator, Djibrill Bassole, and the Qatari Government. However, following the issuance of the arrest warrant against the President of the Sudan and the ensuing expulsion of a number of international NGOs, the JEM decided to suspend its participation in the talks, accusing

the Government of breaching the Good Will Agreement and stating that it would resume talks only if the expelled NGOs are reinstated and the exchange of prisoners effected. During this period, military confrontations between JEM and Minni Minawi's forces, as well as those of GoS, occurred in Northern Darfur, in particular in Umm Baru and Kornoi. I am pleased to report that, thanks to the efforts of regional and international partners, particularly those of the new US Special Envoy for Darfur, the JEM has resumed its participation in the talks since early May. Furthermore, from the 3 to 15 March in Tripoli, Libya number of movements from Darfur signed the Tripoli Pact to participate in the Doha peace talks as one delegation with one position. A delegation from the Tripoli Pact travelled to Doha where it held discussions with the mediation.

87. The security situation was relatively calm during the period under review, but experienced peaks of high tension, especially in January and February 2009, with heavy fighting between the GoS and the JEM's forces for the control of the city of Muhajeria, and in March. The fighting around Muhajeria resulted in a massive forced movement of populations. The reporting period has also been characterized by a significant increase in criminal acts. On 17 March 2009, one Nigerian peacekeeper was killed after his patrol was attacked by unknown gunmen. In accordance with the decisions taken during the meeting of the Tripartite Mechanism on the Deployment of the UNAMID on 19 January 2009, the Government of the Sudan has deployed 183 police officers in El Fasher to reinforce the capacity of the GoS police in the region and to ensure a security perimeter around the Mission compounds.

88. As of 8 June 2009, 13,455 troops (69%) were deployed in Darfur out of the 19,555 military personnel strength authorized by the UN Security Council resolution 1769. Out of the 18 battalions required, 12 are fully deployed in terms of personnel. Joint AU-UN pre-deployment visits have been carried out to assess the readiness of countries that have pledged troops. Critical gaps remain in the areas of aviation and force enablers. Against this background, I welcome the decision of the Ethiopian Government to provide 5 attack helicopters. With respect to the police, 2479 (39%) of the authorized strength have been deployed, including 5 Formed Police Units (FPU). It is worth noting that the Tripartite Coordination Mechanism in charge of facilitating the deployment of the UNAMID has met three times during the reporting period. It came to the conclusion that almost all its decisions were fully implemented by the various partners.

89. In conclusion, sustained efforts are still required to bring to a definite end the conflict in Darfur. I urge the parties to show the required political will and courage. I welcome the progress made in the deployment of UNAMID. Finally, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the members of the AU High Level Panel on Darfur for the work they are undertaking. I am confident that their recommendations will go a long way in assisting the parties to achieve the long lasting peace and reconciliation the people of Darfur and, indeed, of the Sudan as a whole are yearning for.

vi) Burundi

90. There was significant progress in the process of implementing the 2006 Agreements, especially since the Summit of the Regional Initiative held in Bujumbura on 4 December 2008. It is worth recalling that at that Summit, the two parties to the peace process, namely the Government and PALIPEHUTU-FNL had made firm commitments to pursue the peace process. To this end, on 17 January 2009, the President of FNL made a declaration in which he pledged that his movement was renouncing the armed struggle. On 13 March, the Facilitator set up an ad hoc Committee comprising representatives of the

Facilitation, the Government and FNL to fast-track the peace process. On 16 March 3,500 ex-combatants of PALIPEHUTU-FNL were assembled in Rubira zone.

91. On 8 April 2009, the Facilitator convened the Political Directorate and the ad hoc Committee in Pretoria to assess the progress made and decided on the way forward. The meeting among other things decided to integrate 33 civilian cadres in the administration, diplomacy and para-statal organs; the liberation of the last FNL political and war prisoners; the integration of 3,500 former FNL combatants in the army (40%) and in the security services (60%); the demobilization of 5,000 ex-combatants. The meeting also decided that support should be provided to all children associated with the Movement and that 1,000 women should be demobilized. Back from Bujumbura, the ad hoc Committee gave concrete expression to these decisions in an Action Plan focusing among other things on the demobilization of the leader of the Movement on 18 April 2009, thus paving the way for the disarmament of all the combatants and the acceptance of the FNL as a political party on 21 April 2009.

92. It was against this background that the Special Envoys for Burundi met in Bujumbura on 27 May 2009 to take stock of the progress made and took important decisions including the creation of a new structure called “Partnership for Peace in Burundi”. This Partnership which is composed of the Political Directorate (AU, United Nations, EU, Tanzania and Uganda), the Executive Secretariat of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the Executive Secretariat of the United Nations Integrated Office in Burundi (BINUB) is charged to support the continuation of the peace process during the preparatory phase of the 2010 general elections. Specifically, it is mandated to monitor and evaluate the political and security situation in the country, work towards the creation of an environment conducive to the preparation and organization of elections and submit a report to the Regional Initiative.

93. The role of the African Union within the Partnership for Peace in Burundi is to prepare and monitor the process for the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants including women associated with the FNL. In this connection, the African Union is expected to ensure the regular supply of food and other necessities to cantoned ex-combatants.

94. The meeting of the Special Envoys also brought Burundian political actors to agree on the composition of an Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) tasked to organize the 2010 elections. The Chairman of CENI also met with the representatives of the international community to whom he submitted his organ’s requests. After considering the requests, the representatives of the international community set up a “Strategic Electoral Process Support Committee” composed of the Ambassadors of the parter countries involved in the peace process, the representatives of BINUB, UNDP, AU and the Executive Secretariat of the Internal Conference on the Great Lakes Region. The Strategic Committee is assisted by a Technical Committee which is designed to serve as operational structure, coordinate the technical, material and financial assistance and provide technical support to CENI. Not least, the meeting recommended that an end be put to the mandate of the AU Special Protection Force (FSPUA) and that the Personalities

Protection Unit be maintained till the end of the year, when the Joint FNL-Government Protection will become operational.

95. I would like to thank the Burundian parties for the political will they continue to demonstrate. I urge them to persevere in this direction so as to create conditions that are propitious for the preparation and smooth conduct of the 2010 elections. The AU, for its part, will continue to support the efforts deployed to find a way out of the crisis.

vii) Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

96. Last January, I informed Council of developments in Eastern Congo since the attack launched on 28 August 2008 by the elements of the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP) led by the dissident General Laurent Nkunda against the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC). I emphasized that the mobilization of the international community made it possible to establish a unilateral ceasefire and the CNDP in Nairobi, with the facilitation of the Special Envoys of the United Nations and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. Since then, there has been notable progress in the peace process in North Kivu.

97. The direct dialogue which began on 8 December took place in a regional context marked by intense consultations between the Governments of the DRC and Rwanda as part of the implementation of the provisions of the 9 November 2007 Nairobi Communiqué aimed at neutralizing the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) based in Eastern DRC, and by internal division within the CNDP, the proclamation of the end of the war by the CNDP High Command, followed soon afterwards by that of the Congolese armed groups operating in North Kivu, and the arrest of General Nkunda in Rwanda. This succession of events of major significance made it possible to speed up the peace process in the two Kivus.

98. In pursuance of the Operation Plan agreed upon in Goma on 5 December 2008, the elements of the Rwandan Defense Forces (FDR) entered North Kivu on 20 January 2009 to support FARDC in an operation aimed at neutralizing FDLR. The operation which lasted 35 days before the FDR elements returned to Rwanda as initially agreed between the two Governments was a real success and, above all, made it possible to substantially restore confidence between RDC and Rwanda. Following the withdrawal of FDR, FARDC, backed by MONUC continued to track down FDLR elements which in turn carried out reprisals against the civilian population in several localities in North Kivu.

99. The Rwandan Minister of Foreign Affairs undertook a working visit to Kinshasa from 27 to 28 March 2009 as part of efforts aimed at strengthening cooperation between the Congolese and Rwandan Governments. The two parties drew lessons from the operation and agreed among other things to continue the fight against FDLR and to ask the international community to impose sanctions against FDLR leaders wherever they may be. The two Ministers also discussed the question of extradition of General Nkunda to the DRC and, in that regard, agreed to refer the case to their Ministers of Justice for their legal opinion.

100. It was in this context of regional détente that the direct dialogue begun on 8 December 2008 in Nairobi culminated in the signing of an Agreement between the parties in Goma on 29 March 2009. Under this Agreement, the two parties reaffirmed the intangible and inalienable nature of the fundamental principles of the Constitution of the Republic, particularly those relating to national sovereignty, the republican and apolitical nature of the Armed Forces and the National Police. The two parties also agreed, among other things, as follows:

- Transformation of the CNDP into a political party;
- Liberation of CNDP political prisoners and their transportation by the Government to their places of dwelling;
- Promulgation by the Government of an amnesty law covering the period from June 2003 to the date of promulgation of the law;
- Promotion of reconciliation and good neighbourliness among the communities;
- Return of refugees and internally displaced persons;
- Declaration of the North and South Kivu as “disaster zones”; and
- Painstaking reform of the Army and the Security Services.

101. The Agreement also deals with several other specific issues including the vocational reintegration of CNDP cadres, restoration of State authority in the territories formerly controlled by CNDP and war wounded. Not least, the Agreement provides for the establishment by the two Co-Facilitators of an International Monitoring Committee comprising the United Nations, the African Union and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region.

102. Two other Agreements were signed between the Government and the Congolese armed groups in North Kivu on the one hand, and the Government and the Congolese armed groups in South Kivu, on the other. These Agreements in spirit and letter are similar to the one concluded with the CNDP. In them, the armed groups confirm their declaration to end the war and, for those who so wish, their decision to transform themselves into political parties. The Government, for its part, pledged to liberate the prisoners and promulgate an amnesty law.

103. On 30 April 2009, the Prime Minister signed a decree on the establishment, organization and modus operandi of the National Committee on the Follow-up of the Implementation of the three Agreements. The Committee is composed of three Monitoring Committees of Equal Representation, at the rate of one committee per agreement. The task of the Committees with equal Representation is to ensure the effective

implementation of the agreements and the consolidation of the peace process. By this same decree, the Prime Minister also appointed the members of the various Committees.

104. I would like to inform Council that a ceremony organized on 15 March 2009 in Dungou in the Eastern Province marked the withdrawal from DRC of Ugandan troops that took part in the operation jointly conducted by Uganda, the DRC and Southern Sudan against the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) led by Joseph Kony, which has dug in the North-East of Congo. The operation which began on 14 December 2008 resulted in deadly reprisals against Congolese civilian populations by the elements of the LRA. The withdrawal of the Ugandan troops was decided following a meeting between Presidents Joseph Kabila and Yoweri Museveni on 4 March in the border town of Kasindi on the Congolese territory. During the meeting which was designed to take stock of the military operations against the LRA, the two Heads of State also pledged to resume their diplomatic relations broken off in 1988, with an immediate exchange of Ambassadors.

viii) Relations between the Sudan and Chad and other developments

105. The Council will recall that the signing of the Dakar Agreement, on 13 March 2008, and regular meetings of the Contact Group that it established had raised hopes of a sustainable normalization of relations between Chad and the Sudan. The resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries and the exchange of ambassadors, on 9 November 2008, strengthened these hopes within the international community. Despite the difficulties encountered and the sporadic tension in the relations between the two countries, progress has continued to be recorded. Thus, on 3 May 2009 in Doha, under the aegis of Qatar and the Great Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, the two countries signed an Agreement by which they committed themselves to reconciliation and the monitoring of their common border.

106. It is against this backdrop that the situation seriously deteriorated once again. Indeed, on 4 May 2009, the "Union of the Resistance Forces" (UFR), a coalition of rebel forces formed in January 2009, launched an attack in Eastern Chad, in the region of Gos-Beida. In a press release dated May 4, the Government of Chad accused the Sudan of carrying out a "planned aggression against Chad." The Sudan denied the charge and also accused Chad of supporting some rebel movements in Darfur.

107. In a communiqué dated 5 May 2009, I immediately condemned the use of force as a means of resolving situations of tension and crisis, and called on the parties concerned to exercise restraint and demonstrate a sense of responsibility. I stressed that this escalation was most unfortunate, especially as it was happening in the wake of the Agreement of 3 May 2009. In this regard, I called on the parties to comply strictly with their commitments and the relevant principles of the African Union, in a bid to enable the region to overcome the current difficulties and continue with its quest for peace, stability and security. For its part, the Peace and Security Council (PSC), at its meeting of 8 May 2009, strongly condemned these attacks and reaffirmed the rejection and condemnation by the AU of any attempt at destabilization and unconstitutional change of government. The PSC urged the States in the region, without delay, to take the necessary steps to prevent their territories from being used in criminal and destabilization activities. The Security Council of

the United Nations, in a Presidential Statement dated the same day, condemned the renewed military incursions in Eastern Chad by Chadian armed groups from outside. It further stressed that any attempt at destabilization of Chad by force was unacceptable and called on the Sudan and Chad to respect and abide by their mutual commitments.

108. While encouraging Qatar's efforts in the Doha negotiations, I would like to urge the co-chairs of the Contact Group to set themselves to work and complete the excellent task undertaken by the Group under the Dakar Accord, which happens to be the ideal framework for the pooling of efforts to resolve the crisis between Chad and the Sudan. Finally, after its 6th Meeting in N'Djamena, on 15 November 2008, the Contact Group was unable to hold its 7th Meeting scheduled for Khartoum in late February 2009. Consequently, the technical planning of the military deployment for the monitoring of the common border by countries of the Contact Group could not continue.

109. It should be noted that the 11th Session of the Conference of CEN-SAD Heads of State, held in Libya on 29 and 30 May 2009 with the Presidents of the Sudan and Chad in attendance, focused on the situation between Chad and the Sudan. The meeting urged the two countries to resolve their conflict amicably, with a view to ending the tension in their relations. After the meeting, President Déby said he was leaving with the hope that the crisis between the two countries would be resolved thanks to the assistance of the Libyan Leader, the United Nations and other friendly countries.

110. The humanitarian situation in Eastern Chad remains extremely worrying. Many humanitarian agencies continue to provide valuable assistance to some 250,000 Sudanese refugees and 166,000 displaced persons and 700,000 people affected by the crisis. However, insecurity continues to be the main obstacle to humanitarian operations and the return of displaced persons and refugees to their homes.

111. Since mid-January 2009, clashes between rebel factions and the armed forces of the Central African Republic (CAR) have sparked an influx of refugees into the Chadian region of Salamat from North-Eastern CAR. According to UNHCR, there are approximately 16,000 new refugees in Chad.

112. It will be recalled that in the negotiations between the parties of the ruling coalition and those of the democratic opposition, within the framework of the Agreement of 13 August 2007, two important laws were adopted by the Chadian National Assembly relating to the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and the Electoral Code. However, since December 2008, the coalition of opposition parties has continued to denounce the two laws on grounds that they are inconsistent with the Agreement. It considers, in particular, that the INEC is not independent. Despite the numerous meetings between the ruling coalition and the opposition, and a meeting, on 5 March 2009, between the CPDC and President Idriss Déby Itno, the guarantor of the Agreement, the situation remained deadlocked. Following the mediation of two lawyers provided by the OIF, both parties agreed to a compromise consisting in the adoption of a draft decree spelling out the modalities for implementing the law on the Electoral Code and the establishment of an INEC. I am pleased to note that in addition to the above two laws, the Government has also adopted laws on the status of the political opposition and a law on the Charter of

political parties, thus enabling the continuation of the dialogue with the democratic opposition. The general population census, which is also an important element in the process, was conducted from 20 May to 20 June 2009.

ix) Central African Republic (CAR)

113. During the period under review, the Commission continued to monitor the situation in the Central African Republic (CAR). The end of the Inclusive Political Dialogue (IPD), held in Bangui from 8 to 20 December 2008, has raised hopes for a return to political calm. In line with the IPD recommendations, President François Bozizé appointed a new Government on 19 January 2009, including a few members of the democratic and armed opposition. Thereafter, an IPD Recommendations Monitoring Committee and an Ad Hoc Electoral Code Review Committee were established.

114. Against this background, the Representatives/Special Envoys of the AU, the UN, the OIF and President El Hadj Omar Bongo held their second meeting on 26 and 27 January 2009 in Libreville. The meeting welcomed the formation of the new Government of openness and called for the speedy establishment of the IPD Recommendations Monitoring Committee. During the same period, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement Monitoring Committee held its 4th meeting in Libreville on 29 January 2009. My Special Envoy for the Central African Republic took part in this meeting.

115. After heated debates, the Monitoring Committee adopted the composition of the Steering Committee and the timetable for activities of the DDR programme that must be implemented under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The Steering Committee held its first meeting in Bangui, from 3 to 5 February 2009. It adopted its rules of procedure, the regulations governing Central African combatants and a detailed timetable for the entire DDR programme. The AU took part in this meeting.

116. Practical arrangements were adopted to allow the leaders of armed groups present to conduct a census of their combatants for the effective execution of the programme. They included: the “Armée populaire pour la restauration de la démocratie” (APRD), the “Union des Forces pour la démocratie et le rassemblement” (UFDR), the “Mouvement des Libérateurs centrafricains pour la justice” (MLCJ) and the “Union des forces républicaines” (UFR). Meanwhile, the elements of the “Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain (FDPC)” attacked Batangafo on 21 February 2009. Subsequently, in a joint communiqué, the FDPC and MLCJ threatened to resume the armed struggle if on grounds that the Central African Government does not respect the signed agreements and the IPD recommendations. In the months that followed, intercommunity clashes erupted in the Vakaga Prefecture in the North-East of the country. These disagreements gave birth to a new armed group known as the “Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix” (CPJP). As a result of these developments, the implementation of the DDR programme was considerably delayed.

117. On the other hand, the mission of the Peacebuilding Commission (MICOPAX), deployed in the CAR since July 2008, has continued to support to the Central African Defence and Security Forces, particularly in remote provinces of the country. An AU-EU

joint evaluation mission of MICOPAX visited the Central African Republic and Gabon from 23 to 30 April 2009 to review MICOPAX activities in the light of its mandate and the Agreement for funding amounting to 14.6 million Euros, signed in December 2008 with the EU, guaranteed by the AU.

118. As part of the implementation of the decision adopted by the 130th meeting of the PSC, the Commission dispatched a mission to Bangui, from 28 January to 5 February 2009, to discuss the conditions for opening an AU Liaison Office. The Office should be functional in the coming months.

119. The effective holding of the IPD was a milestone in the effort to consolidate peace, security and stability in the CAR. Despite sporadic armed clashes, a general shift towards peace is discernible in the country. Even so, the implementation of the DDR programme remains one of the major challenges facing the Central African Republic. Indeed, it is becoming increasingly clear that the DDR determines the rest of the process leading up to free and fair elections in a peaceful environment. Without the necessary external support, this programme cannot be implemented, and that would impact on the political process. Moreover, the economic and financial situation deserves special attention. Development partners should be responsive to the huge efforts made by Central African authorities and tailor support procedures to the reality of the situation in CAR.

x) *Activities of MINURCAT*

120. On 14 January 2009, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1861 (2009) authorizing the deployment of a military component of the UN Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT), to take over from the EU Force (EUFOR) at the end of its mandate on 15 March 2009. Under the resolution, MINURCAT comprises a maximum of 300 police officers, 25 liaison officers, 5,200 soldiers and an appropriate number of civilian personnel. It will operate in Eastern Chad and North-Eastern Central African Republic where, in conjunction with the UN country team and the UN Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic (BONUCA), it will perform various tasks related to security and the protection of civilians, human rights and the rule of law.

121. As part of the “regional peace support effort”, MINURCAT was authorized by the Security Council to take all necessary measures, in conjunction with the Government of Chad, to protect civilians in danger, particularly refugees and internally displaced persons, facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and the free movement of humanitarian personnel and protect United Nations personnel, facilities, installations and equipment. Similarly, MINURCAT may, by establishing a permanent military presence in Birao (CAR) and, in conjunction with the Central African Government, help create a safer environment, perform limited operations aimed at removing civilian and humanitarian staff from danger and protecting United Nations personnel, facilities, installations and equipment.

122. On 15 March 2009, MINURCAT assumed full control of the military component of EUFOR. The deployment of military force is ongoing, but the operation is hampered by the inadequacy of troop contributions, compared to strength provided for by resolution 1861 (2009). As of May 2, the force had only 2,655 soldiers. Furthermore, the force still has a

shortfall in logistics, including helicopters. The deployment of the humanitarian protection force, known as the Integrated Security Detachment (ISD), is almost complete. As of May 4, 728 police officers and gendarmes out of a total of 850 had assumed duty in Eastern Chad.

xi) Liberia

123. The Commission has continued to follow the post-conflict reconstruction efforts in Liberia. The country's Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme continues to make steady progress based on its four major pillars of national security, economic revitalization, governance and the rule of law, and infrastructure and basic services. On 3 June 2009, President Johnson-Sirleaf signed into law an Act amending certain provisions of the 2005 Independent National Commission on Human Rights Act, paving way for the Commission to conform to international standards and best practice. As the Liberian TRC process comes to an end in June 2009, the Commission has also concluded a week-long regional consultation process designed to promote transparency, inclusion, participation and ownership of the peace building and reconciliation initiatives to help support social cohesion, democracy and national development. Furthermore, the issue of corruption has posed a major challenge to the Government amidst allegations of corruption highlighted by the various audit.

124. Following the PSC request to the Commission to dispatch a multidisciplinary team of experts to Liberia and Sierra Leone to assess the situation and come up with concrete recommendations on the nature of assistance that could be rendered by the AU and its Member States to the two countries, within the AU Policy framework on Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development (PCRD), a mission visited the country. A report on the visit will be submitted to the PSC in the coming weeks.

125. In connection with the United Nations Mission in Liberia's (UNMIL) drawdown programme, a technical assessment mission from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations visited Liberia from 27 April to 6 May 2009, to assess the progress made in the peace process, review all aspects of the UNMIL's mandate concerning its support to the Liberian Government, and the rebuilding of its security and rule of law institutions. The team's recommendations, including the continuation of the drawdown of UNMIL troops (which currently stands at around 10,000) to about 8,500 until after the 2011 elections, will inform the Secretary-General's proposals to the UN Security Council. A Security Council delegation also visited Liberia on 19 May 2009. The delegation noted the fragile security situation and expressed its determination to give support to the Government in the areas of security sector reform, justice and rule of law that require urgent attention – it should be noted here that, while the overall security situation has remained generally stable, there is, however, an increase in incidents of criminal violence; other areas of potential security risk and tension include the issue of dissatisfied ex-combatants, land and ethnic disputes, illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons and illegal mining. The Security Council delegation also noted that the travel ban on individuals in the country who continue to pose security threats to Liberia and regional peace and stability through their actions still remains in force.

xii) Côte d'Ivoire

126. At its 12th Ordinary Session held in February 2009, the Assembly of the Union noted that the presidential elections originally scheduled for 30 November 2008 had failed to take place. It encouraged the Government to take appropriate measures to set new dates agreed upon by consensus, on the proposal of the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). The Assembly welcomed the signing, on 22 December 2008, of the 4th Supplementary Agreement to the Ouagadougou Political Agreement, which is supposed to address unresolved military issues, as well as the effective restoration of State authority throughout the national territory.

127. On the proposal of the IEC, and upon consideration by the Council of Ministers on 14 May 2009, the date of the 1st round of the presidential election was scheduled for Sunday 29 November 2009. It was the Prime Minister who read the decree signed by the President of the Republic to convene the electorate. Coming four days before the meeting of the Permanent Consultation Framework (CPC), this decision helped to ease the increasingly evident tension among the country's political forces.

128. The 5th meeting of the CPC held on 18 May 2009 in Ouagadougou, under the chairmanship of President Blaise Compaoré, Facilitator of the inter-Ivorian dialogue, was attended by all the Ivorian parties. The meeting, inter alia, endorsed the Government's decision to schedule the 1st round of the presidential election for 29 November 2009 and set other important dates, namely May 20 for the start of the handover of duties between FAFN zone commanders and prefects; 30 June 2009 - end of enrolment; September 2009 - publication of the electoral register and mid-November - beginning of the campaign.

129. The handover of duties between FAFN zone commanders and prefects finally took place on May 26 in Bouaké, under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Guillaume Soro and in the presence of some members of Government and the international community, including the AU. It was noted that the handover of other duties will proceed gradually with the deployment of the 8000 police and gendarme officers from the Integrated Command Centre (ICC). This beginning of the restoration of normal administrative work was unanimously hailed, since it paves the way for prefects to exercise their full functions. Despite this progress, the redeployment of the tax administration is still limited to date. The free movement of goods and persons is, however, real. As part of the national reconciliation effort, the President of the Republic began a 10 day state visit to the north, west and centre zones, previously under the control of the former rebellion.

130. The population identification and election enrolment operations ended on 31 March 2009 throughout the national territory. The catch-up operations were completed on May 10 in Abidjan, while in the interior, they resumed on 21 May and are still going on despite some difficulties. As of 2 June 2009, 76381 people had been enrolled, including 41000 in Abidjan. According to the IEC, the 227 collection centres not previously visited are now 100% visited. It plans to launch the enrolment of Ivorians in the Diaspora from 11 June. The recompilation of civil status registers lost or destroyed ended on 20 May. To give all citizens the opportunity to be identified and enrolled, the end of this operation has been extended until 30 June. As of 13 May 2009, 6,048,144 people were enrolled out of an

expected total of 8.7 million.

131. As part of efforts to end the crisis, the PSC, in late April, sent to Côte d'Ivoire an information and evaluation mission led by the Ambassador of Burkina Faso in Ethiopia. This mission arrived at a crucial moment in the process of finding a solution to the crisis, and was commended by the Ivorian parties. It met the highest authorities of the country, officials in charge of the electoral process, representatives of the international community, political parties and civil society.

132. In conformity with the 4th Supplementary Agreement of the OPA, and as directed by the President of the Republic, it was decided, after consultation, to allocate 8000 police and gendarme officers, who will gradually and on an equal basis be stationed in the ICC to form mixed brigades and police stations. These forces also agreed on the modus operandi of providing security for the electoral process under the supervision of the ICC. As of 2 June 2009, 500 elements of the Defence and Security Forces had been deployed in Bouake, and 101 elements of the Armed Forces of the New Forces in Abidjan.

133. But the dismantling of militias and vigilante groups in the South remains worrisome. In Abidjan district, 9625 elements were recently profiled, while the profiling of militias in the West region will begin soon. Many militiamen want to be integrated into the new army, but the mobilization of financial resources is a major challenge. The new weekly forum instituted by the Special Representative of the Facilitator will make it possible to identify all problems so that appropriate solutions can be found.

134. For its part, the United Nations Security Council, on 27 January 2009, adopted resolution 1865 which, inter alia, took note of the delays in the implementation of the 4th Supplementary Agreement and extended the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and of the Licorne force until 31 July. Their respective strengths will reduce from 8115 to 7450 elements by the end of July for the first, and from 1800 to 1100 elements by the end of 2009 for the second.

135. On the economic front, the IMF and the World Bank have agreed to admit Côte d'Ivoire to the decision point of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and granted it financial support. The resumption of cooperation with international monetary institutions is reflected by the working visit to Côte d'Ivoire by the Managing Director of the IMF. This has encouraged the Ivorian Government to rigorously pursue reforms embarked on to be able to reach the completion point next year.

136. On the humanitarian side, an estimated 120000 internally displaced persons (IDP) have already returned to several towns in the West, including almost 80000 who gradually went back to their plantations. But the rates of return and reintegration of IDPs have been experiencing a slowdown for some time because of insecurity. Violence is reported in Bloléquin as a result of land disputes between indigenous populations and other non-native and foreign communities.

137. Significant progress has been made in the implementation of the 4th Supplementary Agreement. I urge the Ivorian parties to support this process by respecting the commitments made. The international community must, in turn, mobilize the financial resources required to support and assist the efforts of the Ivorian parties to hold the presidential elections on schedule and to find a positive solution to the crisis.

xiii) Republic of Guinea

138. During the last session of the Executive Council, I informed Council of the coup d'état which took place in the Republic of Guinea following the death of President Lansana Conté. Council will recall that, during its 164th and 165th meetings, held respectively on 24 and 29 December 2008, the PSC strongly condemned the coup d'état and decided to suspend Guinea from all AU activities until constitutional order returns to that country. As part of the process of monitoring the situation, I appointed a Special Envoy, in the person of Mr. Ibrahima Fall, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Senegal and former Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs at the United Nations.

139. Furthermore, on the Commission's initiative, a consultative meeting on the situation in Guinea was held in Addis Ababa on 30 January 2009. On that occasion, participants agreed to set up an International Contact Group on Guinea (ICG-G), co-chaired by AU and ECOWAS to monitor the situation with due attention and continue to coordinate and harmonize their efforts toward the speedy restoration of constitutional order, on the basis of the relevant elements of the communiqué adopted by the extraordinary session of ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government held in Abuja on 10 January 2009, namely:

- establish a National Transitional Council (CNT), a deliberative body of civilians and the military;
- establish an inclusive consultative forum bringing together all components of the Guinean civil society, to serve as a framework for dialogue enabling the people of Guinea to strengthen national cohesion ;
- conclude the transition process with the conduct of free, fair and transparent elections in 2009 ;
- CNDD members, the transitional Prime Minister and members of his government not eligible to contest the elections slated for 2009 ; and
- commitment by the transition authorities to uphold human rights and the rule of law, as well as combat impunity and drug trafficking.

140. At its inaugural meeting held in Conakry from 16 to 17 February 2009, the ICG-G took note of CNDD President's statement with regard to the conduct of a transition period based on a four-stage programme (establishment of a transition framework and organs,

setting up a truth, justice and reconciliation commission, instituting constitutional reforms and enactment of electoral laws), as well as his pledge that neither he, the Prime Minister nor CNDD members would be eligible to contest the upcoming elections. At its second meeting held in Conakry on 16 March 2009, the ICG-G welcomed the pursuit of political dialogue between all stakeholders and the CNDD. It also noted CNDD's readiness to cooperate with the platform proposed by the *active forces*. The Group also took note of the commitment by CNDD President to set up the transition institutions in consultation with the *active forces*. On 28 March 2009, the CNDD President issued a Press Release indicating CNDD's approval of the proposals put forward by the *active forces* on management of the transition and related calendar.

141. On 29 March, during a meeting organized by the Governor of Conakry, groups of youths requested the CNDD President to extend the transition period to 2010, a position also echoed by demonstrations organized in the hinterland and in Conakry. It is within that context that, on 7 April 2009, my Special Envoy and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for West Africa undertook a mission to Conakry to encourage the CNDD President in his stated determination to respect the calendar proposed by the *Active Forces* and to rapidly put in place the CNT.

142. The 3rd meeting of the ICG-G held in Conakry from 4 to 5 May 2009, noted with satisfaction CNDD's Press Release of 28 March 2009 indicating its approval of the timetable proposed by the *active forces* for organization of legislative and presidential elections, that is: 11 October 2009 for the legislative election and 13 December 2009 for the first round of the presidential election and 27 December 2009, for the run-off. The Group urged the Guinean party to honour its commitment in respect of financing the elections and reiterated its request to INEC and the Ministry of Regional Administration and Political Affairs (*MATAP*) to present a detailed budget for holding the elections.

143. Since December, the PSC has held three meetings to discuss the situation in Guinea (169th meeting held on 10 February 2009, 183rd meeting held on 26 March 2009 and 192nd meeting held on 10 June 2009). At its 192nd meeting on 10 June 2009, after recalling its previous communiqués on the situation in Guinea and the commitment by the authorities emanating from the coup d'état to conclude the transition process before the end of 2009, the PSC requested the Guinean parties to take all appropriate steps to respect this roadmap and urged the international community, including AU Member States, to provide the financial and technical assistance required to prepare and conduct the legislative and presidential elections expected to conclude the transition.

144. In conclusion, I note with satisfaction the pursuit of the political dialogue between all stakeholders and the CNDD, as well as the readiness of the latter to speedily set up the transition institutions. In the same vein, I urge Guinean authorities to ensure respect of the calendar proposed by the *active forces* and to which they solemnly declared their total accession.

145. During the period under review, I continued to follow up the situation in Guinea Bissau. One of the significant events of this period was the assassination, in early March, of President Bernardo "Nino" Vieira and his Chief of Staff, General Batista Tagme Na Wai. I condemned in the strongest terms these cowardly and heinous acts, which occurred at a time when the international community was making new efforts to consolidate the peace in Guinea Bissau and strengthen the progress made in the political process, following the legislative elections of November 2008. I urged all Guinea Bissau political leaders and stakeholders to rally behind the country's legal authorities to face the situation within the framework of legitimate institutions and the Constitution of Guinea Bissau.

146. Meeting the same day, the PSC adopted a communiqué in which it condemned this heinous act in the strongest possible terms. After having reaffirmed the principles enshrined in the Constitutive Act, particularly respect for the sanctity of human life, the condemnation and rejection of impunity and political assassinations, as well as its unequivocal rejection of unconstitutional changes of Government, the PSC took note of the declaration issued by the armed forces of Guinea-Bissau indicating their intention to respect the Constitution of the country. The PSC called for investigation to shed light on these murders and bring the perpetrators to justice. In accordance with the Constitution of Guinea-Bissau, the Speaker of the National People's Assembly, Mr. Raimundo Pereira, was sworn in as Interim President of the Republic. Thereafter, the country's political stakeholders agreed to schedule elections for 28 June 2009.

147. In early March, I appointed a Special Envoy for Guinea-Bissau in the person of Mr. João Bernardo de Miranda, former Foreign Minister of Angola, who proceeded to Bissau from 21 to 27 April 2009, for consultations with the concerned parties. Similarly, a PSC mission went to Bissau on 26-27 April, where it held talks with the country's key political players. The Special Envoy was again in Bissau from 1 to 5 June for further consultation with the country's authorities and the stakeholders in the electoral process.

148. However, the situation in the country remains fragile as evidenced by the assassination, on 5 June 2009, of Mr. Baciro Dabo, former Minister of Territorial Administration and presidential candidate, and Mr. Helder Proenca, former Defence Minister, as well as the acts of violence and other threats meted against the other presidential candidates. At its 192nd meeting held on 10 June 2009, the PSC strongly condemned these acts. It underscored the need for a credible and independent investigation of the string of political assassinations perpetrated in that country since March 2009, and reiterated its support for establishment of a Commission of Inquiry. The PSC further underscored the need to create conducive conditions of security and stability required for holding free, fair and transparent elections.

149. I appeal to the authorities of Guinea Bissau to take all steps to secure the electoral process as well as to guarantee the safety of the population and of the presidential candidates. It is essential that the Army of Guinea Bissau refrain from interfering in the conduct of political affairs. At the same time, Guinea Bissau, which is going through a

difficult period in its history, needs international support.

xv) *Mauritania*

150. During its session of last January, I informed Council of the developments in efforts to restore constitutional order in Mauritania. In that connection, I reported on the various consultations between the Commission, the authorities emanating from the coup d'état, as well as with international partners. On the eve of the Executive Council meeting, the International Contact Group on Mauritania met in Addis Ababa on 28 January 2009. Later, and at the invitation of the OIF, the Group met in Paris on 20 February 2009. During these meetings, the Group expressed its support to AU's efforts and enumerated elements for resolving the crisis, namely the involvement of President Sidi Ould Cheikh Abdallahi in his capacity as Head of State in the search for a solution, the promotion of consensus and respect for Mauritanian Constitution, as such a solution could lead to the holding of the presidential election. As an aftermath of the Contact Group's communiqué in Paris which invited the Mauritanian parties to an inclusive political dialogue under the auspices of the Chairperson of the Union, Colonel Muammar Kaddafi received representatives of these parties in Libya. He later travelled to Nouakchott.

151. Given the lack of progress in finding a solution to the crisis, the PSC, at its 163rd meeting, decided that unless constitutional order was restored by 5 February 2009, measures, including travel restrictions and freezing of assets, would be imposed on all persons whose activities are designed to maintain the unconstitutional *status quo*. On 5 February 2009, the PSC decided that the sanctions provided for in its communiqué of 22 December 2008 would enter into force, stressing at the same time the need to continue with the efforts deployed by the Mauritanian parties for speedy return to constitutional order in the country. On 24 March 2009, the PSC reaffirmed its decision to impose sanctions. At its meeting of 6 May 2009 devoted to a review of the implementation of its decisions, the PSC welcomed efforts made by the AU, with the support of its partners, to find a consensual solution to the crisis in Mauritania. The PSC commended our efforts.

152. During this period, I travelled to Nouakchott to support efforts towards a return to constitutional order. The Commissioner for Peace and Security and other AU emissaries also made several trips to Mauritania, either individually or accompanied by representatives of the Chairperson of the Union or by other members of the international community. The Commission also maintained close contacts with the Mauritanian parties through meetings held at the AU headquarters.

153. It is in that context that a political dialogue between the Mauritanian parties was held in Dakar from 27 May to 2 June 2009, under the auspices of President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal and the Contact Group on Mauritania, chaired by the AU. It resulted in a Framework Agreement to end the crisis. In the Agreement, which was initialled in Dakar on 2 June and signed in Nouakchott on 4 June, the parties agreed *inter alia* on:

- a consensual transition, in accordance with Article 40 of the Constitution;

- the holding of an early presidential election, the first round of which is set for 18 July 2009 and the second round, if necessary, for 1 August 2009;
- the establishment of an Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC);
- a commitment to undertake all appropriate actions for the immediate implementation of appeasement and confidence-building measures during the transitional period ; and
- the continuation of the Inclusive National Dialogue after the presidential election.

154. Meeting on 10 June 2009, the PSC welcomed the conclusion of that Framework Agreement, noting with satisfaction that it was consistent with the consensual crisis exit elements articulated in its relevant communiqués. The PSC urged the Mauritanian parties to abide by the letter and spirit of the Framework Agreement, and requested me to take all necessary steps to assist in implementing the Agreement. The PSC also urged the international community to provide all assistance necessary for effective implementation of the Framework Agreement and to enable it to fully play, under the aegis of the AU, the role expected of it in ensuring a consensual resolution of the crisis in Mauritania.

155. I trust that, in the implementation of the Framework Agreement, the political maturity and sense of responsibility of the Mauritanian parties will prevail. For its part, the AU will spare no effort to assist in this process.

xvi) Western Sahara

156. The dispute over Western Sahara continues to remain stalemated as a result of the polarized positions of the Parties, and, more recently, because of Morocco's insistence that its proposal for autonomy be the only basis of negotiations in the talks with the POLISARIO. In that connection, it is worth recalling that Security Council resolutions 1754 and 1783 (2007) and 1813 (2008) have all called for direct negotiations between the two Parties to be conducted without preconditions.

157. With the foregoing as a backdrop, the UN Secretary General, last April, submitted a report on developments in the territory to the Security Council, confirming that indeed the stalemate had continued. In light of the lack of progress in the peace process, the Secretary-General recommended that the Security Council, once again, call upon the parties, Morocco and the Frente POLISARIO, to negotiate in good faith, without preconditions, to show political will to enter into substantive discussions and ensure the success of the negotiations.

158. The Security Council, for its part, having considered the said report of the Secretary General, adopted resolution 1871 (2009), by a unanimous vote, renewing its call to the protagonists to continue with the direct negotiations, began under the Manhasset process in June 2007. The resolution specifically "*calls on the Parties to continue to negotiate,*

without preconditions and in good faith... with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara in the context of arrangements consistent with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations”.

159. It now remains for the newly-appointed Personal Envoy of the UN Secretary General for Western Sahara, Ambassador Christopher Ross of the USA, to intensify his consultations with the two parties as well as others concerned, and pursue his proposal of holding, small and informal talks in preparation for the convening of the fifth round of the Manhasset talks. It is AU’s hope that the new approach of the Personal Envoy, which has been endorsed by the UN Security Council in resolution 1871, would indeed turn out to be more productive and thus enable the peace process for Western Sahara to achieve its objective of resolving the long-stalemated dispute, in full accord with the principles and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations.

d) Other Peace and Security issues

i) Maritime Security

160. The issue of maritime security and safety has taken on a higher profile in the past year, largely as a result of the resurgence of piracy off the coast of Somalia. Individual countries and intergovernmental organizations have deployed important sea assets to tackle the trend of piracy off the coast of Somalia. Early this year, a high-level meeting of 17 States from the Western Indian Ocean, Gulf of Aden and Red Sea areas adopted the “Djibouti Code of Conduct”, concerning the Repression of Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in the Gulf of Aden. In connection with the UN Security Council resolution 1851 (2008), a Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS) was created, to act as Point of Contact between and among States, Regional and International organizations, on aspects of combating piracy and armed robbery off the coast of Somalia. The concern of the Commission throughout all these meetings is to emphasize the need to adopt a multifaceted comprehensive approach, including in-land capability and capacity building, to tackle the phenomenon of piracy off the coast of Somalia, which is just the symptom of a bigger problem. In this regard, the need to stop all illegal activities off the coast of Somalia, including illegal fishing and dumping of toxic waste, have been highlighted. World attention on the issue of piracy off the Somali coast of Somalia has diverted attention from the growing threat of attacks off the western coast of Africa. The International Maritime Bureau (IMB) indicates that more than 100 pirate attacks occurred off the West African coast last year.

161. In our effort to tackle all these crosscutting challenges, in line with the Common African Defence and Security Policy (CADSP) the Commission is in the process of generating an appropriate strategy to address the situation.

ii) AU Security Sector Reform (SSR) Policy Formulation Process

162. In January 2008, the Assembly of the African Union adopted decision Assembly/AU/Dec.177(X), which “encourages the Commission to develop a

comprehensive AU Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform (SSR), within the context of the Policy Framework on Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development adopted by the Executive Council in Banjul in June 2006". The Commission has begun the process of developing an AU SSR policy in fulfilment of the decision.

163. The consultative process for the formulation of an AU SSR policy started with the African Regional Workshop on SSR held at the AU in Addis Ababa from 23 – 25 March 2009. The workshop was held in collaboration with the office of the Rule of Law and Security Institutions in the Department of Peacekeeping (DPKO) of the United Nations. The main outcome of the workshop was the development of a roadmap for the development of an SSR policy, as well as a series of pilot projects to begin to address SSR in some Member States that have placed SSR on their post-conflict reconstruction agendas.

164. The AU SSR policy formulation process will include the following processes:

- (a) Consultations with all stakeholders (AU departments, Member States, RECs, the UN system, civil society, international partners and donors),
- (b) Commissioning of selected research papers from experts of selected aspects of SSR that have implications for the AU's SSR Policy,
- (c) Writing the draft policy document,
- (d) Conducting pilot projects to address various aspects of SSR as well as the role of the AU in the implementation of SSR,
- (e) Capacity building in SSR at AU HQ, in the RECs and in AU field and peacekeeping missions,
- (f) The submission of the AU SSR policy document to the Executive Council for adoption.

iii) Arms control

165. As part of the implementation of the AU's small arms and light weapons instruments, the AU has established the AU-Regions Small Arms Steering Committee, which consists of the AU Commission (Chair), the Regional Economic Communities, and other Regional Organizations with a Small Arms and Light Weapons mandate (namely, the Regional Centre for Small Arms, RECSA, and the International Conference of the great Lakes Region). During its first meeting held in Arusha in November 2008, the Steering Committee adopted a workplan for 2009. The first priority of the Steering Committee is the development of an AU Small Arms and Light Weapons Strategy, which would be able to contextualize small arms within the African Peace and Security Architecture, would promote the mainstreaming of small arms issues within peace and security activities, and provide for an overarching framework that would allow different regions and Member States to address their own priorities. The Commission has developed an outline for the Small Arms Strategy, and is in the process of finalizing the draft strategy, which would eventually be submitted to Member States for consideration and adoption.

166. The Commission is finalizing the Terms of Reference for the appointment of an AU Special Envoy for Arms Control and Non-proliferation Issues, who would promote efforts to

address arms proliferation, arms control disarmament and non-proliferation. The Commission has also been pursuing the strengthening of relations with the organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and the Commissioner for Peace and Security recently visited OPCW headquarters in the Hague to discuss future collaborative projects.

e) Africa Peace Facility

167. The African Peace Facility (APF), financed under the 9th EDF came to an end in 2007. An agreement on the new APF was signed last January, with a financial envelope of 300 million Euros, under the 10th EDF. Out of this amount, 200 million Euros are earmarked for Peace Support Operations (PSOs), while the capacity building component will receive 65 million Euros, almost double the amount earmarked for this activity under the previous Facility. The scope of the new Facility has been extended to provide support to conflict prevention and mediation activities, as well as to post-conflict reconstruction and stabilization initiatives. The Facility includes an early response mechanism, with a 15 million Euros envelope, to facilitate timely action and intervention towards the promotion of peace.

168. On 4th February 2009, the Joint Coordinating Committee (JCC) of the APF, comprising of representatives of the AU Commission and the EU, as well of the Regional Economic Communities, met in Addis Ababa. The meeting welcomed the progress made in the implementation of the APF and reviewed the implementation of ongoing APF funded programs, including PSOs. It provided an opportunity to exchange views on the modalities for the implementation of the new APF. The programming of the Facility has already started.

169. The APF has gained a new dimension as one of the instruments for the implementation of the joint partnership on peace and security under the Africa-EU Joint Strategy and Action Plan. The APF has been a very successful instrument, being so far the only sustainable and predictable source of funding for African-led peace support operations. It has contributed to strengthening the role of the AU in the area of peace and security and the closer relationship between the AU and the RECs.

f) Follow-up on Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.145(VIII) on the funding of AU-led Peace Support Operations

170. At its 12th Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa from 1 to 3 February 2009, the Assembly of the Union adopted decision Assembly/AU/Dec. 222(XII) on the report of the PSC on its Activities and the State of Peace and security in Africa. In that decision the Assembly, having noted that the Panel established by the African Union and the United Nations to make concrete recommendations on how the UN could support AU-led peace support operations, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1809(2008) of 16 April 2008, had submitted its report, requested Council to meet as early as possible to review the said report and submit its input prior to its consideration by the UN Security Council.

171. It is to be recalled that, in its report, the Panel presented a broad review of the main

issues discussed with a wide range of interlocutors on the increasing engagement of the AU in conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction. In addition to addressing the strategic relationship between the United Nations and the African Union, the Panel made a number of recommendations to strengthen the mutual relationship and develop a more effective partnership when addressing issues on the joint agendas. In this respect, the Panel stressed the need for a shared strategic vision if the UN and the AU are to exercise their respective advantages: the African Union's ability to provide a rapid response and the United Nations capacity for sustained operation. The Panel also stressed the need to develop institutional capacity commensurate with the demands placed on the AU. Concerning the enhancement of the predictability, sustainability and flexibility of financing of United Nations-mandated peace operations undertaken by the African Union, the Panel recommended the establishment of two new financial mechanisms:

- i) the first one would be based on United Nations-assessed funding and designed to support specific peacekeeping operations. This should be on a case-by-case basis to support UN Security Council-authorized AU peacekeeping operations for a period of up to six months;
- ii) the second would be a voluntarily funded multi-donor trust fund, focused on comprehensive capacity-building for conflict prevention and resolution, as well as institution-building, and should be designed to attract new as well as existing donors, while fostering African ownership.

172. At the same time, the Panel emphasized the importance of African ownership. In this respect, it recommended that the AU should consider establishing its own system for financial contributions for peacekeeping operations through assessed contributions to gradually augment the AU Peace Fund. Finally, the Panel recommended the establishment of a joint UN/AU team to examine the detailed modalities to implement the above mentioned recommendations.

173. At its 178th meeting held on 13 March 2009, the PSC stressed that the report of the Prodi Panel marked an important step in the overall efforts to enhance the capacity of the AU to meet the peace and security challenges facing the continent and to mobilize greater support within the larger international community. At the same time, the Panel underlined the need for continued efforts to ensure predictable, sustainable and flexible funding for AU-led peace support operations, building on recent initiatives and developments in this respect. The PSC recognized the importance of a more effective strategic relationship between the AU PSC and the UN Security Council, to enable both organs to exercise their respective comparative advantages. The PSC underlined the need to ensure a more regular interaction between the Chairperson of the PSC and the President of the Security Council, as well as closer coordination and better synchronization between the Security Council and the PSC in terms of decision-making. The PSC supported the establishment of a joint AU Commission – UN Secretariat team to look in-depth into the recommendations that have been made.

174. On 18 March 2009, the Security Council met to review the report of the Prodi Panel. On that occasion, the Commissioner for Peace and Security addressed the Council. The

Security Council welcomed the efforts of the Panel and noted with interest its report. The Security Council requested the Secretary-General to submit a report, no later than 18 September 2009, on practical ways to provide effective support for the African Union when it undertakes peacekeeping operations authorized by the United Nations, that includes a detailed assessment of the recommendations contained in the Report of the Panel. The Security Council further requested the Secretary-General to take into account in his report the lessons-learned from past and current African Union peacekeeping efforts. The Security Council emphasized the importance of establishing more effective strategic relationships between the UN Security Council and the PSC and between the UN Secretariat and the AU Commission, and encouraged further joint efforts in this direction focusing on issues of mutual interests.

175. As a follow-up to the PSC communiqué and the UN Security Council presidential statement, the AU Commission and the UN Secretariat are currently working together towards the preparation of the report to be submitted to the Security Council in September.

g) Establishment of an AU Strategic Level Capability for Conflict Management in Addis Ababa, including infrastructure

176. In June 2008, in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, I briefed Council on the efforts being undertaken with the assistance of the German Government to establish an AU strategic level capability for conflict management in Addis Ababa, including infrastructure. In this respect, I indicated that, during the Annual Consultation between the AU, the Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, the G8 member countries and other AU partners, held in April 2005, the partners agreed on the need to establish such a capability. This was reiterated during the follow-up technical meeting held in October 2005. In the course of the preparations for the Annual Consultation held in May 2007, the issue was discussed with the German presidency of the G8. In August 2007, the Commission formally requested Germany to provide the required support. On 28 April 2008, the German Foreign Minister wrote to the Chairperson of the Commission to formally confirm that Germany would build the required facility. On 13 May 2008, the Chairperson of the Commission wrote to the German Foreign Minister to thank his country for its support.

177. This request is informed by the increasing role being played by the AU in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts on the continent. As a result, the AU has significantly increased and continues to increase the staff of the PSD. However, it is now clear that current office and operating space is no longer able to cope with the needs of the AU. A new building, housing an AU Conflict Management Centre, is required to accommodate the needed number of staff, but also to provide the necessary tools for the PSD to effectively carry out its mandate.

178. As a follow-up, the Commission and the German Government signed, on 21 November 2008, an Agreement regarding the PSD building. Subsequently, on 12 February 2009, the Commission participated in a jury in Berlin to select the best design following a European wide architectural competition. On 29 April 2009, on the margins of the

Conference of the German Ambassadors in Africa in Addis Ababa, an exhibition on the architectural competition was organized under the auspices of the Commissioner for Peace and Security and the German State Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

III. REGIONAL INTEGRATION, DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION

III.1 INTEGRATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

1. EDUCATION

179. Progress continues to be made in the implementation of the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2015). Of note is the fact that now three RECs - SADC, ECOWAS and ECCAS - are working on the domesticated plan of action. An increasing number of development agencies are seeking to collaborate with the Commission and are also aligning their programmes with the Plan of Action, as called for by the Assembly Decision of January 2008. The Pan-African Parliament has continued to engage the Commission in the development of its education programmes, with the latest meeting held in Johannesburg in May 2009. Preparations are underway towards co-hosting a UNESCO Conference on Education in February 2010.

a) Gender and Culture

180. The Programme of Activities of the Commission in the area of gender in education are implemented by the International Centre for the Education of Girls and Women in Africa (CIEFFA), a specialised institute of the African Union located in Ouagadougou. A proposed new staff structure for CIEFFA has been submitted for approval by the competent policy organs. Following the institutional audit in November 2008, CIEFFA's staff will be trained to align their administrative and financial systems with those of the AUC. This year, a total of US \$150,000.00 has been transferred to CIEFFA, to enable them to carry out their activities, including a continental situational analysis of gender and culture in education. The result of the analysis will be used to develop appropriate interventions for subsequent years.

b) Education Management and Information System (EMIS)

181. Since the Commission began building the capacity of the Pan African Institute of Education for Development (IPED) in October 2008, the institution has become operational and has taken up its role as the African Education Observatory. IPED's core function is therefore implementation of the Second Decade Plan of Action in the area of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS). In March 2009, IPED coordinated a technical workshop, held in Dakar, Senegal, bringing together COMEDAF Bureau Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and key partners such as ADEA, UIS/UNESCO, UNICEF and CONFEMEN. The outcome was a definitive implementation timetable for ensuring that Member States will begin to take charge of their education statistics, to enable the Commission to produce a first "AU Outlook on Education" report by the end of 2009. Since then, IPED has held a training workshop in Johannesburg in April 2009 for the benefit of the competent officials from Member States in the use of new instruments

produced by the department for education data collection and management. A second workshop was planned for June 2009 in Dakar. The Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) provides much appreciated technical support to the AU EMIS initiative. This is in line with the Commission's approach of building and harnessing strategic partnerships with African expert agencies.

182. It is imperative that the proposed new structure for IPED be approved expeditiously so that this important institution can operate optimally.

c) Teacher Development

183. The Commission is in the process of recruiting a consultant to carry out a situational analysis of the status of teacher adequacies in African countries, in view of the needs for implementing the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa. The Consultant will also assist in drafting a continental teacher mobility Protocol taking into account existing cross-border teacher recruitment initiatives, the equivalence of teacher qualifications, needs of migrant teachers, as well as the need for both supplying and receiving countries to put in place adequate teacher development and support mechanisms to ensure sustainable education systems.

d) Higher Education

184. The Association of African Universities (AAU) has resumed collaboration under the MoU signed two years ago with the Commission. In a meeting in February 2009, the AAU agreed to provide technical support for the production of the AU Compendium of African Institutions of Higher Education, as well as development of instruments for the implementation of the African Quality Rating Mechanism. These should be ready by the end of 2009.

i. The Pan-African University (PAU)

185. Work has progressed towards implementing the Pan African University (PAU). As instructed by the last session of the COMEDAF III Bureau, a feasibility study of the project has been carried out with a sponsorship from UNESCO. The draft was presented at the ADEA/UNESCO Higher Education Task Force meeting in Tunis in February 2009, and the final copy submitted in May 2009. The Commission undertook field visits to institutions of Higher Education and Science Departments in South Africa and Botswana from 30 March through 3 April 2009 to assess the possibility of the establishing the "Space Sciences" thematic component of the PAU in Southern Africa.

ii. Mwalimu Nyerere African Union Scholarship Scheme (MNAUSS)

186. The Commission has paid tuition fees, student stipends and settling allowances for fifteen young Africans studying in African universities under the scholarship scheme. This number is expected to increase by the end of 2009, as award recipients have been slow to complete and return the contract forms. Meanwhile, the feasibility study carried out on further development of the Scheme as well as collaboration with the EU Erasmus Mundus programme, has been completed and will be presented to a group of experts in June 2009.

Costs for these activities are covered directly by the EC. The second call for the MNAUSS is expected to be sent out by the end of this year.

e) Curriculum and Teaching and Learning Materials

187. The First Pan African Conference on Curriculum, Literacy and Book Sector Development with the theme “Rebuilding Education in Africa” was successfully held in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania from 24 to 27 March 2009. The high profile Conference, co-sponsored by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania was opened by the Right Honourable Prime Minister of Tanzania, accompanied by five senior Ministers from his government. The outcome of the Conference includes a draft continental book policy framework, and guidelines for developing national and regional strategies and policies; as well as recommendations for ensuring an African centred curriculum, promoting African writers and publishers, and enhancing reading and writing. The Conference received financial and technical support from UNICEF and the East African Book Development Association. The two institutions, as well as ADEA will also support follow up activities.

2. SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

a) African Union Scientific Awards Programme

188. The AU Commission, with the support of its key Development Partners, initiated and launched “African Union Scientific Awards Programme” for 2009, targeting young researchers at Member States level, women at regional level with an opening to all outstanding scientists at continental level. These awards are (a) the AU-TWAS Young National Scientist Awards implemented at Member States level, (b) Regional Scientific Awards for women scientists only, being implemented by the RECs namely SADC, ECCAS, EAC, CEN-SAD and ECOWAS and (c) Continental Scientific Awards run by the Commission.

b) AU-EU Research Grants Programme

189. In order to support scientific research, the Commission is in the process of setting up the AU-EU Research Grants Programme as a financial instrument for research in Africa. The Research Grant Programme which has been identified as one of the six “early deliverables” during the EU-AU College to College meeting of 1 October 2008 is being considered for funding under the Intra-ACP budget. The Commission is in the process of building its own capacity to handle and manage calls for proposals in scientific research fields through the establishment of a Programme Management Unit. The first call is expected to be launched by the end of 2009.

c) Biosafety

190. In February 2009, an AU Preparatory Meeting for African delegates attending the negotiation Meeting of the Group of Friends of the Co-Chairs on Liability and Redress in

the context of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was held in Mexico. The preparatory meeting was aimed at assisting African countries to develop an African Common Position on almost all items of the negotiations. Some critical points of the African Common Position include the need to have legally binding provisions on administrative approaches, in particular a legally binding provision on civil liability to redress damage resulting from transboundary movement of living modified organisms. By and large, the African Common Position succeeded in influencing the negotiations, which resulted in an agreement to have an international legal regime on liability and redress.

191. The Commission participated and supported delegations of Member States in the Coordination Meeting for Governments and Organizations Implementing or Funding Biosafety Capacity Building Activities, held in Costa Rica in March 2009. This meeting was an opportunity for the Commission to engage partners on preliminary discussions on the initiative of the African Regional Training on risk assessment and management of living modified organisms planned for 2010.

192. It is to be also noted that the Commission has made the necessary arrangements for the AUC-RECs Regional Meetings on Biosafety for Eastern and Southern Africa in Arusha in May 2009 and for Western and Central Africa in Abuja in June 2009.

d) Scientific, Technical and Research Commission (STRC)

193. During the period under review, the STRC devoted its energies to implement programmatic activities on (i) energy technology policy, and (ii) technology planning and technological governance in Africa. The rationale for undertaking these activities stems from the realization that many Member States develop energy policies that lack technological dimensions. Moreover, national economic planning activities do not include technology planning, and the technological governance systems are not sufficiently proactive in embodying technological imperatives.

iii. Technology Planning and Technological Governance in Africa

194. Technological governance is the manner in which power and authority are exercised to manage a society's technological challenges through a set of relations, processes, and institutional mechanisms, with a view to facilitating, promoting, and deepening technologization in an economy.

195. The meeting on Technology Planning & Technological Governance in Africa was held in Nairobi, Kenya from 24 to 27 February 2009 in collaboration with United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), International Council for Science Regional Office for Africa (ICSU ROA), and the Kenya National Council for Science and Technology (NCST). The meeting discussed a Draft Framework on "Technology Planning & Technological Governance in Africa" and generated recommendations for the attention of policy makers in Africa, including the following:

- Devise ways and means to reverse the general tendency to cede too much control to overseas contractors;

- Ensure that investors sign a technologization quality control and assurance form as evidence of both their technological commitments and expectations;
- Establish a robust monitoring system to ascertain if technological targets are being realized;
- Train technical personnel and build capacity of institutions in S&T policy matters to ensure implementation, enforcement, and compliance of technologization standards;
- Identify the National System of Innovation (NSI) with respect to technological governance, identify the governing stakes (government and non-government) and forge links/interactions to make it functional;
- Strengthen the effectiveness of the proposed Pan-African Intellectual Property Organization (PAIPO) to serve as Coordinator of Intellectual Property Rights Issues (IPR) for the Continent.

iv. Publications

196. STRC has produced the following three publications under the series title “Techno Africa Policy Monitor”:

- No.1: Science and Technology Policy Training, Capacity Building and Advocacy.
- No.2: Indigenous Knowledge, Intellectual Property Protection and Benefit Flows to Africa: The Case of the Sickle Cell Anemia Medical Innovation in Nigeria.
- No.3: Infectious Diseases and Traditional Knowledge in Africa.

3. INFORMATION SOCIETY

a) **Action Plan on GMES and Africa**

197. Preparation of the Action Plan on GMES (Global Monitoring for the Environment and Security) and Africa is part of the implementation of the Lisbon Agreement within the framework of the EU-AU Partnership to be submitted to the next EU-Africa Summit planned for 2010. A consultancy Group of African and European experts in various fields related to the GMES and Africa process has been recruited to contribute in their area of competencies to the drafting of the Action Plan. In this respect, a meeting was held in Ispra, Italy, in March 2009. The Commission is in the process of planning regional consultation workshops in order to develop an African common position that will be submitted for consideration by AU competent policy organs.

b) **Preparation for 2010 ICT Summit**

198. In the framework of preparation for 2010 ICT Summit, two Preparatory Meetings for the January 2010 Summit, with the theme “Information and Communication Technologies in Africa: Challenges and Prospects for Development”, were held on 13 February and 15

May 2009 with key partners. The concept note prepared by the Commission was further enriched and roadmaps/action plans identifying core activities have been developed.

c) ARAPKE Updating Programme

199. A Work Plan for the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE), and Terms of Reference for the ARAPKE Phase II Working Group have been developed. The working group will meet in the 2nd Semester of 2009 to evaluate the Phase II of the ARAPKE flagship projects following the invitation to the Member States to furnish the Commission with a list of projects to be considered for selection.

d) African Virtual Campus

200. Under the partnership between the Commission and UNESCO to implement the African Virtual Campus project, training on the development of online content was conducted for 11 countries in West Africa. The aim is to enhance the capacity of university lecturers in the use of ICT for Science and Technology Education & Research in Member States.

4. HEALTH AND SANITATION

a) Health, Population and Nutrition Issues

201. The 4th Session of the Conference of AU Ministers of Health (CAMH4) was held from 4 to 8 May 2009 in Addis Ababa. It focused on the theme “**Universal Access to Quality Health Services: Improve Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health**”. Among other recommendations, the main outcome was an adoption of the Addis Ababa Declaration which encapsulated the main commitments from all the presentations reflecting a variety of topics. Furthermore, a communiqué on the H1N1 influenza pandemic was issued by the Ministers. In both the Communiqué and the Declaration, Member States were urged to put in place plans for emergency preparedness and response for health. It should be noted here that the Africa Health Strategy (2007-2015) and MDGs are the contexts within which health activities are implemented.

202. The report of this conference is submitted to the Executive Council separately. The report covers most of the health related activities undertaken for the last six months namely; Reproductive Health, the launch of the Continental Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA), the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa (PMP), the Food and Nutrition Security as well as Progress Report on the AU Decade for African Traditional Medicine (2001-2010).

203. As a way of engaging partners in the support for health programmes, the Commission undertook a mission in the United States of America (USA) in May 2009 and in particular made an advocacy to the USA and the World Bank for sustenance of the pledged President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the Malaria Initiative and contributions to the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria by the new USA Administration.

Among other activities, the AUC delegation visited health institutions and pharmaceutical companies that support and collaborate with Africa on health matters.

204. Some of the challenges encountered by the Commission in its health related undertakings include:

- i. Poor coordination and harmonization of programmes with partners at various levels;
- ii. Long delayed feedback from Member States, some RECs, AU Organs and other partners. In this regard, they should communicate the names and contacts of focal persons for follow-up action to the Commission. On a positive note, Mauritius is commended for regularly submitting reports as requested and for communicable disease updates;
- iii. Inadequate awareness-raising by Member States and implementation, at national level of health commitments adopted by Member States themselves (Heads of State and Government as well as Ministers of Health);
- iv. Chronic shortage of human resources at the AU Commission, compounded by a heavy schedule of activities at the AUC;
- v. Late or insufficient communication by the AU Commission with Member States and partners.

205. It is worth noting that the Commission, in close collaboration with partners, has been making efforts to ensure the following :

- i. Greater visibility of health and social development in and outside Africa;
- ii. Mobilisation of funding and collaboration by development partners in certain programmes;
- iii. Improvement of coordination and harmonization of programmes and partnerships;
- iv. Adequate advocacy on issues of vital importance to Africa's health and development;
- v. Improvement of regional cooperation in health.

5. HUMAN AND SOCIAL WELFARE

a) Promoting the Welfare of the Aged and Ageing

206. As requested in the 2002 AU Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing and in implementation of the recommendation of the 1st Session of the AU Conference of

Ministers in charge of Social Development held in October 2008, the Commission has established the Steering Committee on Ageing. The Members of the Steering Committee were selected from the same countries which are on the Bureau of the 1st Session of the AU Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development, namely, Namibia, Libya, Kenya, Equatorial Guinea and Burkina Faso. Representatives from the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), HelpAge International – Africa Region and African Network on Ageing are also members of the Steering Committee. The aim of the Steering Committee is to follow up on the implementation of the Policy Framework and Plan of Action on Ageing and make proposals on the establishment of the Advisory Council as called for in the Plan of Action.

207. The first meeting of the Steering Committee took place in May 2009. It focused mainly on procedural and administrative matters, frequency of its meeting and brainstormed on the activities to be undertaken during the next two years. The next meeting of the Steering Committee is scheduled for November 2009.

b) The African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI)

208. The African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI) which was established to coordinate disability and rehabilitation issues on the Continent continues to face administrative and financial problems. Among others, the Governing Board discussed issues related to the restructuring and revitalization of the Institute and the work plan of the Institute for 2008-2012. The outcome was the adoption of a number of recommendations including the need to enhance the human and financial capacity of the Institute in order to enable it to function effectively.

c) African Decade of Disabled Persons

209. It will be recalled that the AU Heads of State and Government proclaimed 1999-2009 as the African Decade of Disabled Persons. In 2002, a Plan of Action was adopted to implement the Decade's objectives. At the end of the decade this year, it is recognized that not much progress has been achieved in implementing the Plan of Action of the Decade. It is for this reason that the 1st Session of the AU Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development recommended that the African Decade be renewed from 2010 to 2019. At the same time, the Commission was requested to conduct an evaluation to assess achievements made in implementing the First Decade and the added value of extending the Decade. It was also recommended that the African Rehabilitation Institute's programmes be linked to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and that Member States mainstream disability into their social development programmes. As a follow-up to the recommendations, the Commission is in the process of evaluating the implementation of the Decade with a view to submitting a report to the next session of the Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development.

d) Family and Development

210. With a view to monitoring progress achieved in implementing the 2004 AU Plan of Action on the Family, the Commission developed a questionnaire on the priority areas

spelt out in the Plan of Action and forwarded it to all Member States to fill and return. By the end of the deadline of 30 April 2009, only 16 Member States had sent their replies. Member States which have not yet done so are urged to urgently fill the questionnaire and forward it to the Commission. A Consultant will be contracted to develop a consolidated report which will be presented for the consideration of the 2nd Session of the AU Conference of Ministers of Social Development in 2010.

e) Social Development

211. After its adoption by the Assembly in February 2009, the Social Policy Framework for Africa document was disseminated to all Member States, development partners and other stakeholders for implementation. As a follow-up, the Commission is in the process of developing strategies aimed at assisting Member States in developing appropriate implementation mechanisms at national level.

212. With regard to the African Common Position on Social Integration adopted by the Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development, its Chairperson, the Honourable Minister of Health and Social Services of Namibia presented it to the 47th Session of the UN Commission for Social Development which took place in New York in February 2009. He requested that it be one of the working documents of the session. The document was well received by the delegates and it was referred to as Africa's contribution to the 47th Session.

213. During the 47th Session, the Commission was also invited to be one of the speakers on the panel on 'Promoting Social Integration' which took place on 4 February 2009. Furthermore, the Commission and the Government of Namibia hosted a side event on the margins of the 47th Session of the UN Commission for Social Development (CSD) on the theme: Politics of Change: Achieving a Sustainable Social Development for Africa. The event was organized in collaboration with HelpAge International and the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). The event was addressed by the Ministers from Namibia, Senegal and Uganda as well as by the Chairperson of the 47th UN CSD, the UN Assistant Secretary General and the Representative of the Brazilian Mission to the UN. In the debate policy-makers were called upon to give particular attention to social policies and mechanisms that are inclusive and benefit the poorest of the poor. It was recognized that in order to achieve sustainable development, it was imperative to implement the various existing policy documents on social development, in particular the Social Policy Framework for Africa. It was equally emphasized that time has come to move from policy into action, and that all efforts should be deployed to put an end to marginalization and social exclusion; promote love and cultural values; foster social integration and inclusion; and build a society for all.

f) Population and Development

214. The Commission has undertaken the following activities during the reporting period: (i) Preparation and dissemination of the biennial "State of Africa Population Report", initiated in 2004; (ii) Preparation of the 3rd Edition of the Report is underway and due to be published June 2009; (iii) In collaboration with UNECA and UNFPA, the Commission is coordinating activities for the 15-Year Review of the implementation of the Programmes of

Action adopted by the 1994 Cairo International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The review is tentatively scheduled to take place in October 2009. Questionnaires were sent to all Member States and so far 41 countries (close to 80% of the countries) have returned the completed questionnaires. It is hoped that information on the status of implementation of the ICPD programmes of action as well as those of the MDGs will help Member States, the Commission and other partners to identify best practices, register lessons learnt and generate key recommendations for the way forward.

g) Labour, Employment and Migration

i. Employment

215. In May 2009, the AU and the ILO organized a workshop on productivity and social dialogue geared towards the development of Africa Productivity Framework 2009-2012 and Social Dialogue Guidelines in Africa.

ii. Migration

216. Four consultative meetings were conducted in four Regional Economic Communities and two Member States. These visits were part of the programme of the Commission to implement the AU policies on migration and development, namely, the Migration Policy Framework for Africa, the African Common Position on Migration and Development, the Joint Africa-EU Declaration on Migration and Development, and the Ouagadougou Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, Especially Women and Children. Several joint projects are designed as a follow-up to these consultations to be implemented in the next Strategic Plan of the Commission. Moreover, as part of the implementation of the Ouagadougou Plan of Action, a campaign called the African Union Commission Initiative against Trafficking (AU.COMMIT) Campaign has been launched.

h) Drug Control and Crime Prevention

217. Drug control and crime prevention have been on the main agenda of the AU Assembly for two consecutive years, both in January 2008 and January 2009. In January 2008, the AU Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2007-2012) was adopted by the Assembly. In addition, in January 2009, the Assembly took a decision to alert Member States regarding the threat of drug trafficking and associated security threats, and urged the Commission to intensify the fight against drug trafficking in collaboration with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the international community. Subsequently, the Commission developed and signed a joint project with the UNODC in March 2009 for the implementation of the AU Plan of Action up to 2012. This Plan of Action is based on a balanced approach to drug control and crime prevention, including the prevention, treatment, law enforcement and social development components. An MoU between the AUC and INTERPOL was furthermore developed in April 2009, to ensure the sharing of efficient policy indicators and best practices in combating drugs and crime on the Continent.

i. The Impact of Drug Trafficking In West Africa

218. Until recently, illicit drug use and trade in Africa was not of major regional or international concern. Global changes and recurrent internal conflicts have impacted the region in such a way that illicit drugs have now become an issue. Internal economic, social and political instability has created conditions that foster drug use and drug trafficking yet, there is insufficient data on these new illicit drug trends. West Africa is at high risk of becoming the staging ground for drug trafficking in Africa with the attendant threats such as criminality and weakening of state structures associated with it.

219. The UNODC warned in its report of 28 October 2008, “West Africa is at higher risk of becoming an epicentre for drug trafficking and the crime of corruption associated with it” in the African continent. The UNODC report also feared that the region could turn from the “Gold Coast into the Coke Coast” increasing the risk that vulnerable states emerging from conflict situations may be overrun by organised crime syndicates and drug cartels.

220. The countries most affected by drug trafficking in West Africa are Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. In Guinea Bissau, the value of drugs that enters the country per month from Latin America is estimated at US \$150 million which is equal to the country’s annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

221. Ghana continues to be the main hub of drug trafficking in West Africa. The United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) estimate is that 80 percent of all the drugs seized in the whole of Europe came through Ghana. According to the BBC, the Nigerian drug syndicates control about 50 percent of the global illegal heroin trade. Sierra Leone is also considered to be a transit stop in West Africa for trafficking cocaine and other narcotics from the Caribbean and South America to Europe. Togo based criminal groups also smuggle cocaine from West Africa to Europe via Brussels.

ii. Drug Trafficking Networks

222. Drug traffickers take advantage of the West African transit route because of the porousness of the borders of the region. West African countries lack capacity to adequately control their borders because of the weakness of the structures, high level of corruption and poverty in the region. Drugs that arrive in West Africa come from countries such as Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and Venezuela by ship, speed boats and large and small aircraft. The cartels subsequently work with local criminal gangs and corrupt government officials in the army, customs intelligence and security services, judiciary and police to achieve their goals. They also use unprotected terrain to bring in the drugs, for example, Guinea Bissau has about 50 uninhabited islands some of which have abandoned airstrips built by the Portuguese colonialists that now provide good and unmonitored transit for drug trafficking cartels.

223. Colombian drug traffickers have started taking up residence in West Africa, particularly Guinea Bissau, to have better control of the illicit trade in drugs. They have bought up local businesses like factories and warehouses and have also built themselves large houses protected by armed guards in Guinea Bissau. They are also known to have established other front businesses through which they launder some of the drug money.

iii. Impact of Drug Trafficking

224. The complexity of drug trafficking has a devastating effect on the economy, health, social well-being and governance, resulting in a dramatic increase in violent crimes, corruption, bank fraud, money laundering and social decay. It has also led to an increase in homicide, substance abuse and other social ills.

225. Drug money is distorting the economies of many countries in the continent. It is also used to corrupt the judiciary, police, customs and the political system. But above all, it has a debilitating effect on social spending by states because it diverts resources from vital social and economic reconstruction programmes to combating organised criminal gangs fuelled by drug money.

226. There is urgent need to establish a continent drug control program, as the drug contagion is bound to spread if the spread of the HIV/AIDS pandemic is a lesson to be taken seriously.

iv. Relations with Interpol

227. The envisaged visit of the Executive Director of Police Services of INTERPOL, Mr. Jean-Michel LOUBOUTIN to the Commission will be used to lay the foundation for formulating this policy. The visit will be used to enter into talks for coordination of the continent police forces to enhance capacity building, exchange of real time information on this scourge as well as other police problems in the Continent.

228. In recognition of limited capacity in the police forces of many African countries INTERPOL wishes to revive the MoU it signed with the then Organization of African Unity in 2001. INTERPOL wishes to concentrate on traditional police matters during their visit in recognition of the glaring fact that police services in the Continent are in dire need of capacity building and modern technology in fighting crimes in their respective countries. Some of the issues identified in this area include:

- **Organized crime** – drug traffickers are increasingly using Africa, particularly West Africa, as transit point for cocaine going from South America to Europe. Stolen vehicles are trafficked for their own sake and also to finance other serious crimes. Human trafficking and wildlife crimes are also of great concern in the region;
- **Terrorism** – terrorism poses a threat to national security around the world and many other crime areas are linked to it. Africa is the least prepared to deal with it adequately;

- **Border security** – the porous borders that characterize African frontiers make it easy for criminals and racketeers to travel through countries freely to carry out their nefarious activities; and
- **Corruption** – corruption in government as well as in security establishments add to the general breakdown of law and order in Africa and have bearing to the conflicts afflicting the continent.

229. Other areas of cooperation with the INTERPOL are how African police forces would benefit from two INTERPOL initiatives, namely, the Global Security Initiative (GSI) and OASIS Africa. The GSI launched at the INTERPOL's 77th Assembly in St Petersburg in 2008 is designed to achieve development of a broader strategic framework that would guide INTERPOL's priorities in assisting police forces. The OASIS is designed to improve the capacity of African police forces to fight crime. It has three main goals: capacity building; improving infrastructure and enhancing operational capacity.

230. The Commission, as the Secretariat of the African Union, is in the best position to bring African police forces together to be able to benefit from the OASIS and GSI initiatives.

6. CHILDREN, YOUTH AND SPORTS

a) Child Survival, Protection and Development

i. Implementation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

231. The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child was established to monitor the implementation and ensure the protection of the rights enshrined in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. To this end, Article 43 of the Charter provides that State Parties to the Charter shall submit reports to the Committee on measures that they have adopted to give effect to the provisions of the Charter and on the progress made in the enjoyment of these rights.

232. In view of the Reports that had been received, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) considered, in November 2008, Egypt and Nigeria Reports. In April 2009, the Committee organized the 2nd Pre-Session for the preparation of the consideration of Tanzania, Uganda, Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso and Kenya Reports. During this Pre-Session, the Committee received alternate and complementary reports from NGOs and CSOs. These State Parties' reports will be considered during its Committee Session in November 2009.

ii. Call for Accelerated Action on the Implementation of the Plan of Action towards Africa Fit for Children

233. It will be recalled that in its endeavour to make Africa a place fit for children, the Heads of State and Government adopted a Call for Accelerated Action on the Implementation of the Plan of Action towards Africa Fit for Children in 2007. The

Commission has disseminated the Call to Member States and as widely as possible among partners and stakeholders. However, the challenge is how to enhance its implementation. In this regard, benchmarks and strategies have been developed to assist Member States in accelerating interventions to achieve the targets and commitments made in the priority areas of the Plan of Action towards Africa Fit for Children and the Call for Accelerated Action.

iii. State of Africa's Children Report

234. As mandated in the Plan of Action towards Africa Fit for Children, the Commission is developing the report on the State of Africa's Children. The report will focus on the priority areas identified in the Plan of Action. In this regard, therefore, Member States are requested to forward data and other information on children that could be included in the Report.

b) Youth Policy – Decade for Youth Development in Africa

235. The last ordinary Session of the Executive Council, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, January 2009, declared, through the Decision EX.CL/Dec. 468(XIV) a Decade for Youth Development in Africa. The Commission is developing a Plan of Action to provide a framework for interventions in the Decade for Youth Development. The Plan of Action aims at mainstreaming the development and empowerment of young Africans as the critical driving force and main resource for sustainable development, in all policy spheres.

236. Priority areas for the Plan of Action are derived from the African Youth Charter and cover the following five strategic orientations: i) economic empowerment, ii) policies, programmes and institutions, iii) inclusion and participation, iv) development and well-being, v) development financing mechanisms. Envisaged outcomes of implementation of the Plan of Action include improved access to education, skills development training and economic empowerment for youth in Africa; harmonisation of youth development policies and strategies, improved funding mechanisms for youth development; and mainstreaming youth participation in the economic, social and political spheres of the Continent.

i. African Youth Charter and related activities

237. As at May 2009, 13 countries had ratified the African Youth Charter and deposited relevant instruments at the Commission of the African Union. 31 Countries have signed the Charter and are at various stages of its popularisation. As planned in the 2009 programme, 11 countries have been selected to benefit from specific advocacy activities to accelerate the ratification process of the Charter. Advocacy and sensitisation activities continue towards the ratification of the Charter at all levels with the support of partners through country offices.

ii. Youth Participation and the Youth Volunteerism

238. The Commission is at an advanced stage in establishing a youth volunteerism programme. The main purpose is to support and promote the emergence of empowered and effective youth leadership in order to direct their youth energy and creativity into peace

building, integration, and development actions. The main objectives are to contribute to Africa's human development in line with the AU Vision and Mission through effective youth participation in Africa's development. This initiative also aims to reaffirm Africa's commitment to actualize the African Youth Charter as an instrument to make youth participation the critical value driver and architect for sustainable human development in Africa. A consultative approach is under process to elaborate all the required technical and legal documents for consideration and adoption by the African Union Conference of Ministers in charge of Youth.

c) Institutional Capacity Building through the Revitalization of the Pan African Youth Union

239. Following the Pan African Youth Union's Congress, in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, and the first Executive Committee meeting under the leadership of the newly elected president, the Commission has developed training programmes and is planning training sessions to implement and achieve the capacity building of the PAYU.

d) Youth Empowerment through Non-Formal and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

240. Implementation of pilot projects in Liberia, Congo and Burundi is ongoing and a mid-term review has just been concluded to evaluate the progress made, challenges, constraints and find solutions in order to optimise the experience.

e) Adult Education through Non-Formal and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

241. The Commission is developing a programme document to provide training and education, and promote skills development for adults within the framework of the non-formal Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and lifelong learning under the Second Decade of Education for Africa.

f) Trust Fund Study

242. As recommended by the 2nd Ordinary Session of the Conference of AU Ministers in charge of Youth held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 12 to 15 February 2008, a Trust fund is to be established for African Youth Development. The draft document is disseminated to all Member States and their inputs are awaited for the finalisation of the feasibility study.

g) Sports

243. Further to the January 2009 Council Decision to dissolve the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa (SCSA) (EX.CL/Dec.470(XIV)), the Commission has embarked on an assessment of its personnel situation and functions to be transferred to the Commission and Organizations in the African Sport Movement, specifically regarding the organization of the All Africa Games. Furthermore, the Commission has collaborated with South Africa on the 2010 FIFA World Cup Africa Legacy Programme. A joint workshop by

AUC/UNESCO/SADC will be conducted to focus on Culture, Sport and Tourism in July 2009 and to ensure that African artists benefit from the 2010 event.

III.2 INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INTERCONNECTIVITY

244. It will be recalled that the theme of the previous Session of the Assembly was on Infrastructure Development in Africa with focus on energy and transport sectors. A special day, 28 January 2009, was dedicated to the Infrastructure Theme and was open to all Summit participants and invited guests. The Assembly adopted a Declaration on the Development of Transport and Energy Infrastructure in Africa. The Declaration underscores the critical importance of infrastructure in the socio-economic development and integration of Africa and outlines strategies for accelerating implementation of continental priority infrastructure programmes and projects.

245. In pursuance of the implementation of this important Declaration, the Commission continued to focus its attention on the implementation of Plans of Action adopted by sector Ministers in the fields of transport, energy and information and communication technologies (ICT). It should be noted that significant progress has been made in the procurement processes for the pre-feasibility studies on the Dakar–Djibouti and Djibouti–Libreville transport corridors and the study on the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA). Also, setting up of the Pan-African e-Network project for Tele-education and Tele-medicine for concerned countries proceeded well and the dissemination of the outcome of the study on the African Petroleum Fund was initiated.

246. Implementation of activities in specific sectors and sub-sectors are outlined hereunder.

1. TRANSPORT (ROAD, RAIL, AIR, WATER)

247. In the field of transport, the Commission focused its attention on the implementation of the Declaration and modal Plans of Action adopted by the First Conference of African Ministers of Transport (CAMT) held in Algiers, Algeria in April 2008 as endorsed by the competent Policy Organs.

a) Air Transport

248. In air transport the major activities under implementation covered the 1999 Decision relating to the Implementation of the Yamoussoukro Declaration on the Liberalization of Access to Air Transport Markets in Africa and the ongoing EU-Africa dialogue on civil aviation matters including the organisation of the EU-Africa Aviation Conference and dissemination of the Guidelines for the Negotiation of Air Services Agreements between the African Union and European Union Member States.

- i. Guidelines for the Negotiation of Air Services Agreements between AU Member States and the EC / EU Member States

249. It would be recalled that the Conference of African Ministers of Transport held in Algiers, Algeria in April 2008 decided to adopt non-binding guidelines for Member States' in their negotiation of air service agreements with the European Union. Following the dissemination of the Guidelines, the Commission is currently monitoring their implementation with a view to providing assistance to Member States, RECs and concerned stakeholders, wherever necessary, in order to ensure their judicious application for the benefit of the African aviation industry as a whole.

250. As announced in the previous report, the Commission organised jointly with the European Commission, the EU-Africa Aviation Conference whose agenda covered areas of cooperation in civil aviation including the external air transport policies of the two regions as well as matters of aviation infrastructure development, safety, security and protection of the environment. The Conference was held in Windhoek, Namibia on 2 and 3 April 2009.

ii. Implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision

251. The Commission continued the process of putting in place the appropriate legal and institutional framework for the implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision. The current focus is on entrusting the functions of the Executing Agency of the Yamoussoukro Decision to the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) in line with the decision of the Ministers responsible for Air Transport taken at their Third Conference in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in May 2007.

252. To that end, the Commission has maintained consultations with AFCAC on the revision and adoption of the Constitution of the latter to reflect its additional functions as the Executing Agency. Also, the revision of the report of the study for defining the legal, institutional, financial and operational framework of AFCAC as the Executing Agency is ongoing. The Commission expects this work to be completed before the end of 2009.

b) Railway Transport

253. As mentioned in the previous report, the Commission is working closely with key stakeholders, including the Union of African Railways (UAR) and the International Union of Railways (UIC), to implement the priority projects in this sub-sector. To that end, preparations for studies on these projects have been completed and implementation for most of them is expected to begin during the first half of 2009 subject to disbursement of respective project funds. These include:

- Elaboration of an African Railway Vision 2025;
- Study on the creation of a Railway Development Fund for Africa;
- Evaluation of the privatisation of African railways;
- Harmonisation of standards for railway infrastructure and rolling stock;
- Capacity building.

c) Road Transport

254. The major activities currently underway in road transport include the initiation of pre-feasibility studies on two transport corridors. These are Dakar-N'Djamena-Djibouti and

Djibouti-Libreville corridors. It would be recalled that these projects were selected at a round table meeting held in Saly-Portudal, Senegal, in January 2008 to discuss the ways and means of speeding up the implementation of major infrastructure projects in Africa under the NEPAD framework. The pre-feasibility studies are financed by the NEPAD Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility (NEPAD-IPPF) under the management of the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the AU Commission is the Executing Agency.

255. The Dakar–N'Djamena-Djibouti pre-feasibility study is at tendering stage and the appointment of a firm of consultants was expected to take place by the end of May 2009. With regard to the Djibouti–Libreville study, a General Procurement Notice has been published for expression of interest. Consultancy firms were to be invited to tender by the end of May 2009 and the tendering process was expected to take up to four (4) months.

d) Maritime Transport

256. In maritime transport, the increasing activity of pirates beyond the seaboard of Somalia is a major concern not only to Africa, but to the international shipping community as well. The Commission has been working with its partners including the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the European Union, the Government of the United States of America and others to find a lasting solution to this menace. Short-term measures like having international navies patrolling the Gulf of Aden are being undertaken. The Commission also intends to create a coastguard network for Eastern and Southern Africa to monitor and deter all illegal activities in those areas. A similar project is at advanced stages in Western and Central Africa

257. However, it is also acknowledged that the problem has its roots in the lack of a stable national government in Somalia. The Commission is therefore seeking to address this issue in its wider context involving conflict resolution measures as well as negotiating an enduring political solution with a view to establishing a strong national government which can effectively participate in the global efforts to find a sustainable end to piracy and all illegal activities off the coast of Somalia.

258. Furthermore, ongoing priority activities in this sub-sector include defining a continental policy and institutional framework for coordinating maritime activities, securing fair treatment of Africa in international shipping, and combating illegal fishing and marine pollution.

i. Preparation of the Second Conference of African Ministers responsible for Maritime Transport

259. The Commission has initiated preparations for the Second Conference of African Ministers responsible for Maritime Transport, which is jointly organized with the Government of the Republic of South Africa. The Conference which is scheduled to be held in Durban from 12 to 16 October 2009, is expected to consider and adopt the revised African Maritime Transport Charter as well as issues of safety, security and protection of the environment. Combating piracy, illegal fishing and dumping of toxic waste in African waters will feature prominently on the agenda of the Conference.

ii. Institutional Framework for the Coordination of Maritime Transport Affairs in the Continent

260. The Commission intends to initiate the study for the elaboration of an appropriate coordination mechanism for the maritime transport sector in Africa. Preparations for the study including the drafting of Terms of Reference were completed in 2008. The aim of this activity is to put in place a framework that will facilitate sustainable development and the operation of Africa's maritime transport industry in an efficient and sustainable manner.

2. ENERGY (ENERGY CRISIS)

a) Legal and institutional study on the establishment of a Continental Structure to Coordinate the Development of the Major Integrating Hydroelectric Projects in Africa

261. The study is the outcome of the relevant decisions and recommendations emanating from various conferences, seminars and round tables on developing and financing major integrating projects that have been organized over the last two years. The Commission undertook a legal and institutional study on the management of major integrating hydroelectric projects in Africa, with a view to establishing a Continental Coordination Structure for these projects.

262. The decisions and recommendations were, *inter alia*:

- work together to develop Africa's energy resources, especially hydroelectricity as a major renewable energy option for sustainable development, regional integration, energy security and poverty reduction;
- establish a Coordination Committee for development of the major hydroelectric integrating hydroelectric projects.

263. The objectives of the study are as follows:

- take stock of best practices in major integrating projects ;
- define the legal system for Africa's major hydroelectric integrating projects ;
- elaborate the most appropriate institutional framework for implementing predefined legal rules to ensure better management of these major integrating projects.

264. On completion of the study, the Commission organized in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 26 to 28 November 2008, a validation workshop to update the key actors, examine, analyze and amend the study so as to make it a consensus document and allow for ownership of the Study by the participants, thereby facilitating its subsequent

implementation. The workshop conclusions will be submitted to the next Conference of African Ministers responsible for Energy.

265. The main recommendations were as follows:

- Deepen the reflection on the institutional framework and competences of the proposed coordination structure ;
- Broaden the Study's perspective both in terms of space and content by adopting an inclusive method which takes into consideration all stakeholders and existing documentation.

266. These recommendations were intended to underscore the fact that, despite the pressing need to establish this structure, it is imperative to widen the scope of the reflection to include the maximum number of stakeholders possible and, by so doing, provide all the guarantees required for successful operationalization of the Structure.

267. If successfully established, the Structure could readily offer inspiration for other types of major infrastructure integrating projects.

b) AU/AfDB Joint Studies on the Hydrocarbons (Oil & Gas) Sector in Africa

268. In recent years, there have been huge fluctuations in world oil prices. The high oil prices have hit hard consumers and economies hard, but the impact has been most severe in Africa. It is indisputable that oil remains essential to improving the quality of life and production opportunities in Africa, as is the case in other continents.

269. The African Development Bank (AfDB) and the AU Commission agreed to jointly undertake studies on: (i) The Impact of High Oil Prices on African Economies; (ii) The Proposed Establishment of an African Petroleum Fund (APF): Operational Modalities; and (iii) A Prospective Analysis of the Oil and Gas Situation in Africa.

270. The Commission and the AfDB organized a workshop from 10 to 12 December 2008 in Addis Ababa, aiming at validating the results of the joint studies. This workshop concluded that the necessary technical work to validate the studies had not been carried out, and it recommended that at least two regional workshops be conducted for the validation.

271. Therefore, the Commission organized two regional workshops to validate and appropriate the results of the AU/AfDB joint studies: (i) for the Western and Northern Regions (ECOWAS, UMA, CEN-SAD, and UEMOA); (ii) for the Eastern, Central and Southern Regions (EAC, ECCAS, SADC, COMESA, IGAD, and CEMAC).

272. The main activities of the adopted Plan of Action/ Road Map include: i) AUC/AfDB to incorporate the observations and recommendations from the regional workshops; ii) AUC/AfDB to meet APPA organs for exchange of experiences on fund operationalisation; iii) AUC to sensitize the Heads of State and Government during the forthcoming African Union Summit in July 2009, on the need to contribute initial resources

to the Fund; iv) AUC to organize the Conference of Ministers responsible for Hydrocarbons on the APF.

273. The following main conclusions and recommendations were adopted:

- The participants validated the results of the studies carried out by the AU/AfDB and expressed their support;
- The APF should be a Solidarity Fund for African Union Members States;
- Contributions to the APF should come from all AU Member States;
- The APF should facilitate /promote the development of energy projects (oil and gas, renewable energy) and African intra trade in the hydrocarbon sector
- The APF should be established as soon as possible;
- The mandate of the APF should be extended to activities such as coaching the new oil and/or gas producers in negotiation skills and capacity building (local expertise);
- There is a need to undertake synergies/actions between the APF and the existing initiatives (specifically APPA Fund);
- There is a need to establish mechanisms to guaranty that all oil companies operating in Africa can participate/contribute to the solidarity fund and regional integration.

274. The conclusions and recommendations of these Regional Workshops will be submitted to the AU Conference of Ministers in charge of Hydrocarbons (Oil and Gas) during the second semester of 2009 for consideration and adoption.

c) Implementation of AFRICA-EU Energy Partnership

275. The Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP) is one of the eight (8) partnerships comprising the Africa-EU Joint Strategy adopted in Lisbon, in December 2007.

276. The Energy Partnership will strengthen the existing Africa-EU dialogue on access to energy and energy security. The AEEP aims at mobilizing increased financial, technical and human resources in support of Africa's energy development, scaling up European and African investments in energy infrastructure and in energy interconnections within Africa and between Africa and the EU. During different meetings, it was stressed that it is time to move from process to concrete results.

277. During the last EU-Africa Joint Task Force Meeting held in Brussels, Belgium from 17 to 18 March 2009, it was agreed to organize a Technical Consultation Workshop of the EU-Africa Joint Experts Group on the EU-Africa Energy Partnership Road Map in Entebbe, Uganda from 5 to 7 May 2009. The main objectives of the workshop will be to contribute to the development of the Energy Partnership Road Map from a technical perspective and to ensure that the actions proposed match African needs and are technically feasible and sustainable.

278. The final draft of the Road Map was to be presented to the 2nd EU-Africa Joint Experts Group meeting on 18 and 19 June 2009 in Brussels and approved at experts'

level. It will then be submitted to the High-Level Energy Meeting to be organized during the second semester of 2009 in The Netherlands, for endorsement at political level.

279. The objective of the High-Level Energy Meeting is to take stock of progress made in the implementation of the Africa-EU Energy Partnership, to agree on further priorities up to 2010 and to launch discussions on priorities for the period 2011-2013.

d) First ASA Joint Ministerial Conference on Energy

280. In the preparation for the Second Africa – South America (ASA) Summit that will be held in Venezuela in September 2009, the First Joint Conference of African and South American Ministers responsible for Energy, initially scheduled to be held from 29 to 30 May 2009 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and which was to be preceded by a session of experts from 26 to 28 May 2009, had to be postponed owing to the lack of confirmation of attendance by a sufficient number of Member States, especially on the South American side. The new dates proposed are: 13-17 July 2009.

281. The main objective of the First ASA Joint Conference of Ministers responsible for Energy is to adopt strategic guidance as well as programmes and projects of regional and continental scope and an Action Plan to foster cooperation and partnership that will be profitable to all, especially in order to better exploit the abundant resources found in the two regions.

282. The Conference is expected to adopt: i) an overall guidance strategy for cooperation of the two regions in the energy sector; ii) energy projects and programs suitable for partnerships among the Member States of the two regions; iii) an implementation mechanism and modalities for the identified programs and projects including the exchange of expertise and technology transfer; and iv) a Declaration, Resolutions and Plan of Action.

283. The outcomes of the ASA Joint Ministerial Conference on Energy will be submitted for adoption to the Second ASA Summit in Venezuela, in September 2009.

e) Energy Technology Policy Framework for the Domestication of Renewable Energy in Africa

284. The growing demand for energy in Africa presents a serious challenge to policy-makers as they explore options to address the intensifying need to expand capacity and adopt cost-effective solutions. Presently, only about 2 percent of Africa's potential hydro sources have been exploited. Efforts have been directed to harness renewable energy forms to sustain economic production as well as ensure environmental sustainability. In recent years, independent power production systems have increased in number as acute shortages of energy supply compelled many African governments to strike multinational deals designed to fill huge gaps in demand and supply.

285. The meeting on Energy Technology Policy Framework for the Domestication of Renewable Energy in Africa was held in Pretoria, South Africa from 12 to 14 February, 2009. It was jointly organized by the African Union Scientific, Technical and Research

Commission (AU-STRC) and the International Council for Science Regional Office for Africa (ICSU ROA). The meeting discussed a Draft Framework on “Energy Technology Policy for the Domestication of Renewable Energy in Africa” and generated recommendations for the attention of policy makers in Member States.

286. The meeting put forward several recommendations including the following:

- Energy investments must be guided by clear technological targets
- With every new investment affecting a particular energy sub-sector, the domestic content must be seen to rise.
- Policy institutions and domestic power agencies should be proactive in ensuring that local sub-contracting is effected for energy investments implemented by overseas contractors.
- Domestic power institutions should ensure that there is organic involvement of local capacities in pre-investment, project execution, and project implementation services.

3. TELECOMMUNICATIONS, POSTS AND ICT

a) Pan-African e-Network Project for Tele-Medicine and Tele-Education

287. In the last report submitted in January 2009, the Commission presented the status of implementation of this project initiated by the Government of India to provide online tele-medicine and tele-education services. The following developments have since been recorded:

- Commitment of Member States to participate in the project: the African Union Commission and India raised Member States’ awareness of the project and monitored the signing of the participation agreement. As at 30 April 2009, the agreement had been signed by 60% of the Member States of the Union, that is, by 33 Member States, namely:

Bénin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Comoros, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Seychelles, Somalia, The Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia and Zimbabwe;

- Installation and commissioning of the Hub Earth Station in Dakar: connection of the station to TCL Data Centre in New Delhi by optic fibre and to RASCOM satellite;
- Installation of VSAT stations as well as other equipment and software in African Member States: 14 national universities, 13 national hospitals, 2 leading regional universities and 1 super speciality hospital;
- Installation of VSAT stations as well as other equipment and software in 2 Indian universities and 6 super speciality hospitals in India;

- The progress made with respect to the choice of 5 leading regional African universities and 5 super speciality African regional hospitals is as follows:
 - Two regional hospitals selected : Ibadan University Teaching Hospital in Nigeria and the *Centre Hospitalier Universitaire – CHU-* (University Teaching Hospital -CHU), Brazzaville, Congo;
 - Three regional universities selected: Kwame Nkrumah University and University of Ghana (considered as a unit); Makerere University in Uganda and the University of Yaoundé 1, Cameroon.

288. Studies on service tariffs as well as on the modalities and structures for Africa's management of the network after five years of Indian support, are underway;

289. The choice of courses from the list proposed by India is in progress. In that connection, a programme of five courses had been proposed by India, with a recent inclusion of additional options.

290. The Pan-African e-Network was inaugurated on 26 February 2009 by H.E. Pranab Mukherjee, India's Foreign Minister, by video conference from TCIL Data Centre in New Delhi, in the presence of 11 Ministers of countries in which university and hospital installations had been completed. The Commission also participated in this inauguration.

291. Installation and operationalization work is scheduled to be completed in September 2009. These services are being progressively provided to countries in the following manner :

- Tele-medicine services tested with *Hôpital Fann* in Dakar in March 2009, will gradually be extended to other countries ;
- The provision of Tele-education services which commenced in March 2009 will be progressively extended to States as they make their choice of courses.

b) Harmonization of policies and regulatory frameworks for Telecommunications, Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), and the postal sector in Africa

292. As part of the implementation of the conclusions of the Conference of African Ministers in charge of Communication and Information Technologies and the decision of the Executive Council adopted at Sharm-El-Sheikh in July 2008, a Plan of Action was prepared and submitted to the Bureau of the Conference.

293. Pending consideration and adoption of the Plan of Action by the Bureau, the Commission embarked on the following activities emanating from the Plan:

- Translation and forwarding of all relevant documents to Member States, the RECs and partners, with indication of the input expected from them ;

- Drafting of the Terms of Reference for implementation of priority actions, including the study on regional model guidelines for Telecommunications and ICT regulations and laws for RECs ;
- Participation in the process of establishing the African Telecommunications and ICT Regulators Assembly;
- Cooperation with the International Telecommunications Union within the framework of a project known as Support for Harmonization of the ICT Policies in Sub-Sahara Africa (HIPSSA), which involves 43 countries in Africa and aims at implementing certain activities, particularly the formulation of regional model guidelines for Telecommunications and ICT regulations and laws.

III.3 INTEGRATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

1. IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND GENERAL ISSUES OF CONCERN

294. Agriculture is the mainstay of the economy of most countries in Africa and thus remains the region's foremost development instrument. For the majority of African households, domestic food and agricultural production remains the main determinant of overall income, availability of, and access to food, and poverty reduction. Indeed, studies of some African countries show that adding a dollar to farm income contributes to increasing total income by 2-3 dollars because of the high multiplier effect of the agricultural sector which is in the range of 1.5-2.7.

295. By failing to develop agriculture therefore, Africa has also failed to achieve sustainable economic transformation that is capable of promoting broader opportunities for income-generating activities and employment in other sectors that have backward and forward linkages to the agricultural sector.

296. It is against this backdrop that the Commission is actively supporting programmes aimed at promoting, among others, food security and poverty reduction in the Continent, thus contributing to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

297. To promote agricultural development and thus reduce hunger and poverty in the Continent, the Commission has implemented a number of programmes and activities under its purview, in conformity with the agenda of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) of AU-NEPAD. It has also pursued international and regional cooperation in its efforts to address the problem of hunger and poverty in the continent. This has led not only to increased awareness and donor support for the AU programmes and projects, but has also facilitated the exchange and sharing of expertise and human resources with AU development partners and other stakeholders in Africa's Agricultural Development.

a) The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative

298. The African Union programme on the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel has the main objective of combating desertification and land degradation, thus ensuring sustainable productivity which in turn reduces hunger and alleviates poverty within the Continent. The partners in this continental endeavour include the European Union, the Multilateral Environmental Secretariats (UNCCD, UNFCCC, CBD), the Regional Economic Communities (ECOWAS, CEN-SAD, ECCAS, IGAD), NEPAD, TerrAfrica and of course AU Member States.

299. Two Thematic Programme Networks (TPN3 and TPN6 executed by AU/IBAR and AU/SAFGRAD respectively), in the context of combating desertification, are expected to complement the objectives of the Great Green Wall Initiative. The TPN3 Programme, the Dryland Livestock Wildlife Environment Interface Project (DLWEIP), is being implemented by AU/IBAR and is expected to address biodiversity and livestock resources conservation, through support of sustainable land management systems in the livestock/wildlife sub-sector in Kenya and Burkina Faso. On the other hand, the Thematic Programme Network on the Promotion of Sustainable Agricultural Farming Systems (TPN6), coordinated by AU/SAFGRAD, contributes towards the control of desertification, through a holistic approach to agricultural production that recognizes the interrelationships among the various components of sustainable agricultural farming systems.

300. As part of the implementation of the objectives of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiatives, a joint AU/EU feasibility study was conducted with the aim of collecting the relevant information and identifying modalities for model building at country and regional level. The aim is to understand the current and projected trend in desertification and land degradation within the Continent. Concurrently, proposals are being developed for the purpose of tapping the financial support provided by the Government of Greece under the auspices of Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Fund. In addition, efforts are being made to enhance ownership and synergy between various stakeholders by further sensitizing Member States and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and other partners on the benefits of the Great Green Wall Initiatives. Above all, the development of a Master Plan for the Initiative is in the pipeline and is expected to be completed in the next couple of months.

b) Transboundary Forest Management

301. Sustainable management and utilization of the Continent's vast forest resources is key to the fight against hunger and poverty within the Continent. Hence the Commission continues to focus attention on the development of a continental policy on forest management that ensures the efficient and sustainable utilization of this natural resource. In this regard, the Commission has engaged in the development of proposals and concept notes for the sustainable management of Forest Resources in West Africa to include Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, and to be expanded to other relatively high-forest cover areas of the Continent.

302. Furthermore, to ensure sustainable forest management within the continent, the Commission is collaborating with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) like ECOWAS, SADC and COMESA, and the FAO Sub-regional Office for Eastern Africa on Sub-regional forest policy development and in the promotion of community afforestation for the purpose of regenerating lost forest and as a means of employment and wealth creation.

c) Water and Sanitation

303. In line with the Sharm El-Sheikh Decision on Water and Sanitation adopted by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Egypt in July 2008, the Commission has, in concert with the AU's major partners - the African Development Bank, Economic Commission for Africa and the United Nations Environment Agency - supported the African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW) which is the coordinating mechanism for regional strategies and actions on water resources and management. In addition, AMCOW is to be responsible for brokering partnership for the implementation of AU decisions on water and sanitation, while the Commission itself is to participate in the mobilization of resources for the implementation of recommendations and strategies.

304. The Commission is working towards the implementation of the relevant Decision of the January 2009 regarding the Special Technical Committees (STCs), and in particular to ensure the integration of AMCOW and the African Ministerial Conference on Environment into the Special Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment.

305. Similarly, the Commission met with key stakeholders and partners to ensure the implementation of the Sharm El-Sheikh Declaration on Water and Sanitation. These partners included GTZ and AfDB, on supporting the implementation of this Sharm El Sheikh Declaration, as well as the Swedish representatives, with a view to soliciting their support for the policy harmonization on transboundary water management.

d) Climate Change-Adaptation and Mitigation

306. Africa is expected to be the continent that is most vulnerable to the negative impacts of the effects of climate change due to poverty and low adaptative capacity, although it contributes very little, if at all, to emission of Greenhouse Gases that lead to global warming and climate change. It is in the realization of the huge negative impact that climate change could have on the livelihoods of the people of Africa that the Commission resolved to strengthen Africa's capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change by initiating the Climate for Development in Africa (CLIMDEV-AFRICA) Programme. CLIMDEV-AFRICA which is a joint programme of the AU Commission, the AfDB and the UNECA, is an essential step to ensure that adaptation to climate change in Africa is both timely and effective, and that it is fully integrated within the development process of the Continent, particularly in the areas of agriculture and health that are most likely to be affected by climate change.

307. To this end, the appraisal document of CLIMDEV-AFRICA has been developed and finalized by the appraisal team and programme task managers responsible for implementing the initiative. In addition, the various roles of each institution, namely AUC,

AfDB and UNECA, in the implementation of CLIMDEV-AFRICA, have been clearly defined and highlighted for ease of implementation. Furthermore, the Commission has been mandated to liaise with Member States and other stakeholders in the CLIMDEV-AFRICA Programme so that, at the upcoming United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Conference of Parties 15 (UNFCCC COP 15) to be held in Copenhagen, in December 2009, Africa will act in unison and will speak with one voice, and have a common position with regard to climate change mitigation and adaptation in the Continent.

308. The Commission also held consultative meetings with the partners on the decision of the January 2009 Summit on Climate Change on the delegation to COP 15, and also met with the African negotiators to exchange views and strategize the modality for the preparation of the Africa common position paper for Climate Change at COP 15. The Commission also received support from the Government of Greece to support the Climate Change Initiatives and also held discussions with other countries such as Norway and Denmark on supporting the AU negotiators at COP 15. In addition, other partners including the AfDB and the UNECA are also supporting the Commission with experts and consultants on Climate Change to facilitate preparations for COP 15.

e) African Monitoring of the Environment for Sustainable Development (AMESD)

309. AMESD, which is being hosted by the Commission and funded by the European Union through EDF9, seeks to provide decision makers with reliable, timely and accurate monitoring information in terms of an early detection of water and food stress and thus provide a better assessment of the impact of policies and other interventions necessary for environmental sustainability.

310. In order to move the AMESD agenda forward, the Commission organized and facilitated AMESD's Third Technical Expert Meeting (TEM3), Retreat on developing AMESD Global Strategy and the 2nd Steering Committee meeting at the AUC Headquarters, in Addis Ababa and in Nazareth, Ethiopia from 11 to 18 February 2009. During these meetings, several presentations were made in order to provide all the stakeholders with an up-to-date overview of the achievements made so far in the implementation of the AMESD Programme in the preceding six months, since the last 2nd AMESD Technical Experts Meeting was held in Accra, Ghana. The Steering Committee also set the guidelines that it expects the Programme Coordination Team to follow during the next six months for a smooth implementation of the AMESD Programme.

311. The Commission also had an AMESD –EUMETSAT (European Organization for the Exploitation of Meteorological Satellites) Meeting and inaugurated the AMESD Thematic Station at the Headquarters in Addis Ababa on 29 April 2009. During this event, there was a technical presentation to the Embassies and AU staff on the AMESD Thematic actions. The project also had a forecast notice on the EU and AU website to publicize the supply contract of the PUMA (Preparation for the Use of Meteosat Second Generation) and the AMESD Thematic Stations to be launched soon by the European Union. The Thematic Station, when completed will facilitate meteorological satellite data access to 47 ACP countries in Africa, the five Regional Participating Centres of AGRHYMET in Niamey, the Climate Prediction and Application Centre (ICPAC) in Nairobi, the Mauritius Oceanographic

Institute (MOI) in Mauritius, the International Commission of the Congo-Oubangui-Sangha Basin (CICOS) in Kinshasa, the Botswana Meteorological Service in Gaborone and the Commission itself.

f) The Fouta Djallon Highlands Integrated Natural Resources Management Programme

312. The long-term goal of the Fouta Djallon Highlands (FDHs) Programme in Conakry, Guinea, is to guarantee the protection and rational use of the Fouta Djallon Highlands natural resources and to ensure the sustainability of river based water resources in the West Africa region in order to improve the livelihoods of the population in the highlands.

313. To facilitate the launching of a new project funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) on the management of the highlands' natural resources, a Ministerial Conference was organized by the Conakry Coordination Office in Senegal from 18 to 21 May 2009.

314. In addition, an MoU and ToR are in the pipeline for the implementation of Resolution 5 of the 3rd Ministerial Follow-up Committee Meeting of the ECOWAS Commission which calls for the increased involvement of ECOWAS in the management of the Fouta Djallon Highlands Programme.

315. The Fouta Djallon Office has continued to increase the awareness of Member States and all other stakeholders on the need to redress the land degradation process in the Fouta Djallon Highlands and other water towers of Africa by ensuring the timely production of the quarterly bulletin-"THE FOUTA DJALLON" and the fourth issue is planned for April 2009.

g) EC-ACP Capacity Building Project on Multilateral Environmental Agreements

316. Experience with environmental management in Africa shows that environmental concerns are not sufficiently mainstreamed into national and sub-regional development policies and poverty reduction strategies, and the environment sector is still not considered as a political and financial priority for a number of countries. However, most African countries are Parties to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), although the capacity to implement and enforce these agreements is still lacking in Africa. As a way of addressing the above constraints in Africa, the European Commission under the framework of the ACP-EC Partnership Agreement has agreed to support the establishment of a capacity building programme related to MEAs in ACP Countries, including the African ACP countries.

317. The overall objective of the project is to strengthen and enhance the capacity of African ACP countries to effectively implement and comply with MEAs and related commitments, thereby leading to better management of the environment and natural resources and thus contributing towards the effective implementation of strategies for sustainable development and poverty eradication in Africa. The capacities of Africans in international negotiations; in participation in the carbon markets under the auspices of the

Kyoto Protocol; their capacities to manage hazardous chemicals including obsolete pesticides; their capacities to address desertification problems; are also expected to be built or strengthened.

318. The Commission is designated by the ACP African countries and the European Commission as the hub and host for the Africa region for the Project, which has a life span of 48 months. In this regard, the Commission will work in close partnership with Member States, Regional Economic Communities, its NEPAD Programme, as well as the Secretariats of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, the ECA, the AfDB, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), the African Ministerial Conference on Water (AMCOW) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

319. The Programme was endorsed by the AMCEN meeting in Johannesburg in June 2008, where African Ministers called for African countries to participate fully and effectively in its implementation activities, and a Project Cooperation Agreement was signed between the Commission and UNEP in May 2009. Also, a project unit has been established under the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, and a Needs Assessment Workshop is scheduled to take place in June 2009 in 3 different countries and sub regions of Africa to identify the needs and priorities in terms of MEAs implementation.

h) Disaster Risk Reduction

320. Aware of the risk of disasters in the continent, the Commission has followed with keen interest the development and implementation of the Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy through capacity building at both regional and national levels. The support rendered by the International Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction is noted with deep appreciation and it is hoped that this partnership will be strengthened in the years ahead.

321. In an effort to mobilize funds necessary to implement the Disaster Risk Reduction initiatives, the Commission submitted a proposal to the USA Government to fund disaster preparedness and response within the Continent. It should also be noted that a consultative meeting of the Second Africa Regional Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction was held in Nairobi from 5 to 7 April 2009 to prepare Africa's paper for presentation at the Global Platform due to hold in Geneva in June 2009. The Commission, along with Partners, is also working on the decision of the Executive Council of 2006 on Disaster Risk Reduction and on the offer by the Egyptian authorities for the establishment of the Support Management Centre in Egypt. In addition, the Commission along with Member States and Partners is now in the process of extending the Programme of Action for the implementation of the Africa Regional Disaster Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction from 2006 – 2010 to 2006 – 2015.

III.4 INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF FINANCIAL MARKET AND ASSETS

a) The Economic and Financial Crisis

322. The present crisis which erupted in the summer of 2007 initially as a financial crisis and later as an economic crisis ended up becoming a systemic meltdown with the prospect

of alleviating dwindling by the day. Several initiatives, including two G20 Summits, were put in place in an attempt to find effective and lasting solutions to the situation.

323. In Africa, the manifestations of this crisis which is unprecedented since that of 1929-30 are legion. They are evidenced mainly in the dearth of both external and internal sources of funding; the inability to meet debt service obligations, and the inability of most countries in the Continent to achieve the MDGs by 2015. Faced with this situation in which it is only a collateral victim, Africa has no economic recovery or crisis exit plan. It is only expecting to benefit from the ripple effect accruing from implementation of G20 decisions.

324. The G20 Summit held in London in April 2009 took decisions aimed at thoroughly revamping the international monetary and financial system by giving it a new orientation. In particular, this Summit substantially increased IMF resources (threefold) to enable it to more effectively play its role in the global economic recovery. A significant share of the new resources should be earmarked for supporting international trade and assisting the most vulnerable developing countries lacking in recovery plans. However, the crucial question facing Africa is: how does it access these new resources which the London G20 Summit recently made available to the IMF? In other words, what strategy or policy should be put in place for Africa to receive its due share of these new resources which it needs to stave off the harmful effects of the crisis and to revive its economies?

325. For the Commission, the response to these questions partially resides in easing the conditionalities that go with IMF's financial support. Unless those constraining conditionalities are thoroughly reviewed prior to allocation of the fresh resources to potential beneficiaries, Africa is likely to see a worsening of its situation. Consequently, easing the severe constraints of IMF conditionalities should be viewed as a prerequisite for an optimal allocation of the additional resources recently received by the IMF. On that score, the Commission considers it an imperative to re-examine the macro-economic framework for Africa's debt sustainability. If that framework were made more flexible, it would permit most African countries to resort to non-concessional sources of funding which they are currently unable to access. If Africa is unable to obtain a part of the new resources allocated to the IMF, the global economic recovery train will leave Africa behind. Once more, it will remain at the station and its economies will sink more deeply into instability.

326. The Commission recently conducted a study on restructuring the macro-economic framework for Africa's debt sustainability. The purpose of this study is to come up with recommendations which Africa's leaders could propose to the Bretton Woods Institutions.

b) Establishment of the Financial Institutions

327. The process of establishing the African Financial Institutions [the African Investment Bank (AIB), the African Monetary Fund (AMF) and the African Central Bank (ACB)] is moving at different paces. Though tangible progress has been achieved in regard to the African Investment Bank, the pace is slow with respect to the other two institutions.

i. African Investment Bank

328. Significant progress has been recorded. Since June 2008, the Technical Steering Committee, under the leadership of the Governor of the Central Bank of Libya, has been investing considerable effort to move things forward. It has produced the key constitutive instruments of the Bank, namely: the Memorandum of Understanding and the Statute. The MoU was adopted by the Assembly of the Union in February 2009. The draft Statute of the Bank was validated by legal and economic experts of Member States at a meeting held in Tripoli, Libya, in May 2009. This Statute was adopted by the Joint AU-ECA Conference of African Ministers of Economy and Finance held in Egypt in June 2009, which recommended it for final adoption by the Assembly meeting in July 2009.

329. In conclusion, if the second constitutive instrument of the African Investment Bank is adopted by the Assembly, the Bank may see the light of day before the end of 2010, provided that Member States accept to immediately implement the provisions of these instruments by signing and ratifying them.

ii. African Monetary Fund

330. As regards the African Monetary Fund, the Commission is, to this day, still expecting the Cameroonian authorities to provide the premises and facilities required for the Committee to function, pursuant to the Memorandum of Understanding signed in July 2008 between the Government of Cameroon, host country of the AMF, and the Commission. It should be noted that since the signing of the MoU with the Cameroonian authorities, the Commission has invited them several times to implement the MoU by appointing a “team leader” for the Technical Steering Committee and making available suitable premises and facilities to enable the Technical Steering Committee experts, who will soon be recruited, to discharge their duties which include preparing all the constitutive instruments of the African Monetary Fund. However, these invitations by the Commission have, to date, been to no avail or without response. To move this process forward, it is needful for the Cameroonian Authorities to provide the required impetus to reactivate the momentum for establishing the African Monetary Fund.

iii. African Central Bank

331. With regard to the African Central Bank (ACB), the Memorandum of Understanding which paves the way for the setting up of the Technical Steering Committee was signed by the stakeholders - Nigeria, host country, and the Commission in Washington in April 2009. What is now required is for all appropriate steps to be taken by both parties (the Commission and Nigeria) towards its implementation. Here also, the Commission has identified the Experts of the Technical Steering Committee of the African Central Bank. Like for the other two institutions, the mandate of the Technical Steering Committee will be to:

- define the best strategy for speedy establishment of the African Central Bank;
- coordinate and harmonize the policies of existing central banks; and

- draw up the constitutive instruments of the Bank, including the headquarters agreement with the host country.

332. It is imperative that the high Authorities in Nigeria accept to rapidly implement the MoU to enable the Commission to accomplish the tasks leading to the establishment of the African Central Bank.

iv. *Congress of African Economists on regional and continental integration*

333. To help identify effective and lasting solutions to the economic difficulties facing Africa, the Commission undertook to organize an annual Congress of African Economists. This Congress, the main goal of which was to get a better grasp of the issue of regional and continental integration, serves as a platform for African economists (both in the Continent and in the Diaspora) to bring their contribution to bear on the decision-making process at the AU concerning the responses to the economic problems plaguing our Continent. The first Congress, which was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 2 to 5 March 2009 addressed the theme: *Towards the Creation of a Single African Currency: Review of the creation of single African currency in the RECs. Which optimal approach to accelerate the creation of the single continental currency?* It was attended by economists from Africa, the Diaspora, African Universities and Research Centres, African Central Banks, Ministries of Economy and Finance in Africa, etc.

334. The exchange of ideas culminated in important, concrete and operational recommendations which were published in the *Proceedings of the Congress*. These Proceedings will be forwarded to AU policy organs, Member States and RECs. Participants strongly recommended the institutionalization of the Congress as a bi-annual event, so as to involve African economists in the conduct of the African integration process and enable them to contribute ideas towards resolving the Continent's major economic problems; for, as the saying goes "one cannot progress with other people's ideas".

c) Harmonization of Statistics in Africa

335. The first African Statistical Yearbook, published in April 2009, was a joint initiative of the Commission, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). This initiative offers a common mechanism for collection and dissemination of statistical data. The 2009 edition of the African Statistical Yearbook is in two parts, with a set of summary tables and of country profiles containing data generally presented for the period 2000-2008 and covering five main sectors: (i) the socio-demographic sector, (ii) the economic sector, (iii) the monetary and financial sector, (iv) the sector covering data on economic infrastructure and the investment climate, and (v) the sector covering indicators for the Millennium Development Goals. The initiative should be encouraged because it marks a break with past practices, where each institution edited and published its own statistics on African countries, leading to duplication of effort.

336. The African Charter on Statistics was adopted by the Assembly of the Union in February 2009. An advocacy programme has been launched to ensure the signing and

ratification of the Charter by at least fifteen countries during 2009. Discussions are also underway with partners to develop a mechanism for peer review to ascertain whether or not the activities of members of the African statistical system are consistent with the principles and objectives of the Charter.

337. Member States should be invited to expeditiously sign and ratify the Charter to enable it to enter into force, and thereby provide a coherent regulatory framework for statistical activities in Africa.

338. With regard to the *Strategy Paper on Harmonization of Integration Statistics*, it is noteworthy that one of the objectives of the African Charter on Statistics is to provide an appropriate framework for the harmonization of statistical information in Africa to make it comparable between countries and regions. In this connection, a policy document to guide the concerted and coordinated conduct of the harmonization process is being developed in collaboration with all stakeholders of the statistical system in Africa. The document will be validated in August 2009 by African statistics experts and submitted to the organs of the Union for adoption so that it can serve as a framework document to provide Africa with a mechanism for the production of harmonized statistics in the service of African integration.

d) 2009 Report on the assessment of progress made in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

339. In pursuance of the relevant decisions of the Assembly, the Commission, in cooperation with the AfDB and the ECA, prepared the draft 2009 report on progress made towards the MDGs in Africa. A meeting of experts from Member States was held to review and improve the report prior to submission to the joint AU/UNECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in June 2009 and then to the July 2009 Assembly. The opportunity has also been seized to analyze the impact of the international economic and financial crisis on the achievement of the MDGs.

340. The 2009 report shows that Africa continues to make progress towards the MDGs, though the progress is very limited (for certain Goals including the health MDGs) and vary from one region to another. It also shows that the sustainability of the results achieved are under threat from uncertainties and the high risk of decline in global growth due to the international economic and financial crisis.

341. The report recommends implementation of coherent policies in countries to reduce the impact of the global economic and financial crisis on current achievements and progress towards achieving the MDG targets by 2015. It also notes the importance of harmonized statistics in measuring progress towards the MDGs and, in this respect, recommends early implementation of the Charter.

e) Minimum Integration Programme (MIP)

342. It is recalled that the Commission was mandated, by a series of decisions, to develop, in close collaboration with the RECs and Pan-African partner organizations, a Minimum Integration Programme to give more visibility and legibility to the implementation

of the regional and continental integration agenda. The MIP was submitted for consideration by African Ministers of Integration at their Fourth Conference held in Yaoundé, Cameroon from 7 to 8 May 2009.

343. The Minimum Integration Programme comprises different activities, projects and programmes on which the RECs agreed to accelerate and carry through the regional and continental integration process. It is therefore perceived as a mechanism for creating convergence among the RECs, and should focus on a few priority areas of concern at regional and continental levels, in which the RECs can enhance their cooperation and benefit from comparative advantages and one another's good experiences in matters of integration. The MIP which embodies the goals achievable under the AU Strategic Plan (2009-2012), incorporates a monitoring and evaluation mechanism. It is supposed to be implemented by the RECs, Member States and the Commission, in collaboration with Africa's development partners. The Programme was developed in line with the variable geometry approach to integration according to which the RECs are expected to progress at different paces in the integration process. Indeed, the RECs will continue to implement their respective programmes (considered as their own priority programmes) and concurrently strive to achieve the other activities contained in the MIP.

344. The MIP has several objectives, most prominent of which are:

- (i) situate the RECs in relation to implementation of the Abuja Treaty;
- (ii) showcase the priority regional and continental programmes initiated by the Commission, implementation of which falls under the purview of national or regional authorities, according to the principle of subsidiarity;
- (iii) identify regional and continental projects within the Commission and the RECs, implementation of which reposes on the principle of subsidiarity;
- (iv) foster the ongoing initiatives for economic cooperation among the RECs, and identify measures likely to speed up integration in selected priority sectors or areas;
- (v) identify priority sectors that require bold coordination and harmonization in each REC and among the RECs;
- (vi) emulate the successful integration experiences in some RECs and put them to general use in other communities;
- (vii) assist the RECs in identifying and implementing priority activities to cross over the integration stages set forth in Article 6 of the Abuja Treaty;
- (viii) develop and implement other support measures to facilitate establishment of a single market for the priority sectors;
- (ix) identify projects and programmes, implementation of which is based on the activation of inter-REC relations;

345. The importance of the MIP derives essentially from:

- (i) the consensus it creates around the activities and projects to be implemented to speed up the regional and continental integration process;
- (ii) the visibility it gives to this process;

- (iii) the clarification it brings into the relations between stakeholders or players in terms of coordination and harmonization of policies and;
- (iv) the synergy of action it institutes among the development partners particularly in regard to implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

346. Sectoral meetings will be organized in close cooperation with all stakeholders of the regional and continental integration process to identify or deepen the projects and activities to be implemented in the next four years. Such projects and activities will be accompanied with a clear and precise implementation calendar.

III.5 INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF PRODUCTION CAPACITIES

1. AGRICULTURE (CAADP, FOOD CRISIS)

a) CAADP Implementation and High Food Prices

347. In the recent past, the prices of basic food commodities have increased rapidly, although the unfolding global financial crisis and economic meltdown have now pushed food prices down. However, recent estimates and forecasts by various international agencies, particularly FAO and IFAD, reveal that these prices are not likely to remain low in the near future. This is because of the present economic meltdown and the resultant financial crunch which has decreased the availability of capital at a time when accelerated investment in agriculture is needed to increase agricultural production. As capital becomes scarcer and more expensive and consumer spending declines due to growing unemployment and decline in income, there will be a decrease in investment in the agricultural sector. The aftermath is that the expansion needed in the sector to increase supply in order to address the high food prices will not be achieved if urgent steps are not taken to redress this unpleasant situation.

348. The effect of the unprecedented increase in food prices has been keenly felt by poor people purchasing food staples, causing upheaval, unrest and even riots and poses serious threat to food security and poverty reduction in most countries in the developing world including Africa. This implies that without a synchronized response, the burden of rising food prices would continue to afflict the majority of people who live on the poverty threshold, especially the low income African countries that are highly food import-dependent. This could jeopardize the fight against hunger in most African countries where disposable income is low and rising food prices have eroded the already limited purchasing power of the poor and further undermined their ability to achieve food security.

b) Addressing the food crisis through CAADP implementation

349. AU Member States are addressing the High Food Price Crisis through implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) among other coordinated programmes. The CAADP framework addresses long-term growth options such as increase in productivity and the development of rural

infrastructure and markets as well as short-term emergencies such as food crisis and high food prices through safety nets and the use of various automatic stabilizers.

350. In response to the food crisis, the AUC/NEPAD formed a joint taskforce with partners such as the FAO, WFP, IFAD and the World Bank for joint missions to address the food crisis in a coordinated and synchronized manner. To date, there have been joint missions to 12 countries. As part of the implementation of the CAADP, more than two dozen countries, under the leadership of two of the RECs, that is, COMESA and ECOWAS, are actively involved in refining sector policies, developing investment programmes, and establishing the necessary partnerships and alliances to successfully implement the CAADP Agenda and achieve its targets of 6% annual agricultural growth rate and 10% agricultural budget share.

351. In order to accelerate CAADP implementation, several consultations have been held with the various stakeholders and development partners with the aim of generating sound evidence based analysis of the current situation and trend in the food and agricultural situation in Member States. Most recently, on 26 and 27 March 2009, the AUC/NEPAD convened the Fourth CAADP Partnership Platform Meeting in Pretoria, South Africa that brought together representatives of AU Member States, RECs and other key development partners to assess the progress and constraints in the implementation of CAADP, as a strategic framework for agricultural development in Africa. This is with a view to designing appropriate strategies that offer clear and concrete solutions to hunger and poverty reduction within the Continent. It therefore comes as no surprise that the theme of this Assembly Session has been appropriately chosen to reflect the urgent need to invest in the agricultural sector, in order to revamp the sector and address the current problem of high food prices that is currently afflicting the majority of the people, particularly the most vulnerable groups that include the urban poor, rural landless and many small-scale farmers and agro – pastoralists.

352. Each region of Africa has different priorities in terms of the presence and impact of diseases, market opportunities, accessibility of control interventions, technical and human capacity, existing projects and institutional arrangements; which must be addressed in order to develop a tailor-made platform for shared capacity building in disease identification and control from the farm to the fork. A platform “Better Training for Safer Foods in Agricultural Health” that permeates a range of target groups and beneficiaries involved in food security and food safety, and in particular to intervene in the unwanted introduction and spread of pests in disease-free areas, and to manage existing diseases and food contaminants to achieve better yields and safer food on the Continent, has been established jointly by the Commission and the EU. These programmes were launched at the African Union Headquarters in March 2009 between the AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture and the EU Commissioner for Health. The first of these programmes - capacity building - is under progress till the year 2010.

c) Framework and Guidelines for Land Policy in Africa

353. The right and access to land is fundamental in ensuring food security and poverty reduction within the Continent. It is in this respect that the Commission, in a joint initiative with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and the African

Development Bank (AfDB) has developed a Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa to assist Member States to initiate and implement land policy reforms for strengthening land rights, enhancing productivity and securing livelihoods.

354. In this regard, a Draft Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa has been developed, following extensive regional assessments and consultations, as an outcome of the joint land policy initiative led by the AUC, UNECA and AfDB. This draft document was one of the working documents presented at the Joint Conference of African Ministers of Agriculture, Land and Livestock, which was held at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa from 20 to 24 April 2009. The Conference, after thorough deliberations and review, has adopted the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa as well as a set of recommendations for the way forward. This report will be submitted to the relevant AU policy organs for appropriate action.

d) Fisheries Resource Management

355. Concerned about the continuous depletion of the fisheries resources of the Continent, the Assembly of the Union adopted decisions aimed at addressing the challenges related to the fisheries sub-sector during the Sirte Assembly of 2004.

356. As a follow up towards the implementation of these decisions, two main initiatives were developed. The first is the Strategic Partnership Investment Fund for Large Marine Ecosystems (LMEs) of Sub Saharan Africa. Under this project, an additional financing from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other partners was made available to coastal countries in Africa to help support sustainable marine fisheries. Essentially, this initiative includes the Sustainable Fisheries Investment Fund, which is a financing mechanism to make available US\$60 million in GEF grants over the next 10 years to co-finance country level projects aimed at sustainable marine fisheries.

357. The other project, under the Strategic Partnership Investment Fund initiative, involves the strategic partnership of all the stakeholders led by the Commission, to advise the Investment Fund and help exchange lessons learned and promote sustainable fisheries issues within the region.

358. The objectives of this initiative, implemented by the World Bank, include among others, to support country level strategic investment to reverse the depletion of fisheries in the large marine ecosystem (LMEs) of Sub Saharan Africa (SSA) and also to assist the individual coastal countries, bordering these LMEs, to meet the fisheries targets and poverty eradication goal of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

359. The second initiative under the Fisheries Resources Management of the Commission is the Fisheries Access Agreements. This initiative seeks, among others, for the African Union to work with FAO and other development partners in assisting Member States to negotiate agreements that reflect the rights and interests of African coastal states. This would be achieved through the development of materials and guidelines coupled with the training of personnel in order to improve their negotiation skills.

2. INDUSTRIAL AND MINING DEVELOPMENT

360. During the period under review, activities carried out by the Commission were mainly in the area of regional integration, development and cooperation. They consisted in the organization of the 5th Ordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers of Trade and other activities in the areas of trade, customs and industry.

a) 5th Ordinary Session of the AU Conference of Ministers of Trade

361. From 16 to 20 March 2009, the Commission successfully hosted the 5th Ordinary Session of the AU Conference of Ministers of Trade. In accordance with the Decision of the Assembly (Assembly/AU/Dec.197 (XI)) adopted in Sharm-El-Sheikh, Egypt in July 2008, this session of the Conference of AU Trade Ministers examined and endorsed an EPA Template prepared by the Commission and other partners to assist the EPA negotiating regions in their negotiations with the European Union.

362. The Ministers also reviewed and assessed the state of play in the WTO and EPA negotiations respectively; the 2nd Global Aid for Trade Review, scheduled for July 2009; the forthcoming 8th African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Forum, scheduled for Kenya in early August 2009; the presentations by China and India on their respective duty free tariff preferences offered to least developed countries of Africa; and an exchange of experience with other developing countries, with long standing experience on negotiating and implementing Free Trade Agreements with developed countries.

363. A major highlight of the Conference was an Interactive Session during which Ministers engaged dignitaries from some key international organizations and major players in the global economy on the global economic and financial crisis. It was agreed that the root causes of the crisis was the failure of developed countries to effectively regulate and control operators in their financial markets. Grave concerns were expressed that although the crisis was not of the making of African countries, it was having a serious impact on their economic growth and development, through the decline of export earnings, tourism, remittances, trade finance, portfolio and foreign direct investment. At the end of its deliberations on the global economic and financial crisis, the Conference issued a Communiqué, which underscored Africa's concern over the crisis and gave elements of necessary responses to the crisis.

364. The Conference issued Declarations on WTO and EPA negotiations respectively. In the Addis Ababa Declaration on WTO Negotiations, Ministers expressed concern over the effect of the international financial crisis on trade and called on developed countries to refrain from trade protectionism. Ministers also reaffirmed Africa's commitment to a successful conclusion of the Doha Development Round. In the Addis Ababa Declaration on EPA negotiations, Ministers emphasized the need for African countries to have clear policy space to enable governments to respond to various challenges. They also underscored the need for coherence between EPAs and Africa's development and integration Agenda.

365. Above all, the Conference endorsed the EPA Template prepared by the Commission and partner organizations, amended and enriched by Member States and RECs, as a broad-based set of guidelines to assist the RECs in their ongoing EPA negotiations with the European Union. The Conference further called for active preparation and participation in the Aid for Trade Review and the AGOA Forum. Finally, Rwanda offered to host the 2009 Conference of Ministers of Trade.

366. It should also be noted that the 5th Conference of Ministers of Trade contributed to the development of Africa's Common Position on the Global Economic Crisis, focusing on the trade and development dimensions of the crisis, particularly in its Communiqué on the Global Economic Crisis.

b) Industry

367. In the area of industry, following the development of a Strategy for the Implementation of the Plan of Action for the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa, the Commission is working, in collaboration with UNIDO, on a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the Plan of Action. It is worth pointing out that the Implementation Strategy has singled out a total of 16 Programmes and 49 Projects that have to be taken up for the success of the Plan of Action. The Commission is currently preparing for the launch of the Strategy in all Regional Economic Communities (RECs). However, one major challenge is to reflect on modalities for mobilizing financial resources for the implementation of the programmes. In this regard, the Commission is planning to organize an expert group meeting on harmonization of industrial investment policies in Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 8 and 9 July 2009 which will also discuss modalities for resource mobilization. The next Conference of African Ministers of Industry (CAMI) Bureau meeting will also be organized in collaboration with UNIDO and the Chair, South Africa.

c) Mineral Resources Development

368. As a follow-up to the First Ordinary Session of the AU Conference of Ministers responsible for Mineral Resources Development held at AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 16 to 17 October 2008, the Commission has taken the following actions:

- The African Mining Partnership (AMP) has agreed at its last meeting in Durban South Africa held from 3 to 5 February 2009, to merge the AMP with the AU Conference of Ministers responsible for Mineral Resources Development within two years. It was recommended that the process be led by South Africa supported by the AMP Executive Committee;
- A study group comprising representatives from AUC, UNECA, AfDB and other stakeholders will be held from 11 to 16 May 2009 to review Africa's current mining regime and to propose actions to be taken by Member States for the efficient implementation of the decision adopted by African Ministers in charge of Mineral Resources and endorsed by the last session of the Assembly.

III.6 INTEGRATION AND TRADE CAPACITY BUILDING

1. MARKET ACCESS CAPACITY BUILDING

a) Promotion of Efficient Veterinary Services

369. The AU/Pan African Veterinary Vaccine Centre (AU/PANVAC) has continued to lead in the promotion of safe, effective and affordable veterinary vaccines as a way of enhancing livestock production and productivity. In this regard, AU/PANVAC is facilitating the development and introduction of improved or new vaccines and in strengthening Africa's capacity building in veterinary vaccine development, production and quality assurance in line with the AU mission on stimulating economic, social and cultural development in the Continent.

370. The AU/PANVAC activities during the last quarter included, among others, the provision of international independent quality control of veterinary vaccine in Africa. Under this project, AU/PANVAC undertook quality control certification of a total number of 14 batches of vaccines (including vaccines for Rinderpest, Infectious Bursal Disease and Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia) received from AU Member States vaccine producing laboratories and Jordan Vaccine Institute. In addition, AU/PANVAC facilitated the standardization of production and harmonization of quality control of vaccines in Africa and produced 135 vials of vaccine seeds against Hemorrhagic Septicemia (type B) while the production of vaccine seeds against Hemorrhagic Septicemia (type A) is on-going. Also, during this period a total of 12 vials including the vaccine seed for Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia (CBPP), were sent to laboratories in Member States during the first quarter of 2009.

371. To accelerate its work and to be cost effective in the fight against livestock diseases which threaten large scale animal production within the Continent, AU/PANVAC engaged in capacity building in the transfer of necessary skills, including vaccine production technologies and in the general upgrading of performance ability of veterinary staff among Member States. Towards this objective, AU/PANVAC established a partnership with the Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicine (GALVmed) towards the joint organization of a training course in Mozambique on the production of thermostable vaccine against the Newcastle Disease. In addition, PANVAC provided training and technical support to AU/IBAR and GALVmed for the production and quality control of vaccines against the East Coast Fever and Small Ruminants Pests.

372. PANVAC has strengthened its capability for animal disease diagnosis and surveillance by refurbishing old equipment and installing new ones for increased production and distribution of essential biological reagents necessary for diagnosing the various animal diseases that militate against efficient livestock production in Africa.

373. Other activities that the AU/PANVAC intends to initiate within this year include the establishment of Pan Africa Repository of vaccine strains and the establishment of an independent husbandry for laboratory animals. In addition, PANVAC has continued to strengthen its relationships with other international technical organizations and has

established partnership with such organizations in the livestock sub-sector as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), FAO, and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) and GALVmed, among others.

b) Phytosanitary and Sanitary Issues

374. The AU/Inter-African Phytosanitary Council (AU/IAPSC) which is the specialized technical office of the Commission based in Yaoundé, Cameroon, is responsible for plant protection and quarantine in Africa. AU/IAPSC activities as a Regional Plant Protection Organization (RPPO) centre around four main pillars –plant quarantine, phytosanitary standards and trade, plant and plant products protection, phytosanitary measures and pesticides.

375. The present undertaking of AU/IAPSC is focused on the harmonization of pesticides registration in Eastern and Southern Africa, control of the invasion of Grain Eating Birds (*Quelea* sp) as trans-boundary pests in Africa and the scoping study of the impact of fumigation and inspection issues on the safe trade of plant and plant products in the economy of West and Central African countries. In addition, the Council provided phytosanitary information to different National Plant Protection Organizations in Member States through the regular publication of the Phytosanitary News Bulletins.

376. In partnership with AU/IBAR, the IAPSC is implementing the Participation of African Nations in Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standard-setting Organizations (PAN-SPSO) Project through different African Regional Economic Communities (RECs). It is envisaged that the capacity of African countries in phytosanitary standards setting will be greatly enhanced upon completion of this project in 2010. This would facilitate membership of African countries in international standards setting organizations and improve their capacity building in the implementation of food safety standards and measures. This will in turn help reduce poverty and enhance food security in Africa by providing easier and better access to international trade and markets in agricultural products and commodities.

377. AU/IAPSC, also in collaboration with the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Centre for Applied Bioscience International (CABI), is preparing a draft proposal to develop and launch a phytosanitary capacity building strategy for Africa. Similarly, in partnership with CABI and Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services (KEPHIS), AU/IAPSC is working towards establishing a phytosanitary centre of excellence in Nairobi, Kenya for Eastern African countries.

378. AU/IAPSC continues to encourage the rational use of pesticides and other chemicals used in crop and animal production to protect foodstuffs in storage. In this regard, AU/IAPSC continues to closely monitor national legislations on pesticides in several African countries to see what could be learned from these countries and also give support and advice in policy harmonization where necessary, in order to stimulate trade across national boundaries and regions.

c) Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Control and Eradication

379. The Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign (PATTEC) was initiated, as a one of the specialized technical offices of AUC in the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture (DREA), because of the urgent need to address the problem posed by tsetse-transmitted diseases, which threaten the health and productivity of people and livestock, and pose a serious threat to the attainment of food security within the Continent.

380. One of the activities of PATTEC, since inception, include the implementation of the African Development Bank - supported programme to eradicate Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis in six African countries namely-Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Mali. The programme which is now in its 4th year has made significant progress towards control and management of the pest and vector in the programme area. Furthermore, it is gratifying to note that Angola and Zambia will commence joint aerial spraying operations on 12 May 2009, which is expected to render tsetse – free, an area of about 20,000 km² in both countries by August 2009.

381. Significant progress in the Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign is in the development of a monitoring and evaluation protocol that will guide the Commission in monitoring the progress of PATTEC activities as an effective strategy to combat the nuisance posed by this disease. Also, to cope with the increase in the demand by Member States in the fight against Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis, the Commission is to establish regional coordination offices in RECs for effective coordination and harmonization of the activities under PATTEC.

382. In order to increase awareness and enhance commitment and support towards the objectives of PATTEC, the Commission is in the process of introducing various advocacy tools that will highlight the objectives and programmes of PATTEC. These will include, among others, the use of postage stamps featuring themes on PATTEC and soliciting high profile personalities to promote the agenda and purpose of PATTEC.

383. Under the Commission, a special partners' conference to discuss the technical plans and support framework for the implementation of PATTEC in countries of the Central African Region was held in N'Djamena, Chad, from 3 to 4 December 2008, during which US\$138 million in pledges and expressed commitment were made by the participating Member States.

384. Also, a proposal to activate and better manage the Trypanosomiasis Vector Research and Control (TVRC) Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charity organization registered in the USA to mobilize support for Trypanosomiasis control in Africa and Latin America, has been developed. In addition, a 3-week management training course, sponsored by the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) for personnel involved in the planning and execution of PATTEC projects was held in Swaziland and discussions are underway to extend this support to cover more courses in the future.

385. Concepts of a new multi-national programme for Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis eradication in areas of a common tsetse belt in various countries, including Burundi, Rwanda and Tanzania; Nigeria, Niger, Benin, Burkina Faso and Togo; Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic and Nigeria; Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland; Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe; and Ethiopia and Sudan, have been developed and are now underway, to prepare proposals in respect of the identified project areas.

386. There are also on-going consultations on preparations for an inter-ministerial meeting to be held in Liberia, to discuss plans and a strategic framework for the implementation of PATTEC in countries along the West African Coast (Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Senegal, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire).

387. In its effort to increase the flow and exchange of ideas among the stakeholders, including governments, institutions, partners, individuals, etc, the Commission has established a PATTEC domain and website to provide relevant information on the implementation of projects and programmes in the campaign against Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis

d) Customs

i. Rules of Origin

388. A meeting bringing together representatives of Member States and RECs was organized by the Commission from 27 to 29 April in Lomé, Togo, in order to come up with a template on Rules of Origin. This template will be annexed to the already completed model EPA Template which was examined and endorsed by the Ministers of Trade this year. The Rules of Origin EPA template will be circulated to all RECs to provide guidelines during Rules of Origin negotiations with the European Union.

ii. AUC/RECs Coordination

389. The Commission organized the 3rd AUC/RECs Customs Coordination Meeting in Lomé, Togo from 30 April to 01 May 2009. The objective of the meeting was to finalize institutional matters relating to the establishment of this coordination mechanism as a sub-committee of the AUC-RECs Committee on Coordination. The meeting also agreed that, in line with the Customs Division Strategic Plan presently being elaborated, a roadmap leading to the establishment of the Continental Customs Union and which would focus mainly on harmonization of Customs instruments and procedures will be drawn up and considered during the 4th meeting scheduled for November 2009.

2. MULTILATERAL TRADE RULES AND NEGOTIATIONS (EPA, WTO)

a) Negotiations of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs)

390. During the period under review, the negotiations for Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) between African Regional Economic Communities/negotiating groups and the European Commission progressed in all the negotiating regions in Africa. African negotiating groups continue to face challenges in resolving contentious issues identified as

problematic in the Interim EPAs that were initialled in 2007. Negotiations have taken place at the Technical and Ministerial levels, focusing on resolving some of the contentious issues, continuing negotiations on issues not included in the interim agreements and implementation of the Interim EPAs for those countries that initialled interim agreements. Divergent views remain on the inclusion of the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) clause in EPAs. Currently, preparations are going on in some regions for the signing of the Interim EPAs as initialled in 2007 on the understanding that contentious issues will be resolved in the negotiations for full EPAs. During the 5th Ordinary Session of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Trade that came up with the Addis Ababa Declaration on EPAs, Ministers adopted as broad based guidelines the EPA Model Template that was developed by the Commission in collaboration with the UNECA and RECs. As the negotiations for full EPAs continue, it is imperative that we ensure that the final agreements will serve as true instruments for the development of Africa and that they do not undermine regional and continental integration programmes.

b) WTO Negotiations

391. The Commission has continued to lend technical support to the African Group which remains very active within the WTO and continues to positively contribute to advancing the multilateral trading system. It is more than ever conscious that, especially within the current environment of the global economic and financial crisis, it needs to remain highly vigilant to prevent any protectionist trends, and possible infringements to the well established rules and agreements of the WTO. Now, more than ever before, the developmental objectives of the Round should be preserved and strengthened. Particular attention should be afforded to providing meaningful and operational Special and Differential Treatment to developing and least developed countries in all the negotiating tracks. The negotiations are almost 80% complete and serious efforts are being deployed on all sides to ensure a successful conclusion of the Doha Round.

III.7 ROLE OF ALL ACTORS IN STRENGTHENING THE INTEGRATION PROCESS (PUBLIC SECTOR, PRIVATE SECTOR, CIVIL SOCIETY, DIASPORA)

392. In the effort to strengthen its working relationship with the African Civil Society and Diaspora, the Commission focused its attention on the following areas: support for the institutionalization of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council of the Union (ECOSOCC), capacity building for Diaspora programme, Africa-Europe Partnership, mapping of African Civil Society Organisations, strengthening the structure of CIDO, mobilisation and sensitization and the AU-CSOs Pre-Summit Meeting. These activities fall within the purview of the three pillars of the Strategic Plan, namely: Institution and Capacity Building, Development and Cooperation and Shared Values.

a) Support for the institutionalization and Operationalisation of ECOSOCC

393. In its role as the Secretariat of ECOSOCC, the Commission has continued to provide the needed support for the institutionalization and operationalisation of the Organ. The decision of the Council (EX.CL/Dec.477(XIV)) informing the launch of the Permanent General Assembly of the Organ gave it the responsibility to complete elections where they have not been held. Consequently, the 2nd Ordinary Session of the ECOSOCC Assembly

held in Nairobi in October 2008 soon after the launching in Dar-Es-Salaam in September 2008, drew up a work programme for completion of elections. As part of this work programme, the Secretariat was assigned the duty of re-advertising the process, soliciting and receiving applications and providing support for the work of the Credentials Committee which met twice in Cairo, Egypt, in late February 2009 and Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire from 30 April to 3 May 2009. Moreover, the successful completion of this exercise paved the way for composite elections in Yaounde, Cameroon, from 21-23 May 2009 where new members of ECOSOCC were elected from Angola, Djibouti, Rwanda, Lesotho, Libya, Mozambique, Senegal, Seychelles, Swaziland, Togo and the two remaining regions of Central and North Africa. Thereafter, the Ordinary Session of the ECOSOCC General Assembly met in Yaounde, from 25-26 May 2009. During the course of the Session, the ECOSOCC Assembly elected members of the Standing Committee and chairs of its various cluster committees on the basis of regional representations. This has paved the way for the activation of clusters that would be the anchor point for ECOSOCC programmes and activities. Preparations for the inaugural meeting of the Standing Committee which will draw up its rules of procedure and programme of action for the work of the clusters as well as finalization of the strategic plan of ECOSOCC that was developed at its 3rd Ordinary Session in Abuja, Nigeria in December 2008 are underway with the full support of the Commission.

b) Institutional Funding Support For Diaspora Programme

394. The Commission has also been working with the World Bank to obtain institutional funding support for the Diaspora programme. In its previous submissions, the Commission has always underlined that as a global programme, the Diaspora Initiative is capital intensive and yet has not attracted much resources from Member States as a result of various competing needs of the Union and limited resources available to Member States. The process of regional consultative conferences which has set the pace for a global Diaspora Summit that would set the broad parameters for legislative and policy action was made possible through the cooperation and resource support of the Republic of South Africa. It is essential however to ensure adequate capacity support for the outcome of the Summit and strengthen the Diaspora Unit at the Commission as well as its representational offices abroad to support this process. Apart from the World Bank, other partners, including the European Union have also shown some interest in providing support for the Diaspora programme.

c) Civil Society and Africa-EU Partnership

395. The Commission facilitated the second annual AU-Civil Society consultation on the implementation of the Africa-EU Partnership in Nairobi, Kenya, from 3-5 March 2009. The purpose of the consultation was to assess the progress of the partnership project one year after its inception and to review the initial and current phase of the implementation plan with emphasis on the activities of the Joint Experts and Working Groups. The consultation was also designed to further define and refine the organizational processes of civil society participation in this context.

396. The meeting reconstituted the AU-CSO Steering Committee on the Africa-Europe partnership that was set up in Accra, under ECOSOCC leadership. It also established a

process for mobilizing constituencies of support in various regions that would sensitize the various segments of society on the need for participation in the process. The consultation made specific recommendations aimed at ensuring that the Lisbon Declaration of Africa-EU leaders lives up to its promise and commitment to have a people-centred strategy that will integrate civil society in its formal and informal structures. It also made recommendations on Human Rights and Governance processes and stressed the need for the African side to ensure that there is a balance between European and African sides at the technical and operational levels, particularly at the level of experts and Joint Working Groups.

d) Mapping of African Civil Society Organisations

397. The Audit Panel of the African Union recommended that “a register should be opened at the Commission for registration of CSOs and professional associations based on the criteria laid down in the ECOSOCC Statutes. The list must be updated from time to time and should serve as the database for the organization of ECOSOCC processes”. The AU-EU partnership also stressed the requirement for this mapping exercise in its thematic areas. The objective of mapping also fits in with the demands of the AU Constitutive Act on a people-driven and focused African Union which must create effective mechanisms to facilitate access for effective participation among African citizens and civil society relations within the AU framework and globally.

398. The Commission commenced this mapping process with a technical workshop held in Nairobi, Kenya from 28-31 May 2009. The workshop produced a framework document for the mapping process that outlined its purpose, rationale, objectives, expected benefits, scope of the database, identification and classification system, storage, planning and resource requirements, milestones and timeframes. An Expert Group meeting will be held to further elaborate this into a larger project document for policymakers so that the project would commence in earnest by January/February 2010 for a period of 12 months anticipated for the completion of the first phase, after which the database will be constantly and periodically updated.

e) AU-CSO Pre-Summit Meeting in Tripoli, Libya, 20-22 June 2009

399. In the period under consideration, critical attention has been paid to the requirement of promoting and sustaining shared values in the African Union. As part of this process, ECOSOCC and Civil Society/Diaspora meetings are held in various parts of the continent. The Commission has dispatched various sensitization missions to different parts of the continent to mobilize support for the AU among the constituents in the five regions of the continent.

400. An AU-CSO Pre-Summit meeting was planned in Tripoli, Libya, from 20-22 June 2009. The Pre-Summit's agenda included an audit report of the activities of ECOSOCC, the Civil Society and Diaspora processes and AU in general to facilitate understanding, co-operation and interaction. Majority of CSO experts in the field of Agriculture and Economic Growth also met to deliberate on the Summit theme and review presentations that would be made to the Summit.

III.8 PARTNERSHIPS AND RELATIONS WITH THE WORLD

1. ON GOING PARTNERSHIPS

401. Council will recall that by Decision EX.CL/Dec.480 (XIV), the Commission was requested to take a number of steps towards actualizing the overarching objectives and benefits of Africa's partnerships. The Commission has accordingly undertaken various activities in the process of implementation of this Decision.

a) Implementation of the Outcomes of the Africa-India Forum Summit

402. It is to be recalled that paragraph 21 of the Delhi Declaration of 9 April 2008 mandated African and Indian officials to jointly develop, within a period of one year, a joint plan of action at continental level, and an appropriate follow-up mechanism to implement the framework for cooperation. To this end, African and Indian officials began the process of developing a draft plan of action in November 2008. The draft action plan was considered and adopted by the Multilateral Cooperation Sub-Committee and the Permanent Representatives' Committee, and is to be subsequently discussed and agreed upon by both African and Indian officials in May 2009.

403. It should be emphasized that India's engagement with the African Union at continental level is one of India's three-layers of interaction with Africa. The other two levels are at country/bilateral and regional levels.

404. It should also be pointed out that India has earmarked resources for the implementation of programmes and projects at continental level, which amounts to US\$300 million out of the US\$500 million that it has allocated to the three-layers of interaction within the next five years. This is in addition to the US\$2 billion in soft loans India is making available for projects in Africa.

405. Finally, it is worth noting that the Commission is in the process of developing modalities and criteria that could be taken into consideration in locating the various training institutions and vocational training centres that India has proposed to provide in Africa. This exercise would ensure equitable representation and geographical balance across the five regions of the Continent.

b) Preparations for the Second Africa-South America (ASA) Summit

406. Council may recall that the Second Africa-South America (ASA) Summit could not hold as scheduled on 28 and 29 November 2008 in Venezuela, due to the fact that the date coincided with another international engagement in which most participating member states were to be involved. Council will recall that a decision was adopted at its last Ordinary Session to hold the Summit in August 2009. Upon consultation between the AU and the Venezuelan Presidencies, the Summit will now hold in Venezuela from 14 to 19 September 2009 as follows:

Meeting of Senior Officials:	14 – 15 September 2009;
Ministerial Meeting:	16 – 17 September 2009; and
Heads of State and Government:	18 – 19 September 2009.

407. It is hoped that Council will adopt the above stated dates for the 2nd ASA Summit at this Session, which was proposed in order to allow African leaders who wish to attend the UN General Assembly Session to make only one trip across the Atlantic Ocean.

408. In the meantime, preparations for the Summit have intensified following the 4th Meeting of the Coordination Group of the Africa-South America (ASA) Summit that was held in Caracas, Venezuela, on 8 and 9 January 2009. The meeting was attended by Nigeria, ASA Regional Coordinator for Africa; Brazil, ASA Regional Coordinator for South America; the African Union Commission; the Pro-Tempore Chairmanship of the Union of South American States (UNASUR); and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, the host country of the meeting and of the Second ASA Summit.

409. The meeting, among other things, reviewed progress that had been recorded since the previous meeting of the Coordination Group held in Brasilia, Brazil, in June 2008 as well as the implementation of the outcomes of the First Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), also held in Brasilia in June 2008; and the status of the Working Groups of the eight thematic areas of the partnership, including their meeting schedules, functions and work methodology.

410. Following that Coordination Group meeting, the Working Groups have been seized with the task of concluding their consultations and coming up with concrete programmes and projects that would be presented to the Second ASA Summit for consideration and approval. The eventual execution of those concrete programmes and projects would bring to the fore the obvious benefits and opportunities that are ingrained in the partnership arrangement.

411. The Commission wishes to solicit the continued cooperation and commitment of Member States in this, as well as in the other strategic partnerships of the Continent, in order for Africa to maximize the opportunities that could be garnered from these partnership arrangements.

412. Finally, I wish to inform Council that I paid an official visit to Caracas, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela from 7 to 9 June 2009. The visit was at the invitation of H.E. President Hugo Chavez Frias with whom I had useful discussions. I also met with Foreign Minister H.E. Nicholas Maduro Maros; Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs for Africa, H.E. Dr. Reinaldo Bolivar and African Heads of Mission resident in Caracas. All the meetings were geared towards ensuring a good preparation and a successful ASA Summit.

413. I would like to inform Member States that Venezuela is now in a high state of preparedness and the Venezuelan authorities, as well as myself, look forward to a successful and fruitful Summit. In this regard, it is imperative that we intensify preparations for the Summit. I also use this opportunity to invite all Member States to attend this important meeting.

c) Reinforcing the Relationship between the African Union (AU) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)

414. It is to be recalled that the defunct Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) had established a working relationship since the 1970s. Indeed, in 1974 the OIC granted observer status to the OAU during the Fifth Islamic Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs that was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. In turn, the Thirty-First Ordinary Session of the OAU Council of Ministers, held in Khartoum, The Sudan, in July 1978, adopted Resolution CM/Res.669 (XXXI) authorizing the OAU Secretary General to negotiate with the OIC General Secretariat a cooperation agreement between the two organizations.

415. In this regard, a draft cooperation agreement was prepared which was submitted to the Thirty-Second Ordinary Session of the Council of Ministers that was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in February 1979. Council deferred consideration of the document but subsequently approved it at its 2000 Session. The draft agreement approved by Council was sent to the OIC for signing, but the latter did not respond to the request to sign it.

416. Consequently, although the OAU and the AU since its establishment in 2002, have collaborated with the OIC, no formal agreement has been signed to provide a framework for cooperation between the two organizations. In order to rectify this anomaly and strengthen institutional cooperation between the AU and the OIC, the Chairperson of the AU Commission and the Secretary General of the OIC took the initiative to reinvigorate the relations between their two institutions.

417. This move was endorsed by Council at its last ordinary session in January 2009, which mandated the Commission to bring the outcome of the proposal to revise the draft agreement between the AU and the OIC to the attention of Council in due course. In this regard, the 2000 draft agreement has been revised by the Office of the Legal Counsel and approved by the Commission. It is anticipated that the revised draft agreement will be discussed with the OIC and brought to the attention of Member States before it is concluded.

d) Global Review of Africa's Strategic Partnership

418. It will be recalled that the Executive Council in January 2008 directed action to be taken to conduct a global review of all existing partnerships in order to effectively implement strategies and action plans agreed upon between Africa and its international partners, rationalize the number of Summits, identify the criteria for such partnerships and make the necessary recommendations to Council and the Assembly of the Union.

419. In the implementation of the Council decision, the Commission has concluded the study and circulated it to all Member States. The Commission had also had a number of working sessions with on the Multilateral Cooperation Sub-Committee, which made some comments and observations. It is expected that the comments of the Sub-Committee and the study would be considered by the PRC and subsequently by the Executive Council for adoption.

e) Korea-Africa Forum

420. I wish to inform Council that Korea has proposed to host the 2nd Korea-Africa Forum in Korea, from 24 to 25 November 2009 at Ministerial level. Unlike the 1st Korea-Africa Forum, Korea has expressed the willingness to respect the Bajul format on Africa's participation and the involvement of the Commission in the process. In this regard, the Director-General for Africa and the Middle East at the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs visited Addis Ababa on 3 June 2009 to discuss the proposal.

421. Finally, it is recalled that this proposal had been forwarded to Member States and the Multilateral Cooperation Sub-Committee has had some deliberations on the proposal.

2. AFRO-ARAB COOPERATION

422. During the period under review, the Commission undertook a number of activities aimed at implementing the Decision of the 14th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union on Afro-Arab Cooperation - EX.CL/Dec.467 (XIV).

423. The Organizing Committee of the Joint Meeting of African and Arab Ministers of Agriculture met in Addis Ababa from 13 to 14 April 2009. At this meeting, the Committee agreed to convene the Joint Ministerial Meeting from 23 to 26 September 2009 at a venue to be decided. The Organizing Committee also agreed on the list of participants and working documents for the meeting.

a) Afro-Arab Cooperation on Agriculture and Food Security

424. Over the past two years, the African Union and the League of Arab States (LAS) have initiated the Afro-Arab Cooperation Framework on Agricultural Development and Food Security. Several discussions and consultations have been held resulting in a joint plan of action focusing on four main areas as follows: (i) Agricultural Intensification (inputs, irrigation, and value addition); (ii) Strategic Food Reserves Initiative; (iii) Trade and Market Access; and (iv) Agricultural Research and Development and Technology Transfer and Extension.

425. As a first step towards operationalizing the Afro-Arab Cooperation Framework on Agriculture and food Security, and to address the issues identified in the joint plan of action as the cornerstone of the Cooperation, the First Africa-Arab Meeting on Agro-investment was planned in Zanzibar, Tanzania from 25 to 27 May, 2009. During this Meeting, AU Member States were expected to submit three project proposals in the area of agriculture and food security for possible funding through the funds made available by the League of Arab States.

426. Within the framework of the AU Assembly Declaration on: "Responding to the Challenges of High Food Prices and Agricultural Development", the Permanent Delegation to the LAS in Cairo organized a series of activities with the civil society and academic institutions in Cairo during the period January-July 2009, which included:

- Forum on the Role of African & Arab Women to address the food crisis;
- Seminar on Food Security in Africa; and
- Seminar on Climatic Changes in Africa

b) Revitalization of Afro-Arab Cooperation

427. Council may note that the 21st Arab Summit which was addressed by the Chairperson of the Commission on important political, economic and other issues relevant to Afro-Arab Brotherhood, adopted important decisions on Afro-Arab cooperation. It reconfirmed its commitment to the removal of obstacles facing the revitalization of this cooperation and the regularity of meetings of its institutions, and requested the Secretary General to continue his contacts in this regard in order to reach a real cooperation stage for the mutual benefit of the two regions in all interrelated political, economic, commercial, social and cultural fields.

428. At the invitation of the League of Arab States, a high-level delegation led by the Chairperson of the Commission attended the 21st Arab Summit, held in Doha, Qatar, in March 2009.

c) 2nd Afro-Arab Summit

429. The 21st Arab Summit called for the continuation of efforts to convene the 2nd Afro-Arab Summit in the nearest future and expressed appreciation for the decision of the 12th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in February 2009, which called upon Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary General of the League of Arab States to continue consultations on the venue of the Summit which is expected to be convened during the 4th quarter of 2009.

d) 13th Session of the Standing Commission for Afro-Arab Cooperation and the Afro-Arab Development Forum

430. The Commission, in collaboration with the League of Arab States and the Government of Libya, commenced preparations for the 13th Session of the Standing Commission for Afro-Arab Cooperation. The Session is planned to take place in Tripoli, Libya, at a date to be agreed upon between the Host country, the Commission and the League of Arab States.

3. REPRESENTATIONAL OFFICES

(1) NEW YORK OFFICE

431. In strengthening the cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations, the AU New York Office, actively engaged with various organs of the United Nations and relevant departments of the Secretariat, UN Agencies, and Academic Institutions. It also facilitated consultations between AU and UN senior officials. An in-depth review of the resolution on Cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union was

launched with a view to reflecting the multifaceted trends in cooperation between the two organizations. Through its website launched since January 2008, the Office continues to facilitate communication between the AU and the UN, and the dissemination of Decisions, Resolutions and key Reports from both sides to various stakeholders.

a) Peace and Security

• **Security Council and Peacebuilding Commission**

432. In the area of Peace and Security, the New York Office monitored the activities of the UN Security Council, which devoted 28 meetings to African issues during the period under consideration, and adopted 4 Resolutions and 4 Presidential Statements (PRST). The Office facilitated the participation of the AU in the Security Council meeting held on 18 March 2009 devoted to the Report of the AU/UN High-Level Panel on the question of resource mobilization for financing peacekeeping operations conducted by regional organizations such as the AU. In its PRST, Council requested the UN Secretary General to submit a Report, no later than 18 September 2009, on practical ways to provide effective support for the AU when it undertakes peacekeeping operations authorized by the UN.

433. The New York Office reported on notable developments on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) and participated in the process of selection of UNAMID senior military personnel, including the selection of a new UNAMID Force Commander. Pursuant to Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.221(XII), the Office facilitated and participated in the engagement with the UN Security Council on the request for deferral of the International Criminal Court (ICC) indictment of the President of Sudan, in accordance with the provisions of Article 16 of the Rome Statute of the ICC. The Office also facilitated the participation of the AU at Council's meeting of 20 March 2009 devoted to the situation in Somalia, which outlined the support package for the strengthening of AMISOM, the Somali security sector reform, and the maritime task force that should include a component for support to AMISOM and to the peace process.

434. With regard to a UN peacekeeping operation, the Secretary General's Report stresses the need for basic conditions to be in place, as well as adequate pledges of troops by Member States.

435. Furthermore, the Office closely monitored discussions at the UN Security Council on the situation between Djibouti and Eritrea, the situation in Chad and the Central African Republic, in Guinea Bissau and in Côte d'Ivoire.

436. On disarmament and non-proliferation of arms, the New York Office monitored the substantive session of the UN Disarmament Commission from 7 to 25 April 2009, which considered the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. Signs were emerging that nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States could redraw the global debate and discard outdated ideas that nuclear weapons were irreversibly embedded in the global security architecture.

437. On peacebuilding and post conflict reconstruction, the Office continued to monitor and participate in the PBC activities pertaining to the four African countries under its umbrella, namely Sierra Leone, Burundi, Guinea Bissau, and the Central African Republic. A notable development was the consideration of the question of cooperation with regional organizations at a meeting held on 30 March 2009, during which the Office articulated the experience and perspectives of the African Union as contained in the Au Policy Framework for Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development and other related instruments.

b) Political Issues

438. The New York Office monitored the activities of the 63rd General Assembly which adopted 279 resolutions, including Resolution A/RES/63/267 on New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support, which reaffirms the General Assembly's commitment towards the implementation of the political Declaration on Africa's development needs.

439. The Office also monitored the UN High-level Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and its Impact on Development held from 1 to 3 June 2009, pursuant to Resolution A/RES/63/277. On the same subject, ECOSOC held an interactive panel discussion on 21 April 2009 to discuss the coordination between ECOSOC, UN Agencies, and Bretton Woods Institutions. It also participated, on 6 April 2009, in the Interactive Thematic Dialogue on the Global Food Crisis and the Right to Food initiated by the President of the General Assembly, pursuant to Resolutions A/RES/63/235 and A/RES/63/187 on the right to food.

440. The Office also followed up the process leading to the adoption by the General Assembly of relevant Resolutions on social and humanitarian issues, including those related to Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons, the follow-up to the implementation of the International Year of Volunteers; the Programme on Human Rights for the period 2010-2011, the 12th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to be held in Salvador, Brazil, from 12 to 19 April 2010 as well as the International Cooperation on Drug Control and the recognition to sickle cell anemia as a public health priority.

441. In addition, the Office contributed to efforts deployed by Member States towards including the question of the abuse of the principle of universal jurisdiction on the Agenda of the 63rd Session of the UN General Assembly, pursuant to AU Decisions Assembly/AU/Dec.199(XI) and Assembly/AU/Dec.213(XII). In this respect, the African Group engaged in various consultations at ambassadorial and experts level with the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the Rio Group and the European Union in New York.

442. The Office continued to closely monitor the United Nations Reform, in particular, the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations in the General Assembly on various clusters of UN Security Council Reform, launched on 28 February 2009. Pursuant to decision Assembly/AU/Dec.230(XII), the Office continued to support the efforts of Permanent Representatives of the Committee of Ten in New York on UN Reform which, working in consultation with the African Group, engaged in the intergovernmental negotiations and articulated the African Common Position as outlined in the Ezulwini Consensus. On the

Revitalization of the General Assembly, the Ad Hoc Working Group focused on the need for better coordination between the General Assembly and the Security Council in order to avoid overlap of their tasks, for the Security Council to be more responsive and accountable to the General Assembly, and for the General Assembly to be involved in the process of selection of the Secretary General of the UN. On System-wide Coherence, the Office monitored the plenary informal consultations, under the co-chairmanship of Namibia and Spain, from 16 to 24 April 2009. Consideration of the document “Strengthening governance of operational activities for development of the United Nations System for enhanced system-wide coherence” presented by the Deputy Secretary General continued in May 2009.

443. In implementing of AU Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.408 (XII), the Office took active part in the celebration on 25 March 2009 as the international day of remembrance of the victims of slavery and the trans-atlantic slave trade. Under the theme “Breaking the Silence, Beating the Drum”, it was marked by messages from UN Senior Officials, and chairs of CARICOM (Granada) and the African Group (Sierra Leone), cultural events with special emphasis on African and Caribbean artists, documentary films screening, student video conferences, a special book event and panel discussion. The Office also took active part in the Committee established by Resolution A/RES/63/5 (2008) to oversee the Permanent Memorial Project to honour the victims of slavery and the trans-atlantic slave trade. A Trust Fund was established and the realization of the project is estimated at US\$2.8 million.

c) African Candidatures in the International System

444. The Office also facilitated the coordination of the African Group process related to election in various UN bodies to be held in 2009, in the light of AU Decision EX.CL/Dec.484 (XIV). A notable development reported was the success of Africa at the election of judges to the ICC on 20 January 2009, and the election of members of the Human Rights Council on 12 May 2009 in New York. During the process, the Group underscored the need to review its guidelines, enhance coordination with the AU in the light of the current system of bi-annual Summits, and address the issue of endorsement of candidates exceeding the number of seats open to Africa.

d) Economic and Social Issues

• UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

445. The New York Office continued to monitor related ECOSOC activities, starting with the organizational session from 10 to 13 February 2009 which decided on the theme of the humanitarian affairs segment of its 2009 substantive session, under the theme: “Strengthening coordination of humanitarian assistance: present challenges and their impact on the future”. The Office fully participated in the intergovernmental preparatory

meeting and the 17th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development from 4 to 15 May 2009. The session took important policy decisions to expedite implementation of Agenda 21 in the critical interrelated thematic clusters of this cycle; Agriculture, Rural Development, Drought, Desertification, Land, and Africa. IPM also recognized the importance of tackling food crisis, energy crisis, financial crisis, global recession and the looming climate crisis.

446. The New York Office, also closely followed up on the 40th session of the Statistical Commission from 24 to 27 February 2009 during which Member States discussed the program review on Climate change and official statistics, as well as various statistical disciplines. The Office participated in other meetings such as the 8th Session of UN Forum on Forests (UNFF8) from 20 April 2009, the annual special high level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the 47th Session on the Commission for Social Development (COSD) held from 4 to 13 February 2009 as well as the 53rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) held from 2 to 13 March 2009 and the “World Malaria Day,” on April 22, 2009.

e) African Group Activities

447. The New York Office organized for the African Group more than 30 meetings at ambassadorial and expert’s level. The Group heard a number of briefings by several Senior Officials from Member states, UN system, AU Commission, and other partners and considered relevant issues, such as the outcomes of G20 High Level Conference, the question of abuse of principles of universal jurisdiction, the Resolution on the AU/UN Cooperation, the Inter-governmental Negotiations on Security Council Reform, the situation of the Office of Special Adviser on Africa (OSSA). In order to be proactive as much as possible at the UN, the African Group has been improving its working methods by introducing innovative approaches, such as the establishment of ad Hoc Working groups, tentative program of work and review of priorities, harmonization of work with other groupings in New York.

f) Multilateral Interactions

448. The Office continued to facilitate interactions between the African and European Union Troika in New York towards developing a more structured but flexible environment for engagement on issues of shared concern, and with a view to enhancing their role in implementing the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership and the first Action Plan (2008-2010). In collaboration with the EU Commission Representation in New York, a Roundtable Discussion was organized on “Increasing dialogue and collaboration between the UN and regional organizations to enhance the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820” on 27 February 2009.

449. The Office supported the UN African Ambassadors’ Spouses Group (UNAASG) African Bazaar held at the UN on 30 April 2009 around the theme: “Empowering African Women through Micro-Finance”. The event which was aimed at improving the continent visibility and the richness of its human resources, was attended by more than 400 visitors.

It was also organized in preparation for the Africa Day celebration scheduled on 29 May 2009.

450. The New York Office also facilitated and participated in various activities of the UN Senior African Group devoted to the consideration of issues related to Policies, Program and Personnel. In particular, the issue of unequal access to the UN System by Junior Officers from Africa may require further consideration by the African Union.

(2) WASHINGTON OFFICE

451. During the current reporting period January-June 2009, the Washington Office focused attention and efforts on developments relating to the immediate aftermath of the historic inauguration of President Barack Obama as the 44th President of the United States of America as well as activities in the context of both the mandate of the African Union Mission/USA and implementation of relevant decisions emanating from the AU Summit meetings held in January 2009.

a) Activities Relating to USA Post-inaugural Developments:

452. The Washington Office's activities were focused in the following areas:

- Transmission, to its highest destination, of congratulatory messages conveyed to President Barack Obama by the 12th Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly;
- Co-organized/hosted the Pan African Inaugural Event with the Embassy of Kenya, the African Diplomatic Corps and the Corporate Council on Africa (CCA);
- Monitored and assessed post-inaugural developments relating to the formation of the new Administration's cabinet, appointments of Senior Advisors as well as other key postings and their implications for US/Africa foreign policy agenda;
- Attended and reported on the Joint Session of the First Session of the One Hundred Eleventh Congress of the United States during which the President of the United States delivered his address(similar to that of a State of the Union address) to the joint session of Congress, held on February 24, 2009;
- Consulted and engaged with relevant members of the President Obama's transitional team to articulate Africa's expectations from the new US Administration. These consultations paved the way for a visit by the AU Commission Team led by the Deputy Chairperson;
- Prepared and submitted a Concept Note to facilitate the visit of the AU Commission: Based on this concept note, the Commission prepared a well articulated message as contained in its Mission Report.

453. The Mission observed that post inaugural developments and policy decisions of the new US Administration in its first 100 days focused on the following:

- Mitigating the impact of the global financial and economic crisis on the domestic US economy: A massive stimulus package was voted by Congress for economic

recovery and rebuilding, as well as re-strengthening the American Financial Systems (“restoring America’s economic strength”)

- Protecting National Security and Combating Terrorism: Unveiling of a “new era of engagement” and appointments of Special Envoys for Afghanistan and Pakistan; a new diplomatic approach towards Cuba and Iran.
- Middle East – Israeli and Palestinian Conflict
- Energy and Climate Change – appointment of a Special Envoy on Climate Change

454. The Mission also noted that foreign travels to Canada, the Caribbean, Europe and Asia within the same period left Africa somewhat on the sidelines until the recent announcement of a Presidential trip to Ghana as well as official visits of the President of Tanzania and envoys of the President of Egypt to the US President. These developments both encouraging and of strategic importance, reaffirms the new administration’s policy of dialogue and consultations. Africa should embrace this new approach while also considering ways to elevate US/Africa partnership to the optimal level.

455. The appointment of the Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, (which in the views of many pro-Africa advocates came much later than expected) is a welcome development, considering the incumbent’s rich African experience and long service. Close collaboration with both the AU and USA Missions in Washington and Addis Ababa, respectively, will provide the necessary institutional framework for strengthening US/Africa relations. The recommendations from the African Union Commission’s visit to Washington are useful guidance on some concrete steps in the right direction.

b) Activities Undertaken in the context of implementing AU Summit Decisions and the mandate of the AU Representational Mission in Washington:

i. Coordination of the activities of the African Diplomatic Corps

456. Pursuant to its mandate of coordination, the Washington Office briefed the African Diplomatic Corps on the conclusions and outcome of the AU Summit meetings held in Addis Ababa, January 2009.

457. In the area of trade and economic development, the Mission participated and facilitated the participation of a Representative from the African Diplomatic Corps in the 5th Ordinary Session of the Conference of African Union Ministers of Trade held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 16 to 20 March 2009. By supporting and participating in the preparation of the African Diplomatic Corps’ Briefing Paper on the Preparations for the Eighth AGOA Forum, the Mission ensured that common African strategies already adopted in other multilateral trade negotiations were duly harmonized and aligned with the AGOA negotiations.

458. It is also to be noted, as did the AU Commission delegation during its visit, that the new Administration has not been found wanting in its commitment to strengthen trade relations with Africa. However, the limitations of current US trade and development

instruments are real. It is therefore incumbent upon Africa to exploit the prevailing good will and readiness of the new administration for dialogue and consultations with a view to making AGOA a trade instrument that is more predictable, transparent and permanent, as well as one which takes on board investment and regional integration components.

459. The forthcoming AGOA Forum to be held in Kenya, in August 2009 will provide a good opportunity for Africa to articulate a new paradigm for US/Africa trade relations.

460. In the area of Health, the Mission continues to work closely with the African Diplomatic Corps Committee on Health and provides guidance on AU Health Policies and other health-related initiatives.

ii. Celebration of Commemorative Days

• **Africa Environment Day**

461. During the reporting period, the Office jointly commemorated with the African Diplomatic Corps, Africa Environment Day on March 23rd, 2009 on the theme, "Conservation, Governance and Economic Growth in Africa: The Way Forward". Other partners included, US State Department; USAID, Africa Wildlife Foundation and Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group. The event provided a unique opportunity for the US Government to highlight its Environment and Conservation programs in Africa while four selected African countries (Gabon, Liberia, Rwanda and Tanzania) shared experiences of their respective countries in conservation as well as the inherent challenges.

• **Africa Day 2009**

462. In an effort to reach out to other States in the United States, the Washington Office decided to celebrate Africa Day 2009 in Detroit, Michigan. The choice of Detroit was based on two factors: Firstly, the city of Detroit has over 80% black population and secondly, Detroit is currently facing serious impact of the global economic crisis as a city which is host to all major US car industries. Africa Day was celebrated in partnership with the City Council of Detroit and the United African Community Organization, an umbrella African Diaspora organization to demonstrate Africa's solidarity with the people of Detroit in a difficult period. Given the positive feedback and, as a viable outreach and advocacy strategy medium, the Mission intends to henceforth rotate the celebration of Africa Day in each US State.

463. The Mission participated, alongside the Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs and the President's Special Assistant and Senior Director for Relief, Stabilization and Development, National Security Council, in an event jointly Organized by the Millennium Challenge Corporation and the African Diplomatic Corps in commemoration of Africa Day. The Mission highlighted the African Union's vision for a "United, Peaceful and Prosperous Africa" focusing on, preserving the Unity of Africa through a Union Government, peace and stability as a pre-requisite for development and finally, ensuring Africa's prosperity through regional integration and investment, as well as support of Africa's regional projects for Infrastructure and Transportation (PIDA) and Africa's

Comprehensive Agricultural Development Project (CADDP). Finally, the Mission called upon the US Administration to reconsider its approach to both AGOA and MCA to ensure that both take into account regional integration and, in the case of AGOA investment component as well.

iii. Meetings/Forums and Bilateral Consultations:

464. The Washington office also engaged US Policy makers, Think Tanks and the US Public at large on matters relating to peace and security on the continent. Particularly noteworthy was a forum organized by the Woodrow Wilson Center in the aftermath of the formation of the inclusive government in Zimbabwe. The Mission, participated alongside the resident Ambassadors of Zimbabwe and South Africa and seized the opportunity to reiterate the terms of Assembly Decision (Dec 219(XII) calling for support to address Zimbabwe's socio-economic challenges including the immediate lifting of sanctions on Zimbabwe. These engagements provided good platforms for the Washington Office to articulate and/or clarify the African Union positions or decisions on specific situations relating to peace and security on the continent which often times are misinterpreted or misunderstood.

465. The Mission noted the new Administration's keen interest and commitment to working closely with the African Union and African leaders to resolve the hotbeds of tension/conflicts on the continent. This commitment has found concrete expression in the appointment of a US Special Envoy to Sudan, the development of a coordinated and comprehensive strategy for Somalia which takes into account the need to support the transitional Government in stabilizing Somalia as well as US leadership in the International Contact Group diplomatic efforts against Piracy. The African Union may wish to seize this momentum to consistently engage the US Administration for leadership and support in this new era of "Smart Power" based on dialogue and consultations.

iv. Support to Model AU:

466. The Mission provided support to the Annual National Model African Union spearheaded by the Howard University. Briefing the Participating Colleges and Universities representing the various African Nations helps to facilitate the effective simulation of AU Summit deliberations. The Mission is working closely with the Head of the Model African Union on modalities to extend the National AU Model throughout the United States of America, including initiating/replicating the Model AU in Africa.

v. Implementation of Executive Council Decision on the Purchase of a Permanent Chancery for the Representational Mission

467. Following the decision by the Executive Council authorizing the purchase of a Chancery for the African Union Representational Mission in January 2008, serious and conscious efforts were made to implement the said decision in accordance with the internal rules and regulations.

468. The Mission is pleased to report progress since the hiring of reputable Legal and Brokerage Services. Three potential properties have been identified, two of which were

inspected by the Commission delegation visiting Washington in April 2009. The prices of the three buildings are: \$7.9 Million; 12 Million and 18 Million. Meanwhile, the Mission is awaiting clear guidance from both the Legal and Brokerage Services as well as feedback from the Headquarters to prepare for negotiating an acceptable fair market price.

469. It should be noted in this regard that the current favourable “buyers” real estate climate has reached its peak and is likely to shift in favour of “sellers” given the renewed impetus provided by the US Government to stimulate the domestic economy. If current opportunities for “buyers” are not exploited effectively, the Commission will find itself in a very difficult negotiating position.

470. The Mission will continue to consolidate its presence and assert itself in the fulfilment of its mandate and responsibilities. However, given the increasing high expectations, the Mission’s efforts would be seriously affected by staff constraints. It would be necessary to review the current structure of the Mission so as to enable it to respond to the demands and expectations.

(3) GENEVA OFFICE

471. The Mission continued its activities towards boosting cooperation and partnership ties with Geneva-based international organizations in various areas.

a) Human Rights

i. Human Rights Council (HRC)

448. The Human Rights Council held three sessions during the first three months of 2009. These were: the 9th Extraordinary Session (9 and 12 January 2009), on serious Violations of Human Rights in the occupied Palestinian territories following the Israeli military attacks on the Gaza Strip, the 10th Extraordinary Session (20 February 2009) on the impact of the global economic and financial crisis on the universal achievement and effective enjoyment of human rights and the 10th Ordinary Session (2 to 27 March 2009). The Mission participated actively in these sessions, forwarded its outcomes to Headquarters and followed up on these outcomes.

449. The Council reviewed the situation in Africa. According to several UN Agencies and HRC special procedures, the human rights situation in Somalia is alarming. As regards the DRC, according to several UN Agencies, the HRC Special Rapporteur and other mechanisms, the human rights situation has deteriorated in the East of the country, particularly in North Kivu.

450. It is noteworthy that the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Sudan will submit his report to the 11th Session of the HRC in June 2009. Rather difficult and tense negotiations, particularly with the European Union, should be expected on this issue.

451. Mr. Musa Ngary Bitaye, member of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights, attended the 10th Session of the HRC. The Geneva Office has always worked towards greater involvement of representatives of African human rights promotion

and protection mechanisms in the work of Geneva-based UN mechanisms, including the HRC and the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

ii. The Durban Review Conference

452. The Durban Review Conference held in Geneva from 20 to 24 April 2009 was characterized by sharp political tensions. Despite the consensus reached with respect to approval of the draft conclusions at the Preparatory Committee, some Western countries decided to announce their withdrawal from the Conference, thus rekindling the tensions and doubts over the success of the Conference. The Commission has prepared a detailed report on the conclusions of the Conference. The Geneva Mission participated actively in its preparation and is following up on the key recommendations in close cooperation with the Department of Political Affairs.

iii. AU / EU Human Rights Dialogue

453. As part of implementation of the EU/Africa Strategic Partnership adopted at the Lisbon Summit in 2007 concerning the second area of this partnership which relates to governance and human rights, the Mission took part in the deliberations of a joint AU/EU meeting held in Brussels on 20 April 2009. The meeting focused on several issues particularly: freedom of association, violence against women, the dialogue with the civil society, periodic universal review, country mandates, the Durban Review Conference and identification of common positions.

iv. Humanitarian Affairs

454. The Mission participated in the 44th Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Programme of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which took place from 3 to 5 March 2009. The Standing Committee in particular considered the broad outlines of the presentation on the 2008 High Commissioner's Dialogue that addressed the protracted refugee situations, programme budgets and funding for 2008 and projections for 2009, global programmes and partnerships, update on the process of structural change and management and various presentations on regional strategies. As regards programmes for Africa, UNHCR will focus on finding lasting solutions, particularly for refugees that have been caught up in the protracted situations. UNHCR representatives and several delegations showed particular interest in the African Union Convention for Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in Africa which is expected to be approved in due course by the Special Summit of the African Union on the question of forced displacement in Africa.

b) Social Affairs

i. UNAIDS

455. The 23rd Session of the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board (PCB), which was held in December, adopted a decision in which it "Requests the UNAIDS Secretariat, in consultation with the Global Fund Secretariat, to propose options for strengthening mechanisms to facilitate consultations and networking among African States so that they

can participate significantly in the Programme Coordinating Board and the Council of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria for its further expansion to other regions”.

456. Pursuant to this decision, the UNAIDS Secretariat, in consultation with the Presidency of the PCB (Ethiopia) and the Global Fund Secretariat, organized a meeting with the health experts of the African Group in Geneva to prepare a document for the 24th Session of the PCB slated for June 2009. The objective of the meeting was to identify the constraints and challenges of the current consultation and networking processes. It was also to consider the feasibility of establishing effective mechanisms for consultation between the PCB, the African Group and the African Members of the Global Fund Board.

457. The African Group held experts meetings as part of the preparations for the consultation with UNAIDS and prepared draft proposals, including guidelines for effective participation in UNAIDS meetings, the identification of current challenges and suggestions for overcoming them. These guidelines underscored the vital need to take into consideration the special needs of Africa, to enable African States to determine the composition of their delegations, hold regional consultations in Africa before each Programme Coordinating Board (PCB) session and to increase the number of UNAIDS-sponsored African delegates.

458. Based on these challenges, the following proposals were made: creation of a focal point with the specific mandate to assist African Member States, pre-PCB regional consultations, interaction with national constituencies and regional offices, linguistic equity, and financing the participation of African delegations. The meeting represented a first step towards effective strengthening of African Group’s participation in the work of UNAIDS governing bodies. The discussions and proposals of the Group will form the basis of a draft document to be submitted to the Secretariat for consideration at the 24th Session of the PCB in June 2009.

ii. World Health Organization (WHO):

459. The 124th Session of the WHO Executive Board was held at WHO Headquarters in Geneva from 19 to 27 January 2009. The current members of the Africa Region on the Board are: Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Niger, and Sao Tome and Principe. Djibouti and Tunisia are African countries’ representatives in the Eastern Mediterranean Region.

460. The major issues on the agenda of the 124th Session relate to technical, health, staff and administrative matters. The Africa Region has been unwavering in its commitment on these issues, although it is more interested in the ongoing discussions on a number of specific issues. The question of fake drugs generated heated debate centred on the definition of fake drugs and the role of the WHO in the matter. African countries underscored the importance of the debate on fake drugs, given that the issue has been a source of concern in the area of public health. In this regard, the African countries stressed the need for consensual definition of fake drugs. Consequently, the Executive Board was unable to adopt the resolution on fake drugs and the WHO was requested to facilitate the planned consultations before resubmitting the draft to the Board.

461. The post of Director-General is crucial for the administration of the WHO. In this regard, the Africa Region proposed that the principle of rotation be instituted so as to give all regions equal opportunity to provide qualified candidates, and thus ensure equitable rotation. The Africa Region reiterated this proposal at the 124th Session of the Board. However, some delegations, particularly those of developed countries, expressed reservations over the principle of geographical rotation. The Africa Region stressed that efforts should be made to promote adherence to the principle of geographical rotation. It was also emphasized that Africa has many competent personnel with the knowledge and experience required to lead the WHO.

iii. International Labour Organization (ILO)

462. The 304th Session of the ILO Governing Body was held from 5 to 27 March 2009. That session was dominated by the debate on the impact of the global financial and economic crisis. In this regard, the African Group held a tripartite meeting on the crisis to work out the broad guidelines for a common African position on the issue.

463. As part of preparations for the tripartite meeting, the ILO Regional Office for Africa organized an experts' meeting in Addis Ababa in February 2009. The conclusions of the meeting highlighted the importance of African integration as a bulwark to protect the Continent against future crises originating from beyond its shores. The delegations representing African governments, workers and employers were unanimous in recognizing the urgent need for Africa's integration and empowerment.

464. In considering the crisis issue, the delegations agreed that the ILO Decent Work Agenda in Africa 2007-2015, the Ouagadougou Plan of Action and the ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization should be the basis for formulating national policies.

465. The Tripartite African Group stressed that any response to the crisis must necessarily focus on job creation, debt cancellation, increased role of States in regulating the financial sector, social dialogue and tripartism, respect for workers' rights, prevention of wage deflation and gender equality.

iv. International Organization for Migration (IOM)

466. The African Group has been active in its support for the establishment of an IOM Mission with Regional Functions (MRF) in Central Africa and the creation of a Capacity Building Centre (CBC) for the Continent. This issue has been on the agenda of the African Group since 2007 and its importance has been reiterated at the meetings of IOM management bodies, as well as at meetings between the Ambassadors of the African Group and the current and previous IOM Directors-General. The untiring efforts of the African Group paid off when the IOM Council, at its 96th Session in December 2008, adopted the Programme Budget for 2009, and requested the IOM to launch the MRF and CBC projects with the establishment of the MRF in Kinshasa (DRC) and the CBC in Moshi, Tanzania.

c) Economic and Trade issues

i. World Trade Organization

467. The African Group Mission and members in Geneva contributed to the preparation of the 5th Ordinary Session of the Conference of African Union Ministers of Trade held on 19 and 20 March 2009 at the Headquarters of the AU Commission, conclusions of which are contained in a separate report submitted to the Executive Council.

468. Meanwhile, the status of the various issues under negotiation at the level of the WTO, may be summarized as follows:

- **Agriculture**

469. Appreciation of the text of the Chairman of the Negotiating Group on the modalities relating to Agriculture as a basis for future negotiations, although the final level of goals and balance in this area is still to be determined.

- The pillars: Concern on the part of the African Group regarding (1) domestic support in terms of increased flexibilities granted to certain developed countries, which may undermine the goal of this pillar, (2) market access in terms of the impact of the flexibilities granted to some developed countries in regard to the description and treatment of sensitive products and the importance of eliminating all forms of export subsidies by 2013 as part of the export competition pillar.
- Commodities: Request by the African Group for the existing Agreement on Agriculture to be amended to include provisions on commodities, particularly in view of the global economic and financial crisis.
- The banana sector: the need for a fair and balanced treatment of the banana issue, taking into account appropriate trade and non-trade measures.
- Cotton: African Group's support for the approach adopted by the Chairperson calling for reduction of domestic cotton subsidies in the text of 6 December 2008.

- **Non-Agricultural Market Access (NAMA):**

470. *The final revised text on the NAMA dates back to 6 December 2008. Positions were divergent on a number of issues, including on participation in sectoral liberalization initiatives on industrial products. Questions on preference erosion and exemptions from general disciplines on tariff reduction concerning country-based flexibilities remain largely unresolved.*

- **Services:**

471. No significant progress was made in negotiations on services since the pledging conference, which was held in conjunction with the Mini-Ministerial Meeting in July 2008.

- **Special and differential treatment:**

472. Recent discussions on this issue focused on proposals to clarify the provisions on special and differential treatment (SDT) in the Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Agreement. However, an agreement is yet to be reached.

473. The Mission organized several meetings of the African Group, as well as workshops to prepare and adopt common African positions on negotiations on various issues, especially NAMA and Agriculture. Consultations are underway to organize a WTO Ordinary Ministerial Session due to be held at the end of 2009. The Mission will not fail to lend technical and logistics support to the African Group to ensure proper preparation of this Ministerial meeting.

474. Finally, the WTO General Council held on 30 April 2009, renewed the mandate of the WTO Director-General, Mr. Pascal Lamy, for a second four-year term.

ii. UNCTAD

475. UNCTAD intensified its efforts to meet the needs of developing countries and LDCs in all areas of its mandate under the Accra Agreement. In this context, the implementation of the Accra Agreement resulted in the flagship publications, the convening of ordinary sessions and executive meeting of the Council or the activities of the Inter-Agency Cluster on Trade and productive capacity. UNCTAD also convened a series of high-level multipartite consultations to review the world cotton market, the insurance sector in Africa and the coffee issue. The African Group at UNCTAD, with the support and assistance of the Mission, was very active in pushing for a better implementation of the Accra Agreement in the interest of Africa.

476. Regarding the Memorandum of Understanding signed on 3 April 2008 between the AU Commission and UNCTAD, consultations are underway to identify future joint activities.

iii. World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

477. After taking up duty at the helm of the Organization, the new WIPO Director-General said the development of intellectual property in the countries of the South would be among his key concerns.

478. The Mission continued to support the African Group during the ongoing negotiations within WIPO. Thus, two workshops were organized in April and June with WIPO support, aimed at preparing common African positions and briefing members of the Group on key issues under discussion in WIPO.

479. The Committee on Development and Intellectual Property (CDIP) continued its activities to implement the recommendations aimed at developing intellectual property worldwide. It is absolutely necessary that African countries as part of the CDIP initiatives, come up with specific projects and activities, preferably infrastructural projects and activities likely to help promote and protect intellectual property rights in Africa. It is noteworthy that the new WIPO management team has promised to make every effort to finance activities relevant to the development of intellectual property. The WIPO Standing Committee on the Law of Patents continued its work to prepare a timetable for harmonization of substantive patent law.

480. To strengthen cooperation between WIPO and the Commission, a meeting between the WIPO Director-General and the Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology was held in Geneva to promote partnership between the two parties.

iv. International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

481. Since 2006, ITU under the leadership of its Secretary-General, Dr. Hamadoun Touré, initiated major programmes, including the Connect Africa Summit held in Kigali, Rwanda. Cooperation between the Commission and ITU is very fruitful and deserves to be supported. It is in this light that there was a meeting between the Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology and the ITU Secretary-General. During the meeting, avenues of cooperation were identified, including the updating of the Memorandum of Understanding between ITU and the Commission. An AUC-ITU Joint Committee could be set up to follow up the deliberations of the Connect Africa Summit and to implement programmes concerning the preparation of the African Union Summit on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to be held in January 2010.

v. Universal Postal Union (UPU)

482. The Mission participated in the meeting of the Postal Operations Council of the Universal Postal Union (UPU), which was held during this semester. An Extraordinary Session was devoted to the impact of the economic and financial crisis on postal activities worldwide. From the discussions during that session, UPU members concluded that the crisis had had negative effects on the sector and called for concrete measures aimed at mitigating these effects. The African postal sector, which is one of the hardest hit sectors, is thus urged to take steps to reduce its operating costs and develop new high-value-added products that could generate fresh income while being more user-friendly.

vi. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

483. Relations between the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the Commission have grown stronger. WMO hopes, in cooperation with the Commission, to convene African Ministers in charge of meteorological matters for discussions on topics of interest to the Continent. The Chairperson of the Commission has been invited to attend the Third World Climate Conference to be held from 31 August to 4 September 2009, in Geneva.

vii. Environmental issues

484. The city of Geneva in particular and Switzerland in general, hosts the headquarters of several conventions on environmental protection issues. To coordinate the African common positions on these issues, the African Group decided to strengthen its team of coordinators for environmental issues so that Africa's voice could be heard in this area.

d) Other Activities

485. The Commission, through its Mission in Geneva, organized on 27 May 2009, on the occasion of the celebration of Africa Day, the first African Forum for Dialogue on the thorny issue of the development of Africa, with the participation of the Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology. This Forum, chaired by the Commission, was very well attended and was characterized by a very pragmatic and constructive approach to issues relevant to the promotion of a more integrated and better developed Africa, corrective and preventive measures in response to the global economic meltdown and to technological and human development.

486. The objectives of the first African Dialogue Forum were to engage and raise the awareness of top level policy-makers, the international community, bilateral and multi-lateral private and public development partners, civil society actors and the press on the problems facing the Continent, and above all, create a normative framework to build well-structured partnerships with Africa. Given the success of this Forum, this experience should be repeated in the years to come.

(4) CAIRO OFFICE

487. During the first semester of the year 2009, the activities of the Permanent Delegation focused on the implementation of the Programme Budget adopted by the 12th AU Assembly Ordinary Sessions convened in Addis Ababa in February 2009. The office was also following the implementation of the Strategic Action Plan adopted in the Axis for Afro-Arab Brotherhood as defined in the African Union Vision and Mission.

a) Political Issues

488. The Permanent Delegation to the League of Arab States (LAS) continued to follow up the activities of LAS, foster close cooperation relations between the African Union and the League in the various political, economic, social and cultural fields. It has attended:

- the International Conference the Reconstruction of Gaza and Support to the Palestinian Economy in Sharm El Sheikh, on 2 March 2009,
- The first Arab Economic Summit in Kuwait from 19 to 20 January 2009,
- The Arab League Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Council of Ministers, and the 21st Summit in Doha, Qatar in March 2009

489. As usual, the meetings adopted decisions of interest to the African Union on the following matters:

490. Cairo Office participated in the 21st Arab Summit which adopted several decisions including the Doha Declaration which included the solidarity with the Republic of The Sudan, regarding the rejection of the process initiated by the International Criminal Court (ICC), and the Decision of the Pre-Trial Chamber against President Omer Hassan Ahmed Al Bashir of The Sudan.

491. The 21st Arab Summit also expressed its support to the efforts deployed by the Afro-Arab Ministerial Committee headed by the Prime Minister of Qatar, the Chairperson of the Commission, and LAS Secretary General and welcomed the outcome of its meeting of 14/01/2009 in Doha Qatar. It decided to provide Sudan with US\$ 8 millions, monthly, for one year to assist in bridging the food gap in Darfur.

492. On Somalia, the Arab Summit welcomed the steps taken to implement the Djibouti Agreement for the Somali reconciliation, notably the expansion of the Transitional Federal Parliament, the election of the new President as well as the designation of the new Prime Minister and the establishment of a Government of National Unity. It called upon all Arab countries to extend all sorts of urgent financial and logistical support to Somalia. To assist in off-setting the food shortage in Somalia, the Summit decided to provide US\$ 3 million monthly for one year.

493. On Comoros, the Arab Summit rejected the results of the referendum conducted by France on 29/03/2009 on the unification with Anjouan Island and its transformation into a French district, and considered the steps taken by France as illegal. To assist in filling the food gap in Comoros, the Summit decided to provide US\$ 2 million monthly for one year.

494. On the situation in the Middle East and Palestine, the Arab Summit reaffirmed the Arab commitment to the comprehensive and just peace as a strategic option on the basis of the Arab Peace Initiative adopted by the 19th Arab Summit in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia in March 2007.

b) Celebration of Africa Day

495. The Permanent Delegation organized the Africa Day celebration on 25 May 2009 in collaboration with the Committee of African Ambassadors in Cairo and LAS General Secretariat.

496. The celebration programme included:

- Sport Day for African Youth Groups,
- Workshop on Afro-Arab Relations,
- Reception, Folklore Performance and Exhibition of African handicraft.

497. The Permanent Delegation requested the relevant Departments of the Commission to prepare and submit projects to be jointly implemented with the relevant Arab Specialized Organizations such as:

- The Arab organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD),
- The Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA),
- The Arab Fund for Technical Assistance to African Countries (AFTAAC).
- The Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD)

498. The Permanent Delegation so far received the following two projects from the AUC Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture:

- Pan African Programme for the Eradication of Small Ruminants pests and other small ruminants priority diseases. (Prepared by AU IBAR)
- Environment Protection in Africa.

499. The above projects together with others would be submitted to the relevant Arab specialized organizations for consideration.

c) Coordination of activities of the African Group in Cairo, Egypt

500. During the period under consideration, the committee of African Ambassadors in Cairo organized a series of meetings in the premises of the Permanent Delegation as usual. During these meeting the Committee was briefed on the Decisions and activities of AUC in General and of the Permanent Delegation in particular.

501. The Office also facilitated all AU meetings held in Egypt during the period under review.

d) Other Activities

i. High Level Experts Meeting on Investment Prospects in Africa and the Arab World

502. As part of the implementation of this programme, the Permanent Delegation - in collaboration with LAS General Secretariat - prepared a concept note on "Investment Prospects in Africa and the Arab World." That included: The objectives, rationale, and modalities of organization of the meeting including the establishment of an Organizing Committee.

503. The first meeting of the Organizing Committee was held from 18 to 20 May 2009 in Cairo, Egypt. The "High Level Experts Meeting on investment Prospects in Africa and the Arab World" is expected to take place in October 2009.

ii. Afro-Arab Sport Tournaments

504. The Permanent Delegation discussed the modality for establishing regular Afro-Arab sports tournament with the Department of Sports and Youth at LAS General Secretariat. To this end, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between AUC and LAS relevant Departments is being prepared.

505. A meeting between the African and Arab Football Unions is scheduled to discuss the possibility of establishing an Afro-Arab Football Cup.

(5) BRUSSELS OFFICE

a) Implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy

506. The Africa-EU Joint Strategy and the related Plan of Action, which were adopted in December 2007 at the end of the 2nd Africa-EU Summit in Lisbon, entered into their implementation phase, following regular intensive consultations held between the African Union (AU), the European Union (EU) and the Lead Member States of the eight partnerships identified within this framework. With respect to all these partnerships, the Mission strengthened its working relations with the European institutions. It also carried out a campaign to sensitize the African Group in Brussels, which is an essential component of the Group of ACP States, for the mobilization of the necessary financial resources for the effective implementation of these partnerships. In the same vein, the Mission participated in the following meetings, held within the framework of the implementation of this Joint Strategy:

- The 8th Meeting of the Africa-EU Task Force which was held on 17 and 18 March in Brussels.
- The Seminar of the African and European Union Civil Society on Human Rights, held in Brussels on 16 and 17 April 2009 at the invitation of the European Commission, and with the participation of fifty (50) African and European Civil Society Organizations, as well as ECOSOCC. The themes discussed included, among others, the role of the civil society in the promotion and protection of human rights; the ratification of regional and international instruments on human rights and the transfer into national legislations of international instruments on human rights. A declaration was adopted at the end of the seminar, which was transmitted to the 4th Meeting of the EU-AU Human Rights Dialogue, held in Brussels on 20 April 2009.
- The 4th Meeting of the EU-AU Human Rights Dialogue, which was held in Brussels on 20 April 2009, and considered, *inter alia*, the conclusions of the Africa-EU Civil Society Seminar mentioned above.
- The 12th Meeting of the Africa-EU Ministerial Troika, held in Luxembourg on 28 April 2009.

b) Implementation of the ACP-EU Cotonou Partnership Agreement and participation in meetings with development partners

507. The Mission continues to follow up on the implementation of the ACP-EU Cotonou Partnership Agreement on a daily basis. During the period under review, the activities carried out focused essentially, firstly, on the ways and means of seizing the opportunity of

the 2nd Review of the Cotonou Agreement to strengthen the positioning and the role of the AU, and secondly, the structuring of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) under negotiation on the model EPA elaborated by the competent AU organs.

508. In this respect, the strategy adopted by the Mission consisted in working with the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels, particularly its ACP component, to ensure that it was regularly informed of the decisions and positions of the AU on the different sections of this Agreement, and also the problems of the Africa-EU Dialogue, whose reference remains essentially the Joint Strategy and the related 2008-2010 Plan of Action. It was in this spirit that the Mission facilitated the participation of representatives of the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels, on the basis of one delegated per region negotiating an EPA, in the 5th Meeting of AU Ministers of Trade, which was held in Addis Ababa from 16 to 20 March 2009. In addition, the Mission participated in the following ACP and ACP-EU meetings:

- 15th Session of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly, held in Brussels, Belgium from 9 to 12 February 2009;
- International Symposium on « Culture and Creation as Vectors for Development », organized by the European Commission in Brussels on 2 and 3 April 2009, with the participation of artistes, film producers, and various other artistic creators from about thirty African countries;
- 16th Session of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly and the 17th Session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, held in Prague, Czech Republic, from 1 to 9 April 2009;
- Meeting of the ACP Ministerial Trade Committee, held in Brussels, Belgium from 4 to 7 May 2009 ;
- 89th Session of the ACP Council of Ministers, held in Brussels, Belgium from 25 to 29 May 2009.

c) Activities of the African Group

509. The Mission continues its efforts towards the inclusion of the African Group of Ambassadors based in Brussels in the architecture for the implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, and beyond that, the AU-EU Political Dialogue. In this context, the following meetings were organized:

i) Meeting with the EU Council Africa Working Group

510. A meeting was held between the Bureau of the African Group and the EU Council Africa Working Group (COAFR), on 25 February 2009 at the Council of the European Union, presided over by the current Chair, the Czech Republic. This meeting was deemed all the more important by the two sides because it was the first initiative of its kind aimed at further involving African and European Ambassadors in the implementation of the Joint Strategy. At the end of this meeting, the following conclusions were reached:

- The importance the two sides attach to the Africa-Europe Partnership, as reflected in the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and the related Plan of Action;

- The need to make available the ways and means for the effective implementation of the Joint Strategy;
 - The appropriateness of increasing the involvement of the key partners of the Strategy in its implementation, particularly Member States, RECs, the Civil Society, Parliamentarians, etc.;
 - The need to strengthen the Task Force on the Joint Strategy through the involvement of RECs (especially in the Trade and Regional Integration components) and the Civil Society;
 - The importance of expanding the Ministerial Troïka to include the leaders of the different partnerships in the Joint Strategy;
 - The need to initiate a reflection on the sources of financing the 2008-2010 Plan of Action and the mobilization of resources.
- ii) *Meetings of the Chairperson and other members of the AU Commission with the Bureau of the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels within the framework of the Africa-EU Dialogue:*

d) Representation activities to promote the AU's visibility in Europe

511. As part of its representation activities to promote the visibility of the AU in the EU in particular and Europe in general, the Mission undertook, *inter alia*, the following actions:

- Participation in a Meeting on Investment in Africa, organized on 29 and 30 April in Brussels by an association called " Friends of Europe";
- Sponsorship of the 3rd edition of Africa Day which was celebrated in Brussels on 25 May 2009 with a fundraising bazaar for the social reintegration of women and children who are victims of violence in the DRC, organized by the Congolese Diaspora in Belgium;
- Participation in a symposium organized in Paris on 14 May by the World Bank on the theme "Youth and Employment in Africa" , following a study it conducted on the issue in order to analyse the effects of the economic crisis on this segment of the African population;
- Facilitation of a Conference at the European Council on 18 May by the Permanent Representative together with General Pierre-Michel JOANA, Adviser of Mr. J. SOLANA, EU Secretary General and High Representative for External Relations, entitled "Crosscutting Approaches of the EU-Africa Strategic Partnership". This Conference took place in the presence of participants in the 10th IHEDN Forum on the African Continent organized by the French Institute for Advanced Defence Studies for about sixty senior officials from African Ministries of Defence;

- Participation of the Permanent Representative in a Symposium organized on 19 May 2009 by the Heinrich Böll Foundation in Berlin, Germany on the theme: “Europe, fortress or free movement zone? Management of Euro-Mediterranean Borders”;
- Facilitation of a Symposium to mark Africa Day on 25 May in Brussels, on “The Issue of African Borders from the Viewpoint of the African Union Border Programme(AUBP)”;
- Facilitation by the Permanent Representative of a conference at the University of Ankara in Turkey, organized at the initiative of the African Group of Ambassadors in Turkey as part of celebrations to mark Africa Day on 25 May, on the theme “Political and institutional development recorded in recent years in Africa, with special emphasis on the stages that marked the transition from the OAU to the African Union”.

512. The Mission also carried out different activities with African Diaspora associations in Europe for the establishment of a network to bring them together and contribute to the AU programme to identify the skills of the African Diaspora worldwide, in order to make use of them for the Continent’s development programmes.

513. Lastly, the Mission represented the AU in the EU-Guinea consultations held in Brussels on 29 April 2009 within the framework of Article 96 of the ACP-EU Cotonou Partnership Agreement.

(6) LILONGWE OFFICE

514. During the period under review, the Office continued to monitor and contribute to the advancement of integration and development in Southern Africa.

a) Political and Economic Developments in the Region

515. Political and economic developments in the region during this period continue to be peaceful and encouraging. Member States and stakeholders in political and economic development took necessary actions to sustain them as priorities in the effort to attain higher standard of living in the various countries and in the region.

516. In Zimbabwe, the establishment of the Government of National Unity was a welcome development both internally and externally. The creation of the Government of National Unity effectively ended the unfortunate years of economic recession and provided the beginning for a new economically viable and prosperous Zimbabwe. The new spirit of cooperation by all political parties to regain the lost years in economic growth and development had elicited financial support for the new administration both within and outside the region. However, significant external resources would still be needed in the short and medium term in order to rejuvenate the moribund sectors of the economy.

517. Furthermore, the Office monitored the preparations for the Presidential and Parliamentary Elections in South Africa and Malawi that took place on 22 April 2009 and 19 May 2009, respectively. The elections in the two countries were largely perceived as free and fair by most observers present, including AU Observers. These represented good developments for the creation of sound democracy in the region. There was, to a large extent, compliance with AU code of conduct on elections, as stipulated in the OAU/AU Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections in Africa and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, as well as the constitutional, legal framework, and electoral laws of both countries. The Office facilitated the visits made, in the context of preventive diplomacy prior to the elections, by a high level delegation to the country on two occasions from 20 to 26 February and 5 to 13 March 2009, respectively. The delegation consisted of H.E. Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, former President of the Republic of Mozambique and Chairman of the African Forum, and H.E. Prof. John Agyekum Kufuor, former President of the Republic of Ghana. The aim was, in the spirit of the OAU/AU Declaration on the Principles Governing Democratic Elections, and the Electoral Laws of Malawi, to sensitize all stakeholders on the need for peaceful elections, abiding by the code of conduct for elections and ensuring peaceful transition from one government to the other. The delegation had meaningful consultations with the key stakeholders during the two visits which resulted in the signing, by major stakeholders, of a declaration, "Declaration of the Malawi Inter-Political Parties Dialogue" on 13 March 2009. With the Declaration, the key stakeholders, the leaders of the three main political parties, committed themselves to peaceful elections in accordance with the code of conduct for elections.

518. Subsequently, the Chairperson of the Commission followed this up with another visit to Malawi from 2 to 4 May 2009. During the visit, the Chairperson held useful consultations with the leaders of major political parties and most Presidential Candidates. The discussions resulted in greater understanding of the importance of the elections to political and economic development, and the necessity for peaceful elections that are devoid of violence before, during and after voting.

519. In effect, the visits of the high level delegation and the Chairperson of the Commission resulted in significant positive contributions to the peaceful and stable environment that prevailed before, during and after the elections.

520. In the context of the present world economic recession, most of the countries in the region continued to take relevant economic measures to cope with the shocks from the world economy. Generally, Southern African countries are intensifying efforts towards the implementation of sound macroeconomic policies to redress the effects of decline in price and demand for primary products, decline in foreign aid and uncertainties in foreign direct investments. Macroeconomic policies are also directed at deepening structural transformation, towards infrastructural development, food security, and the diversification of exports in order to ensure sustainable economic growth and development.

b) Regional Integration

521. Political leaders in the region continue to take appropriate actions towards this ideal and the consolidation of regional integration arrangements and the promotion of good

governance and democracy. It was in this context that the SADC Extraordinary Summit of the Troika Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation met on 31 March 2009 and decided not to recognize the illegal government in the Republic of Madagascar. In addition, it is engaged in further consultations with the regime for peaceful solution in order to restore democracy and ensure the maintenance of peace and development in the country.

522. The Office continued to work closely with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa-Southern Africa (UNECA-SA). The Office participated at the UNECA-SA-UEM (Universidade Eduardo Mondlane) Forum on Mainstreaming Regional Integration in National Development Plans in Southern Africa, hosted by the Eduardo Mondlane University Faculty of Law and Center of Studies on Regional Integration and SADC Law, from 28 to 29 May 2009. The Forum deliberated on the various actions that should be taken at the national levels to ensure internalization of the regional integration agenda. In this respect, the creation of the Center of Studies on Regional Integration and SADC Law at the Faculty of Law at Eduardo Mondlane University is timely for the region and Africa as it would represent an important centre of excellence for capacity building, and dissemination of innovative ideas on African integration.

c) Coordination of the African Group

523. The Office devoted significant attention to the coordination of the African Group in Lilongwe in the effort to promote integration and development in the region. During this period, the Office organized a total of five meetings for the African Group and three meetings for the SADC Group. Discussions at these meetings dealt with the political, economic and social development issues emanating from the countries in the region, as well as international economic issues that are tangential to integration and development in the region.

d) Advocacy

524. The Office continues to publish its Bulletin, as an instrument of advocacy of AU in the region. The Bulletin provides current information on the activities of the AU Office on continental integration. It is widely distributed throughout the region and to the outside world through print and electronic media.

4. AFRICA'S SHARE IN GLOBAL EXCHANGES

525. The Commission is involved in Africa's efforts towards collaboration between Africa and other continents and for mutual benefit as concerns socio-economic development. All major health issues of the AU feature significantly on the agendas of these fora.

a) Collaboration with RECS, Health Organizations, UN Agencies, NGOs and CSOs

526. The Commission has continued to strengthen partnerships with UN Agencies, International Development Partners, NGOs and CSOs, whose collaboration and support

contribute significantly to enhancing the AU's Vision and Mission, and particularly, in supporting health and development in Member States.

b) Follow-up on the Implementation of the TICAD IV Yokohama Action Plan

527. The Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV), which was held in Yokohama, Japan, in May 2008, made provision for monitoring and assessing the implementation of commitments made during the TICAD Conference. Pursuant to this provision, the Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) of TICAD IV held its First Meeting in Tokyo on 9 February 2009, to discuss the progress of implementation of the Yokohama Action Plan over the next five years. This was followed by the TICAD IV Ministerial Follow-up meeting, which was held in Gaborone, Republic of Botswana, on 21 and 22 March 2009. During the meeting, the African Ministers, together with the TICAD IV co-organizers, jointly reviewed and assessed the current state of implementation of the Yokohama Action Plan on the three priority areas: namely, Boosting Economic Growth, including the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Consolidation of Peace and Security, and Addressing Environmental Issues.

528. The Japanese Government briefed the Ministers on on-going and planned activities over the next five years in the key areas of Infrastructure, Trade, Investment and Tourism, Agriculture and Rural Development, Community Development, Education, Health, Democracy and Good Governance, and Climate Change Issues, as outlined in the Yokohama Action Plan. The meeting concluded that despite the global financial crisis, significant progress has been made in some countries in some of the priority areas of TICAD IV. In addition, the meeting discussed the issue of the global financial crisis and how it may affect African economies with a view to agreeing on a common African position prior to the London G20 Summit. Finally, a Communiqué on the Implementation of the Yokohama Action Plan and the Impact on Africa of the Global Financial Crisis was unanimously adopted by the Ministers.

c) Africa-Europe Relations

529. The 12th Meeting of the African and EU Troïkas took place in Luxembourg on 28 April 2009. The meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Dr Ali Treki, Secretary for African Union Affairs of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and current chairperson of the African Union Executive Council and H.E. Jan Kohout, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic and current President of the Council of the European Union.

530. On global challenges, the Ministers welcomed the outcome of the London G20 Summit and stressed the need for a global and concerted approach, and for sustainable answers to the current global economic turmoil. They underlined the fact that economic recovery was impossible to achieve without strong solidarity between developed and developing countries.

531. The EU side reiterated its willingness to deliver upon its Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments despite the crisis, and recalled the increase in EU Member States total ODA to approximately 0.40% of their GNI in 2008, recalling the essential role

of ODA as a complement to other sources of financing for development. Both sides looked forward to the discussions at the G8 Summit in Italy (8 to 10 July 2009).

532. Ministers identified the following measures as being of primary importance to help developing countries face the crisis and stimulate growth and job creation:

- Closing of infrastructure missing links, most recently discussed at the AU Assembly in Addis Ababa in February 2009, for which the EU aims to provide support via a reinforced and reshaped Infrastructure Trust Fund;
- Revitalizing agriculture, including through the recently launched EU 1 billion Euros Food Facility Initiative;
- Supporting trade and investment, including by continuing to provide 2 billion Euros level Trade Related Assistance in 2009 and 2010;
- Exploiting the potential of the informal sector in job creation;
- Supporting foreign direct investment as an important component of development financing and poverty alleviation in Africa.

533. The importance of progressing towards full Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), in the spirit of the Cotonou Agreement and the provisions of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy was highlighted. With regard to the Strategic Plan of Action, the Ministers welcomed the results achieved by the 8 thematic partnerships agreed in Lisbon and they acknowledged the delivery of the 8 draft implementation roadmaps elaborated by the informal Joint Expert Groups as living documents.

IV. SHARED VALUES

IV.1 DEMOCRACY, ELECTIONS AND GOVERNANCE

1. DEMOCRACY, ELECTIONS AND GOVERNANCE

a) African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance

534. As part of the process of enhancing AUC leadership on Governance and Democracy issues, attention, during this period of reporting, was focused on building an overall architecture for governance and on promoting the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. The Commission remained very active in the observation of elections held within the Continent and on assistance, through capacity building, for African Election Management Bodies.

535. Within the shared values area, attention has been focused on enhancing AUC interactions with partners on governance and democracy issues. In addition to direct engagements on governance and democracy matters with the European Union (EU), African Union perspectives, as reflected in decisions of the Assembly, were articulated at a range of meetings. The Memorandum of Understanding with International IDEA (institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance) moved towards implementation with the launching of a Joint Action Programme (JAP). The JAP focuses on building the capacity of

the AUC in the shared values space and is reflected in the direct capacity assistance provided to the AUC. German assistance, through GTZ, was also reflected in the shared values area through direct contributions for specific activities and the provision of computer equipment.

536. The Commission continued its popularisation and awareness raising campaign with a view to ratifying the Charter which, to date, has been ratified by only two Member States, namely Ethiopia and Mauritania.

537. A meeting was held in Khartoum, The Sudan, in April 2009, to engage with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) on the ratification of the Charter in Member States. This meeting concluded that the AUC and RECs will work together to encourage Member State ratification of the Charter. Twenty-eight Member States, but only two have ratified this Charter, as previously indicated.

538. At the Khartoum meeting, RECs expressed a commitment towards placing the Charter as an item on the agenda of RECs Summit meetings and distributing copies of the Charter at all relevant meetings. The meeting with RECs also concluded that a more focused and targeted approach for ratification must be established. Within the framework of this approach, national level structures and APRM focal points may be used to assist the process. It was further proposed that the Charter be integrated into the existing peer review activities and in the follow-up review and implementation activities.

539. There is a need to further reflect on the slow pace of ratification of the Charter and the reasons for this. As the development of the Charter was to consolidate past resolutions on matters relating to democracy and unconstitutional changes of government, it is becoming more imperative that guidance be provided by the Assembly on the way forward and on dealing with the slow pace of ratification.

b) Architecture of Governance Interventions

540. To enhance the capacity of the AUC for interaction on governance issues, a “mapping of governance” interventions study has been completed. This study was presented at a Multi-Stakeholder Workshop on Governance held in Yaoundé, Cameroon in March 2009. The study served as a foundation for a more focused dialogue on building the AU Governance Architecture.

541. The Multi-Stakeholder Governance Meeting in Yaoundé served to establish the importance of African ownership of the governance architecture. The meeting concluded that the African Union Architecture of Governance Institutions and Intervention needs to be strengthened and serve as a basis for interactions with development partners. Whilst there are many organisations active in governance at the regional, sub-regional and national levels, the meeting asserted further that the African Union should provide the overall political framework and leadership. The Yaoundé Meeting also established the importance of RECs in democracy and governance. As building blocks of the African Union, RECs would be integrated into the evolving governance architecture. In further strengthening the existing architecture, it was proposed that a governance platform or mechanism be established for further and ongoing dialogue on governance between all stakeholders. This

approach and its implications will be explored as part of the ongoing dialogue within the AUC.

542. In keeping with the conclusions of the Multi-Stakeholder Workshop, efforts will be focused on enhancing dialogue and interaction between all AU institutions that play a role in governance and democracy. The meeting also recommended that the Commission works towards the elaboration of the architecture, in close collaboration with Member States and all other stakeholders. Such a Governance Architecture would serve to ensure AU leadership on governance matters in Africa and provide a basis for more effective engagements with all our partners.

c) Local Governance

543. In the area of local governance, an initial meeting was held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, in March 2009. Discussions at the meeting focused on the possibility of establishing a Charter for Local Governance and establishing effective partnerships with role players in 'local governance'.

544. Following intensive discussions with the relevant stakeholders, it was recommended that there be wider consultations on local governance and the activities that would be most relevant at continental level. The meeting of stakeholders served to establish a need for a more cautious approach to issues of local governance and local government, as there are many variations across Member States and very different approaches and understandings of local government.

545. The meeting of the relevant stakeholders in local governance concluded that consideration be given to the idea of establishing a platform for ongoing engagements on local governance within the overall evolving AU governance architecture. It was further asserted that the Commission should organize a larger conference to exchange information on local governance and to establish a continental perspective on activities and instruments that would be most relevant. Such a gathering would also serve to consider the possibility of a Charter for Local Governance.

d) African Union Advisory Board on Corruption

546. The Advisory Board on Corruption, as per Article 22 of the African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Corruption and Related Offences, was appointed at the January-February 2009 Session of the Assembly of the Union. This Board held its first meeting from 26 to 28 May 2009 and focused its attention on establishing its role and areas of intervention. The Advisory Board will pay greater attention to the further ratification of the Convention and the level of implementation across Member States.

e) Public Service

547. The Commission has been most active in taking forward the activities on public service, established by the African Ministers of Public Service. The past few months included a number of meetings to assist Kenya in its capacity as the Chairperson of the 6th Conference of African Ministers of Public Service. A number of meetings were held to ensure a smooth transfer of all relevant material and activities from the Chairperson of the 5th Conference (South Africa) to the Chairperson of the 6th Conference (Kenya).

548. A number of operational meetings have been held on public service matters. These meetings were directed at establishing the foundations for mobilising resources for implementing the decisions emanating from the 6th Conference of Ministers of Public Service. As the Public Service has been defined as an area for one of the Specialised Technical Committees, work within this area is likely to evolve in a very positive manner.

549. In establishing a path forward in celebrating African Public Service Day, a meeting was held on this matter in Nairobi, Kenya. This meeting proposed that Africa Public Service Day (23 June 2009) be focused on the “Delivery of Quality Service for Sustainable Development”. This theme was confirmed at a Ministerial Bureau meeting, held in May 2009. The Bureau Meeting also served to confirm the activities for the period of the 6th Conference of Ministers of Public Service. The declaration of the 6th Conference of African Ministers of Public Service will be presented during this Summit for adoption.

f) Democracy and Elections in Africa: Achievements and Challenges

550. The African continent has made significant progress in institutionalizing electoral democracy during the past decade. This is reflected in a number of successful multiparty elections in most Member States where electoral environments have steadily improved and are presumably a significant contributing factor in the increasingly favourable evaluations of several elections conducted periodically in recent years. Notwithstanding these achievements, major challenges remain. Most recently the emerging issue concerning political leadership and policy makers has been the large scale election violence arising from disputed elections. This unfortunate trend has not only raised questions about election management and administration but also the long-term impact on the consolidation of political stability in Africa.

551. Furthermore, the alarming occurrences of unconstitutional regime changes brought about by inconspicuous coup d'états are becoming a dominant feature in some of Africa's transitional democracies. After Mauritania and Guinea, another unconstitutional change occurred in Madagascar where disenfranchised groups challenging the legitimacy of the regime vented their feelings through mass demonstrations and destruction of property, which spiralled into widespread violence and ultimately unconstitutional regime change. The Peace and Security Council of the African Union continues to reiterate its total rejection of any change or attempt at unconstitutional change of Government as contained in the relevant texts of the AU; in particular the Algiers Decision of July 1999, the Lomé Declaration of July 2000, the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council. Despite AU's many efforts to address this phenomenon, the scourge of coups d'état in African countries is presenting an emerging concern for policy makers, especially with its new and varied manifestations.

552. Attention in the area of election is also increasingly paid to Elections Assistance. In this respect, a training programme for officials from National Election Management Bodies has commenced and two groups have been taken through the initial training. The first course took place in South Africa and the second in Ghana. It is expected that three other courses will be delivered within the next six months. These interventions serve to strengthen support to Member States for the management of the election process.

2. ELECTIONS OBSERVATION AND MONITORING

a) Elections Observed

553. The African Union (AU) has been committed and fully engaged in the strengthening of the democratization process in Africa for many years, particularly by observing and monitoring elections in Member States, on the basis of strict guidelines. As such, it continues to send election observation missions to Member States. For 2009 between January and April the AU, under the directorship and guidance of the Political Affairs Department, dispatched multi-disciplinary teams of observers to observe the Presidential Elections in Algeria (April 2009), the National and Provincial Elections in South Africa (May 2009), Presidential elections in Malawi (May 2009) and in Guinea Bissau (June 2009). In pursuance of the relevant provisions of the Durban Declaration of 2002, the Commission deployed pre-electoral evaluation missions to these countries, to examine the conditions that had been put in place for the holding of the elections. These missions were fruitful and had the best possible collaboration from national players.

554. The holding of elections can be summarised as follows:

Algeria

555. In response to the invitation of the Algerian Authorities, the Commission deployed a high level mission of 87 observers led by H.E. Mr Joaquim Chissano, Former President of Mozambique, to the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

556. The Mission reported that the Algerian Presidential election was carried out in a successful manner. There was a participation of 74% of the population for this election which demonstrated the enthusiasm and inspiration of the Algerian nation for the electoral process. President Abdelaziz Bouteflika was re-elected by an overwhelming majority. The process of the Presidential Elections was accomplished successfully in great transparency.

South Africa

557. At the invitation of the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa, H.E Jean Ping, Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union sent a 42 member multidisciplinary group of Observers to South Africa's National and Provincial Elections scheduled for 22 April 2009. The Mission was led by Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Former Prime Minister of Tanzania and Former Secretary General of the OAU.

558. South Africa's elections were conducted peacefully and were well prepared. The AU Mission in particular commended the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa for the efficient manner in which the national and provincial elections of 22 April 2009 were organized and for the measures taken to ensure the inclusiveness of the electoral process.

Malawi

559. Within the framework of promoting a proactive policy of pre-emptive diplomacy the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) His Excellency Jean Ping decided to field a high-level mission of Former African Heads of State and Government to the Republic of Malawi. The high-level delegation was composed of His Excellency Mr. Joaquim Alberto Chissano, former President of the Republic of Mozambique and chairman of the African Forum, and His Excellency Mr. John Agyekum Kufuor, Former President of the Republic of Ghana and member of the African Forum. The overall objective of the mission was to, inter alia, undertake consultations with all stakeholders particularly the incumbent President, former President and other parties, to assess and determine the current political situation in Malawi.

560. This mission largely contributed to the creation of an environment conducive to the holding of elections. In fact, following the mission, an Inter-Political Party Dialogue was facilitated by the two former Presidents. The three main political parties; Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), Malawi Congress Party (MCP) and the United Democratic Front (UDF) present signed a declaration agreeing to the implementation of several commitments. The Political Parties agreed to, among others:

- Address expeditiously and in a concerted manner, all elements that may be considered as impediments to the creation of an environment conducive to credible, free and fair elections;
- Address all issues necessary for the levelling of the playing field;
- Work expeditiously, jointly and together, to support any process within the framework of law that would enhance the performance and operational capacity of the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC).

561. An African Union team was sent to Malawi between 9 and 26 May 2009 to observe Malawi's Presidential and Legislative elections scheduled for 19 May 2009. The election which was won by the outgoing President, President Bingu Wa Mutharika, passed off in a peaceful and calm atmosphere.

Guinea Bissau

562. Following the assassination of the President of Guinea Bissau, General Joao Bernardo Vieira on 2 of March 2009, which was preceded by that of his Chief of Defence Staff, presidential elections will be organised on 28 June 2009 following a transitional period during which the President of the National Assembly acted as interim President and

following numerous efforts expended by the International Community in which the African Union actively participated within the framework of the International Contact Group.

b) Observations

563. The organisation of elections poses major challenges to our Member States; they can only take up these challenges successfully if they have the overall support of the International Community, and particularly the continental organisation. This is especially true for those States that have been made vulnerable by crises related to unconstitutional change and, in the case of Guinea Bissau, to the assassination of the Head of State. It is within this context that, apart from its contribution to efforts to bring peace and stability to these countries, the African Union has, inter alia contributed financially, as far as it was able, to the preparation of some elections. This was notably the case in Guinea for which financial assistance amounting to US\$100,000 was released to assist the bodies in charge of organising the elections.

c) Elections Calendar: 2009-2010

2009 Elections		
Algeria	9 April	Presidential
South Africa	22 April	Presidential/Parliamentary
Malawi	19 May	Presidential/Parliamentary
Mauritania	6 June	Presidential
Guinea Bissau	28 June	Presidential
Congo- Brazzaville	12 July	Presidential
Angola	September	Presidential
Botswana	October	Presidential/Parliamentary
Tunisia	October	Presidential/Parliamentary
Côte d'Ivoire	29 November	Presidential/Parliamentary
Namibia	November	Presidential/Parliamentary
Niger	November/December	Presidential/Parliamentary
Chad	December	Parliamentary
Equatorial Guinea	December	Presidential/Parliamentary
Mozambique	December	Presidential/Parliamentary
Guinea-Conakry	October/December	Parliamentary/Presidential

IV.2 HUMAN RIGHTS

564. The Commission, guided by the Constitutive Act of the African Union, positioned the promotion and protection of human rights in Africa as a priority.

a) Strengthening the Resource Centre for Democracy, Governance and Human Rights

565. The Resource Center for Democracy, Governance and Human Rights continues to make progress in the areas of acquisition of relevant publications through purchase and donations, cataloguing and classification of these publications, official visits from potential donors and interested organizations, acquisition of audiovisual materials, access to free Internet facilities.

b) Commemoration of the Rwanda Genocide

566. The Commission commemorated the 15th Anniversary of the Rwanda Genocide together with the Rwandan people represented by the Rwandan community in Addis Ababa. The ceremony which I chaired, was graced with the presence of representatives of the International Community and the African Diplomatic Corps accredited to Ethiopia, United Nations agencies and religious leaders.

567. It is worth recalling that the objective of the commemoration of the Rwanda Genocide is to raise greater awareness of the African Peoples and the International Community about the value of life and humanity, and to help us renew our collective commitment to the Constitutive Act of the African Union. Publicly remembering the genocide is an important aspect of looking into Rwanda's future and also serves as imperative for ensuring that the African Continent establishes and maintains peace, security and stability as enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the Africa Union.

c) African Union-European Union Human Rights Dialogue

568. The Dialogue initiated between the African Union and the European Union within the context of the implementation of the Joint Strategy was conducted under favourable conditions. The fourth session was held in Brussels on 20 April 2009. It was preceded by the 1st African and European Union (EU) Civil Society Human Rights Seminar which was held in Brussels on 16 and 17 April 2009. About 50 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) from Africa and EU attended the seminar, which pledged to "further promote the development of vibrant and independent civil society and of a systematic dialogue between it and public authorities at all levels".

569. In the two-day long seminar, participants discussed the following issues:

- The legal frameworks for civil society in Africa and Europe: NGO laws and the role of the civil society in implementing human rights instruments;
- The fight against torture in Africa and the EU based on African and EU human rights instruments and institutions; and
- The role of CSOs in the EU-AU Partnership: the way forward.

d) EU-Africa Partnership on Governance and Human Rights

570. The 2nd Informal Joint Experts Group (IJEG) meeting of the EU-Africa Partnership on Democratic Governance and Human Rights took place in Lisbon on 30 and 31 March

2009. The Meeting was attended by experts from African and European States that are members of this partnership as well as the AUC and EUC. The meeting agreed on a Joint Road Map on Governance and Human Rights, which was submitted to the Troika meeting held in Luxemburg on 28 April 2009.

IV.3 HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS, REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

571. Council will recall that at its 14th Ordinary Session, it reviewed the situation of refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons in Africa. Over the years, host countries which themselves are faced with other economic problems are recognized for the generosity they extend to refugees even before the international community appears on the scene.

572. Council's attention needs to be drawn to the fact that Africa continues to host the largest number of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the world. In spite of the return of thousands of people, the recent serious global factors worldwide do not help the Continent to cope with its situation. These global occurrences which have a lasting impact on already vulnerable populations include climate change, global food crisis, natural disasters, population growth and urbanization, competition for scarce resources as well as international migration and mixed movements of people.

573. Having drawn attention to all these scenarios, it is crucial to highlight the problem of forced displacement in a concrete manner, which calls for strategies to strengthen our partnership with the international community and our partners, within the existing cooperation agreements. With the aim of tackling the root causes of forced displacement, the Commission has been exchanging views in various meetings, conferences and seminars. For example, since last year, the Commission has been involved in finding a lasting solution to the crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo through peace negotiations, and appeals were made to the international community to redouble its efforts to this effect. There are of course other pressing humanitarian situations prevailing in other countries which are also of great concern to the African Union such as in Somalia, Chad, Darfur in The Sudan and the Central African Republic.

574. Some of the important meetings and conferences as well as seminars/workshops, which took place in close cooperation with AU partners included: the meetings of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons, the preparatory meetings of the Task Force on the AU Special Summit of Heads of State and Government on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa scheduled to hold in Kampala, Uganda in October 2009 and various meetings with AU Partners.

575. In addition, the AU partners were co-opted to take an active role in the missions of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees together with the Commission to various African countries most affected by the problem of forced displacement. Council is advised that the African Union cannot possibly tackle the numerous challenges in the area of humanitarian affairs alone. That is why a lot needs to be done in terms of burden sharing with the international community.

576. Council is reminded of the various decisions taken for Member States to participate actively in the first ever African Union Special Summit on Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced scheduled to take place in Kampala, Uganda in October 2009. The Heads of State and Government will, among other things, commit themselves to address the root causes of forced displacement and also endorse and sign the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, which will be the first of its kind in the world.

IV.4 GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

577. The Commission has continued to pay great attention to the capacity building foundation in mainstreaming gender in the AU Commission, AU Organs, RECs and Member States.

578. Following the adoption of the AU Gender Policy at the last session of the Executive Council, the Commission is in the process of publishing and disseminating the Policy to all AU Organs, Stakeholders and Partners.

579. It will be recalled that the first AU Gender Pre-Summit held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 24 January 2009. In the light of Recommendation 95 of the High Level Panel on the Audit of the African Union, the meeting recommended that a Steering Committee be established to manage future AU Gender Pre-Summits by:

- Providing an open forum where women CSOs can engage the Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD) on Gender Equality and Women Empowerment (GEWE);
- Providing an opportunity for stakeholders to assess implementation of WGDD and GEWE programmes;
- Providing an opportunity to reflect on summit themes and its relevance to GEWE;
- Harmonizing the decisions and identifying targets for our messages.

580. The Commission organized a Brainstorming Round Table held at the premises of AU Permanent Mission to the UN on Sunday 1 March 2009. The objective of the Brainstorming Roundtable was to exchange views on the implementation of the Assembly Decision (Assembly/AU/Dec. 487 (XIV)) proclaiming 2010-2020 as an African Women's Decade. Further, it was to brainstorm on the African Women's Decade roll out as proposed by the Extraordinary Meeting of Ministers of Gender and Women Affairs in Maseru.

581. The 53rd CSN Session recommended as follows:

- A group of Experts to develop a framework and propose strategies for the Decade;

- A group to be composed of the Vice President and the Ministers present at the meeting to consult between now and the next Ministerial Meeting scheduled for November 2009;
- The Decade to be an item on the Agenda of the meeting of Gender Machineries that was slated for The Gambia in the 1st week of May 2009.

582. In the Implementation of Executive Council Decision EX.CL/425(VIII), the AfDB recruited an expert for the realization of the Feasibility Study on the African Women Trust Fund. The AfDB organized a technical meeting on 16 and 17 April 2009 in Tunis, Tunisia, with the participation of the Commission, to discuss the outline of the study, especially the principles of leadership, sustainability and ownership, accessibility of the funds and strengthening of existing mechanisms, AU cooperation, the country gender assessment, and the impact of the global crisis. The technical team agreed to realize a gender assessment parallel to the launching of the Trust Fund for preparing the intervention map among the countries and women's needs. A progress report is being submitted at this Session to Policy Organs in a separate document.

IV.5 CULTURE

583. The cultural development field is composed of four main axes of intervention: support and promotion of African Cultural Institutions; the promotion of cultural industries; coordination and harmonization of cultural policies and programmes; and promotion and protection of African cultural heritage. Within the field of promotion of African Cultural Institutions, notable progress has been made for the capacity building of the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) in Bamako, Mali and the African Centre for Linguistic and Historical Studies by Oral Tradition (CELHTO) in Niamey, Niger. The Synthesis Conference on National Policies on the roles of cross-border languages and the place of less diffused languages in Africa was organised in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 5 to 07 February 2009. It identified 50 vehicular cross-border African languages and 12 first cross-border African languages to be promoted as a priority from the year 2009. The host agreement between the AUC and the Government of Mali for ACALAN headquarters was finalized and is scheduled to be officially signed by July 2009.

584. The African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) based in South Africa held its Board Meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 19 to 20 February to evaluate its activities and plan its main programme for 2009. A subsidy amounting to USD10,000 was transferred to AWHF in April 2009 to support its financial capacity. The meeting focused on the need to strengthen the financial capacity of the AWHF in order to broaden its interventions in the field of inventory, protection, promotion of African cultural heritage and training of cultural development professional and practitioners. For better collaboration and support from UNESCO, it was envisaged to transform the AWHF into a UNESCO Category 2 Centre.

585. The Third Meeting of the Forum of African Regional and Sub-Regional Organisation to support cooperation between UNESCO and NEPAD (FOSRASUN) in Tripoli Libya from 21 to 24 February 2009, and the AUC- UNESCO Meeting in Paris, France from 11 to 12 March 2009, evaluated achievements realised and strengthened the commitment of

UNESCO to technically and financially support strategic African cultural development programmes such as the revitalization and harmonization of Pan-African Cultural Institutions and events. UNESCO commits itself to technically assist the Commission in the preparation and organisation of the 2nd Pan African Cultural Congress that will take place from 5 to 7 October 2009.

586. The 2nd Edition of the Pan African Cultural Congress will be devoted to the inventory, protection and promotion of African Cultural goods. It will involve all AU Member States, Pan-African Cultural Institutions and strategic partners such as the European Commission, the African Diaspora and the private sector. The discussions will address key issues like the strategy for the harmonisation and modernization of Pan-African Cultural Institutions and National Museums.

587. Official meeting between the Minister in charge of Culture of Algeria and the Commissioner for Social Affairs took place in February 2009 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for the preparation of the 2nd Pan African Cultural Festival scheduled to take place in Algiers, Algeria from 5 to 20 July 2009.

IV.6 LEGAL MATTERS (LEGAL ARCHITECTURE OF THE UNION

a) Depositary Functions

588. Since the submission of the last report in January 2009, Member States have made great strides in their efforts to sign and ratify OAU/AU treaties. Indeed, at the time of reporting, thirty-eight (38) treaties have been adopted under the aegis of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Union (AU), the recent ones being the Statute of the African Union Commission on International Law (AUCIL); the African Charter on Statistics and the Protocol on the African Investment Bank adopted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 4 February 2009. Out of the total of thirty-eight, only twenty-two (22) of these treaties have entered into force while two (2) additional treaties namely: the Constitution of the Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations (1974) and the African Maritime Transport Charter (1994) are in force provisionally. Additionally, the only two (2) treaties that have been ratified or acceded to by all Member States remain the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981) and the Constitutive Act of the African Union (2000).

589. During the reporting period, 15 (fifteen) new signatures were appended and seven (7) additional instruments of ratification/accession were deposited. However, although giant efforts have been made to sign and ratify or accede to OAU/AU Treaties, a lot remains to be done. Indeed, as the African Union continues with its set objectives of political and socio-economic integration, it is crucial that the operationalization of the institutional framework of the Union is completed as soon as possible.

590. In this regard, the attention of Council should be drawn to the fact that four (4) Member States are yet to ratify the 1991 Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (Abuja Treaty) which forms part of the basic legal instruments of the Union as indicated in the Constitutive Act of the African Union. The Commission would like to take

this opportunity to reiterate its appeal to the four (4) Member States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Abuja Treaty, to do so expeditiously.

591. It should be noted with concern that since the last report to Council on this matter, the Protocol on the Statute of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights adopted in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, on 1 July 2008, to date, has been signed by fifteen (15) Member States and has not yet been ratified by any Member State. Furthermore, taking into account the stated imperative of strengthening judicial institutions of the Union to enable them to play their roles in the peaceful settlement of disputes, promoting the rule of law and respect for human and peoples' rights, it is critical that the Protocol on the Statute of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights is signed and ratified expeditiously. Similarly, due attention needs to be given to the African Youth Charter and the Protocol on the African Investment Bank.

b) Accreditation of Non-African States to the African Union

592. In accordance with Part II, Section II (3) of the Criteria for Granting Observer Status and for a system of Accreditation within the African Union (the Criteria), adopted by the Executive Council in July 2005, the Commission has continued to receive and consider requests for accreditation from various non-African States and organizations, bearing in mind the supreme interest of the Union. Since the last reporting period, six (5) non-African States and three (3) international organizations were accredited in line with the provisions of Part II, Section II (3) of the Criteria for the granting of AU Observer Status and a System of Accreditation within the AU. The names of the representatives accredited since the last report and their respective States/organizations are listed in the table below:

NON-AFRICAN STATES		
No.	Name & Title	Country
1	H.E. Dr. Antonio Sánchez-Benedito Gaspar Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Spain in Addis Ababa	Spain
2	H.E. Mr. Chung Soon-Suk Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Korea	Rep. of Korea
3	H.E. Ms. Clara Margarita Pulido Escandell Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic Cuba	Cuba
4	Most Reverend George Panikulam Titular Archbishop of Arpaia and Apostolic Nuncio in Ethiopia	Holy See
5	H.E. Maria Victoria Diaz de Suarez Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Colombia	Colombia

NON-AFRICAN STATES		
No.	Name & Title	Country
	to the Gov. of Kenya and Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Nairobi	
6	H.E. Jean-Christophe Belliard Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of France to Ethiopia and the African Union	France
REGIONAL INTEGRATION AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS		Organisation
7	Ms. Akila Belembaogo Head of the UNICEF Liaison Office to the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa	UNICEF
8	Mr. Gérard Peytrignet Head of the ICRC Delegation to the AU	ICRC
9	Mr. Chrysantus ACHE Representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to the AU and the ECA	UNHCR

593. The total number of non-African States and international organizations accredited to the Union is now sixty-one (61), that is, fifty-one (51) non-African States and ten (10) Regional Integration and International Organizations.

c) Implementation of the Assembly Decision on the Specialised Technical Committees (STCs)

594. As Council will recall, by Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.227 (XII) adopted by the 12th Ordinary Session of the Assembly held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in February 2009, the Assembly decided on the new reconfiguration of fourteen (14) Specialized Technical Committees (STCs) and requested the Commission to prepare a detailed breakdown of the financial implications of STC meetings and their detailed activities.

595. Within the framework of the implementation of this Decision, the Commission has prepared a Report in collaboration with the PRC for consideration by Council at its present session. The Report comprises (i) the financial implications of STC meetings and (ii) their detailed activities. Regarding particularly the periodicity of the meetings of the STCs, appropriate recommendations will be made in this respect by the Commission for consideration by the PRC and the Executive Council at their next Session.

d) The Review of the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to the Pan-African Parliament (PAP)

596. The process of the review of the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community relating to the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) is underway. At the

appropriate time consultations will be undertaken with relevant organs and stakeholders such as the relevant PAP committees, the Permanent Representatives' Committee (PRC) and ECOSOCC. Consultations have also been undertaken within the Commission on how to secure the necessary funds for carrying out the activities envisaged in the implementation of the decision. Furthermore, the Terms of Reference (TORs) of the consultancy were finalized and based on these TORs, a comprehensive study on the review of the Protocol will be carried out and appropriate recommendations will be submitted to Council for consideration, through the PRC, at your next Ordinary Session scheduled for January 2010.

e) Implementation of Assembly Decision on Granting Competence to the African Court of Justice and Human Rights to deal with International Crimes

597. Pursuant to the Assembly Decision, Assembly/AU/213(XII) adopted by the 12th Ordinary Session of the Assembly in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in January 2009, the Commission has undertaken initial consultations with some members of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (AfCHPR) and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) with a view to determining the modalities for effective implementation of this decision. Consultations have also been undertaken within the Commission on how to secure the necessary funds for carrying out the activities envisaged in the implementation of the decision. In addition, informal preliminary discussions have taken place between representatives of the Commission and the AfCHPR and the ACHPR and there is some clarity on the preparatory activities required. However, it is expected that formal consultations will take place in the near future.

f) Implementation of Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.213 (XII) on the Abuse of the Principle of Universal Jurisdiction

598. As was reported to Council previously, pursuant to Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.213 (XII), the issue of universal jurisdiction was discussed at the 10th and 11th Sessions of the AU/EU Ministerial Troika, in Brussels, Belgium and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 16 September and from 20 to 21 November 2008, respectively, during which the two parties recognized that the issue could have negative consequences for the relationship between the AU and the EU. Consequently, the Ministerial Troika agreed to set up an AU-EU Joint Technical Ad Hoc Expert Group to clarify their respective understanding of the principle of universal jurisdiction and to report to the 12th Troika meeting, which was held on 28 April 2009 in Luxembourg.

599. It should be noted that following several meetings held in Brussels and Addis Ababa, the Joint Technical Ad Hoc Expert Group finalized and adopted a report entitled "Report of the AU-EU Technical Ad Hoc Expert Group on the principle of Universal Jurisdiction, which is a separate item on the agenda of your current session.

600. The Report was considered by the Ministerial Troika meeting, during which Ministers recalled that the Group was set up in the light of the recognition that the issue has negative consequences for the relationship between the EU and African. They expressed their gratitude to the six independent experts for their work and expressed their

hope that this undertaking had served the purpose as requested by the Ministerial Troika meeting in November 2008. They agreed that the Report should be shared with the organs of the EU and the AU as well as Member States.

601. At the level of the United Nations, consultations and discussions continue on the title of the agenda item.

g) Implementation of Assembly Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.221 (XII) on the Meeting of African States Parties to the Rome Statute on the International Criminal Court (ICC)

602. Following the adoption of the Assembly Decision in February 2009 calling for a meeting of African States Parties to the Rome Statute of the ICC, I would like to inform Council that consultations were immediately undertaken within the Commission to determine how to secure the necessary funds for carrying out the activities envisaged in the implementation of the decision. I am happy to report that this initial hurdle was overcome and the Meeting was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 8 to 9 June 2009 as planned. The recommendations have been submitted to Council under a separate agenda item.

h) Election of the Members of the African Union Commission on International Law

603. The Statute of the AUCIL entered into force upon its adoption by the Twelfth Ordinary Session of the Assembly held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in February 2009. The AUCIL is composed of eleven (11) members.

604. The objectives of the AUCIL include, among others, undertaking activities relating to codification and progressive development of international law in the African continent; assisting in the revision of existing treaties and identification of areas in which new treaties are required, and preparing drafts thereof as well as studies on legal matters of interest to the Union and its Member States.

605. The current Council Session is expected to elect the members of the AUCIL and submit a report thereon to the Assembly for nomination.

i) Elections of the Members of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)

606. Council will recall that the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (the ACHPR) is established within the Union, under Article 30 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (the Charter). The main mandate of the Commission is to promote and ensure the protection of Human and Peoples Rights in the Continent.

607. The terms of office of three (3) members of the ACHPR elected in 2003 and 2007, are due to expire in July 2009. It should be noted that these members are eligible for re-election. Accordingly, Council is expected to elect three members during the current Ordinary Session and submit their names to the Assembly for nomination.

j) Implementation of Assembly Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.240 (XII) on the Hissène Habré Case

608. Upon the adoption of Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.240 (XII) by the Assembly during its 12th Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, my Special Representative for the Hissène Habré case, Mr. Robert Dossou from Bénin, undertook, at my request, a mission to Dakar in order to establish the actions already undertaken by the Government of Senegal and identify ways/areas where the Commission can assist the Government of Senegal to accelerate the implementation of the Assembly Decision. During this mission, he met with the President of the Republic of Senegal and other senior Senegalese officials in charge of the Hissène Habré case as well as the Partners, including European Union Representatives.

609. At the end of his mission, my Special Representative made appropriate recommendations that I have endorsed as follows:

- Organise Donors Round Table in Dakar for the funding of the budget of the trial;
- Undertake a Joint AU-Senegal Mission to Chad in order to consider ways/areas of judicial cooperation between Senegal and Chad within the framework of the organisation of Hissène Habré trial.

610. Furthermore, within this framework, the process of finalising the budget is expected to be completed within the next few weeks during the next mission of the Special Representative to Dakar. Follow up actions will then be discussed with the European Union.

611. In addition, after the Assembly session, I solicited voluntary contributions from all Member States towards funding the budget of the trial in accordance with the Assembly Decision. I regret to inform Council that at the time of reporting, I am not aware of any positive reactions from Member States. Accordingly, I wish once again to appeal to Member States to urgently consider making voluntary contributions to the budget of the trial.

612. I am confident, in view of the commitment demonstrated by all those concerned and in particular by the President of the Republic of Senegal personally and his Government, as well as the positive signals by the Partners, that we are on the right track in ensuring that we live up to the challenge of ensuring early commencement of the Hissène Habré case.

V. STRENGTHENING THE INSTITUTIONS

V.1 THE COMMISSION

1. FOLLOW-UP ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON THE AUDIT OF THE AFRICAN UNION

613. Council will recall that, at its 14th Ordinary Session held in January 2009, a report was presented to it on the status of implementation of the recommendations of the High-Level Panel on the Audit of the Union as considered and endorsed by an Extraordinary Session of Council in Arusha, Tanzania, in May 2008 (vide document EX.CL/456 (XIV)). During consideration of this report by the PRC and Council, due note was taken of the measures already implemented by the Commission. At the same time, the Commission was mandated to report to Council on regular basis on the progress made in this regard.

614. The Commission therefore wishes to report that measures have been taken to implement the said recommendations in the areas that fall under its purview, as follows:

- i) Thematic approach by the Assembly (Recommendation 2) has become the established practice as was evidenced by Decision Assembly/AU/Dec. 232 (XII) adopted by the last Assembly of the Union in February 2009, which set forth the themes of Assembly Sessions up to July 2010. The Commission will, in January 2010, come up with appropriate recommendations on the choice of the themes for subsequent sessions.
- ii) Recommendation 3 was implemented such that henceforth the Commission will, at each Assembly Session, present to the Heads of State and Government, a report on the status of implementation of the Decisions taken by the previous sessions.
- iii) As per its Recommendations 5 and 6, the Panel invited the Governments of Member States to popularise the decisions and acts of the Assembly and to put in place an appropriate mechanism for monitoring the implementation of Assembly Decisions. Member States are therefore required to intensify their efforts to give practical effect to their own decisions. The Commission is ready to work closely with Member States towards establishing the mechanism that would allow for frequent consultation.
- iv) The February 2009 Assembly Session took a Decision (Assembly/AU/Dec.227 (XII) regarding the study on the Specialised Technical Committees (STCs) (Recommendation 10) by which it established 14 Specialised Technical Committees. The modalities of implementing this Decision is being finalised and will be submitted for consideration in January 2010 as recommended by the PRC.
- v) Accelerating the process of merging the African Court of Justice with the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (Recommendations 18 to 21) requires that Member States sign and ratify the Protocol adopted in Sharm El Sheikh in July 2008 and make a commitment to accept the competence of the Court once it becomes operational.

- vi) Establishment of the Financial Institutions provided for in the Constitutive Act (Recommendations 31 and 32) is in progress. A detailed report on this issue indicating the current situation was prepared in January 2009. A Steering Committee has already been established in Tripoli, Libya in respect of the African Investment Bank, while talks are underway with Nigeria and Cameroon, respectively, with regard to the establishment of the Steering Committee for the African Central Bank and the African Monetary Fund.
- vii) The recommendations accepted and referred to the Commission (Nos. 33, 34, 35, 43, 44, 45, 46, 49, 50, 51, 59 and 60) concerning its system of governance and the Staff Regulations and Rules are in the process of being implemented. The Staff Regulations and Rules are currently being studied by the PRC. It is vital that the PRC, in collaboration with the Commission, rapidly finalise the consideration of this important tool for management of the staff of the Union and submit its proposals for consideration by Council. The Commission meets every Tuesday to examine issues that fall under its competence and to provide the required momentum for all its structures, thereby instituting a system of coordination within these structures. Moreover, the Commission has adopted the Terms of Reference for regular meetings of the Directors, chaired by the Secretary to the Commission. These meetings could be used to give appropriate technical advice to the Commission for harmonious and coordinated implementation of the programmes and activities of the Union. For all the structures to function effectively, it is necessary to strengthen all the departments of the Commission in terms of increased human and logistics resources, especially the Office of the Secretary to the Commission, thereby enabling it to effectively and efficiently discharge its new responsibilities as head of the Commission's services and serve as the Secretariat of the PRC as recommended in the Audit (Recommendations 43, 44,45,47,49, 51 and 74).
- viii) The Commission welcomes the adoption of Decision EX.CL/Dec.487 (XIV) in January 2009 on the Gender Policy of the African Union - an instrument for promotion of gender equality. This Policy will provide inspiration for all the measures geared towards implementing the Protocol on the Rights of Women and the Solemn Declaration of the Assembly on Gender Equality in Africa (Recommendations 62, 63, 64, 67 and 68).
- ix) Recommendation 70 on the Conference Services Directorate has been partly implemented with the gradual strengthening of the capacities of this essential service.
- x) The relations between the PRC and the Commission improved significantly in recent months thanks to increased and intense communication between the two organs and the organization of high-level retreats (two retreats were organized, one in November 2008 and the other in March 2009, in Nazareth). These regular consultations have made it possible for the two organs to discuss all pertinent issues of common interest in a serene climate characterized by mutual

confidence, a development currently known as “the spirit of Nazareth” (Recommendations 73, 74 and 75).

- xi) As regards recommendations 76, 77 and 78 concerning the study on the existing regional and representational offices, and the possibility of opening other offices in the light of a thorough cost-benefit analysis and of available operational resources, two consultants were recruited in February 2009. The consultants have produced a document currently being studied by the Commission which will submit appropriate proposals thereon in due course.
- xii) Recommendation 79 regarding the study on the Specialized Agencies of the Union is yet to be implemented. Consultations are still in progress to identify the experts to undertake the evaluation.
- xiii) Recommendations 81 and 82 on the Strategic Plan 2009-2012 have been fully implemented in the sense that the Plan which has been submitted for consideration by the policy organs, was formulated on an inclusive and participatory basis with very close consultation with the PRC, particularly through the retreat organized in Nazareth in March 2009.
- xiv) With respect to recommendations 83, 87 and 88, on speedy ratification and implementation of treaties, it should be mentioned that, by decision EX.CL.459 adopted in January 2009, Council endorsed the recommendations of the Conference of Ministers of Justice on the measures aimed at accelerating this process. The Commission has stepped up its efforts vis-à-vis Member States for effective implementation of this decision.
- xv) In regard to recommendations 89 to 93, tremendous progress has been made in terms of the communication policy and strategy of the Commission. On this score, a strategy has been put in place in consultation with some experts in that domain and will be implemented gradually. The African Union Website also improved remarkably, as was also the case with internal communication within the Commission as well as with the Member States, other organs, the RECs, the partners, the civil society, the Diaspora and the media. The Commission will continue to deploy effort to achieve more effective internal and external communication through exchange of diverse and quality information with the various players and partners.
- xvi) Recommendation 95 has been implemented, and as a result, pre-summit forums have been organized. Furthermore, the Commission, working closely with ECOSOCC, ensures that logistics support is provided towards the organization of the forums and stepping up frequent contacts with the civil society organizations that often operate under the latter’s umbrella to popularize the objectives, actions and symbols of the Union, promote the history of Pan-Africanism and African identity and provide inputs to the key issues on the broad agenda of the Union (Recommendations 96 to 99, 109, 111, 114, 115 and 116).

- xvii) With respect to recommendation 100 on the need for the Commission to play a more assertive coordinating and representational role in the global policy arena, the Commission has taken appropriate measures to promote adoption of common African positions through meetings of the policy organs. These common positions have enabled the Commission to project the viewpoint of the Union on all relevant issues discussed in international gatherings. It is however essential that Member States spell out the exact role and place of the Commission in the international negotiation processes on which the Union has adopted common positions. With regard to recommendation 101, Member States were called upon by the Panel to work within the framework of the Constitutive Act and the decisions of the Assembly and Executive Council and thereby promote and uphold the collective interest of Africa.
- xviii) On recommendation 107 regarding calendar of meetings, the Commission invested efforts to reduce the number of meetings and avoid their overlapping, with the full support of the PRC Sub-Committee on Conferences and Programmes.
- xix) As regards Recommendations 121, 125 and 126, the Commission has continued to back the actions of the PSC and to intensify efforts at mobilizing resources for the Peace Fund and to build capacities. The PSC has also continued to strengthen its relations with the United Nations Security Council, especially with the African members of the Council, as evidenced by the joint annual meetings held in the past two years, the most recent of which took place in Addis Ababa in May 2009.
- xx) Concerning recommendations 127 to 141 on the RECs and their relations with the organs of the Union including the Commission, the latter deployed tireless efforts during the year ended to promote the Minimum Integration Programme (MIP) so as to create convergence and coherence in the programmes of the various RECs. Several consultation meetings were held in this regard to create a common ground on the MIP. Similarly, there was intense exchange of information between the Commission and the RECs on the Strategic Plan 2009-2012 process, among other things.
- xxi) As regards recommendations 142 to 144 on relations between the ECA, AfDB and the Commission, fruitful cooperation was maintained among the three parties which have organized themselves in a Joint Secretariat with a view to addressing issues of common interest, not only with regard to the studies on integration and on continental and regional development projects in areas as varied as infrastructure, energy, agriculture, capacity building, definition of the African common position on the economic and financial crises, but also in the field of multilateral negotiations, etc.
- xxii) With respect to recommendations 145 to 157 on establishment of adequate financial mechanisms for financial management and improved budgetary procedures in collaboration with the PRC, the Commission has, since nearly one

year, adopted a Procurement Manual which now governs procurements and purchases. Other measures have been taken to create the tools of transparency and accountability for all resource managers in the organization. An Audit Charter has also been formulated and submitted to the competent sub-Committee of the PRC. Furthermore, the Commission has implemented the recommendations contained in the Ernst & Young report on improvement of management procedures. The Commission plans to submit a review of the structures of the competent organs to enable them to meet the challenges of transparent management and accountability in regard to the resources made available to the Union either by Member States or by development partners.

- xxiii) As regards recommendation 159 - the last made by the Audit - on tax on air tickets, the competent organs of the African Union has, for several months, been considering a study on alternative sources of financing for the Union. The debate on this issue which has been taking place at the level of the Conference of Finance Ministers is, unfortunately, not moving at the desired pace. The competent organs, including the Executive Council and the Assembly should assume responsibility for this matter that is so crucial for the future of the Union, issue clear directives to keep things going the way they should, and by so doing, emulate the RECs that have succeeded not only in endowing themselves with predictable resources free from the uncertainties of the arrears of contributions owed by Member States, but also in substantially alleviating the burden of these States which often bear the full brunt of economic and financial crises that have become chronic.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

a) Human Resource Management

615. The enhancement of the human resource management function is at the heart of the current institutional strengthening and reform programme of the Commission. Currently the Commission is implementing a number of key change projects that are aimed at modernizing the function and making it more responsive to organizational needs and priorities through, among other things, the establishment and/or updating of relevant HR policies and strategies and promoting a culture of learning and result-based staff and programme management. Special attention is in this context being given to improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the recruitment process and to implementing a clear and transparent staff training, development and retention policy and plan.

616. The present structure of the Commission was determined at the Assembly Session in Maputo 2003 and further strengthened in Khartoum in 2006. The structure provides for an approved establishment of 923 posts. Of these over 600 are substantively filled. There is also a complementary work force of short- term staff and consultants. With the coming on stream of a new Strategic Plan there is now a need to align the structure to the new strategic orientation in a manner that would enhance synergy, transparency and accountability, ensure clear reporting lines and further rationalize the distribution and use of available resources. A consultative in-house exercise has been undertaken and

recommendations based on immediate, medium-term and long-term needs would be developed for consideration by the policy organs.

b) Information and Communication Technology (ITC)

617. The Commission has continued its extensive modernization of its ICT infrastructure and is now set to improve connectivity to all the AU regional and representational offices. The next important steps would be to improve the integrity and security of the system, enhance the Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) implementation, extend the VSAT by adding new sites and enhance staff capacity effectively to provide the requisite support services to the Commission. The overall objective is to provide a comprehensive and flawless MIS solution to the Commission. In the next few months the Commission would have laid a solid foundation for the development of an e-Commission.

c) Administrative Services

618. The new Procurement Manual is now fully operational. The use of the Manual will go a long way towards rationalizing and streamlining procurement procedures in the Commission and at all Representational and Regional/Liaison Offices. The construction of the new office block and Conference Centre is well underway and an agreement has been concluded for the commencement of work on the Peace and Security Centre. Meanwhile, several facilities enhancement projects are being implemented in the AUC compound to improve the availability of office space. Security and Safety continue to be given the attention it deserves. A comprehensive modern security and safety plan for the staff and property of the Organization was being finalized at the end of the period under review.

i) Status Report on the Construction of the AU Conference Center and Office Complex Project

619. The idea of endowing the African Union Commission with a modern Conference Center and office building facilities befitting its status has always been in the hearts of African Leaders. As the Commission is now set to grow both in size and functions, the need for bigger and more efficient facilities has become even more crucial.

620. In this connection, the Commission is highly appreciative of the Ethiopian Government for allocating extra land for the expansion of the Commission and of the unqualified assistances of the Government of the People's Republic of China for its commitment to design, construct and fully finance such big facilities as a gift to Africa.

621. After one year of hard work in finalizing the design and in closer coordination of tasks with the Technical Team of the Commission, the construction work on the Project officially commenced on 10 November 2008 with subsequent follow-up of mobilization of personnel, equipment and materials. The Chinese work force is now firmly on ground and the project is progressing smoothly as scheduled.

622. The Commission, on its part, has established a Technical Team in order to work closely with the Chinese side, supervise, facilitate and ensure that the Project progresses according to the agreed design and requirements of the Commission.

623. Completion of the Project is scheduled for the end of 2011.

3. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

a) Budget Execution

624. At its January 2009 session held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the Assembly approved a total budget of US\$ 164,256,817.00 for the financial year 2009. US\$ 95.58m represented the operational budget and US\$62.68m was for programmes.

625. Execution of the operational and programme budgets for the five months ended May 2009 was as follows:-

Budget Category	Appropriation	Expenditure and Obligations as at 31 May 2009	Percentage of Budget Execution
Operational Budget of the Commission	75,164,886.00	30,581,174.10	41%
Other Organs	20,410,885.00	4,559,194.21	22%
Sub Total Operational Budget	95,575,711.00	35,140,368.31	37%
Programme Budget	68,681,046.00	9,864,770.51	14 %
Grand Total	164,256,817.00	45,005,138.81	27%

626. As at 31 May 2009, US\$45,005,138.81 was executed representing 27% of the total budget. Out of the total execution, US\$35,140,368.31 was on the operational budget whilst US\$9,864,770.51 was on the programme budget.

b) Collections

627. The source of funding of the AUC's approved budget for the year 2009 was from Member States, development partners and surplus from the budgets for the years 2004 to 2007. An amount of US\$3,937,075.00 was received from Member States as at 31 May 2009 out of the total assessed contributions of US\$93,804,243.00. The Commission also received US\$6,924,283.00 from Member States previous years' arrears. The total receipts in income by the end of May 2009 stood at US\$10,861,359.00.

628. A total of US\$5,088,479.84 was received from development partners, out of the total amount of US\$52,003,000.00 pledged to finance programmes approved for the year. In addition, development partners contributed a total of US\$ 26,983,636.48 towards the Peace Fund during the period January to May 2009.

c) Financial Management

629. Overall financial management remains an important priority for the Commission. Focus is on ensuring greater accountability and security of the Commission's finances. The Financial Control Unit has been revamped and its capacity enhanced to ensure more effective control of the financial flows. Efforts are also being made to continually improve services to the Commission staff, vendors and suppliers.

630. Efforts have also continued to be directed to strengthening the management and control of the peace funds under the purview of the Commission. An important exercise aimed at cleaning up records and closing accounts of past operations has been undertaken. A stronger Finance Unit for these funds is highly desirable.

631. Furthermore, in order to ensure a better alignment between Member States' aspirations and spending, the Commission will implement a Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) as a "linking framework" that will allow expenditures to be "driven by policy priorities and disciplined by budget realities" so that it can correct the present disconnect between policy making, planning, and budgetary processes.

4. PLANNING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

a) Strategic Plan 2009 - 2012

632. In line with Decision Ex.CL. Dec. 481(XIV) on the Strategic Plan for 2009 - 2012, the Commission has taken all the necessary measures to ensure that support structures, projects and budgets drawn up from the former Strategic Plan 2004 – 2007 are carried out appropriately, pending the adoption of the Strategic Plan 2009-2012, within the available means at its disposal. Furthermore, as already indicated, the Commission organized a Retreat with PRC Members in Nazareth, Ethiopia, in March 2009. During this retreat, important contributions and inputs were gathered and incorporated into the new Draft Strategic Plan 2009 – 2012 which is now submitted in a separate document to the Policy Organs for consideration and adoption.

5. CONFERENCE SERVICES

633. During the period from 1 January to 15 May 2009, the Commission serviced 154 meetings among which 19 were outside Addis Ababa. In this connection, a total of twenty thousand two hundred and forty six (20,246) pages were translated into the four AU working languages.

634. The total number of pages printed by CSD Printing and Reproduction is four thousand seven hundred and ninety (4,790) pages in terms of books, booklets, bulletins, newsletters for the Commission and the Regional Offices. A total of 40,000 badges, 17,

000 certificates, 657 invitation cards, 20, 000 business cards, 2 banners and 5 posters were printed from January to May 2009.

635. Furthermore, the total number of copies reproduced and printed amounted to 1210 000 copies for the PRC, the Executive Council, the Assembly and other related activities. In order to reduce paper wastage, the Commission published and distributed to all participants of last Assembly meetings, the first version of CDs containing Addis Ababa 2009 draft Assembly documents in all the working languages. The second CDs of this first version have been dispatched to all Member States after AU Assembly meetings. Moreover, the Commission has just completed the publication of new CDs containing all Decisions and Declarations since the establishment of the AU, in the four AU working languages. The CDs will be distributed shortly to all Member States.

636. With regard to the 2009 Calendar of Meetings, and in accordance with Decision EX.CL/Dec 458 (XIV) adopted by the Executive Council in January 2009, the Commission has ensured better coordination among the Departments to avoid overlapping of major meetings as well as undue changes in meetings schedule.

637. Moreover, the Commission is playing a more proactive role by constantly updating and sending the calendar at least two months ahead of meetings, to all Member States and Commission members. Additionally, a weekly program of meetings is forwarded to all AUC Departments, at the beginning of every week, for their information and necessary follow-up.

638. However, in spite of all these efforts, the Commission is still faced with the challenge of insufficient number of interpreters and translators. Indeed, even though the Commission is devoting its best efforts to speeding up the recruitment procedures to fill the present vacant posts, it is a fact that the structures need to be reviewed to meet the new realities and provide staff complement based on new specializations (Editors, Translation Assistants, IT Technicians) and well trained staff, based on sound written procedures, equipped with cutting edge equipment to be able to adequately face the challenges implied by the changes occurring within the Commission. Aware of those unavoidable requirements, the Commission has already set such goals in its 2009 Plan of Action and will be submitting proposals on new structural reforms in this critical area.

639. The Commission is in the process of drafting Conference Management Procedures to be followed by the various Directorates.

640. The Commission is carrying out a cooperation programme with the European Commission in the field of interpretation and translation. In this respect, the Conference Services Directorate and EU DG/Translation and DG/Interpretation are exchanging best documentation through the AUC/EUC website. Furthermore, staff exchange and training programmes have been carried out not only with these two EU structures but also with other institutions in Luxembourg and Ottawa.

641. The Commission acquired a Computer Assisted Translation software with translation memory and capacity to create AU terminology. The software has now been installed and a training course of CSD staff was organized in April 2009.

6. AUDIT ACTIVITIES

642. The role of the Office of Internal Audit (OIA) is to provide assurance and advisory services to the management of the Commission. The Office also supports top management in the effective discharge of their responsibilities by furnishing them with analyses, appraisal, counsel and recommendation on the activities reviewed.

643. In accordance with Article 70 of the Financial Rules and Regulations of the AU, the OIA is mandated to carry out a review of transactions/activities of the Commission in order to determine whether they are in compliance with AU Financial Rules and Regulations, Staff Rules and Regulations, Resolutions of the Council of Ministers and administrative instructions issued from time to time.

644. Since the January/February 2009 session of the Assembly, the audit activities undertaken by the Office of Internal Audit (OIA) have included the review of:

Details	Status
AMISOM-Nairobi	Final Report issued
OLMEE Asmara	Final Report issued
Transport Service Unit	Final Report issued
AMIS - Sudan	Final Report issued
EC-Euro 55m Support Programme (Jan-Jun 2008)	Final Report issued
EC Support for Democracy, Governance & HR	Final Report Issued
AU Cairo Office	Final Report issued
AU Brussels Office	Final Report issued
AU Conakry Office	Final Report issued
AU Yaoundé Office	Draft Report issued
AU Lagos Office	Draft Report issued
AU Niamey Office	Draft Report issued
AU New York Office	Draft Report –in progress
AU Washington Office	Draft Report –in progress
PAP on the EC €55 Million Support Programme	Draft Report issued
AU Medical Centre	Fieldwork - in progress
OLMEE – Addis Ababa	Fieldwork - in progress
Cash and Cash Management at Headquarter	Fieldwork - in progress
Data validation on SAP – HR & MM modules	Fieldwork - in progress
EC-Euro 55m Support Programme (Jul-Dec 2008)	Fieldwork - in progress
Programmes / Projects financed by AU Partners	Fieldwork - in progress

645. Apart from the audit projects cited above, the OIA provided the under-listed professional services since January 2008:

- a) External Audits – The OIA undertakes external audits in some of the AU Specialized Agencies. In April 2009, the OIA performed an external audit of the Afro-Arab Institute in Bamako, Mali.
- b) Resource Persons – Internal Auditors were engaged as Resource persons /Task force members in the IMIS implementation project as well as the Task Force on external resource management.
- c) Special Requests – Internal Auditors were involved in carrying out special assignments/requests from departments/directorates including special investigations (from AHRD).

646. Furthermore, the OIA undertook programmes for capacity building which were funded by AU Development Partners as summarized below:

- a) Training of Internal Audit Staff – Under the EC Euro 55million support programme, three Internal Audit Staff members were sponsored to attend an international conference of auditors organized by the Institute of Internal Audit (IIA) in Sout Africa from 10 to 13 May 2009. The conference provided an opportunity to the OIA staff members to learn, exchange views and experiences on various internal audit contemporary issues.
- b) Implementation of Audit Software – With support from Partners, the process of implementing the audit software is well advanced. The implementation of audit software (SAP-AIS) formally kicked off on 16 March 2009. The AIS Consultant conducted a training workshop on SAP and AIS Overview during the last week of March 2009 and the first week of April respectively. The blue printing phase was carried out between April and May 2009 with a view to document the internal audit processes and to identify the gap between the AIS solution and the current processes. It is anticipated that the realization phase (configuring the system) will be carried out in June and July 2009. The go-live will take place on 20 July 2009.

647. The OIA will continue to have an independent and objective assurance function guided by a philosophy of adding value in order to improve the operations of the African Union Commission. To this end, OIA will pursue its vision of assisting in the building of an efficient, transparent and accountable Commission.

648. On the basis of Article 70(h) of the AUC Financial Rules and Regulations, the Commission has developed a Draft Audit Charter which was submitted to the PRC Sub Committee on Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Matters for consideration. The Charter is aimed at clearly defining the *purpose, authority and responsibility of the internal audit activity* and setting up the PRC Sub-Committee on Audit Matters (equivalent of Audit Committee) as recommended by the report of the Board of External Auditors and some External Audits by Partners, including the EC.

7. INTEGRATION OF NEPAD

649. It will be noted that this issue is addressed in a separate Progress Report which is submitted to the Policy Organs for consideration.

650. After the appointment of the new Chief Executive Officer in February 2009, a number of other activities were carried out within the Framework of implementation of the Decision of the Assembly on the Integration of NEPAD into the AU Structures, and Processes. In this regard, a study was commissioned. The Consultants have produced an initial report and have undertaken a series of consultations with stakeholders with a view to finalizing the report, namely with the Commission, the NEPAD Steering Committee, the PRC and its NEPAD Sub-Committee. The Commission is of the view that this process should be accelerated and believes that it is necessary to further clarify the integration process within the AU Structures.

651. In this respect, it is recommended that in the light of Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.233 (XII) on the Transformation of the Commission into an Authority, the Algiers recommendation be reviewed and aligned with this new development, so that clarity is made regarding the specific Organ that is to host the NEPAD Programme. In the opinion of the Commission, NEPAD should be integrated into the executive arm of the Union which is the Commission itself.

VI. CONCLUSION

652. This Report has attempted to take stock of the activities carried out by the Commission in the last six months. The Commission takes this opportunity to reiterate its commitment to implement the programmes as well as the decisions taken by the competent organs of the Union. The Strategic Plan now before the present session of the Assembly for adoption, will enable the Commission to move forward on solid foundations thanks to Action Plans which would result in concrete, measurable and assessable realizations that are completed within the set timeframes. However, substantial human, financial and material resources will need to be mobilized for us to translate words into action. We are firmly resolved to do so; and in this regard count as usual on the support of Member States. We also commit to promoting internal good governance through meticulous management of our meagre resources, with the help of the tools of transparency and accountability described in the Report as the new rules for administrative and financial management, the Audit Charter, the Report of the High-Level Panel on the Audit of the African Union and other relevant documents.

653. We are aware that the global economic and financial crisis will indubitably have a negative impact on Member States. We have therefore in recent months engaged fully in international consultations, including those of the G20 in London, and the preparations for the G8 Summit scheduled to hold shortly in Italy, to ensure that the Continent's interests are taken into consideration. The other major event that our Member States should prepare for in the next few months, is the World Summit on Climate Change due to be held in Copenhagen in December 2009. The present Session of the Executive Council will consider in detail the recommendations of the Commission on the African common

position on this crucial issue, as well as on the appropriate system of representation for the Continent, to enable the Assembly to take a decision in full knowledge of the facts.

654. The Report highlights the activities carried out within the framework of the four pillars of the Strategic Plan. The Commission expects from the consideration of this Report, the inputs of Member States in order for clear directives to be formulated on all crucial issues of collective interest, thus making it possible for the Commission to carry out the desired improvements in its implementation of its programmes and activities. Once again, the Commission is convinced that the combined efforts of the different stakeholders will contribute to achieving significant progress in Africa's agenda which focuses essentially on continental integration, the affirmation and protection of Africa's interest and place in the world, and strengthening its role in the international arena.