



DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

FIRST EXTRA-ORDINARY SESSION

OF COMEDAF VI BUREAU

17TH TO 18TH NOVEMBER 2014
YAOUNDE, CAMEROON

REPORT
OF
THE MEETING OF MINISTERS

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The first extra-ordinary session of the Bureau of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF VI) was held in Yaounde, Cameroon from 17th to 18th November 2014. As called for by the Malabo 2014 Summit of the African Union, the purpose of the meeting was to receive names from the five geographic regions of the African Union, to be submitted to the Executive Council Session during the January 2015 Summit, for the election of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Pan African University Council.
2. The Senior Officials met on 17 November to prepare for the meeting of Ministers on 18 November.
3. The following COMEDAF VI Bureau members were represented by honourable ministers: Cameroon, Nigeria and Mauritania. Tanzania was represented by a designated Senior Official. Angola was not represented. See attached list.

II. OPENING SESSION

4. The session began with the singing of the anthem of the Republic of Cameroon followed by opening remarks by the African Union Commissioner in charge of Human Resources, Science and Technology (HRST-AUC), H.E. Dr Martial De-Paul Ikounga, and a rich cultural display.
5. In his opening remarks, the Commissioner expressed appreciation for the Ministers present and the Member States represented. He explained that the extra-ordinary session had only one main purpose, based on the Decision by the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the AU, concerning expediting the establishment of the governing structures of the Pan African University, specifically electing the Chair and Vice Chair of the PAU Council. He further explained that failure to receive names from the COMEDAF VI Bureau members would negatively affect full operationalization of the autonomy of the PAU. The Commissioner also recalled that the Second Decade for Education in Africa will come to an end in 2015. In this regard, the African Strategy for Education should be prepared and submitted to African Union Heads of State and Government. In the same vein, Member States must work together to achieve the common vision of Africa enshrined in Agenda 2063. Finally, he thanked the COMEDAF VI Chair for her commitment and the commitment of the government of Cameroon in ensuring effective implementation of the Decisions of the Malabo Summit concerning the COMEDAF VI session.
6. The President of COMEDAF VI, who was also host to the extra-ordinary meeting, the Minister for Basic Education of Cameroon, H.E. Madame Youssouf Hadija Alim welcomed the Bureau Ministers and appreciated their participation. She commended the AUC Commissioner for his efforts in following up on what was agreed at COMEDAF VI and the decisions of the AU Summit. She stressed on the need to sustain communication flow from the Commission to Ministers, and called on colleague Ministers to actively play their role in championing the common African positions especially within their geographic regions. The honourable

Minister also congratulated the Commissioner for the realization of the Pan African University dream in having the first PAU graduation at PAUSTI in November 2014. She reiterated Cameroon government's commitment in providing the agreed support to PAUGHSS (University of Yaounde II).

7. The draft programme of work was adopted without amendment

III. PRESENTATION OF COMEDAF VI REPORT

8. The COMEDAF VI Rapporteur, honourable Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau Con, Minister of Education of Nigeria, first expressed his appreciation to the host country and to the AU Commission for organising the meeting. He went on to request the Commissioner HRST-AUC to kindly present the report of COMEDAF VI. The Commissioner explained that the report had been submitted to the Summit of the African Union held in Malabo in June 2014, and that the Summit had endorsed the report and its recommendations and taken strategic decisions.

IV. PRESENTATION OF THE MALABO SUMMIT DECISIONS ON THE COMEDAF VI REPORT

9. The HRST Commissioner made a presentation on the decisions of the Malabo Summit concerning the COMEDAF VI report. He explained his eagerness to facilitate implementation of the decisions, and invited Bureau members to identify their role in implementation. Commissioner explained that the role of the AUC was to convene Member States, facilitate articulation of common vision and priorities; spearhead development of strategies and programme frameworks at continental level. The role of Member States was to carry out the actual implementation, and the RECs are to help domesticate continental frameworks in line with expressed priorities in the regions, and monitor implementation in Member States and report to the continental level. He went on to itemise actions that had been taken so far by the AUC in implementing the Decisions. Actions included establishment of the Pan African University High Level Panel to assist with recruitment of senior officers including the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Institute Directors. The same Panel was also used to carry out evaluation of Member States who had applied to host the PAU Rectorate. Other actions included the following:
 - a. Sharing of the Summit Decisions with Member States and Key Partners
 - b. Drafting of Concept Notes, Terms of Reference and implementation instruments for the following:
 - i. Coalition of Partners for Education Development in Africa;
 - ii. End term evaluation of the Second Decade of Education for Africa;
 - iii. Study on teacher training and teacher welfare in the African Education system
 - iv. Development of graduate curriculum using the General History of Africa publications, for PAU and other universities
 - c. Working in collaboration with l'UNESCO in view of the end-term evaluation of the Second Decade for Education in Africa and of Education for All (EFA) objectives, in conjunction with those of the common position on Development in Africa for the post-2015 period and Agenda 2063. In this

regard, the February Conference in Kigali shall be jointly organised by the African Union Commission and UNESCO.

10. The ministers took note of the report. They commended the Commissioner for the progress made and committed to provide the necessary support.

V. PRESENTATION ON THE PAN AFRICAN UNIVERSITY

11. The HRST Commissioner gave an overview of progress in implementation of the PAU. He explained how the calendar of PAU is being streamlined to promote the oneness of the University, and informed the Bureau that South Africa had been selected to host the PAU-Space Institute. He gave the floor to the acting Rector of PAU for a presentation on the University.
The acting Rector observed that PAU calendar was currently undergoing some streamlining to underscore the institution's oneness. He further informed delegates that 54 students of PAUSTI would be receiving degrees jointly awarded by PAU and the host University, JKUAT, Nairobi. He expressed satisfaction with the excellent results recorded by the students. With respect to the student population, he indicated that they were drawn from thirty seven (37) African countries, stressing further that in the last recruitments, particular emphasis was laid on the involvement of more female candidates, thus resulting in 111 female student enrolments out of the overall 311.
12. After the acting Rector's presentation, the Commissioner underscored the central value of PAU as an instrument for demonstrating the partnerships needed for realizing Africa's collective agenda in the areas of human resource development, science, technology, innovation and youth empowerment. He went on to cite the example of the linkages the Commission is creating between the PAU and other University networks for implementing the Science, Technology & Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024) and promoting employability of graduates. He observed that PAU was committed to proposing solutions to problems facing the continent, notably the Ebola crisis, in collaboration with other research institutes. He further said the first graduation of PAU was a symbolic landmark that Africa can achieve what it sets out to do as long as Member States are committed.
13. The Commissioner announced that the President of the AU Commission will personally chair the ceremony to award degrees to the first batch of PAU graduates.
14. With respect to hosting PAU institutes, the Commissioner congratulated all host countries and exhorted them to expedite the procedure for providing dedicated facilities as part of their contribution to PAU.
15. The AU resident Representative in Yaounde drew attention on the challenges in ensuring the financial management of PAUGHSS students from his office. He further stressed the need to rehabilitate the African Centre for Phytosanitary Research and Training (CARFOP) in order to continue to train new generations of

young African who are fully aware of issues that are relevant to the development of the continent.

16. The Commissioner acknowledged the challenges in the management of PAU and reiterated the urgent need for measures to be taken to empower the University, especially through the setting up of essential organs for university governance and the recruitment of requisite staff in order to stop systematic reliance on volunteerism.
17. The President of COMEDAF VI congratulated the Commissioner for all his achievements and underscored the need to attract more female students to PAU. However, she admitted that the management challenges raised were typical of any budding institution.
18. In discussions, the delegates commended the Commission for the progress made so far and expressed support towards ensuring that their countries and regions enhance participation in the PAU.

VI. PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT ON MEETING OF EXPERTS OF THE COMEDAF VI BUREAU

19. The Permanent Secretary of Education of Nigeria presented the report of the COMEDAF VI Senior Officials.
20. The President of COMEDAF VI commended the Experts for the work done and stressed the urgent need for the presentation of candidates for the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the PAU Council.
21. The ministers took note of the report.

VII. RECEIVING THE NAMES FOR ELECTION OF PAU COUNCIL CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

22. The Commissioner for HRST briefed the ministers on the statutory procedure for election of PAU Council Chair and Vice Chair. He underscored the regional rather than national character of the candidates expected and explained that it was important to establish PAU governing structures so that the university could quickly attain its autonomy to progress. He further remarked that failure to have the names at the extra-ordinary COMEDAF VI Bureau session would delay process for at least six months until the June 2015 Summit.
23. The ministers presented names and curriculum vitae of candidates identified from their respective regions as follows:
 - a. Central Africa : - File presented;
 - b. Western Africa: - File presented
 - c. Northern Africa: - File presented, but to be completed within one week;
 - d. Southern Africa: - File not presented;
 - e. Eastern Africa: - File presented.

24. Presented files were sealed and minutes signed.
25. The ministers took note of the absence of the Southern Africa file. They recommended that the Commissioner should send a written reminder to Angola – the representative of the region to COMEDAFVI –, with copies to Education Ministers of each country in the region, stressing the need for submission of the Southern Africa candidate's file to the Commission by 30 November at the latest. They further recommended that if this deadline was not met, the Commission should proceed and submit the available names to the January 2015 summit.
26. The Commissioner expressed appreciation to the ministers.

VIII. DATE END VENUE OF FIRST STC-EST

27. The RHST Commissioner briefed the ministers concerning hosting STC sessions, explaining that AU head-quarters was the default venue. He also outlined some of the responsibilities associated with hosting a Specialised Technical Committee (STC) meeting. The Commissioner further informed the ministers of the strategic value of 2015 since there will be need for decisions to be taken concerning a new Continental Education Strategy and Programme Framework, and to consider the report on the end-term evaluation of the Second Decade of Education for Africa.
28. As no country offered to host the first STC-EST meeting, the meeting shall be held in Addis Ababa at the end of April 2015. The Commission will notify Member States accordingly and request all those who may still be interested to indicate before 15 February 2015.

IX. PRESENTATION AND ADOPTION OF REPORT OF THE COMEDAF VI BUREAU

29. The COMEDAF VI Rapporteur, Honourable Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau Con, Minister of Education of Nigeria presented the report of the meeting, which was adopted as amended.

X. CLOSING SESSION

30. In her closing remarks, the Minister for Basic Education of Cameroon, H.E. Madame Youssouf Hadija Alim expressed satisfaction for participation in the Bureau meeting.
31. The participants commended Minister Youssouf Hadija Alim, for the success of the meeting and for all her efforts in ensuring the effective realisation of COMEDAF projects.
32. The participants adopted a vote of thanks to H.E. Paul Biya, President of Cameroon, for his commitment to education in Africa (See note attached).