

AFRICAN UNION

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PRESS RELEASE N°37/AU SUMMIT

22nd Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly concludes: A summary of key decisions

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 31 January 2014- The 22nd Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Summit holding on the theme: “Agriculture and Food Security” ended Friday 31 January 2014 at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with the adoption of key decisions by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

The following is a summary of decisions made by the Assembly. Full decisions will be posted on the AU website www.au.int in due course:

The Assembly approved the offer of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire to host the African Statistical Training Centre that will be based in Yamoussoukro (Institut Polytechnique Felix HouphouetBoingy), and resolved to allocate adequate resources for the production and use of statistics, in line with the principles of the African Charter on Statistics. This is in pursuit of implementing the African Charter on statistics and the strategy for the harmonisation of statistics in Africa.

Assembly welcomed the establishment by the AU Commission, of a panel of independent experts to assess the status of the operationalization of the African Standby Force and its Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC), as well as the development of proposals for the operationalization of the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC), and requested the Chairperson of the Commission to submit a comprehensive report on the implementation of its Declaration at the next ordinary session in June/July 2014.

Under the discussion on implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Assembly commended the Commission and partners for the efforts in enhancing Africa's visibility in COP.11/UNCCD in Windhoek, Namibia; and renewed its commitment to the Namibian Declaration to enhance the implementation of the UNCCD in Africa in order to address land degradation, desertification, biodiversity loss and effects of drought, and to promote sustainable development on the continent. It endorsed the establishment of an African working group on desertification and sustainable land management, to be convened by the Commission.

While expressing its disappointment that the request by Kenya supported by AU, to the United Nations (UN) Security Council to defer the proceedings initiated against the President and Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya has not yielded the positive result expected; and that

the request by the Union to the UN Security Council to defer the proceedings initiated against the President of the Republic of The Sudan has not been acted upon to date; the Assembly, in its discussions on the implementation of decisions on the International Criminal Court decided that:

- (i) African states parties should comply with African Union Decisions on the ICC and continue to speak with one voice to ensure that the African proposals for amendments to Articles 16 and 27 of the Rome Statute of the ICC are considered by the ASP working Group on amendments as well as by the forthcoming sessions of the Assembly of States Parties (ASP) to the Rome Statute;
- (ii) There is an imperative need for all member states to ensure that they adhere to and articulate commonly agreed positions in line with their obligations under the Constitutive Act of the African Union;
- (iii) The group of African states parties in New York and the African members of the bureau of ASP should follow-up on the implementation of various Decisions of the Assembly on ICC, in collaboration with the Commission and ensure that the African proposals and concerns are properly considered/addressed by the ASP and report to the Assembly through the Commission on actions taken regularly;

Discussions on maternal, new born and child health (MNCH) led to the endorsement of the recommendation of the Chairperson of the Commission on the establishment of an annual award to recognize significant contributions or action of individuals, organisations and governments in Africa towards ending preventable maternal, newborn and child mortality as well as enhancing their survival and well-being; and that the annual award be named “Mama Afrika Award” in honour of Miriam Makeba. The Commission was requested to coordinate the process of investiture.

With regard to Africa’s strategic partnerships, the Assembly welcomed the offer made by the Republic of Cameroon to host the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in May 2014 and welcomed the adoption of the principle of rotation in hosting the TICAD V follow up mechanisms, including the summit, and requested the Chairperson of the Commission to undertake consultations with Member States of the African Union with a view to identifying the host for TICAD VI Summit to be held in Africa in 2018.

In the same vein, the Assembly endorsed the Kuwait Declaration and the Eight Resolutions adopted by the 3rd Africa-Arab Summit and expressed gratitude to the Amir of Kuwait for the initiative to grant concessionary loans to African countries to the tune of one (1) Billion US Dollars, in the coming five years, through the Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development and also to finance investment and its insurance in Africa, with emphasis on infrastructure, to the tune of one (1) Billion US Dollars, through cooperation and coordination with the World Bank and other International Institutions. It welcomed the establishment of an Annual Prize of one (1) Million US Dollar, to be allocated by the State of Kuwait for development research in Africa, under the auspices of the Kuwait Scientific Development Institutions.

The Assembly adopted the 2050 Africa Integrated Maritime (AIM) Strategy plan of Action Plan. It also retained the 2015-2025 decade as the “Decade of African Seas and Oceans”, and the date of 25 July as the African Day of Seas and Oceans. Assembly invited Regional Economic Communities and regional mechanisms to develop and adopt a regional strategy against piracy, armed robbery and other illegal activities committed at sea, consistent with the 2050 AIM Strategy.

While welcoming the fact that more than 10,000 students have received higher and post graduate studies and more than 5,000 doctors from Africa have received continuous medical training (CMT), and that 48 countries are now connected to the Pan Africa E network under the

Africa-India partnership, Assembly requested the Commission to prepare and submit to member states at the January 2015 Assembly Session an action plan for the sustainability of the services of the network.

Assembly endorsed the organization of an extraordinary summit of Heads of State and Governments on the assessment of progress made in the implementation of the 2004 Ouagadougou Declaration and Plan of Action on employment and poverty alleviation, proposed to be held in Burkina Faso this year.

Assembly requested the Commission to work out the modalities, in collaboration with the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and other interested member states including the legal, structural and financial implications relating to the establishment of an African Center for Disease Control and Prevention (ACDCP) and to submit a report in January 2015 to the Assembly.

On Ghana's proposal for the adoption of the Encyclopaedia Africana Project (EAP) by the African Union; Assembly called upon the Commission in consultation with the secretariat of the Encyclopaedia Africana, to submit at the next Summit proposals for sustainable financing of the project, including strategies for making it financially self-reliant.

The Assembly deliberated on the issue of peace and security on the continent. In this regard, it expressed satisfaction at the continued progress in the consolidation of peace and reconciliation in The Comoros, in Liberia and in Côte d'Ivoire; It welcomed the conclusion of the process of transition and restoration of constitutional order in Madagascar; the conduct of legislative elections in Guinea on 26 September 2013; the positive developments in the situation in Tunisia and the commitment of the various Tunisian stakeholders to foster consensus and dialogue with a view to bringing the on-going transition to a successful conclusion; developments in Mali, particularly the conduct of two rounds of presidential election on 28 July and 11 August 2013; the progress that has continued to be recorded in Somalia; and the advances made in the implementation of the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA). It expressed satisfaction at the positive developments in the situation in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) following the end of the M23 rebellion and the signing in Nairobi on 12 December 2013, of Declarations by the DRC Government and the M23; and noted with satisfaction the continued progress in the relations between The Sudan and South Sudan, and this, within the framework of the Cooperation Agreements signed between the two countries in Addis Ababa, in September 2012.

However the Assembly expressed its concern and made recommendations on the eruption on 15 December 2013 of violent conflict in South Sudan and the grave consequences inherent in this situation for both the country itself and the region at large; and at the situation in the Central African Republic. It underscored the need for more sustained effort to overcome the difficulties facing the peace process between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and to normalize the relations between Djibouti and Eritrea, reaffirmed its support for the Libyan government, expressed its solidarity with the Egyptian people and strongly condemned the acts of terrorism being perpetrated in the country.

While discussing the report of the Committee of Ten on UN Security Council Reform, the Assembly requested the committee to endeavour to reach out at the highest political levels for the purpose of garnering and galvanizing the necessary political will in support of the African Common position; and reiterated its call for Africa to continue to speak with one voice and cohesively on all issues relating to the UN Security Council reform and related matters.

The Assembly adopted the Common African Position on the Post 2015 Development Agenda; requested the high level committee that was formed to sensitize and coordinate the activities of African leaders and members of the High Level Panel as well as build regional and inter-continental alliances on the Common African Position on the post 2015 Development Agenda, to meet as soon as possible to launch the Common African Position in Ndjamena, Chad.

On African development goals especially in the post 2015 period, the Assembly endorsed the articulation of the African development goals consistent with the existing continental frameworks and to serve as milestones for tracking and monitoring progress towards Agenda 2063.

In recognizing that boosting intra-African trade, industrial development and economic integration are the most viable means for African countries to achieve structural transformation and sustainable development, while discussing the report of the high level African Trade Committee on Trade Issues, the Assembly urged Member States and Regional Economic Communities to consider carefully the impact of the negotiations of bilateral and multilateral trade agreements on the African integration agenda, so that they do not compromise the African trade integration process and undermine the vision and scope of the Abuja Treaty. It also mandated the Ministers of Trade to hold an extra ordinary session to consider and adopt a work plan, negotiating modalities and principles towards the effective launch of the CFTA negotiations in 2015 to be presented through the High Level Committee on Trade to the next Summit meeting in June 2014.

On the biennial joint AU/WHO conference of the AU Ministers of Health, the Assembly called upon member states, RECs, regional health organizations and other stakeholders to utilize the biennial meetings to strengthen coordination and create synergies.

The Assembly appointed the ten members of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union for a two year term as follows:

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| 1. | Burundi | Central Region |
| 2. | Chad | Central Region |
| 3. | Ethiopia | Eastern Region |
| 4. | Tanzania | Eastern Region |
| 5. | Libya | Northern Region |
| 6. | Namibia | Southern Region |
| 7. | South Africa | Southern Region |
| 8. | Gambia | Western Region |
| 9. | Guinea | Western Region |
| 10. | Niger | Western Region. |

While discussing the report of the Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC) on NEPAD, Assembly reinforced the critical need for financial investments and leveraging public private sector partnerships and in particular welcomed the Africa 50 investment vehicle by the African development Bank to mobilise adequate funds for infrastructure developments.

Assembly decided that the 23rd session of the Assembly of the African Union will be held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea from 26-27 June this year, preceded by meetings of the PRC and the Executive Council from 21-21 June and 23-24 June respectively.

Following deliberations of the Assembly, the large conference hall at the African Union Commission has been renamed Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Conference Hall.

Assembly encouraged the Commission to pursue its efforts in enlisting the inputs into Agenda 2063 of all Africans and the Diaspora and engage member states to submit their written inputs before the end of April 2014.

On the democratic transition in Tunisia, Assembly expressed its satisfaction with the establishment of a new government of highly qualified technocrats with no affiliation to any political party, mainly tasked with securing the continuation of the democratic process.

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