



Press Release N°19/2017

## The Standing Committee of the 2nd ECOSOCC Permanent General Assembly Convenes its 5<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session in Cairo

**Cairo- Egypt- 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2017:** The Standing Committee of the 2<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of the Economic, Social, and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) of the African Union (AU), opened its 5<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March, at Fairmont Nile City Hotel, in Cairo, Egypt.



Welcoming the participants, Mr. Joseph Chilengi, Presiding Officer of the ECOSOCC, highlighted in his opening remarks that ECOSOCC has changed the orientation of Africans toward the African Union as it is now making the Union people centre by enabling civil society organization to participate in it decision making.

Commending the team work spirit of the members, he said the second assembly after ten years has been able to develop an elaborate strategic plan without hiring a consultant that would have cost millions of dollars. Ascribing the success of the council to team work, he therefore urged the standing committee members continue to work together as one.

Ag. Director CIDO, Mr. Ahmed El Basheer, in his opening remarks stated that ECOSOCC has been able to achieve its aim by bring the union closer to the people. He said that this meeting is very important so as to identify the challenges ECOSOCC faced and look for possible solutions in addressing them. He said the visibility of ECOSOCC is still a major challenge and also the financial aspect but in a broader picture he is satisfied with the major achievements such as the development of the strategic plan, the establishment of the various clusters and the wider civil society engagement.

The Ag. Director recognized the tremendous effort of the PO and his team in driving the agenda/mandate of ECOSOCC in ensuring that the CSO are in a better position to make decision of ECOSOCC. He said the agenda items are very important and he seeks the indulgence of the team to work judiciously in adopting the various working document for presentation to the GA. He concluded by wishing the team a fruitful meeting.

Organized by the Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO) of the African Union Commission, the 5<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session took place ahead of the ECOSOCC General Assembly Meeting scheduled for March 2017 and considered what needs to be achieved prior to the GA Meeting.

Specifically, the Session considered a number of issues and reports on its agenda including: reports on AU Summits 2015 -2017, update on international cooperation and partnership, report on clusters and ECOSOCC National Chapters Operationalization, draft framework for National ECOSOCC Chapters, draft report for General Assembly/ financial reports, and update on ECOSOCC Communication Strategy.

The Session also deliberated on the legal issues relating to ECOSOCC and GA, including update on relocation process for ECOSOCC Secretariat electoral guideline/legal guidance, reports of the Credentials Committee meeting of December 2016 and February 2017, accreditation process of civil society organization to AU and the preparations for upcoming GA Meeting.

The Standing Committee is the executive organ of the ECOSOCC empowered by the statutes for coordinating the work of the ECOSOCC, follows up implementation of the Code of Ethics and conduct developed for CSOs, and for preparing and submitting annual reports to the Assembly of the Union.

The Report of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Standing Committee will be presented for adoption to the upcoming Meeting of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ECOSOCC General Assembly to be held in March 2017.

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