



PRESS RELEASE

Ministers of African Union Member States discuss prospect of Education, Science and Technology in the continent in light of Agenda 2063

Cairo, Egypt - 23 October 2017 – African Union (AU) Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology, H.E. Prof. Sarah Anyang Agbor, and Chair of the meeting, H.E. Prof. Dr. Khaled Abd El-Ghaffar, Minister of Higher Education & Scientific Research of Egypt opened, today, the Ministerial Session of the Second Ordinary Session for the Specialized Technical Committee on Education, Science and Technology (STC-EST-2) in Cairo, Egypt. The opening of STC-EST-2 was graced with the presence of H.E. Eng. Sherif Ismail, Prime Minister of Egypt. The meeting reviewed the implementation progress of the instruments and decisions adopted during 2016 and 2017 Heads of States Summits as it relates to Education, Science and Technology.

The meeting considered the draft statutes of African Space Agency, the African Union International Centre for Girls and Women's Education in Africa (AU/CIEFFA) in order to submit them to the next STC on Justice and Legal Affairs and subsequently to the January 2018 Summit. Outlining progress made within the last two years, H.E. Prof. Sarah Agbor highlighted among others: development of a Pan-African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Framework (PAQAF); Observance of African School Feeding Day on the 1st of March every year by Member States of the African Union; Study conducted on the Training, Working and Living Conditions of Teachers in Member States when implemented will raise the quality of education and the professional status of teachers in Africa; Strengthening the human resources for the International Centre for the Education of Girls and Women in Africa (AU/CIEFFA); Appointment of PAU Senate and the PAU Institute Boards and the Council, Conducting Research soon on the theme Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture on problem areas relevant to the continent; and Development of Joint Africa-EU Cooperation on Climate Change and Sustainable Energy and was endorsed.

Looking ahead, the Commissioner said: "For an effective implementation of our Continental Strategies, towards an integrated and prosperous continent requires: Inclusion of the wider communities, particularly the under-represented groups among women and youth". She also added "Linking research agenda to Agenda 2063 through implementation of STISA and promotion of intra-African collaboration will

help to nurture creative ecosystems for realizing advances in scientific discoveries and new technologies to solve African problems, while optimizing use of Africa's resources through value chain development.”

In his welcoming remarks, H.E. Prof. Dr. Khaled Abd El-Ghaffar, Minister of Higher Education & Scientific Research of Egypt noted that Africa is facing challenges in social and economic development, unemployment, poverty and misuse of environmental resources among others. To alleviate these problems, he said “Science, technology and innovation play a great role to bring about sustainable development and the reorientation of Africa's capacities and resources towards the building of Africa that we want.” He reaffirmed Egypt's commitment to take necessary steps in the implementation of the initiatives and strategies by promoting regional integration and mobility.

Senior Officials meeting was held on 21 and 22 October 2017 to prepare for the Ministerial Sessions. The Senior Officials discussed and recommended to the Ministers for adoption the following draft Statutes: (i) draft statute for the African Space Agency, (ii) Draft Statutes for AU CIEFFA1, (iii) Pan-African University Council Members Emoluments and (iv) the reports from the parallel sessions on education, and science and technology.

The STC-EST-2 is jointly organized by African Union, Department of Human Resources, Science & Technology and the Arab Republic of Egypt, notably the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. The meeting brought together Ministers and Experts in the field of Education, Science and Technology, representatives from the Regional Economic Communities, and key development partners.

The meeting elected a new Bureau, STC-EST-3, chaired by Republic of Sudan that subsequently offered to host the STC-EST-3.

The AU Agenda 2063 recognizes Science and Technology and Innovation (STI) as – multi-functional tools and enablers for achieving continental development goals. The agenda further emphasizes that Africa's sustained growth, competitiveness and economic transformation requires sustained investment in new technologies and continuous innovation in areas such as agriculture, clean energy, education and health. This will be realized through accelerating Africa's transition to an innovation led knowledge based economy by STISA-2024 which is designed to meet the knowledge technology and innovation demands in various AU economic and social sector development frameworks. In light of this, we are reminded of President Kwame Nkrumah's, First speech at the Foundation Summit of the Organization of African Unity in Addis Ababa on 24 May 1963, “...It is within the possibility of science and technology to make even the Sahara bloom into a vast field with verdant vegetation for agricultural and industrial developments”.

For further information, please visit:

<https://au.int/en/newsevents/20171021/second-ordinary-session-specialized-technical-committee-meeting-education>

For additional information on the STC-EST-2, please contact:

Dr. Gilles Ogandaga Ndiaye; Senior Academic and Student Affairs Officer, Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology, AU Commission; E-mail: OgandagaG@africa-union.org

Media contact and interview:

Mrs. Rahel Akalewold, Directorate of Information and Communication, AU Commission; E-mail: rahela@africa-union.org

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: DIC@africa-union.org | Website: www.au.int | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

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