



PRESS RELEASE

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Member States and RECs Help Shape AU Diaspora Agenda for 2018

Midrand, 30 November 2017 – The Citizens and Diaspora Directorate of the African Union Commission (CIDO) launched an ambitious continental agenda for the 2018 program year following wide-ranging consultations on the AU Diaspora Initiative with member states, Regional Economic Communities and representatives of diaspora organizations held in Midrand, South Africa from 25-30 November 2017.

The working sessions involved the inaugural meeting of the Member State Working Group on Diaspora, a task force established by member states during the 1st Continental Diaspora Focal Point Workshop held in Cairo, Egypt in December 2016. The Working Group is composed of Algeria, Egypt, Zambia, Burundi, Sudan and Liberia, and was formed to provide a direct operational link with the AU Commission on the implementation of the AU Diaspora Initiative. The six member states were joined by representatives of four diaspora organizations: the African Foundation for Development (AFFORD) based in the UK, the Diaspora African Forum (DAF) based in Ghana. Two diaspora youth organizations, ADYFE and WySly, based in Austria and the Cote d'Ivoire respectively, also participated in the context of the AU Theme of the Year: Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investment in the Youth.

The member state meeting was followed by a consultative session with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as part of the ongoing effort towards the harmonization of diaspora policy at the national, regional and continental level; which is a key component of the action plan developed at the Continental Forum in Cairo.

The working sessions assessed the progress of implementation of the action plan developed from the Cairo meeting; provided proposals for diaspora participation in the African Union with particular emphasis on diaspora youth; and developed recommendations for optimizing the coordination between member states, RECs and the AU Commission in diaspora engagement.

The work accomplished during the consultations provided the basis for a continental plan of action for 2018 to be implemented by CIDO within the context of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

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