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**Directorate of Information and Communication**

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### **Stakeholder Coordination Meeting of the ECOSOCC stresses on the positive contribution of CSOs in supporting Agenda 2063**



**17 – 18 December – Accra, Ghana –** Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) Ambassadors and representatives from nineteen (19) African Countries and members of ECOSOCC as well as representatives from Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Diaspora convened in Accra, Ghana for 2 days of fruitful discussions. The Stakeholder

Coordination forum provided an opportunity to get better acquainted with the structure and functionality of ECOSOCC and Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO), specifically focusing on lessons learned and best practices as well as recommendations for future. For Member State representatives, the meeting also aimed to draw out the specific roles the stakeholders play in the area of civil society interaction with the African Union and its organs including ECOSOCC.

Speaking on behalf of H.E the AUC Chairperson during the opening ceremony, Mr. Ahmed El-Basheer, CIDO Director and Head of ECOSOCC Secretariat reiterated his appreciation to the participants for their keen interest in supporting the AU and its organs especially the ECOSOCC in the conception and implementation of activities. “We consider you as key stakeholders in ECOSOCC programmes and so fostering an open space for dialogue is important. This is why we regularly update the Permanent Representatives Committee on ECOSOCC activities, as well as seek feedback from the Committee for better engagement”, he said.

In his remarks Mr Richard Ssewakiryanga, the outgoing Presiding Officer of ECOSOCC, speaking on behalf of the New Presiding Officer Mr Abozer Elligai, highlighted the unique nature of ECOSOCC and stressed on the positive contribution of CSOs in supporting Agenda 2063. He emphasized the importance of allowing Civil Society Organizations in shaping the future of Africa impressing upon the participants that the founding fathers of the African Union were all a part of different Civil Society Organizations.

Speaking on behalf of PRC Bureau, Ambassador of South Africa, H.E. Mr. Ndumiso Ntshinga called on the new ECOSOCC General Assembly members to head straight into

work. “You are part of a very important organ in Africa. Your voice and expertise need to come out to the fore if the work of the African Union for the continent is to be of the quality that you as civil society, want it”, he remarked. H.E Ntshinga further asked all participants to use the retreat as a time of reflection. “During this retreat let us understand the role played by CIDO, the challenges and the positives that the Secretariat has faced in the execution of ECOSOCC’s programmes”, he said.

Discussions were rounded off with contributions from CSOs, ECOSOCC members and member States delegates on how to enhance an effective working relationship between ECOSOCC and PRC going forward. The delegates emphasized the importance of working collaboratively and creating synergies towards one mutual goal. Furthermore, it was highlighted that an open channel of communication needs to be fostered and encouraged; this could be facilitated through quarterly reports or an annual meeting between both sides. In addition, it was emphasized that ECOSOCC needs to work further on empirical writings and publications of findings and share them with Member States, respectively. Overall the importance of building a more collaborative relationship with African Union member states to ensure transparency, clarity and confidence was emphasized.

This PRC Retreat was preceded by an inception meeting on the in-depth study on the effectiveness and efficiency of the ECOSOCC. The meeting’s objectives were to discuss the organ’s performances, pitfalls, successes and how to get ECOSOCC to do better in advising member states and the African Union.

**For further information contact**

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