



Press Release

Morocco hosts CIDO Consultative Meeting on African Union Theme of the Year, “Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa”



Casablanca, Morocco, 6 August 2019: In line with the African Union(AU) theme of the Year 2019 "Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons : towards durable solutions to forced displacement in Africa" 2019, the AU Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO) in partnership with the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) have held a Consultative Meeting in Casablanca, Morocco on the Popularization of the AU theme of the year. The consultation served to propose solutions



to help address the root causes of the forced displacement and refugee movements, as well as bolster the capacity of civil society to engage governments and other stakeholders in this regard.

This meeting brought together Civil Society Organisations(CSOs) from ECOSOCC,

representatives of Regional Economic Communities(RECS), Civil Society organizations from Morocco and Staff of the AUC.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Jalel Chelba, Head of the Civil Society Division within CIDO, stressed the critical role that African civil society continues to play in the issues being addressed by the theme of the year; and called on them to increase their efforts to identify areas of support and coordination with member state governments in order to enact sustainable solutions to the issue.

Out of the estimated 68 million forcibly displaced persons in the world, over one third are recorded to be in Africa; consisting 6.3 million refugees and asylum-seekers and 14.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) due to multiple complex circumstances including conflicts, poor governance, human rights violations, environmental degradation, adverse effects of climate change and natural disasters.

In her opening remarks, the Deputy Mayor of Casablanca in charge of International Cooperation Mme Hakim Fasly emphasized the need to continue to develop a coordination mechanism among stakeholders across the national, regional and continental levels to strengthen communication and enhance mutual collaboration and cooperation in the popularization of the theme of the year.

The background to the AU 2009 theme of the year was presented by Mr Wafula Renny Mike – Policy Officer- who represented the Department of Political Affairs at the meeting. He noted that the theme of the year was a deliberate effort by African leaders to address rootcauses and achieve durable solutions to challenges of forced displacement in the continent. He noted that forced displacement remains a big challenge to the attainment of the aspirations of Agenda 2063. The AU will also commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the 1969 OAU Convention on Refugees and the 10th Anniversary of the 2009 AU Convention on IDPs (Kampala Convention). The impact of the theme of the year will be reflected in three major areas, namely longlasting peace and stability in the continent, effective protection and assistance of the displaced populations and the operationalization of Africa's new humanitarian architecture, including the African Humanitarian Agency to be launched in 2020.

The 2-day meeting concluded with the development of policy proposals to enhance the role of civil society in the management of forced displacement and refugee movements on the continent.

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