



DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

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Africa's Infrastructure Ministers Validate Africa's Infrastructure Priorities for 2021-2030

Africa's infrastructure Ministers convened virtually to discuss the Continent's infrastructure priorities for 2021-2030 and to validate the outcome of the first extraordinary expert group meeting of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Transport, Intercontinental and Interregional Infrastructures, Energy and Tourism (STC-TTIIET) held on December 14, 2021. A large number of African Ministers and institutions actively participated. The AU High Representative for Infrastructure Development, Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga, also addressed the audience.

The Ministerial meeting has looked into the reports of the STC-TTIIET experts' meeting and the Bureau of the STC TTIIET, the priority list of projects for PIDA PAP2, the roadmap, policy, and governance structure of the African Single Electricity Market (AfSEM), the implementation of the COVID-19 Emergency Action Plan for Resilience and Recovery and the African Road Safety Action plan of the Decade 2021-2030.

In his opening remarks, Minister of Electricity & Renewable Energy of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Chair of the STC TTIIET, H.E. Dr. Mohamed Shaker El Markabi acknowledged that the determination of the African Union Commission and stakeholders to move Africa's infrastructure development agenda forward despite the challenges posed by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The Chair further highlighted that infrastructure development is key for the attainment of Africa's development aspirations captured by Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the priorities lined up for the next decade speak to these continental and global goals.

H.E. Dr. Amani Abou-Zeid, African Union Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, emphasised the importance of infrastructure in Africa in the next decade as the backbone to the realisation of the much-needed integration and trade facilitation in the continent.

According to AU Commissioner, post-COVID-19 recovery requires the fast-tracking of Africa's infrastructure development to improve resilience and improve livelihoods and economies. "The COVID-19 pandemic also accelerated digitalisation, exposed the gaps in energy in rural areas and highlighted the need to develop infrastructure that is smart, inclusive and sustainable", said Dr. Abou-Zeid.

The AU Commissioner seized the opportunity to remind the Committee of the bottom-up participatory approach and regional consultations conducted leading to preparation of the PIDA PAP2 and the AfSEM, calling on the AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Stakeholders to synergize efforts towards the realizations of Africa's infrastructure development ambitions.

"Annually, we have an infrastructure financing gap of between \$60 -\$90 billion. We need effective and efficient plans to mobilize resources to fund the identified PIDA projects. The long-term solution in my view is the creation of an Africa Continental Infrastructure Fund under the auspices of the AU to pool resources. Such a fund would focus on a combination of domestic sources and private sector financiers", said the Rt. Hon. Raila Odinga, the AU High Representative for Infrastructure Development.

Infrastructure & Partnerships Division Manager at the African Development Bank(AfDB), Mike Salawou recalled that the bank has been the major financier of infrastructure projects in Africa by availing 7bln USD in the past ten years. "We have been actively supporting the first phase of PIDA and we will continue to support PIDA PAP2, recognizing the long-term effect it will have to spur economic advancement for the continent".

Mr. William Lugemwa, Director of Private Sector Development and Finance Division at the UNECA, also appeals for ownership of the PIDA PAP2 projects, saying "African leadership from the highest political level is critical for the successful implementation of PIDA PAP2".

In her closing remarks, AU Commissioner Dr Abou-Zeid thanked Member States, Regional Economic Communities, PIDA Institutions, and partners for their active participation and relentless efforts exerted throughout the processes of PIDA PAP2, the PIDA PAP2 guiding documents, and AfSEM policy documents.

The recommendations and declarations validated by the Ministerial meeting of the STC-TTIIET will be presented to the Assembly of the African Union Heads of States and Government for adoption at the African Union Summit in February 2021.

About the Specialized Technical Committees (STCs)

The Specialized Technical Committees (STCs), which constitute an important technical organ of the AU, was established under Article 25 of the African Economic Community Treaty (the Abuja Treaty). With the transformation of the OAU into the AU, the STCs were carried over by the Constitutive Act of the African Union under Articles 14 to 16.

The STCs are expected to work in close collaboration with the various departments of the AUC to provide well-informed inputs in their areas of specialization to the work of the AU Executive Council. They should also, be involved in monitoring development programs implementation by the AUC and Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

Therefore, the early operationalization of the STCs becomes imperative, given the overall objective of accelerating continental integration and the importance attached to the effective implementation of programmes and projects of the Union. To this end, the Assembly of the Union adopted The Decision: Assembly/AU/Dec.227 (XII) reconfiguring the existing STCs and created one on Transport, Intercontinental and Interregional Infrastructures, Energy and Tourism (STC-TIIET). The STC held its maiden meeting in the Republic of Togo in March 2017, and meets on a biennial basis.

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