

ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COUNCIL (ECOSOCC)

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ECOSOCC dates media on kick off of its 20th anniversary commemoration activities

The African Union Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), hosted a Press Briefing, 19th March 2024 to officially present the Commemoration of the African Union's Economic, Social, and Cultural Council Twentieth Anniversary #ECOSOCC20.

Established in July 2004, ECOSOCC has been integral in integrating civil society into the African Union's decision-making processes. Marking its 20th anniversary, ECOSOCC symbolizes two decades of commitment in promoting pan African values and spearheading socio-economic and cultural development across Africa.

The briefing covered ECOSOCC's journey and achievements in its 20 years; the launch of #ECOSOCC20 initiatives and a call for the registration plus an interactive panel discussion on ECOSOCC and its engagement with stakeholders.

The panel included Mr. Khalid Boudali, ECOSOCC Presiding Officer, Mr. William Carew, Head of Secretariat and Mr. Kyeretwie Osei, Head of Programs.

Mr. Boudali implored the media to work closely with ECOSOCC and by extension the AU, to convey positive messages about how the Organ could move forward to transform the African continent.

"ECOSOCC's journey underscores the importance of partnership, dialogue, and collaboration. It is through our united efforts that we can continue to break new ground and address the challenges that face our continent," he said.

Mr. Carew shared the historical perspective of ECOSOCC and also provided an overview of #ECOSOCC20 while Mr. Osei shared the core objectives, the planned ECOSOCC flagship Commemorative activities, key initiatives and how CSOs, including the media could be involved in the commemoration activities.

In closing the media briefing, Mr. Richard Ssewakiryanga, former ECOSOCC Presiding Officer, noted that while ECOSOCC is a platform for Civil Society Organizations in Africa, it is also a representation of the diversity of CSOs such as cultural institutions, NGOs, social enterprises, academia, religious organizations and much more.

"This is what defines the identity of ECOSOCC – the richness and diversity of membership. We need to cherish this diversity and promote constructive engagement

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between the states and civil society organizations. The role of national chapters in ECOSOCC is therefore very essential in ensuring inclusion and diversity,” he said. “As we look ahead, let us reaffirm our commitment to strengthening ECOSOCC and advancing its mission. Africa remains an ongoing experiment in building a future that works for all its citizens. Through collective action and engagement, we can ensure that ECOSOCC continues to be a vital platform for civil society across our continent.”

The establishment of ECOSOCC in July 2004 was a culmination of several decisions to actively engage civil society in the processes and work of both the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and its successor, the AU particularly with regard to Africa’s integration and development. The principle of ECOSOCC is to facilitate effective interface between AU member states and their people, through partnership and engagement with African CSOs.

The 20th anniversary of ECOSOCC further coincides with the roll-out of the Second Ten Years Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063. Recalling the vision of the African Union that of: “An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena,” the commemoration is timely to reinstate the African Citizenry at the centre of the continental development agenda.

The commemoration also marks an era of unprecedented progress; during the first quarter of 2024, significant progress has been made in reviewing ECOSOCC’s legal instruments and once adopted; will signify a rebirth of the Organ fully equipped to meet the expectations of both the African Union and the African Citizenry.

2024 also marks the roll-out of the much awaited ECOSOCC National Chapters in AU member states and the increasing importance of ECOSOCC in light with the adoption of the AU Harmonized Accreditation Mechanism.

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About ECOSOCC

The Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) was established in July 2004 as an Advisory Organ composed of different social and professional groups of AU Member States. The mandate of ECOSOCC is to contribute, through advice, to the effective translation of the objectives, principles and policies of the African Union into concrete programmes, as well as the evaluation of these programmes.

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