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AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION HOSTS REGIONAL CONSULTATION TO VALIDATE THE DRAFT AFRICA COMMON POSITION FOR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION



The African Union Commission (AUC) successfully hosted the Regional Consultation on the Africa Common Position for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) on June 2, 2025, in Geneva, Switzerland. Organised on the sideline of the Global Platform2025 (GP2025) for DRR, the event brought together high-level delegations from African Union Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and key development partners in a collaborative effort to refine and strengthen Africa's stance ahead of the Global Platform for DRR high level segment during the week.

The African Common Position outlined the key priority areas and commitments of African Member States to contribute to reduced disaster losses and ensure risk informed development based on the unique context of the continent, and guided by the Programme of Action, the Windhoek Declaration, as well as other relevant AU Decisions.

The session was chaired by Hon. Natangwe Paulus Lithete, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Industrialisation, Mines and Energy of the Republic of Namibia, alongside notable speakers including the AU Commission and UNDRR.

In his address at the Africa Day special session, Hon. Lithete expressed pride in Namibia's role as Chair of the Africa Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction Bureau during this critical juncture. "It is my honour to welcome you all to this important meeting," he stated, emphasizing the significance of the gathering in shaping Africa's collective response to disaster risk reduction.

While recognising the African Union Commission and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction for their efforts in organizing the event, he highlighted the inclusive, member state led consultation process that guided the development of the draft Africa Common Position, which reflects a shared vision and continental priorities.

"I am pleased to confirm that the draft Africa Common Position is fully aligned with the Windhoek Declaration," Hon. Ithete noted. "It ensures that African delegates speak with one voice at GP2025, amplifying our common concerns and ambitions on the global stage." Recalling the challenges facing the continent on increasing disasters, he encouraged Member States to mobilise local resources to DRR programmes.

The draft common position aims to facilitate effective implementation of the Windhoek Declaration and the outcomes of GP2025, advancing commitments under the Sendai Framework and contributing to sustainable development across Africa.

Dr. Jihane El Gaouzi, Head of the Sustainable Environment Division at AUC, expressed her gratitude for the robust participation of all stakeholders, emphasizing the collective commitment to building resilience and reducing disaster risk across the continent. "This consultation marks a pivotal moment for Africa as we unite to address the growing threats posed by disasters. Our shared determination to save lives and protect our economies is evident in the mobilization of our Member States and RECs," she stated.

Despite significant strides in disaster risk management, Africa continues to face unprecedented vulnerabilities to both natural and human-induced disasters. Dr. El Gaouzi highlighted the importance of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Programme of Action guiding its implementation, which have been instrumental in shaping Africa's response to these challenges.

The consultation served as a platform to review the Draft Africa Common Position, which incorporates feedback gathered from a recent survey distributed to Member States. This draft reflects the collective experiences and aspirations of African nations and is rooted in the commitments established in the Windhoek Declaration, adopted at the 9th Africa Regional Platform and the 8th High-Level Meeting on DRR in October 2024.

In his remarks Amjad Abbashar, Chief, UNDRR Regional Office for Africa said "While the draft Africa Common Position to the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction 2025 highlights significant progress, it is crucial to acknowledge that Africa remains highly vulnerable to natural hazards. Droughts and floods account for over 90% of disasters on the continent, underscoring the urgent need for enhanced resilience and preparedness."

Addressing the challenges outlined on the draft Africa Common Position, he highlighted the issue of low public investment and limited private sector engagement in DRR financing, and limited risk knowledge and disaggregated data for risk-informed development and investment.

"We have only 5 years left till the end of the Sendai Framework. Therefore, the ACP priorities and the Windhoek declaration must be implemented with a sense of urgency

if the continent is to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, he added.

The regional consultation aims at providing an opportunity for African delegates to familiarize themselves with the key findings of the Global Assessment Report 2025 and come up with a unified voice.

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