

AFRICAN UNION

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UNION AFRICAINE

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**STATEMENT OF DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON, H. E. ERASTUS
MWENCHA, ON THE OCCASION OF THE HANDING- OVER OF THE UN
CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME: DIAGNOSIS AND WORK
PROGRAMME OF RCM-AFRICA CLUSTERS**

- UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA,
- COMMISSIONERS OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION,
- DEPUTY EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA,
- HEADS OF UN ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES IN ADDIS ABABA,
- LADIES AND GENTLEMAN,

IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE, AND INDEED, WITH A SENSE OF SATISFACTION, THAT I WELCOME YOU ALL TO THE HEADQUARTERS OF THE AFRICAN UNION ON THE AUSPICIOUS OCCASION OF THE HANDING-OVER OF THE FIRST-EVER COMPREHENSIVE CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME

INSPIRED BY THE UN/AU TEN YEAR CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME , TYCBP, AND WHICH SETS OUT COMMITMENTS OF SUPPORT BY THE UN FAMILY, BASED PRINCIPALLY ON THE CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDS OF THE AU COMMISSION AS DEFINED BY THE AU COMMISSION ITSELF .

I WANT TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION TO THE UN UNDER SECRETARY GENERAL AND ECA EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, MY FRIEND AND BROTHER, ABDOULIE JANNEH, FOR THE LEADERSHIP WHICH HE PROVIDED THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS,

AND, INDEED, TO THE WHOLE OF THE UN SYSTEM ,FOR THEIR IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE ELABORATION OF THIS REPORT, COMPRISING A NEEDS-

ASSESSMENT OR DIAGNOSIS OF THE AU COMMISSION, AND A WORK PROGRAMME OF THE RCM CLUSTERS, WHICH HAS JUST BEEN HANDED OVER TO THE AU COMMISSION.

THIS REPORT IS, AS WE KNOW, THE RESULT OF MUCH HARD WORK, PERSEVERANCE, ON BOTH THE SIDE OF THE UN, AND THE AU; AND IS A DEMONSTRATION OF WHAT REAL COMMITMENT AND PALPABLE COLLABORATION BETWEEN OUR TWO SYSTEMS CAN ACHIEVE.

I WOULD LIKE TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS MY APPRECIATION, ALSO, TO THE RCM JOINT SECRETARIAT, COMPRISING REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH THE AU AND THE UN, WHO SHEPHERDED THE PROCESS FROM BEGINNING TO END.

WE BELIEVE THAT IF WE HAVE COME THIS FAR, IT IS DUE IN NO SMALL MEASURE TO A CHANGE IN THE WAY WE HAVE DECIDED TO CONDUCT OUR BUSINESS IN THE REGIONAL COORDINATION MECHANISM, OR RCM, SINCE THE SESSION HELD IN NOVEMBER,2010,

AND ESPECIALLY AFTER THE SUBMISSION AT THAT FORUM OF THE RESULTS OF THE FIRST TRIENNIAL REVIEW OF THE TYCBP. INDEED, THIS SESSION MARKED A MAJOR TURNING POINT IN THE ANNALS OF THE RCM, AND CULMINATED IN THE MAKING OF A NUMBER OF VERY PERTINENT OBSERVATIONS AND THE ADOPTION OF SOME VERY CRITICAL RECOMMENDATIONS.

ONE OF THESE RECOMMENDATIONS WAS THAT A COMPREHENSIVE CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME, BASED ON THE STRATEGIC PLAN AND PRIORITIES OF THE AU COMMISSION, SHOULD BE ELABORATED.

AN IMPORTANT OBSERVATION THAT WAS ALSO MADE WAS THAT THE MUCH - SOUGHT SUCCESS IN ELABORATING SUCH A COMPREHENSIVE CAPACITY BUILDING REPORT HAD PROVED ELUSIVE, NOT LEAST BECAUSE OF THE ABSENCE OF A SENSE OF OWNERSHIP REGARDING THE TYCBP PROCESS ON THE PART OF THE AU COMMISSION .

TO OUR MIND, THEREFORE, THE SUCCESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TYCBP, THROUGH THE ELABORATION OF A COMPREHENSIVE CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMME , SUCH AS WE HAVE LAUNCHED TODAY, IS

INEXTRICABLY LINKED TO THE CULTIVATION OF A REAL SENSE OF OWNERSHIP BY THE AU COMMISSION.

I WISH TO RECALL IN THIS REGARD, THAT THE AU COMMISSION, AWARE AS IT WAS OF THIS CRUCIAL LINK BETWEEN SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION AND OWNERSHIP, HAS MOVED SWIFTLY AND DECISIVELY TO MEET THE CHALLENGE OF ASSUMING OWNERSHIP OF THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING THE TYCBP.

IT HAS DONE THIS IN A NUMBER OF WAYS THAT ARE MORE CONCRETE THAN SYMBOLIC, INCLUDING THE DESIGNATION OF A FOCAL POINT FOR THE TYCBP IN THE COMMISSION AND THE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF A DEDICATED TEAM OF AU STAFF IN THE RUNNING OF THE RCM SECRETARIAT, WHICH STARTED FUNCTIONING AS A JOINT SECRETARIAT IN 2011, AND UNDER WHOSE JOINT AUSPICES THE REPORT THAT WE HAVE LAUNCHED TODAY WAS ELABORATED.

FURTHER, AND IN KEEPING WITH THE PRINCIPLE OF CONSOLIDATING THE OWNERSHIP OF THE PROCESS BY THE AU AS A WHOLE, THE AU COMMISSION BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF ITS MEMBER STATES FOR THE FIRST TIME, DURING THE JUNE ,2011 SUMMIT, THROUGH THE PRC AND THEN THROUGH THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, THE PROGRESS WHICH WAS STEADILY BEING MADE TO IMPLEMENT THE TYCBP.

SIGNIFICANTLY, THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ALSO REQUESTED THE COMMISSION TO REPORT REGULARLY TO IT ON THE MATTER, AND TO PLACE A FOCUS ON CONCRETE DELIVERABLES.

IN THE MEANTIME, AT THE BEHEST OF THE AU COMMISSION, AND WITH THE STRONG SUPPORT OF THE ECA, A LANDMARK RETREAT ,ATTENDED BY AU STAFF AT ALL LEVELS, INCLUDING PROGRAMME MANAGERS FROM MOST OF THE AU COMMISSION`S DEPARTMENTS ,AS WELL AS REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UN IN ADDIS, WAS HELD TO PREPARE THE GROUND FOR A NEEDS- ASSESSMENT EXERCISE .

IF FOR NOTHING AT ALL, THE RETREAT WAS SUCCESSFUL IN RAISING THE AWARENESS OF THE AU STAFF IN THE POTENTIAL OF THE TYCBP; AND SUCH WAS THE INTEREST GENERATED AMONG THE AU PARTICIPANTS IN THE TYCBP,

THAT THERE WAS EVEN A CALL FOR GROUND - BREAKING ACTION TO BE TAKEN TO CREATE A NEW GROUP TO ADDRESS CAPACITY BUILDING IN SUCH SERVICE AREAS AS FINANCE, HR, CONFERENCE MANAGEMENT, MEDICAL SERVICES AND AUDITING, HITHERTO NOT CATERED FOR IN THE RCM.

IT IS MY EARNEST HOPE THAT RELEVANT INSTITUTIONS IN THE UN SYSTEM WILL DEEM IT FIT TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY SUPPORT FOR THESE SERVICE AREAS OF THE AU COMMISSION`S WORK.

THE NEEDS- ASSESSMENT EXERCISE WHICH WAS CONDUCTED THROUGH A PROCESS INVOLVING THE ENGAGEMENT OF A TEAM OF ECA-SPONSORED CONSULTANTS WITH MOST OF THE DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAMME MANAGERS OF THE AU COMMISSION, AND WHICH IS CONTAINED IN THE FIRST PART OF THE REPORT, WAS SUBSEQUENTLY VALIDATED AT A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE COMMISSIONERS THAT WAS CHAIRED BY THE CHAIRPERSON.

IT IS ITSELF IS NO DOUBT ,A REFLECTION OF THE PERSPECTIVES OF THE AU COMMISSION ON HOW IT WANTS TO BUILD ITS OWN CAPACITY IN THE VARIOUS AREAS OF ENDEAVOR IT IS INVOLVED IN; AND WILL NO DOUBT CONSTITUTE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT TO ITS OWN ONGOING CAPACITY BUILDING EFFORTS.

THE CONSENSUS REACHED WITHIN THE AU COMMISSION AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL IS THAT THIS REPORT WILL CONSTITUTE THE BASIS OF THE INTERACTION BETWEEN THE AU AND THE UN IN THE CONTEXT OF THEIR JOINT EFFORTS IN THE CONTEXT OF CAPACITY BUILDING.

IN MY ESTIMATION, IT WILL BE CRITICAL FOR ALL STAKEHOLDERS TO L KEEP THE MOMENTUM GOING; AND IN THAT REGARD, I WISH TO APPEAL TO THE UN AGENCIES ,THROUGH THE CLUSTERS, NOT ONLY TO GIVE IMMEDIATE AND PRACTICAL EFFECT TO THE COMMITMENTS THEY HAVE ALREADY MADE IN THE PROGRAMME OF SUPPORT THAT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TODAY, BUT TO INCREASE THEIR ASSISTANCE TO ALL AREAS OF THE PROGRAMME.

I WANT TO UNDERSCORE THE FACT THAT, IF, FOR ITS PART, THE AU HAS DEMONSTRATED A KEEN INTEREST IN ASSUMING GREATER OWNERSHIP OF THE TYCBP ,THE UN FOR ITS PART, HAS ALSO PLAYED A CRITICAL PART BY GIVING

SUPPORT AND ENDEAVORING TO CEDE THE SPACE FOR THE AU TO ASSUME SUCH OWNERSHIP.

I AM OF THE FIRM BELIEF THAT THIS COMMON STANCE ASSUMED BY BOTH THE AU AND UN HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN RELEASING THE RENEWED ENERGY AND INTEREST WHICH HAS IMPELLED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TYCBP FORWARD, THE RESULTS OF WHICH WE HAVE WITNESSED TODAY.

THE RECEIPT OF THIS PROGRAMME OF SUPPORT TODAY BY THE AU COMMISSION IS TIMELY BECAUSE IT COMES ON THE EVE OF THE JULY, 2012 SUMMIT WHERE THE COMMISSION, AS ENJOINED BY THE JULY SUMMIT LAST YEAR, WILL BE IN A POSITION TO SUBMIT A REPORT ON THE PROGRESS WE HAVE MADE WITH THE ELABORATION OF THIS NEW PROGRAMME ,IN THE CONTEXT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TYCBP.

ON ANOTHER FRONT, AND ENCOURAGED AS WE ARE BY TODAY'S DEVELOPMENT, AND AS INDEED REQUESTED BY THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL AS WELL AS THE RCM,

THE AU COMMISSION WILL BE WORKING WITH ITS PARTNERS IN THE UN FAMILY, AND PARTICULARLY IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE RCM AND THE JOINT SECRETARIAT, TO ELABORATE SIMILAR CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAMMES FOR OTHER MEMBERS OF THE LARGER AU FAMILY, INCLUDING THE NPCA, APRM, AFRICAN COURT AND PAP AND THE RECS.

ON THAT NOTE OF OPTIMISM, I WANT TO THANK YOU ALL FOR HAVING GRACED THE OCCASION WITH YOUR PRESENCE.