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**OPENING STATEMENT BY  
DR JINMI ADISA, DIRECTOR,  
CITIZENS AND DIASPORA DIRECTORATE AND  
HEAD OF THE SECRETARIAT OF ECOSOCC**

**AT THE**

**ELECTIONS INTO THE SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE  
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL COUNCIL  
(ECOSOCC)**

**NAIROBI, KENYA 18 DECEMBER 2014**

## **Distinguished representatives of the African Civil Society community;**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome the distinguished representatives of the African Civil Society community to the Hilton Hotel in Nairobi, Kenya, for the conduct of elections into the 2<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council of the African Union (ECOSOCC).

I want to congratulate each and every one of you for qualifying for this election. We are here to take the next big step and determine who among you will become members of the ECOSOCC assembly.

ECOSOCC is an important organ of the African Union. The Constitutive Act of the Union is explicit in its intention to create a people-centred community in the African Union. ECOSOCC is the main vehicle for achieving this goal. Thus the Organ ranks high among the key organs of the Union which also includes the Assembly of Heads of States and Governments, the Executive Council and the Pan-African Parliament (PAP).

The elections into ECOSOCC will be conducted by the Office of the Legal Counsel of the African Union that conducts similar elections for all the other organs including the Executive organs i.e. Council and the Assembly.

The process of elections will be staggered according to regions of proximity. The elections on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2014 will be for the Eastern, Central and Southern Regions.

On 19 December 2014, elections will be conducted for the Western region. On 20 December 2014, elections will be conducted for the Northern Region. Elections of regional and continental candidates will be conducted on the same day.

Details of processes and procedures will be elaborated by the Office of the Legal Counsel. Suffices to note here, that the Electoral College will be made up off all CSO candidates that have qualified as eligible for membership of the ECOSOCC Assembly

Only qualified CSO candidates from a specific Member State of the Union can vote in the election of the two (2) candidates for that Member State. Only Sudanese will be electors for the vote for Sudan, Kenyans for Kenya, Egyptians for Egypt, etc. Only qualified CSO representatives from each region can vote in regional elections. All qualified candidates across the African continents can vote in the election for continental candidates.

Candidates those are not successful in the bid for national, regional and continental elections will leave on 20 or 21 December 2014 or immediately thereafter. Successful candidates will stay behind and participate in the subsequent elections of 21 December 2014 for the Bureau of the ECOSOCC Assembly. The ECOSOCC Assembly and its principal officers will then be sworn in at a short official ceremony on 22 December 2014.

I should add that those who lose elections will continue to be associated with ECOSOCC through the work of its Sectoral Cluster Committees which are the key operational mechanisms of ECOSOCC. ECOSOCC also represents the African civil society community as a whole and not just its elected members. Thus your colleagues in the Assembly are duty bound to involve you in ECOSOCC process. This is not an option. It is mandatory.

Finally, I wish each and every CSO representative present here the best of luck in the ensuing elections. May the spirit of the founding parents of the OAU/AU and the desire and yearnings of ordinary African Citizens guide you well in this endeavour.

**I thank you all.**