



**OPENING REMARKS DELIVERED BY: H.E. AMIRA ELFADIL, AU COMMISSIONER
FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS ON THE OCCASION OF THE EXTRAORDINARY SESSION
OF THE SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON YOUTH, CULTURE AND
SPORT (STC-YCS2)**

NAIROBI, KENYA

15 SEPTEMBER 2017

Protocol

On behalf of the African Union Commission Chairperson H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat and on my own behalf it is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the ***“Extraordinary Session of the 2nd Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Youth, Culture and Sport”***

Allow me to start by expressing profound gratitude to the Government and people of the Republic of Kenya, for hosting this important conference of Ministers of Youth, Culture and Sport. I am aware that Kenya is still in the process of a presidential election following the intervention of the Supreme

Court. Allow me to say a word of appreciation to the resilience that the Kenyan citizens have shown so far and their confidence in established institutions. As the country continues to build on the nascent democratization process which is indeed trend setting in Africa, I want to wish the people of Kenya a peaceful presidential election to be held in October 2017.

Allow also me, Excellencies, to remind us all that the Extraordinary Session of the 2nd Specialized Technical Committee Meeting (STC-YCS) is being organized as per a decision of the 29th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly held In Kigali, Rwanda in July 2017 to consider the Draft Statute of the African Audio Visual and Cinema Commission (AACC).

The potential contribution of the audio-visual and cinema sector to Africa's development cannot be overemphasised. Your Excellencies may recall that the process of organizing the development of the audio-visual and cinema sector at the continental level started many years back when the 2nd Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly held in Maputo, Mozambique in July 2003 passed a resolution calling for the establishment of an African Audio-visual and Cinema Commission (AACC) as a way of giving renewed action and impetus to the audio visual and cinema, creative industry sector.

As implementation of the AU Assembly Decision many initiatives were carried out for the organization and development of the film sector industry in the continent amongst them I would like to refer to the following:

- The 1st African Union Conference of Ministers of Culture (CAMC1) held in Nairobi, Kenya in October 2005 which exhorted the African Union Commission in collaboration with African cultural institutions and the AU Member States to promote and reinforce creative and cultural industries in order for them to provide their contribution to the socio-economic development of the continent;
- The African Film Summit, held in Pretoria, South Africa in April 2006, which allowed various key stakeholders to engage with each other towards streamlining activities across the continent that were aimed at developing the African film industries;
- The hosting by the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) of the Republic of South Africa of the Secretariat of the Pan-African Federation of Film Makers (FEPACI) from 2006 to 2013. The hosting of FEPACI by the Government of Kenya from 2014. We express gratitude to South Africa and Kenya for the support to the audio visual and cinema industry.

And finally

- The drafting of the ***Report on the Status of the African Film Industry: An Analysis of the Status of the Audio-visual and Film Sector in the African Union Member States.***” and the Draft Statute of the African Audio-Visual and Cinema Commission in 2015 which was made possible due to the strong commitment to the audio visual and cinema sector by the Government of Kenya and the Pan-African Federation of Film Makers (FEPACI). The Draft Statute of the African Audio Visual and Cinema Commission was reviewed during the 2nd Session of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC-YCS2) held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in June 2016 and after which it benefitted from further contributions and inputs from AU Member States.

As can be seen from the mile stones I have just outlined, the audio visual and cinema industry in the continent has come a long way, through various achievements and challenges, now it is high time we capitalize on the overwhelming expertise of the sector so that it provides a meaningful contribution to the development of the economy of the African continent. We can only achieve this if we organize the sector and establish structures which will coordinate and facilitate the development of this industry.

One of such structures is the: ***The African Audio-Visual and Cinema Commission (AACC)***. If this continental structure was important fourteen (14) years ago, it is more so now and it has become even clearer that such a structure is crucial to achieve better results of the audio visual and cinema sector in the continent.

The African Audio-visual and Cinema Commission will spearhead the promotion of African film industries in terms of production, distribution and exhibition of films as well as explore markets for the industry outside the continent. With the advent of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and acknowledging the role that African cinema production can play in the promotion of our African Cultural Renaissance, African identity, shared values and traditions as well as promoting cultural diversity and a culture for peace, we have no choice than accelerate the efforts of operationalizing the African Audio-visual and Cinema Commission (AACC).

In the same vein, the African Union Agenda 2063 adopted by the AU Assembly in January 2015 provides for an Aspiration for culture: “An Africa with a Strong Cultural Identity, Common Heritage, Values and Ethics” at which the African creative and cultural industries will be celebrated throughout the continent and the diaspora and contribute significantly to self-awareness, well-being and prosperity.

As such, culture and creative industries are taking a centre stage in the continental and global agenda and it is the right moment for the continent, to boost the audio visual and cinema sector development for increased profit to the artists and the continent at large.

Excellencies

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Africa has the youngest population in the world with more than 400 million young people aged between the ages of 15 to 35. A population with a significant share of young people can be both a challenge and a window of opportunity. It calls for a sustained investment in economic and social development factors that would enhance an inclusive economic growth in Africa. As you may be aware, the theme of the year 2017 on “*Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth*” was officially launched at the 28th Ordinary Session of session of the AU Assembly on January 30th 2017. In addition, a roadmap on its implementation was developed outlining key actions that Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and other partners need to take towards harnessing the demographic dividend in Africa. It is important that Member States integrate actions in the Roadmap on Demographic Dividend into National Policy Frameworks and development planning processes and a report made of the implementation. This, alongside the development of demographic dividend profiles at the national level will go a long way in fostering ownership of the process and enhance youth development in Africa.

In an effort to maintain the momentum on youth development focus, the African Union, at its 29th Ordinary Session in July 2017, dedicated 2018 – 2027 to be the African Decade for Technical, Professional, Entrepreneurial Training and Youth Employment. It also endorsed the establishment of the African Youth Fund. This reflects the commitment towards finding responses to the pressing needs for training, professional skills development and employment for the youth. I am glad that Member States have had an opportunity to be acquainted with this decision and of the upcoming continental dialogue platform on Education and Skills Development in Africa.

Hon. Ministers

Sport as a tool for social and economic development has continued to contribute towards youth employment and development; promotion of peace

and unity in Africa. As we may recall, it's almost a year after the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, whereby Africa gained respect for the exceptional performance of her athletes. Allow me to take this opportunity to congratulate our athletes who represented our continent in this important international event. It's my trust that Africa learnt a lesson and a lot has to be done to make sure that coming 2020 in Japan, Africa will win more medals. Apart of the exceptional performance and skills displayed by African Athletes, Issues on cheating and unclean sport, suspension of athletes and laboratories were top on the agenda. To respond on the call for clean Sport, the African Union Commission in collaboration with WADA Africa and other key stakeholders met in Seychelles in August 2017 to discuss and consider Africa's role in the fight against doping.

The outcome of the meeting will be shared for further input and implementation by Member States and all key stakeholders. Records show that Africa has been lagging behind on the compliance and implementation of International Instruments against Doping in Sport. I wish to take this opportunity to urge Member States to honour their commitment to WADA by paying their contributions among others and for those who have not yet ratified the UNESCO International Convention against doping in Sport to expedite the process. The African Union Commission reiterates its commitment to continue to coordinate all key stakeholders on the implementation of the projects and programmes on anti-doping related to education, awareness creation, and communication and code compliance.

Last but not least, I wish to encourage Ministers of Sport and Senior Government official to participate in the coming 6th UNESCO-Conference of Parties meeting on 25-26 in Paris, France. African participation is crucial as the meeting will provide the platform to discuss and deliberate on the future strategies to tackle doping in sport.

I wish us all fruitful deliberations as we move forward the Youth, Culture and Sport agendas in the continent.

Thank you very much for your kind attention!