

**AFRICAN UNION**

**الاتحاد الأفريقي**



**UNION AFRICAINE**

**UNIÃO AFRICANA**

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

P. O. Box 3243

Telephone: 5517 700

Fax: 5517844

Website: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int)

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ACTIVITIES OF THE UNION AND ITS ORGANS**

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## REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE UNION AND ITS ORGANS FOR THE PERIOD JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2018

### A. INTRODUCTION

#### I. Preliminary Remarks

1. On behalf of the Commission and the other African Union (AU) Organs and Specialized Agencies, I have the honour, as the Chairperson of the Commission, to present the **Annual Report on the Activities of the Union and Its Organs** for the period of January to December 2018, pursuant to the decision of the Executive Council EX.CL./Dec.943(XXX) of January 2017.
2. During the year under review, in addition to their own mandated activities, the Commission and other AU Organs and Specialized Agencies were fully engaged in assisting Member States in the implementation of the Union's Agenda 2063 and, in particular, the flagship projects identified under the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (FTYIP) and the Medium Term Plan 2018-2023 (MTP), as adopted by the Executive Council in June 2018 [EX.CL./Dec.1008(XXXIII)].
3. Pursuant to the directives of the Policy Organs, the report is designed in a way that highlights strengthened cooperation, coordination and synergy among the Union's various organs with an emphasis on outcomes or results achieved and their impact on improving its work and the lives of African people. This design is in line with the policy requiring the Union's Organs and Specialized Agencies to deliver on AU reforms and accelerate the implementation of continental frameworks and mandates relating to Agenda 2063's FTYIP.
4. As of this reporting, the Commission's departments and autonomous units, including the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency (hereafter the NEPAD Agency), have aligned their reporting obligations with the FTYIP's milestones and deliverables. Consultations took place with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and other AU Organs and Specialized Agencies during the FTYIP's preparation phases. Work is now under way, pursuant to Assembly decision Assembly/AU/Dec.588(XXVI) of January 2016, to ensure that all AU Organs internalize and align their respective programmes with Agenda 2063's FTYIP. It is expected to be finalized after the conclusion of the First Mid-Year Coordination Meeting of the Bureau of the Assembly and the RECs in June-July 2019.
5. During the period under review, continental integration remained a key driver in realizing the *Africa We Want* and delivering on sustainable development and the prosperity of African citizens. The Commission also embarked on the institutional reform process in preparation for the Assembly's extraordinary Summit of November 2018, while working strenuously to meet the deadline for silencing the guns by the year 2020. The preparation and approval of the Union's budget for the year 2019 saw marked improvements, thanks largely to the oversight exercised by the Committee of Ministers of Finance during the process.

6. During the course of the year, the Union continued to face a multitude of challenges, some of which are highlighted in the Introductory Note of the Chairperson of the Commission to this report. Two such challenges are noteworthy: the very low rate of implementation of the decisions and policies of the Union, and equally, the slow disbursement of assessed contributions.

## **II. Highlights of Activities and Main Achievements**

7. The following section highlights some of the key results achieved by the Commission, other AU Organs, Specialized Agencies and Representational Missions during the year under review.

8. Forty-nine (49) Member States signed the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement, and sixteen (16) have ratified it. As at the end of 2018, the following nine (9) Member States deposited their instruments of ratifications: Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Rwanda, Niger, Eswatini and Uganda. Furthermore, the national assemblies of the remaining seven (7) Member States ratified but the instruments of ratification have yet to be deposited. They are the Republic of Congo, Mali, Mauritania, Namibia, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Togo. Of the remaining six Member States that have still to sign the AfCFTA Agreement – Benin, Botswana, Eritrea, Guinea Bissau, Nigeria and Zambia – one (1) promised to do so in the margins of the February 2019 Summit, and three were still conducting national consultations. Meanwhile, the Commission was consulting the remaining two (2) on how to facilitate their signatures as soon as possible. Twenty-two (22) ratifications are required for the AfCFTA Agreement to enter into force by the deadline of July 2019. As of December 2018, only six (6) ratifications remained to achieve this historic and significant milestone towards African integration.

9. The AU Development/NEPAD Agency established the Traffic Light System at four pilot One Stop Border Posts that connect five countries, namely Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. This system is aimed to facilitate continental integration and regional trade. Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe have domesticated this system.

10. Thirty-two (32) Member States signed the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, the Right of Residence and Right of Establishment, but only one – Rwanda – ratified it. The threshold of fifteen (15) ratifications is required for its entry into force.

11. Only twenty-eight (28) Member States have joined the Single African Air Transport Market.

12. On the whole, implementation of the flagship projects moved at a different pace. Three flagship projects – the AfCFTA, the Free Movement of Persons and, to some extent, the SAATM – achieved significant progress as judged by the number of Member States that have signed or joined them. Two others – the Africa Integrated High Speed Railway Network and Silencing the Guns by 2020 – were on track. However, there was very little or no progress at all on the remaining flagship projects.

**13.** The Commission modernized its cybersecurity infrastructure and capacity and set up an IT Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Recovery mechanism to deter and respond to cybersecurity threats.

**14.** The Assembly's extraordinary Summit of November 2018 adopted decisions on several substantive issues relating to AU institutional reform, including on the structure of the Commission, the mandate of the newly established AU Development Agency and, more importantly, on financing the Union.

**15.** Implementation of the decision of the 2015 Sandton Summit on financing the Union is also moving apace. Twenty-four (24) Member States were at different phases of domesticating the AU import levy. Among them, fourteen (14) were collecting the levy and all but two have paid their assessed contributions through the new system. In addition, Member States' contributions to the Peace Fund amounted to US\$80.4 million.

**16.** The new program and budget processes achieved a 12% decrease in the 2019 budget compared to 2018, allowing the elimination of wastages and overbudgeting, addressing the issue of low execution rates and strengthening compliance with AU financial rules and regulations.

**17.** As part of its efforts to expand its revenue base, the Commission collected from January to November 2018 the amount of US\$844,629 through renting its facilities. Costs have also been cut through the acquisition of state-of-the-art equipment for conference management and the commissioning of infra-red wireless conference system.

**18.** In recognition of its expertise in vaccine quality testing, the Pan African Vaccine Centre (PANVAC) was conferred the International Standard Organization (ISO) 17025 Certification by the Ethiopian National Accreditation Organization, placing PANVAC among world-class laboratories.

**19.** Assistance to Member States and the RECs in developing aflatoxin control plans, mainstreaming them in national plans and advancing food safety more generally yielded encouraging results. With the support of the Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA) and financial assistance from AU partners, some Member States increased funding for their national aflatoxin control plans. The Commission organized the 3rd PACA Partnership Platform Meeting in Dakar in October 2018 in the presence of the Prime Minister of Senegal and the Chairperson of the Commission. In February 2019, the Commission, jointly with FAO and WHO, will be hosting an International Food Safety Conference in Addis Ababa.

**20.** Progress was made through the Inter-African Phytosanitary Council (IAPSC) in strengthening Member States' phytosanitary capacities to prevent the introduction and spread of pests and coordinating their efforts for the control of the Fall Army worm.

**21.** Climate change remains of concern to the Union. The accreditation of the NEPAD Agency to the Global Climate Fund was on track. The process will take another one or two years before its successful completion.

**22.** The Campaign to end child marriage gained momentum. As a result of the Commission's advocacy efforts, twenty-four (24) Member States have launched their campaigns to end child marriage and other harmful practices.

**23.** Work also continued to promote and safeguard maternal, newborn and child health through the implementation of the Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA). Fifty (50) Member States had launched the CARMMA campaign and started its implementation. The Commission was also actively engaged in the elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Africa, under the leadership of President Roch Marc Christian Kabore of Burkina Faso and in partnership with the U.N. The Commission planned to launch the AU Continental Campaign to End FGM in the margins of the February 2019 Summit, with the goal to eliminate this horrible practice in Africa by 2030.

**24.** The Maputo Protocol on the Rights of Women has so far gathered forty-one (41) ratifications. The Commission intensified the campaign for the Maputo Protocol's ratification and domestication by all Member States.

**25.** The AU Youth Volunteer Corps gained in visibility and interest. 156 youth volunteers served in the second quarter of 2018, of which 58.4% were female and 41.6% male. On its part, the Pan African University continued to grant advanced degrees in its three institutes. On the whole, of the total student population of 860 in 2018, approximately 29% are female and over 70% male. For the 2018-2019 academic year, the Pan African University is committed to raise the number of female students to at least 40%. Meanwhile, its rectorate has been officially relocated to Yaoundé.

**26.** Member States made notable progress in the implementation of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) projects. The following results were achieved in 2018:

- (i) Approximately 16,066 kilometers of road were built throughout the continent;
- (ii) 4,077 kilometers of railway capacity were built;
- (iii) A total transmission line capacity of approximately 3,056 kilometers was added;
- (iv) Seventeen countries were connected with regional fibre optic cables in the Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) sector; and
- (v) 112,900 jobs were created directly and 49,400 jobs indirectly through constructed and operational PIDA projects.

**27.** The Assembly adopted several legal instruments in 2018, including:

- (i) the Statute of the Trust Fund for Victims of Hissène Habré;
- (ii) the Statute of the African Institute for Remittances;
- (iii) the Protocol to the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment;

- (iv) the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on Persons with Disability in Africa;
- (v) the Statute of the African Space Agency; and
- (vi) the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area, its Protocols and Annexes.

**28.** Pursuant to the Executive Council's decision EX.CL/Dec.193 (VII), the Commission embarked on the alignment of the recently adopted legal instruments to ensure that the texts of the treaties were harmonised in all the working languages. The Commission's Office of the Legal Counsel made certified copies available to Member States to facilitate the ratification/accession process.

**29.** The Commission registered a total of one hundred and eight (108) signatures in 2018. As at the end of November 2018, the Office of the Legal Counsel had registered a total of one hundred and thirty-six (136) signatures of various treaties and forty (40) ratifications – including seven (7) for the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area – thus surpassing the total of eighteen (18) received in 2017. The Office of the Legal Counsel also initiated the process for registration of OUA/AU treaties with the UN Secretariat. Eleven (11) treaties were due to be registered by the end of 2018.

**30.** During the commemoration of the AU Law Week and the Treaty Signature Week in December 2018 [EX.CL/Dec.459(XIV)], the Commission encouraged Member States to keep the current treaty signing momentum and, more importantly, to implement the treaties they have ratified, so as to demonstrate their commitment in advancing the Union's agenda to improve the lives of the African people.

**31.** The Commission continued to ensure that relations with non-African States and other organizations foster the Union's best interests and are conducted in accordance with the Criteria for Granting Observer Status as adopted by the Executive Council in July 2005 [EX.CL./Dec.230(VII)].

**32.** The Commission received requests for accreditation from eleven (11) non-African States and four (4) regional and international organizations. At the end of this reporting period, the number of non-African States and international organizations accredited to the Union stood at one hundred and fourteen (114), of which ninety (90) non-African states and twenty-four (24) regional and international organizations.

**33.** Eleven (11) Member States held presidential and parliamentary elections in 2018. The Commission dispatched long and short-term observation teams for all the elections. Overall, there was a notable improvement in election management. However, incidents of electoral violence and contestations of election results remained high in some places.

**34.** In order to better address the medical needs of the AU staff and African diplomats and their families, the Commission upgraded the AU healthcare delivery system at AU headquarters and initiated the acquisition of the newest medical equipment. The Commission also enhanced medical care to AU personnel serving in



AU peace support operations. Better disability and death assessment was arranged for AMISOM and MISCA personnel.

**35.** Lastly, the Ethics Office continued to enhance accountability in the Commission and other AU Organs and Specialized Agencies through, among others, the implementation of the African Union Code of Conduct and other relevant AU rules, such as the harassment and whistle-blower policies, as well as raising awareness among AU elected officials and staff about their rights and responsibilities in accordance with AU values.

## **B. UPDATE ON FLAGSHIP PROJECTS**

**36.** The Assembly, in its decision Assembly/AU/Dec.565(XXIV) of January 2015, identified twelve flagship projects as part of Agenda 2063's FTYIP. This section provides a status report on their implementation as at the end of the year 2018.

### **I. African Commodity Strategy**

**37.** The Executive Council's Ministerial Retreat, which was held in Bahir Dar, Ethiopia, in January 2014, recommended the development of a commodity strategy to address price volatility in the commodities sector, as well as spur commodities-based industrialization through value addition.

**38.** During the year under review, the Commission developed a draft AU Commodity Strategy that addresses challenges in three main commodities sectors, namely agriculture, mining, and energy. The draft Commodity Strategy also identifies the following four strategic pillars: (i) commodity markets and pricing; (ii) linkages and diversification; (iii) governance and enabling environment; and (iv) skills development and research and development. The pillars will help guide the optimal use of African commodities through sustainable industrialization, economic diversification, structural transformation, development and enhanced trade.

**39.** The draft Commodity Strategy also proposes the establishment of a Secretariat that would be hosted in the Commission's Department of Trade and Industry and work in collaboration with other stakeholders.

**40.** The draft Commodity Strategy and its Action Plan will be submitted for the consideration of the Policy Organs at the February 2019 Summit.

### **II. African Continental Free Trade Area**

**41.** The Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) was signed in Kigali on 21 March 2018 during the 10<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government. The AfCFTA Agreement includes (i) the Protocol on Trade in Goods; (ii) the Protocol on Trade in Services; and (iii) the Protocol on Rules and Procedures on the Settlement of Disputes.

**42.** As requested by the Kigali extraordinary Summit of March 2018 [Ext./Assembly/AU/Dec.1(X)], the Commission submitted, for adoption, to the Assembly at the June-July 2018 Summit in Nouakchott, nine (9) Annexes to the Protocol on Trade in Goods, comprising: (i) Annex 1 on Schedules of Tariff Concessions; (ii) Annex 2 on Rules of Origin; (iii) Annex 3 on Customs Cooperation and Mutual Administrative Assistance; (iv) Annex 4 on Trade Facilitation; (v) Annex 5 on Non-Tariff Barriers; (vi) Annex 6 on Technical Barriers to Trade; (vii) Annex 7 on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures; (viii) Annex 8 on Transit ; and (ix) Annex 9 on Trade Remedies.

**43.** The Commission also submitted to the Nouakchott Summit, for adoption, three Annexes to the Protocol on Rules and Procedures on the Settlement of Disputes, namely (i) Annex 1 on Working Procedures of the Panel; (ii) Annex 2 on Expert Review; and (iii) Annex 3 on Code of Conduct for Arbitrators and Panelists.

**44.** Furthermore, the Assembly, in its decision Assembly/AU/Dec.692(XXXI) of June-July 2018, adopted the list of five priority sectors on trade in services, including the sectors of transport, communication, finance, tourism and business services.

**45.** The Assembly also directed the AU Ministers responsible for Trade to complete all outstanding work on Phase 1 negotiations and submit the outcomes to the Assembly at the February 2019 Summit. This includes (i) the Schedules of Specific Commitments on Trade in Services; (ii) the finalization of Annex 1 of the Protocol on Trade in Goods dealing with the Schedules of Tariff Concessions; and (iii) the Annexes on Trade Remedies and Rules of Origin. The Assembly also directed that Phase 2 negotiations related to investment, intellectual property rights and competition policy be concluded by January 2020.

**46.** As of this reporting, forty-nine (49) countries have signed the AfCFTA Agreement. The remaining six are Benin, Botswana, Eritrea, Guinea Bissau, Nigeria and Zambia. Of the remaining six Member States that have still to sign the AfCFTA Agreement, one (1) promised to do so in the margins of the February 2019 Summit, and three were still conducting national consultations. Meanwhile, the Commission was consulting the remaining two (2) on how to facilitate their signatures as soon as possible.

**47.** The status of the AfCFTA's ratifications at the end of this reporting period was as follows: nine (9) Member States ratified and deposited their instruments of ratification. They are Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Rwanda, Niger, Eswatini and Uganda. Furthermore, the national assemblies of the other seven (7) Member States ratified but the instruments of ratification have yet to be deposited. They are the Republic of Congo, Mali, Mauritania, Namibia, Sierra Leone, South Africa and Togo. Twenty-two (22) ratifications are required for the AfCFTA Agreement to enter into force by the deadline of July 2019. As of December 2018, only six (6) ratifications remained to achieve this historic and significant milestone towards African integration.

**48.** In line with the Assembly's decision Assembly/AU/Dec.394(XVIII) of January 2012, the Commission continued implementation of the programs and activities on boosting intra-African trade and fast tracking the establishment of a Continental Free

Trade Area under the seven clusters of the Action Plan for Boosting Intra African Trade. To this end, the Commission, in partnership with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), organized the First African Union Meeting on Strengthening Trade Policy Dialogue Platforms in Lusaka in September 2018. Similar activities are scheduled to take place with other RECs in 2019.

**49.** The Commission worked with Afreximbank to establish a Pan African Payment and Settlement Platform which will support customer transfers and interbank transfers for trade and retail payments using mobile/wallet, internet and web gateways. These tools will facilitate payments and money transfers for cross-border trade and investment. The launch is planned for 2019 with an initial set of countries. Also, in collaboration with Afreximbank, the Commission's Department of Trade and Industry organized in Cairo in December 2018, the First Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF) with three segments: exhibition, conference and a virtual fair trade. The 2018 IATF was one of the first major deliverables of the AfCFTA.

**50.** The Commission, through the Department of Economic Affairs, developed a comprehensive database on trade statistics in Africa (AFRICATRADE). The database will be instrumental in the monitoring and evaluation of the AfCFTA, Boosting Intra-African Trade and implementation of the 0.2% import levy to finance the Union. AFRICATRADE has the series of trade data for all the Member States from 2005 to date. The 2017 edition covered the period from 2005 to 2011. It also shows the trends of Intra-African Trade and the trade flows between Africa and the rest of the world.

### **III. Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and Efforts on Free Movement of Goods**

**51.** A recent study by the African Development Bank (AfDB) on visa regimes in Africa reveals that Africa is closed to Africans while it is wide open to nationals of other continents, in particular Europeans and North Americans. The studies show that Africans need visas to travel to over half of the Union's Member States. They can get visas on arrival in a quarter of them, but don't need a visa to travel to only ten African countries. In contrast, North Americans are required to obtain a visa prior to travel to 45% of African countries. They can get visa on arrival in 35% of African countries and don't need a visa in 20% of African countries.

**52.** This paradoxical situation presents African citizens with a double jeopardy. On the one hand, they are unable to travel freely in their own continent. On the other hand, as the tide of racism, xenophobia and narrow-national populism gathers momentum, continents such as Europe and North America are closing their borders to African citizens under the guise of containing illegal migrants.

**53.** Since the adoption by the Assembly in January 2018 [Assembly/AU/Dec.676(XXX)] of the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment and Its Implementation Roadmap, thirty-two (32) Member States have signed the Protocol but only one – Rwanda – has ratified it. The Commission embarked on a popularization campaign with the aim to secure, within a short period of

time, the fifteen (15) ratifications required for the Protocol's entry into force. Universal ratification is nonetheless the ultimate objective, along with the domestication by all Member States and implementation of this landmark instrument in full and without reservations.

**54.** Part of the ratification campaign targeted the two RECs that are ahead in this area, namely the East African Community (EAC) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). While not ignoring the other RECs, the Commission organized a joint EAC-ECOWAS consultation in Dakar in October 2018 to encourage the two RECs to sensitize their members on the need to accelerate the ratification of the Protocol. Taken together, the membership of EAC and ECOWAS amounts to twenty-one (21) countries, of which six for the EAC and 15 for ECOWAS.

**55.** There is currently an encouraging move among Member States to relax visa regimes for Africans, with Ethiopia, Kenya and Namibia as the latest Member States to relax their entry visa regimes. Two (2) Member States – Benin and Seychelles – do not require visas to Africans, while the following seventeen (17) grant visas on arrival: Cabo Verde, the Comoros, Djibouti, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia, Tanzania, Togo and Zimbabwe. However, abolition of visa requirements for Africans is essential to facilitate the right of entry as the first phase of the Protocol.

**56.** The Protocol also provides for the issuance of the African Passport. During the period under review, the Commission convened in Nairobi in June 2018, a meeting of the Chiefs of Immigration from all Member States to develop the guidelines for the design, production and issuance of the African Passport. The guidelines were adopted by the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Migration, Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons and Returnees in Malabo at the end of October and beginning of November 2018. They will be submitted to the February 2019 Summit and, once adopted by the Assembly, will clear the way for Member States to begin issuing African Passports to their citizens.

**57.** The Commission, in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Republic of Djibouti, launched the 4<sup>th</sup> Pan African Forum on Migration (PAFOM) in Djibouti in November 2018 under the theme *Harnessing the benefits of Free Movement of persons regime for sustainable development in Africa*. Participants focused on the achievements and challenges of free movement of persons regimes and the urgency to promote effective labour mobility governance in Africa. On their part, Member States representatives noted the importance of cooperation among neighbouring countries as key to create stronger border regimes and emphasized the need for a balanced view of migration to ensure both development and security.

**58.** In support of regional and continental integration, with a particular focus on movement of people and goods (MoveAfrica), the NEPAD Agency operationalized in June 2018 the Traffic Light System (TLS) at four (4) pilot One Stop Border Posts (OSBPs) – Beit Bridge, Chirundu, Kasumbalesa and Kazungula – that connect five countries, namely Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

**59.** The Traffic Light System comprises nine indicators focused on: cross border road transport permits; visas for professional drivers and crews of road vehicles; bond acquittal process; transit guarantees; vehicle insurance for drivers; vehicle weights/load - (overload control); cross border facilitation arrangements; infrastructure and level of infrastructure for freighters and trucks; and health and safety.

**60.** The NEPAD Agency conducted the first OSBP assessment at Chirundu in September 2018, in partnership with COMESA, the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) and the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (ZIMRA). The assessment indicated that Chirundu is currently rated as yellow, which indicates some relatively improved performance. Botswana, Zambia and Zimbabwe have domesticated TLS indicators for expected better performance. MOVEAFRICA's ultimate goal is to reduce trade barriers in view of creating jobs and competitiveness as less logistics cost will make goods competitive and increase intra-African trade, therefore jobs.

#### **IV. African Virtual University**

**61.** The Pan-African Virtual and e-University (PAVEU) aims to accelerate the development of human capital, science and technology and innovation through increasing access to tertiary and continuing education in Africa by capitalizing on the digital revolution and global knowledge and consolidating African initiatives and strategies on accelerated development of human capital, as well as science, technology and innovation. In addition to the core learning objectives, the eLearning platform is aimed to expose African students to the emerging technologies on the internet and help them acquire communication skills that are critical in today's world.

**62.** The Commission completed the development of the PAVEU's progress implementation framework. The framework includes guidelines on the Institute's management structures, staffing and potential partnerships with other role players.

**63.** The Commission was advised to provide cloud hosting services for the Pan-African Virtual and e-University. Investing in this technology will help reduce costs by removing the need for turnaround maintenance, replacement of outdated technological investment and large number of staff to manage the existing structures. However, a network and infrastructure that is robust enough to support learning resources, administration and research, as well as accommodate learners in all Member States and the Diaspora, is required. Currently the PAVEU Rectorate is serviced with a very limited in-house outreach through a Wi-Fi.

**64.** The piloting of two online courses – History of Africa and Gender & Human Rights – could not be implemented in 2018. More time is required to train the facilitators, develop a course template, develop multimedia components of the courses, package the online courses and orient the students to use the recommended Moodle learning management system.

65. The Assembly approved the recommendation of the STC on Education, Science and Technology (STC- EST) about the establishment of the PAVEU as an Institute of the Pan-African University and its location at the PAU Rectorate Headquarters in Yaoundé. PAVEU's acting coordinator also relocated to Yaoundé in August 2018. PAVEU is a Member of the ICT in Education CESA Cluster. The positions of PAVEU Coordinator (P5), Instructional Designer (P3) and Senior Educational Technologists were also advertised. Specifications of office equipment for the Yaoundé office are under consideration.

## **V. African Economic Platform**

66. The African Economic Platform (AEP) is an annual forum for regular engagement between the political leadership, business leaders and the private sector, universities and intellectuals, on the implementation of Agenda 2063 and issues of Africa's economic transformation and industrialization. As a follow-up to the Executive Council's decision EX.CL/Dec.924(XXIX) of July 2016, the Commission, in partnership with the Government of Mauritius and with the support of the African Union Foundation, organized the first forum in Mauritius in March 2017.

67. The Assembly, in its decision Assembly/AU/Dec.643(XXIX) of July 2017, approved the offer by the Republic of Mauritius to host the second African Economic Platform in March 2018, and requested the Commission and the African Union Foundation to work closely with the host country Mauritius to ensure a successful second African Economic Platform. However, the African Economic Platform (AEP) did not take place in 2018 due to challenges regarding the operational and governance status of the African Union Foundation (AUF).

68. The Commission has been working with the AUF to resolve these outstanding matters. Meanwhile, following a proposal by the Government of Mauritius, the AEP forum for 2019 is tentatively scheduled to take place in May 2019.

## **VI. Continental Monetary and Financial Institutions**

69. The *Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community* – also known as the *Abuja Treaty* – envisioned the establishment of the African Economic and Monetary Union and the African Central Bank (ACB) as the institution to mint the single African currency. The AU Constitutive Act added two more institutions, namely the African Monetary Fund (AMF) and the African Investment Bank (AIB), thus making the three institutions – the African Central Bank, the African Monetary Fund and the African Investment Bank – the core financial institutions of the African Union. In addition, the Assembly, in its decision Assembly/AU/Dec.109(VI) of January 2006, mandated the Commission to carry out a feasibility study on the establishment of a Pan-African Stock Exchange (PASE).

70. Together, the three financial institutions and the Pan African Stock Exchange constitute the Pan-African Financial Institutions (PAFI).

- **The African Central Bank**

**71.** The African Central Bank (ACB) aims to manage monetary and exchange rate policy in Africa. It will be preceded by the African Monetary Institute, which will lead the preparatory work for the establishment of the ACB based on a gradual approach.

**72.** The Commission and the Association of African Central Banks (AACB) initiated a study group and a joint strategy and roadmap for the establishment of the African Central Bank. The strategy was adopted by the Board of Governors of the AACB in Malabo in August 2015. It was submitted for approval to both the Annual Joint Meeting of the STC on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the 49<sup>th</sup> Conference of African Ministers of Planning, Finance and Economic Development of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA), which was held in Addis Ababa in March-April 2016.

**73.** A technical study on the Pan African Stock Exchange was carried out by a team of consultants in 2012. The outcome was submitted to the Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance held in Abuja in March 2014, who recommended that the study report be submitted to Member States for further review. The study report will be submitted for the consideration of the STC on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration in 2019.

**74.** To accelerate the establishment of the African Central Bank, the Commission developed a draft headquarters agreement to be negotiated with the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the host country, and the Central Bank of Nigeria as the designated representative of the Nigerian government for the establishment of the African Central Bank. Once the draft headquarters agreement is concluded, the next step will be the setting up of the African Monetary Institute in collaboration with the Association of African Central Banks and in accordance with the recommendations of the joint strategy.

**75.** Meanwhile, the Commission engaged key African Central Bank stakeholders to advance the African Central Bank agenda. The Commission's Department of Economic Affairs attended the meeting of the Technical Committee of the Association of African Central Banks in Dakar in February 2018 during which the Technical Committee reaffirmed the Association's commitment to work with the Commission towards the fulfilment of the continental integration agenda.

**76.** The Commission's Department of Economic Affairs also attended the meeting of the Assembly of the Association of African Central Banks in Sharm-El-Sheikh in August 2018, to sensitize African Central Bankers on the need for monetary and financial integration in Africa.

- **The African Monetary Fund**

**77.** The African Monetary Fund is expected to facilitate the integration of African economies by abolishing trade restrictions, financing deficits, fostering monetary

cooperation and providing technical assistance to Member States particularly on poverty and debt reduction strategies.

**78.** The African Monetary Fund has still not been operationalized. As of this reporting, only ten Member States had signed the instruments establishing the African Monetary Fund. They are Benin, Cameroon, Chad, the Comoros, the Republic of Congo, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania, Sao Tome and Principe, and Zambia. No Member State ratified the Fund's legal instruments.

**79.** On its part, the Commission signed in Yaoundé in April 2018, the host country agreement with the Republic of Cameroon to begin the operation of this institution once its protocol receives the fifteen (15) ratifications required to enter into force.

- **The African Investment Bank**

**80.** As at December 2018, the following twenty-two (22) Member States had signed the relevant legal instruments for the African Investment Bank: Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Comoros, the Republic of the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sao Tome and Principe, Togo and Zambia. However, only five (5) ratified them, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, the Republic of Congo, Libya, and Togo.

**81.** As the Union moves steadily towards the realization of its development and integration agenda, Member States should do their utmost to ensure that these financial institutions begin their operations as early as possible. Member States that have signed and ratified these institutions' legal instruments should be commended, and all are urged to accelerate this process. These continental financial institutions not only strengthen Africa's capacity to assume its financial self-sufficiency, but they will also help shield Member States from international currency manipulations and the uncertainties of the global financial markets.

**82.** The Commission published in 2018, a book that highlights the main features, protocols and statutes of the African Investment Bank and the African Monetary Fund. The publication also discusses the pre-conditions, performances and challenges of the Regional Economic Communities towards the establishment of the Economic and Monetary Union, as well as the joint AU-AACB strategy for the establishment of the African Central Bank.

- **The African Multidimensional Regional Integration Index (AMRII)**

**83.** Over the period under review, the Commission's Department of Economic Affairs, in collaboration with experts from the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the Association of African Central Banks (AACB) and the Committee of Directors General (CoDGs) of National Statistical Institutes, carried out a study to develop a comprehensive and coherent tool of monitoring and evaluation of regional integration in Africa. Following several technical meetings, *the new African Multidimensional Regional Integration Index (AMRII)* was adopted by experts in Kampala in September 2018.



**84.** The AMRII is based on the following regional integration dimensions: (i) free movement of persons; (ii) political and institutional integration (iii) trade integration; (iv) social integration; (v) infrastructure integration; (vi) financial integration; (vii) monetary integration; and (viii) environmental Integration. The Commission plans to submit the AMRII to the *STC on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning, and Integration* in Yaoundé in March 2019. The AMRII will subsequently be submitted for the consideration of the Policy Organs in Niamey in July 2019.

## **VII. The Grand Inga Dam**

**85.** The “Grand Inga Hydropower Project” in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is under review following an overall scheme (Inga 3 to Inga 8) that is intended to reach its full capacity of over 44,000 MW and contribute to electricity supply to the DRC and to the entire continent.

**86.** The selection process of the private developer started in August 2015, but as of this reporting, only two consortia – China Inga 3 and ProInga – remained in the competition. On the other hand, the Government of the DRC decided in June 2017 to change the concept of Inga 3 from the original 4,800 MW to 10,000-12,000 MW capacity and requested the two remaining consortia to submit a joint optimized project proposal. This was submitted in June 2018 on the Inga 3’s new concept of 11,000 MW. The Government of the DRC eventually signed an agreement with the two project developers in October 2018. The latter has committed to undertake technical studies, including an assessment of the dam’s environmental and social impact.

**87.** It is important to note that the Grand Inga Dam project has faced major challenges since its inception, including the Government’s lack of technical capacity and inability to mobilize its own resources as a contribution to the realization of this flagship project. Notwithstanding these and other challenges, the Commission remains committed to the operationalization of this flagship project.

**88.** The Commission’s financial assistance allowed the DRC Inga Team to take part in the meeting of the STC Energy Subcommittee in Nouakchott in March 2018. The STC Energy Subcommittee made two major recommendations, namely (i) the establishment of a continental coordination arrangement for Inga hydropower project that will bring together relevant institutions such as RECs, Power Pools and Regulators under the Commission’s leadership; and (ii) the alignment of all the various agreements on Inga with interconnection projects that are being planned, i.e. Inga to South Africa and Inga to Nigeria.

**89.** To this end, the Chairperson of the Commission sent a letter to President Joseph Kabila of the DRC on 5 December 2017 in which he reiterated the AU’s commitment to the realization of this flagship project and proposed the setting-up of a “Strategic Committee” (AU Commission-African Development Bank-NEPAD) to support the DRC for this flagship project. The Chairperson of the Commission also proposed the presentation by the Government of the DRC of regular reports to AU Summits on developments on the Inga project, starting in June/July 2018.

**90.** The Commission has initiated consultations with the Government of the DRC to secure the concurrence of the authorities to set up a continental coordination arrangement for the Inga hydropower project, as recommended by the STC Subcommittee on Energy, and ensure regular reporting to the abovementioned Subcommittee and AU Summits on the status of implementation of the Grand Inga project.

**91.** Meanwhile, during a consultative meeting between the Commission, the PRC Committee on the Implementation of Agenda 2063, the RECs and the African Development Bank, which was held in Nairobi in September 2018, a DRC delegation made a presentation on the Grand Inga project outlining the status of the project implementation, the challenges being faced and recommendations on the way forward.

### **VIII. Great Museum of Africa**

**92.** The process of establishing the Great Museum of Africa in Algiers gained momentum in 2018. As requested by the Executive Council, the Commission worked with the Government of Algeria and other stakeholders in June 2018 to establish the Technical and Advisory Committee of the Great Museum of Africa. The Technical and Advisory Committee held its first meeting in Addis Ababa in June 2018, and another one in Algiers in December 2018. The Great Museum of Africa is expected to open in 2022 with a continent-wide exhibition.

### **IX. Africa Integrated High-Speed Train Network**

**93.** The Africa Integrated High Speed Railway Network (AIHSRN) project is a Commission-led initiative designed to interconnect African capitals, economic and other industrial hubs and major tourism locations with appropriate high-speed rail technology, with other complementary electricity, power and ICT broadband infrastructure and services.

**94.** The Commission finalized the recruitment of the consultancy firm, CPCS Transcom Ltd JV, which will conduct phase 1 – the detailed scoping study – of the comprehensive pre-feasibility study of the project. Thereafter, focus will be on mobilizing substantial resources for a full feasibility study. Meanwhile, the Commission provided US\$400,000 from the 2018 budget to support the NEPAD Agency in the execution of the detailed scoping study.

**95.** The NEPAD Agency has signed the contract with CPCS Transcom Ltd for the detailed scoping study (DSS). The study will be conducted from January to June 2019. The NEPAD Agency is also facilitating resource mobilization for the pre-feasibility and feasibility studies with the development of a financing toolkit.

### **X. Outer Space Strategy**

**96.** The Assembly, in its decision Assembly/AU/Dec.589(XXVI) of January 2016, called for further development of a governance structure in addition to evaluating the legal, structural and financial implications of the proposed African Outer Space Agency.

**97.** The Statute for the African Space Agency was adopted by the Assembly in January 2018 [Assembly/AU/Dec.676(XXX)]. Thereafter, the Commission finalised the African Space Agency structural and financial implications study and submitted it for consideration of the Policy Organs. The Commission launched an institutional arrangement process by inviting Member States to express their intention to host the African Outer Space Agency. A high-level panel of space experts was appointed to finalise the evaluation of the countries that expressed interest to host the African Outer Space Agency.

**98.** The Commission also initiated two surveys that will inform the development of the earth observation and the navigation and positioning programmes by the African Space Agency: the first is on the status of the earth observation private sector in Africa, and the other on the status of navigation and positioning in Africa.

**99.** The Commission sponsored the participation of dozens of young engineers and scientists in the African Space Leadership Conference held in Abuja and the African Association for Remote Sensing for Environment, held in Alexandria, Egypt.

**100.** The Commission signed in Brussels in June 2018, a cooperation arrangement with the European Commission in the area of free data access and use of sentinel data of the Copernicus programme by all African institutions and citizens. It also publicized the African Space Policy and Strategy in several international fora.

**101.** In 2018, the GMES and Africa Support Programme, a component of the African Outer Space flagship, was co-financed by the European Commission and the AU Commission to the tune of €29.5 million and €0.5 million, respectively. The GMES programme aims to use earth observation science and technology to deliver on water and natural resources service and marine and coastal areas service.

**102.** As a follow up, the Commission undertook GMES & Africa Due Diligence missions to implementing consortia with the aim of assessing their institutional capacities in earth observation, ICT, financial and procurement areas, before the release of grants. Consortia Lead Countries visited during this period are Botswana, the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Gabon, Mauritius and Namibia.

**103.** GMES & Africa training and communication strategies have been adopted and published. Design and development of a geo-portal for GMES & Africa has been initiated. It will be a permanent tool for monitoring the performance of consortia and implementation progress of GMES & Africa. Design for the GMES & Africa website has also been completed with the assistance of the Commission's Department of Information and Communication (DIC) and is now operational.

## **XI. The Pan-African e-Network**

**104.** Concerned by the inactivity of this flagship project, the Commission convened the second Assembly of Parties users of the Pan-African e-Network (PAeN) in Addis Ababa

in December 2018. As requested by the Policy Organs, the meeting identified options on making use of the PAeN infrastructure for further add-on services, including the pre-feasibility study on the Pan-African Mass Education TV that was developed by the Commission. The meeting gathered the representatives of the ten (10) Member States that utilize the facilities provided by the Network.

**105.** The report of the Chairperson of the Commission on the sustainability of the Pan-African e-Network was finalized in May 2018 and submitted for the consideration of the Assembly of Users in December 2018. The final report will be presented to the STC on Communication and ICT in November 2019.

**106.** The Commission has been active in promoting digitalization through the implementation of various projects, notably the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), the African Internet Exchange Point System (AXIS), the African Leadership in ICT (ALICT), Policy and Regulation Initiative for Digital Africa (PRIDA), dotAfrica top level domain name and the implementation of the AU Convention on Cyber-security and Personal Data Protection.

## **XII. Single Africa Air Transport Market (SAATM)**

**107.** The following twenty- eight (28) countries are currently part of SAATM: Benin, Burkina Faso, Botswana, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Eswatini, Togo and Zimbabwe.

**108.** The regulatory and institutional texts of the Yamoussoukro Decision, which constitute the regulatory and management framework of the SAATM, were adopted by January 2018 Summit. The Commission has recruited a consultant to redraft the dispute settlement mechanism and its institutions.

**109.** The Ministerial Working Group that was set up to lead SAATM's establishment and operationalization held its fourth meeting in Lomé in May 2018. An important outcome was the adoption of the memorandum of implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision, to be signed by all states that join SAATM. The Commission facilitated the capacity strengthening of the Executing Agency of the Yamoussoukro Decision, the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), including the recruitment of its new Secretary General.

**110.** The slow pace by Member States to join the SAATM and slow implementation of the immediate measures remain the greatest challenge to its operationalization. Member States that have signed and ratified the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) are urged to join the SAATM, if they have not already done so, to enable its operationalization. The liberalization of the African air transport market will contribute significantly to intra-African trade. On its part, the Commission continued its advocacy for the SAATM and the mobilization of financial and technical resources to strengthen the effectiveness of the African Civil Aviation Commission, which is the Executing Agency.

### **XIII. Silencing the Guns by 2020**

**111.** In line with his coordinating role, the High Representative for Silencing the Guns, Ramtane Lamamra, organized a two-day workshop in Addis Ababa in March 2018, which brought together experts and practitioners from institutions active in the promotion of peace and security in Africa. The workshop's aim was to reflect on how best to expedite the operationalization of one of the Union's flagship projects on Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020.

**112.** Participants discussed peace and security trends on the continent, including traditional threats such as violent extremism and terrorism, transnational organized crime, the trafficking of small arms and light weapons, as well as inter-communal conflicts, but also more recent challenges related to climate change, rapid urbanization and growing youth unemployment. They also focused their attention on the continent's major trans-regional conflict complexes in the Sahel (including the Lake Chad Basin), North Africa, the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa (including South Sudan).

**113.** The workshop underlined two major imperatives to silencing the guns on the continent. First is the need to concentrate, even more than in the past, on the prevention of violent conflicts and strengthen the Union's efforts towards structural prevention of conflict. In this regard, participants expressed concern about the increased use of military might to resolve conflicts. Second is the urgent need for African leaders, at all levels, to demonstrate strong personal commitment in pushing for peace. In this context, participants welcomed the visionary leadership that led recently to an end of some of the continent's protracted regional conflicts, notably in the Horn of Africa, following the rapprochement between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

**114.** There was also a consensus that political legitimacy and governmental accountability to its citizens must be enhanced to realize the ambitious goal of silencing the guns in Africa by 2020. Good governance was thus identified as the single most important asset not only for the promotion of peace, security and political stability, but also inclusive development.

**115.** The AU High Representative for Silencing the Guns in Africa undertook a mission to the Comoros in September 2018, to support the dialogue between the Comorian parties. The visit was a follow-up to a meeting in Beijing in September 2018 between the President of the Union of the Comoros, Azali Assoumani, and the Chairperson of the Commission. He also travelled to Madagascar in September 2018, as part of the AU's efforts to assist the Republic of Madagascar in preparation of the 2018 presidential elections. The successful holding of presidential elections and the acceptance by all the Malagasy parties of the decision of the High Constitutional Court marked a major advance towards the promotion of democracy and the settlement of electoral disputes through constitutional means. The AU High Representative also continued to assist the peace initiatives undertaken by the AU High Level Implementation Panel (AUHIP) and IGAD High Level Revitalization Forum in Sudan and South Sudan, respectively.

**116.** As part of its efforts to implement Article 17 of the African Youth Charter (2006), which urges the active engagement and collaboration with youth on peace and security, the Commission convened a Maiden Consultative Meeting in Lagos in November 2018, with youth organizations working on peace and security. The meeting was held with the objective of defining modalities and implementation strategies for the engagement of youth organizations in conflict prevention and feed their efforts into the Commission's Framework for Youth in Peacebuilding. On its part, the Peace and Security Council convened an open session on youth, peace and security in Africa in November 2018, and decided to hold such session annually as a way of involving the African youth in peace efforts.

**117.** In collaboration with the RECs, the Commission's Department of Peace and Security continued its efforts towards developing the Silencing the Guns Continental Plan of Action on small arms and light weapons, which seeks to translate into action the arms control priorities contained in the AU Master Roadmap. The West and East Africa chapters were validated in May and November 2018, respectively. Finally, the Department of Peace and Security completed the continental mapping study on illicit arms flows, which was validated by experts in September 2018. The study will be presented to the Peace and Security Council in early 2019.

**118.** Within the framework of the African Union's Continental Structural Conflict Prevention Framework (CSCPF) that was endorsed by the Peace and Security Council in 2015, the Commission launched its pilot Country Structural Vulnerability and Resilience Assessment (CSVRA) and Country Structural Vulnerability Mitigation Strategy (CSVMS) report of the Republic of Ghana in October 2018. Ghana's pioneering role in this exercise needs to be replicated by all Member States as part of the efforts to silence the guns and promote a conflict-free continent.

### **C. INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS AND SELF-FINANCING**

**119.** The Assembly in its decision on the AU institutional reform Assembly/AU/Dec.635(XXVIII) of January 2017, sets out a comprehensive AU reform agenda aimed at fundamentally re-positioning the organization to meet the evolving needs of its Member States and the continent. The reform decision took into account previous reform proposals, notably the 2007 Adedeji Audit, which made extensive and far-reaching recommendations on how to improve the overall effectiveness of the Union. Unfortunately, most of these recommendations were never implemented.

**120.** To this end, the Assembly identified the following core reform priorities: (i) focus on key priorities with continental scope; (ii) realign AU institutions in order to deliver against those priorities; (iii) connect the AU to its citizens; (iv) manage the business of the AU efficiently and effectively at both the political and operational levels; and (v) finance the African Union sustainably and with the full ownership of the Member States.

**121.** More importantly, the Assembly decided to oversee the reform process by designating President Paul Kagame of Rwanda to supervise the implementation process. It determined that President Kagame would work with the *Reform Troika* comprising the outgoing Chair of the Union for 2016, President Idriss Déby of Chad, and

the incoming Chair of the Union for 2017, President Alpha Conde of Guinea. The Assembly requested President Kagame to report on progress made in implementing the reform agenda at each of its ordinary sessions.

**122.** During the January 2018 Summit, the Assembly decided that, as part of the process of deepening consultations around the reform implementation process, the *Reform Troika* should be expanded to the Bureau of the Assembly of the Union. The Assembly also decided to establish a group of fifteen (15) Ministers of Foreign Affairs, three per region, to play an advisory role to the reform process. In Nouakchott in July 2018, the group of Ministers of Foreign Affairs was expanded to twenty (20) members.

**123.** Significant progress was made in the implementation of the institutional reform. Key highlights include the following:

- *Financing the Union:*

**124.** Following the adoption of the ‘golden rules’ for financial management at the January 2018 Summit, a credible budget process was put in place as a result of which the AU 2019 budget was reduced by 12%, compared to the 2018 budget.

**125.** At the time of this reporting, twenty-five (25) Member States were at various stages of implementing the 0.2% levy to ensure predictable and autonomous financing of the Union. In addition, Member States contributed approximately US\$80.4million to the AU Peace Fund.

**126.** UN Security Council Resolutions 2320 and 2378 on predictable and sustainable financing of AU-mandated and/or authorized peace support operations also represented significant progress in delivering on the AU’s long-standing position that AU-led peace support operations that are authorised by the UN Security Council should be funded by UN assessed contributions.

- *Working Methods of the Policy Organs:*

**127.** From 2019 onwards, there will only be one ordinary Summit a year of the heads of state and government. A streamlined agenda for the Summit focusing on only three key strategic issues for the Assembly’s attention was instituted. Furthermore, the systematic categorisation of decision-making that is already provided for in the Assembly Rules of Procedure will be instituted starting from 2019, with a view to improving the overall quality of the decision-making process and enhancing implementation.

- *Gender and Youth Representation:*

**128.** Quotas for women – 50% by 2025 – and the youth – 35% by 2025 – for posts across the AU were set and recruitment is being undertaken in line with these quotas.

- *Policy Coherence and Division of Labour in the Union:*

**129.** During the period under review, the Chairperson of the Commission established a joint committee of experts and liaison officers of the different Regional Economic Communities (RECS) at the AU headquarters to follow up on the implementation of the various Assembly decisions namely: (i) Assembly/AU/Dec.690(XXXI) of July 2018, which requested the implementation of the roadmap on the clarification of the division of labour among the AU, RECs, Member States and continental organizations; (ii) Assembly/AU/Dec.635(XXVIII) of January 2017, which called for a clear division of labour and effective collaboration among the AU, the RECs, the Regional Mechanisms (RMs), the Member States, and other continental institutions, in line with the principle of subsidiarity; and (iii) Assembly/AU/Dec.112(VII) of July 2006, which urges the RECs to coordinate and harmonize their policies among themselves and with the Commission with a view to accelerating Africa's integration process.

**130.** The Joint AU Commission-RECS Committee submitted a draft decision on establishing an effective division of labour between the African Union, Regional Economic Communities and continental organisations that was adopted by the Assembly at its 11<sup>th</sup> extraordinary Summit held in Addis Ababa in November 2018 [Ext/Assembly/AU/Dec.1(XI)].

**131.** In addition, the Commission, with the technical support of the African Capacity Building Foundation, carried out three studies on policy coherence and division of labour in the Union. The first study reviewed the functional roles of all the AU Organs with a human rights and governance mandate. The aim was to identify entry-points for the introduction of processes, systems and mechanisms for the improvement of policy alignment, harmonised budgeting, results-based programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management, and reporting across these Organs.

**132.** The second study examined the relationship between the Commission and Specialised Agencies. The objective was to (i) create a comprehensive inventory of all Specialised Agencies; (ii) elaborate a coherent legal definition of a Specialised Agency; (iii) review a standard set of criteria for the awarding of specialised agency status to autonomous institutions; (iv) propose a consistent process for the operationalisation of these Agencies; (v) construct a mapping of division of labour between Specialised Agencies and relevant departments of the Commission; and (vi) consider possible funding models to ensure sustainability of these Agencies.

**133.** In addition, recognising the need to enhance the functional relationship with its Permanent Representational Offices (PROs), the Commission undertook another study to assess the strategic and capacity of PROs with a view to designing effective mechanisms for improved institutional coherence.

**134.** Work will continue in 2019 towards the implementation of the Assembly's decision and the holding of more consultations with all the stakeholders on the issues and options articulated in the three studies.



- *Pan-African Parliament and Judicial Organs:*

**135.** The Commission completed an initial review of the Pan-African Parliament and the judicial organs, and a more detailed assessment is underway to develop more detailed recommendations on how to strengthen the effectiveness of these Organs.

- *Strategic Partnerships:*

**136.** The Commission also completed an initial review of AU's strategic partnerships. On its part, the PRC Sub-Committee on Multilateral Cooperation began to draft an overall Partnerships Strategy, with a view to establishing clear principles, enhance the Union's capacity to negotiate effective partnerships and monitor their implementation and impact of African people.

- *AU Development Agency:*

**137.** The Assembly meeting in Nouakchott in July 2018 adopted decision Assembly/AU/Dec.691(XXXI) on the transformation of the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) into the African Union Development Agency (AUDA). The Assembly in Nouakchott also agreed on the governance structure for the new AU's Development Agency.

- *African Peer Review Mechanism:*

**138.** Proposals on how to strengthen the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) focused on establishing the predictable financing of this institution by integrating it into the AU budget and developing an annual State of Governance in Africa report as a tool to track overall governance in Africa.

- *Peace and Security Council:*

**139.** The Peace and Security Council held a retreat in Cairo in October 2018 to reflect, among others, on how to strengthen its working methods and its role in conflict prevention and management.

**140.** It is against this background that at its extraordinary Summit on AU institutional reform, which was held at AU headquarters from 17 to 18 November 2018, the Assembly adopted its decision [Ext/Assembly/AU/Dec.1(XI) :

- a) to reduce the size of the Commission from 10 to 8, in order to rationalise senior leadership portfolios and improve overall efficiency. From 2021, the Commission's senior leadership will now comprise the Chairperson of the Commission, the Deputy Chairperson and six (6) Commissioners;
- b) to strengthen the selection process for the senior leadership by introducing a new competency-based assessment that will be overseen by a Panel of Eminent Africans assisted by an independent African consultancy firm;

- c) to strengthen performance management and accountability at the senior leadership level by introducing performance contracts that will be monitored on an annual basis;
- d) to clarify termination procedures for the senior leadership of the Commission; and
- e) to adopt a new and enhanced sanctions regime against Member States for the non-payment of their contributions in a timely manner.

## **D. IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 2063 FTYIP**

### **I. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework for Agenda 2063**

**141.** The Commission, in collaboration with the RECs, the NEPAD Agency, UNECA, the African Development Bank, and the African Symposium on Statistical Development, developed the M&E Framework for Agenda 2063 First Ten Year Implementation Plan (FTYIP) and the SDGs. The M&E Framework was adopted by the Executive Council in January 2018 [EX.CL./998 (XXXII)].

**142.** The adoption of the M&E Framework has led, among other steps, to an agreement on a unified implementation and monitoring plan, as well as a reporting template for Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In preparation for the operationalization of the Framework, the NEPAD Agency developed a handbook with detailed profiles of each of the core indicators, as well as a training manual and an implementation support architecture with corresponding tools for alignment, data collection, analysis, reporting and data visualization. In addition, the Strategy for Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA) was initiated to cater for both Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda for SDGs.

### **II. Domestication of Agenda 2063 First Ten-Year Implementation Plan**

**143.** Domestication of Agenda 2063's First Ten-Year Implementation Plan into national planning frameworks is gaining traction with forty (40) Member States that had done so by the time of this reporting.

**144.** The Commission organised the second consolidation workshop on domestication of Agenda 2063 in Nairobi in September 2018, to take stock of progress made in this area, share experiences and lessons learnt in this process, as well as draw insights on how the integration of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs had progressed since the last meeting held in Maseru in December 2016.

**145.** The Nairobi meeting identified the kind of technical assistance and other needs that are required of the Commission in its efforts to support Member States in the process. The meeting also addressed the issue of progress in reporting on Agenda 2063 by Member States to AU Summits and identified ways to popularize Agenda 2063 to the African citizenry.

### **III. Domestic Resource Mobilization for Agenda 2063**

**146.** Following the adoption of the Domestic Resource Mobilization strategy by the Executive Council in January 2018, the Commission convened a preparatory meeting with the African Development Bank in Addis Ababa in June 2018 for the operationalization of the strategy. In this regard, it was agreed that a platform comprising identified key stakeholder institutions – the Commission, the African Development Bank, UNECA, and the NEPAD Agency – would be launched in February 2019, to develop a domestic resource mobilization roadmap and guidelines that will be circulated to all Member States for domestication. Implementation of the strategy and its roadmap is expected to commence in 2019.

### **IV. Joint AU/UN Framework on the implementation of Agenda 2063 and SDGs**

**147.** Progress has been made since the adoption of the two agendas in 2015. It includes the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework that accommodates both Agendas and a common reporting framework that will help to produce a single periodic performance report.

**148.** The Chairperson of the Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations signed in Addis Ababa on 27 January 2018, the *African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. The AU-UN Framework sets out the conditions for cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations, which will include joint activities and programs to ensure efficient implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the two Agendas.

**149.** The Commission initiated contacts with the UN and its various agencies in several African countries on how the M&E Framework for Agenda 2063 will be rolled out and what capacity will be needed for its operationalization.

**150.** Meanwhile, the first annual report under the title *Africa Sustainable Development Report Tracking Progress on Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals* was completed and disseminated in 2017. The second report for the year 2018 was launched in Rwanda in December 2018.

### **V. Revitalization of the Ministerial Committee on Agenda 2063**

**151.** Following the adoption by the Executive Council of the decision on the revitalization of the Ministerial Committee on Agenda 2063 in January 2018 [EX.CL/Dec.998(XXXII)], the Ambassadorial Committee on Agenda 2063 was established and its rules of procedure drafted.

**152.** The Ministerial Committee met informally in the margins of the Nouakchott Summit in July 2018. It had planned to meet in December 2018 to finalize its Progress Report on the implementation of Agenda 2063 and on its revitalization process. However, the meeting has been postponed for March 2019, and the report will be

submitted to the Assembly for further consideration during the July 2019 Summit.

## **E. IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS OF THE POLICY ORGANS**

**153.** During the period under review, the Commission implemented fifty-five (55) of the ninety-seven decisions (56.7%). It should be pointed out, however, that some decisions – such as those that confirm the results of the elections or congratulate Member States for hosting the Union's Summits – do not give rise to action. This category of decisions reduces the rate of implementation.

**154.** As regards Member States, the Commission had addressed a questionnaire seeking information about Member States' implementation activities. Only three – Mali, Mauritius and Morocco – responded.

**155.** The responsibility to implement the Union's decisions rests primarily with Member States with the support of various Organs and Specialized Agencies. While the current trend appears to be positive, many constraints continue to impede this process. They include the following:

- (i) most decisions are adopted after the approval of the current year's budget and cannot therefore be implemented in the absence of a budgetary provision;
- (ii) some decisions are not likely to be implemented because of the exorbitant financial cost they entail;
- (iii) often some decisions face a very short implementation time due to the limited time interval between the sessions of the Policy Organs;
- (iv) late payment by Member States of their statutory contributions and late release of funds by partners also contribute to these implementation challenges;
- (v) despite the reduction in the number of decisions, there are still too many to be implemented from each session of the Policy Organs.

**156.** It is also useful to reform the procedure for the submission and adoption of decisions and preclude the adoption of decisions that will never be implemented by, among others, (i) ensuring that the draft decisions are in coherence with the available human and financial resources; (ii) limiting the number of draft decisions to be submitted to the Policy Organs; and (iii) ensuring the conformity of the draft decisions with AU legal instruments.

**157.** Member States are also urged to forward to the Commission their response to the implementation questionnaire to facilitate the production of the report on the implementation of decisions within the time-limit.

## **F. DELIVERING ON CONTINENTAL FRAMEWORKS AND MANDATES**

### **I. Economic Transformation, Inclusive Growth, Poverty Reduction**

- **Africa Industrialization Week**

**158.** The Commission commemorated the Africa Industrialization Week (AIW2018) in Addis Ababa during the period of 18 to 23 November 2018, pursuant to the resolution of the Heads of State and Government of the OAU – AHG/Res.180 (XXV) – of July 1989, which proclaimed 20 November as the Africa Industrialization Day, to be celebrated annually, “for the purpose of mobilizing the commitment of African countries and the international community towards the industrialization of Africa”.

**159.** The 2018 event was organized in partnership with the NEPAD Agency, UNIDO and UNECA. It aimed to enhance consciousness and understanding of the opportunities and challenges associated with the industrialization drive on the continent. It also provided a platform for business to business interface, to enhance prospects for developing business partnerships and investment promotion.

- **Accelerated Industrial Development for Africa (AIDA)**

**160.** Following the endorsement by the Assembly in 2008 – (Assembly/AU/Dec.175(X) – of the Action Plan for the Accelerated Industrial Development for Africa (AIDA), the Commission, through its Department of Trade and Industry, has worked closely with Member States and the RECs to implement the pan-African industrialization blueprint.

**161.** Notable progress has been made in this regard as most RECs now have their own regional industrialization strategies. However, at the continental level, the implementation of the strategy over the last ten-year period (2008-2018) has been slow. This is mainly due to the absence of an institutional mechanism to drive the implementation and coordination of AIDA activities, as well as lack of financial resources dedicated to this program.

**162.** In an effort to accelerate the pace of AIDA implementation, the Commission, with the financial support of UNIDO, set up the Implementation Coordination Unit (ICU) in May 2018, to coordinate the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of AIDA.

**163.** Special Economic Zones (SEZs) experienced a promising resurgence in Africa’s industrialization agenda, thanks in particular to the cooperation with China on industrial capacity development, as well as the inspiring achievements of some African countries in this regard. Many Member States and RECs have included SEZs as a key element in their industrialization policies and their strategies to foster economic growth and competitiveness.

**164.** As part of initiatives in this area, the Commission participated in the launch of the first phase of Africa’s biggest free trade zone in Djibouti in July 2018. The free trade zone, which was built in partnership with the Chinese government, is part of the Sino-

Africa initiatives. It was opened during the Africa-China Economic Forum that was hosted by Djibouti to ensure deeper commercial collaboration between the public and private sectors.

- **Implementation of the Action Plan on Boosting Intra-African Trade**

**165.** Under the Action Plan on Boosting Intra-African Trade, within the domain of Trade Facilitation and Customs Cooperation, the need to promote competitiveness of African countries and goods in the international market calls for an agreed common and shared mechanism that will assist the stakeholders to have a coherent approach. As directed by the African Union Subcommittee of Directors General of Customs (AUSCDGC), the Commission, through the Department of Trade and Industry, continued to facilitate and coordinate the different programme activities with a view to expediting the free movement of goods. In the same vein, a draft AU Trade Facilitation Strategy was developed in line with international instruments and best practices, such as the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement and the World Customs Organization Revised Kyoto Convention, and also taking into consideration existing trade facilitation initiatives at national and regional levels. The development of the AU trade facilitation strategy has an ultimate objective of enhancing economic growth and development in Africa.

- **AU Trade Observatory**

**166.** The Assembly, in its decision Assembly/AU/Dec.394(XVIII) of January 2012, endorsed the framework, roadmap and architecture for fast-tracking the establishment of the AfCFTA and the action plan for Boosting Intra-African Trade. The AfCFTA's architecture includes, among others, the establishment of the African Union Trade Observatory (ATO), to be located within the Commission's Department of Trade and Industry. The ATO will provide updated and reliable trade data and information to support policies and business decisions, and facilitate the monitoring of the AfCFTA's implementation process.

**167.** The AU Trade Observatory is a collaborative project between the Commission, the EU and ITC, with the RECs as co-partners. The African Centre for Statistics and the UNECA are members of the Steering Committee. The project will be funded by the EU for €4million from the €50 million envelope recently announced by the EU in support of the AfCFTA implementation.

- **Maritime Strategy (Blue Economy)**

**168.** The Commission and the Government of the Seychelles jointly organised in April 2018 the 2018 Africa Shippers Summit for AU Ministers and stakeholders in the maritime sector. Participants underscored the need for the AU to appoint a Blue Economy Champion for Africa. Subsequently, President Danny Faure of Seychelles was appointed the Blue Economy Champion at the Assembly's extraordinary session held in Addis Ababa in November 2018.

**169.** Pursuant to decision EX.CL/Dec.822 (XXV) of June 2014, the Commission activated an interdepartmental team under the coordination of the Office of the Legal Counsel to ensure more integrated action with regard to maritime matters. In this direction, the organization of an AU-ECA side event during the Blue economy Conference in Nairobi in November 2018 constituted a significant step.

**170.** At the Nairobi Conference, the Commission, working with UNECA, organized a side event that achieved the following results:

- (i) establish a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities for African coastal, maritime and inland water governance as well as stimulate concrete proposals that will contribute to the 2019 African Union Blue Economy Strategy, with clear prioritization of women and youth participation;
- (ii) promote notable key sectors that require improved private sector involvement, with a focus on women participation. They include fisheries, tourism, transport, renewable energy, aquaculture, seabed extractive activities, and biotechnology and bio prospecting;
- (iii) launch the establishment of a platform to coordinate and facilitate the synchronization between existing sectors, institutions and industries relevant to the Blue Economy by highlighting best practices and awarding recognition to Champions at the presidential level, industry and collaborating partners with a special focus of women in the Blue Economy regime. Four heads of state – Guinea, Mauritius, Seychelles and Togo – as well as the Women in Maritime Africa (WIMA) organization and an outstanding woman Blue Economy practitioner – Ms Nancy Kariginthi from Kenya – received awards tied to the Blue Economy from the Chairperson of the Commission;
- (iv) also launch of one of the mechanisms provided under the 2050 Africa Integrated Maritime (AIM) Strategy during the award ceremony, namely the High College of Champions. Naming the champions and giving them acknowledgement prizes from heads of states, governments and civil society was a direct implementation of the said AIM strategy. The Champion – President Faure of Mauritius – is a member of the High College but his specific mandate is more continental and aligned to the development aspects of the Blue Economy.

**171.** The Commission commenced work on the development of a Blue Economy Strategy to ensure that Africa benefits from its maritime resource endowments. The Strategy is expected to be finalized in March 2019.

- **Pharmaceutical manufacturing plan for Africa**

**172.** Implementation of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa resulted in the launch of the African Medicines Regulatory Harmonization initiative led by the NEPAD Agency, and the establishment of the African Medicines Agency (AMA).

**173.** Development of the pharmaceutical manufacturing sector has been hampered by lack of access to financing and responsiveness to the needs of the sector. It was in view of these challenges that the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Health, Population and Drug Control recommended, in March 2017, the establishment of the Fund for African Pharmaceutical Development to accelerate the realization of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa.

- **Africa Mining Vision**

**174.** The Statute establishing the African Minerals Development Centre (AMDC) as an AU Specialised Agency responsible for coordinating the implementation of the Africa Mining Vision was adopted by the Assembly at the January 2016 Summit [Assembly/AU/Dec.589(XXVI)]. Subsequently, the Assembly, in its decision Assembly/AU/Dec.697(XXXI) of July 2018, decided that the AMDC will be hosted by the Republic of Guinea. The Assembly also directed that the AMDC Interim Secretariat be hosted by the Commission to facilitate the finalisation of the Host Agreement and putting in place the Governance Structure as well as expedite the ratification of the AMDC Statute. The AMDC Interim Secretariat has already moved to the Commission, funds for recruitment of interim staff have been acquired and the recruitment of the new AMDC Staff is ongoing. The transition process has commenced and will be concluded as soon as possible and, in any event, by the end of 2019.

**175.** Since the adoption of the Africa Mining Vision by the Heads of State and Government in 2009, Member States have either domesticated it in its totality – Lesotho – or have used it to review their mining laws – Ghana, Kenya and Namibia, among others. Apart from Member States, a number of institutions have also been strengthened, including the Organisation of Africa Geological Surveys (OAGS), which is now partnering with EuroGeo Surveys to implement a €10 million Geoscience capacity building programme called PanAfGeo that will train over 1200 young geoscientist in various areas within the next three (3) years 2018-2022.

**176.** In terms of strengthening and consolidating the private sector in the mineral resources sector, an Association of Chamber of Mines and other Mining Associations in Africa and the African Women in Mining Association (AWIMA) have been established; they have already endorsed the AMV Private Sector Compact. A Mining Model law is also being developed to assist in the harmonization of African mining codes. An artisanal and small-scale mining strategy is also under development to ensure that the artisanal and small-scale mining sector contributes optimally to the social and economic development agenda of the continent.

- **Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)**

**177.** Recognizing the importance of private sector-led growth in contributing to Africa's economic development, the AU Conference of African Ministers of Industry (CAMI 20), which was held in Nairobi in June 2013, identified industrialization as the basis for development, with the private sector playing a critical role in supporting sustainable



industrialization. CAMI also directed Member States to create an enabling environment for the creation and operation of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and small and medium-sized industries (SMIs);

**178.** As a follow-up, the Commission drafted an SME Strategy and Master Plan for Africa (2019-2023). The Commission planned to submit the SME Strategy for the consideration of the STC on Trade, Industry and Minerals in January 2019, for its final adoption by the Policy Organs at the February 2019 Summit.

- **Enterprise Africa Network**

**179.** During the year under review, the Commission worked closely with private sector organizations and Afreximbank on the revival of the Pan-African Private Sector Trade and Investment Committee (PAFTRAC), which was created in 2011 to serve as an advocacy platform to enhance African private sector participation in the formulation of trade and investment policy – including the negotiations and implementation of trade agreements – and to channel private sector expectations to policy makers. Following a working group meeting that took place in Nairobi in February 2018, the Commission convened the PAFTRAC inaugural meeting in Addis Ababa in October 2018, which resulted in the setting up of a steering committee for the project.

**180.** During the period under review, the Commission sought ways to address problems faced by small and medium enterprises in their quest to sustain themselves. This effort was in addition to the SME Strategy that was developed in 2017 and will be submitted for the consideration of the Policy Organs at the February 2019 Summit. The Commission initiated a feasibility study on “Enterprise Africa Network” (EAN) in the framework of the EU-funded Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) Support Mechanism II.

**181.** With regards to the development of Regional Value Chains, the Commission began the development of a viable cassava value chain in Africa. Africa is the largest cassava producer in the world, producing about 55% of the global market. Four of the world’s top ten cassava producers are in Africa, namely, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ghana and Angola. The Commission’s Department of Trade and Industry continued to support the capacity of small-holder cassava producers to link with the market, whilst at the same time implementing programs to anchor transformation of the sector towards a higher value chain production system to enhance farm gate and upstream incomes.

**182.** Africa’s private sector has the potential to be part of global value chains and benefit from the technology needed through joint ventures and other forms of partnerships with private sector actors from other parts of the world. In light of the above, the Commission drafted the African Union Private Sector Development Strategy 2016-2020 in November 2015 as a concrete step towards enhancing private sector capacity to be part of the global value chains. Through the Department of Economic Affairs, the Commission was actively involved in initiatives to promote public-private cooperation and capacity building for African young and women entrepreneurs to equip them with innovative ideas and entrepreneurial skills. The Commission also assisted Member States in developing policies that are conducive to the development of the

private sector, with a particular emphasis on strengthening local micro, small and medium-size enterprises.

**183.** On its part, the NEPAD Agency set up a Country Agribusiness Partnerships Framework and a multi-stakeholder platform to untap private sector resources, enable connection of key players in the agriculture value chains, and match investors to business opportunities that are framed in national development plans. The following Member States took part in phase 1 of these multi-stakeholder platforms for the following products: Benin (pineapple), Côte d'Ivoire (rice), Burkina Faso (mango), and Kenya (potato).

**184.** Grow Africa is an integral part of the CAADP implementation process, championing private sector engagement in support of National Agriculture Investment Plans. The project delivered on four key result areas, namely (i) mobilization of high level (political) commitment; (ii) mainstreaming of the private sector into National Agricultural Investment Plans; (iii) connection of value chain partners; and (iv) knowledge sharing for innovation.

- **Pan African Investment Code**

**185.** During the Third Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Integration (COMAI III) held in Abidjan in May 2008, the Ministers requested the Commission to create a conducive environment to attract greater flows of investments into Africa and facilitate intra-African cross-border investments. The Ministers mandated the Commission “to develop a comprehensive Investment Code for Africa with a view to promoting private sector participation”.

**186.** The draft code was submitted to the STC on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration held at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa in October 2017. The Ministers considered the revised Pan African Investment Code and requested the Commission to submit it to the STC on Trade, Industry and Minerals. The Commission presented the draft to the Consultative Meeting of this STC at the level of senior officials, held in Addis Ababa in October 2018. The Consultative Meeting recommended that the Pan African Investment Code should be used as a reference framework document in the negotiations of the AfCFTA investment chapter.

- **Establishment of the African Inclusive Market Excellence Centre**

**187.** By its decision EX.CL./Dec.987(XXXII) of January 2018, the Executive Council approved the establishment of the African Inclusive Market Excellence Centre (AIMEC) and requested the Commission, among others, to look at the practical modalities of operationalizing the Centre, in line with the AU rules and procedures, by ensuring that the selection of the Member State to host the Centre be carried out in conformity with the relevant criteria. So far, three Member States, namely Benin, Senegal and Tunisia, have offered to host the AIMEC. The Commission will conclude the selection of the host country in early 2019.

## **II. Agricultural Productivity and Production: Implementation of CAADP**

### **• Supporting Countries and Regional systems**

**188.** Since the adoption by the Assembly in June 2014 – Assembly/AU/Decl.1(XXIII) – of the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods [Doc.Assembly/AU/2(XXIII)] and the development of the CAADP implementation guidelines, the Commission, working with the RECs and NEPAD Agency, provided support to twenty-seven (27) Member States in the domestication of the Malabo Declaration in the National Agriculture Investment Plans (NAIPs), with the objective to reach twenty (20) more in 2019. The support focused on the alignment of the revised or updated NAIPs to the countries' planning cycles and budget processes.

**189.** The Commission also launched two key continental frameworks to help Member States implement their National Agriculture Investment Plans, one on agricultural mechanization and the other on postharvest loss management. The Commission also developed the Country Agribusiness Partnership Framework (CAP-F) as a tool to mobilize private investments in the agriculture sector. The CAP-F was rolled out in five (5) AU Member States (Ghana, Malawi, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda) with a target to reach fifteen (15) in 2019.

### **• Enhancing food security and nutrition - Declaration on Hunger Free Africa by 2025**

**190.** In the Malabo Declaration, Member States made a commitment to end hunger in Africa by 2025 and resolved to accelerate agricultural growth by at least doubling current agricultural productivity levels. Member States also committed to create and enhance the necessary appropriate policy and institutional conditions and support systems for crops, livestock, fisheries, amongst others, and the promotion and protection of smallholder agriculture.

**191.** During the year under review, the Commission initiated various interventions to assist Member States in achieving the goal of ending hunger in Africa by 2025. The Commission also commemorated the annual African Day for Food and Nutritional Security to create the needed awareness for attaining a hunger-free Africa by 2025. The 2017 Africa Day for Food and Nutrition Security took place in Côte d'Ivoire, while this year's commemoration will be held in Dar es Salaam on 5 December 2018.

**192.** The NEPAD Agency contributed to a preparatory survey in ten (10) Member States – Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal and Sudan – that were implementing the Initiative on Food and Nutrition in Africa (IFNA). The survey findings will inform the development of the IFNA Country Strategy for Action (ICSA), which will prioritise intervention action on food and nutritional security and provide guidelines for its implementation. An ICSA Consultative workshop comprising the ten countries was convened in Dakar in April 2018 to share the lessons and good practices. A consultative technical mission was deployed to two

additional IFNA countries – Chad and Mauritania – in August and September 2018, respectively.

**193.** In March 2018, the NEPAD Agency partnered with the Pan African Parliament (PAP) in the organization of a high-level advocacy event on nutrition and food systems for nutrition investments at the community level. A resolution on nutrition and food systems was adopted in May 2018, during the 6<sup>th</sup> ordinary session for the Pan African Parliament. The NEPAD Agency also held in Johannesburg in August 2018, a capacity building workshop for SADC Member States to advance the nutrition agenda in the region. During its October 2018 session, the Pan-African Parliament adopted a resolution on the development of a Model Law on Food Security and Nutrition in Africa.

**194.** FAO and the NEPAD Agency developed a Technical Cooperation Project (TCP) to incorporate indigenous crops into the African Nutritious Food Basket for improved food security and nutrition. The cost of the project for East and Southern Africa is estimated at US\$500,000. By the time of this reporting, the parties had not yet signed the TCP.

- **Strengthening mutual accountability and biennial review process**

**195.** Pursuant to the Malabo Declaration, the Commission submitted the first CAADP biennial review report to the Assembly at its January 2018 Summit. The report aims to track progress in the implementation of the Union's agricultural transformation agenda and serve as a mutual accountability tool for Member States in this collective endeavour. Forty-seven (47) Member States submitted their country reports that the Commission used to compile the biennial review report. Twenty (20) among the forty-seven countries were on track towards achieving the Malabo goals and targets by 2025.

**196.** The Commission, RECs and NEPAD Agency, working with partners, assisted Member State on how to efficiently use the outcomes of the biennial review and institute accountability mechanism for Malabo implementation at country level for more results and greater impact on people's livelihoods.

**197.** The Commission has put in place a dedicated mechanism and developed a roadmap to support Member States in the drafting and submission of their next contributions by June 2019. The second CAADP review report will be presented to the Policy Organs at the January 2020 Summit.

- **Livestock development strategy in Africa (LiDeSA) and policy framework**

**198.** The Livestock Development Strategy for Africa (LiDeSA) is the blueprint for livestock development in Africa. Its objective is to transform the livestock sector for enhanced contribution to Africa's socio-economic development and inclusive growth. This is being achieved through the promotion of priority livestock value chains with comparative advantage at the national and regional levels. The Commission is currently implementing LiDeSA through the Sustainable Development of Livestock for Livelihoods

(Live2Africa) project that seeks to address livestock issues on the continent through a value chain approach.

**199.** Live2Africa's implementation was delayed in the first half of 2018 due to slow staff recruitment, deployment processes and delayed release of partner funding. Nevertheless, implementation of activities picked up in the second half of 2018, with several activities, including support to Member States and the RECs to develop strategies to manage a disease of small ruminants called the Peste des Petits ruminants (PPR) and the creation of continental platforms and associations of key stakeholders in livestock development.

**200.** Additionally, the Commission established the African Association of Veterinary Education Establishments (2A2E-V) in July 2018, with the secretariat at AU-IBAR, to enhance the quality of veterinary education, training and research in Africa. The Association will also enhance collaboration among African academic and research institutions involved in veterinary education and spearhead innovation and curricular harmonization.

**201.** Similarly, the African Association of Veterinary Statutory Bodies (2AVSB), the Veterinary Education Establishments (VEEs), Veterinary Statutory Bodies (VSBs), the African Women in Animal Resources Farming and Agribusiness (AWARFA-N), the Africa Youth in Livestock (AY-L), and the Fisheries and Aquaculture Incubators Network were established in July 2018. These associations and networks are expected to address the challenge of the lack of veterinary regulations; enhance veterinary training; promote greater investment in women-led animal resources farming and agribusiness; and boost job creation for the youth in the animal resources sector. Activities of these associations/networks will be rolled out in 2019.

**202.** Through Live2Africa, the Animal Resources Information System (ARIS) was also sustained. Further, the identification and mapping of priority livestock value chains is underway and expected to be realized in the first quarter of 2019.

- **Policy framework and reform strategy for fisheries and aquaculture in Africa**

**203.** During the period under review, the Commission's Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture developed the following policy frameworks to advance the conservation and sustainable use of fisheries and aquaculture resources in the Blue Economy: (i) framework for the formulation of minimum terms and conditions for access to marine fisheries; (ii) regional plan of action for combating Illegal fishing for the regional fisheries bodies in West Africa; and (iii) framework for establishing regional coordinating centre for Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) for Central Africa in the premises of the Regional Fisheries Body (Regional Commission for Gulf of Guinea) in Libreville.

**204.** The Commission plans to operationalize the Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture (PFRS) in the various regions of the African Continent by supporting the establishment of MCS centres to continuously measure, regulate and follow up on maintenance of compliance issues with the regulatory controls imposed on fishing activities.

**205.** Besides, the Commission supported Member States and the RECs in implementing international guidelines for securing sustainable small-scale fisheries. It also provided assistance to thirty (30) Member States to align their national fisheries and aquaculture policies with the PFRS. In addition, a continental strategy for rational management of inland fisheries was developed.

**206.** In 2019, the Commission plans to assist Member States in domesticating these frameworks and strategies into their national policies and regulations for coherent management of shared resources.

**207.** The continental aquaculture network - the Intergovernmental Aquaculture Network for Africa (ANAF) – was transferred from FAO to AU-IBAR in July 2018. The NEPAD Agency assisted in the transfer and in strengthening the linkages between the RECs and regional fisheries bodies to enhance accountability in fisheries management and aquaculture development. Through a pilot project of the Eco Mark Africa, the NEPAD Agency provided support to four (4) Member States – Cameroon, Gabon, Guinea and Nigeria – in their efforts to improve fisheries in accordance with regional and international regulations and increase their access to global fish markets. Notable success has been recorded with regard to improved governance of ornamental fisheries and trade in Guinea.

**208.** In Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal, the NEPAD Agency's assistance helped to increase trade amongst private sector associations. Dedicated support was provided to women fish processors and traders, as well as aquaculture producers to help them make better use of the growing trade opportunities through competitive small and medium scale enterprises. The support provided also included capacity development and operationalisation of the African network of women fish processors and traders (AWFishNet).

- **Sustainable utilization, management and conservation of animal resources and their ecosystems**

**209.** During the year 2018, the Commission assisted twenty-five (25) Member States in the formulation of appropriate policies and regulatory frameworks for animal resources. The Commission also developed five regional guidelines for the formulation, harmonization of policies on animal crossbreeding.

**210.** Legislations and policies for the management of animal genetic resources (AnGR) were developed and validated by Member States, National Coordinators for AnGR, RECs, farmers associations, NGOs, tertiary institutions, and the private sector in all the five AU regions. As of this reporting, eighteen (18) policy notes on various aspects of the management and development of AnGR were available for Member States' use. Meanwhile, an African Animal Genetic Resources Information System (AAGRIS) is expected to be launched in the first quarter of 2019. It will serve as the continental platform for sharing information on AnGR.

- **Veterinary governance and animal health systems**

**211.** The Commission finalized the development of the Animal Health Strategy for Africa (AHSA) in December 2018. This Strategy seeks to enhance the contribution of the animal resources sector to livelihoods and improvement of public health through enhanced veterinary service delivery; strengthened harmonization and coordination of programmes and initiatives; and enhanced partnerships among other livestock stakeholders. Through the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, the Commission will initiate and complete the process for endorsement of the AHSA by the Executive Council and the Summit in June-July 2019 Summit.

**212.** During the year under review, the Commission also set up the Continental Animal Health Platform (CAHP-Africa). This continent-wide network of public and private actors involved in animal health seeks to strengthen the implementation of the Animal Health Strategy for Africa.

- **Pan African Vaccine Centre**

**213.** In 2018, the Pan African Vaccine Centre (PANVAC) received a total of 330 batches of vaccine samples for quality control test. In total, thirty-six (36) different types of vaccines were received from the laboratories of thirty-two (32) Member States. The pass rate for quality control was over 85%, which shows an increase in the number of batches of vaccines tested per year and the AU-PANVAC's visibility. The total number of batches tested represents a total of 912,187,289 doses of animal vaccines tested.

**214.** Diagnostic kits and reagents produced at PANVAC were supplied to the following Member States: Botswana, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Equatorial-Guinea, Gabon, Morocco, Sao-Tome & Principe and Zambia.

**215.** As part of the AU's commitment to eradicate all Rinderpest virus strains, the PANVAC implemented the resolutions of the 8th Conference of Ministers responsible for Animal Health in Africa held in Entebbe in May, 2010, as subsequently endorsed by the Executive Council [EX.CL/Dec. 610 (XVIII)] in January 2011. Presently, twelve among the thirteen countries have transferred their wild virus and vaccine seed strains to AU-PANVAC's safe custody. All unnecessary materials – tissue samples and other unpurified material that contain the wild virus – have been destroyed by the countries that held them, the last being Nigeria in Vom on 27 September 2018. The destruction in Nigeria marked the conclusion of a process that began with the discovery of the materials in a university in Northern Nigeria in November 2017.

**216.** The Chairperson of the Commission inaugurated the Continental Rinderpest Vaccine Bank at PANVAC in January 2018. Efforts are underway to support the establishment of a modern laboratory for AU-PANVAC and stock the Bank with 10 million doses of emergency preparedness vaccines in accordance with the resolution of the Rinderpest Sequestration meeting that took place in Sharm el Sheik in 2015. The Continental Rinderpest Vaccine Bank presently holds vaccine seed stocks and 1.5 million doses of vaccines to be used in any rinderpest outbreak globally.

**217.** The PANVAC also finalized the process for the procurement of 250,000 doses of Rinderpest emergency vaccines for storage at the Bank, as well as a walk-in cold room which will be used for the storage of the vaccines.

**218.** The PANVAC held several training sessions for Member States on vaccine production and animal disease control. They included an emergency preparedness session for Rinderpest outbreak for Member States' diagnostics and vaccine laboratories that took place in Debre-Zeit, Ethiopia, in January-February 2018. In addition, a Workshop on production and quality control of the dreaded disease of village chickens called the "Newcastle disease" was conducted for ten (10) Member States at Debre-Zeit in November 2018. Four (4) other laboratory staff were trained in vaccine quality control techniques. Technical support for the control of the disease of sheep and goats, also known as "Peste des Petits Ruminants", was provided to Botswana in January 2018, Burundi in January to February 2018, and Djibouti in April to May 2015, while 17 laboratory technicians were trained on the diagnosis of animal diseases in general.

**219.** In accordance with international standards and in recognition of its capacity and expertise in vaccine quality testing, the PANVAC was conferred with the International Standard Organization (ISO) 17025 Certification by the Ethiopian National Accreditation Organization (ENAO) on 22 November 2018. This is the highest recognition any testing laboratory can receive globally. It places PANVAC in the category of world-class recognized laboratories.

- **Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign**

**220.** The African Union Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign (AU-PATTEC) continued to coordinate the Union's efforts for the creation of tsetse and trypanosomiasis (T&T) free areas. During the period under review, thirty-five participants from twenty-eight affected countries received training on planning and managing large scale programmes to reduce the disease burden. Ethiopia, Mali, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Uganda Ghana, Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Senegal, Zambia have sustained the gains registered in the areas where tsetse and trypanosomiasis burden has been reduced.

**221.** Capacity building training sessions were also held for Tanzania (March 2018) and Mozambique (April 2018), as well as ECOWAS (May 2018) and the East Africa region (August 2018) on the application of open source geographical information system technology in tsetse and trypanosomiasis eradication projects. In addition, PATTEC carried out monitoring and evaluation missions to Rwanda (March 2018), and Côte d'Ivoire (October 2018) on the status of implementation of AU-PATTEC's initiatives.

**222.** Recognizing the importance of the RECs in accelerating regional integration of the management of tsetse trypanosomiasis (T&T) interventions, the AU-PATTEC held consultations with all T&T affected RECs (SADC, COMESA, EAC, IGAD, ECOWAS and ECCAS), as well as two bilateral meetings with ECOWAS and ECCAS. In the future, the



RECs will assume a greater role in mobilizing resources for their T&T eradication programmes.

**223.** AU-PATTEC also carried out eight joint activities regarding T&T control, notably with FAO, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). PATTEC has also worked very closely with AU-IBAR by participating in the guiding group meetings in the process of developing an animal health strategy for Africa (AHSA).

- **Enhanced resilience of production systems to climate change and improved agricultural risk management**

**224.** Smallholder women farmers comprise nearly half of the labor force in Africa's agriculture sector. In Cameroon, women represent 52% of the population, contribute 75% of agricultural work and produce 80% of food. In Ethiopia, women account for about 48% of the agricultural labor force and 70% of household food production. Malawian women contribute 70% of the country's agricultural labor force and produce 70% of household food. Women in Niger represent 49.5% of the national agricultural population and reportedly spend at least five hours per day in agricultural field work. Women in Rwanda contribute immensely to the agriculture value chain by providing labor for planting, weeding, harvesting and processing in addition to reproductive activities and community work.

**225.** Projects on the climate-agriculture-gender nexus were under implementation in five countries, namely Cameroon, Ethiopia, Malawi, Niger and Rwanda. The objective was to augment deployment of climate smart technologies among women and youth small holder framers and enhance their adaptive capacity and coping mechanism of climate externalities. The NEPAD Agency contributed USD 700,000 and technical advice to these countries during the year 2018.

- **Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa and Food Safety**

**226.** The Commission, through the Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA), continued its support to Member States and the RECs in effective and sustainable aflatoxin management to enhance food safety, food security and nutrition as well as improve trade and competitiveness of African foodstuffs globally.

**227.** The Commission organized the 3rd PACA Partnership Platform Meeting (PPM) in Dakar in October. The meeting charted the roadmap for scaling up to all Member States and the RECs the country-led model for aflatoxin control piloted by PACA since 2015/2015 in six Member States, namely The Gambia, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda. PACA also participated in continental and global events to showcase the Union's concern for food safety and its current efforts. They included two side events at the 14th CAADP Partnership Platform meeting in Libreville (April 2018), the Africa Green Revolution Forum (September 2018), the Africa Food Safety Workshop in Pretoria (June 2018), the 2nd Africa Symposium on Mycotoxicology in Mombassa (June 2018), and the Food Safety and Healthy Diets Workshop held at the Vatican (September 2018).

**228.** The Commission, through PACA, advocated the mainstreaming of food safety and aflatoxin control in continental frameworks. As a result, food safety was included in the Malabo Declaration Biennial Review report with the development of the Africa Food Safety Index. Through PACA, the Commission also secured €800,000 funding from the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU (CTA) to support food safety tracking and prioritization in Member States.

**229.** High quality publications on aflatoxin control in six (6) Member States – the Gambia, Malawi, Nigeria, Senegal, Tanzania and Uganda – are available as part of PACA's country situational analyses and action planning (C-SAAP). In addition, PACA, in collaboration with the German GIZ agency, published a book on "Mycotoxin Analysis: Focus on Rapid Methods" that provides rapid and low cost analysis of aflatoxins and other mycotoxins. PACA also produced infographics on the ten most commonly asked questions about aflatoxins, providing simplified visual presentation of the complex subject. PACA published the Status of Aflatoxin Situation in Africa using data from agriculture, trade and health sectors working with the six afore-mentioned Member States that received support from the Commission in building aflatoxin testing and monitoring capacity.

**230.** The Commission through PACA worked with the six afore-mentioned Member States and the ECOWAS Commission and COMESA Secretariat in developing aflatoxin control plans, mainstreaming them in national or regional strategies, and supporting their implementation. With the Commission's technical support, the financing of the national aflatoxin control action plans (NACAPs) from national and partner funds reached 4.6% of the NACAP budget in Malawi, 42% in Senegal, and 93% of the NACAP budget in Tanzania.

**231.** The Commission through PACA completed a €1million grant agreement with GIZ, of which €233,731 was disbursed in 2018 to support integrated aflatoxin control in groundnut value chains in Malawi. With PACA's initiative and support, the Commission helped Tanzania to launch a USD 20 million grant project that was funded by Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP). The Commission also deployed full time experts to coordinate national implementation plans in the six (6) afore-mentioned Member States.

**232.** It is in this context that the Commission, jointly with FAO and WHO, will organize the First International Food Safety Conference in Addis Ababa from 12 to 13 February 2019. The Conference's objectives are twofold: (i) to identify key strategies and actions to address current and future challenges to food safety globally, and (ii) to strengthen commitment at the highest level to scale up food safety in all continental commitments and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development Goals. More than 600 delegates are expected to take part in this event.

- **AU-SAFGRAD**

**233.** In the year 2018, AU Specialized Technical Office of Semi-Arid Food Grade Research and Development (AU-SAFGRAD) continued to promote the development of

agricultural strategic commodity value chains in terms of its competitiveness, efficiency and reliability.

**234.** AU-SAFGRAD trained young researchers and scientists from the following twenty-five (25) Member States on ways to improve agricultural development, in particular small irrigation development schemes: Algeria, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, The Gambia, Togo, Tunisia and Uganda.

**235.** AU-SAFGRAD hosted a policy dialogue to strengthen the role of communication and media on adaptation and mitigation of climate change and combating desertification issues that affect resilience of rural livelihoods in dry lands of Africa. Participants from Benin, Burkina Faso, Djibouti, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, the Gambia, Guinea, Mauritania, Senegal, Togo, Rwanda and Uganda, as well as the NEPAD Agency discussed the afore-mentioned topic, identified the main challenges and came out with recommendations that will be submitted to the Conference of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment and will be followed up with RECs and Youth associations in Africa.

**236.** AU-SAFGRAD initiated a special training programme in Ouagadougou in May 2018 on land degradation neutrality for the science and technical correspondents of UNCCD and the Great Green Wall focal points in Africa from the following twenty-nine (29) Member States – Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Djibouti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Eswatini, and Uganda. The objective was to create an effective platform to strengthen and coordinate the African Group of National Science and Technical Correspondents of UNCCD. In July-August 2018, AU-SAFGRAD also assisted ECCAS in prioritizing its regional agricultural strategic commodities.

**237.** AU-SAFGRAD finalized its strategic plan for the period 2019-2023, which aims to contribute to sustainable food security and improved rural livelihoods in semi-arid zones of Africa. For its realization, the plan relies on the need to strengthen the policy and institutional environment for enhancing the resilience of rural livelihoods in semi-arid zones of Africa, and the research-related capacity for agricultural productivity and climate change adaptation for enhanced resilience of rural livelihoods in semi-arid zones of Africa.

- **Pastoralism**

**238.** The Commission's Inter-Departmental Task Force on Conflict Prevention organized a two-day workshop at AU headquarters in September 2018 on transhumance conflicts in Africa, to reflect on the drivers of violent conflicts between farmers and herders and develop a continental policy on how to address such conflicts. Participants included representatives from the five regional Farmers Association and Pastoral Networks. A follow up meeting took place in Ouagadougou in November 2018

to draw up an implementation plan. A roadmap for the implementation of the action plan will be finalized in March 2019.

- **Rural infrastructure policy framework**

**239.** The Commission's Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture developed a draft Policy Framework on Rural Infrastructure and Access to Markets. An experts meeting was held in 2015 in Nairobi during which this policy document was critically reviewed and refined. Follow up consultations with the Regional Economic Communities and other key stakeholders are planned for the second quarter of 2019.

- **Inter-African Phytosanitary Council (IAPSC)**

**240.** Based on the recommendations of the last IAPSC's General Assembly and Steering Committee meetings held in Cairo in April 2017, the focus of the activities of Inter-African Phytosanitary Council (IAPSC) for 2018 was on strengthening the phytosanitary capacities of Member States and assisting them to prevent the introduction and spread of pests.

**241.** During the year 2018, IAPSC worked assiduously to harmonize Africa's position on International Phytosanitary Standards. In March 2018, IAPSC held a workshop for preparing the African contracting parties to the International Phytosanitary Standards and participated in a session of the Commission of Phytosanitary Measures (Pre-CPM). Twelve (12) Member States from the AU five regions met in Addis Ababa to discuss international phytosanitary standards and forge a common African vision and position. The report of this meeting was later shared with all Member States.

**242.** In April 2018, IAPSC participated in the CPM13 discussions in Rome on international standards on fruit flies, *Xylella fastidiosa* diseases and sea containers. In June and November 2018, IAPSC participated in meetings of the Standard Committee of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) to sensitize the participants about the needs of African countries in phytosanitary standards for re-dress. So far, the International Plant Protection Convention has adopted 142 standards on various phytosanitary issues.

**243.** IAPSC, in collaboration with FAO, also held in Madagascar in September 2018 a regional workshop for Africa within the ambit of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) in Madagascar in September 2018. Participants reviewed the draft phytosanitary standards for Africa and recommended the training of African countries on their use. IAPSC also organized two workshops on the Fall Armyworm in March and September 2018 to sensitize Member States on how to control this pest. IAPSC and FAO are planning another training programme on the control of the Fall Army Worm for all Member States in January 2019.

### **III. Environmental Sustainability**

- **Africa's engagement in global climatic change negotiations**

**244.** The Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) met in the margins of the January 2018 Summit in Addis Ababa and adopted the Decision on Outcomes of Conference of the Parties COP23/CMP13 (Assembly/AU/9(XXX) and Africa's Engagements at the Global Climate Change Conference at COP24/CMP14.

**245.** The 48<sup>th</sup> Session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies on Implementation (SBI 48) and Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 48) as well as the Fifth part of the Meeting of the Ad-hoc Working Group on Paris Agreement (APA 1.5) was held in Bonn, Germany, from 30 April to 10 May 2018. The outcomes of these meetings contributed to the climate negotiations at UNFCCC COP 24 in December 2018.

**246.** The Commission also participated in the 48th Session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) held in October 2018 in Songdo, Korea. The IPCC meeting adopted the Summary for Policy Makers on the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C (SR1.5). The session was important for the staff of the Commission to be updated on the scientific findings on climate change. Key recommendation made by the Commission was that support is needed for African Scientists to participate in the preparation of the IPCC reports.

**247.** The Lead Coordinators of the African Group of Negotiators on Climate Change (AGN) with the support of the Commission convened a Strategy meeting in Cairo in November 2018, which harmonized the African positions on emerging issues in preparation for the 24<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP24) of the UNFCCC that took place in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018. The Lead Coordinators exchanged views with the Commission on the challenges facing Member States in reporting on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). This information will help the Commission better assist Member States on the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

**248.** The NEPAD Agency supported the implementation of the provisions of the Paris Declaration by providing training and capacity building support to Member States on implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) within the agriculture sector. The first training session drew participants from Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, South Africa and Uganda.

**249.** The NEPAD Agency also supported national governments to mobilize climate finance for investments into the agriculture sector. Specifically, twelve (12) Member States – Botswana, Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Niger, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia – received technical support to develop project proposals on agriculture adaptation and climate change for financial support from the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

**250.** The process of the NEPAD Agency's accreditation to the Global Climate Fund is on track. A formal application was submitted in November 2018. This process may take another one or two years to be successfully completed.

- **Conserving wild fauna and flora**

**251.** The Republic of Angola hosted in July 2018 the Commission's meeting of the Experts' Group on the implementation of the AU Strategy to Combat Illegal Exploitation and Trade in Wild Fauna and Flora in Africa. The experts' group validated the monitoring and reporting framework for the implementation of the AU Wildlife Strategy and adopted a draft roadmap and action plan for a common African position on the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) for the 18<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP18) scheduled for May 2019, as well as a resource mobilization plan for the implementation of the strategy at regional and national level. The draft document was finalized in December 2018.

- **Enhancing environmental governance through the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCE) and the African Environment Partnership Platform (AEPP)**

**252.** The African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) convened its 7<sup>th</sup> Special Session and the first meeting of the African Environment Partnership Platform (AEPP) in Nairobi in September 2018, with the support of the Commission and the NEPAD Agency. The session prepared the Ministers' participation in three global events, namely: (i) the 14<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties to UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 14) that was held in Sharm El Sheikh in November 2018; (ii) the UNFCCC COP 24 in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018; and (iii) the 4th UN Environmental Assembly (UNEA-4), which is scheduled to take place in 2019.

- **Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa (MESA) and Africa Strategy on Meteorology**

**253.** The Commission through its Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa (MESA) programme and with funding from the European Union, concluded a capacity enhancement exercise for forty-nine (49) Member States from ECCAS, ECOWAS, IGAD, the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and SADC regions. The capacity enhancement included provision of training and equipment for accessing, processing, and disseminating both satellite-based and in-situ environment, marine, and climate data and information to Member States.

**254.** The following seven (7) Regional Technical Institutions were selected by the regions to lead implementation:

- (i) the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD) – based in Niamey – for climate services for disaster risk reduction for the whole continent;
- (ii) the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre (ICPAC) – based in Nairobi – for the IGAD region;
- (iii) the Agrhymet Regional Centre – based in Niamey – for the ECOWAS region;

- (iv) the ECOWAS Coastal and Marine Resources Centre – based at the University of Ghana in Accra – for the ECOWAS region;
- (v) the SADC Climate Services Centre (SADC-CSC) and the Botswana Department of Meteorological Services (BDMS) – based in Gaborone – for the SADC region;
- (vi) the Mauritius Oceanography Institute – based in Albion, Mauritius – for the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) region; and
- (vii) the International Commission of Congo-Oubangui-Sangha (CICOS) – based in Kinshasa – for the ECCAS/CEMAC regions.

**255.** In order to ensure sustainability of the activities, the Commission provided training equipment and software to four (4) African Regional Training Centres recognised by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), namely the Institute for Meteorological Training and Research (IMTR), which is based in Nairobi, l'Ecole africaine de la Météorologie et de l'Aviation Civile (EAMAC), based in Niamey, Niger; the South African Weather Agency (SAWS), based in Pretoria; and the Mauritius Meteorological Services in Mauritius. The training helps Member States to produce information on the state of the environment and natural resources.

**256.** The Commission trained 1,500 experts from Member States and Regional Institutions in both technical and policy-oriented fields. Some of the training included in-situ and satellite-based weather and environment monitoring, processing and dissemination of environment and climate information.

**257.** The Commission further mobilized additional resources from the European Union amounting to €52million to enhance the generation and provision of accurate, tailored, and timely climate information and enable Member States to address climate change related issues in the areas of agriculture and food security, disaster risk reduction, energy, health, and water resources. This activity will be carried out through the implementation of the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) under the Integrated African Strategy on Meteorology (weather and climate services).

- **The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and Sahel Initiative**

**258.** During the period under review, the Commission collaborated with the SADC Secretariat to develop a strategy for the implementation of the concept of the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative in Southern Africa. The objective is to help the Southern region enhance its efforts in combating land degradation and desertification and build resilience in its dry lands. Support was also provided to the Governments of Cameroon and Ghana to develop national action plans for the GGWSSI.

**259.** Meanwhile, the Commission's Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture continued its engagement with partners, including the UNCCD, on resource mobilization to support the activities of the GGWSSI. Through these activities, the Government of the Republic of Ireland pledged support for the initiative and will contribute over €1,400,000 for various activities, including the detailed assessment studies of the impact of the GGWSSI a decade on. In addition, discussions are at advanced stage for

financing the development of strategy for the implementation of the Initiative in the SADC region.

- **Multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs)**

**260.** The Commission's Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture organized a workshop in Khartoum in August 2018, on the synergistic implementation of MEAs and related obligations. The Commission also developed tools and guidelines for the integrated management of waste, including hazardous chemicals, as well as the integration of biodiversity into national planning and development policy processes. The guidelines have since been used by Burkina Faso, Gabon, Liberia and Zambia to draft their respective programmes on integrated management of wastes, including hazardous chemicals.

- **African regional strategies on disaster risk reduction and programme of action for implementation of Sendai Framework 2015-2030 in Africa**

**261.** The Commission's Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture carried out several activities during the course of the year 2018 which resulted in the adoption of the monitoring and reporting framework for the Programme of Action for the implementation of the Sendai Framework by the 6<sup>th</sup> High-level Disaster Risk Reduction meeting in Tunis in October 2018. The "Tunis Declaration" has been submitted for the endorsement of the Policy Organs at the February 2019 AU Summit.

**262.** The Commission developed and published the first report for the programme on "Building disaster resilience to natural hazards in sub-Saharan African regions, countries and communities". The report entails achievements made on disaster risk reduction within the framework of building disaster resilience in Africa. The report is now publicly available and will help raise awareness on the work of the Union in disaster risk reduction in Africa.

- **Implementation of Water and Sanitation (African Water 2025) initiatives in line with the AU Heads of State and Government June 2008 Sharm El Sheikh Commitment**

**263.** The Commission worked with the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) to convene the 7<sup>th</sup> African Water Week and the 11<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of AMCOW in Libreville in October-November 2018. On that occasion, the AMCOW General Assembly launched the AMCOW Strategy (2018 – 2030) for the achievement of the African Water Vision 2025, Agenda 2063 and the SDGs.

- **Fouta Djallon Highlands Programme**

**264.** In line with the Executive Council Decision EX.CL./Dec.971(XXXI) of July 2017, the Commission officially handed over the Fouta Djallon Integrated Management Programme to the ECOWAS Secretariat on 24 October 2018. The transfer is justified by the fact that all the Member States in this programme are from ECOWAS.



- **Sustainable forest and land management**

**265.** Twenty-six (26) Member States have demonstrated commitment to the implementation of the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100), with 86% (about 86 million hectares) of degraded land committed for land restoration. They are as follows: Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, CAR, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, Niger, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Senegal, Sudan, South Africa, Eswatini, Togo, Tanzania and Uganda. The AFR100 Secretariat, which is housed at the NEPAD Agency, is now fully functional.

**266.** During the period under review, the NEPAD Agency launched the <nepad.org> portal for regional flagship programmes to showcase the progress made in the coordination and implementation of regional flagship projects for the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN). Continued support in this area resulted in the launching of Africa Environmental Partnership Platform (AEPP), which is now functional. AEPP's first partnership platform was launched in Nairobi in September 2018.

**G. INVESTING IN THE AFRICAN PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY THE YOUTH, WOMEN AND CHILDREN**

**I. Science, Technology and Innovation Driven Education**

- **Implementation of STISA – 2024**

**267.** Following the adoption by the Assembly in June 2015, of the Alliance for Accelerating Excellence in Science in Africa (AESA), the Commission set up a Committee of ten (10) Heads of State as Champions on Education, Science, and Technology – Chad, Gabon, Egypt, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Tunisia.

**268.** Efforts were made to produce a new strategy for health research and innovation to support operationalisation of the Africa Health Strategy 2016-2030. The strategy is in progress for further review and validation.

**269.** During the year under review, the NEPAD Agency completed the report on Africa Innovation Outlook. The report provides insight analysis of selected key Science and Technology Innovations (STI) performance indicators in general and Science Technology Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA) 2024, in particular. It highlights performance of Research and Development (R&D) and innovations and consolidates information from eight (8) countries – Botswana, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Eswatini and Uganda) out of the twenty-three (23) countries that conducted R&D surveys.

**270.** The NEPAD Agency also provided training on R&D and Innovation, focusing on National Statistics Offices and Science Granting Councils from fifteen (15) countries, namely Botswana, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi,

Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, with the aim of raising awareness of STI and R&D indicators and equipping the countries with requisite skills for developing and implementing systems for tracking these indicators.

**271.** These Member States also received training on the revision of the data collection instruments for both R&D and Innovation. As a result, nineteen (19) – the fifteen above and four others, namely Egypt, Mali, Seychelles Eswatini – have now adopted a system for measuring and tracking the utilization of STI indicators.

**272.** The African Union High Level Panel on Emerging Technologies (APET) presented its recommendations to the African Innovation Summit that was held in Kigali in June 2018, on how to harness the following three emerging technologies for sustainable transformation: (i) gene drives for control and elimination of malaria; (ii) drones for increasing agricultural transformation; and (iii) micro-grids for community empowerment. The recommendations were endorsed by the Executive Council during the January 2018 Summit and reports on the three technologies were launched in June 2018, at the Africa Innovation Summit.

- **Pan-African University (PAU)**

**273.** The Government of Cameroon and the Commission signed the host agreement for the PAU rectorate in Yaoundé in April 2018, in accordance with the Assembly's decision Assembly/AU/Dec.552(XXIV) of January 2015. The handing over ceremony was held on 31 July 2018, marking the official relocation of PAU Rectorate from Addis Ababa.

**274.** The PAU Planning and Coordination meeting took place in Nairobi in June 2018. The meeting reviewed the state of activities at PAU and assessed the progress made towards making it an effective academic tool for the appropriate development of human capital in Africa.

**275.** Ms. Audrey Nthabiseng Ogude was elected as the Vice-President of the Council of the PAU in July 2018. The Executive Council also approved the budget of the Pan-African University for the year 2019. It amounts to US\$16,209,157, of which \$13,387,180 for the program budget and \$2,821,977 for the operational budget.

**276.** The Pan-African University continued to grant degrees in its four institutes. Graduation ceremonies took place in the Pan-African University Institute for Life and Earth Sciences, including Health & Agriculture (PAULESI), the Pan-African University Institute for Governance, Humanities & Social Sciences (PAUGHSS), the Pan-African University Institute for Basic Sciences, Technology & Innovation (PAUSTI) and the Pan-African University Institute for Water & Energy, including Climate Change (PAUWES). A total of 327 students – 237 males and 90 females – graduated from the Pan-African University Institutes. Of these graduates, 295 and 32 were awarded Masters' and Doctoral degrees, respectively.

**277.** A call for applications in the various PAU institutes was launched for the 2018-2019 academic year. A total of 13,048 applications were received from fifty-three (53) Member States, out of which 77.93% were male and 22.07% were female applicants.

**278.** On the whole, a total of 919 students – 29.2% female and 70.8% male – pursued their studies in the four PAU Institutes. For 2018-2019, the Pan-African University is committed to raise female representation to at least 40% of all admitted students.

**279.** Since its inception in 2014, the Pan-African University has received financial support from partners to fund its programs. While the Commission welcomes donor financial contributions and some increased support from Member States, the budget ceiling of US\$ 16,209,157 set for the PAU is a challenge to its capacity to develop world class teaching and research programs as well as scaling up student numbers. While initiatives are under way to attract new partners, Member States are encouraged to increase their support both in cash and kind, in order to enhance the realization of the objectives of developing a world class African University.

- **Implementation of CESA**

**280.** The Commission's main activity in 2018 on the implementation of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA) was to ensure Member States' ownership of CESA. This objective was accomplished through the launching of four new CESA Thematic Clusters Platform, namely the Thematic Clusters on (i) Peace and Education in March 2018; (ii) on TVET in April 2018; (iii) on Early Childhood Care and Education in September 2018; and on Curriculum in December 2018. This was in addition to the already existing eight (8) Thematic Clusters launched before 2018. Each Cluster has a roadmap, and a coordinating team of Member States and agencies that, among others, submit biannual reports to the Commission.

- CESA, Girls and Women's Education in Africa

**281.** The African Union International Centre for Girls and Women Education in Africa (AU/CIEFFA) carried out several activities in favor of access by girls and women to education. CIEFFA developed a Strategic Plan (2018-2020) comprising four axes: (i) legal framework for girls' rights to education; (ii) gender-sensitive teaching and learning environments; (iii) STEM-focused TVET; and (iv) advocacy and communication.

**282.** AU/CIEFFA also organized the Second High-Level Dialogue (HLD) on *"Enhancing policies and practices to promote Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) focused Technical Vocational Education Training (TVET) for women and girls"*, which was held in Addis Ababa in January 2018, for African Ministers of Education, Gender, and Finance. Participants identified best practices to boost girls' and women's interest in STEM and TVET areas, and reconfirmed political support for women in STEM-focused TVET, an area that is male-dominated.

**283.** A Consultative Meeting of Ministers of Gender in New York in March 2018 on the margins of the 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW62) in New York. Participants discussed challenges and opportunities in achieving gender

equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.

**284.** Consultations with the RECs, the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and other AU Organs and Specialized Agencies in Midrand, South Africa, in May 2018, which resulted in the validation and operationalization of a framework for monitoring the implementation of existing instruments and policies on girls and women's education in Africa. This event also helped popularize CIEFFA among members of the Pan African Parliament and encouraged cooperation with the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) and the African Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Participants also recommended the appointment of a Special Rapporteur for Girls and Women's Education in Africa.

**285.** AU/CIEFFA held in Dakar in November 2018, a training of teacher trainers workshop on STEM in cooperation with UNESCO, for over twenty teacher trainers from Francophone countries.

**286.** An Innovation Expo on Education was also held in Dakar in October 2018, under the theme "*Meeting Continental Targets for Inclusive, Quality and Transformative Education and Training in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*". It showcased technical and social innovations in the areas of education and training.

**287.** AU/CIEFFA co-organised with the United Nations Girls Education Initiative (UNGEI) and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), a capacity-building workshop on Gender Responsive Education Sector Planning in Nairobi in November 2018. The meeting recommended, among others, a multi-sectoral sensitization on gender-responsive education sector planning and the development of a three-year gender-sensitive education sector implementation plan.

- CESA, IPED and Education Planning

**288.** During the reporting period, *l'Institut Panafricain pour l'Education pour le Développement (IPED)* led the drafting of the CESA Indicators' Manual, along with the development of a monitoring and reporting framework. As a result, the first comprehensive evaluation of CESA implementation is scheduled for 2019. A platform for management information systems for education, science and technology and innovation was developed by the Commission's Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology in partnership between AOSTI, IPED, NEPAD and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA).

- **Higher education scholarship, harmonization and quality assurance**

**289.** In implementation of the AU Strategy for Harmonisation of Higher Education, the Commission, with the support of the European Union, continued its support in building the capacity of African universities to establish vision-based competence-oriented curriculum development processes while providing a mechanism for comparability of credit. So far 200 universities from 43 Member States have been involved in this effort. The second phase of the project ended this year, with publication of the curricula.

**290.** The Continental African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in higher education was also completed. A consolidated report on the third institutional evaluations using the African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM) for 15 higher education institutions was published. Efforts will be exerted in 2019 to ensure that AQRM becomes a regular tool for promoting continuous quality assurance. The Association of African Universities, as the coordinating agency for the Higher Education Cluster, will ensure continuing promotion of the AQRM and the African Standards.

**291.** In 2018, the Mwalimu Nyerere AU Scholarship Call was focused on young women pursuing STEM studies at Masters and PhD levels. Twenty (20) new students were selected competitively and the first semester payment was done on their behalf. Since the launch of this scholarship programme, the Commission has sponsored about 250 students studying in African universities, mostly outside their own countries. As 2019 will be the year of refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa, efforts will be made to include young people living as refugees among the awardees.

**292.** The EU-sponsored Intra-Africa Academic mobility programme, a partner programme of the Commission, completed the selection process for the fourth call. So far 1255 Africans have received full or partial scholarships for Masters, PhD and staff mobility schemes under this programme.

- **Teacher development**

**293.** The recommendations of the study on Teacher Training, Working and Living Conditions in Africa, which was requested by the Assembly in July 2014, were under implementation. As the coordinator of the Teacher Development Cluster, UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa (IICBA) has been instrumental in implementing CESA and the teacher study recommendations.

**294.** During the period under review, the Commission finalized a Continental Teacher Mobility Protocol (CTMP) in partnership with UNESCO IICBA. The CTMP is necessary to assist in managing teachers' mobility from regions and countries that are over-supplied to those in great need. In order to strengthen teacher regulatory agencies, the Commission initiated the development of a Continental Teacher Qualification Framework in partnership with the African Federation of Teacher Regulatory Agencies (AFTRA) to inform the needed mutual verification of qualifications, as is being done in the SADC region. Continental standards and guidelines for the teaching profession were also developed to enhance professionalism in this sector.

## **II. Social Development – Social Welfare, Vulnerable Groups and Drug Control**

- **Social Protection**

**295.** As a follow-up to the recommendations of the STC on Social Development, Labour and Employment, the Commission developed the Draft Protocol on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security and submitted it for review to the

African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR). The draft was first discussed during the ACHPR's extraordinary session in August 2018. It was validated in November 2018, and will be reviewed by the STC on Social Development, Labour and Employment in March 2019.

**296.** The Commission also developed the Draft Social Agenda 2063 that aims to give effect to the social objectives of Agenda 2063 and other relevant AU instruments in the social development area. The draft was validated in November 2018 and will be submitted to the STC on Social Development, Labour and Employment in March 2019.

- **Child marriage**

**297.** The Campaign to End Child Marriage continued its efforts to address the issue of child marriage in Africa by implementing several activities. Led by the AU Special Rapporteur on Ending Child Marriage, the AU team carried out four campaign post-launch visits in Egypt, Eritrea, Mozambique and Zambia, respectively. The purpose was to observe the progress made by the Member States that have launched the Campaign in implementing their national strategies on ending child marriage and inquire about the level of protection of the girl child against child marriage. The visits also provided an opportunity for the AU team to assess the role of governments and other stakeholders in ending child marriage.

**298.** As a result of the Commission's advocacy efforts, the following twenty-four (24) Member States have launched their campaigns to end child marriage and other harmful practices: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, the Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

**299.** The second annual meeting of the Civil Society Organisations Reference Group to the AU Campaign took place in Addis Ababa in May 2018 to prepare the 2<sup>nd</sup> African Girls' Summit on Ending Child Marriage and develop a roadmap on the Campaign's direction beyond 2018.

**300.** The Commission and the Government of Ghana co-organized the Youth Pre-Summit and the 2<sup>nd</sup> African Girls' Summit on ending child marriage and other harmful practices in Accra in November 2018 under the theme "Enough with silence". Participants addressed several issues of concern to adolescents' sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, and enhancing the role of the youth in combatting child marriage and other harmful practices.

**301.** Furthermore, the Commission, in collaboration with UN Women and the International Telecommunication Union, launched the African Girls Can Code Initiative. This four-year initiative (2018-2022) aims to enhance the mastering of ICT for girls and women and, therefore, increase their contribution to Africa's innovation in this sector. The first coding camp was held in Addis Ababa in August 2018 and involved 88 girls from 32 African Member States who were trained on ICT and programming skills.

**302.** On its part, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) worked with the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) in the launching of the Joint General Comment on Ending Child Marriage. The aim is to elaborate on the nature of State Party obligations that arise from Article 6 (b) of the Maputo Protocol and Article 21 (2) of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which prohibit child marriage. The Joint General Comment describes the legislative, institutional and other measures that should be taken by State Parties to give effect to the prohibition and to protect the rights of those at risk or affected by child marriage.

- **Older persons**

**303.** The Commission, through the Department of Social Affairs, continued its advocacy efforts for the ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa, to demonstrate Member States' commitment to the dignity, empowerment and the rights of persons with disabilities across the continent. The Kingdom of Lesotho has become the first Member State to ratify the Protocol on Older Persons while the Central African Republic has become the first Member State to sign the Protocol on Disability.

**304.** As regards the disbanded African Rehabilitation Institute (ARI), the Commission has disbursed partial payments – approximately US\$200,000 – towards the liquidation of the emoluments of former ARI staff. The Commission continues to follow up with the remaining seventeen ARI Member States to make their contributions so that payments of the former staff's final entitlements can be completed. They have still not been paid their separation salaries.

- **Labor, Employment and Social Protection – Ouaga + 10 Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development**

**305.** The First Five Year Priority Program on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development 2017-2022 - (5YPP) places a focus on decent job creation for youth and women, aiming at achieving more inclusive growth and sustainable poverty eradication.

**306.** With 10 to 12 million young Africans entering the labor force each year, job creation in Africa is an urgent challenge. Regrettably, growth in Africa has not generated enough jobs to achieve large-scale poverty reduction. As a result, many young people are disproportionately employed in the informal sector. The implementation of the 5YPP in 2018 yielded the following outcomes:

**307.** Establishment of the *Employment and Social Cohesion Fund (ESCF)*: A feasibility study was conducted in 2017 under the supervision of the Commission, the UN-ECA and ILO to clarify the conditions under which the ESCF could be established. The findings were submitted to the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Finance,

Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration in Addis Ababa in April 2018. As requested by the STC, an additional study on the operationalization and implementation mechanism was subsequently undertaken and submitted to the F15 Ministers of Finance and a joint meeting of the Bureaus of the Specialized Technical Committees on Finance and Labour for onward submission for the consideration of the Policy Organs at the February 2019 Summit.

**308.** *Promotion of decent work in the micro, small and medium sized enterprises in the informal economy:* The Commission began the implementation of a five-year project under the title “Decent Work for the Transformation of the Informal Economy: Growing the Micro, Small and Medium Sized Enterprises’ (2018-2022)”. The project is in partnership with the NEPAD Agency, the African Capacity Building Foundation and Women in Informal Economy, Globalization and Organization (WIEGO). Five pilot countries – Cameroon, Kenya, Senegal, Tanzania and Zambia – received technical support from the Commission and the ILO for the development and implementation of their respective national projects. Capacity building support was also provided to Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Sudan, Tanzania and Zimbabwe. Preparations were also under way for the production in 2019 of the “First Informal Economy Statistics Report in Africa”.

**309.** *Domestication of the Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Growth, and their First Five Year Priority Programme (2017-2021):* The Commission worked with ECOWAS on the domestication in the ECOWAS region of continental policy frameworks on employment. ECOWAS adopted its new policy framework aligned with the AU framework. The other RECs, namely SADC, EAC, IGAD, COMESA and ECCAS, took part in the exercise to learn about the domestication process.

**310.** *Promotion of Public-Private Partnerships Frameworks on Decent Jobs Creation for Inclusive Growth:* The Assembly adopted in January 2015 the Public Private Partnership Framework (PPPF) on Jobs Creation and Inclusive Development [Assembly/AU/Decl.6(XXIII)]. The Commission, working with Business Africa and the ECOWAS Employers’ Organization, adopted a roadmap in Dakar in November 2018, on engaging Member States and regional employers’ organizations in implementing PPP frameworks.

**311.** On its part, the NEPAD Agency assisted four (4) Member States – Benin, Cameroon, Malawi and Niger – in the development of their national action plans on youth employment and skills development, with a special focus on rural economic value chains. All four (4) Member States piloted a catalytic set of interventions through the Africa Solidarity Trust Fund to design, develop and implement youth capacity development projects. Sixteen (16) young people from the four countries participated in peer learning and knowledge exchange visits on rural youth employment and entrepreneurship in the areas of agriculture and agribusiness. A total of 178 youths (44 in Benin, 91 in Cameroon and 43 in Malawi) were trained on agriculture value chain enterprises. In addition, 20 business plans (5 in Benin, 10 in Cameroon and 5 in Malawi) were subsequently developed and submitted for funding.



**312.** The NEPAD Agency also disbursed the amount of USD1.3 million as a contribution to the implementation of Business Incubation for African Women Entrepreneurs (BIAWE) in ECOWAS and COMESA. The following Member States benefitted from the contribution: Burkina Faso, Burundi, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Eswatini.

- **Migration and Development**

**313.** The following activities were carried out under the AU-ILO-IOM-ECA Joint Program on Labour Migration Management for Development and Integration (JLMP).

**314.** *JLMP Three Year Priority Project (2018-2022):* This project was implemented with the Kingdom of Sweden's financial support of US\$9 million. The objective is to improve the governance of labour migration to achieve safe, orderly and regular migration in Africa.

**315.** *Second edition of the Labor Migration Statistics Report in Africa:* The report was launched on the margins of the UN Conference on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Marrakech in December 2018. The first report published in March 2017 covered thirty-seven (37) national statistic offices. By contrast, only fifty (50) contributed statistics and data for the second report.

**316.** *Operationalization of the AU Labour Migration Advisory Committee:* The Committee held its inaugural meeting in Dakar in May 2018, during which it adopted its rules and procedures and roadmap for the next three years. It comprises representatives of the RECs, social partners' organizations, the Pan African Parliament, ECOSOCC, women cross borders traders, the Academia and international partners such as ILO, IOM and ECA.

**317.** *Social security access and portability for migrant workers:* Within the framework of the JLMP, the ILO began in February 2018 the implementation of a two-year project on social security access and portability for migrant workers, covering the three geographic priority area RECs – EAC, ECOWAS and SADC. Funded by the EU with €2 million, the project is coordinated by the Commission as a component of the AU-ILO-IOM-ECA Joint Programme.

**318.** *Communication strategy on labour migration:* As per the JLMP, a labour migration communication strategy was adopted with the participation of all the RECs, social partners organizations *ie* ILO, IOM and ECA. The Commission's Directorate of Information and Communication will coordinate the overall implementation of the strategy. The objective is to promote and protect the rights of migrant workers.

**319.** On its part, the Pan-African Parliament continued its sensitization campaign on the AU policy frameworks on migration and labour migration, in particular the renewed Migration Policy Framework and the AU Common Position on Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. The Pan-African Parliament also advocated for the fostering of labour mobility within and from Africa.

- **Human trafficking**

**320.** In its decision EX.CL/987(XXXII) of January 2018, the Executive Council requested the Commission to sustain, replicate and extend the operational mechanisms of the AU Horn of Africa Initiative (AU-HoAI) to other trafficking and smuggling routes across the continent and other regions.

**321.** The AU Horn of Africa Initiative covers three migratory routes, namely (i) the Eastern Route – through Djibouti, Northern Somalia, Yemen and eventually Saudi Arabia and other Middle Eastern countries; (ii) the Northern Route – through Sudan, Egypt, Libya, into Europe; and (iii) the Southern Route – through Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique into South Africa.

**322.** The Executive Council also requested the Commission to expedite the establishment of the Regional Operational Centre in Khartoum (for sharing information on human trafficking and migrant smuggling) and the Training Centre for Law Enforcement in Cairo, and to facilitate the participation of other Member States not part of the AU-HoAI and the RECs upon their request.

**323.** At the time of this reporting, the Commission was in the process of establishing the Regional Operational Centre in Khartoum and the African Migration Observatory in Morocco. The Khartoum Center will facilitate regional cooperation of law enforcement partners in the fight against human trafficking and smuggling through the exchange of information and intelligence among countries of origin, transit and destination in close collaboration with AFRIPOL, INTERPOL and other regional bodies. The Morocco Center, on its part, will focus on migration data collection and information exchange and coordination among Member States in order to effectively address the challenges of migration flows in Africa.

- **AU Horn of Africa Initiative on Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants**

**324.** The Commission convened in Maseru in December 2018, a workshop on «*Fostering Dialogue and Collaboration between the AU Horn of Africa Initiative (AU-HoAI) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) in Addressing Irregular Migration on the Southern Migratory Route*». The meeting provided a platform for Member States of the AU-HoAI and SADC to deliberate and share experiences on addressing irregular migration with a view to establishing collaborative mechanisms to address irregular migration (specifically human trafficking and migrant smuggling) along the southern migratory route.

**325.** In addition to recommendations on collaboration between the AU-HoAI and SADC Member States in the areas of prevention, protection and prosecution in combating human trafficking and migrant smuggling, participants recommended the formalization of the inter-regional dialogue on migration under the auspices of the Commission and the title of ***The Africa Inter-Continental Dialogue on Migration*** (AIDoM). Participants also proposed that the dialogue should include other RECs. The *Africa Inter-Continental Dialogue on Migration* could form the basis for the Pan-African Forum on Migration.

**326.** The Commission also contributed to enhancing coordination and collaboration for a better management of irregular migration through the combined efforts of the Tripartite Task Force comprising the AU-EU-UN that was set up in 2017 to resolve the situation in Libya. Since its establishment, the Task Force has facilitated the return or resettlement and evacuation of 20,138 migrants and refugees to their countries of origin and other countries, respectively. The figure includes 1,334 persons that the UNHCR evacuated from Libya to Niger in order to fast-track the processing of their resettlement claim. Continued engagements with the Libyan authorities have resulted in the dismantling of twenty-four (24) detention centres.

**327.** Furthermore, the Commission organized in Addis Ababa in November 2018, a joint workshop with the EU and Member States from Africa and Europe to better address the plight of returnees in Africa. Participants raised the need for Continental Return, Re-admission and Reintegration Guidelines that take into account, among others, the needs of individuals and communities of return.

**328.** As a follow-up to the Joint Valletta Action Plan on Migration adopted by Heads of State and Government of Africa and Europe in Valletta, Malta, in November 2017, and in furtherance of the Declaration of the 5<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Summit of November 2017, the Commission co-organized in Addis Ababa in November 2018 the meeting of African and European senior officials on the Joint Valletta Action Plan 2018. Among others, the meeting confirmed the overarching role of the regional processes (Rabat and Khartoum Processes and the AU Horn of Africa Initiative) in addressing irregular migration in the West and Horn of Africa regions and further encouraged their coordination.

- **Migration policy framework for Africa and Plan of Action 2018-2030**

**329.** In view of the ever-growing number of migrants and the complexity of migratory movements within and across Africa's regions, the Executive Council adopted the Migratory Policy Framework for Africa (2018-2030) and its Plan of Action (2018-2030) by its decision EX.CL/987(XXXII) of January 2018. The 2018 MPFA highlights the need to develop inter-state and inter-regional approaches to managing migration in Africa through the development of clear objectives, providing opportunities for exchange of experiences, views and best practices, and working towards the coordinated implementation of policies and programmes. Furthermore, the MPFA recommends the need to speak a 'common language' when addressing migration and forced displacement issues as a critical step, and one that is on-going and evolving.

**330.** Since the adoption of the Migration Policy Framework for Africa, the Commission made efforts to popularize it among Member States, the RECs and other stakeholders, including through the organization of regional workshops for the Southern Africa, West and Central Africa, and East and North Africa regions. Participants, among others, identified the challenges that militate against the coherent management of migration in their respective countries/RECs, and proposed actions to ensure coherence and momentum on this issue. More than 300 hard and soft copies of the MPFA were distributed to Member States, RECs, CSOs and partners on this occasion.

**331.** The Commission conducted an assessment of the capacity needs of Member States and the RECs to manage migration as part of a broader continental capacity building effort for Member States and the RECs. The assessment report was validated by Member States and will form the basis for a 5-year continental capacity building programme in the area of migration governance.

**332.** Since about 80% of African migration occurs within the African continent, it is paramount that more efforts and resources be channelled towards building the capacity of Member States and the RECs to manage the phenomenon. It is also important that Member States and RECs should continue to exchange views on challenges and best practices among themselves to manage migration issues. Inter-regional dialogue on migration will bring Member States and RECs closer and enable the Union to speak with one voice when they dialogue with other regions (especially Europe and the Gulf States) on migration issues.

### **III. Wellness and Quality of Life**

- **Medical health regulations**

**333.** Following its endorsement in 2016, the Model Law on Medical Products regulations has now been adopted by twelve (12) Member States, namely Burkina Faso, Burundi Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia Lesotho, Mozambique Namibia, Rwanda Seychelles, Eswatini, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe.

- **African Centre for Disease Control**

**334.** The Assembly, through its decision Assembly/AU/Dec.554 (XXIV) of January 2015, established the Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) as a specialized agency to support Member States to improve the health of their citizens through prevention of infection, surveillance and response to emergencies (including outbreaks, man-made and natural disasters, and public health events of regional and international concern), and capacity building to reduce disease burden on the continent. As one of its core functions, the Africa CDC conducted the following activities during outbreaks in 2018.

**335.** On 11 May 2018, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, through its Ministry of Health, reported the ninth Ebola outbreak in Bikoro, Equateur Province, followed on 1 August 2018, with the tenth outbreak in North Kivu and the Ituri provinces. The 10<sup>th</sup> outbreak has been considered as the second largest after the West Africa outbreak. It is still ongoing, with currently 645 cases and a total of 377 deaths.

**336.** The Africa CDC supported the DRC Ministry of Health to respond to the outbreak by providing 63 health workers in the following specialties: central support team(11); national coordination team (4); epidemiologists (24); infection prevention and control specialists (14); laboratory scientists (4); anthropologist (1); communication experts (3); data manager (1) and logistician (1).

**337.** The Africa CDC also supported response activities including surveillance and contact tracing; infection prevention and control; safe and dignified burials; community death investigations; and the procurement of six (6) laboratory diagnostic machines (GeneXperts) with 3,000 testing cartridges for utilisation in Goma, Butembo, Beni, Mangina and Tshomia areas. The Africa CDC trained 469 local health workers, traditional healers and teachers in infection prevention and supplied local thirteen (13) health centres and hospitals with personal protection equipment (PPEs).

**338.** During the year under review, the Africa CDC also supported the response of Member States to the following outbreaks: cholera in Cameroun, Zimbabwe and Malawi; Chikungunya in Sudan, and the Rift Valley fever in East Africa. In Cameroun, 640 cholera cases, including 43 deaths, were reported whilst in Zimbabwe, 9557 cases, including 55 deaths, and in Malawi 900 cases and 30 deaths were also reported. As for Rift Valley fever and Chikungunya, 21 cases including 11 deaths, and 13,978 with 11 deaths were reported, respectively. The Africa CDC have supported these countries through the provision of training workshops in various areas and procurement of laboratory kits and consumables.

**339.** The Africa CDC, in collaboration with other partners also developed and reviewed the basic package of the training materials that will be used for capacity building of Member States in Public Health Emergency Operations Centres (PHEOC). Three countries – Somalia, South Sudan and Zambia – undertook baseline assessment process to identify the current situation, gaps and area for support and improvement. Technical documents such as legal framework for PHEOC and manual for developing PHEOC handbook are under revision.

**340.** The Africa CDC continuously scans official and media sites weekly to detect and assess events of public health significance. High quality data about the number and causes of death will enable Member States to allocate resources effectively to prevent avoidable deaths and extend life expectancy. Despite the importance of this data, few Member States have high quality data for the national and sub-national levels about causes of death. Of the 55 African countries, 38 (69%) did not produce any reliable data on causes of death from 2010 to 2016.

**341.** To address this situation, the Africa CDC held meetings with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in April (Seattle) and June (Addis Ababa) 2018 to develop a proposal on how it can assist Member States in building their capacity to collect more reliable data about the number and causes of death. It is encouraging to note that the Africa CDC was awarded \$2.6 million, effective 1 January 2019, to hire two personnel, work with Member States on a Framework for Mortality Surveillance, and support initiatives in selected Member States for improving mortality surveillance.

**342.** The Africa CDC also held a continent-wide workshop to identify high priority activities for implementing the Africa CDC Framework for Antimicrobial Resistance Control. The workshop included partners from across the continent, representing human and animal health sectors.

**343.** The Africa CDC, in collaboration with UNAIDS, developed a platform for integrating routinely collected health surveillance data. The “Situation Room” is a platform run by UNAIDS that permits UNAIDS to directly access the “District Health Information System” (DHIS) within seven (7) Member States to provide detailed reports about disease incidence, management, and program for TB, HIV, and related conditions. In May 2018, UNAIDS and the Africa CDC held a workshop with seven Member States – Côte d’Ivoire, Kenya, Lesotho, Namibia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe – to review a proposal on expanding the Situation Room to include collection and analysis of epidemic-prone diseases, such as cholera, typhoid fever, meningitis, yellow fever, and measles. A continental meeting planned for November 2018 to present this data to all Member States and gain support for expanding the Situation Room to other Member States was postponed to February 2019.

**344.** The Africa CDC strengthened and expanded the network of National Public Health Institutes (NPHI) and developed standards to guide and monitor the establishment of NPHIs in Africa. The Africa CDC, in collaboration with the IANPHI, has produced several publications, including a National Public Health Institutes monitoring card, to support and strengthening NPHIs on the Continent Two consultants were engaged to provide technical support to Member States, namely Kenya, Madagascar, Somalia and South Sudan, in the process of establishing functional NPHIs.

**345.** Strengthening Africa’s clinical and public health laboratory systems and networks is among the key objectives of the Africa CDC’s laboratory systems and network pillar. In March and May 2018, the Africa CDC held two regional meetings, in Libreville for the Central Africa region and Lusaka for Southern region, respectively. The objective was to identify, prioritize and advocate for effective and efficient interventions for strengthening of national and regional laboratory systems, improving quality standards and promoting laboratory networks.

**346.** These meetings provided the Africa CDC with an opportunity to obtain a buy-in from Member States on the mapping of laboratory assets within the Member States, assessments of countries status in relation to national laboratory strategic plans and the status on existing national and regional laboratory networks within the two regions. This information was necessary for effective planning and execution of laboratory systems and network strengthening activities in the regions.

**347.** Subsequently in November 2018, a Regional Integrated Surveillance and Laboratory Network (RISLNET), which aims to harness existing public health assets in each of the five AU regions, was officially launched in Central Africa. The Africa CDC, through the Commission’s procurement process, recruited a partner namely Global Health Systems Solution (GHSS) to support the implementation of RISLNET activities in Central Africa. Subsequently, the Africa CDC in collaboration with GHSS organized in Brazzaville in November 2018, the 1<sup>st</sup> laboratory quality management systems (QMS) training for 35 laboratory managers from six countries: Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Central African Republic (CAR), Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon. Other workforce development trainings included laboratory quality management training for Malawi and Zimbabwe in support during the Cholera outbreaks.

**348.** Inadequate budget and office space, and limited staff remain a challenge for the Africa CDC's full operationalization. In addition, responses to emergency outbreaks was not always timely in most of the cases due to bureaucratic processes.

- **The Africa Health Strategy (AHS) 2016-2030**

**349.** The revised Africa Health Strategy (2016-2030) was endorsed by the Assembly in 2016. Its main objective is to strengthen health systems performance, increase investments in health, improve equity and address social determinants of health to reduce priority disease burdens by 2030. The Africa Health Strategy has also provided umbrella guidance for the development of the Africa Regional Nutrition Strategy, the Maputo Plan of Action, the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa and the Catalytic Framework to end AIDS, TB and Malaria.

**350.** In order to advance the implementation of the Africa Health Strategy, the Commission through the Department of Social Affairs and in close collaboration with its partners, put in place mechanisms to improve accountability and monitoring its implementation. They include the AfricaHealthStats website that provides data approved by Member States on several health indicators and their progress towards the implementation of the Maputo Plan of Action (MPoA), the Abuja Call and the Catalytic Framework to end AIDS, TB and Malaria commitments.

**351.** Other accountability tools include the accountability framework for the African Health Strategy, the Campaign for the Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA)'s scorecard and website for the monitoring of maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health, in particular. Both data platforms – AfricaHealthStats and the CARMMA Scorecard – were revised in 2018 to include indicators from other sectors of health determinants such as nutrition, pharmaceuticals and harmful practices. These updated tools will be presented to the 3<sup>rd</sup> STC on Health, Population and Drug Control for endorsement in 2019.

- **Catalytic framework to end AIDS, TB and eliminate malaria by 2030**

**352.** To translate the health related commitments of Agenda 2063 into concrete action, the Heads of State and Government have committed to a new set of strategic and policy direction by endorsing the Catalytic Framework to End AIDS, TB and Eliminate Malaria in Africa by 2030, which provide bold and ambitious targets, a business case and strategic priorities to end the three diseases as a public health threat by 2030. African leaders also endorsed the Africa Health Strategy (2016-2030) to strengthen health systems and achieve universal health coverage. In 2018, the Commission led the implementation of both the Africa Health Strategy and the Catalytic Framework to end AIDS, TB and Eliminate Malaria in Africa by 2030.

**353.** The AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) Heads of States and Government held a high level meeting on the margins of the July 2018 Summit in Nouakchott. They endorsed the "Zero Malaria Starts with Me" campaign, which is an advocacy and social

mobilisation campaign to end malaria as a public health threat by 2030. In 2018, the following Member States launched national malaria campaigns: Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Uganda and Zambia. Others plan to launch their own national malaria campaign in 2019. The AWA meeting also endorsed the Common Africa Position on TB, to influence global negotiations on UN Political Declarations on TB (endorsed in September 2018) that heavily influenced the final global compact.

**354.** \_The Commission and the Organization of the First Ladies (OAFLA) are leading a new continental campaign to eliminate new HIV infections for children and keep mothers alive. This campaign was launched on the margins of the January 2018 Summit. One quarter of Member States launched their own in 2018.

**355.** \_The Commission produced the 2018 Africa Scorecard on Domestic Financing for Health, as an advocacy and accountability tool. The scorecard has various indicators that help with expenditure tracking and the promotion of increased accountability by governments and development partners.

**356.** The Africa Leadership Meeting on Health Financing is scheduled to be held in Addis Ababa on 9 February 2019. The purpose is secure the commitments of Heads of State and Government and the private sector to increase domestic finance for health and advocate for the replenishment of the health funds organizations. The outcome of the meeting will be submitted to the Assembly for endorsement at the February 2019 Summit.

**357.** Africa is the region with the highest TB incidence among the five WHO regions, estimated at 275 per 100,000. In the southern Africa region, the burden is estimated at 591 per 100,000. The mining sector has the highest TB incident in the world, estimated at 3000–7000 per 100,000. During the period under review, the NEPAD Agency provided training on occupational health and safety to twelve (12) experts from Lesotho and twenty-two from Malawi. Ten (10) medical doctors and twenty-three (23) health workers from Lesotho were also trained on ILO x-ray classification and lung functioning, and Health WISE, respectively.

**358.** The NEPAD Agency also launched two operational research studies, covering Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia – on mine health regulation and occupational health and safety service in Southern Africa.

**359.** The NEPAD Agency has been designated as the secretariat for the TB in the Mining Sector Programme.

- **Maternal, Newborn and Child Health**

**360.** The Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Task Force met in Dar es Salaam in May 2018. Participants, comprising Member States, the RECs and relevant partners, reviewed the state of implementation of the continental maternal and child health agenda. They also reviewed the criteria for the Mama Africa Award and received an update on the revised indicators of AfricaHealthStats website and the CARMMA score card, as well as the African Union Health Accountability Framework. The revised



indicators and score card will provide reliable, validated data on the progress Member States are making towards meeting their health commitments, including those of maternal and child health.

**361.** The Task Force also deliberated on the regrettably slow progress in ending female genital mutilation across the continent. The outcome of the deliberations and the Task Force's recommendations will be submitted for the consideration of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Health, Population and Drug Control in 2019. At the time of this reporting, the CARMMA Campaign is ten years old. Fifty (50) Member States have launched the CARMMA campaign. An evaluation of the campaign that was conducted in 2017 will be submitted to the STC on Health, Population and Drug Control in 2019.

**362.** As regards the elimination of female genital mutilation in Africa, the Commission, in partnership with the UN joint program on the elimination of FGM, held an international conference in Ouagadougou in October 2018, under the leadership of President Roch Marc Christian Kabore of Burkina Faso, on galvanizing political action to eliminate female genital mutilation. The conference brought together twelve (12) African ministers, twenty-three (23) Member States and over 300 participants, mainly from the most affected countries. They adopted a political declaration resolving to end the practice and announced the launch of the AU Continental Campaign to End FGM.

**363.** The AU Campaign, to be known as *Saleema*, is scheduled to be launched during the February 2019 Summit, with President Roch Marc Christian Kabore as its Champion. The ambition is the total elimination of FGM in Africa by 2030.

- **African Regional Nutrition Strategy (2016-2025)**

**364.** The Tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) Africa Task Force on Food and Nutrition Development (ATFFND) met in Burundi in June 2018. Comprising Member States, the RECs and other partners, the meeting reviewed the progress made in the implementation of existing continental initiatives, including the studies on the Cost of Hunger in Africa, which have been completed and launched by fourteen (14) Member States. The African Leaders for Nutrition Initiative has developed a continental score card for nutrition. The outcome and recommendations will be submitted for the consideration of the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Health, Population and Drug Control and other related STCs in 2019.

**365.** Throughout its May and October 2018 sessions, the Pan-African Parliament addressed the issue of nutrition and food systems in Africa and adopted recommendations in support of the Union's strategy on nutrition and food safety.

- **Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development (AADPD)**

**366.** The Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development (AADPD) Beyond 2014 was adopted by Ministers in October 2013, and endorsed by the Executive

Council in January 2014 [EX.CL/Dec.799(XXIV)]. The Commission, in collaboration with UNECA and the UNFPA, carried out in 2018 a five-year continental review of the Addis Ababa Declaration. The review report was adopted by the working group of the STC on Health, Population and Drug Control in October 2018.

**367.** The review highlighted the need for Member States, the Commission and other stakeholders to accelerate the full implementation of AADPD, especially in the areas of health, education, harmonization of data, youth development and employment. This is crucial to realize the transformation of Africa, taking advantage of its demographic dividend as of 2014 and beyond.

**368.** During a pre-consultation meeting held in New York in March 2018, prior to the 50<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Population and Development, representatives of African permanent missions' in New York called for the Commission to develop a Common Africa Position on Population and Development issues. The draft report is in the initial stages of development. It will go through consultative process with Member States starting from the third quarter of 2019.

- **Plan of Action on Drug Control and Prevention**

**369.** At its second meeting held in Addis Ababa in March 2017, the STC on Health, Population and Drug Control recommended to Member States to invest more in national drug responses with adequate budget and an integrated approach at the policy, strategic and implementation levels. As a follow up, the Commission worked with Member States to develop a new strategic continental framework on drug control - "the African Union Plan of Action on Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2019-2023)" – which will be considered for adoption by African Ministers of Health, Population and Drug Control in their bi-annual meeting scheduled for April 2019.

**370.** The Commission also facilitated the establishment of drug use surveillance networks in five new Member States, bringing the total to fifteen (15), namely: Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Malawi, Namibia, Eswatini, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia. The networks are aimed to assist Member States in building capacity for policy formulation and programming in the area of drug dependence treatment and care.

**371.** The Commission launched the first African Union continental epidemiology report in December 2018. It also produced the first continental Compendium of Good Practices on the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders, including harm reduction.

**372.** The Commission, in collaboration with the Government of Kenya, the International Society of Substance Use Prevention and Treatment (ISSUP) and the United States Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, convened in Kenya in December 2018 the first ISSUP event focusing on the prevention, treatment and care for substance use disorders. Over 2,000 delegates from 84 countries shared knowledge and experience in the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders. Several trainings and events were held concurrently, including the first Africa-Latin America policy dialogue to share best practices and experience in developing and

implementing robust evidence-informed policies for drug use prevention, treatment and care. Participants also discussed the need to promote inter-continental dialogue on the establishment and operationalization of national drug epidemiology networks. They reviewed a new draft framework to guide drug policy development – the African Union Plan of Action of Drug Control and Crime Prevention (2019-2023) – which will be considered by the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Health, Population and Drug Control in Addis Ababa in March/April 2019.

**373.** The Commission also worked with other international organizations to train professional staff in substance use prevention and treatment. Concomitant to this, the AU has been collaborating with other international organizations to develop five regional organized crime observatories in Africa, as well as the African Organized Crime Index.

**374.** A new project to strengthen regional and national capacity and action against online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) in Africa was launched in July 2018. Under the project, the technical capacity of the AUC Project staff and interdepartmental collaborative team as well as the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) has been strengthened. A consultant was under recruitment to investigate the state of OCSE in Africa, as well as to map out appropriate national responses.

- **African Medicines Agency**

**375.** The AU Ministers of Health met in Geneva in May 2018, as a working group of the STC on Health, Population and Drug Control, and adopted the draft treaty for the establishment of the African Medicine Agency (AMA). The draft treaty was submitted to the STC on Justice and Legal Affairs in November 2018 and will be forwarded to the Assembly in February 2019 for its adoption and the launch of the AMA. The AMA Treaty will require fifteen ratifications in order to enter into force. After its adoption, the Commission will work with Member States to identify the AMA host country.

- **Fund for African Pharmaceutical Development**

**376.** In partnership with the African Development Bank and the African Export Import Bank (Afreximbank), the Commission held a consultation in Cairo in May 2018, to determine the modalities for the setting up of a fund to support the manufacturing by local manufacturers in Africa of essential medicines and medical products. The meeting was chaired by the bureau of the STC on Health, Population and Drug Control. It brought together Member States, RECs, and industry experts.

**377.** The consultative meeting recommended the need for preliminary steps and a feasibility study to determine the viability of fund for pharmaceutical manufacturing in Africa. The meeting also requested the Commission (i) to report to the upcoming STC on Trade and Mining the progress towards the establishment of the Fund for African Pharmaceutical Development, and (ii) to develop a road-map, including timeframe and clear deadlines, towards the establishment of the Fund before March 2019.

- **Policy Framework for the Sustainable Development of Sport in Africa (2008-2018) implemented.**

**378.** The Policy Framework for the Sustainable Development of Sport in Africa (2008-2018) came to an end in 2018. The purpose of the Framework was to promote participation and excellence, build capacity and promote ethics and values for sport. It identified key sport related issues, with recommendations to be addressed by Governments and other stakeholders.

**379.** Progress was made in the implementation of the Architecture for Sports in Africa and the promotion of sports as a tool for social and economic development. In April 2018, the Government of Cameroon and the Commission signed the host agreement for the African Union Sport Council, to be headquartered in Yaoundé in accordance with the Executive Council's decision EX.CL/Dec.680 (XX) of January 2012.

**380.** The Executive Council also vested the ownership of the African Games to the African Union, while entrusting their organization and management to the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA), with technical inputs by the Association of African Sport Confederations (AASC). As a follow up, the three institutions signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Addis Ababa in February 2018, on the organization and management of the African Games and related programmes.

**381.** The Commission, in collaboration with ANOCA and AASC, selected the Kingdom of Morocco and the Republic of Ghana as hosts for the 2019 and 2023 editions of the African Games, respectively. The African Union Sport Council and the Government of Morocco signed a host country agreement in November 2018.

**382.** The Commission took an active part in the global fight against the scourge of doping in sport. It chaired the WADA Public Authorities meetings for the 2018.

#### **IV. Youth Empowerment**

- **AU Roadmap on Harnessing the Demographic Dividend**

**383.** The Commission was involved in the collection of data and the finalization of indicators across the four pillars of the demographic dividend: Employment and Entrepreneurship, Education and Skills Development, Health and Wellbeing, and Rights, Governance and Youth Empowerment. The Status of African Youth Report will be produced once this process is completed in the first quarter of 2019. It will help broaden the knowledge and facilitate information sharing about youth development in Africa.

**384.** The AU Demographic Dividend calls for the Commission to create an index based on a set of indicators specific to each pillar of the Roadmap, with the aim to measure, monitor and report on investments in youth in Africa. This process is under way in partnership with National Statistical Offices, UN-ECA, the Population Reference

Bureau, the Commonwealth, Afristat, and the Packard Foundation. Fourteen (14) young researchers received a specialized training in Yaoundé in May 2018, within the framework of AU Youth Volunteer Corps, to assist in data collection.

- **Skills Development and Youth Empowerment**

**385.** As a follow-up to the Assembly's decision – Assembly/AU/Dec. 652 (XXIX) – of July 2017, the Commission developed a plan of action for the African Decade for Technical, Professional and Entrepreneurial Training and Youth Employment, as well as the setting up of a Continental Dialogue Platform on Skills Development in Africa. The draft was endorsed by the STC on Youth, Culture and Sports in October 2018. The final validation is expected to take place in early 2019.

**386.** The Commission launched the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Cluster in Tunis in April 2018, bringing together a coalition of stakeholders, agencies and experts working in TVET development in Africa. The NEPAD Agency coordinates cluster activities, while CISCO Systems Inc. and the Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) will co-chair the TVET Cluster.

**387.** A Forum on Youth Skills and Enterprise in the Digital Age was hosted in Tunis in April 2018. The Forum brought together senior officials from Member States, development partners, the private sector, young entrepreneurs and civil society representatives to discuss innovative Technical and Vocational Skills Development (TVSD)-TVET models and programs aimed at developing leadership and digital skills for employment.

- **African Youth Charter**

**388.** Article 17 of the African Youth Charter (2006) urges an active engagement and collaboration with youth on peace and security. In this regard, the Commission convened in Lagos in November 2018, a Maiden Consultative Meeting with youth organizations working on peace and security. The objective was to define modalities and implementation strategies for the engagement of youth organizations in conflict prevention to feed into the overall AUC Framework for Youth in Peacebuilding. On its part, the Peace and Security Council convened an open session on youth, peace and security in Africa and agreed to hold this session each year as one of the ways involve youth in peace efforts.

- **Malabo Declaration on Youth Employment**

**389.** Youth unemployment and underemployment constitutes a central challenge to Africa's development. It is estimated that African economies generate only three (3) million formal jobs annually for an estimated 12 million youth entering the workforce in Africa every year.

**390.** The Malabo Declaration on Youth Employment provided a springboard for discussions on youth unemployment and underemployment. Several other frameworks have been introduced to address this issue within Agenda 2063's call for a skills revolution in Africa. One such framework is the Plan of Action for the African Decade for Technical, Professional, Entrepreneurial Training and Youth Employment (2019-2028), which is a roadmap for accelerated implementation of the continental strategy for TVET to foster youth employment. By regularly aligning TVET programmes with labour market requirements, the Plan of Action seeks to enhance the relevance and quality of the African TVET systems (formal, informal and non-formal) for equipping youth and adults with the skills required for (self) employment, decent work, entrepreneurship and lifelong learning. It also aims to address key issues hindering TVET development and youth employment, including the need for re-orienting the African TVET systems to address mismatch between education and training and labour market needs through high quality learning experience and coherent policies at the continental, regional and national levels.

**391.** The STC on Youth, Sports and Culture (STC-YCS) met in Mahe, Seychelles, in December 2018, to finalize the development of the Africa Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (APAYE) towards its launching by June 2019. The STC adopted the Plan of Action and called on the Commission, Member States and Partners to advocate for its implementation. The STC also urged Member States to respond with agility to the issues of labour migration and mobility and implement policies to respond to youth unemployment and underemployment.

- **AU Youth Volunteer Corps**

**392.** Since the launch of the program in December 2010, the Commission recruited over 600 young African women and men and deployed over 400 across the continent. Highlights for 2018 are as follows:

- (i) 156 youth volunteers served in the second quarter of 2018, of which 58.4% were female and 41.6% male;
- (ii) 19 youth volunteers completed their service in the same period; and
- (iii) 70 new youth volunteers were deployed after completing their matching and administrative processes.

**393.** The Commission issued an online call for applications in May-June 2018 for the 2018-2019 deployment cycle. Meanwhile, the selection process for the 9<sup>th</sup> cohort of the African Union Youth Volunteer Corps has been finalized. Two training sessions took place in Kigali in September 2018 and in Brazzaville in November 2018, respectively.

- **African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child**

**394.** The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) completed the first draft of continent-wide study on the situation of the children on the move. Consultations were under way to finalize the study by the end of 2018.

**395.** Commemoration of the 2018 Day of the African Child (DAC) took place in Lilongwe under the theme “Leave no child behind for Africa’s development”. Children presented a declaration to the Government of Malawi expressing their expectations on the role they would like the authorities and other stakeholders involved in child issues to play towards the realization of the 2018 DAC theme.

**396.** It will be recalled that the Executive Council, meeting in its 33<sup>rd</sup> ordinary session in Nouakchott in July 2018, adopted the theme “Humanitarian Action in Africa: Children’s Rights First” for the commemoration of the 2019 Day of the African Child.

**397.** The period under review witnessed an increase in reporting by Member States on their implementation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Of the forty-eight (48) States that have ratified the Charter, thirty-seven (37) have submitted their initial reports, and nine (9) have submitted their first and second periodic reports. Furthermore, during its 31<sup>st</sup> session held in Bamako in April and May 2018, the ACERWC considered four State Party Reports and two Complementary Reports from Burkina Faso, Burundi, Malawi and Niger, and from Nigeria and Zambia, respectively.

**398.** The ACERWC also developed four Concluding Observations and Recommendations for the attention of concerned Member States. These tasks are mandated by Articles 43, 44 and 45 of the ACRWC Charter.

**399.** The ACERWC continued its advocacy efforts for the signing and ratification of the African Charter for the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Fruitful discussions in this regard were held in Mogadishu in July 2018 with the Government of the Federal Republic of Somalia and other stakeholders involved on child issues, to encourage the ratification of the Charter. As a result, the Government of Somalia committed to hasten the ratification process, while partners in the country promised to support the Government in this endeavour.

**400.** In the coming year, the ACERWC will continue its lobbying efforts for the universal ratification of the African Charter for the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and monitor the measures adopted by Member States to implement it. The ACERWC will also increase the number of advocacy visits and expand them to States Party and other organs regarding allegations of violations of children’s rights.

**401.** Member States are encouraged to extend their full cooperation to the ACERWC, including by adopting, without further delay, the amendment to Article 5 of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights to allow the ACERWC access to the African Court of Human and People’s Rights.

## **V. Gender**

### **• Gender Strategy**

**402.** The year under review witnessed several activities in support of gender equality and women’s empowerment. During its 30<sup>th</sup> ordinary session, the Assembly decided to achieve full 50/50 gender parity and to reserve 35% of posts to the youth in all AU

Organs by the year 2025 [Assembly/AU/Dec.687(XXX)]. To implement this decision, a Parity 2025 project was initiated and held its first meeting in Dakar in July 2018, to agree on the way forward.

**403.** The Commission completed the evaluation of the 2009 AU Gender Policy. The outcome will inform the implementation of the new AU Strategy on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, which was adopted by the Executive Council – EX.CL/Dec.1012(XXXIII) – during the June-July 2018 Summit in Nouakchott. The new Strategy and its Operational Plan will be launched during the 2019 February Summit in Addis Ababa.

**404.** 2018 also marked the fifteenth anniversary of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, also known as the Maputo Protocol. So far, forty-one (41) Member States have ratified it, with the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia as the latest to submit its instruments of ratification in July 2018.

**405.** The Commission, in collaboration with the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa, UN partners and the Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR) coalition, organized at AU headquarters in Addis Ababa in December 2018, a High-Level Consultation on the Ratification, Domestication and Implementation of the Maputo Protocol by States Yet to Ratify the Protocol. Participants took the opportunity to design a roadmap for the In-Country Advocacy Missions that will commence in 2019 to Member States that are yet to ratify the Maputo Protocol. This event was followed by the commemoration, on 14 December 2018, of the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Maputo Protocol to celebrate the achievements made so far in the realization of women's rights and launch the "All for Maputo Program".

**406.** In the same vein, the Commission initiated a Continent-wide Campaign on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, in furtherance of the implementation of AU and international instruments to promote and protect women's rights against violence. The Campaign's official launch will take place during 2019.

**407.** To mark the International Women's Day (IWD) on 8 March 2018, and the Pan-African Women's Day (PAWD) on 31 July 2018, the Chairperson of the Commission issued statements celebrating women's achievements and contributions to Africa's development and calling for greater collective action to fast-track the implementation of agreed commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment. Furthermore, in his opening remarks during the Joint AU/EU High Level Meeting in Nouakchott in June-July 2018 on Women in Power, the Chairperson of the Commission reiterated the need to shift focus from rhetoric to action, results and greater accountability and adequate resourcing for gender equality and women's empowerment.

**408.** The African Women Leaders Network (AWLN) convened at AU headquarters in April 2018 its Second Women Leaders Forum for Africa's Transformation, in collaboration with UN-WOMEN and the Office of the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the Commission on Women, Peace and Security. A Plan of Action was developed to enhance the leadership of African women in bringing transformative changes focusing on peace, security and development in Africa.



**409.** The Fund for African Women (FAW) contributes to women's economic empowerment by providing financial supports to women's grassroots organizations. During the period under review, an amount of US\$2 million was disbursed to 119 organizations across the continent. From 30 January to 7 February 2018, two field visits were undertaken by the members of the Fund's Steering Committee and the staff of the Commission's Women and Gender Development Directorate to Nigeria and Namibia, to assess the progress made in the implementation of the projects that were funded under the FAW theme "fighting poverty and promoting economic empowerment of women and entrepreneurship". The information collected during the field visits contributed to the development of the booklet on the FAW's achievements.

**410.** The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) is an accountability and reporting tool on how Member States and the Commission implement gender equality commitments. In 2018, a synthesis report of eleven (11) Member States and a report of the Chairperson of the Commission were endorsed by Policy Organs in Addis Ababa. Concerned about the low number of reports from Member States, the Executive Council, in its Decision EX.CL/Dec.1009(XXXIII) of June 2018, appealed "to the Member States that are yet to submit their reports to do so urgently." A framework for the online reporting system is under development by the Women and Gender Development Directorate to facilitate this process and encourage the sharing of best practices on issues pertaining to gender equality and women's empowerment.

**411.** The Office of the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the Commission on Women, Peace and Security convened at AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa in March 2018, a meeting of the twenty-three (23) Member States and RECs that have developed National and Regional Action Plans on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 for the validation of the Continental Results Framework (CRF) on Women, Peace and Security. The Continental Results Framework was validated in March 2018 and adopted by the Peace and Security Council in May 2018.

**412.** The Commission, through the Women, Gender and Development Directorate, continued to coordinate the integration of AU's policy position on gender equality and women's empowerment in global decision-making processes. In collaboration with UN Women and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the Africa pre-consultation meeting for the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was held in Addis Ababa in February 2018. The meeting developed a consolidated Africa Common Position on the themes of the CSW's 62<sup>nd</sup> session, and a coordinated African strategic advocacy to influence the Agreed Conclusions of the CSW session. The consultation meeting was preceded by multi-stakeholder national and regional consultations across the continent led by Ministries responsible for Gender Equality and Women's Affairs, as well as by the RECs and civil society organizations (CSOs).

**413.** The Commission, through the Women and Gender Development Directorate, hosted in Addis Ababa in November 2018, the 2<sup>nd</sup> FemWise-Africa Induction Training, the 3<sup>rd</sup> FemWise-Africa Executive Steering Committee Meeting, as well as the 2<sup>nd</sup> FemWise-Africa General Assembly. These events brought together around one hundred FemWise-Africa members who were trained during the 1<sup>st</sup> FemWise-Africa

induction training session in June 2018, the FemWise leadership and other leaders in the area of women, peace and security.

**414.** Implementation of agreed commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment remains one of the key challenges to the full realization of women's rights in Africa. Member States are therefore encouraged to allocate the requisite resources to their national gender institutions to enable them to carry out their work in accordance with the decisions of the AU Policy Organs.

**415.** Likewise, multiple reporting on various international and regional instruments contributes to reporting fatigue, often characterized by delayed or fewer submissions from Member States. It is therefore opportune for the Policy Organs to reflect on how to combine reporting on various instruments into one single national report that covers multiple international and regional instruments. The Commission stands ready to assist Member States in this undertaking.

**416.** Lastly, there is a need for a stronger coordination of AU Member States in the negotiations and side events of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). Thirteen (13) African countries are members of the 45-strong CSW. Member States are therefore encouraged to continue to work with the Commission in coordinating their efforts to achieve African common positions on various issues, in line with the AU decisions on gender equality and women's empowerment.

- **Pre-Summit gender meetings and high-level panels**

**417.** The 10<sup>th</sup> session of the AU Gender Pre-Summit was held in Addis Ababa on the margins of the 2018 January Summit, under the theme "Winning the fight against corruption: a sustainable path to gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa". The outcome included an outline of actions to be taken at national, regional and continental levels to accelerate the fight against corruption, as well as performance plans and terms of reference for each of the gender multi-stakeholder policy platforms, which formed part of the report on "Enhancing the Performance of WGDD Policy Platforms".

**418.** The Commission also organized High-Level Presidential meetings on the margins of the 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Summits held in Addis Ababa and Nouakchott, respectively. They included (i) the 'High-Level Breakfast on Equal Access of African Women in High-Level Positions at the AU and in the UN System', which was hosted President Alpha Conde of Guinea; (ii) the Revival Launch of the East African Region of the Pan-African Women's Organization (PAWO), hosted by President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda; and (iii) the High-Level Consultation on the Ratification of the Maputo Protocol by States Yet to Ratify the Protocol.

**419.** There was also the AU/EU High Level Consultation meeting on Women in Power, hosted by President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and AU Chairperson. The outcome included strengthened commitment to implement parity across the Union, the establishment of a peer review mechanism for the implementation of policies on gender equality and women's empowerment, and the acceleration of the ratification,

domestication and implementation of Maputo Protocol and other AU instruments on gender equality and women's empowerment.

- **Maputo Protocol and Women's Rights**

**420.** The Commission, through the Women, Gender and Development Directorate (WGDD), convened in Addis Ababa in December 2018, a High-Level Consultation to accelerate the ratification, domestication and implementation of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol). The consultation meeting was organized in collaboration with the Office of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Women in Africa (SRRWA) of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR), the Solidarity for African Women's Rights (SOAWR), the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and with the support of development partners. Forty-one (41) Member States have thus far ratified the Protocol and are bound to its provisions. However, fourteen (14) have yet to do so.

**421.** During the meeting, Member States that have not ratified the Maputo Protocol shared the challenges and opportunities they face with regard to the ratification process. On the other hand, they gave examples of the legal provisions that they had promulgated, the programs they had implemented and the institutions they had established and which, in their view, advance the provisions laid out in the Maputo Protocol.

**422.** Three documents were reviewed and adopted over the course of the two days consultation. They were the All for Maputo Protocol Roadmap, Country Profiles and their accompanying advocacy strategies (for countries yet to ratify), and the concept note and action plan for in-country advocacy missions to accelerate ratification.

**423.** Member States committed to realizing the goal of universal ratification of the Maputo Protocol by 2020, affirming that its universal ratification, domestication and implementation will address the myriad of challenges women and girls face across the Continent, ensuring an environment that allows for their freedom, self-determination and autonomy free of violence, coercion and discrimination.

**424.** The High-Level Consultation concluded on 14 December 2018, with the celebration of the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the adoption of the Maputo Protocol and progress made so far in the realization of women's rights.

## **H. CONTINENTAL POLICIES, FRAMEWORKS AND STANDARDS**

### **I. Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA)**

**425.** The Assembly adopted a declaration in February 2009 – Assembly/AU/Decl.1(XII) – requesting the Commission to formulate the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), which was officially launched in Kampala in July 2010. Subsequently, the Assembly, in its decision Assembly/AU/Decl.2 (XVIII) of January 2012, adopted PIDA as the reference programme for regional and continental infrastructure development in Africa.

**426.** Since then, the Commission, in partnership with the NEPAD Agency, UNECA and the African Development Bank (AfDB), worked to address the infrastructure deficit. In addition, initiatives such as the G20 Infrastructure Action Plan, the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa (ICA), the EU-Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund and the Africa Infrastructure Country Diagnostic highlight the necessity of regional infrastructure development for Africa's economic growth.

**427.** The PIDA Priority Action Plan (PIDA-PAP) portfolio of projects that are prioritized for implementation from 2012 to 2020 comprises more than 400 projects in 51 cross-border programmes, covering the four sectors that include transport (235 projects), energy (54 projects), ICT (113 projects) and trans-boundary water resources management (9 projects). The capital cost of delivering the PIDA-PAP is estimated at US\$68 billion or US\$7.5 billion annually.

**428.** Member States have taken significant strides in ensuring the implementation of the PIDA projects. From the 433 individual project fiches, about 32% (131 projects) are either under construction or already operational, 16% are currently being structured for tendering, while about 26% have moved from concept to pre-feasibility and feasibility phases.

**429.** So far, implementation of PIDA projects has produced the following results:

- (i) a total capacity of approximately 16,066 kilometers of roads were built throughout the continent;
- (ii) 4,077 kilometers of railway capacity was built through PIDA railway projects;
- (iii) in the energy sector, a total transmission line capacity of approximately 3,506 KM was added;
- (iv) thirteen (13) countries – Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Republic of Congo, Guinea, Liberia, Malawi, Niger, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia – were connected with regional fiber optic cables in the ICT sector; and
- (v) through constructed and operational PIDA projects, respectively 112,900 and 49,400 jobs were directly and indirectly created.

**430.** The timeframe of the PIDA Priority Action Plan (PAP) covers the 2012-2020 period. Following the relevant decisions of the STC on Transport, Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructure, Energy and Tourism (STC-TTIET), as well as consultations with continental and regional partners, the Commission, through the Department of Infrastructure and Energy, initiated the process of the PIDA Mid-Term Review to take stock of PIDA implementation to date, highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the processes and instruments currently in use to achieve the 2020 targets.

**431.** Regional consultation workshops were carried out to assess the implementation of PIDA projects in the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Member States. The outcome will provide guidance on the way to fast-track the implementation of the PIDA-PAP. It will also provide the basis on how to formulate the PIDA-PAP II (2020-2030).

**432.** During the reporting period, the Commission convened four PIDA implementation governance meetings, including the Steering Committee and the data collection forums. The meeting of the Reference Group on Infrastructure (RGI), which was jointly convened with the European Union in Addis Ababa in May 2018, took note of the positive progress made to date on PIDA and developed the 2018-2020 strategic infrastructure roadmap. It was also noted that the AU-EU partnership is one of the most structured of all Africa's partnerships with implementation mechanisms that are institutionalized at all levels, from the technical implementation level to the policy and decision-making at the highest political level which is embodied in the AU-EU Summit of Heads of State and Government.

**433.** On its part, the NEPAD Agency convened the first technical meeting in June 2018, on the need for an aggregated financial guarantee scheme to ensure more investments in PIDA projects. Another technical meeting with the Pension and Sovereign Wealth Funds was scheduled in the last quarter of 2018. Furthermore, the NEPAD Agency will promote a few flagship projects using the Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility with the aim of getting particular institutional investors and Heads of State and Government to champion the projects, initially along the Batoka Gorge and LAPSETT Corridor.

**434.** The NEPAD Agency continued to provide support to the RECs, including through the deployment of technical experts to various regions. Two more experts were deployed to the Union of the Maghreb Arab (UMA) region and one to the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

- **PIDA Capacity Building Project**

**435.** In order to ensure smooth implementation of the PIDA PAP (2012-2020), the Commission and the NEPAD Agency, with the support of the African Development Bank, initiated the PIDA Capacity Building Project (PIDA CAP). The African Development Bank provided almost US\$9 million for its implementation over three years.

**436.** The main objective of the PIDA CAP is to strengthen the capacity of Member States, through their respective Regional Economic Communities (RECs), as well as the Commission and the NEPAD Agency, in planning, preparing and coordinating the implementation of regional infrastructure programmes and projects. Through the NEPAD Agency, experts have been recruited for all the RECs to support projects preparation activities in Member States. The Commission is also using the funds of the PIDA CAP to strengthen its communication strategy, as well as policy interventions in Member States. The Commission and the NEPAD Agency are in the process of negotiating a second phase of the PIDA CAP with the African Development Bank.

**437.** In addition to the PIDA CAP, the Commission also carried out several capacity building workshops over the years to support data collection on infrastructure projects in Member States. These workshops have helped to collect and provide information on PIDA projects, which are available in the Virtual PIDA Information Centre (VPIC).

- **PIDA Advocacy Efforts**

**438.** Advocacy on PIDA was enhanced in 2018. The Commission's Department of Infrastructure and Energy implemented its PIDA Communication Strategy to enhance awareness on PIDA projects at the national, regional and local levels. The Department also set up the PIDA Journalists Network whose membership has now reached 40 media outlets from across the continent. The PIDA Journalists Network has taken on the task of raising the profile of infrastructure development. It is expected to increase the volume and quality of positive coverage on PIDA's impact on Africa's development.

**439.** As part of its communication strategy for PIDA implementation, the Department of Infrastructure and Energy carried out training activities for African journalists, in order to enhance visibility of PIDA projects at the global, regional and national levels. In 2018, the Department took journalists from across the continent on a tour of the largest hydropower project in Africa – the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) – as one of the PIDA Projects at an advanced stage. The visit to the GERD was preceded by a third media workshop held in Addis Ababa in November 2018, to hone the skills of 24 journalists to effectively cover PIDA projects.

**440.** Furthermore, as part the annual activities to showcase PIDA projects to stakeholders, the Department of Infrastructure and Energy, in collaboration with the Zimbabwean Government, the NEPAD Agency and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), organized the Fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) PIDA Week in Victoria Falls in November 2018. The main objective of the PIDA Week was to showcase progress made in the implementation of selected PIDA projects, provide a marketing platform to accelerate their implementation, and address crucial issues around resource mobilization and enabling environment, among others. The 4th PIDA Week was attended by over 450 participants.

**441.** The Commission and the NEPAD Agency held a special briefing for the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) in Addis Ababa on 21 June 2018, to sensitize Member States on PIDA. As a result of a strong advocacy and sensitization work, thirty-four (34) PIDA programs out of the existing fifty-one (51) are now included in national development plans in forty-two (42) Member States.

**442.** During the meeting of the STC on Transport, Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructures, Energy and Tourism, which was held in Lomé in March 2017, Ministers underscored the potential of regional infrastructure development as a key leverage in job creation. They requested the Commission and the NEPAD Agency to develop a tool to estimate, integrate and promote job creation through infrastructure development under the framework of PIDA. Following up on the Ministerial request, the Commission's Department of Infrastructure and Energy and the NEPAD Agency, with the support of

the German Government through GIZ, developed the PIDA Job Creation Toolkit in 2017. The Commission and the NEPAD Agency will launch the Toolkit in the margins of the February 2019 Summit.

- **African infrastructure database (AID) and the Virtual PIDA Information Centre (VPIC)**

**443.** The PIDA information management system – comprising the Virtual PIDA Information Centre (VPIC), the Africa Infrastructure Database (AID), regional (RECs) databases, and the PIDA monitoring and evaluation (M&E) portal <http://www.au-pida.org> – was developed and deployed to provide an update on PIDA implementation. The PIDA information system is an effective tool for the dissemination of information and knowledge on PIDA, and the prioritization of infrastructure development at the level of Member States.

- **PIDA Pilot Smart Corridors**

**444.** Following a consultative session between the NEPAD Agency and the Government of Kenya, specific projects on the Lamu Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia (LAPSSET) Corridor were identified, as well as a roadmap and corresponding actions for accelerated development and financing. The roadmap is in alignment with the Kenya National Development Plan and the African Union's 5% Agenda.

**445.** The Praia-Dakar-Abidjan Multimodal Multisector Corridor development project is earmarked for the piloting of the PIDA ASII (The African Strategic Infrastructure Initiative) methodology. The objective is to package the shortlisted projects based on their relative attractiveness for private sector investment (private finance) and public investment. It is also to prepare a Corridor Development Investment and Marketing Plan for projects in the transport, energy, transboundary water and telecommunication and IT Sectors, which will be selected by experts from the ECOWAS Corridor Member States. The Project Packaging Consultancy for Selected PIDA-ASII is being finalized

**446.** Preparations were also in advanced stages at the NEPAD Agency for the implementation of the Central Corridor Transit Transport Facilitation Agency (CCTTFA). The initial phase of the project will focus on developing a feasibility study, environmental impact and social assessment and the development of a resettlement for the section from the Kalundu port through to the Uvira-Ruberizi road, transecting Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi.

**447.** The following five PIDA Priority projects were selected, namely: two (2) projects in the SADC region; one (1) in ECOWAS; one (1) in the EAC; and one (1) in ECCAS. Project profiles highlighting, *inter-alia*, specific opportunities for private sector investments in each of the five projects are currently being developed.

**448.** The NEPAD Agency developed a Comprehensive Project Status Report for all ten (10) projects of the Presidential Infrastructure Champion Initiative, namely:

- (i) the missing link of the Trans-Sahara Highway – Algeria;
- (ii) optic fibre from Algeria to Nigeria, via Niger;
- (iii) the Dakar-Ndjamena-Djibouti Road/Rail – Senegal;
- (iv) Nigeria–Algeria gas pipeline: Trans-Saharan Gas Pipeline (TSGP);
- (v) Kinshasa-Brazzaville Bridge Road/Rail;
- (vi) the unblocking of political bottlenecks for ICT broadband and fibre optic projects in the neighbouring states;
- (vii) the establishment of a navigational line from Lake Victoria to the Mediterranean Sea via the River Nile Project (VICMED);
- (viii) Lamu Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia Transport Corridor project;
- (ix) the international logistics hub projects. The report is expected to be completed by the end of the year; and
- (x) the SMART Africa Project

- **PIDA Integrated project for access to basic infrastructure and services for rural/remote areas**

**449.** The Commission, in collaboration with the NEPAD Agency, the UNECA and the African Development Bank, organized in Addis Ababa in December 2018, a policy dialogue on PIDA's regional and continental infrastructure to unlock access to remote and rural areas of Africa. The objective was to provide a platform for PIDA stakeholders to create synergies between the different implementation institutions - regional and continental and other stakeholders – to minimize duplication and maximize the socio-economic impact of PIDA projects in remote and rural areas. More than 200 participants, including participants from rural communities, took part in the event.

- **PIDA Project on policy and regulation initiative on digital Africa (PRIDA)**

**450.** The Commission set up the PRIDA Technical Assistance and Project governance. Terms of reference were developed for a need assessment study relating to the PRIDA's outputs 2 (ICT policy and regulation) and 3 (internet governance). Project implementation started in August 2018. The meeting of PRIDA's global steering committee took place in Addis Ababa in December 2018 and agreed on the project implementation modalities.

- **African Internet Exchange Points (AXIS)**

**451.** During the period under review, the Commission set up an internet exchange point in Mali and awarded US\$75,000 to the internet exchange in the Republic of Congo. Grant agreements were signed with the National Telecommunication Regulatory Authority of Egypt and Rwanda Internet Exchange.

**452.** The Commission also processed payment of US\$39,870 to Nigeria's internet exchange point and a second disbursement of US\$45,000 to Internet Exchange in the Republic of Congo. Gabon's internet exchange also received a payment of US\$37,855.43.



## II. Continental Transport Policy

### • Road transport

**453.** In April 2014, African Ministers of Transport adopted the Malabo Declaration on Transport Sector Development in Africa, which requested the Commission, among others, to elaborate a long-term transport strategy for the continent to respond to the continent's transport challenges. In response, the Commission prepared a draft transport policy paper, which set out a common framework for delivering integrated and sustainable transport at continental, regional and country level.

**454.** The draft paper was presented to the first meeting of the Ministerial Sub-Committee on Transport, which was held in Addis Ababa in December 2017. The meeting agreed that the draft should be finalized as the Continental Transport Policy framework and submitted to the Policy Organs by the end of 2018.

**455.** In November 2018, the Commission convened a continental expert workshop to validate the draft continental transport policy before its adoption by the Specialized Technical Committee on Transport, Trans-continental and Interregional Infrastructure, Energy and Tourism (STC-TTIET) and submission to the July 2019 Summit.

**456.** Similarly, the Malabo Declaration adopted the Intergovernmental Agreement on harmonisation of norms and standards of the trans-African highway network (TAH) and its five (5) annexes. The ministers requested the Commission to ensure rigorous application of the standards to avoid non-compliance with the burden at the axle, which is at the origin of the massive destruction of the road heritage. They stressed that this Agreement is also essential for the facilitation of trade throughout the continent.

**457.** The objective of the Intergovernmental Agreement and its Annexes is to establish minimum norms and standards for the design and maintenance of the trans-African transport network, to contribute to the integration and the physical, political, economic and social cohesion of Africa, and ensure road transport facilities between major production and consumption areas on the continent. Its implementation will allow the interoperability of the continental road transport networks, thus contributing to the smooth implementation of the AfCFTA, reduce traffic accidents, minimize the harmful effects of infrastructure on the environment, and avoid high costs of road maintenance.

**458.** The Commission organised in Addis Ababa in October 2018, a continental experts workshop to consider, among others, the ratification and implementation of the Intergovernmental Agreement on TAH. Amon other outcomes, the meeting agreed on a roadmap to accelerate the ratification and implementation of the Intergovernmental agreement. The roadmap recommended the launching of the working group on TAH, intensify advocacy on the ratification and implementation, and ensure an appropriate capacity building for the various stakeholder.

- **Road Safety Action Plan**

**459.** In connection with recommendation 64/225 of the General Assembly of the United Nations of 2 October 2010, adopting a Plan of Action for Road Safety for the 2011-2020 Decade of Action, the African Ministers of Transport, at their meeting held in Luanda in November 2011, adopted the African Road Safety Action Plan.

**460.** The Ministers also adopted the Luanda Declaration which, among others, proclaimed the third Sunday of November, which is currently the World's Remembrance Day for road accident victims, as the African Road Safety Day. They also requested the Commission to prepare an African Road Safety Charter. The Commission and the UNECA were also assigned the task to follow up and report on the implementation of continental road safety instruments, including organising regular meetings on road safety in Africa. The Luanda ministerial declaration was endorsed by the Executive Council Summit in January 2012 [EX.CL/682(XX)].

**461.** As a follow-up, the Commission had repeatedly encouraged all Member States to ratify the **African Road Safety Charter** adopted by the Assembly during the January 2016 Summit. The latest communication was sent to Member States in June 2018. In addition, as a prelude to the African Road Safety Day (18 November 2018), an information note and a celebration guide was distributed to all Member States, reminding them to celebrate the Road Safety Day in their respective countries at the highest possible levels.

**462.** The African Road Safety Observatory and Minimum Road Safety Indicators are being developed with the support of UNECA and Africa Transport Policy (SSATP), as recommended by the STC-TTIET.

**463.** The Commission initiated a mid-term evaluation of the implementation of the African Road Safety Action Plan. It brought together experts from Member States to take stock of progress made in this area and assess the extent to which the objectives of the action plan can be achieved by 2021. The evaluation started in November 2018 and is expected to be completed by the end of February 2019.

**464.** The major challenge is currently the signing and ratification by all Member States of the African Road Safety Charter, as well as the operationalisation of the African Road Safety Observatory. As of this reporting, only four (4) Member States have signed the African Road Safety Charter – the Comoros, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Zambia – and no Member State has ratified it.

**465.** On its part, the Commission will continue to advocate for the implementation of the African Plan of Action for the Decade of Road Safety and complete the establishment of the African Road Safety Observatory.

- **The Revised African Maritime Transport Charter**

**466.** The Revised African Maritime Transport Charter was adopted by the Assembly [Assembly/AU/Dec.293(XV)] in Kampala in July 2010. The Revised Charter has been formulated as an overall continental policy on maritime transport to facilitate trade

between Africa and the rest of the world. However, since its adoption, the Revised Charter has received only nine (9) ratifications, namely Benin, Burkina Faso, Congo, Ethiopia, Gabon, Kenya, Mauritius, South Africa, and Togo.

**467.** The Commission organised in Addis Ababa in October 2018, a maritime experts consultation meeting on the ratification and implementation of the 2010 Revised African Maritime Transport Charter. The Consultative meeting adopted a roadmap to accelerate the full ratification and implementation of the 2010 Revised African Maritime Transport Charter. The roadmap recommended the revival of the oversight committee as provided for in article 44 and to intensify advocacy on ratification of the Charter. It may also be opportune for Member States to consider the designation of Champions to spearhead the ratification of the Charter and identifying focal points at national and RECs levels.

**468.** The Commission also revived the Strategic Task Force for the Implementation of the 2050 Africa's Integrated Maritime Strategy that was established in 2014. The Task Force met in May and August 2018, to consider eight (8) Draft Annexes to the African Charter on Maritime Security and Safety and Development in Africa (Lomé Charter), which were developed in 2017 in the areas of (i) Definitions; (ii) General Provisions; (iii) Living marine resources; (iv) Extraction of non-living resources; (v) Climate and Environmental Sustainability; (vi) Poverty Eradication, Employment and Social Development; (vii) Blue Economy; and (viii) Cabotage.

**469.** The Task Force met again in October 2018, to validate the Draft Annexes and circulate them to all Member States for comments. The Commission plans to submit them for the consideration of the various STCs and, finally, to the Policy Organs through the STC on Justice and Legal Affairs.

**470.** Pursuant to Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.822 (XXV) of June 2014, the Commission set up an interdepartmental team for more coordinated action on maritime matters. In addition, the Commission and UNECA organized a side event during the Blue Economy Summit in Nairobi in November 2018, to foster increased wealth creation from Africa's oceans and seas through a sustainable and thriving maritime economy.

### **III. Geothermal Energy**

- **Operationalization of the Geothermal Risk Mitigation Facility**

**471.** The Geothermal Risk Mitigation Facility (GRMF) was established in 2012 by the Commission with the support of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and the European Union Africa Infrastructure Trust Fund, which is managed through the German Development Bank (KfW). In 2014, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) added its contribution to the GRMF, bringing the total size of the Facility to approximately USD115 million. Originally, the Facility was planned for a period of five years. It has now been extended to 2021 because the funds have not yet been fully spent due to delay in the implementation of the projects that were awarded GRMF grants.

**472.** From 2012 to 2018, five applications rounds were completed and grants totaling US\$117.5 million were awarded to thirty (30) projects with a potential of 2,783 MW. The planned investment volume by geothermal developers for the 30 projects is estimated at USD9.2 billion.

**473.** The main challenge facing the GRMF is the delay in the implementation of the projects that received grants, due, among other reasons, to delays in award of licenses, signing of power purchase agreements and high cost of infrastructures to access the project sites. The Commission maintained regular consultations with the GRMF-focused countries, as well as the developers of those projects, to resolve these challenges and accelerate the implementation.

- **Development of sustainable energy in small island developing states (SIDS) in Africa**

**474.** African island states have unique concern in addressing energy issues because of their location. Currently, they are highly dependent on fossil fuels and the majority spends in excess of 30% of their foreign exchange earnings annually on importing fossil fuels.

**475.** The concept of Renewable Energy in Small Island States was developed and validated by the Heads of Renewable Energy in African Island States. Terms of reference to implement the concept were also approved and the implementation initiated. A validation workshop was organized in Addis Ababa in August 2018, and requests for proposals advertised in September 2018. The bids are presently under evaluation.

#### **IV. Electricity Standards**

- **Africa Energy Information System**

**476.** The African Energy Commission (AFREC), in 2018, continued working on the African Energy Information System and Database (AEIS) and the dissemination to Member States, the RECs and other international institutions.

**477.** AFREC published “2018 Africa Energy Database” in October 2018. Work on energy efficiency indicators for residential sector will be published in March 2019. Meanwhile, AFREC conducted four regional training workshops on data collection for energy statistics and energy efficiency residential sector for the five African regions. The workshops were organized within the framework of capacity building of focal points of Member States, the RECs and the Regional Power Pools.

- **Harmonization of regulatory frameworks for electricity market in Africa**

**478.** The Commission launched the project on “Harmonized Regulatory Framework for Electricity Market in Africa” in 2015-2016, with the development of a Strategy and

Action Plan. The Strategy and Action Plan were approved by the Specialized Technical Committee of Ministers for Transport, Trans-continental and Inter-regional Infrastructure, Energy and Tourism (STC-TTIIET) in Lomé in March 2017, and by the Executive Council in its decision EX.CL/1024(XXXI) of June- 2017.

**479.** Implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan commenced in May 2017, and was completed in March 2018, with the adoption by the Energy Sub-Committee of the STC-TTIIET in Nouakchott in July 2018, of a continental transmission system tariff methodology, as well as policy and technical models of mini-grids. The Coordination Unit within the Commission's Department of Infrastructure and Energy began its operation in 2018, with the development of guidelines for Minimum Energy Performance standards and Energy Labelling Schemes for Africa.

**480.** There is a delay, however, in the implementation of the third phase of the Action Plan because it took longer than anticipated to confirm the funding and recruit the consultants. Slow recruitment of staff has also delayed the operationalization of the Coordination unit.

**481.** To overcome the unavailability of sufficient data for the MEPS and Energy Labelling assignment, the Commission is working closely with the Regional Centers for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency and the UN Union for Energy Efficiency (U4E). Efforts were made towards strengthening working relations with the RECs, Power Pools and Regional Centers for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency in the implementation of the projects that have been initiated.

**482.** Finally, it is important to note that funding for these projects is much dependent on external donors, mainly the EU. The contribution of Member States is therefore crucial to ensure financial stability in the implementation of these important projects.

- **Electrical infrastructure standards**

**483.** The membership of the African Electrotechnical Standardization Commission (AFSEC), through National Electrotechnical Committees, increased to sixteen (16) – Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. AFSEC's sixth general assembly was held in July 2018, where several key resolutions were made.

**484.** The 3<sup>rd</sup> Africa Smart Grid Forum (ASGF) was held in Kigali in October 2018. Progress was observed in several Member States towards the application of smart grid technologies since the 2<sup>nd</sup> ASGF held in 2016. Continued and increased support of partner organizations was evident with proposals to conclude new MoUs in November 2017 with African Forum for Utility Regulators (AFUR) and the International Council on Large Electric Systems (CIGRE), respectively, to promote the application of AFSEC recommended standards.

**485.** The Egyptian government's commitment to host the AFSEC headquarters in Cairo has been implemented, with the forthcoming appointment in January 2019 of an Executive Secretary to replace the part-time volunteer who was acting in that capacity in

South Africa since AFSEC's inauguration in 2008. Furthermore, office space has been allocated and support staff assigned.

## **V. Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI)**

- **Operationalization of Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI)**

**486.** The African Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) was launched by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) at the June 2015 Summit and the COP 21 in Paris in December 2015. AREI targets are to facilitate the development of 10 GW new capacity of renewable energy sources installed by 2020, and 300 GW by 2030.

**487.** The AREI Board of Directors – consisting of five Heads of State and Government representing the five AU regions – provisionally approved for attribution 24 investment programs and projects with an expected total production capacity of 1.7GW for a total of €4 billion of already planned investments. These investments were prepared with the support of several technical and financial partners, notably the European Union, the French Development Agency (AFD), the KfW Group, the European Investment Bank (EIB), and the African Development Bank (ADB). The majority of these projects are currently undergoing the tender process.

**488.** Regional consultation meetings were organized for Central and East African regions in Nairobi in July 2018, and in Cairo in October 2018, respectively. The consultation meetings for other regions were scheduled to be held before the end of 2018. The purpose of the consultation meetings is to initiate work on roadmaps to remove barriers and create the necessary conditions for operationalizing appropriate project portfolios to enable the Board of Directors to take appropriate measures to accelerate their implementation. The next meeting of the Board of Directors was scheduled for January 2019.

- **Bioenergy development in Africa**

**489.** The African Bioenergy Framework and Policy Guidelines were adopted by the Executive Council in January 2013 – EX.CL/Dec.748(XXII). The purpose of the Framework was to: (i) build consensus on shared framework and provide guidance to individual countries and regions in developing bioenergy policies and regulations; and (ii) enhance awareness among African policy makers and civil society about the need for more environmentally friendly and socially acceptable bioenergy development policies.

**490.** The Commission's Department of Infrastructure and Energy, in collaboration with United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), developed a concept paper in May 2018 for designing regional bioenergy strategies and investment plans. In June 2018, consultancy services were advertised for developing regional bioenergy development strategy and investment plans for the East and Central Africa regions. The contract for Eastern Africa was awarded to Dr. Bothwell Batidzirai in August 2018, while the one for Central Africa went to Dr. Bemba Diop in September 2018. Both

consultants were expected to finish their assignment by 31 December 2018. The Commission also initiated resource mobilization for similar assignments for the Southern, Western and Northern regions.

**491.** The development of bioenergy resources on the continent requires that Member States prioritize their bioenergy sector, make available adequate funds for bioenergy project development, and strengthen working relations with the RECs and the Regional Centres for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency.

- **Small Hydropower and Solar Energy Development**

**492.** Hydropower and solar energy are proven and internationally-recognized as sources of clean energy. This is particularly more so now that the global community is now prioritizing solar and small hydropower to cater for increasing energy demands and improved energy access.

**493.** Due to many barriers and constraints, Africa has not yet fully benefitted from this transition. Africa is among the regions that receive the highest insolation in the world. Yet, as of 2016, its total installed solar photovoltaic capacity stood at just over 2GW, which is less than one percent of the global solar installed capacity (estimated at 300GW).

**494.** Recognizing the huge potential of these two energy sources for Africa and their ability to contribute to energy access at low cost with high impact, the Commission designed in February to July 2018, a program for small hydropower and solar energy development. Implementation of the program has commenced with resource assessment of small hydropower potential and development of solar energy policy framework. It is expected to be completed by mid-2019.

**495.** As regards hydropower development, the NEPAD Agency held discussions in Victoria Falls in June 2018 with Southern Africa Power Pool (SAPP), to support the synergistic integration of the Batoka, Inga Dam III, and ZTK projects resulting in an agreement to wait for the approval of the SAPP Masterplan for guidance. These discussions involved three RECs (SADC, COMESA and EAC), and four Member States – the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

**496.** Efforts were initiated to strengthen the North African transmission line and support the creation of a regional energy market platform. In this regard, engagement with Arab Maghreb Union (UMA)) and the North Africa power pool is planned for later in the year.

**497.** The NEPAD Agency also provided technical and financial support of renewable energy pilot projects at national level. They included financial closure of the 6MW wind project in The Gambia, solar application to public buildings in Madagascar, and small islands mini-grids in Tanzania.

**498.** This support facilitated the commencement of energy audits for heavy industries in Rwanda and Tanzania. The audits are expected to be completed in the second half of

2019. Furthermore, scoping missions and resource mobilization were underway in Uganda and Burundi for identification of energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.

## **VI. Comprehensive ICT Strategy for Africa (CISA)**

### **• Continental e-governance framework**

**499.** The Commission, in collaboration with the Government of Sudan, hosted the 2018 African Internet Governance Forum (AfIGF) in Khartoum in November 2018. Meanwhile, the website of the Internet Governance Forum was moved from [www.afigf.org](http://www.afigf.org) to [www.afigf.africa](http://www.afigf.africa), that is, DotAfrica.

**500.** The Commission developed an e-Governance Framework and an e-Government Platform (Toolkit) for Member States. An MoU was also signed in the margins of the AU-EU Summit in Abidjan in November 2017, with the Government of Estonia on assistance with e-governance training.

### **• DotAfrica**

**501.** The Commission and the South African Central Registry (ZACR) lawyers met with the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) - a non-profit organization responsible for the maintenance of databases related to the allocations of names and numerical spaces of the Internet - to prepare for the hearing on the litigation on Dot Africa about the transparency of the process followed by ICANN to delegate DotAfrica gTLD to ZACR on behalf of the AU, and the legitimacy of the claim of DCA, an opponent of ZACR that applied for Dot Africa. The Commission and ICANN are awaiting the date of the trial in a United States court in California. The goal is to dismiss DCA for good and forever. Meanwhile DotAfrica is operational and is being used by more than 17,000 entities around the world.

**502.** The Commission also hosted the meeting of the African Internet Registrars held in Addis Ababa in November 2018.

### **• Cybersecurity**

**503.** Cybersecurity remains a serious concern for the AU. As part of its efforts to address the threats related to IT security, the Commission conducted its first threat assessment in collaboration with the Host Country. The assessment uncovered serious breaches caused, among others, by the AU's unsecured network, the vulnerability of its website, and staff members' lack of awareness of IT security requirements. If left unaddressed, these security issues may cause weak access control and expose the AU network to malicious activities by intruders. The Commission intends to give a higher priority to cybersecurity in the years ahead pursuant to Executive Council's decision EX.CL./Dec.987(XXXII) of January 2018, requesting the Commission to implement cybersecurity as a flagship project of Agenda 2063.



**504.** As requested by the STC-CICT-2, the Commission officially launched the Guidelines on Privacy and Personal Data Protection, in the margins of the Africa Internet Summit in Dakar in May 2018. This project was completed in collaboration with Internet Society (ISOC).

**505.** Also, as requested by the January 2016 Summit through the Executive Council's decision EX.CL/Dec.900(XXVIII), the Commission continued to follow up on the ratification process of the Malabo Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection. Since its adoption in June 2014, the Convention has been signed by eleven (11) Member States, while only three (3) – Guinea, Mauritius and Senegal – have ratified it. The Chairperson of the Commission sent correspondence to Member States and the RECs calling for the acceleration of the ratification. The Commission also organized a sensitization session for the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) Committee on Transport, Industry, Communication, Energy, Science and Technology on ICTs on the need to encourage Member States to ratify the Malabo Convention.

**506.** The Commission organized in Addis Ababa in April 2018, a workshop on "Cybersecurity Policy & Diplomacy for the diplomatic community based in Ethiopia. The Commission also modernized its cybersecurity infrastructure and capacity and set up an IT Emergency Prevention, Preparedness and Recovery mechanism to deter and respond to cybersecurity threats.

**507.** The First African Summit on Cybercrime was also held in Addis Ababa in October 2018. It was the result of the collaboration between the Commission and the Council of Europe. A capacity building workshop for Member States was also organized in Addis Ababa in July 2018, on the elaboration and adoption of cyber strategies, cyber legislations and the setting up of national computer emergency response teams (CERTs).

**508.** The Commission is now a member of the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise (GFCE) and of the editorial board of the GFCE Magazine. In this capacity, the Commission contributes to the global network of research, expertise and exchange of best practices in this domain.

**509.** On its part, the NEPAD Agency finalized the cybersecurity assessment framework. A cybersecurity portal for sharing knowledge, lessons and best practices among Member States will be on line, in the second half of the year 2019. The plan is to establish digital platforms to enhance the transformation of rural communities through jobs, education, health and access to market. This initiative is implemented under the framework of Rural Futures.

## **VII. Policy framework for sustainable development of tourism in Africa (2008-2018)**

**510.** The Sub-Committee on Tourism of the STC TTiet held its first meeting in Nairobi in October 2018. The Sub-Committee reviewed the status of implementation of the Lomé Plan of Action for Tourism and charted the way forward in aligning tourism strategies to Agenda 2063.

**511.** The Sub-Committee identified the key targets for the development of the tourism sector and called for the formulation and full implementation of a continental tourism strategy, as well as the establishment of the African Tourism Organization. In particular, the Sub-Committee expressed concern about the implementation of the revised tourism action plan, especially the coordination of activities and assignment of responsibilities between the key stakeholders, namely the Commission, the RECs, Member States, the NEPAD Agency, UNECA and the World Tourism Organisation. It urged the Commission to disseminate the revised tourism action plan, as adopted, and prepare a budget for coordination of activities.

### **VIII. Harmonization of Statistics in Africa: setting up statistical institutions and implementation of SHaSA II**

**512.** Work continued towards the establishment of African statistical institutions and implementation of the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa (SHaSA II).

**513.** The Commission and the Government of Tunisia signed in Addis Ababa in January 2018, the host agreement for the African Institute of Statistics. A team from the Commission's Department of Economic Affairs traveled to Tunis in November 2018, to officially open the African Institute of Statistics. The Institute began its activities since then.

**514.** The Commission and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire finalized the negotiations for the hosting of the Statistical Training Center of Yamoussoukro. The host agreement is expected to be signed in early 2019.

**515.** SHaSA II was adopted by the Executive Council in January 2018 (EX.CL/DEC.987 (XXXII)). Consultations are underway about incorporating SHaSA II into national and regional statistical development strategies. The Commission held two meetings – the first in Madagascar in June 2018 and the second in Côte d'Ivoire in July 2018 – with the focal points of different National Statistical Offices on how to harmonize all statistical development policies on the continent in order to achieve better implementation of SHaSA II. Resources are needed to enable the full implementation of SHaSA II as quickly as possible.

## **I. GOVERNANCE, HUMAN RIGHTS AND INSTITUTIONS**

- **Governance**

**516.** The African Governance Architecture (AGA) is the AU's coordination mechanism for all AU Organs, Institutions and RECs with the mandate on democracy, human rights and governance. The African Governance Platform, which is the consultative and dialogue mechanism of the AGA, met in Magaliesburg, South Africa, in March 2018 and approved the development of the AGA Roadmap. The Roadmap is expected to run from 2019 to 2023 in alignment with the AU Mid-Term Plan (2018-2023)

**517.** As part of the efforts to improve Member States' reporting on the implementation of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG), the Commission convened a National Stakeholders Consultative Workshop on State Parties Reports for the Republic of Rwanda to assist the Government of Rwanda in preparing its first report. The workshop took place in Nyagatare in October 2018.

**518.** In August 2018, the African Governance Platform completed its internal review of the Togo initial State Report on the implementation of ACDEG. Togo is the first State Party to the ACDEG to submit its State Report.

**519.** In a bid to deepen the synergy between the African Governance Architecture (AGA) and the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA), the Commission convened three open sessions of the Peace and Security Council on issues related to Silencing the Guns by the year 2020. The sessions were held in Addis Ababa in April and August 2018.

- **Democratic values and practices as the norm**

**520.** During the period under review the Commission, through the Department of Political Affairs, deployed long and short-term election observers to the following twelve (12) Member States: Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Gabon, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Eswatini and Zimbabwe. The Commission also embarked on capacity building of Election Management Bodies in Madagascar, Mali and Zimbabwe, including a financial contribution of USD100,000 to both Madagascar and Mali during the preparation of presidential elections.

**521.** Overall, there was a notable improvement in election management in these countries. However, incidents of electoral violence and contestations of election results remain high in some places, while voter turnout varied from 30 to 90%.

**522.** The Commission provided technical assistance to the Association of the African Electoral Authorities (AAEA) in developing strategies for strengthening the AAEA and make it more relevant and responsive to the needs of election management bodies (EMBs). In addition, the Commission's Department of Political Affairs and the Association of the African Electoral Authorities convened the 5<sup>th</sup> annual continental forum of EMBs in December 2018, to share experiences on combatting corruption to enhance the integrity and credibility of electoral processes in Africa.

**523.** During the period under review, the Commission, in collaboration with the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), spearheaded training and capacity building on the design of Somalia's electoral system and delimitation of electoral boundaries. The system will assist Somali stakeholders in the organization of the first universal suffrage scheduled to take place in 2020.

**524.** On its part, the Permanent Representatives Committee, during its meeting of 11 April 2018, established its Sub-Committee on Democracy, Governance and Human Rights, to provide a link between the PRC and other AU Organs with mandates on

democracy, governance and human rights. The Sub-Committee will begin its work in the first quarter of 2019.

- **Constitutionalism and the Rule of Law**

**525.** During the period under review, the Commission provided technical assistance to the Governments of the Gambia, South Sudan and Somalia on constitution-building processes. The assistance was aimed to help the three Member States ensure that their ongoing constitution-building processes were inclusive and responsive to management of diversity.

**526.** During a meeting held in Accra in June 2018, the Commission, through the Department of Political Affairs, launched a new programme on the institutional strengthening of political parties in Africa, with a view to inculcating and entrenching a culture of democracy, political pluralism, constructive management of diversity, tolerance, and peace on the African continent. The programme's exploratory and feasibility study have been validated, and the guidelines and key priorities finalised and identified.

- **Participatory government and local governance**

**527.** During the period under review, the Commission through the Department of Political Affairs funded a seminar organised by MISAHEL in April 2018 for exchange of experience on decentralization in Mali.

**528.** The Commission, through the Department of Political Affairs, sent a communication to all Member States reminding them to commemorate the African Public Service Day in their respective countries in June 2018, under the theme « Combating corruption in the public service institutions through stakeholder participation and promotion of ethical leadership to realise the objectives of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs».

**529.** Furthermore, the Commission embarked on ratification and domestication campaigns of the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration, which adopted in January 2011. So far, thirty-eight (38) Member States have signed and eighteen (18) have ratified it. The Commission convened the first conference of State Parties in November 2018, which adopted the guidelines to assist State Parties in reporting on the implementation of the Charter.

**530.** The Human Settlements and Urban Development Sub-Committee of the Specialized Technical Committee (STC) on Public Service, Local Government, Urban Development and Decentralisation held a side event on the margins of the World Urban Forum in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in February 2018. Discussions focused on the way forward in respect of policy priorities regarding the Regional Harmonized Framework for the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda in Africa.

**531.** The Commission, through the Department of Political Affairs, organised in Nairobi in July 2018, a technical consultation on the preparation of a Draft Model Bill on Urban Development and Human Settlements. This meeting was followed by a ministerial regional meeting in Entebbe in November 2018, which validated the Harmonized Regional Framework for the Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting of the New Urban Agenda in Africa. The framework was officially adopted at the STC's third ordinary session in December 2018.

**532.** On the operationalization of the High Council of Local Authorities (HCCL), as requested by the executive Council in its decision EX.CL./Dec.993(XXXII) of January 2018, the Commission submitted a report to the Structure and Budget Subcommittee of the PRC on the structural, financial and legal implications for the operationalization of the High Council of Local Authorities (HCCL). A request was sent to the Subcommittee to register the item on the agenda of its consideration before the February 2019 Summit.

- **The Fight against Corruption**

**533.** The AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption was adopted in 2003 and entered into force in 2006. To date, forty-nine (49) Member States have signed it while forty (40) have ratified it. By proclaiming the year 2018 as the year for combating corruption (Project 2018), the Assembly renewed its determination to win the fight against corruption and set Africa on a sustainable path to its transformation. Two Member States – the Republic of Angola and the Republic of Mauritius – were the latest to ratify the Convention in 2018.

**534.** The AU Advisory Board on Corruption (the Board) led the Union's efforts in this endeavour. Several activities were carried out in collaboration with Member States and other AU Organs, and under the leadership of President Muhamadu Buhari of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as Champion for the theme of the year. One main highlight of Project 2018 was the Africa Anti-Corruption Dialogue held in Arusha in October 2018, during which participants deliberated on the development of an African Anti-Corruption Measurement that will be specifically tailored to the realities of the African continent. A key outcome of the dialogue was the development of an African Corruption Measurement paper.

**535.** The AU Advisory Board on Corruption held advocacy meetings in Botswana, Egypt, Mauritius, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda alongside other existing meetings to raise awareness about the theme of the year and amplify Member States' efforts in fighting corruption. One of the key outcomes of consultations and advocacy meetings is the proposal to establish an African Youth Communities of Practice on Anti-Corruption. The activities increased the Board's visibility and a greater public awareness of the AU architecture for fighting corruption. As a result, the Board's Twitter social media page grew from 50 followers in March 2018 to 1,000 followers by the end of November 2018.

**536.** The AU Advisory Board on Corruption launched a continental study to review the state of implementation of the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption with a view to ensuring universal ratification and its full implementation by Member States. The Board worked with the RECs in order to identify emerging trends on corruption as well as draw lessons on good practices in fighting corruption.

**537.** The Board also conducted evaluation missions to Namibia in September 2018 and Rwanda in November 2018, as part of the key activities of Project 2018. The assessment missions reviewed how Member States are complying with, and implementing the provisions of the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption.

**538.** Within the framework of the African Governance Architecture (AGA) youth engagement strategy, the Commission convened three regional youth consultations aimed at mobilizing youth across the five regions, inviting them to join the fight against corruption. These consultations were held in Gaborone in August 2018 for East and Southern Africa, in Dakar in September 2018 for West and Central Africa, and in Casablanca in September 2018 for North Africa. They culminated with the convening in Abuja in December 2018, of the Anti-Corruption Youth Congress by President Muhammadu Buhari of Nigeria and the Champion for the Anti-Corruption Year. The Youth Congress in Abuja was preceded by the Women's Forum and an AGA-led High-Level Dialogue, both of which took place in Gaborone in November 2018 under the auspices of President Mokgweetsi Masisi of Botswana.

**539.** Participants in these consultations stressed the need for renewed political will to implement them. They also stressed the need for expanded civic spaces at national levels, to enable the meaningful participation of African citizens in the fight against corruption. They called for universal signature, ratification, domestication and implementation of the AU Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption and urged Member States to enact progressive laws that protect whistle-blowers of corrupt practices. In view of the limited space for interaction among anti-corruption youth networks and activists at the continental and regional levels, participants resolved to organize themselves through an African Youth Community of Practice and Anti-Corruption (AYCPAC), which will facilitate, among other things, south-south and north-south sharing of experiences and comparable lessons in engaging young people in the fight against corruption.

**540.** Trade union leaders from twenty-seven (27) Member States met in Dar-es-Salaam in August 2018, under the auspices of the Commission and the Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU), to exchange views on "Development and Transformation of Africa through Good Governance: the Role of Trade Unions in Winning the Fight against Corruption". Participants commended the AU Declaration on the year 2018 as the African anti-corruption year and pledged their commitment as trade union leaders to contribute to the fight against corruption on the continent and the realization of Agenda 2063.

**541.** During the year under review, Member States took strong steps in the fight against corruption at the continental and national level. At the Nouakchott Summit in July 2018, the Assembly's Declaration on the African Anti-Corruption Year – Assembly/AU/Decl.1(XXXI) – provides a roadmap for advancing the collective fight against corruption. Key commitments include empowering national anti-corruption agencies, combating all forms of illicit financial flows, and speeding up the implementation of the recommendations of the High-Level Panel on Illicit Flows.

**542.** At the national level, Nigeria's anti-corruption body, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), had reportedly recovered N794 billion, US\$261 million, £1.1 million; €8,168,871 and 407 mansions from fellow Nigerian citizens who allegedly enriched themselves through corruption. The Nigerian EFCC also reportedly secured convictions of no less than 703 allegedly corrupt persons and the forfeiture of N147 billion to the State. Similar actions were enforced in Angola and Ethiopia.

**543.** The Executive Council, in its decision EX.CL/1012(XXXIII) of June 2018, called upon the Commission to lead in the tax transparency and information exchange agenda for Africa, and foster stronger collaboration among countries and regions for tackling the root causes of illicit financial flows (IFFs). As a follow up, the Commission, through the Department of Economic Affairs, prepared a reference book on Domestic Resource Mobilization and Fighting Illicit Financial Flows and Corruption that will be launched soon. This book includes contributions on best practices and experiences of Member States and international institutions in order to promote better policies against IFFs and corruption and by fostering collaboration. It is a first step towards setting up an experience sharing platform between Member States on IFFs and corruption.

## **I. Human Rights**

### **• Human rights and transitional justice**

**544.** During the year 2018, the Commission deployed a total of sixty-two (62) human rights observers as follows: forty-seven (47) in Burundi, three (3) each in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic, respectively, five (5) in Mali, and one (1) each in Somalia and South Sudan, respectively. Human rights observers help in gathering information on the human rights situations on the ground and contribute to the development of appropriate actions to address these situations in a timely manner.

**545.** The Commission and the European Union held the 14<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Human Rights Dialogue in Brussels in October 2018. The dialogue was preceded by the AU-EU civil society organizations seminar on human rights issues, which brought together experts from African and European civil society to jointly discuss issues of interest for both continents.

**546.** The Commission and the United Nations convened the 1<sup>st</sup> AU-UN Human Rights Dialogue in Addis Ababa in April 2018. The dialogue served as a platform for the two organizations to develop joint approaches to preventing and addressing human rights abuses and violations.

**547.** The Assembly, by its decision Assembly/AU/5 (XIV), mandated the Commission to “initiate steps to build a permanent memorial for the victims of human rights violations, including genocide, within the African Union headquarters”. As a follow-up to this decision, the Commission convened in Debre Zeit, Ethiopia, in August 2018, a validation workshop on the Execution Plan of the AU Human Rights Memorial Project. The consultation finalized the design of the project as well as the design of the Documentation Centre, which will provide the history of past violations and serve as communication centre for researchers working on human rights. The memorial site is expected to be erected at the AU headquarters during the course of 2019.

**548.** The Commission carried out the following activities as part of the implementation of the 10-Year Action Plan of the Human and Peoples’ Rights Decade on Africa (2017-2026):

- (i) the Continental Gender Consultation on the Human and Peoples’ Rights Decade in Africa and its Action Plan was held in Ouagadougou in May 2018, to mainstream gender in the 10-Year Action Plan;
- (ii) the Continental Civil Society and Media Consultation on the Human and Peoples’ Rights Decade and its Action Plan was also held in May 2018, to involve CSOs and media in the implementation of the 10-Year Action Plan in Africa; and
- (iii) a consultation of the Steering Committee of the Human Rights Decade in Africa was held in Arusha in July 2018. The meeting focused on the development of a roadmap for the implementation of the 10-Year Action Plan.

**549.** The Commission worked with Member States’ experts to finalize the draft AU Transitional Justice Policy. The draft was submitted in 2016 for consideration by the STC on Justice and Legal Affairs. While awaiting its adoption by the Policy Organs, the Commission convened in Niamey in September 2018, a regional conference on Impunity, Access to Justice and Human Rights. The meeting addressed issues related to transitional justice, impunity, justice and human rights within the context of emerging threats to peace and security in West Africa and the Sahel.

**550.** The Commission organized in Khartoum in October 2018, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Continental Forum on Transitional Justice in Africa, to review the state of transitional justice in Africa, including the various emerging challenges, opportunities and experiences on the African continent. The Commission also organised a series of regional workshops with traditional chiefs and leaders across Africa in order to highlight their role in promoting access to justice for marginalised communities. Work to develop guidelines to bridge the gap between formal and traditional justice structures is expected to be completed in 2019.

**551.** On its part, the Pan African Parliament conducted a training session for its parliamentarians on transitional justice.



- **African Commission of Human and People's Rights (ACHPR)**

**552.** During the reporting period, the ACHPR considered twenty (20) communications or complaints. The ACHPR decided not to be seized of nine (9), issued five (5) Provisional Measures, declared one (1) admissible and two (2) inadmissible and decided one (1) on the merits. The ACHPR held an Oral Hearing on one (1) communication, struck out thirteen (13) for lack of diligent prosecution and deferred seventeen (17) at various stages. The ACHPR also provided the Secretariat with guidance on two (2) Communications while reversing its decision to refer two (2) cases to the African Court. The ACHPR also sent numerous Urgent Appeals to States, concerning the situation of human rights violations on the continent, which in one instance led to the release of human rights defenders unlawfully detained.

**553.** Furthermore, pursuant to Executive Council Decision EX.CL/995(XXXII) on its 43<sup>rd</sup> Activity Report, the ACPHR held a joint retreat with the Permanent Representatives Committee in June 2018, to resolve various concerns about the relationships between the ACHPR, the Policy Organs and State Parties, among others. The retreat and other similar initiatives helped improve cooperation between the ACHPR and other Organs of the Union, as evidenced with the publication of the Joint Retreat Outcome document as Executive Council Decision [EX.CL/Dec.1015 (XXXIII)]. The Decision, inter-alia, noted the “need for the ACHPR and the State Parties through the PRC, to enhance confidence, trust and cooperation between the two organs for the benefit of the continent”.

**554.** The ACPHR's promotional activities during the reporting period produced the following results:

- (i) Ratification of the Maputo Protocol by the Governments of South Sudan and Ethiopia, which increased the number of State Parties to the Protocol to forty-one (41);
- (ii) Adoption by the Assembly of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa in January 2018;
- (iii) Gazetting by the Government of the Gambia of the Moratorium on the Death Penalty on 18 February 2018;
- (iv) Enactment by the Government of Rwanda of a law to protect whistleblowers; and;
- (v) The commitment by the Government of Sierra-Leone to decriminalize defamation.

**555.** State Parties increased their level of participation at the ACHPR ordinary sessions where they provided information on developments in the area of human rights protection at national level. These sessions also offered State Parties the opportunity to

respond to allegations of human rights violations, including the steps taken if any, to remedy the alleged violations.

**556.** The Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa has only been ratified by five (5) Member States, namely Benin, the Comoros, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Zambia. This low ratification and the low level of reporting by State Parties under Article 26 of the Maputo Protocol and Article 14 of the Kampala Convention constitute major challenges to the realization of the ideals espoused in the African Charter. In addition, certain provisions within the domestic laws of several State Parties are yet to be harmonized with the provisions of the African Charter.

**557.** Furthermore, refusal by State Parties to comply with provisional measures issued against them and delays in approving promotional and other ACPHR's missions within their territories are a serious hindrance to the effective implementation of the ACHPR's mandate. During the reporting period, the ACHPR received no information from State Parties concerned by its provisional measures regarding the implementation of its decisions in accordance with Rule 112 of its Rules of Procedures.

**558.** To address these issues, the Executive Council in its decision EX.CL/Dec.1014 (XXXIII) called on State Parties to sign and ratify the various treaties and protocols of the ACHPR, and to submit their periodic reports under these instruments, as well as facilitate the fact-finding missions to investigate all alleged violation of human rights. Furthermore, the Executive Council has called on all State Parties to comply with requests for Provisional Measures; implement decisions of the ACHPR in Communications in which they are parties and inform the ACHPR of the measures taken to implement those decisions in line with the ACHPR's Rules of Procedures. The Commission looks forward to the cooperation of State Parties in fulfilling the requests of the Executive Council on these challenges in the coming weeks and months.

**559.** Staffing issues at the ACHPR remain unresolved. Currently, only twenty-three (23) of the approved regular staff strength of forty-six (46) are on board, resulting in major performance constraints in key units, sections and the secretariat of the ACHPR. It is gratifying, however, to note that the Executive Council in its decision, EX.CL/Dec.1014 (XXXII), requested the Commission to expedite the recruitment for the various unfilled positions at the ACHPR Secretariat in accordance with its approved organogram and staffing table.

- **African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights**

**560.** The mission of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights is to "enhance, through judicial decisions, the protective mandate of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights by strengthening the human rights protection system in Africa and ensuring respect for and compliance with the African Charter and related human rights instruments".

**561.** As at 31 December 2018, the Protocol had been ratified by thirty (30) out of the fifty-five (55) Member States, namely: Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Comoros, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya,

Libya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo and Tunisia.

**562.** Of the 30 State Parties to the Protocol, only nine (9) have made the declaration under Article 34(6) of the Protocol, accepting the jurisdiction of the Court to receive cases from individuals and non-governmental organizations. They are Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Malawi, Mali, Tanzania and Tunisia

**563.** During the year under review, the workload of the African Court continued to increase. In 2018, the Court received a total of twenty-nine (29) new applications (cases), held four ordinary sessions and one extraordinary session. It also organized nineteen (19) public hearing to receive oral arguments from the parties, and delivered sixteen (16) judgments on the merits as well as issued rulings and orders on a number of pending cases. The Court has also taken steps to reduce the back-log of applications before it by installing an electronic case management system which will ensure expeditious consideration and finalization of cases.

**564.** This increase in the number of cases received by the Court demonstrates that more and more Member States, non-governmental organizations and individuals are gradually becoming aware of the existence and work of the Court.

**565.** Notwithstanding the above development, the Court continues to face a number of challenges that continue to deprive it of the ability to ensure continent-wide protection of human rights and contribute meaningfully to the development of the continent. They include: (i) the level of ratification of the Protocol establishing the Court considering how long the Court has been in existence; (ii) the very low number of States that have deposited the declaration under Article 34(6) of the Protocol allowing individuals and NGOs direct access to the Court; (iii) Member States' non-compliance with the Court's decisions; and (iv) inadequate human and financial resources.

**566.** It is important to recall that, by its decisions Assembly/AU/Dec.196(XI) of 2008 and Assembly/AU/Dec.529(XXIII) of 2014, the Assembly adopted the Protocol on the merger of the Court of Justice with the current human rights court (Sharm-el Sheikh Protocol) and the Amendments to the Protocol on the Statute of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights (Malabo Protocol), respectively. Both instruments aim to strengthen the continental justice system and the fight against international crimes and impunity on the continent.

**567.** To date however, only six (6) Member States have ratified the Sharm el Sheikh Protocol, while the Malabo Protocol has received none. It is therefore imperative that, in light of the Union's position on the International Criminal Court, Member States accelerate the establishment of a credible and trustworthy judicial system to deal with the human rights and international criminal justice challenges we face on the continent.

- **African Union Commission on International Law**

**568.** The African Union Commission on International Law (AUCIL) was established on the basis of Article 5(2) of the Constitutive Act as an advisory organ of the Union. It is composed of eleven (11) nationals of Member States who serve in their personal

capacity. The AUCIL became operational in 2010 following the adoption of its statute by the Assembly [Assembly/AU/Dec.209 (XII)] in 2009. The Commission's Office of the Legal Counsel serves as the AUCIL Secretariat.

**569.** During the period under review, the AUCIL undertook various studies through the appointed Special Rapporteurs. In particular, the study on the AU Model Law for the Implementation of the African Union Convention for the Protection of, and Assistance to, Internally Displaced Persons in Africa and the AU Model Law was adopted through Assembly/AU/Dec. 676 (XXX), making it the first ever AUCIL document to be endorsed by the Member States. In collaboration with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the AUCIL also published the Model Law for further use by the Member States during the 2019 celebration of the 50th and 10th anniversary of the 1969 OAU Convention and the Kampala Convention respectively.

**570.** Other studies that are underway cover various subjects, namely: non-double taxation; domestication of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combatting Corruption; domestication of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Right of Women in Africa; jurisprudence of the Regional Economic Communities; implementation of the African Mining Vision; International Environmental Law; domestication of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; piracy and maritime security; fight against terrorism; and comparative constitutional law in Africa.

**571.** The AUCIL also conducted its 7<sup>th</sup> Forum on International Law, under the theme "The Management of Africa's Natural Resources". The AUCIL will publish a compilation of the contributions to the Forum. The publication of the 3rd and 4th Journal of the AUCIL is also expected by the end of 2018, thereby fulfilling its mandate to disseminate international law within and beyond the continent.

**572.** As the legal Advisory body of the Union, the AUCIL through the General Rapporteur, Prof. Hajer Gueldich, sits as one of the experts guiding the AU institutional reform.

**573.** In preparing its 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and in line with Article 25 of the AUCIL Statute, which calls upon the body to collaborate with international organisations of similar interest, the AUCIL has placed its request for a joint session with the United Nations International Law Commission, so as to create a platform of an inclusive discussion on subjects of international law. The AUCIL also works closely with the Inter-American Juridical Committee, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and other international organisations.

## **II. Humanitarian Issues**

**574.** Forced displacement remains a complex challenge for the Union. Africa is home to over a third of the forcibly displaced persons globally. This translates into 6.3 million refugees and 14.5 million Internally Displaced Persons. The continent is also host to 509,900 asylum seekers and 712,000 stateless persons.

**575.** Six years after the establishment of the OAU, African leaders adopted the historic OAU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. In 2009, they adopted the landmark African Union Convention for the Protection of, and Assistance to, Internally Displaced Persons in Africa. More recently in January 2015, the Assembly adopted the Common African Position on Humanitarian Effectiveness, which commits the Union to address the root causes of forced displacement in Africa and explore durable solutions.

**576.** Significantly, during July 2018 Summit in Nouakchott, the Assembly declared 2019 as “The Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa.” This 2019 theme will be officially launched during the February 2019 Summit. It is worth noting that the year 2019 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1969 OAU Convention on refugees and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 2009 African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa – commonly known as the Kampala Convention.

**577.** Pursuant to the Assembly’s decision, the PRC and the Commission conducted in November 2018 a joint mission to Western Sahara to launch the African Union Campaign on Accelerated Reduction on Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA) and assess the refugee situation in order to demonstrate the Union’s solidarity and the urgency of finding a speedy resolution of the Western Sahara question.

**578.** In line with the AU Common Position on Humanitarian Effectiveness and as per the Assembly’s decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.604 (XXVI)] of January 2016, the Commission continued to take concrete measures toward the operationalization of the African Union Humanitarian Agency. As requested by the Assembly, the Commission initiated a feasibility study to determine the Agency’s legal, structural and financial implications for the Union. Consultations with Member States and Regional Economic Communities on the establishment of the Agency were also undertaken. The conclusions of this process will be presented to the Policy Organs for consideration and endorsement in the course of 2019.

### **III. Institutions**

- **Institutions and leadership**

**579.** The Commission’s interactions with National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) continued during the year 2018. National human rights institutions are the key instruments for Member States’ implementation of human rights instruments and the advancement of the Union’s human rights agenda. The following activities took place during the year, in collaboration with the Nairobi-based Network of African National Human Rights Institutions:

- (i) a continental consultation with National Human Rights Institutions on the Human and Peoples’ Rights Decade in Africa and its Action Plan, held in Nouakchott in April 2018, which set up a continental platform for engaging NHRIs for effective promotion and protection of human and peoples’ rights.

- (ii) the 2<sup>nd</sup> Policy Forum co-organised by AU Commission and the Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) on the State of the African Human Rights Institutions was convened in Addis Ababa in November 2018. The ultimate goal is to enhance the contribution of NANHRI in the promotion and protection of human rights in Africa as a part of the implementation of the Human and People's Rights Decade in Africa (2017-2026).

**580.** The Assembly's Declaration on the 2016 Theme of the Year [Assembly/AU/Dec I.1(XXVII) Rev.1] mandated the Commission, in close collaboration with all AU Organs with a human rights mandate, to establish a Pan African Institute for Human Rights (PAHRI). This decision was taken pursuant to the letter and spirit of Article 45 of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

- **Pan-African Parliament**

**581.** During the year under review, the Pan-African Parliament organized several activities within its mandate, which helped to strengthen its parliamentary functions. They included the holding of its statutory and non-statutory meetings, notably two ordinary sessions in May and October 2018, committees' sittings in March and August 2018, and the meetings of the Bureau and regional and thematic caucuses. All these activities were organized under the AU theme of the year 2018 "Winning the Fight against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation".

**582.** During the same period, there was also an increase in the number of signatures and ratifications of the new PAP Protocol, which had now reached the number of nineteen (19) signatures and ten (10) ratifications.

**583.** In the course of its work in the year 2018, the Pan-African Parliament adopted several resolutions and recommendations whose implementation would strengthen the Union's agenda on key issues, including ICT developments, the role of women in fighting corruption and the rights of older persons.

**584.** In line with its role as a platform for mainstreaming African voices into the AU's policy making processes, the Pan-African Parliament co-organized a workshop on migration flows in May 2018 on illicit financial flows. Furthermore, civil society organizations took part in all committees' sittings as well as during the plenary sessions in May and October 2018.

**585.** During the year 2018, the Pan-African Parliament deliberated on various issues affecting human rights, governance, transitional justice and the rule of law on the continent. The resolutions, recommendations and declarations adopted at these sessions will contribute to advancing the Union's human rights and governance agenda.

**586.** The Pan-African Parliament also debated on issues of peace, security and stability and conducted training workshops for parliamentarians to enhance their capacity to deal with peace and security matters. The training focused particularly on the regulation and control of the use and circulation of small arms and light weapons

and also on transitional justice.

**587.** Promoting continental integration lies at the core of the mandate of the PAP. In furtherance of this objective, the Pan-African Parliament contributed in the discourse on the nexus between tax policy and tax administration to improve effective revenue mobilization on the continent. The Pan-African Parliament also sensitized members of Parliament in countering illegal financial flows by raising their awareness on the renewed AU Migration Policy Framework and the AU Common Position on Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

**588.** The Pan-African Parliament participated in the 4th African Union Customs Experts Trade Facilitation Forum, held in Cairo in August 2018, where it advocated for the ratification, domestication and implementation of the AfCFTA and other relevant AU treaties.

**589.** The Pan-African Parliament implemented several activities to strengthen its institutional management capacity, notably on administrative, human resources, financial and budgetary matters. It is worth noting, on the financial side, the conclusions of the external audit of the 2017 financial statements and a positive budget execution, as well as the budgetary increase secured for the 2019 budget.

**590.** During the year under review, the Pan-African Parliament made strides in the pursuance of its mandate. However, this Organ continued to face several challenges due, among others, to the high turnover of its members, which affects institutional memory and PAP's capacity to perform effectively its mandated activities. In 2018, seventy-seven (77) new members – almost a third of the PAP's membership – were sworn. Vacancies in the PAP Secretariat and the freezing of recruitment also caused a serious burden and a relative staff instability within the PAP Secretariat.

**591.** Building on its work in 2018, the Pan-African Parliament plans in 2019 to engage more actively with parliamentarians at the national and REC levels on the need for Member States to ratify, domesticate and implement all the legal and policy frameworks on continental free trade and free movement of people, the fight against corruption, the rights of forced migrants, and the rights of persons with disability.

- **African Peer Review Mechanism**

**592.** As of 31 December 2018, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) had a membership of 37 Member States. By the end of the year 2018, the APRM had completed governance reviews of twenty-one (21) Member States, with reviews of the Sudan (first review) and Uganda (second review) completed at the APR Forum of Heads of State and Government in January 2018.

**593.** At its 11<sup>th</sup> extraordinary Summit in Addis Ababa in November 2018, the Assembly urged the remaining eighteen (18) AU Member States that are not members of the APRM to accede to it in order to achieve universality in APRM Member States by 2023.

**594.** During 2018, the APRM completed review missions to Côte d'Ivoire in July 2018 and Mozambique in November 2018. The next set of Peer Reviews by the APR Forum of Heads of State and Government will take place on 9 February 2019. It will discuss the review reports emanating from the review missions to Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique and Liberia, which had received a review mission in a prior year.

**595.** The APRM also published and launched the Djibouti review report on 29 March 2018 at a national event bringing together more than 400 participants at the People's Palace in Djibouti City, including the Prime Minister of Djibouti, Mr Abdoukader Mohamed Kamil, and the Lead APR Panel Member for Djibouti, Professor Fatima Karadja.

**596.** The APRM broke new ground in 2018 by introducing *targeted reviews* on specific governance topics. Targeted Review Guidelines were sent to Member States. Senegal and Djibouti voluntarily agreed to undertake Targeted Reviews in early 2019, on "*Mineral Resources in the Heart of the Structural Transformation of the Senegalese Economy*" and "*Decentralization in Djibouti*" respectively.

**597.** The APRM Secretariat is the current chair of the African Governance Architecture (AGA) Platform, which in March 2018 agreed on a Work Plan and Strategic Framework that identified collaborative priority activities for 2018. The APRM is the lead institution for the development of the State of Governance in Africa Report (SoGR). The report assesses the status of African governance, including progress towards the attainment of the AU shared values, and will be the basis of future monitoring of governance trends.

**598.** The APRM Secretariat hosted the first validation meeting on the draft report in October 2018. In early January 2019, the draft report will be validated by APRM structures and the AGA Platform. The report is expected to be presented by President Idris Déby of Chad, Chairperson of the APR Forum, at the February 2019 Summit.

**599.** The APRM Country Review Reports of Djibouti, Chad and Senegal were tabled during the first Ordinary session of the Fifth Pan-African Parliament in October 2018. Concurrently, these reports were tabled at the 63rd Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights by the Chairperson of the APRM Panel of Eminent Persons, Honourable Brigitte Mabandla.

**600.** From 13 to 14 March 2018, the APRM held its annual flagship meeting, the 2nd APRM Annual Methodology Forum. The event was attended by members of the APRM community, experts, collaborating stakeholders and selected government official and non-state representatives. The Forum exchanged ideas and practices on APRM Methodology and related processes for improved mission delivery. Discussion centred on rationalising and improving the APRM approaches in measuring governance, especially the tools and processes used in the context of the expanded mandate as well as how to better incorporate APRM reviews in the AGA and APSA frameworks.



**601.** In 2018, the APRM commenced a project to deepen its reviews, including the country self-assessment and external review processes by which the final APRM review report and national programme of action are produced. The outputs from the exercise are due by December 2019 and will include a revised self-assessment questionnaire; a revised APRM Organisations & Processes document; revised Guidelines for Countries to prepare for and Participate in the APRM, and an APRM handbook. The APRM has also commenced engagements with academic institutions in order to build the African governance and APRM knowledge base and enrich continental research capabilities in governance.

**602.** The Africa Network on Corporate Governance of State-Owned Enterprises was officially launched in Mauritius in November 2018. The Network which was founded and managed by the OECD for the benefit of SADC countries, is now launched under the leadership of the APRM for all regions in Africa. The APRM will align the Network's priorities with the APRM objective of promoting good corporate governance on the Continent. The launch was attended by representatives from eighteen (18) Member States, including Angola, Botswana, Chad, Congo Brazzaville, Congo DRC, Kenya, Lesotho, Mauritania, Mauritius, Namibia, Niger, Senegal, Seychelles, South Africa, Sudan, Eswatini, Zambia and Zimbabwe as well as a non-Member State, Turkey. Furthermore, development financial institutions that support State-Owned Enterprises were represented, including the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), Afrexim Bank and the World Bank. APRM strategic partners, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) and the Mo-Ibrahim Foundation also participated in the launch meeting, as well as the OECD.

**603.** The APRM Secretariat will continue with the implementation of its work plan in 2019, despite a challenging funding environment due to a shortfall in contributions from Member States. The Assembly's decision to integrate the APRM budget in the Union's statutory budget will allow APRM to continue to meet its Agenda 2063 obligations as a part of the AU family.

**604.** Lastly, the APR Forum that was scheduled to take place in the margins of the Nouakchott Summit in July 2018 was postponed to the February 2019 Summit because of the Assembly's loaded agenda.

## **J. CONSOLIDATING PEACE AND SECURITY**

**605.** The Commission organized the third Interfaith Dialogue Forum during the Peace Month in N'Djamena in November 2018 under the theme of "Faith in Action": the role of Religious Leaders in Advancing Peace, Inclusiveness and Development in African Communities". The meeting raised awareness on AU instruments on youth, peace and security, as well as the need for their rapid implementation by Member States facing armed threats or actively working to prevent conflicts. The third Interfaith Dialogue Forum also elected a new steering committee to carry out concrete communication mechanisms between religious leaders through interfaith councils, the AU and Member States.

**606.** The Commission's Directorate of Citizens and Diaspora Organizations (CIDO) and the German GIZ agency jointly launched the Interfaith Dialogue on Violent Extremism (iDoVE) pilot project in 2017 which is an intercontinental, innovative youth-led approaches to highlight the soft power of religion in Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE). iDove explicitly focuses on youth, as it is the largest group directly affected by violent extremism. It builds on existing youth initiatives and supports young people's engagement and initiatives in developing non-violent approaches to problem solving and social cohesion.

**607.** In 2018, the iDove project conducted the iDove Training of Trainers workshop, developed a detailed manual and further teaching materials on the use of soft power in preventing violent extremism. Furthermore, the second Intercontinental Youth Forum under the project was launched at the Commission's headquarters in Addis Ababa in October 2018.

**608.** The Commission's Directorate of Medical and Health Services worked closely with the Department of Peace and Security to improve disability and death assessment for AU peacekeepers in AMISOM and MISCA. Following the adoption by the AU Medical Board for Death and Disability of the standards operating procedure addendum in September 2018, the AU Medical Services in collaboration with AMISOM troop contributing countries, managed in 2017 to clear 95% of the backlog cases from 2007 to 2014. Payments of compensation for the dead cases and wounded peacekeepers with disability commenced in 2018.

**609.** In collaboration with the Department of Peace and Security, the Commission's Directorate of Medical and Health Services completed the development of medical equipment specifications for the Level II hospital in Gao, Mali. The equipment was delivered after requests for proposals were sent to bidders and subsequent technical and financial evaluation done.

**610.** On the situation in Burundi, the Commissioner for Peace and Security, accompanied by former Central African Transition President Mrs. Catherine Samba-Panza, as Co-Chair of FemWise, met with high level officials in Burundi in November 2018 to express the AU's solidarity to the Government of Burundi and its support in the search of sustainable peace. Furthermore, the Commission decided in August 2018 to maintain the deployment of ten (10) AU Human Right Observers and three (3) Military Experts to Burundi after the end of the first phase of their mission on 31 August 2018, to enable the AU to continue monitoring and reporting on the political and security situation in the country.

**611.** On the situation in Darfur, the African Union and the United Nations co-hosted a High Level event in New York in September 2018, on the transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding and development in Darfur.

**612.** The Chairperson of the Commission met in Bangui in September 2018 with President Faustin-Archange Touadera. They underlined the need for ownership by the people of Central African Republic of the African Initiative for Peace and Reconciliation. A delegation of the Commission also visited Bangui in October 2018 to assess the implementation of the AU Gender Peace and Security Programme.

**613.** Regarding the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Commissioner for Peace and Security and Mrs. Catherine Samba-Panza traveled to Kinshasa in November 2018, with a view to supporting the ongoing electoral process and the fight against Ebola in the Northern Kivu province. Presidential, national and provincial legislative elections took place on 30 December 2018 in a relatively peaceful atmosphere.

**614.** Concerning the situation in the Sudan, the AU High-level Implementation Panel for Sudan and South Sudan (AUHIP) convened meetings in Addis Ababa, Khartoum and Johannesburg in October and November 2018, respectively, with the SPLM North (SPLM-N) and the Government of Sudan on the basis of the Roadmap Agreement, which stipulates that the parties will urgently resume their negotiations to conclude a Cessation of Hostilities (CoH) leading to a Permanent Ceasefire (PC) Agreement with respect to the Two Areas. In the negotiations conducted with the Government of Sudan, the SPLM-N agreed to further consult with its membership and subsequently reconvene only with the AUHIP, in order to prepare for a structured engagement with the Government at a later stage.

**615.** On the situation in South Sudan, the Commission undertook a consultative mission to Juba in November 2018, to ascertain with the authorities how the Commission could contribute in the country's post-conflict reconstruction phase and the effective implementation of the Revitalized Agreement for the resolution of the crisis in South Sudan.

**616.** It should be recalled that several consultations were held between the AU and IGAD during the negotiations of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan. These consultations, including by the AUHIP, continued after the signing of the Agreement with a view to supporting its peaceful implementation. The Commission was represented by Commissioner Smail Chergui in the signing ceremony that took place in Addis Ababa on 12 September 2018.

**617.** Concerning the situation in Somalia, the combined efforts of AMISOM and Somalia National Security Forces has degraded Al Shabaab's fighting capabilities. There is need for streamlined and coordinated capacity building for the Somalia National Security Forces, particularly the training support provided to the Army, with clear distribution of roles and responsibilities among stakeholders, including AMISOM. On its part, an evaluation conducted by the Commission's Department of Peace and Security in June 2018 on post-conflict reconstruction and development found that quick-impact projects (QIPs) played a critical role in generating local support within the context of AMISOM's mandate implementation and the Somalia Transition Plan.

**618.** Following a request by the Government of The Gambia and as directed by the Peace and Security Council on 15 June 2017, the Commission deployed a Technical Support Team to the Gambia to support the country's security sector reform (SSR) and transitional justice processes. The Chairperson of the Commission also visited Banjul in October 2018, to demonstrate the AU's political support to The Gambia's democratic transition and institutional reforms.

**619.** The Commission's Department of Peace and Security published three key policy documents in November 2018, on "Results-Based Framework for PCRD Activities", "Guidelines Note for the Implementation of the African Union Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Policy", and "Policy Brief on African Union's Quick Impact Project Implementation: Lessons Learned from Somalia". They cover the planning, coordination, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation phases of post-conflict reconstruction and development interventions in Africa and will help facilitate strategic interventions in this area.

**620.** Following the adoption in August 2018 by the Council of Ministers of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) of the Regional Strategy for Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the areas affected by Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin, the Commission's Interdepartmental Task Force met with the Lake Chad Basin Countries and the Multi-National Joint Task Force in Ndjamena in November 2018 to deliberate on the way forward for operationalising key institutions envisaged in the Strategy. The Strategy will be submitted to the PSC for its consideration during the course of December 2018.

**621.** The Commission conducted a Bilateral Technical Desk Review with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in September 2018 to refine the existing human rights indicators in the Continental Early Warning System (AU-CEWS) and strengthen the overall integration of a human rights-based approach to conflict prevention data.

**622.** In cognizance of the increased number of farmer-pastoralist conflicts on the continent and its growing threats and linkages to other transnational organized crimes, the Commission organized a meeting on "Farmer-Herders Conflict in Africa: Towards a Continental Conflict Transformation Mechanism" in September 2018, to develop a sustainable policy alongside action-oriented strategies to transform them holistically.

**623.** The AU Border Programme conducted an assessment mission in Mozambique in June 2018, Namibia in August 2018, Zimbabwe in September 2018, and Zambia in October 2018, in order to determine the human and institutional capabilities of these Member States to delimit, demarcate, and reaffirm their common international boundaries. In addition, the Commission facilitated meetings of the Joint Demarcation Committee of South Sudan and Sudan in August 2018, the Joint Technical Committee of the Riparian States of Lake Tanganyika in September 2018, and the Joint Demarcation Committee of South Sudan and Sudan. The purpose of the meetings were to assess the progress made by Member States involved in these initiatives and address any challenges in the delimitation/demarcation of their common boundaries.

**624.** On cross-border cooperation, the AU Border Program undertook advocacy efforts for the signing and ratification of the African Convention on Cross-Border Cooperation (Niamey Convention), adopted by the Assembly in June 2014 [Assembly/AU/Dec.529(XXIII)]. In this regard, the Commission provided assistance in the establishment of local cross-border committees between Malawi and Tanzania in August 2018. The Commission also organized the 4<sup>th</sup> AU Border Programme with the

RECs/RMs Coordination Meeting in Arusha, following which the 2018-2022 AUBP-RECs/RMs Roadmap and the proposed Terms of Reference for the RECs/RMs Border Focal Points were adopted, and best practices on border management were shared.

**625.** During the reporting period, in line with the decisions of the Policy Organs, the Commission pursued its efforts towards the full operationalization of the African Standby Force (ASF) and its Rapid Deployment Capability (RDC). Within the process of implementing the Maputo 5 Year Work Plan on the enhancement of the ASF, the African Capacity for Immediate Response to Crises (ACIRC) Volunteer Nations (VNs) a Command Post Exercise (CPX) code named UTILIVU AFRICA IV (UA IV) 2018, was conducted in Jinja, Uganda from 26 August to 4 September 2018.

**626.** In the implementation of the Assembly's decision Assembly/AU/Dec.679 (XXX) on harmonisation of ACIRC activities with ASF Framework, the Commission's Department of Peace and Security facilitated the meeting of the PSC Military Staff Committee which was assigned to develop a roadmap on harmonization of the ACIRC within the ASF framework. The recommendations will be considered by the PSC in December 2018 for onward submission to the Assembly at its next session in February 2019.

**627.** As part of the Monitoring and Evaluation of Implementation, the Commission held the 10<sup>th</sup> Training Implementation Workshop in October 2018 to review progress in the implementation of the Training Directives. One of the key identified challenges was the lack of funding for ASF training priorities as highlighted in the Directive. The AUC and RECs/RMs continue relying on partner funding, but these are not always aligned with the priorities highlighted in the Directive.

**628.** The Specialized Technical Committee on Defense, Safety and Security (STCDSS) met in Addis Ababa in October 2018 to consider two policies, namely "Conduct and Discipline" and "Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse". As a follow-up to the STDSS' request to the PSC to adopt these policies, the Commission transmitted them to Member States in November 2018 for their inputs and response to the PSC. Subsequently, the PSC adopted the two policy documents on 29 November 2018.

**629.** During the period under review, the operations conducted by the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) in the Lake Chad islands resulted in the degradation of Boko Haram capabilities and the rescue of more than 21,000 abducted civilians, thus increasing the security of the affected population. In accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and Support Implementation Agreement (SIA) between the AU, the LCBC and MNJTF Troop Contributing Countries, the Commission provided additional support to the MNJTF and funding for QIPs using its own resources.

**630.** In line with the AU Policy Framework on Security Sector Reform (SSR), the Commission provided technical support to the Government of Madagascar in November 2018 with the operationalization of the national SSR framework. Technical expertise was also offered to Mali in November 2018, to support the development of the national strategic vision towards the implementation of DDR/SSR in line with the principles of the

Peace Accord. Furthermore, a training workshop for Member States was held in Addis Ababa in September 2018, on the development of national codes of conduct for security institutions to enhance their efficiency and professionalism.

**631.** The Department of Peace and Security organized the 2<sup>nd</sup> Africa Forum on SSR in October 2018 to exchange views on the challenges and opportunities of sustainable SSR initiatives in Africa. The Department also launched Phase II of the project on “Engaging Civil Society in Security and Justice Sector Reforms” with two capacity building workshops for civil society groups held in July and December 2018, respectively.

**632.** In strengthening national and regional capacities on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), and within the framework of the Lake Chad Basin Stabilization Strategy, the Commission’s Department of Peace and Security convened regional and national consultations that resulted in the adoption of a comprehensive framework on screening, prosecution, rehabilitation and reintegration of persons associated with Boko Haram.

**633.** On its part, the Government of Somalia received assistance in developing an integrated database to facilitate storing, retrieval and analysis of all information related to the national defector rehabilitation program. The Commission further assisted the Government of Somalia in reviewing its national defector rehabilitation program to identify current gaps and challenges of the screening, amnesty policy and reintegration processes, as well as the required improvements to strengthen the program.

**634.** Furthermore, and in order to assist Member States in dealing with the challenges posed by temporary conflicts and the challenges to traditional approaches, the Department developed Operational Guidance Notes on Foreign Fighters and Countering Violent Extremism in DDR contexts. Both notes were validated by Member States, regional and international experts in July 2018 and were readied for wider dissemination at the time of this reporting.

**635.** Within the context of the month of September as the Africa Amnesty Month, the Commission assisted Member States in designing and implementing national initiatives to promote voluntary disarmament and combat illicit arms flows. The Commission also increased the support provided to Member States in line with the Ammunition Safety Management Initiative. In Malawi, the Commission’s Department of Peace and Security undertook a technical assessment mission in March 2018 to help identify the gaps and needs ammunition management followed by a technical training on ammunition management in June 2018. The draft AU Policy for the Management of Recovered Arms and Ammunition in PSOs was validated by Member States, regional and international experts in November 2018. It is expected to be endorsed by the STC-DSS in 2019.

**636.** In the area of disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), the Commission provided technical and financial support for the convening of the 4<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Conference of States Parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba, in March in Addis Ababa, as well as the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Extraordinary Sessions, in Addis

Ababa in June and November 2018, respectively. The Commission also supported the convening of the 9<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCONe) in October 2018 in Addis Ababa. In August 2018, the Commission organized a training course for National Points of Contact on UN Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). At the request of Member States, the Commission's Department of Peace and Security commenced the development of a Comprehensive WMD Model law, with an inception experts meeting that was held in December 2018 to decide on its scope and structure.

**637.** Overall, there is need for increased political will and cooperation on the part of Member States in the area of conflict prevention, predictable funding, reliable provision of logistics and deployment of the necessary human resources, as well as better coordination between the PSC and the RECs/RMs policy organs dealing with peace and security.

## **K. ENHANCING AFRICA'S ROLE AND POSITION IN AFRICA AND GLOBALLY**

### **I. Engaging Civil Society and the Diaspora**

#### **• ECOSOCC**

**638.** ECOSOCC continued its reform and relocation efforts. Activities during the year 2018 covered the operationalization of ECOSOCC thematic clusters, the relocation of the Secretariat with the recruitment of a dedicated staffing structure, and the expansion of the national chapters in all Member States.

**639.** ECOSOCC convened in Nairobi in March 2018 the 8<sup>th</sup> ordinary session of the Standing Committee of the 2<sup>nd</sup> ECOSOCC Permanent General Assembly. Discussions centered around the election of the ECOSOCC 3<sup>rd</sup> Permanent General Assembly, which was scheduled to take place in Nairobi in December 2018. In preparation for this election, the Credentials Committee met three times: first in Cairo in April and October 2018, followed by Casablanca in September 2018, and Addis Ababa in November 2018.

**640.** Progress was made on the relocation of the ECOSOCC Secretariat to Lusaka. The Commission and the Government of Zambia signed the host agreement during the July 2018 Summit in Mauritania. Eleven (11) priority positions were advertised and recruitment is ongoing for the effective operationalization of the Secretariat in Zambia;

**641.** ECOSOCC and the AU Advisory Board on Corruption convened a joint Sectorial Cluster Planning meeting in Nairobi in February 2018. They discussed a mechanism for tackling corruption and established a collaborative strategy with an emphasis on the role of CSOs at Member States level to facilitate dialogue and synergy in this area.

**642.** Fifteen (15) ECOSOCC National Chapters were launched in line with the relevant Executive Council decisions [EX.CL./Dec.869 (XXVI) of January 2015 and EX.CL./Dec.924(XXVI) of June 2015], which consider national chapters as a framework for accountability of elected members, as well as a conduit for disseminating information and mobilizing support for AU programs and activities. The low number of national

chapters is due to the lack of a special budget allocation to support their activation and coordinate their work.

**643.** ECOSOCC organized two side events during the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which was held in New York in July 2018. The first one, entitled ‘The Blue and Green Economy Nexus in Africa’, was held jointly with the Commission’s CIDO Division, and the other, entitled ‘Creating a Green Economy in Africa: Lessons and Opportunities for the Future’, was co-hosted with the Government of Zambia. Critical issues were raised on the role of CSOs in influencing policy decisions.

**644.** During the period under review, ECOSOCC submitted an advisory opinion on two critical issues affecting the continent, namely migration focusing on Libya’s stranded migrants, and the enhancement of peace and security in Africa.

**645.** The first phase of the implementation of the Executive Council’s decision on ECOSOCC’s reform was completed with the convening of a multi-stakeholder consultation to develop the framework and provide inputs for the second and final phase. This process was expected to be finalized in the last quarter of 2018.

**646.** Member States’ increased support to ECOSOCC, particularly the approval and release of its operational and relocation budgets, is welcomed. However, this Organ encounters several challenges, including limited representation of civil society organizations from Member States, the lack of standardized framework for the development and submission of advisory opinions – a key function of this Organ – and limited participation of women in ECOSOCC structures.

- **Diaspora Volunteer Corps and Diaspora Investment Fund Projects**

**647.** Work began on two diaspora legacy projects, namely the Diaspora Volunteer Corps and the African Diaspora Investment Fund. A pilot phase for the African Diaspora Volunteer Corps was rolled out in the last quarter of 2018. A feasibility study of the African Diaspora Investment Fund is underway. It includes an analysis of existing and planned diaspora and investment funds and schemes promoted and managed by the African Development Bank, Member States, Diaspora organizations and other relevant bodies in Africa.

- **African Diaspora Global Market Place Project**

**648.** This project was a proposal by the World Bank in early 2010. It was included in the Commission’s Diaspora Legacy projects in 2012. However, since then, no activity was undertaken for its implementation due to lack of budget. Plans are underway to revive it in 2019 and carry it out alongside the other Diaspora Legacy projects.



- **Diaspora engagement in Union's activities**

**649.** The Declaration of the Global Diaspora Summit, held in Johannesburg in May 2012, recognized the need to build sustainable partnerships between Africa and the governments and peoples of African descent in different regions of the world. In recognition of the importance of engaging the global African community, the Assembly subsequently designated the African Diaspora as the Sixth (6<sup>th</sup>) Region of the continent.

**650.** The Commission and other stakeholders on the continent and in the African Diaspora have taken several initiatives to implement this decision in line with Article 3(q) of the Protocol on Amendments to the Constitutive Act of the African Union [Assembly/AU/Dec.26(II)] of July 2003, which “invites the African Diaspora to participate as an important part of the building and development of the Union”.

**651.** It should be noted that the Protocol on Amendments to the Constitutive Act [Doc.Assembly/AU/8(II) Add.10) has yet to enter into force because it has not received the number of required ratifications. Nevertheless, the Commission has drafted a legal framework for the participation of the Diaspora in the AU, in accordance with decisions EX.CL.Dec.406(XII) of January 2008, and Assembly/AU/Dec.443(XIX) of July 2012.

**652.** The legal framework was presented to Member States’ focal points in December 2018, for a technical review. The draft legal framework will be submitted to the Permanent Representatives Committee during the course of the year 2019.

**653.** The first ever *African Diaspora Young Leaders* was held in Washington, DC, in August 2018, under the theme “Connecting Leaders across Africa and the Diaspora”. The forum was organized by the AU Washington DC Office in collaboration with the US State Department and two US-based Diaspora organizations, namely the African Development Foundation and the Constituency for Africa, which works on U.S.- Africa foreign policy with a particular focus on the African Diaspora. More than three hundred young men and women from various parts of the continent met with their counterparts from the Diaspora to tackle such issues as the negative image of Africa in US media, relations between people of Africans on the continent and in the Diaspora, and the role that sports and technology can play in driving growth, peace and unity.

**654.** The AU’s drive for literacy development in Africa secured the support of Books for Africa, a US-based non-profit organization which is the largest distributor and donor of books to the continent. Books for Africa undertook to supply to the Commission 22,000 books on law, human rights, international relations, science, law, health and other subjects, to coincide with the February 2019 Summit.

**655.** In its efforts to mobilize and organize the Diaspora in the US, the AU Washington DC Office established AU’s Diaspora Chapters in Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia (DMV Region), North Carolina and South Carolina (The Carolinas), Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, (The Tri-States), and California. Within each AU Chapter, the Diaspora is organized into Pan African Diaspora Women Association (PADWA), Pan African Youth Association (PADYA) and Pan African Diaspora Men Association (PADMA). The work is underway to cover the entire USA, in Canada, South

America, Central America and the Caribbean. The next step will be the implementation of programs decided by AU Chapters, for the development of Africa, based on the AU Agenda 2063.

**656.** *Invest in Africa Magazine*, the flagship publication of the AU Washington DC Office, will be produced twice a year (January and June-July), starting from 2019. Since the magazine's launch in May 2018, thousands of copies have been distributed online and in hard copy. The Magazine showcases the best of the continent in terms of agriculture, infrastructure, commerce, tourism and trade. It offers corporates, government institutions and businesses the opportunity to invest in various sectors in Africa.

**657.** *AU Diaspora Radio and Podcast:* the AU Diaspora radio was launched in October 2017 by the AU Mission in Washington, DC, and redesigned to reach a wider audience. It transmits programmes via internet on the AU website and targets a listenership of about 10,000 at any given time. Eleven (11) volunteer producers host various shows on pan-African issues, ranging from social economic issues, US policy on Africa, trade and investment, to health, children's stories and traditional folklore. Listeners can tune to <<https://steams.radio.co/s614501e52/listen>> via the AU Mission's website <<https://www.auwashingtondc.org>>. Furthermore, the Commission's CIDO launched the AU on the Go Podcast on Africa Day. Just like the AU radio, the podcast aims to strengthen a positive image of Africa among African citizens in and outside the continent, and the international community at large, with a specific focus on youth. To date, the podcast has launched five episodes in which it seeks to explain various topics related to the Union's work. The podcast is available on Android, iTunes, and Soundcloud.

- **African Diaspora Mapping**

**658.** In recognition of the fact that diaspora communities are dynamic and often fragmented and divided, the Commission through CIDO has integrated diaspora mapping as an integral feature in its work. In addition to engagement with the African Diaspora through regional consultative conferences, a mapping exercise is usually conducted prior to visiting a non-African country. This exercise helps ascertain pertinent facts about the African diaspora members in that particular country and understand the circumstances that led to their migration. During 2018, mapping was conducted in five countries in Western Europe (Belgium, France, Germany, Netherlands, and UK), Australia, China, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar.

## **II. Enhancing positive image through economic self-reliance and culture**

- **Encyclopaedia Africana project**

**659.** The second Technical Workshop on the implementation of the Encyclopaedia Africana Project was held in Accra in 2016 and 2017 in accordance with the objectives set forth in the First 10-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063. Key outcomes of the workshop included a roadmap for project financing, the reconstitution of the Scientific

Committee to produce the scholarly content for the Encyclopaedia, the role of the Commission in the project implementation, and the structure and content of the next edition of the Encyclopaedia.

**660.** The third technical workshop took place in Freetown in June 2018. It focused on the establishment of the International Scientific Committee to develop the framework for the next edition of the Encyclopaedia Africana. The framework outlines the working methodology of the scientific committee to kick start the process for the next edition of the Encyclopaedia.

- **Charter on African Culture Renaissance**

**661.** The Commission continued its advocacy and sensitization campaign for the ratification of the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance. The Charter was adopted by the Assembly in 2006, but it has yet to enter into force because only twelve (12) Member States have ratified it. Working with the Champions of the Charter – that is, the twelve countries that ratified it, namely Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, The Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa – the Commission developed a draft Implementation Guide of the Charter to assist Member States in the implementation process.

**662.** The 4<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs, held in November 2018 adopted the amendment of article 35 of the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance on entry into force. The objective is for the Charter to enter into force thirty days after the receipt by the Commission of the fifteenth instrument of ratification.

**663.** The African Audio-Visual and Cinema Commission was established in July 2016 as an AU Specialized Agency by the Executive Council's decision EX.CL./Dec. 921(XXIX). Its draft statute was adopted in 2017 by the STC on Youth, Culture and Sport, and endorsed by the STC on Justice and Legal Affairs in Addis Ababa in November 2018. The establishment of the Commission's temporary secretariat in Kenya is under way; it will be launched in early 2019.

**664.** The Commission has finalized the draft AU Model Law on the Protection of Cultural Property and Heritage. The draft was adopted by the STC on Youth, Culture and Sport in Algiers in October 2018. The model law will assist Member States in enacting their own legislation on cultural property and heritage and in their fight against illicit trafficking in cultural goods.

**665.** In its decision EX.CL./Dec.1006(XXXII) of January 2018, the Executive Council requested "the Commission and Member States to develop programmes to promote a culture of reading among children, youth and adults, as well as the promotion of African writers and African content in education curricula, in line with the Continent Education Strategy for Africa, adopted by the Assembly in January 2016". As a follow-up, the Commission initiated the development of a continental programme on the promotion of reading to empower young generations of Africans to learn from and renew the spirit of Pan-Africanism. The launch of the programme across the continent is planned for 2020.

- **African Languages**

**666.** The Secretariat of the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN), in 2018, continued to implement its core projects, including the harmonisation of the writing system of African languages, terminology development, the implementation of the ECOWAS chapter (including the Islamic Republic of Mauritania) of the Linguistic Atlas of Africa, the development of the Kiswahili corpus as a component of the African Languages, and the cyberspace project and the promotion of Kiswahili as a language of wider communication.

**667.** ACALAN also launched the Pan-African School of Translation and Interpretation, whose aim is to train Africans to translate from one African or former colonial language to another. The Academy also advocated the development of language policies in Member States within the context of the Language Plan of Action for Africa (LPAA). It encouraged the publication in African languages by instituting and allocating prizes and awards to organisations and persons contributing to the promotion of African languages.

**668.** Within the period covered by this report, ACALAN carried out visibility and advocacy campaigns in the Member States to publicize its activities and programmes and create more synergies and partnerships and support.

**669.** In 2018, ACALAN established Vehicular Cross-border Language Commissions (VCLC) for five (5) African languages, of which three were in West Africa – Ewe, Soninke and Songhay ; and two for the vehicular (mega) languages in Central African Republic (Sango) and IsiZulu (South Africa), respectively. ACALAN also harmonised the writing systems of eight (8) Vehicular Cross-border Languages, namely, Beti-fang, Kikongo, Kinyarwanda/Kirundi, Kiswahili, Lingala, Luganda, Malagasy, Somali.

**670.** The Specialised Technical Committee on Youth, Culture and Sports (STC-YCS–3), meeting in Algiers in October 2018, adopted the week from 24 to 30 January as the *African Languages Week*, to mark, among others, the important role of African languages in African integration and development. Reflections and advocacies will be conducted to sensitise the African population about the importance of African languages for a peaceful, prosperous and integrated Africa.

**671.** ACALAN's perspectives for 2019 include the continued collaboration with Member States on the development of national language policies which will lead to a continental language policy within the context of the Language Plan of Action for Africa. ACALAN will also continue the harmonization of the writing systems of vehicular cross-border languages and enable them assume their role as languages of integration. Implementation of the linguistic atlas of Africa will continue as a priority project, and efforts will be intensified to modernise African linguistic tools, making it possible to effectively bridge the digital divide. ACALAN also intends to institute and award prizes to organisations and individuals contributing to the promotion of African languages to encourage publications in African languages.

- **Safeguarding and promotion of Africa and its Diaspora oral traditions and history**

**672.** For centuries, the people of African descent have faced unprecedented levels of injustice, deprivation and discrimination in different parts of the world. The Durban Declaration of Programme of Action (DDPA) of 2001 provided the framework to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and affirmed that people of African descent were victims of enslavement and have been suffering from its consequences.

**673.** In 2013, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 68/237 that proclaimed the International Decade for People of African Descent: recognition, justice and development. The Decade ran from 1 January 2015 and will end on 31 December 2024. It aims to promote respect, recognition and realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for the people of African descent.

**674.** The Commission, in coordination with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, organized a symposium on the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent resolution in Accra in September 2018. The event constituted the first AU major event to commemorate the Decade and elaborate a continental platform for the achievement of the Decades' Program of Action with respect to the three main pillars of recognition, justice and development.

**675.** The symposium raised awareness among Member States and the RECs about the Decade, consolidated multiple goals set forth by the International Decade for People of African Descent and related frameworks, and developed actionable measures within the context of the Program of Activities of the Decade, in accordance with the Durban Declaration and Program of Action (DDPA) and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICEARD).

**676.** During the year under review, the Commission, through CIDO, initiated an outreach project to the African community in China as part of the African Diaspora. The African community in China is not only the largest but the youngest in Asia, comprising African business people and traders (about 61%) and students (23%), the majority of whom are between 25 and 34 years old and holders of tertiary degrees.

**677.** The Commission, in collaboration with the Government of China, initiated activities to project the AU vision in China and improve Africa's outreach. They include increased contacts with the African diplomatic corps and the African diaspora network in China and strengthening cultural and people-to-people exchanges between China and Africa, through the newly opened AU Representational Office in Beijing.

### **III. Africa's Role in Global and Regional Institutions**

- **Coordinating Africa's global engagement on trade**

**678.** The Commission, in liaison with the UN-ECA and the AU Representational Mission in the United States (Washington DC Office) co-organized a workshop to assist

eligible Member States in developing their AGOA utilization strategies. The Commission also took part in the convening of the 2018 AGOA Midterm Review which evaluated AGOA utilization by the eligible countries. The Review also prepared recommendations that were considered during the 2018 AGOA Forum that took place in July 2018. Among other outcomes, the Forum recommended improvements in the utilization of AGOA preferences, post-AGOAs processes, and recent developments in global trade.

**679.** Concerning the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the AU Permanent Delegation in Geneva pursued its support to the African Group for an effective implementation of the Nairobi "Maafikiano" outcome that will ensure that Africa draws maximum benefit from the decisions of the said Conference. The Geneva Office also continued its support to the African Group in the negotiations on the revitalization of the UNCTAD Intergovernmental Machinery.

**680.** During the year under review, the AU Permanent Delegation in Geneva continued its efforts to assist the African Group in Geneva involved in the WTO processes. An internal retreat for the African Group was held in July 2018 in the preparation of the post Buenos Aires Ministerial Conference (MC11). In this context, the Geneva Office organised several meetings at the level of Ambassadors and Experts of the African Group to prepare the African Common Position at all the levels of the negotiations.

**681.** The retreat came up with concrete recommendations to ensure coherence between the African Group's negotiating agenda at the WTO and AfCFTA's priorities. The retreat also addressed the key policy issues, notably on trade distorting domestic support including Cotton, the Special Safeguard Mechanism (SSM) and public stockholding (PSH), and on the G90 Special and Differential Treatment (S&DT) proposals confronting the African Group in respect to current dynamics in the WTO and defined a way forward for the African Group on the remaining Doha negotiations issues. The difficulties in the negotiations have been compounded by the challenges to the Dispute Settlement Mechanism and growing risks to core principles and disciplines underpinning the trading system.

## **L. SERVICE DELIVERY, PARTNERSHIPS AND OUTREACH**

### **I. Service Delivery**

- **Budget and Financial Matters**

**682.** During the reporting period, the Commission strived to strengthen budget reforms and financial reporting and effectively implement the oversight mechanism as decided by the Policy Organs.

**683.** The Committee of AU Ministers of Finance (F15) increased its oversight role during the preparation and approval of the 2019 AU budget. With the support of the PRC Sub-Committees on General Supervision, Budgetary, Financial and Administrative Matters, and Programs and Conferences, the F15 were able to identify waste and redundancy in the proposed budget.

**684.** Of the nine (9) Golden Rules approved by the Assembly in January 2018, to underpin the budget reform process, four (4) related to budget preparation were fully applied to the 2019 budget and led to a reduced budget by 12% compared to 2018, and a balanced budget for 2019.

**685.** Budget ceilings introduced in the 2019 budget have been communicated to all AU units – the Commission and other Organs and Specialized Agencies – and the gradual process to reduce the ratio of operational budget (including salaries) to the total budget from the current 48% towards the recommended 30% by 2021 has commenced.

**686.** Overall, and as a result of the above measures, the 2019 budget has decreased by 12% compared to 2018, while ensuring that Member States will gradually increase their assessed contributions. As of July 2018, Member States assessed contributions stood at a rate of 34%. Meanwhile, dependency on partner financing continues, especially on some key projects.

**687.** The Commission also proposed, in June 2018, a reformulated scale of assessment, based on the principles of equitable burden sharing, the ability to pay, solidarity, avoidance of risk concentration and the setting up of “caps and minima”. Representing the Ministerial Committee on the Scale of Assessment, members of the PRC discussed it in Addis Ababa in June 2018. However, the PRC requested for more clarifications and agreed to carry out wider consultations at the PRC level before submitting it for the consideration of the Ministerial Committee in November 2018. The Assembly’s extraordinary session of November 2018 adopted a decision on the issue.

**688.** Implementation of the decision of the 2015 Sandton Summit of funding 100% of operational budget, 75% of the program budget, and 25% of peace support by 2021 is also moving apace. Twenty-four (24) Member States – Kenya, the Gambia, Congo Republic, Gabon, Rwanda, Cameroun, Chad, Sierra Leone, Djibouti, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Benin, Sudan, Ghana, Mauritius, Seychelles, Malawi, Algeria, Nigeria, Comoros, Mauritania, Ethiopia, Senegal and Libya are at different phases of domesticating the AU import levy. Among them, fourteen (14), namely: Kenya, Gambia, Congo Brazzaville, Gabon, Rwanda, Cameroun, Chad, Sierra Leone, Djibouti, Cote d’Ivoire, Guinea, Benin, Sudan and Ghana currently collect the levy and, with the exception of Chad and the Gambia, have paid their assessed contributions through the new system

**689.** The Commission also endeavoured to submit financial and audit reports to the Policy Organs as stipulated in the AU Financial Rules and Regulations. As a result, external audit reports were for the first time submitted for the consideration of the Policy Organs at the June/July 2018 Summit in Nouakchott.

**690.** The Commission also embarked in the acquisition and installation of state-of-the-art equipment for conference management. This includes six I-Mac computers, a banner making machine, full-colour invitation, flier and card printing, as well as installation of an infra-red wireless conference system for the Multi-Purpose Hall. The new equipment shifts the production of conference material in-house and, therefore, help cut rental and outsourcing cost. It also enhances processing time for design and layout.

- **Staffing Matters**

**691.** The AU's staffing status exhibits a high and growing pool of short-term employment at 64%, as opposed to regular staffing (36%). This is mainly the result of the imbalance between the current implementation of the Maputo Structure, which was last revised in 2012, and the dynamic mandate of the AU. The Maputo Revised Structure is now obsolete in that it does not address the need of the new, highly skilled, technically diversified positions aligned to Agenda 2063. The Commission proposed a revised structure in 2016, which was conditionally approved by the Policy Organs. It is now awaiting implementation.

**692.** Short-term staff are funded through Member States and Partners budget as follows: 39% short-term staff are paid from the Vacant Posts budget, 29% from Departmental Programs such as Youth Volunteers or Special Representatives to the Chairperson of the Commission, while 32% are Project staff paid from partners fund supporting key program activities such as CDC, CAADP, PAU, and Research Grant.

**693.** It should be noted that more than two hundred short-term staff have been under this contract condition for over ten years, which shows that the staffing structure used is no longer aligned with the Organization's needs. The majority provide essential general service support, including security guards, drivers, and administrative assistants.

**694.** The large number of short-term staff is cause for low staff morale. It leads to high staff turnover and, therefore, the loss of institutional memory and knowledge.

**695.** The Commission, through the Administration and Human Resources Directorate, continued to work towards finding a lasting solution to this staffing issue which was also on the agenda of the Assembly's extraordinary session in November 2018.

- **Performance Management**

**696.** The AU's performance management system is another critical issue that requires greater attention from the AU leadership. Performance management is mandated by the AU Staff Rules and Regulations for the purpose of aligning systematically the Organization's vision with its programs, budget and staff performance. The system was improved in 2017 to address several issues, including the non-alignment of staff performance management system with AU objectives, and the underutilization of the system. The new performance management cycle is in line with budget cycle.

- **Official Travel**

**697.** Staff travel is among the Organization's core activities and a financial cost driver. Currently, 46% of the Commission's expenditure goes to official travel which includes accommodation, air tickets and daily subsistence allowances (DSAs). During the period under review, the Commission put in place several measures to streamline the travel process and make it more cost effective. They include a review of the AU Travel Policy



and the enforcement of measures such as the mandatory submission of a quarterly mission plan, the limit of all staff travel to a maximum of twenty-one (21) travel days per quarter per staff member, and the automation of all travel requests.

**698.** Procurement management is key for the Organization's successful performance if it can minimize supply chain costs and risks. However, it should be noted that due to the location of the AU Headquarters, AMISOM and IBAR Offices in Ethiopia and Kenya, the share of procurement expenditures was higher in the East – 68.04% - than in other AU regions. The Commission is taking measures to ensure a balanced share among all the AU regions.

- **Strengthening accountability within the Commission**

**699.** The African Union Ethics Office was established in August 2016 pursuant to Rule 78 (3) (c) of the AU Staff Regulations and Rules. It covers the administrative activities of all the Union's Organs, peacekeeping missions and representational offices.

**700.** The Office is mandated to implement *the African Union Code of Ethics and Conduct* (hereinafter the "Code") and to cultivate and nurture an ethical culture in the delivery of the Union's mandate. The Code mandates the Ethics Office to hold elected officials and staff members equally accountable for the delivery of their respective roles and responsibilities and that they perform their functions consistent with the highest standards of integrity required by the Code and other relevant rules and regulations. To ensure its independence and autonomy, the Ethics Office reports annually to the PRC through the Chairperson for the consideration of the Executive Council.

**701.** Pursuant to its mandate to provide ethics training and create awareness of the African Union values, the Ethics Office held ethics training sessions for the Commission, other AU Organs, AU Representational Missions and Technical Agencies.

**702.** The Ethics Office trained around 2,000 Staff Members and Elected Officials. The interactive sessions allowed staff members to raise issues, challenges and ethical dilemmas they encountered in the course of their duties and seek guidance on how to remain ethically compliant with AU values, regulations and rules.

**703.** The training on the code of ethics primarily focused on behavioural change and promoted core AU ethical values, including respect for diversity and teamwork, transparency and accountability, integrity and impartiality, and efficiency and professionalism.

**704.** The training on the code of conduct required elected officials and staff members to comply in the execution of their responsibilities with several imperatives, notably respect for privacy and confidentiality in the exercise of their authority. All training sessions focused on raising staff members' awareness on their rights and protection instruments in the work place.

**705.** The Ethics Office also reviewed the Code and the Harassment Policy to provide guidance on the efficient and effective implementation of the African Union values. It

also developed draft policies for elected officials and staff members on gifts, dress code, financial and asset declarations, conflict of interest management, and whistle-blower protection.

**706.** In the course of the reporting period, the Ethics Office received complaints from over forty (40) staff members about managerial harassment but they did not request the Ethics Office to pursue the complaint for fear of being further victimised by their supervisors. The Office also received and deferred five cases to the respective administrative bodies mandated to consider and provide redress. The Office facilitated the amicable resolution of two harassment complaints from senior staff member against supervisees or junior staff members.

**707.** During the year 2018, staff members demonstrated increased confidence in the Ethics Office. Over 100 staff members approached it for further verification or clarification of their rights and protection as provided by the Code and the Harassment Policy. There was also a notable increase in the number of memos copied to the Office and seeking administrative redress.

**708.** Internal audit reports issued during the year ensured that strong internal controls and accountability are maintained within the Union. The reports were shared with the AU Board of External Auditors (BoEA), resulting in time and cost savings. The Commission has also been working on a framework for risk management to assist the Office of Internal Audit's preparation of its annual plans and the conduct of its audits.

- **Streamlining the work of Policy Organs**

**709.** During the year 2018, the Commission organized the following meetings of the Policy Organs:

- i) the 30<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, and the 32<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary session of the Executive Council, which were both held in Addis Ababa in January 2018;
- ii) the 10<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, and the 18<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Session of the Executive Council, in Kigali in March 2018;
- iii) the 31<sup>st</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, and the 33<sup>rd</sup> Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, in Nouakchott in June/July 2018;
- iv) the 6<sup>th</sup> Executive Council Retreat in Addis Ababa in September 2018;
- v) the 19<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Session of the Executive Council in Addis Ababa in September 2018;

- vi) the 11<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, and the 20<sup>th</sup> Extraordinary Session of the Executive Council in Addis Ababa in November 2018.

**710.** In the same period, the Policy Organs adopted a total of ninety-seven (97) decisions in 2018, of which fifty-one (51) by the Assembly and forty-six (46) by the Executive Council. The rationalization of the methods of work of the Policy Organs led to the reduction in the number of decisions, which in principle should increase the rate of their implementation.

## **II. Audit**

**711.** The Commission's Office of Internal Audit (OIA) prepared its plan for the year 2018 using a risk assessment methodology of Audit Management System (MKInsight) and inputs from management. In addition, the OIA set its audit priorities based on the results of the mapping exercise on domestication of the First Ten Year of Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063.

**712.** The Annual Audit Plan for the year 2018 covered a total of 44 audit projects at the AU headquarters and the outstation offices – other AU Organs, field missions and regional, representational and Specialized Offices. It included financial, certification, compliance, operational (performance audits) as well as information technology (IT) audits. It also included staff development activities in line with the Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA) standards.

**713.** The OIA planned to undertake 44 audit projects during the year 2018. As of December 2018, the OIA conducted 39 of planned audit projects which are in various stages of completion (i.e. either final/draft report issued or field work in progress).

**714.** The Executive Council in its decisions EX.CL/Dec.1020 (XXXIII) and EX.CL/Dec.1008 (XXXIII) of June 2018, requested the Office of Internal Audit to conduct a performance audit on the Operations/Budget execution as well as the Human Resources Recruitment processes of all the AU organs. Accordingly, the Office conducted performance and recruitment audits of the NEPAD Agency, the AU Anti-Corruption Board, The African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. The performance and recruitment audits of the Commission started and will be conducted in phases given the size and operations of the Commission.

**715.** The OIA also undertook seven (7) audit projects that were not in the 2018 plan but were requests from management and six (6) investigation cases.

**716.** Audit staff development activities were also carried out during the period under review, including professional trainings and international conferences on current auditing practices. In addition, through the support of the World Bank and German GIZ, all OIA staff took ACL training and online training and certification on IPSAS. It should be noted, however, that the Office has a large proportion of staff who are under Partner Funds. This leads to high staff turnover since the contracts are mostly on short term basis.

### **III. Strategic Partnerships**

**717.** Agenda 2063 underscores the need for Africa to be a dynamic force and influential player in the global order. It is therefore critical for the Union to strengthen the links between AU Organs and the RECs with Regional Offices and Representational Missions. The Chairperson of the Commission initiated actions to enhance the AU's representation in and outside Africa. Such presence will assist in strengthening relations with the African citizens and Diaspora, as well as expanding AU's presence in the territories of its strategic partners.

- **Evaluation of strategic partnerships**

**718.** The Commission facilitated the convening of a retreat of the PRC Sub-Committee on Multilateral Cooperation in May 2018. The Sub-Committee reviewed and updated the draft report on the evaluation of strategic partnerships with additional inputs from the Commission, the RECs, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) and the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency (AUDA-NPCA). The Joint PRC-Commission Report on the Evaluation of the Strategic Partnerships will be submitted for the consideration of the Policy Organs at the February 2019 Summit.

- **Bilateral and multilateral MOUs and partnerships**

**719.** The Commission convened the 2<sup>nd</sup> African Union Partnerships Coordination and Interactive Platform (AU-PCIP) in Accra in November 2018. It was the follow-up to the inaugural AU-PCIP which was organized in Harare in December 2017 and resulted in the establishment of an African Partnerships Coordination Platform, through which all relevant stakeholders could develop a common understanding of how the AU plans and implements its development and integration agenda, identify the challenges and opportunities and facilitate possibilities for synergy building while avoiding duplication and conflicting engagements with partners.

**720.** The 2<sup>nd</sup> AU-PCIP annual conference, under the title *Let's Act*, reviewed, among others, the implementation of the recommendations adopted at the Harare inaugural AU-PCIP, exchange views on how to mobilize indigenous support for the actualization and operationalization of the AU-PCIP and the challenges and opportunities in engaging with partners. A webpage hosted on the Commission's website <<https://au.int>> was also launched to share content on the Union's partnership activities.

#### *Africa-Arab*

**721.** The 2016 Malabo Summit of the Africa- Arab Partnerships decided to hold the next Africa Arab Summit in Saudi Arabia in 2019. The Commission started the preparations for the Summit with the League of Arab States.

**722.** In light of the challenges encountered at the Malabo Summit in 2018, the Commission, in collaboration with the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States,

was directed, through Resolutions 7 and 10, to finalize the Action Plan for the Partnerships and define the criteria and principles for participation at the Africa-Arab Partnership meetings, respectively. The work is under way and will soon be concluded.

#### *FOCAC*

**723.** During the year under review, the Commission worked closely with the Government of China in deepening cooperation within the framework of the Forum of China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). This resulted, among others, in the incorporation and adoption of key AU flagship programs within the FOCAC Action Plan for 2018-2021 during the 2018 FOCAC Summit held in Beijing in October 2018.

**724.** The Government of China also agreed to expedite the construction and equipping of the Africa CDC, within the framework of the five-year strategic plan developed by the Africa CDC. The Government of China also committed to earmark RMB 500 million to that end and in support of other AU projects. The Chinese Government further offered to provide equipment worth USD 25 million in support of the AU Logistics Base in Douala, for use by the African Standby Force as part of China's USD100 million contribution in support of peace support operations in Africa.

**725.** Pursuant to the Executive Council's decision EX.CL/Dec.942(XXX) of January 2017, the Commission has been working with the PRC on mechanisms that will ensure the AU's full involvement in the effective management of FOCAC. Meanwhile, the African Union Office in Beijing was inaugurated during the 2018 FOCAC Summit in Beijing.

#### *Preparations for TICAD Ministerial Meeting and Summit*

**726.** In preparation for the upcoming TICAD VII Summit, which will take place in Yokohama from 27 to 30 August 2019, the Commission, in collaboration with the PRC, has been working with the Government of Japan on key elements of the Summit's agenda and program.

**727.** The preparatory TICAD Ministerial meeting was held in Tokyo in October 2018. The meeting adopted the 2018 TICAD Report on the implementation of the TICAD V Action Plans (2013-2017) and TICAD VII Implementation Plan (2016-2019) and elaborated on the Strategic Direction on the TICAD VII Summit, so as to put the focus on Africa's priorities.

**728.** It should be noted, however, that there was a disagreement at the Tokyo preparatory meeting over the participation of all Member States to the upcoming Summit, in line with the relevant AU decisions. It is important that this recurring issue of participation at TICAD meetings is resolved once and for all to allow full representation of all AU Member States at future TICAD events.

*EU-Africa*

**729.** The African Union-European Union Abidjan Summit Declaration of 2017 requested the two Commissions to develop an action plan, within three months of adoption of the declaration, that would involve the holding of working level meetings to identify projects and programs within the AU-EU joint priority areas of cooperation that both sides agree to implement, and to establish a joint follow-up mechanism. As a follow up, the Commission submitted to the PRC's review a draft of priority areas which, after amendments, will be finalized for final discussions the with EU. The Commission also started the preparations for the First AU-EU Ministerial meeting to be held in Brussels on 21-22 January 2019.

**730.** The African Union and the European Union institutionalized the EU-Africa Business Forum (EABF) in 2006, to improve the business environment and increase investment in Africa. The Forum is held alternatively in Africa and Europe. The last event was held on the margins of the Africa-EU Summit held in Abidjan in November 2017.

*Africa-Turkey Partnership*

**731.** As a follow up to the implementation plan for 2015-2019, the second African Union - Turkey Ministerial Review Conference, which was held in Istanbul in February 2018, adopted a Joint Communiqué in which both sides identified the need to enhance cooperation at the multilateral level and start in earnest to prepare for the upcoming African Union-Turkey Summit to be held in 2019 in Istanbul, Turkey.

**732.** Within the framework of the Africa-Turkey Partnership and its Action Plan, the Commission and the Ministry of Trade of the Republic of Turkey convened the Second Turkey-Africa Economic and Business Forum in Istanbul in October 2018, to promote Turkish and Africa investments and highlight Agenda 2063's vision for the continent. More than 2500 participants, thirty-four (34) Ministers and forty-six (46) Member States attended the forum. Business to Business and Business to Government meetings were also held on the sidelines of this event.

**733.** Three bilateral memoranda of understanding (MoUs) were signed on that occasion between the Turkish government and various Member States, including a MoU on cooperation on trade and investment between the Commission and the Government of Turkey. An implementation strategy and roadmap will be developed in early 2019. As a way forward, the Commission will continue to engage the private sector and provide a platform to enhance public-private cooperation and partnerships, with an emphasis on strengthening small and medium entrepreneurship in Africa.

- **Preparations for the Post-Cotonou Negotiations**

**734.** The Executive Council, in its decision EX.CL/Dec. 986 (XXXII) of January 2018, on the Future of the Post-2020 Cotonou Agreement, requested the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC), in close collaboration with the Commission and the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels, to finalize an African Common Position on

the future of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group and the Post-2020 Cotonou Agreement. The draft of the African Common Position was submitted for the consideration of the Extraordinary Session of the Executive Council, held in Kigali in March 2018 and adopted by the Executive Council [Ext/EX.CL/Dec.2(XVIII)], with the caveat of allowing one extra month of consultations to further enrich the draft with comments from African Member States and regions.

**735.** The final version of the Position was circulated to all African Heads of State and Government, after which the Chair of the Executive Council led the AU delegation to the ACP Ministerial Meeting held in Lome in May 2018. The AU ministerial delegation participated in the ACP-organized “Inter-Agency Consultative Meeting with Regional and Continental Organizations on the ACP Group’s Negotiating Framework for a Post-Cotonou Agreement with the EU, on 26 May 2018. The meeting, which gathered ACP’s regional organizations, discussed the negotiating mandate of the ACP countries. The African Common Position, as presented, was met with lack of unity on the African side and, for this reason, it was not presented on the following day at the meeting of the ACP Council of Ministers. At the meeting on 27 May 2018, the ACP Council of Ministers adopted its negotiating mandate and selected Togo to lead the negotiations on behalf of the ACP.

**736.** Subsequently, the Chairperson of the Commission appointed Dr. Carlos Lopes as his High Representative for AU-EU Partnerships, Post-2020, to provide the required support to the process through analysis, consultations, and consensus building.

**737.** The status of implementation of the Kigali Executive Council Decision was presented and discussed at the 31st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union held in Nouakchott in July 2018. The Assembly, in its Decision/Assembly/AU/Dec. 694 (XXXI), decided to move forward on an AU – EU Post 2020 agreement that treats Africa as a united continent, while recognizing the need for further consultations at the ministerial level to consolidate Africa’s Common Position on its post-2020 relations with the EU.

**738.** The Chairperson of the Commission communicated the Assembly’s decision to the President of the European Commission and the Secretary General of the ACP, requesting that, in accordance with the Assembly’s request, the commencement of ACP negotiations should be postponed, pending the consolidation of the African Common Position. In July 2018, both the ACP Secretary-General and the President of the European Commission responded, indicating that the negotiations would start on 1 October 2018, partly to allow time for the African side to consolidate its common position.

**739.** In preparation for the consultations, Dr Carlos Lopes consulted various stakeholders and conducted research with the help of the Commission, the UNECA and other relevant institutions. He submitted a report, which together with the report of the Chairperson of the Commission, were used as the basis for consultations at the Executive Council meeting, which was held in Addis Ababa on 14 September 2018, and expanded to include Ministers in charge of the ACP and EU relations.

**740.** Following its deliberations, the Executive Council agreed that the negotiations on the post-Cotonou agreement with the EU would be undertaken under the ACP framework and should start on 1 October 2018, as scheduled. The Executive Council further agreed that the Commission would extend technical support to the African members of the ACP negotiating team, in order to ensure coherence with Agenda 2063, as well as other relevant instruments. However, Member States did not reach an agreement on the leadership role to be played by the Commission towards the conclusion of an Africa-EU partnership Compact between Africa and the EU within the post-Cotonou framework. As a result, no decision was adopted at the end of the meeting, except to refer the matter to the Assembly for guidance.

**741.** Meanwhile, the European Union had adopted its negotiating directives and, soon thereafter, the ACP adopted its own. Negotiations were launched on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York at the end of September 2018.

**742.** Several discrepancies remained between the ACP and EU directives because the former had an ACP-wide focus whereas the latter preferred to move the bulk of the activities to the regions. It should be noted that, in the two negotiating directives, the post-Cotonou agreement will be a single one, consisting of a foundation agreement and three regional pillars. The difference lies in the definition of “regions”: while the EU directives point out the importance of treating Africa as a whole continent, the ACP regions are limited to the signatories of ACP and therefore do not treat Africa as a whole continent.

**743.** At the Assembly’s extraordinary Summit on 18 November 2018, the Chairperson of the Commission reported on these developments and stressed the importance of Africa speaking with one voice. In the end, the Assembly, in its decision Ext/Assembly/AU/Dec.1(XI), decided that the ACP-EU post-Cotonou negotiations should proceed within the framework of the EU-ACP partnership, and that the Commission would extend technical support to the African Members of the ACP negotiating team, as may be requested. The Assembly also decided that the AU-EU continent-to-continent partnership should continue post 2020, building on the Joint Africa-EU Strategy and the Declaration of the AU-EU Summit held in Abidjan on 29 and 30 November 2017, in order to advance Agenda 2063 and its priorities with respect to peace and security, development, the African Continental Free Trade Area, migration and climate, among others.

**744.** Since the November 2018 extraordinary Summit, the High Representative initiated consultations with key stakeholders to lay out the framework of the Continent-to-Continent Partnership post 2020. As of the time of this report, the High Representative had met with the African Group of Ambassadors and with the European Commission in Brussels. He also held discussions with several Member States and plans to continue such consultations.



- **AU Regional Offices and Representational Missions**

*AU Permanent Mission in Brussels*

**745.** During the period under review, the activities of the AU Permanent Mission in Brussels (the Brussels Office) focused mainly on: (i) the implementation of existing cooperation instruments between the African Union and the European Union, namely: the joint AU-EU strategy and the Agreement of partnership ACP-EU Cotonou; (ii) the facilitation and coordination of the activities of the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels; and (iii) the follow-up of regular working relations with the international partners based in Brussels.

**746.** The Brussels Office contributed to the implementation and monitoring of the Joint AU-EU Strategy and its roadmap for the period 2018-2020, which was adopted by the 5<sup>th</sup> AU-EU Summit in Abidjan in December 2017. The Office also facilitated the College-to-College meeting between the AU Commission and the European Commission held in Brussels on 23 May 2018, as well as the sectoral meetings between the two Commissions and among the two continents' leadership.

**747.** The Brussels Office also strengthened its relations with the European Commission, the European External Action Service, the European Council and the European Parliament. AU officials at the Office met regularly with their counterparts in these institutions to advocate the AU positions on issues of common interest to the two continents, including on the Post-Cotonou negotiations, Au institutional reforms and financing, and the implementation of Agenda 2063.

**748.** The Brussels Office continued to assist the African Group of Ambassadors in Brussels and coordinate their interactions with the EU and Africa Caribbean Pacific (ACP) institutions. It is in this perspective that the Office organized in June 2018 for the African Group and the Regional Economic Communities represented in Brussels a workshop entitled "Towards an integrated and harmonized approach to the implementation of the sustainable development program at UN 2030 and the AU Agenda 2063". The purpose was to update the participants on the progress made by the Commission in the implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

**749.** The Brussels Office also participated in the meetings of the Group of Africa Caribbean Pacific (ACP) States, including the meetings of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors and the ACP-EU Parliamentary Assembly held in Brussels in March and June 2018. In these and other ACP meetings, the Brussels Office contributed to the harmonization of the positions of AU Member States with the decisions and policies adopted by the AU Policy Organs. Contacts with the ACP secretariat were strengthened, and this facilitated the meetings between the President of the AU Commission and the Secretary General of the ACP that took place in Brussels in February and May 2018.

**750.** In general, the Brussels Office achieved significant results during the year 2018. One of its key tasks in 2019 will be to enhance its working relations with the Group of African Ambassadors in Brussels and assist Member States in consolidating Africa's

common position on its economic relations with the EU after 2020 in accordance with the relevant decisions of the Assembly's extraordinary sessions that took place in Addis Ababa in November 2018, so that Member States speak with one voice and remain consistent in their promotion of African interests.

*AU Permanent Delegation in Geneva*

**751.** During the year under review, the AU Permanent Delegation (hereafter the Geneva Office) in Geneva pursued its effort to support the African Group in Geneva and coordinate its involvement in the WTO and other fora.

**752.** With regard to industrialization issues, the Geneva Office worked with all stakeholders based in Geneva, including UNCTAD, UNIDO, WEF and the Diaspora, to promote African industrialization, economic diversification and structural transformation in line with Agenda 2063. Most recently, the Geneva Office co-organized a high-level panel discussion with UNCTAD and UNIDO on mobilizing investment for inclusive and sustainable industrial development in Africa on the sidelines of the World Investment Forum that took place in Geneva in October 2018. The panel brought together global leaders in the investment and finance sectors to identify new approaches towards mobilizing investment for the manufacturing sector in Africa to help strengthen productive capacity development.

**753.** In 2018, the African Group in Geneva meeting at the level of Ambassadors established an African Group for Disarmament issues to be coordinated by Namibia. The Geneva Office organised meetings and workshops to reinforce the activities of that Group. One such workshop held on 27 March 2018 was on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS).

**754.** In 2019, it will be the turn of Africa to preside over the UN Human Rights Council. Senegal was endorsed for this position by the July 2018 Summit in Nouakchott. The Geneva Office will continue to work with the African Group and other stakeholders to ensure Senegal's election to this position. On 5 December 2018, the Ambassador of Senegal in Geneva was formally elected as President of the Human Rights Council for the year 2019.

**755.** African citizens also competed for the positions of Deputy Secretary General and Director of the Telecommunications Development Bureau within the International Telecommunications Union in Dubai in October 2018. For the position of Deputy Secretary General, the candidature of Mr. Brahim Sanou from Burkina Faso was endorsed by the AU but was not elected. For the position of Director of Telecommunications Development Bureau there were two candidatures from Nigeria and Zimbabwe as there was no agreement on a single candidate, nevertheless, none was elected.

**756.** The Geneva Office organized fourteen meetings to assist the African Group of negotiators dealing with intellectual property issues and facilitate the definition of African common positions. The Office also organised on 8 and 9 November 2019 a workshop for the African Group to reinforce the capacity of African negotiators; the workshop

developed, *inter alia*, positions on issues newly introduced in the WIPO agenda such as resale rights.

**757.** It should be noted that the discussions within the technical committees at the WIPO did not make tangible progress due to the unwillingness of developed countries to make concessions. Within the WIPO Standing Committee on Copyrights and Related Rights, western countries opposed any international instrument on exceptions and limitations to copyrights for the benefit education and research institutions as requested by developing countries. Western countries also backtracked on discussions on an international binding instrument for the protection of the rich African traditional knowledge.

**758.** The Geneva Office assisted the African Group in the preparation of the 332<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Governing Body (GB) and 107<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Labour Conference (ILC), of the International Labour Organisation, which was held in Geneva in March and May/June 2018, respectively.

**759.** The 332<sup>nd</sup> session of the ILO Governing Body was important for Africa as it discussed the revision of the Rules for Regional Meetings. The African Group successfully lobbied for the revision of the rules on the composition of regional meetings to ensure that African countries would be the only full members participating in regional meetings and that countries from other regions could take part as observers and only when invited. This was a major victory for Africa, given that as recently as 2015, countries from other regions were able to participate in African region meetings as full members.

#### *AU Observer Mission to the United Nations*

**760.** The Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the United Nations (hereafter the New York Office) continued to facilitate interaction and coordination among the African Group and with the United Nations system at UN headquarters and ensure that Africa's strategic priorities remained on the top of the UN agenda.

**761.** During the period under review, the New York Office worked closely with the African Group in New York in forging consensus among African negotiators about using Agenda 2063 to influence the implementation of the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In particular, the New York Office assisted the African Group experts during the 2018 ECOSOC Segment on Operational Activities for Development in February/March 2018. The session served as a platform for UN member states to begin the formal consideration of the repositioning of the UN development system (UNDS), with special focus on the vision, key areas of transformation and the related response to General Assembly resolution on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations. In this session, the African Group emphasized that the harmonization of the existing AU programmes of action, including the AU Agenda 2063 and the programme of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) with the UN Deputy Secretary-General's engagement on the global 2030 Agenda is critical at the earliest possible stage to build synergies at country level.

**762.** During the Forty-Ninth Session of the UN Statistical Commission in March 2018, the New York Office coordinated a side event co-organized by the Commission and UN-ECA to inform the African Group and relevant stakeholders on the progress regarding the development of statistics on the continent, and a consultative meeting between the Commission and the African Directors-General of National Statistics. The purpose of this meeting was to exchange views on modalities to improve coordination, collaboration and communication between the Commission and the African Directors-General of National Statistics offices, representing AU Member States during the upcoming Session of the UN Statistical Commission in 2019.

**763.** The New York Office, in conjunction with the Coordinator of the Committee of Ten (Sierra Leone) and the Permanent Missions of the Committee of the Ten on Security Council Reform, organized a three-day retreat in New York in April 2018, to deliberate on the on-going Intergovernmental Negotiations on Security Council reform. The retreat decided to prepare an Aide-Memoire for the C-10 Heads of State in their engagement with the UN Security Council's P-5 members and develop a consensual strategy for the African Union Heads of State and Government of the Committee of Ten on Security Council reform to engage with the interested regional groups as well as guide the participation of the African Group at the IGN meetings.

**764.** The retreat also developed a draft Common African Position on Security Council reform to be used in their national statements during the General Debate of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly and other international fora. Furthermore, the Office facilitated the preparation and organization of the Ministerial Retreat of the Committee of Ten held in Freetown Sierra Leone in December 2018, the outcome of which will be presented to the February 2019 Summit.

**765.** The New York Office took part in the High-Level Conference of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States, which was organized by the UN Secretary General in New York in June 2018. The meeting's theme of *Strengthening International Cooperation to Combat the Evolving Threat of Terrorism* reflected on the need for Member States to improve international counter-terrorism cooperation and the practical steps for the implementation of relevant aspects of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy.

**766.** The New York Office also participated at the United Nations Forum held in New York in May 2018 on the question of Palestine under the theme *70 Years After 1948 - Lesson to Achieve a Sustainable Peace*. It was declared that the State of Palestine is designated to lead the Group 77 and China for 2019.

**767.** In the area of peace and security, the New York Office continued to improve its collaboration with the African Members of the Security Council (A3) for better coordination and cohesion of African issues within the UN Security Council. The A3 continued to be faced with dealing with external pressures particularly when defending African Union decisions that are incompatible with external competing interests.

**768.** The AU's efforts to secure predictable and sustainable funding through UN assessed contributions for AU-led peace support operations mandated by the Security Council gained momentum in 2018 with a roadmap developed by the A3 – Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt and Ethiopia – to facilitate the final resolution of this issue.

**769.** During the reporting period, the New York Office supported the July 2018 joint UN-AU Solidarity Mission to Chad, Niger and South Sudan, which was led by the AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security and the UN Deputy Secretary-General along with the UN-Women Executive Director of UN-Women. The AU Special Envoy and the UN Deputy Secretary General briefed the UN Security Council on the outcomes of the mission in July 2018.

**770.** The New York Office assisted the African Group in negotiations, alongside the G77 and China and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), for the attainment of the 2030 SDGs agenda and other internationally agreed development goals, the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all through adequate funding and the transfer of technology, as a way to boost socio-economic development in the LDCs. The African Group and its allies proposed the adoption of a Convention on the Right to Development as a legally binding instrument which will push the implementation of the right to development.

**771.** The Mission also supported the participation of the African Group at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women which was held in March 2018, under the theme "Challenges and Opportunities in Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Rural Women and Girls". A significant outcome of this session was the agreement reached by the African Group, the G77 and China and the NAM to host a high-level meeting on the Fight Against Tuberculosis, and a third high-level meeting on non-communicable diseases in 2018. The three groups of states also agreed to host a high-level meeting in 2019 on universal health coverage.

*AU Representational Mission to the United States – Washington D.C. Office*

**772.** During the year 2018, the AU Representational Mission to the United States of America-Washington DC Office continued to promote AU's priorities in the United States and strengthen the AU-US strategic partnership, particularly in the areas of economic development, investment and trade, and the mobilization of the African diaspora in enhancing US-Africa relations.

**773.** The Washington DC Office intensified its advocacy efforts with the US Administration, both Houses of Congress and the think-tank community. It also assisted the African Ambassadors Group to the United States in coordinating African common positions on various issues, particularly following statements made by the current Administration vis-à-vis the continent. Given the importance of the US legislative branch, the Office advocated the need for the United States to engage Africa as an equal partner on the basis of shared interests and common values. Emphasis has been given to the importance of the US support to AU peace support operations, as well as future US-Africa relations beyond African Growth and Opportunities Act (AGOA) in light of the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

**774.** Working with the Commission's Department of Trade and Industry and the African AGOA Eligible Countries, the Washington DC Office organized a series of meetings leading to the annual AGOA Ministerial Forum held at the State Department in Washington, DC. These meetings were (i) the Midterm Review in June 2018, which took stock of AGOA's key milestones and challenges; and (ii) the AGOA Ministerial Consultative Meeting, which took place in July 2018 prior to the AGOA Forum.

**775.** The Washington DC Office took an active part in the 17<sup>th</sup> annual AGOA Forum, which was convened by the US State Department in Washington, DC, in July 2018 under the theme "Forging new strategies for US-Africa Trade and Investment". The Forum focused on the implementation of AGOA, in light of the US Government's new trade and foreign policy priorities. Participants exchanged views on strategies to improve trade relations between the US and Africa as a united bloc rather than on a bilateral basis as is currently the case, as well as the future of US-Africa economic relations after AGOA's expiration in 2025.

**776.** The Washington DC Office hosted in October 2018 a follow-up meeting to tackle the issues raised by the AGOA Trade and Industry Ministers at the Forum, between the group of African Ambassadors and a US inter-agency delegation led by Ms. Connie Hamilton, Assistant US Trade Representative for Africa. The meeting set the ground for the next high-level engagement on the future of US-Africa economic relations between the African Ambassadors and Deputy US Trade Representative Ambassador C.J. Mahony in November 2018.

**777.** The 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the AU Commission-United States of America (AU-US) High-Level Dialogue took place in Addis Ababa on 29 November 2018. It was co-chaired by the Deputy Chairperson of the Commission and the US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs. The High-Level Dialogue provided an opportunity to review the progress made in the implementation of the various aspects of cooperation under the four interdependent pillars that govern the AU-US Strategic Partnership, namely: (i) peace and security; (ii) economic growth, trade and investment; (iii) democracy and governance; and (iv) promoting investment opportunities and development.

**778.** Both sides reaffirmed their strong commitments to deepening and broadening their partnership in all these areas to achieve the AU's vision of an "integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa". They also agreed particularly on the value of convening an annual forum for trade and investment to promote economic partnerships and expand the utilization of the African Growth and Opportunity Act at the regional and continental levels.

**779.** The AU Office in Washington, DC, in collaboration with the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Diaspora Business Council, organized in Washington, DC, in November 2018 the Diaspora Trade and Investment Conference. This conference facilitated the initiation of linkages between the African Diaspora business community with trade and investment counterparts from African countries, as well as trade-related agencies in the United States and Africa. More than two hundred participants and ten Diaspora trade associations, representing more than 300 Black

Chambers of Commerce representing various industry sectors, as well as seven U.S. government international development agencies, took part in the Conference.

**780.** The First Annual Diaspora Retreat was also organised by the Mission in Baltimore, Maryland in December 2018. More than 150 participants took part in the one-day retreat, including representatives of the African Diaspora groups from different states and provinces in the USA, Canada and Europe from Canada and Europe. The Retreat adopted the Constitutive Act of the African Union Diaspora 6<sup>th</sup> Region Network applicable to the African Diaspora in the US only. It also launched the African Diaspora Savings and Investment Account as an innovative instrument to invest in the African Centers of Excellence (WAKANDA) in each region of the continent.

**781.** The Washington DC Office continued to coordinate the monthly meetings and host the major activities of the African Ambassadors Group (AAG) in its capacity as the Secretariat of the Group. It is encouraging to note that African Ambassadors are increasingly speaking with one voice on issues of common interest between the US and Africa.

#### **IV. Communication and Outreach**

**782.** During the period under review, the Commission enhanced its efforts to increase the visibility of the AU through various traditional and online media and digital platforms. The Commission completed the AU Brand Identity & Style Guide to ensure common alignment in the use of the AU Brand iconography in all communication channels across the Union. The Commission also initiated work on realigning the AU Organs with the AU corporate brand identity. The new website of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC) was launched with this updated visual identity.

**783.** Between January and July 2018, the Commission reached out to around 20 million people via Facebook, registering 355,000 followers. This represents an increase of 9.5% over 2017. For Twitter, the Commission recorded 6.1 million tweets and 215,000 followers representing an increase of 24% compared to 2017. Furthermore, there were 150,000 views on YouTube, an increase of 19% from 2017, and 1,799 subscribers, representing an increase of 18% since January 2018. The photo archive on Flickr also increased by 72%.

**784.** Visits to the AU website also increased with 3,229,707 page views registered during this period. Additionally, fifty-one (51) events were streamed live, generating 143,184 views from January to July 2018, compared with 113,000 for the full year in 2017.

**785.** The *Know the AU* campaign continued during the year under review. The campaign's aim is to popularise and educate African citizens on the African Union history, structures and functions thereby contributing to the goal of bringing the African Union to its citizens. The objective of campaign is to increase engagement with the AU citizen by directing online traffic to AU digital platforms such as the AU website and social media pages to learn more about the AU.

**786.** Production of documentaries on flagship projects is underway as part of the *Know the AU* campaign. The documentaries were finalized in December 2018 and will begin to air in 2019. The flagship projects are Silencing the Guns by 2020, the African Continental Free Trade Area, the African Commodity Strategy, the Grand Inga Dam and the integrated High Speed Train.

**787.** During the period under review, the Commission completed the mapping, architectural design and layout of the new AU Studio, which will be installed in the New Conference Centre at AU Headquarters. Construction work is expected to begin in the second semester of 2018.

**788.** The Commission, working with the Government of New Zealand, continued the publication of the annual **AU Handbook**. 2500 copies were distributed during the AU Summits in 2018. Production of the 2019 edition ongoing with delivery expected at the February 2019 Summit.

**789.** In collaboration with the Government of Rwanda and Rwanda's Nyundo Music School, the Commission's Department of Information and Communication began the production of the AU Anthem in English, Arabic, French, Portuguese, Spanish and Kiswahili. The audio production was to be released in December 2018. This project was also supported by the Embassies and Permanent Representations of Tanzania and Equatorial Guinea to the AU, which provided the Swahili and Spanish translations of the AU Anthem, respectively.

**790.** The Commission's Department of Information and Communication launched, in collaboration with the NEPAD Agency, the Agenda 2063 Network of Journalists representing all the AU regions. The objective of the Network is to promote AU activities related to Agenda 2063, giving importance to Africa's voices in telling Africa's story and sharing ideas on how Africa's media can better build the narrative of the continent.

**791.** During the period under review, the Commission increased its outreach activities to the African citizenry and beyond. Several media briefings were held and over 300 press releases issued and disseminated through media database, the AU website and social media channels.

**792.** The AU Media Centre continued its operation, serving more than 2,000 visiting journalists covering events at the AUC Headquarters in Addis Ababa or via satellite media centre at AU Summits in Kigali and Nouakchott in March and June/July 2018, respectively. The Media Centre is equipped with 50 computers, individual workspaces, facilities for live video and audio transmission of the open sessions, audio recording in four AU working languages, cable and wireless internet access, access to latest news, publications and media resources.

**793.** Lastly, the Commission's Department of Information and Communication has stepped up guided tours of AU Headquarters. Over 1,221 visitors took advantage of guided tours. They included African and non-African students of all age groups, dignitaries, diplomats and other officials, as well as international media groups.



**794.** The Commission deployed a new project entitled the African Knowledge Base (AKB) Platform, which is accessible at <<http://akb.africa-union.org>>. The objective is to enhance information sharing and the search and retrieval of current publications by the AU, the RECs, and other AU-affiliated organizations from a single website and interlinked databases. As at this reporting, the platform was introduced to eight regional and international organizations and academic institutions. All institutions began using and contributing to the Platform. In the future, the AKB Platform will serve as an integrated database of African local contents and indigenous knowledge.

## **M. CONCLUSION AND THE WAY FORWARD FOR 2019**

**795.** This Report on the Activities of the Union and Its Organs highlights some of the significant achievements the Union made in 2018 and for which the continent can take a legitimate pride. These achievements are a tangible demonstration of the impact of the Union's transformative agenda and its contribution to improving the livelihoods for African citizens. Their reinforcement and the need for a better outreach to make them known to African citizens will continue to engage the attention of the Commission, other Organs and Specialized Agencies in 2019.

**796.** Many challenges still persist. Conflicts and violence remain a reality that affects the lives of large segments of the African population. The democratization process and the promotion of good governance are still fraught with difficulties. Poverty and misery are the daily lot of hundreds of millions of people even though the continent is endowed with wealth and talent. The voice of Africa on the international stage is still insufficiently taken into account, even though the continent represents more than a quarter of the membership of the United Nations.

**797.** With Agenda 2063, Africa through the Union has developed a roadmap that clearly articulates the path forward for its transformation. The year 2019 offers the opportunity to move faster to break the multiple chains that hinder the actualization of Africa's rich human and natural potential. From this point of view, nothing is more decisive than the deepening of continental unity. As the Chairperson of the Commission has pointed out many times, "With unity we are everything. Without it, we are nothing".