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Mechanism for Africa and the Regional United Nations
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Addis Ababa, 12 and 13 May 2018

African Union

Draft report on the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa joint programming retreat

**Nairobi
24-27 April 2018**

Introduction

A retreat of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa was held in Nairobi from 24 to 27 April 2018. The gathering was organized by the joint secretariat of the Mechanism, which consists of the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

The retreat was co-chaired by the adviser to the Chairperson on Regional Integration of the African Union Commission, Rosette Nyrinkindi; the head of the joint secretariat of the Mechanism, Joseph Atta-Mensah; and the strategic adviser on institutional reforms and capacity-building in the Office of the Deputy Chairperson of the Commission, Haddis Mekonnen.

The retreat was attended by representatives of the African Union Commission and of agencies of the United Nations system working in support of the African Union, the United Nations Development Group for Eastern and Southern Africa, the African Peer Review Mechanism secretariat, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the East African Community, Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. The full list of participants is found in annex I of the present report.

Opening session

Opening remarks

Mr. Atta-Mensah welcomed participants and highlighted the various expected outcomes of the retreat, including discussions on how the Mechanism

could effectively realign itself to the expected reforms put forward by the African Union, the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Executive Secretary of ECA. He reaffirmed the commitment of the United Nations to continuing its support to the African Union to deliver on its priorities. He noted that the work of the Mechanism must be aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. This was particularly relevant, given that the African Union Heads of State and Government had decided that there should be only one report on both agendas. He concluded by thanking all participants for their attendance, which was a demonstration of their commitment to the Mechanism.

Ms. Nyrinkindi also welcomed participants and read a statement on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat. In it, Mr. Mahamat emphasized the need for the Mechanism to focus its work on the frameworks of enhanced partnership between the United Nations and the African Union, notably the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security and the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda. Mr. Mahamat, through the statement, also stressed the need to reposition the Mechanism to respond to the continent's priorities in terms of implementing Agenda 2063. He added that, in the context of the Mechanism, there was a need to improve inter-cluster and inter-organizational communications and to have regular reviews of the existing programme and cluster systems. He stressed that, more than ever, now was the time to reposition the Mechanism to better respond to continental priorities through more efficient and effective stakeholder engagement. Joint planning and programming between the United Nations and African Union would therefore be the way to proceed in this regard in order to achieve synergies and comparative advantages in all entities involved. Lastly, he wished participants successful deliberations and urged all present to take the opportunity to develop productive relationships among themselves.

Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

The agenda and programme of work were adopted with amendments.

Objectives and expected outcomes

The secretariat of the Mechanism outlined the following meeting objectives:

- (a) To review the work of the clusters and the subregional coordination mechanisms for the period 2017-2018 in order to collect input for the preparation of the progress report of cluster coordinators for the upcoming nineteenth session of the Mechanism and to gather lessons learned, with a view to enhancing and strengthening the capacity and effectiveness of the Mechanism;
- (b) To finalize the 2018-2019 workplan of the Mechanism, utilizing the tools and templates developed for joint programming;
- (c) To learn about and have a common understanding of recent United Nations-African Union strategic developments and reforms and their implications for the Mechanism;
- (d) To prepare and approve documents for the nineteenth session of the Mechanism;
- (e) To work on improving information-sharing and collaboration tools.

The expected outcomes of the Retreat were the following:

- (a) An improved, more concise and accurate progress report and an implementable workplan for the period 2018-2019;
- (b) Improved effectiveness of the Mechanism and subregional coordination mechanisms through joint planning and programming and information-sharing;
- (c) Contribute to the current debate on regional coordination and increased/improved collaboration under the Framework for a Renewed United Nations-African Union Partnership for Africa's Integration and Development Agenda 2017–2027, the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security and the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda .

The outputs expected from the retreat were the following:

- (a) Progress report for the nineteenth session of the Mechanism;
- (b) 2018-2019 cluster workplan of the Mechanism;
- (c) Documents for the nineteenth session of the Mechanism;
- (d) Report/outcome statement.

Session I: joint programming, monitoring and evaluation and information-sharing

Presentation of progress on the proposed Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa information-sharing and knowledge management platform

Participants were briefed on the platform for information-sharing and collaboration management. Various aspects of the platform were presented, including the website, containing the history and mandate of the Mechanism. Attention was drawn to a new element, namely, the collaboration section of the platform, which will enable several members to edit a document in real time and an online discussion forum in which members can interact and engage in cluster-related discourse at any time. Three key sections of the platform are in place: live document editing, collaboration and discussion and the website.

The participants made the following comments, observations and clarifications:

- (a) The website platform should be customized to address the very needs of the Mechanism and its members;
- (b) The creators of the platform may consider developing a mobile app because more people have access to mobile phones than laptops;
- (c) The platform is able to hold virtual meetings but does not allow for video-based or voice-based collaboration. Integrating these features will increase the cost of the development of the platform;
- (d) There is a need to have the portal serve as a learning hub. Video tutorials will be sent out when the tool is released to assist in the use of the platform;
- (e) With reference to transforming the tool into an app, this is very feasible and affordable. The site is adaptive and has been developed from conception with this in mind. The parameters and specific areas needed, however, would have to be clarified. In addition, Android-enabled mobile

systems can be developed sooner than iOS (Apple) systems owing to Apple's terms and conditions.

Presentation on joint programming and monitoring and evaluation

The presentation on joint programming and monitoring and evaluation offered a refresher to members on the functions of the Mechanism as a whole and the challenges of coordination. The Economic Affairs Officer at ECA, Nozipho Simelane, reviewed key elements pertinent to United Nations-African Union joint programming, including a thorough explanation of coordination as a means of development effectiveness and an understanding of what such coordination would mean at the global, regional and subregional levels. Participants were reminded of the nine clusters in the Mechanism:

- (a) Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, industry, trade agriculture and agro-processing and regional integration;
- (b) Infrastructure development;
- (c) Human capital development, health, nutrition, science, technology and innovation;
- (d) Labour, employment creation, social protection, migration and mobility;
- (e) Gender equality and the empowerment of women and young people;
- (f) Humanitarian matters and disaster risk management;
- (g) Environment, urbanization and population;
- (h) Advocacy, information, communications and culture;
- (i) Governance, peace and security.

The discussion, comments, observations and clarifications following the presentation included the following:

- (a) The argument that joint programming reduces transaction costs is not always true. The existing United Nations Development Group guidelines, which clarify the number of agencies and how much is contributed financially, should be used as a guide for joint programming in the Mechanism;
- (b) Some participants suggested that the clusters and their configuration be reviewed. The secretariat, however, reminded participants that the current configuration of the clusters, which are aligned with Agenda 2063, were created by the African Union Commission after exhaustive consultations;
- (c) There is a need for the development of monitoring and evaluating tools to assess and measure the performance of the work of the Mechanism;
- (d) United Nations support should be based solely on the priorities of the African Union. In this regard, the African Union should inform the United Nations of the support that it requires;
- (e) The United Nations should support the African Union in the implementation of work programmes approved by the latter's specialized technical committees.

Session two: cluster progress reports on joint programming

With regard to the largest cluster, on sustainable and inclusive economic growth, industry, trade agriculture and agro-processing and regional integration, it was reported that there had been significant improvement in joint programming by the United Nations and the African Union in multiple areas, including achievements in industrialization, agriculture and agro-processing, mining, governance, resource mobilization and private sector development.

The most significant achievement was the development of and the agreement to establish the African Continental Free Trade Area. A total of 44 African countries signed the agreement in Kigali in March 2018. The Free Trade Area is intended to increase trade within Africa.

Cluster 2, on infrastructure development, had registered success in two areas: (a) energy, including bio-energy development; and (b) transport and tourism, including the single African air transport market, which was launched at the African Union summit in January 2018.

The focus areas of cluster 3, human capital development, health, nutrition, science, technology and innovation, included the implementation of the continental education strategy and teacher development issues, including mobility, information and communications technology (ICT) in education and peace and education. Activities included a high-level policy dialogue on education financing, a project to provide meals to children at school, the pan-African conference on education and the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024.

The cluster also worked on strengthening pan-African science, technology and innovation institutions such as the African Observatory on Science and Technology, the Pan African Intellectual Property Organization and the African Outer Space Programme, which are critical for Africa's development and industrialization. One of the most interesting and most collaborative projects of the cluster is the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024, in which the African Union Commission, ECA, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the New partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) are participating. It was suggested that this was one of the best opportunities for collaboration.

The presentation on cluster 4, on labour, employment creation, social protection, migration and mobility, began with the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration. The cluster was involved the work to collect Africa's input into the compact. The consultative meetings at the continental, subregional and national levels under the African Union were held and input was made into the initial draft of the report. The global meeting on the compact will be held in September. It was pointed out that, even though the media highlight Africans migrating to Europe or the America, a majority of migration originating on the continent is, in fact, intra-African.

Participants were reminded that cluster 4 had two goals for the ending year [[2018]]. Under goal 1, namely, a high standard of living, quality of life and well-being for all citizens, the cluster worked on the first five-year priority programme on employment, poverty eradication and inclusive development (2016-2020). Additional work was done on the draft protocol on social protection and social security (International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)), the draft social agenda of Agenda 2063 (UNDP, ILO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)), the report on the state of social security in Africa (UNDP, ILO, UNICEF) and the preparation for the establishment of the employment and social cohesion

fund (ILO, ECA and AfDB) and the draft of the green jobs project (ILO and United Nations Environment Programme).

Work under goal 2, namely, migration as a driving force for development and growth and the protection of refugees and migrants, with special attention given to vulnerable groups, included the migration policy framework for Africa and plan of action; the African Union-ILO-International Organization for Migration (IOM)-ECA joint programme on labour migration management for development and integration; and the first labour migration statistics report in Africa (March 2017, with the second edition scheduled for 2018). The study on social security access and portability for migrant workers is under way, in addition to a two-year project on social security access and portability for migrant workers in the East African Community, ECOWAS and SADC

It was also reported as part of the presentation that, following a news report on slavery, the African Union-European Union-United Nations tripartite task force on stranded African migrants in Libya (IOM and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) had worked on the IOM voluntary humanitarian return programme to accelerate assisted voluntary returns of migrants and refugees. The exercise repatriated 16, 000 migrants in six months, surpassing the target of 15,000. The repatriation of stranded migrants by the Horn of Africa secretariat was also presented.

Since the most recent reporting period, cluster 5, on gender equality and the empowerment of women and young people, held a series of activities aligned with its two goals: gender equality and women's empowerment in all spheres of life and the empowerment of young people through harnessing the demographic dividend. With regard to the first goal, the cluster organized the fourth African Union high-level panel on gender equality and women's empowerment in June 2017, based on the 2017 theme of "Harnessing the demographic dividend through investment in youth: empowering young women and girls". It also mobilized and coordinated the review of the African Union's 2009 gender policy and the development of the African gender equality and women's empowerment strategy (2018-2027). Under the second goal, the cluster participated in the development and implementation of the African Union demographic dividend road map, among many other activities. Broadly speaking, these activities brought together multiple stakeholders to collaborate on technical and financial support and continuous advocacy of the priority areas highlighted above.

The cluster reminded the Mechanism to include gender components in its activities and subsequent reporting. In addition, the cluster raised concerns of time constraints, which limit the adequate implementation of the various activities under the annual themes. The joint secretariat responded by noting that the African Union themes around which some clusters centre their work, served only the function of highlighting priority areas in the development agenda but were not time frames for the planning and implementation of the said selected areas of focus.

During the year under review, cluster 6, on humanitarian matters and disaster risk management, reported that the United Nations had been successful in strengthening cooperation with the African Union in the implementation of a number of its priorities through its support to the African Union Commission in the implementation of the African Union decisions to establish the African Union humanitarian policy framework and African Union Humanitarian Agency, in its prompt response to landslides in Sierra Leone, which occurred in August 2017, and in the publication of the African Union model law for the implementation of the African Union Convention for the Protection of and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons in Africa.

Cluster 7, on the environment, urbanization and population, reported that during the period under review, the clusters had been successful in providing

support to countries on the sound management of chemicals, the New Urban Agenda, the African Union's Panel of the Wise and assisting in the mobilization of resources to accelerate the operationalization of the Africa Geothermal Centre of Excellence and the high-level work programme of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change. Some work was also done on gender, young people and climate change

Cluster 8, on advocacy, information, communications and culture, noted that, during the period under review, it had successfully organized the Africa senior media dialogue on the theme "Role of media in Africa's development, women's empowerment and their support for Agenda 2063". The meeting was aimed at increasing the role of the media in Africa's development and the media's eagerness to expand coverage and provide more balanced reporting on development issues and African affairs in general. Key outcomes fed into the discussion and decisions of the African Union Specialised Technical Committee on Communication and Information and Communications Technology, held from 20 to 24 November 2017.

Cluster 9, governance, peace and security, highlighted its activities in the areas of preventing and mediating conflict and sustaining peace (horizon scanning and the need for shared understanding, information-sharing and analysis), conflict prevention (having a shared understanding of conflict), the utilization of good offices and mediation (e.g., appointments of special envoys), electoral matters and governance, human rights protection and humanitarian assistance.

The ECA subregional offices, in their capacity as the secretariat of the subregional coordination mechanisms, also reported on the progress made during the year in review. The presentations centred on the support of the United Nations to the regional economic communities and intergovernmental organizations. They reported on their relevant sessions. To strengthen the regional coordination mechanisms, it was proposed that each regional economic community should have a focal point for the Mechanism process and that a task force be established to meet under the Mechanism umbrella to address the reforms put forward by the African Union and the Secretary-General, as well as the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security and the the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda.

It was observed that the following challenges were common for all the clusters:

- (a) Inadequate coordination and collaboration at all levels of the Mechanism;
- (b) Inadequate resources to enable the clusters to deliver on joint programmes and activities;
- (c) Insufficient communication within the clusters and with the United Nations Development Group and the United Nations liaison team;
- (d) New and emerging situations that need to be addressed;
- (e) Lack of commitment and active participation in some clusters.

The sharing of information using modern ICT tools and resourcing the joint secretariat of the Mechanism through the secondment of dedicated staff were suggested in order strengthen coordination and collaboration within the clusters. It was also suggested that coordination could be enhanced through a rotation in the chairing of the clusters as a means of enhancing effective participation and commitment. The scheduling of meetings of clusters that takes into account the overall calendar of meetings of the United Nations and the African Union must be encouraged. Also discussed at the retreat were the

designation of Mechanism focal points at the level of regional economic communities and the full involvement of the latter in the Mechanism.

There is also a need to complete the mapping of the United Nations agencies, regional economic communities and regional United Nations Development Groups for the purpose of understanding their comparative advantage and avoiding overlaps and the duplication of effort. Suggestions were made for the strengthening of linkages between the regional Mechanisms and the subregional coordination mechanisms through the involvement of the secretariats in annual meetings of the subregional mechanism and in encouraging the participation of the United Nations agencies and organizations at the subregional levels.

Session 5: priority agendas

African Union Commission medium-term plan (2018-2023)

The African Union Commission medium-term plan (2018-2023) is not only the fourth successive plan since the establishment of the African Union, but also the first structured one. These plans are aimed at accelerating the attainment of the vision of the African Union. The medium-term plan is the first strategic plan that is aligned with Agenda 2063 and that takes into consideration existing continental challenges.

In terms of its structure, the medium-term plan follows a framework that entails, among other things, plan principles and orientation and institutional reform and renewal. The foundations of the medium-term plan are based on the vision and mission of the African Union and the goal of the medium-term plan, which is to deliver African Union reforms and accelerate the implementation of Agenda 2063.

- i. The priorities of the medium-term plan include institutional reform, economic transformation, inclusive growth and environmental sustainability, while the principles that guide the medium-term plan are prioritization; subsidiarity; accountability and transparency; the harmonization of policies, systems and processes; flexibility/adaptability; and coordination and control.

Key results of the medium-term plan focus on institutional reform and delivering on continental frameworks and mandates relating to Agenda 2063 and the first ten-year implementation plan (2014-2023). The medium-term plan also sets up thematic clusters with clearly defined leadership. In each thematic area, subcomponents were identified, in addition to 13 flagship projects that are enablers for the implementation of the medium term plan. The presenter informed the retreat that, as a result of the rigorous prioritization process used, proposed and existing institutions and programmes were tested, leading to some programmes being eliminated and some institutions being earmarked for closure.

The initial costing of the medium-term plan was \$1.8 billion. Current calculations, however, are likely to result in a different figure. Sources for these funds include AfDB, contribution from member States and donor sources and the newly implemented 0.2 per cent levy on imports.

The following observations were made:

- (a) In the ensuing discussions, the question of implementing the African Union policy frameworks discussed above at the national level is an issue that still exists, given that the decisions or agendas of the African Union do not always translate to national policies;

(b) With respect to the African Union's plans to increasing its private sector and philanthropic funding, questions were raised on how it plans to increase this to the proposed 3 per cent; [[of what?]].

(c) The question was raised whether, if the African Union carried out an evaluation of the previous medium-term plan in 2017, anything could be learned from it;

(d) It was asked how the situation in which regional economic communities are in radically different levels of development will be managed, especially given the crucial role that they have been given in the implementation process. In response to this, it was clarified that these communities would be working closely with the African Union. A fully dedicated unit is set up for this and, on the basis of the subsidiarity plan in the medium-term plan, this is achievable.

2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 first ten-year implementation plan monitoring and evaluation framework

The Details of the African Union's common monitoring and evaluation framework for the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 were presented. A clarification made was that the framework addresses both the agendas. The early history of the framework and its evolution until its final stages was recalled. The approved framework has 261 indicators.

It was also noted that the overall monitoring and evaluation framework architecture, which includes national, regional and continental values, begins with implementation and mainstreaming at national levels. Implementation pathways and milestones have been set, including agreement on having one report. Other details include the following:

(a) Agenda 2063 implementation pathway and milestones: from implementation and internalization to technical mainstreaming and alignment for implementation, country-specific indicators, evaluation and accountability platform and communications, advocacy and public awareness-raising;

(b) Implementation support templates and checklist: national implementation and reporting is always the starting point, followed by implementation at the regional and continental levels;

(c) Reporting template was adjusted to fit into the monitoring and evaluation framework and the reports on both agendas, thereby resulting in one report;

(d) Next steps: the Agenda 2063 monitoring and evaluation framework is being rolled out in the member States through the regional economic communities;

(e) Between now and 2019, \$1.6 million is needed to fund the framework.

It was also noted that the overall Agenda 2063 monitoring and evaluation framework architecture, which includes national, regional and continental values, begins with implementation and mainstreaming at national levels. Implementation pathways and milestones have been set, including agreement on having one report. Other details are outlined below.

In the ensuing discussion, the fact that member States appear to be more conversant with the 2030 Agenda, compared with Agenda 2063, was highlighted. There is therefore a need for more advocacy and awareness anchored to a more robust communication strategy with regard to Agenda 2063. In this regard, the United Nations agencies wanted to know how they could be of assistance.

Session 6: African Union priority initiatives for 2018

The African Union Commission presented its priority initiatives for 2018, which are discussed below.

African Continental Free Trade Area

The Head of the Industry Division, Department of Trade and Industry, African Union Commission, Hussein Hassan, gave a brief presentation on the African Continental Free Trade Area, which is one of the flagship programmes under the first ten-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063. He said that it was intended to be the following:

- (a) A people-centred developmental free trade agreement that goes beyond tariff liberalization and increases the choices of the African people;
- (b) A free trade agreement that will help to address many of Africa's most significant challenges, including unemployment among young people, migration, skills development, the empowerment of women, industrialization and infrastructure development;
- (c) A free trade agreement that will help Africa to strengthen its trade and investment relations and thereby unleash its business potential, including in the services sector;
- (d) A free trade agreement that would help Africa to integrate into global value chains and strengthen its geopolitical position vis-à-vis the rest of the world.

A total of 44 African Heads of State and Government signed the agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area during the Extraordinary Summit of the African Union held in Kigali on 21 March 2018. A total of 28 signed the Protocol on Free Movement. Other protocols on trade in goods and services, dispute settlement and their annexes will be completed in the coming phase.

The activities relating to the African Continental Free Trade Area identified for support by the Mechanism were the following:

- (a) Advocacy and awareness-raising about the benefits of the Free Trade Area;
- (b) Advocacy and awareness-raising for the ratification of the agreement;
- (c) Advocacy for the allocation of adequate resources to the finalization of the agreement;
- (d) Advocacy for the implementation of continental frameworks that will support the Free Trade Area, such as the Action Plan for Boosting Intra-African Trade, the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, the Action Plan for Accelerated Industrial Development in Africa, the Africa Mining Vision, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons in Africa and the African passport;
- (e) Advocacy for the realignment of national trade policies to the African Union trade and integration agenda.

Single African air transport market

The Director for Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission, Cheikh Bedda, said that the single African air transport market was also one of the priority initiatives of Agenda 2063 and had a history linked to the

Yamoussoukro Decision. The market had been launched at the Ordinary Summit of the African Union in January 2018. The action plan has the following pillars:

- (a) Pillar 1: Advocacy for effective operationalization of the market;
- (b) Pillar 2: Regulatory framework;
- (c) Pillar 3: Operationalization of the market;
- (d) Pillar 4: Infrastructure;
- (e) Pillar 5: Enhancing safety and security;
- (f) Pillar 6: Financing the aviation industry.

The following activities were identified as avenues for collaboration:

- (a) Intensify advocacy for more States to join by involving the new champion (President of Togo);
- (b) Resource mobilization for the executing agency;
- (c) Capacity-building of member States and regional economic communities on the regulatory text of the Yamoussoukro Decision;
- (d) Formulation of the dispute settlement mechanism and its institution;
- (e) Validating the guideline on external policy regarding the negotiation of air transport agreement with non-African countries;
- (f) Follow up with member States on the implementation the agreed action plan.

Migration and employment

The African Union Commission Department of Social Affairs and IOM gave the presentation. After brief remarks on the status of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration, by the Director of IOM, Maureen Achieng, the Social Affairs Officer, African Union Commission, Oumar Diop, briefed the meeting about other activities on migration and employment. The five major activities are the following:

- (a) Implementation of the ten-year action plan of the migration policy framework;
- (b) Institution-building: ROC (Regional Centre, Khartoum) and Mali Centre
- (c) African Union Horn of Africa initiative;
- (d) African Union-European Union-United Nations tripartite task force on stranded African migrants in Libya;
- (e) Global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration.

Free movement of persons and African passport

An officer in the Political Affairs Division of the African Union Commission, Olabisi Dare, indicated that the efforts regarding the free movement of persons and the African passport support the initiatives presented. The single African air transport market and the African Continental Free Trade Area free the movement of goods and services, while the free movement of persons and the African passport frees the movement of people. Free movement is a cross-cutting issue and requires countries to abolish the requirement of a visa for all Africans. The African passport, which will facilitate the free

movement of people, will be possible only once 15 countries have ratified the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons in Africa.

The efforts of the Mechanism could assist in the establishment and strengthening of common civil registration regimes, biometric registration and movement control systems. This would facilitate information-sharing among countries and the establishment of common infrastructure for the common passport, which require the harmonization of associated laws and policies throughout the continent.

Efforts to succeed in combating corruption

There was no one to present this item, the theme of the African Union for 2018, but a participant wanted the meeting to note that corruption went beyond the normally identified areas to include fisheries, wildlife and forestry.

Session 7: harmonizing United Nations-African Union frameworks

Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security

There was an emphasis in the presentation on the strong relationship between United Nations and the African Union since the establishment of Security Council and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union?]]. The new Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security streamlines responses throughout the conflict cycle. It facilitates regional conversations on responses and missions, such as the United Nations mission in the Sudan and for the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. and enhances coordination. Prior to this framework, the United Nations-African Union relationship had been based mainly on capacity-building support. The shift was brought about by the decentralization of responsibility, moving from Chapter VII (global) to Chapter VIII (regional) responses (of the Charter of the United Nations) and increased coherence. This is evident in the smaller responses (e.g., Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel), which are more appropriate , in the era of austerity. It also facilitates increased communication between the Councils and increased platforms for engagement.

The Joint United Nations–African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security is guided by the following principles:

(a) The attainment of peace through joint efforts to resolve violent conflict is critical to the achievement of these fundamental development goals;

(b) The priority focus of United Nations-African Union efforts throughout the cycle of conflict must be the search for sustainable political solutions, in keeping with international standards and principles;

(c) Protection of civilians, the promotion of human rights standards and the prevention of human rights violations, as well as the respect for international humanitarian law, are fundamental principles of any peace and security effort;

(d) The participation of women is key to achieving sustainable peace, and more needs to be done to advance the women and peace and security agenda;

(e) The United Nations and the African Union recognize that their efforts must be combined in a complementary and mutually reinforcing manner, guided by mutual respect and comparative advantage.

To support the implementation plan of the Joint United Nations–African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, the United Nations and the African Union shall implement an effective communications strategy to support implementation of the Framework involving the full range of communication tools available.

The following observations were made by participants:

(a) Concern was raised over the need for support in the implementation and popularization of Agenda 2063 and its priority initiatives. There is a need for establishing a clear messaging strategy that the United Nations could use for Agenda 2063, which, in turn, the Organization could use to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda. It was also suggested that Agenda 2063 be part of the curriculum in schools;

(b) Most of the migration in Africa is internal, whereas the focus is most often on external migration. Simplifying immigration within Africa is critical to the continent's development, given that it allows for the movement of skilled personnel;

(c) At the continental level regarding migration, an African common position will be part of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration;

(d) There is a need for a clear division of labour, especially with regard to resource mobilization and the implementation of initiatives. The private sector should be engaged as early as possible;

(e) There was concern on the issue of consistency and the pace at which the African Union Commission is moving on awareness-raising, compared with the United Nations regarding the 2030 Agenda. Although the world is excited about the African Continental Free Trade Area it may be overtaken by events such as bilateral agreements, if information on its benefits does not quickly reach the national level.

(f) The cost of flying in Africa has always been high. Participants wanted to know how the single African air transport market protocol was going to reduce the cost. It was pointed out that a 15-country study had been carried out, the single African air transport market would reduce taxes, fees, and completion and increased availability would further reduce the prices and reduce the time to cover distances.

African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The presentation began with a brief history of the Millennium Development Goals, the Sustainable Development Goals (2030 Agenda), Agenda 2063, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Paris Agreement on climate change. The leadership of the United Nations and the African Union decided to sign the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to strengthen and enhance the coordination of United Nations support. Inclusivity, transparency, subsidiarity and ownership are some of the principles espoused in the Framework. The areas of focus include the following:

(a) Advocacy and awareness-raising of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063;

(b) Integration of the goals, given that there is a high congruence between the goals contained in the two agendas;

- (c) Mainstreaming the development goals into national development plans;
- (d) Building the capacity of national statistics offices to enable reporting on the indicators of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063;
- (e) Building an efficient data infrastructure and reducing fatigue and duplication.

Framework for a Renewed United Nations-African Union Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda 2017-2027

Participants were briefed on the focus framework for the Mechanism, namely, the Framework for a Renewed United Nations-African Union Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda 2017-2027. It is the successor to the Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the African Union, which had been the focus for the Mechanism from 2006 to 2016, along with NEPAD. The Framework for a Renewed Partnership, as with the recently signed African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is very specific with regard to partnering with the African Union, its institutions and its organs on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, given that they are the priority agendas for the African Union. The Framework for a Renewed Partnership was developed through consultations with stakeholders and adopted at the African Union Summit of July 2015 and by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/254.

In the ensuing discussion, the following issues arose:

(a) Concerns were raised about the clusters not being in line with the medium-term plan and the fact that clusters on finance and investment, strategic planning, do not exist. The Mechanism secretariat explained that the clusters/thematic areas in the medium-term plan would change and that the finance and strategic planning ones were actually not thematic ones but administrative support services. The secretariat also explained that the Mechanism clusters were created by an African Union Commission working group following a painstaking exercise and are indeed synchronized with the first ten-year implementation programme of Agenda 2063;

(b) Both the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Framework for a Renewed United Nations-African Union Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda 2017-2027 deal with advocacy and awareness-raising. There had been concern regarding the existence of mechanisms at national levels for advocacy of and awareness-raising on the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and priority initiatives such as Silencing the Guns by 2020;

(c) The difference in the effectiveness of the mechanisms was due to the fact that, in the past, while most conflicts were between States, now they are intra-State. This is the difference between the conflicts during the fight for independence and conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example. The peacekeeping mechanism is not working in that country;

(c) It was noted that, more often than not, the root causes of current conflicts are access to and the sharing of resources and the fact that there are often international players involved. ECA has published several documents on the root causes of conflict and on the cost of conflict.

Session 8: collaborative project

Presentation by the regional United Nations Development Group of Eastern and Southern Africa

A representative of the regional United Nations Development Group for Eastern and Southern Africa informed participants that it comprised 32 members and 20 observer entities from the United Nations system. He noted that, previously, the regional United Nations Development Group had four functions: (a) the provision of technical/programme support to resident coordinators and United Nations country teams; (b) quality support and advice on the common country programming (United Nations Development Assistance Framework) process; (c) performance appraisal and oversight of the resident coordinators and United Nations country teams; and (d) troubleshooting in complex country situations and dispute resolution, among others. It was observed that, in the light of the proposed reforms of the Secretary-General, the role of the regional United Nations Development Group had been modified so that the second function mentioned above went beyond quality support to include issues of quality assurance and the monitoring of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, standard operating procedures and joint initiatives.

The representative noted that there was an expectation regarding the proposed reforms of the Secretary-General to include programmatic policy and analytical services and products in support of countries and shared regional issues in the context of the 2030 Agenda, including through partnerships with the regional economic commissions, the World Bank and regional banks.

The representative also noted that, beyond the provision of technical support to United Nations country teams, there was an expectation regarding the proposed reforms of the Secretary-General to include the provision of leadership and strategic guidance to the country teams to help them to deliver more coherent, effective and efficient support to Member States.

The representative concluded by reminding participants that, whereas the chair of the United Nations Development Group was the UNDP Administrator, that role has been transferred to the Deputy Secretary-General, with the UNDP Administrator becoming the Deputy Chair of the United Nations Development Group.

Group of Five for the Sahel

The presenter of the Group of Five for the Sahel project was from the ECA Sub-regional Office for Central Africa. The Sahel, which had previously consisted of 5 countries, had expanded to 10. He said that many studies had been conducted, including some by ECA, on the root causes of conflict in the region. The major challenges with the Sahel include:

- (a) Trans-border conflicts;
- (b) Difficulty in coordination, given that seven countries are from ECOWAS, two from the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and one from the Arab Maghreb Union;
- (c) Sahel vulnerabilities go beyond conflict and insecurity, and interventions should also tackle issues of sustainable development;
- (d) The outcome of the 2012 United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel has yet to be realized.

The implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel is taking place under the leadership of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel and the regional United Nations Development Group for Central and West Africa, and the study on the long-term prospects for the Sahel (Sahel 2043 initiative) is ongoing under the leadership of ECA and UNDP. It is expected that there will be a new positive narrative on the Sahel because of the natural resources potential of the region.

As part of the long-term prospective study on the Sahel, training to the member State experts and the regional economic communities (i.e., ECOWAS and ECCAS) was going to be offered.

Participants made the following observations:

(a) There was concern over the multiplicity of studies on conflict and insufficient action on development. Participants suggested looking at development opportunities. It was noted, however, that it was almost impossible to have development amid conflict;

(b) There was concern over the long-term study's definition of the Sahel. The presenter indicated that resolving instability in the region must go beyond humanitarian measures to encompass sustainable development, including inclusive growth, economic opportunity and efforts to combat poverty.

Sessions 9 to 13: cluster breakaway sessions and reporting back to plenary

All the clusters met and embarked on the formulation of their workplan for 2018-2019. Each cluster reported back at the plenary session. The Mechanism secretariat is expected to collate all the workplans and finalize that of the Mechanism. The workplan for 2018-2019 is expected to be considered for adoption at the nineteenth session of the Mechanism.

The clusters presented their proposed workplans. The subsequent discussions, comments, observations and clarification centred on the following:

(a) For cluster 2, it was noted that due consideration for wildlife and cultural heritage sites should be taken into account when working to implement its programme of work. It was clarified that that would be the case, especially given that the programme remained a work in progress;

(b) It was also pointed out that there might be too many programmes being proposed within the workplans. Accordingly, achieving them may be implausible. It was proposed that all programmes should be in line with United Nations and African Union priorities and that there should therefore be a further review of the plan in terms of achievability and feasibility;

(c) It was proposed and agreed following further discussions that, following the retreat, all the workplans would be compiled and shared with the African Union for its review and the selection of its desired priorities. The outcome of that process would be presented at the nineteenth session of the Mechanism;

(d) Several participants indicated that there might be the need for further development of the workplans, given that they might not reflect the views of all cluster members in the given time frame. Accordingly, it was agreed that clusters and/or subclusters would be free to meet on their own if they wish to do so to discuss further or for other purposes;

(e) As an example of improved ways of communication to national levels, it was highlighted that ECOWAS had a radio station based in Monrovia, which broadcasts to all member countries, and that Cluster 8 could work with the ECOWAS team on the implementation of some of the cluster objectives;

(f) For cluster 9, it was proposed that it and the United Nations should engage with the African Union governance platform;

(g) There is the need for the clarification, establishment and/or development of the Mechanism's communication strategy. Given the importance of publicizing the work that is being carried out by it, it is important to formulate an adequate communication strategy;

(h) It was proposed that, if possible, there should be representation of young people in the panel discussions at future sessions of the Mechanism. It is an issue, however, that is dependent on the availability of resources.

Session 14: planning for the nineteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa

The Mechanism secretariat briefed participants on the preparations for the nineteenth session of the Mechanism, which will be held in Addis Ababa on 12 and 13 May 2018. The theme is United Nations system support to the African Union in succeeding in efforts to combat corruption as a sustainable path to Africa's transformation, which is based on the African Union theme for 2018. The first day of the session is for discussing the theme, while the second day is about statutory matters and discussing the successes and failures of and the way forward for the Mechanism. Included in the programme is a high-level meeting on United Nations and African Union reforms and frameworks, to be held on 13 May .

Participants were invited to consider the draft aide-memoire, agenda, annotated agenda and programme of work. They approved the draft documents with amendments and urged the Mechanism secretariat to redouble its efforts in the planning and organization of the session.

Participants were also asked to assist in expediting the confirmation of the panellists for the session.

Session 15: conclusions and recommendations

The participants recommended the following:

(a) Noted that much had been achieved and significant progress made by the clusters, as evidenced by the agreement to establish the African Continental Free Trade Area in March 2018 and the signing of it by 44 member States, the signing of the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons in Africa, the launch of the single African air transport market at the African Union Summit in January 2018, the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration and the progress made in the financing of the African Union;

(b) Also noted the ongoing reforms in the United Nations and the African Union and the impact that they might have on the Mechanism;

(c) The need to adopt a robust communication strategy that would sell the African Union brand and make its work known to the public, and enhance the United Nations-African Union partnership;

(d) There is a further need to enhance effective coordination and collaboration in the Mechanism at all levels, given that this remains a big challenge;

(e) Recommend that:

(i) The Deputy Secretary-General, as the Chair of the Mechanism and the United Nations Development Group, is urged to convene a meeting, for later in 2018, of the

leadership of the United Nations working in Africa and the leadership of the African Union to discuss the impact of the reforms of the African Union and those put forward by the Secretary-General for the United Nations, and the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda and the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security on the work of the Mechanism;

- (ii) The African Union shall set the priorities that will be supported by the United Nations, in line with the African Union Commission medium-term plan for 2018-2023;
- (iii) The African Union Commission shall review the proposed workplans for 2018-2019 of the clusters and submit a report to the Mechanism secretariat;
- (iv) The work of the clusters will continue to be anchored to the Framework for a Renewed United Nations-African Union Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda 2017-2027, which is aligned with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In this regard, the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda and the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security should be implemented through the Mechanism;
- (v) Clusters will alternate the chairing of the clusters, depending on the theme of the year, as a means of enhancing the active participation of members;
- (vi) The configuration of the clusters will be maintained in order to avoid a disruption of the process for the alignment of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda, as set out in the Framework for a Renewed United Nations-African Union Partnership for Africa's Integration and Development Agenda 2017-2027. Nevertheless, the African Union Commission reserved the right to submit proposals for the reconfiguration of the clusters for consideration by the Mechanism;
- (vii) The Mechanism will strengthen the monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism of its work;
- (viii) The General Assembly is urged to provide adequate resources to the Mechanism to enable the clusters to function properly. In this regard, the African Union needs to clearly articulate that its resource needs that require the support of the United Nations;
- (ix) The role and involvement of the regional economic communities in the Mechanism and subregional mechanisms and the connections among them should be strengthened;
- (x) The ECOWAS liaison officer should be a part of the Mechanism joint secretariat, representing regional economic communities, in order to strengthen the linkages between the Mechanism and subregional mechanisms and the joint secretariat;
- (xi) Gender mainstreaming is enhanced in all activities of the clusters;

- (xii) Cooperation and collaboration between regional United Nations Development Group and subregional mechanisms will be further strengthened;
- (xiii) The United Nations and African Union will be encouraged to extend their interventions for addressing conflicts beyond humanitarian measures to include programmes of inclusive growth and sustainable development.

Other matters

There were no issues presented.

Presentation of the meeting report or outcome statement

The report was adopted with amendments and participants were given an opportunity to submit corrections in writing to further improve the report. They were to submit their revisions by Monday, 31 April, 2018.

Closing session

On behalf of the Strategic Planning Section of the African Union Commission, Strategic Planning, Mesfin Tessema, thanked all present for their full participation and emphasized the importance of collaboration and cooperation between both organizations. He expressed confidence in the combined efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. He also said that there was a need for clusters to refine the proposed projects and indicated all the proposed projects should have clear objectives and detailed monitoring and evaluation systems for the reviews of their achievements.

Mr. Atta-Mensah concurred that the retreat had been useful and beneficial for the Mechanism. He thanked the participants and express gratitude and praise for the invaluable contributions in ensuring that the retreat achieved its objectives. Notwithstanding the challenges in terms of coordination, he expressed hope that, given the existence of a work programme, there would be improvements in the Mechanism. He also thanked the leadership of the African Union Commission for their presence, which is a testimony to their commitment to ensuring the efficiency of the Mechanism. He also thanked them for their immerse contributions to the workplan. With those remarks, the retreat was brought to a close.

Annex I¹

**List of Participants
Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa joint
programming retreat
24 to 27 April 2018
Hilton Hotel, Nairobi**

- 1 Mr. Jaco Du Toit
Régional Communication and information Adviser
UNESCO
Mobile: 254(0) 728610912
Email: j.dutoit@unesca.org
Nairobi, Kenya
- 2 Mr. George Okutho
Country Director
ILO
Mobile: 251911505311
Email: okutho@ilo.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- 3 Dr. Pieume Calice Oliver
Cluster lead
UNESCO
Mobile: 00221777470409
Email: co.pieume@unesco.org
Dakar, Senegal
4. Ms. Malebogo Lerato Bowe- Gonise
Liaison officer
UNESCO
Mobile: 251930000527
Email: m.bowe@unesco.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
5. Dr. Ivorlumum Uhaa
Representative to the AU and UNECA
UNICEF
Mobile: 251911505179
Email: juhaa@unicef.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

¹ Annexes I and II of the present report are being issued without formal editing.

6. Ms. Tedenek Fantaye
Asst Liaison Officer,
UNHCR RAUECA
Mobile:
Email: Fantaye@unhcr.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
7. Mr. Cosmas Chanda
Representative to the AU and ECA
UNHCR
Mobile: 251911208655
Email: Chanda@unhcr.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
8. Mr. Samba Thiam
Head, UN Environment Liaison Office to AUC, UNECA and
Representative to Ethiopia
UNEP
Mobile: 251-937947007
Email: samba.harouna@un.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
9. Ms. Louise-Agnes Mackongo
Liaison officer
UNESCO
Mobile: 254773617157
Email: la.mackongo@unesco.org
Nairobi, Kenya
10. Ms. Ledet Teka Befekadu
Reporting Officer
UNOCHA
Mobile: 251911517318
Email: tekal@un.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
11. Dr. Yumiko Yokozeki
Director
UNESCO
Mobile: 251911202653
Email: y.yokozeki@unesco
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

12. Mr. Charles Njorge
Deputy Secretary General
East African Community Secretariat
Mobile: 255683516969
Email: cnjorge@eachq.org
Arusha, Tanzania
13. Ms. Workenesh Gonet
Director Representative to AU
UNOPS
Mobile: 251911512306
Email: workeneshg@unops.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
14. Abdul Rahman Lamin
Program specialist, Social and Human
UNESCO
Mobile: 254207622617
Email: ar.lamin@unesco.org
Nairobi Kenya
15. Desire Assogbavi
Representative to the AU and UNECA
UNFPA
Mobile: 251944199757
Email: assogbavi@unfpa.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
16. Mrs. Shewaye Lulu
Liaison and Project Officer
UNFPA
Mobile: 251-915953960
Email: shewaye@unfpa.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
17. Mr. Getu Assefa
National Professional officer
UNESCO
Mobile: 2510930000524
Email: g.assefa@unesco.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

18. Ms. Nathalie Ndongo-Seh
Chief of staff
UNOAU
Mobile: 251911511715
Email: ndongo-seh@un.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
19. Patrick Kormawa
FAO Representative to AU and UNECA and Sub Regional Coordination
for Eastern Africa
FAO
Mobile: 251911202191
Email: Patrick. kormawa@fao.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
20. Dr. Taukumar Ramasamy
Senior program Specialist
UNESCO
Mobile: +254792266851
Email: r.jauakumar@unesco
Nairobi, Kenya
21. Mr. Deo Kamweya
COMESA
Mobile: +260965907679
Email: DKAMWEYA@COMESA.INT
Zambia
22. Saba Bokhari
Programe Specialist/Educcation
Mobile: 254(0) 717722025
Email:
Nairobi Kenya
23. Mr. Charles Njoroge
Deputy Secretary General DSG
East Africa Community
Mobile: 255(0)2721621100
Email: cnjoroge@eachq.org
24. Mr. Danston Ondachi
Operations specialist
R-UNDG/ ESA
Mobile: 254727400545
Email: DANSTON.ONDACHI@ONE.UN.ORG
Nairobi, Kenya

25. Mr. Julius Kabubi
Programme Analyst
Mobile: 0722752228
Email: Julius.kabubi@un.org
Nairobi Kenya
26. Mr. Olabisi Adeleye Dare
Head of Division
AUC
Office: +251115182608
Email: dareo@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
27. Ms. Assietou Diouf
Director of Programming, Budget, Finance
And Accounting (PBFA)
AUC
Mobile: +251911503416
Email: dioufs@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
28. Mr. Cheikh Bedda
Director of Infrastructure and Energy
AUC
Mobile: +251911201647
Email: beddac@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
29. Mr. Charles Mwaura
CEWS & Preventive Diplomacy
Expert
AUC
Mobile: +251911388193
Email: mwaurac@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
30. Mr. Tichawona Shumba
Senior Policy Officer
AUC
Mobile: +251929188474
Email: tichawonas@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

31. Mr. Agbor Ambang
Head, NEPAD Co. Un
AUC
Mobile: +251911201650
Email: agbora@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
32. Mr. Hambani Masheleni
Senior Policy Adviser
AUC
Mobile: +251911998430
Email: hambaniM@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
33. Ms. Leslie K. A. Richer
Director, Communications
AUC
Mobile: +251911201652
Email: richerL@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
34. Ms. Lami Omale
Associate Legal Expert
AUC
Mobile: +251961287765
Email: omaleL@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
35. Ms. Anthonia Iyanda
Senior Policy Officer
AUC
Mobile: +251930643363
Email: anthonial@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
36. Mr. Oumar Diop
Senior Policy Adviser
AUC
Mobile: +251922175584
Email: diopO@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

37. Mr. Jean-Denis Gabikini
Head of Economic Integration and Regional Cooperation
AUC
Mobile: +251 913478610
Email: gabikiniJD@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
38. Prof. Mekonen Haddis Kidanemariam
Strategic Advisor
AUC
Mobile: +251911255325
Email: mekonenH@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
39. Amb. Rossette Nyirinkindi Katungye
Advisor, Regional Integration
AUC
Mobile: +251911510518
Email: katungyer@africa-union.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
40. Dr. Mustapha S. Jallab
Head of Research and Training Division
IDEP
Office: +221 338295510
Email: m.sadnijallab@unidep.org
Dakar, Senegal
41. Mr. Ferdinand Katendeko
Chief of Staff
APRM
Mobile: +277 87309211
Email: Ferdinand.katendeko@aprm-au.org
Johannesburg, South Africa
42. Mr Abdi Fidar
Capacity Development Coordinator
IGAD
Mobile: +25377016829
Email: abdi.fidar@igad.int
Djibouti, Djibouti

43. Mr. Deogratias Kamweya
Chief of Resource Mobilization & International Cooperation
COMESA
Office: +260965907679
Email: dkamweya@comesa.int
Lusaka, Zamiba
44. Ms. Suma Mwakyusa
Principal International Relations Officer
EAC
Mobile: + 255752399244
Email: smwakyusa@eachq.org
Arusha, Tanzania
45. Mr. Giuseppe-Renzo D'Aronco
Economic Affairs Officer
UNECA- SRO CA
Mobile: +237870112133
Email: daroncoguiseppe@un.org
Yaounde, Cameroun
46. Ms. Francoise Umuringa
Programme Officer
UNECA SRO EA
Mobile: +250 788306200
Email: umulinga@un.org
Kigali, Rwanda
47. Mr. Aziz Jaid
Economic Affairs Officer
UNECA SRO NA
Mobile: +212639008675
Email: jaid@un.org
Rabat, Morocco
48. Mr. Mamoudou Sebegu
UNECA SRO WA
Mobile:
Email:

49. Said Adejumobi
Director,
Sub-Regional Office for Southern Africa,
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA),
Mobile: +260960561681
Email: adejumobi@un.org
Lusaka, Zambia.
50. Ms. Raheemat Momodu
Head
ECOWAS Liaison Office to AU
AUC
Mobile: + 251910162065
Email: romomdu@ecowas.int
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
51. Ms. Nozipho Simelane
Economic Affairs Officer
Capacity Development Division
ECA
Tel: +251-11- 5-445468
Mobile: +251-937-449796
Email: simelane@un.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
52. Mr. Joseph Atta-Mensah
Principal Advisor
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
Capacity Development Division
Office: +251-115-445-379
Mobile: +251-9-11-201-817
[Email: atta-mensahj@un.org](mailto:atta-mensahj@un.org)
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
53. Enoch Okara
Consultant/ CDD
United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
Tel:
Email: Okara@un.org
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Annex II



Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa

Joint programming retreat

24 to 27 April 2018

RCM Africa Retreat on Joint Programming
Hilton Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya
24-27 April 2018

Distr.: General

ECA/RCMR/Info 2
13 April 2018

Original: English

Draft Programme of Work

DAY 1: Tuesday, 24 April 2018		
Time	Item	Presenter
Co-Chairs: AUC/UN		
9:00 – 09:30	Welcome Remarks Opening Remarks - AUC - ECA	
09:30 – 09:45	Objective and expected outcomes	RCM Joint Secretariat
09:45-10:45	Session 1: Joint programming, monitoring and evaluation and information sharing	
	Presentation of progress on the proposed RCM-Africa Information Sharing and Knowledge Management Platform	ECA Knowledge Management
	Joint programming and monitoring and evaluation guidelines	RCM-Africa Joint Secretariat
	Templates for Joint Programming and reporting	RCM-Africa Joint Secretariat
	Discussions	
10.45 – 11:00	Coffee Break	
11:00 – 13:00	Session 2: Cluster Progress Reports on joint programmes	
	Cluster 1: Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, industry, trade, agriculture and agro-processing and regional integration;	Cluster Coordinators
	Cluster 2: Infrastructure development	Cluster Coordinators
	Cluster 3: Human capital development, health, nutrition, science, technology and innovation	Cluster Coordinators

	Cluster 4: Labour, employment creation, social protection, migration and mobility	Cluster Coordinators
	Discussion	
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch	
	Session 3: Cluster Progress Reports on joint programmes	
14:00 – 15:00	Cluster 5: Gender equality, women and youth empowerment	Cluster Coordinators
	Cluster 6: Humanitarian matters and disaster risk management	Cluster Coordinators
	Cluster 7: Environment, urbanization and population	Cluster Coordinators
	Cluster 8: Advocacy, information, communications and culture	Cluster Coordinators
	Cluster 9: Governance, Peace and Security	Cluster Coordinators
	Discussion	
15:00 – 15:15	Coffee Break	
15:15 – 17:00	Session 4: Cluster Progress Reports on joint programmes (cont'd)	
	SRCM CA	SRO/REC
	SRCM ESA	SRO/REC
	SRCM NA	SRO/REC
	SRCM WA	SRO/REC
	Discussion	
DAY 2: Wednesday, 25 April 2018		
Time	Agenda item	Presenters
Co-Chairs: AUC/UN		
09:00-10:00	Session 5: Priority Agendas	
	UNDG	UNDG - ESA
	Presentation and Discussion on the AUC Medium Term Plan 2018-2023	AUC - Strategic Planning, Policy, Monitoring, Evaluation and Resource Mobilization (SPPMERM)
	Presentation and Discussion on SDGs and Agenda 2063 FTYIP Monitoring and Evaluation Framework	AUC – Strategic Planning, Policy, Monitoring, Evaluation and Resource Mobilization (SPPMERM)
10:00 – 10:15	Coffee break	
10:15 – 13:15	Session 6: AU Priority Initiatives for 2018	
	The African Continental Free Trade Area	AUC-DTI
	Single Air Transport Market	AUC-DIE
	Migration	AUC-DSA
	Free Movement of Persons	AUC-DPA
	Winning the Fight Against Corruption	AUC-PSD
	Discussions	
13:15 – 14:15	Lunch	
14:15 – 15:45	Session 7: Harmonizing AU-UN Frameworks	
	UNDG	UNDG-ESA Secretariat
	United Nations-African Union Framework on Peace and Security	ECA and UNOAU
	United Nations –African Union Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	ECA and UNOAU
	PAIDA	RCM Secretariat

	Discussions	
15:45 – 16:00	Coffee break	
16:00 – 17:00	Session 8: Collaborative Projects	
	G5 – Sahel Project	SRO-WA
	Discussions	
17:00 – 17:30	Guidelines for Breakaway Sessions	RCM Secretariat
DAY 3: Thursday, 26 April 2018		
Time	Agenda item	Presenters/Facilitator
Co-Chairs: AUC/UN		
09:00 – 11:00	Session 9: Cluster Breakaway Sessions Clusters 1 , 4 & 7	Cluster Coordinators
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee break	
11:30 – 13:00	Session 10: Cluster Breakaway sessions Clusters 2 & 8	Cluster Coordinators
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch	
14:00 – 15:30	Session 11: Cluster Breakaway Sessions Clusters 3 & 9	Cluster Coordinators
15:30 – 15:45	Coffee break	
15:45 – 17:15	Session 12: Cluster Breakaway Sessions Clusters 5 & 6	Cluster Coordinators
17:15 – 17:30	Wrap-up for Breakaway sessions	Co-Chairs
DAY 4: Friday, 27 April 2018		
Time	Agenda item	Presenter
Co-Chairs: AUC/UN		
09:00 – 10:30	Session 13: Report Back All Clusters	Cluster Co-Coordinator
10:30 – 10:45	Coffee break	
10:45 – 13:15	Session 14: Planning for RCM-Africa 19 Review of Draft Aide Memoire	RCM-Africa Joint Secretariat
	Review of Agenda, Annotated Agenda and Work Programme of Work	RCM-Africa Joint Secretariat
	Review of the Progress Report to RCM 19	RCM-Africa Joint Secretariat
	Review of the Draft Work Programme for the RCM-Africa 2018/19	RCM-Africa Joint Secretariat
	Any other business	Co-Chairs
	Presentation of the meeting Report or outcome statement	RCM-Africa Joint Secretariat
13:15 – 13:30	Closing Remarks - AUC - ECA	
13:30 - 14:30	Lunch	