

# **ECA and partners to review progress on African Union/NEPAD programme and regional integration in Central Africa**

Yaounde, 12 October 2013 (ECA) - How much success has been achieved in implementing a wide range of African Union (AU) and NEPAD projects in Central Africa and what progress has been made in attaining regional integration in Central Africa? These questions will constitute the major discussion points of three back-to-back meetings organised by ECA from 21 to 25 October in Cameroon's economic capital – Douala, bringing together authorities and experts from UN agencies, CEMAC, ECCAS and Government officials of all ECCAS member-states, AfDB, the Steering Committee on the Rationalisation of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Central Africa, specialised institutions, private sector representatives and members of the civil society.

The first meeting to be held from 21 to 22 October will be the fifth session of the Sub-Regional Coordination Mechanism (SRCM) of the UN system-wide support to the AU/NEPAD programme in Central Africa. It will review progress made in executing the first Common Indicative Programme (CIP) 2010-2012 in support of ECCAS, CEMAC and their specialised institutions and adopt the second CIP to run from 2013 to 2015. A working document for the second CIP has already been developed following proposals made by the beneficiary bodies. Meanwhile the preliminary evaluation report on the state of execution of the 2010-2012 CIP shows that 54 out of the 96 planned projects/group of projects of the Programme have been executed, giving a percentage score of 53.6. Most of the projects so far implemented fall within the domains of infrastructural development, governance, peace and security, industrial development, trade, access to markets, agriculture and food security, science and technology, the fight against HIV/AIDS, employment, training and the improvement of institutional frameworks for development.

The second event – an Ad hoc Expert Group meeting on the Rationalisation of ECCAS-CEMAC market integration tools will be held from 23 to 24 October. Experts attending the meeting will examine the current state of the harmonisation of trade liberalisation instruments between the two Regional Economic Communities (RECs) put in place since 2006. This will enable them re-launch the dynamics of this harmonisation which is expected to result in the creation of a single customs union for Central Africa.

The last event will be the third edition of the Regional Integration Day in Central Africa. The event to be held on 25 October will focus on the theme “Free movement of persons and the right of establishment in Central Africa” with a goal of getting stakeholders to understand the dynamics and the state of regional integration in the sub region. Specifically, the event will offer the participants the opportunity to debate on the issue of free movement and right of establishment in Central Africa in order to tease out ways of speeding up the implementation of community texts and instruments that have already set the rules for such movements. This is all the more relevant given the adoption by the Conference of Heads of State of CEAMAC, held in Libreville on 25 June 2013, of the additional agreement on the abolition of visas for citizens of the CEMAC circulating within the Community from 1 January 2014.

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