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Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

Statutory issues**Report on the follow-up to the resolutions of the
fifty-first session of the Economic Commission for
Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance,
Planning and Economic Development, and other
ministerial recommendations of relevance to the
Commission****Introduction**

1. The present report highlights progress in the implementation by the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) of the resolutions adopted at the fifty-first session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development held in Addis Ababa on 14 and 15 May 2018.
2. The session adopted six resolutions, which were submitted to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations for review and endorsement. This report highlights progress made on the implementation of the resolutions.
3. The present report is submitted to the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development at its fifty-second session, for information.

**Resolutions and decision adopted by the Conference of
Ministers at its fifty-first session****A. Resolution 956(LI) African Institute for Economic
Development and Planning****Paragraph 3****(a) Text**

3. *Requests* the Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, to take all steps

*E/ECA/COE/38/1/Rev.1.

necessary to request the General Assembly to increase the regular grant to the Institute in support of the Institute's programme;

(b) Progress

ECA and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning have commenced the process of requesting the General Assembly to agree to increase the grant from the United Nations to the Institute as part of the submission of the 2020 programme plan and budget. Feedback shall be provided to the fifty-third session of the Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Paragraph 4

(a) Text

4. *Also requests* the Economic Commission for Africa to adopt a more systematic gender sensitive programme-based approach to the provision of financial support to the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning to enable the Institute to adequately support the capacity development needs of member States;

(b) Progress

While this was not achieved in 2018, the planning process for 2019 is expected to provide the opportunity for ECA and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning to work out modalities for a sustained and more systematic gender sensitive programme-based support to the Institute's capacity development plans.

Paragraph 5

(a) Text

5. *Reiterates* its call to member States for the more regular payment of assessed annual contributions and the settlement of arrears to the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, and calls upon the Institute to redouble its recovery efforts as part of a more comprehensive resource mobilization strategy;

(b) Progress

The Institute has redoubled its efforts to recover arrears from member States. This has ranged from increased visits to member States, increased visibility of the Institute at the level of member States through media presence, meetings with African Ambassadors and senior officials of member States, and advocacy for the Institute on the part of the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa. Contributions received from member States in 2018 amounted to \$760,000, which is 53 per cent lower than the 2017 comparative. There is, nonetheless, a positive response from member States to the recovery efforts: the Institute expects member States to regularly make their annual contributions and settle a significant part of their respective arrears. This will be monitored closely in 2019.

B. Resolution 957(LI) Review of the intergovernmental structure of the Economic Commission for Africa

Paragraph 3

(a) Text

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference of Ministers at its next session on restructuring the conference structure and subsidiary bodies of the Economic Commission for Africa, including the intergovernmental committees of experts;

(b) Progress

The external review of the Commission's intergovernmental structure has been completed. Findings and recommendations will be presented at the fifty-second session of the Commission in 2019.

C. Resolution 958(LI) Implementation of international migration programmes in Africa**Paragraph 1****(a) Text**

1. *Requests* the Economic Commission for Africa to continue to work with the African Union, regional economic communities, member States and other stakeholders on policy research, regional dialogue and capacity development on migration issues, in particular on creating a positive narrative and developing strategies to harness it for regional development;

(b) Progress

ECA has worked closely with the African Union Commission and member States to develop a common position on migration and has supported the negotiations on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (referred to as the Global Compact on Migration) through a series of subregional and regional consultations. The evidence-based regional report prepared by ECA was highly appreciated and recognized by the Africa Group and formed the basis for intergovernmental negotiations that led to the Global Compact on Migration.

A change in narrative is particularly necessary in the light of recent interest on the part of international media, which has tended to distort the real picture of African migration. There is considerable evidence that most Africans migrate within the continent, in search of better employment prospects, and that they do so with valid documents. They are not always from the poorest sections of society and contribute substantially to their countries of destination. Unfortunately, the image that has been created by the media of the African migrant is very different from the reality. The High-level Panel on Migration is working to dispel such distortions.

Paragraph 2**(a) Text**

2. *Also requests* the Economic Commission for Africa, in partnership with the African Union, to continue to provide support and advice to member States on mainstreaming migration policies into their national development plans and strategies;

(b) Progress

ECA, working in partnership with the African Union Commission, is the secretariat of the High-level Panel on Migration. Chaired by the former President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the Panel advocates for an Africa-centred narrative on international migration.

The High-level Panel on Migration was set up in 2017 and comprises 16 members, all of whom are persons of eminence drawn from government, civil society and the private sector, highlighting the need to address the issue of migration from regional, global and national perspectives.

Since its formation, the Panel has held four meetings, details of which follow: the first meetings were held in Monrovia on 6 June 2017 and 15 January 2018; a meeting was held subsequently in Geneva on 28 and 29 May 2018; and a final meeting was held, in Addis Ababa on 19 and 20 November 2018. The

in-depth deliberations that took place during the meetings focused on the nature of migration and related trends within the continent and outside Africa. The meetings also discussed the content and structure of the report on the High-level Panel on Migration and the key messages on migration governance in Africa intended for Heads of State and other stakeholders. Finalized at the meeting in Addis Ababa, that report has become an evidence-based tool for use in advocacy and sensitization activities, including to raise awareness among member States and governments, citizens, and international development partners of matters relating to migration governance in Africa.

To further disseminate the key messages and outcomes of the deliberations, and to ensure that migration policies are integrated into their national development plans and strategies, the Chair of the Panel convened a series of meetings with Heads of State and other key stakeholders. In addition, in March 2018, the Chair of the Panel met separately with the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Migration, the co-facilitators for the Global Compact on Migration, the African Union Commissioner for Social Affairs, and staff at the African Union New York Office for the Global Compact on Migration. During the consultations, the Chair had the opportunity to discuss the progress of the negotiations, the African common position, and its impact on the work and outcomes of the High-level Panel.

The Panel, supported by ECA, produced the report, “African migration: facing facts, embracing opportunities and mitigating challenges”, which puts forward seven action points to be presented at the upcoming session of the Assembly of Heads of States and Government of the African Union in February 2019.

Paragraph 3

(a) Text

3. *Further requests* the Economic Commission for Africa, in partnership with the African Union and in close consultation with other relevant regional organizations, to track and monitor the progress made in implementing migration programmes in Africa through various means, including by convening periodic conferences;

(b) Progress

The monitoring and evaluation of migration in Africa will follow the recommendations of the Global Compact on Migration, which decided to rename the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development. That Dialogue is now known as the International Migration Review Forum. It serves as a global-level platform where Member States will review the implementation progress and guide the direction of the work of the United Nations on migration. The plan is for the High-level Dialogue to take place every fourth session of the General Assembly, beginning in 2022.

Recognizing that most migration takes place within regions, relevant subregional, regional and cross-regional processes, platforms and organizations, including the regional commissions of the United Nations or its regional consultative processes, are invited to review the implementation of the Global Compact within the respective regions. It is anticipated that the period of implementation will begin in 2020, alternating with discussions at global level at four-year intervals, in order to effectively inform each session of the International Migration Review Forum with the participation of all relevant stakeholders. On the continent, there are proposals that:

- (i) The Pan-African Forum on Migration remain open to the participation of a wide spectrum of stakeholders, including but not limited to member States, United Nations agencies, regional

economic communities, development partners, the private sector and civil society;

- (ii) The Pan-African Forum on Migration be organized jointly by ECA, the International Office for Migration and other United Nations entities represented in the United Nations Migration Network, and the African Union Commission;
- (iii) Clear terms of reference be developed and endorsed by the appropriate organs, for example, the African Union Specialized Technical Committee;
- (iv) The Pan-African Forum on Migration be utilized in the review process of the Global Compact.

Paragraph 4

(a) Text

4. *Calls upon* the Economic Commission for Africa, through its regional and subregional offices, to address the critical areas concerning migration, including sustainable development, thereby providing frameworks for action by member States, the private sector and civil society;

(b) Progress

Five consultative meetings were organized that brought together experts from various sectors to deliberate on migration issues in the respective subregions.

The following regional meetings took place: for Eastern Africa, Nairobi on 24-25 July 2017; for Southern Africa, Lusaka on 21-22 September 2017; for West Africa, Dakar on 25-26 September 2017; and for Central and North Africa, in Addis Ababa on 24-25 October 2017. Migration experts were drawn from all countries in the subregion. On average, 25 experts participated in each subregional meeting.

There was comprehensive coverage by the media of those meetings and the deliberations were disseminated to the regions, on the continent and globally. The outcomes of the meetings continue to contribute to developing and strengthening the African position on the Global Compact.

Advocacy for a fresh perspective on international migration in Africa is strengthened by the high-profile visits of the Chair of the High-level Panel on Migration and panel members to different States that help focus attention on the importance of the free movement of people in Africa.

D. Resolution 960(LI) Harnessing the potential of the African Continental Free Trade Area and creating fiscal space for jobs and economic diversification

Paragraph 1

(a) Text

1. *Calls upon* the Economic Commission for Africa to continue to provide technical support to the African Union Commission and the member States of the African Union to conclude the negotiations of the agreement to establish the African Continental Free Trade Area;

(b) Progress

ECA continued to contribute to meetings on the negotiating structures of the African Continental Free Trade Area, and to provide technical inputs to the negotiations, in particular in the context of the meetings of the Negotiating

Forum. ECA prepared a toolkit on the African Continental Free Trade Area entitled, “Towards the finalization of modalities on goods”. It provides guidance for African policymakers and negotiators on resolving matters that remain to be addressed in ongoing negotiations, in relation to the modalities on goods, with a view to bringing negotiations on tariff reduction to a successful conclusion. The toolkit was disseminated to various countries and regional economic communities.

Paragraph 2

(a) Text

2. *Also calls upon* the Economic Commission for Africa to work closely with the African Union Commission and other regional, continental and international institutions, such as the regional economic communities, the African Development Bank and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to provide technical support to facilitate the ratification process and implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area;

(b) Progress

To facilitate the ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Area, ECA co-organized with the Rockefeller Foundation and the Government of Nigeria, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the Africa Trade Forum 2018 in Lagos, Nigeria, on the theme, “AfCFTA ratification and implementation: a game changer for African economies”. The key messages from the Forum were as follows: first, while governments are responsible for setting conducive environment for business and trade, it is the private sector that is the key driver of the economy and the African Continental Free Trade Area process. Second, complementary interventions addressing gaps in infrastructure, finance, trade facilitation and other barriers, will be crucial to ensure that there are win-win outcomes. Last, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, female traders and those involved in informal cross-border trade, who constitute a large majority in many African countries, are key in the implementation of the agreement. In that regard and in order to facilitate the implementation of the agreement once it enters into force, ECA is supporting countries in preparing national strategies.

Paragraph 3

(a) Text

3. *Further calls upon* the Economic Commission for Africa to continue to support member States in their efforts to enhance their structural transformation through industrialization, economic diversification and value addition;

(b) Progress

ECA supported the Government of Senegal in its efforts to develop an Action Plan for Industrial Development, which focused on a number of elements, including: improving the regulatory environment that supports the scaling up of the manufacturing sector; putting in place efficient institutions to implement the country’s industrial policy; promoting infrastructure that supports industrial development; promoting sustainable and inclusive industrial development with a particular focus on small and medium-sized enterprises; and developing industrial hubs. ECA is collaborating with the African Union Commission and other institutions to support countries in developing national strategies anchored to the process surrounding African Continental Free Trade Area negotiations, with the objective of promoting economic integration, structural transformation through trade, value adding and sectoral diversification.

ECA is collaborating with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in the implementation of a technical cooperation project involving six member States, with the objective of strengthening trade policymaking for the integration of Africa into regional value chains in support of the 2030 Agenda.

Two subregional offices of ECA reported on recent sessions of their respective Intergovernmental Committee of Experts. At the Subregional Office for Central Africa, the thirty-third session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts, which took place in Douala in September 2017, adopted the Douala Consensus on Economic Diversification in Central Africa through resource-driven and trade-induced industrialization. The Douala Consensus calls for horizontal and vertical economic diversification and sequenced counter-cyclical measures to boost productive capabilities in the region, enhance enterprise-level competitiveness and accelerate the pace of industrialization and intraregional trade in Central Africa. It heralds the dawn of the “Made in Central Africa” label and recommends the setting up of industrial zones and growth poles, and the quick implementation of both the African Continental Free Trade Area and the initiative of the African Union, Boosting Intra-African Trade (BIAT) Action Plan. The operationalization of the Douala Consensus could contribute to doubling intra-Central Africa trade in the next five years (referred to as “5 in 5”) as well as to expanding the contribution of manufactured goods in total exports, thus reducing the overall vulnerability of local economies to oil exports.

Since the adoption of the Douala Consensus in September 2017 and in line with the Action Plan of the Douala Consensus, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Central African Economic and Monetary Community have formulated regional blueprints to spur industrialization in the subregion.

The Subregional Office for Central Africa is working towards operationalizing the Douala Consensus and is focused on Cameroon, Chad, the Congo and Equatorial Guinea, with the most comprehensive and advanced advisory support package centring on Chad. On 17 September 2018, the Ministry of Economy and Development Planning of the Government of Chad and the Subregional Office for Central Africa officially launched the process of the formulation of that Government’s Industrial Development and Economic Diversification Master Plan, following the scoping mission undertaken by the Subregional Office on 12–16 March 2018, and working sessions with the national inter-ministerial committee on economic diversification on 16–20 July 2018. Product space analysis helped confirm the relevance of the main pillars of the Industrial Development and Economic Diversification Master Plan. These include the development of a leather and meat cluster to make the most of the country’s 94 million head of cattle, the modernization of food and agriculture systems and agribusiness development. Support for the Master Plan has been included in the programme of work of the United Nations Country Teams in Chad. Extensive consultations have been undertaken with development partners operating in Chad, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the African Development Bank, the European Union, and the French Agency for Development (Agence française de développement), to ensure that they align their intervention in the country with the Master Plan, as part of an integrated financing framework for the development of Chad.

On 12 July 2018, the Subregional Office for Central Africa also carried out an extensive scoping mission to Equatorial Guinea, which included a high-level policy dialogue focusing on economic diversification. Since then, the Government of Equatorial Guinea requested the support of the Subregional Office to undertake a growth diagnostic study, formulate an economic diversification strategy, and establish an integrated planning system for the

country. This technical advisory package is now part of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Equatorial Guinea. The Subregional Office for Central Africa has started to deliver the relevant assistance to the country.

The Douala Consensus is also the pedestal on which ECA and the Government of the Congo are developing the country's Vision 2047 – the country's long-term framework to build a prosperous and peaceful nation and a resilient, diversified and globally competitive economy that is firmly linked with regional and global value chains.

In addition, in line with the African Continental Free Trade Area negotiations and the BIAT Action Plan, the Subregional Office has trained more than 200 experts from national administrations and from the private sector of Cameroon, Chad, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Gabon, on relevant trade and market access instruments to take full advantage of the harmonized preferential tariff trade regime of the Economic Community of Central African States and the Central African Economic and Monetary Community.

In terms of activities undertaken by the Subregional Office for Southern Africa, support was provided to member States and regional economic communities in the subregion, aimed at enhancing their capacities to develop policies, plans and appropriate institutional frameworks to promote inclusive industrialization and economic growth in line with the agenda of the Subregional Office for Southern Africa, which focuses on enhancing structural transformation through industrialization, as espoused in the long-term blueprint of the South African Development Community (SADC), namely, the SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap, 2015-2063.

At the Subregional Office for Southern Africa, for example, the twenty-fourth session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts, held in Pointe aux Piments, Mauritius on 18–21 September 2018, stimulated policy debate on the blue economy-inclusive industrialization-economic development nexus. The region is preparing to implement the SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap. In the meantime, the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts focused on developing regional value chains, including maritime value chains, agro-processing, minerals beneficiation, pharmaceuticals and tourism. In doing so, it underscored the need to explore how the blue economy approach (which centres on cooperation and partnership among member States) could effectively contribute to the attainment of the sustainable and inclusive industrialization objectives of the region. Moreover, the Committee was able to demonstrate the huge potential that the blue economy, as a major site of production and investment, holds out for accelerated growth, poverty reduction and development in Southern Africa. The Committee also re-affirmed the notion of the blue economy, its variants and components, including the issue of inland waterways and how both landlocked and land-linked countries can be part of the blue economy framework and the resultant economic value chains. The Committee reflected on policy opportunities and challenges of harnessing blue economy resources such as renewable energy, fishing, aquaculture, coastal tourism and marine biotechnology. As a result, common positions emerged, most notably on the need to develop an inclusive and harmonized regional framework for the exploitation of blue economy resources, which factors in the needs and expectations of land-linked, coastal and island States to enhance cooperation among member States in Southern Africa.

A high-level round-table dialogue was convened by the Subregional Office for Southern Africa on the role of small and medium-sized enterprises in the industrialization process in Southern Africa, in Pointe aux Piments, Mauritius on 20 and 21 September 2018. Findings from that round-table dialogue together with conclusions drawn from a study and the outcomes of an

expert group meeting were consolidated and gave rise to three policy tools, which were developed for assisting SADC in its plans to improve the capacities of small and medium-sized enterprises, within the context of the regional industrialization agenda. The tools comprise: (i) a template for developing capacities of small and medium-sized enterprises for their enhanced role in the industrialization process and regional value chains; (ii) a regional framework for supplier development with a special focus on building capacities and capabilities of small and medium-sized enterprises to participate in the implementation of the Industrialization Strategy and regional value chains; and (iii) a regional support programme framework and instruments for small and medium-sized enterprises, which is intended to cover a number of elements, including institutional strengthening, access to finance and long-term sustainability. The study represents part of the support that the Subregional Office for Southern Africa provides to SADC in developing a framework on small and medium-sized enterprises within the context of the SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap, 2015-2063 and the Action Plan for Implementation (2015-2030).

Under the advisory services portfolio, the Subregional Office for Southern Africa, in collaboration with the Africa Minerals Development Centre, continued to provide technical support towards rolling out the SADC Mining Programme, building on the work that has been done in the last three years, including two analytical initiatives: (i) the Mineral Beneficiation Profiling, which identified key mineral value chains that the region could focus on as quick-wins in driving forward the SADC industrialization agenda; and (ii) the Mineral Sector Skills Assessment, which identified gaps in the sector and called for deeper integration to facilitate movement of skills, harmonization of training curricula and the sharing of capacities to address the gaps in support of the broader SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap. In 2018, ECA provided technical support to the SADC secretariat through the process of developing the SADC Regional Mining Vision, a draft of which has since been prepared and subjected to validation processes, including at an expert group and consultative meetings. ECA continues to support the process of finalizing the preparation of the SADC Regional Mining Vision.

In promoting regional integration, of which industrialization is a key component, the Subregional Office for Southern Africa, in collaboration with the African Union Southern Africa Region Office and the Africa Business Group, convened the Southern Africa Stakeholder Forum on Regional Integration, in Lilongwe, on 11–13 June 2018. Discussions held at the Forum explored how the private sector could be the driver and major beneficiary of the regional integration process in Southern Africa through increased opportunities for investments, profits and growth in the region. As a result, the stakeholders called for the institutionalization of the Forum as a useful platform for sustained engagement of the private sector in encouraging the rapid implementation of the broader regional integration agenda, and particularly, in accelerating the industrialization process in Southern Africa.

ECA provided further technical support to the Government of Lesotho in developing the minerals and mining policy and legal framework. That support is in keeping with the aspirations of Lesotho to underpin sustainable socioeconomic growth and address poverty along the aspirations of the Africa Mining Vision. The Minerals and Mining Policy framework, which complies with the Africa Mining Vision, was developed through an extensive consultative process of stakeholders at national and subnational levels. The National Minerals and Mining Policy was finalized and adopted by the Government, and was officially launched on 12 June 2015. With further support, the Government has since embarked on the process of aligning the legal and regulatory framework to underpin the implementation of the new policy framework. The draft legislation on mines and minerals is currently

under review. This is an area where the Subregional Office provides ongoing support to the Government of Lesotho. Such efforts are in line with supporting the broader regional industrialization framework, that is, the SADC Industrialization Strategy and Roadmap, 2015-2063.

Arising from those efforts, the Subregional Office for Southern Africa continues to receive an increasing number of requests for advisory services and technical support from member States and regional economic communities in respect of promoting and fast-tracking the industrialization process. Requests received in late 2018 include that from the SADC secretariat for technical support to develop the SADC industrial information portal; and the request from the Government of Malawi for assistance in developing a regulatory framework on the Special Economic Zone.

Paragraph 4

(a) Text

4. *Requests* the Economic Commission for Africa to work, in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the African Capacity-Building Foundation, the African Development Bank, and the regional economic communities, and other continental institutions, to support the member States of the African Union in developing national strategies to benefit from the African Continental Free Trade Area that complement the broader trade policy of each State party to the agreement to establish the African Continental Free Trade Area and in identifying the key trade opportunities, current constraints and steps required to take full advantage of the African market;

(b) Progress

In order for the African Continental Free Trade Area negotiations to deliver the expected development outcomes, it is critical that member States undertake deliberate actions through effective and integrated national strategies, with a view to maximizing the benefits of an agreement, while minimizing potential risks. In that regard, ECA has developed a methodology to support member States in developing national strategies to support the implementation of the agreement, once ratified. It is anticipated that such strategies will complement the broader trade policy of each State Party and identify key trade opportunities, current constraints and reforms required for each country to take full advantage of national, regional and global markets in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area. Based on the demand expressed, ECA will support member States to develop relevant strategies at the national level. Participating countries are Cameroon, Chad, Djibouti, Egypt, the Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Mauritania, Namibia, the Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, the Sudan, Togo and Zimbabwe.

Paragraph 5

(a) Text

5. *Also requests* the Economic Commission for Africa to support the member States of the African Union in enhancing their fiscal space and mobilizing additional domestic resources through strengthening tax administration, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public spending, tapping into private financing and improving the sustainability of borrowing;

(b) Progress

ECA continues to support member States in enhancing fiscal space and mobilizing additional resources through the provision of policy recommendations for member States to implement towards achieving that goal. ECA has also carried out, and plans to continue to carry out, additional activities to support member States to raise additional revenues from domestic

public sources in efforts to boost the continent's sustainable development, as explained below.

The theme of the 2019 edition of the ECA flagship publication, *Economic Report on Africa*, focuses on fiscal policy for financing sustainable development in Africa. The *Report*, which draws on case studies from 12 member States, examines the performance of member States in raising revenues since 2000, the policy reforms undertaken along with the results achieved, and lessons learned. It makes policy recommendations for member States on how to raise additional public revenues for financing their sustainable development.

ECA carried out two studies, one was on innovative approaches to financing Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and the other was on financialization, financial regulation and inclusive growth on Africa. The first study provides analysis and policy recommendations for African countries to mobilize additional resources, through improving the efficiency of public financial management, including public spending, tapping into private financing and strengthening capital markets. The second analyses how financial development and financial regulation can help African countries to mobilize additional domestic resources, including through preventing illicit financial flows, leveraging private sector finance and supporting capital markets.

ECA continues to advocate for African countries to stem illicit financial flows, including tackling base erosion and profit shifting by multinational corporations. On that front, ECA has delivered relevant messages in at least a dozen meetings and conferences, including: (i) the Platform for Collaboration on Tax, held 14 – 16 February 2018 in New York; (ii) the launch by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development of the report on illicit financial flows in West Africa, held on 20 February 2018 in Paris; (iii) the Paris School of International Affairs discussion on the topic, “Financing for development: who is making an impact and how”, held in Paris on 14 March 2018; (iv) the Forum on Financing for Development, high-level side event on investing in sustainable development: the EU's contribution, held on 23 April 2018 in New York; (v) the Global Solutions Summit, held from 28 to 29 May in Berlin; (vi) the High Level Policy Dialogue on Development Planning in Africa held 10–12 July 2018 in Cairo; (vii) the high-level diplomatic advocacy mission on illicit financial flows in Abuja, Nigeria held 3–5 October 2018; (viii) the Pan-African Conference on Illicit Financial Flows and Tax Evasion 2018, held in Nairobi on 17 and 18 October 2018; (ix) the conference on “Paradise Lost? Inequality and Tax Justice” held in Lima on 13 and 14 June 2018; (x) the “G20 @ 10” Conference, held in Bonn, Germany on 23 and 24 October 2018; (xi) the partnership meeting with representatives of the Government of Norway in Addis Ababa held on 25 October 2018; and (xii) the expert meeting to review a report on “illicit financial flows and human rights”, held in Pretoria, on 24 and 25 July 2018.

ECA prepared a policy brief on “Tax transparency and exchange of information (EOI): priorities for Africa” and submitted it to the T20 Summit. It gave rise to recommendations for approaches to tax transparency and exchange of information that would help African countries to mobilize additional domestic resources through improved tax administration.

ECA is implementing two projects to help boost the capacities of African countries to mobilize additional domestic resources through preventing illicit financial flows. Working jointly with UNCTAD on the project entitled “Defining, estimating and disseminating statistics on illicit financial flows in Africa”, ECA will work with nine African countries to develop national capacities to estimate illicit financial flows from their territories. Working jointly with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United

Nations Secretariat, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and UNCTAD on a project entitled “Prevent trade mis-invoicing in selected African countries”, ECA will support six African countries to develop their capacities to prevent trade mis-invoicing from their territories. ECA is updating its estimates of illicit financial flows through trade mis-invoicing.

Paragraph 6

(a) Text

6. *Calls upon* the Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the African Union Specialized Agency for Capacity Development, the African Development Bank, the regional economic communities, and other continental institutions, to formulate a comprehensive capacity development and training programme on issues relating to the African Continental Free Trade Area for the benefit of its member States;

(b) Progress

ECA is collaborating with UNCTAD in building the capacity of six member States in assessing the integration of their services sector into regional value chains. The six countries are Ethiopia, the Gambia, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria and Togo.

In partnership with the secretariat of the African Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, ECA will implement a capacity-building project focusing on stakeholders in African countries from the public and private sectors. The aim is to use preferential trade agreements and arrangements more effectively, including the African Continental Free Trade Area, to reach their development aspirations. The overall objective of the project is to contribute to the enhancement of intra-African trade and the share of Africa in global trade through inclusive, sustainable and development-friendly trade reforms. The particular focus will be on ensuring that the African Continental Free Trade Area process and other trade-related reforms enhance employment opportunities, have positive impacts on gender equity, and contribute to strengthening the general welfare of people in Africa.

On the training front, ECA organized the second edition of the course on trade, gender and development, which was run by the African Trade Policy Centre and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning and targeted French-speaking countries in Africa. The course was attended by 20 participants representing 16 member States. The aim of the training was to address trade and gender concepts on gender mainstreaming, the design of gender-sensitive trade policy targeted interventions on gender equality, and creating dialogue on trade and gender.

Through the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, training materials on the African Continental Free Trade Area process have been developed for mid-level and senior officers. The officers will be drawn from ministries in charge of areas related, but not limited, to trade, macroeconomic modelling, economic affairs, planning, industry, regional integration and foreign affairs. It is anticipated that the training will also benefit participants from media institutions and private sector organizations, and will equip participants with negotiation skills and other relevant tools, with a view to optimizing the vast benefits of an established African Continental Free Trade Area. In that regard, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning has put strong emphasis on the development of national strategies to fully utilize the opportunities brought about by the African Continental Free Trade Area.

In addition, the Institute is partnering with the Pan-African Parliament to develop specialized orientation courses designed for members of parliament

of African countries, on the implementation of the agreement, as well as on Phase II negotiations. In addition, the Institute has produced specific research to analyse the potential impacts of a ratified African Continental Free Trade Area agreement on gross domestic product and trade flows. Furthermore, the research focuses on how the agreement could constitute a catalyst for industrialization and structural economic transformation of the continent. Related findings have been presented in various policy-oriented forums and academics conferences in Africa.

At the request of the African Group of accredited Ambassadors to Senegal, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning organized a high-level policy dialogue focusing on the role of the African Continental Free Trade Area for the structural transformation and industrialization of Africa.

The initiatives outlined above constitute the capacity development programme on the African Continental Free Trade Area. The programme will continue to expand and, for maximum impact, its undertakings and findings will be circulated widely.

Paragraph 9

(a) Text

9. *Requests* the Economic Commission for Africa and other development partners to support the mobilization of resources and promote investment to facilitate the harnessing of the full benefits of the African Continental Free Trade Area;

(b) Progress

In partnership with UNCTAD, ECA prepared and launched electronic investment guides, referred to as iGuides, which are premier reference instruments. It is envisaged that iGuides will help African member States to attract more investments. In addition, it is expected that such investments will be conducive to the development and structural transformation of participating member States. The iGuide has been launched in seven countries: Congo, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Nigeria and Zambia.¹

Paragraph 10

(a) Text

10. *Calls upon* the Economic Commission for Africa to monitor progress and report regularly on the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, and to measure its impact on structural transformation through industrialization, economic diversification and value addition;

(b) Progress

Pending the ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Area by 22 member States, and upon the entry into force of the agreement, ECA will monitor and deliver regular reports on the implementation of the agreement. ECA is in the process of establishing a country business index relating to the African Continental Free Trade Area agreement, for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the agreement. Upon its implementation,, which is expected to be driven primarily by the private sector, businesses will face constraints relating to a variety of issues, including trade costs, regulatory frameworks and governance. Such constraints undermine the effective operation of the agreement on the African continent. Assessing and monitoring such constraints through the establishment of a country business index will

¹ More information on the iGuides initiative is available at <http://theiguides.org>.

assist in improving the business environment and, ultimately, in facilitating business and trade within and beyond Africa.

E. Resolution 961(LI) Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

Paragraph 1

(a) Text

1. *Decides* formally to establish the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development under the auspices of the Economic Commission for Africa to follow up on and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to act as a multi-stakeholder forum at which matters relating to sustainable development and the structural transformation priorities of Africa can be discussed;

(b) Progress

In line with the resolution, the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development is fully established, and is accordingly convened under the auspices of ECA, with the collaboration of the United Nations organizations, the African Union Commission, and the African Development Bank, to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the aspirations set out in Agenda 2063 of the African Union. The Forum provides a multi-stakeholder platform for follow-up and review of progress, strengthening learning and advocating effective policy measures and actions to achieve the goals of the two agendas. Participants in the Forum include policymakers and senior experts representing Governments of the member States, regional organizations, civil society, academia, private sector and development partners.

Paragraph 2

(a) Text

2. *Also decides* that the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development will be convened annually by the Chair of the Bureau of the Forum, with the support of the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa, and that its meetings will be aligned with the schedules, programmes of work and themes of the Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up and the high-level political forum on sustainable development;

(b) Progress

The Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development is convened annually and focuses on aspects of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 that are aligned with the high-level policy forum on sustainable development under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council. The fourth session of the Regional Forum in 2018, for example, was held in preparation for the 2018 high-level policy forum on the theme, “Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies”, focusing on Sustainable Development Goals 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17, and the corresponding aspirations of Agenda 2063. Similarly, the fifth session of the 2019 Regional Forum, on the theme, “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality,” will focus on Goal 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all), Goal 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all), Goal 10 (Reduce inequality within and among countries), Goal 13 (Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts), and Goal 16 (Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all

levels), and the corresponding aspirations of Agenda 2063, together with Goal 17 (Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development).

Several key messages were adopted by the fourth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development in 2018, on the following theme and sub-themes of the Forum, which were submitted to the 2018 high-level panel: transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies; clean water and sanitation; affordable and clean energy; sustainable cities and communities; responsible consumption and production; life on land; and strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the partnership for sustainable development.²

Paragraph 3

(a) Text

3. *Further decides* that the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development will take into consideration decisions relating to sustainable development taken by the African Union, including in connection with Agenda 2063;

(b) Progress

The Africa Regional Forum is organized in collaboration with the African Union Commission and examines progress and actions needed to advance coherent and integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the corresponding goals of Agenda 2063. Moreover, as a member of the task force for the organization of the Forum and the preparation of documents for the Forum, the African Union Commission has the opportunity to ensure that issues raised by the African Union are fully reflected in the work of the Regional Forum.

Paragraph 5

(a) Text

5. *Underscores* the need for secure, stable, adequate and predictable financial resources to enable the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development to hold annual meetings and carry out its mandate effectively;

(b) Progress

Funding for the Forum is provided mostly through the United Nations regular programme of technical cooperation with some in-kind contribution by the organizing partners. Funding remains insufficient for the work of the Forum, including commissioning evidence-based good practice case studies to inform the deliberations and to ensure strong representation of all stakeholders in the Forum.

Paragraph 6

(a) Text

6. *Calls upon* the Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the African Union Commission and other partners, to take all steps necessary to organize on a regular basis a multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation as an input into the work of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development;

² More information on the key messages adopted by the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development at its fourth session is available at: <https://www.uneca.org/arfsd2018>.

(b) Progress

The focus of one of the pre-events organized by ECA and partners, and featured in the deliberations of the 2018 Africa Regional Forum, was science, technology and innovation. As a result, among the key messages adopted by the Forum was on the creation of a multi-stakeholder forum in Africa on science and technology innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals. To be held in the margins of the Forum, the multi-stakeholder forum will enable African countries to build and strengthen partnerships, identify African science and technology innovation needs and gaps, and assist Africa in coordinating its representation at that multi-stakeholder forum and at the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

In accordance with the resolution, the science, technology and innovation forum will be held in the lead-up to the 2019 Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, to be hosted by Morocco from 16 to 18 April 2019.

Paragraph 7**(a) Text**

7. *Requests* the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and other partners to continue to support the work of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, including by ensuring the full and effective participation of representatives of member States, major groups and other stakeholders in the Forum;

(b) Progress

The Regional Forum is convened by ECA in collaboration with the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank. Some funding is available to support the participation of representatives of both Governments and non-government bodies, comprising major groups and other stakeholders. A dedicated workshop to prepare the major groups and other stakeholders to take part in the forum is held as a pre-event of the Regional Forum. Given the need to strengthen the Forum, however, partners may wish to consider mobilizing and allocating more funds to the work of the Regional Forum.

F. Ministerial Statement**Paragraph 21****(a) Text**

21. We call upon the Economic Commission for Africa to continue its close collaboration with the African Union Commission and other regional, continental and international institutions such as the regional economic communities, the African Development Bank and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development to provide technical support to facilitate the ratification process and implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area;

(b) Progress

On 21 March 2018, the Governments of 44 African member States signed the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area. An additional five Governments have signed the agreement and 15 have ratified. ECA continued to provide technical support to member States on the outstanding Phase I issues, particularly on the finalization of modalities for trade in goods.

Paragraph 22**(a) Text**

22. We also call upon the Economic Commission for Africa to support member States in enhancing their fiscal space and mobilizing additional domestic resources through strengthening tax administration, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public spending, developing and strengthening capital markets and leveraging private financing, and improving debt sustainability;

(b) Progress

See the response on paragraph 5 resolution 960(LI) under subheading (b).

Paragraph 23**(a) Text**

23. We are cognizant of the significant and preeminent role of human and institutional capacity development in the achievement of the aspirations of Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals and the African Continental Free Trade Area. We appreciate the commendable work that the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning is undertaking in this respect. We call upon the United Nations to continue and to increase its support to the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning in support of the structural transformation of Africa;

(b) Progress

The African Institute for Economic Development and Planning and ECA have commenced the process to request the General Assembly for an increase in the United Nations grant to the Institute as part of the submission of the 2020 programme plan and budget. Feedback will be provided to the fifty-third session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in 2020.