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**REPORT OF THE TWENTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE
OF EXPERTS OF THE CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS
OF FINANCE, PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

REPORT OF THE TWENTY FIRST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

1. The twenty-first meeting of the Committee on Experts of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was held in Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa, from 16 to 18 October 2002. H.E. Mr. Mustaq A. Moorad of Algeria, outgoing-Chairman of the Committee of presided over the opening ceremony. The composition of the Bureau as well as information on Experts attendance, the agenda and organization of work are annexed to this report.

Opening Addresses

2. Hon. Mandisi B.M. Mpahlwa, Deputy Minister of Finance, Republic of South Africa, opened the meeting by noting that Africa had embarked on a multi-tiered process of economic renaissance. He said the establishment of the African Union (AU) and the elaboration of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) reflect a new level of commitment to realizing Africa's ambitions to bring the continent into a new age of peace, security, stability, economic growth, development and prosperity.

3. Hon. Mpahlwa said Africa had made great strides in the last 10 years towards setting the stage for growth through regional integration, macroeconomic stabilization, improving trade policies, and attracting more foreign capital. He said Africa needs to commit itself to the implementation of NEPAD priorities, and where necessary, enhance capacity building, identify overlapping agendas and take steps to avoid duplication, review and confirm the content of the African Peer Review (APR) mechanism, focusing on the use of international standards and codes.

4. In his opening statement to the conference, Mr. K.Y. Amoako, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), said several major events in the past 18 months had led to a considerable improvement in the climate for development cooperation. The events include the fourth WTO Ministerial Meeting held in Doha, Qatar last November; the International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD) held in Monterrey, Mexico in March 2002; the G-8 Summit in Kananaskis, Canada in June 2002, which adopted the Africa Action Plan in response to NEPAD; the Summit of African Heads of State and Government in Durban in July 2002 where AU was formally launched; the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in Johannesburg in September 2002; and more recently, the World Bank/IMF meetings in Washington D.C. Taken together, the outcomes of these major conferences and meetings gives cause for renewed optimism about Africa's development prospects, because they provide a solid framework for mobilizing the international community in support of Africa's development.

5. The Executive Secretary said ECA's new priorities include: supporting the NEPAD process with technical inputs; helping to backstop implementation of the recommendations of the Abuja summit on HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other related diseases with the creation of a health economics unit; expanding work on the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) process through a Learning Group; and strengthening statistical development.

Outcomes of the fourth WTO Ministerial Conference; the International Conference on Financing for Development; and the World Summit on Sustainable Development: Implications for Africa (Agenda item 3)

6. A representative of the secretariat outlined the six areas that were the basis of negotiations launched at the fourth WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar. The six areas were: implementation issues; agriculture, with emphasis on reducing tariffs and farm subsidies; further liberalization in the provision of services; reduction in tariff peaks and tariff escalations on industrial goods; clarification on how regional trade agreements will work within the World Trade Organizations (WTO) rules; and duty and quota-free access for Least Developed Countries (LDC) goods. The global welfare gains from eliminating trade barriers are estimated at between \$US 250 billion and \$620 billion, over one third of which will accrue to Africa. Growth from greater market access could lead to a 13 per cent reduction in poverty by 2015, which will help in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

7. Regarding the Financing for Development (FfD) conference, estimates show that additional financial resources amounting to about \$50 billion per year were required in order to meet MDGs. For the 30 African countries judged to be in a position to use external assistance effectively, it is estimated that an increase of \$25 billion in Official Development Assistance (ODA) from the current \$13 billion to \$38 billion would be required to reach MDGs. The Monterrey Consensus provides a framework for mutual responsibility: developing countries will take primary responsibility for instituting measures to improve governance, sustain strong macroeconomic and structural policies, and strengthen institutional capacity in order to stimulate private sector development and economic growth. On the other hand, development partners will support these efforts through harmonized and more comprehensive support with more aid, market access, debt relief, and technical assistance. Several countries announced pledges of increased ODA to Africa at Monterrey. This was welcome, but more needs to be done as most Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries have not yet reached the target of contributing 0.7 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) as ODA.

8. The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) stressed the importance of the quality of economic growth, noting that poverty eradication is at the heart of long-run sustainable development. At the same time, the summit reconfirmed that MDGs were the pillar for sustainable development and identified key sectors for action including agriculture and the provision of clean water. Africa was singled out for special attention and the Summit called on the international community to support the NEPAD process. The Summit also established targets in critical areas such as HIV/AIDS (reduce by 25 per cent HIV prevalence by 2015), fishery replenishment (restore collapsed fish stocks by 2015) and sanitation (halve people without sanitation by 2015).

In the plenary discussions that followed, participants focused on the following issues:

9. **Market Access:** Experts recognized the importance of trade for development. They expressed disappointment that international partners have not implemented their commitments adequately, particularly regarding market access and the elimination of trade distorting agricultural subsidies. The cost of these distortions amount to \$360 billion a year. Experts called for greater collaboration among African countries to ensure that current multilateral trade negotiations under

WTO and bilateral trade negotiations under the African, Caribbean and Pacific/European Union (ACP/EU) Cotonou Agreement, The North Africa – European Union Association Agreements result in genuine market access for products from African countries. The experts also said Africa needs to develop common negotiating objectives and strategies to ensure effective participation in trade negotiations, and mechanisms to ensure that all agreements are implemented, and all interests are preserved including that of net food importing countries.

10. ***Supply-Side Constraints:*** Experts noted that most African countries have not fully benefited from preferential market access agreements such as the Lome Convention due to supply constraints. Therefore, should the developed countries open up their markets to imports, this would not necessarily lead to larger export volumes. In this respect, due consideration should be given to reforming domestic policies and the adoption of specific measures in order to boost supply. These policies include removing anti export bias of the tax and exchange rate regime improving infrastructure, investing in agricultural extension, irrigation, rural electrification and improving export market intelligence and access to credit.

11. ***Agriculture:*** Participants agreed on the need to revive this sector, not only to achieve food-self sufficiency but also to improve rural incomes and employment opportunities. Experts also noted that industrial countries have maintained high subsidies to their farmers, while African countries have removed most of their subsidies, which together have contributed to the detriment of agricultural output. Africa now, on average, spends only 1 per cent of its GDP on agriculture and millions of Africans regularly require food aid. The continent imports \$19 billion worth of agricultural goods, while exporting only \$14 billion worth leaving many African countries as net importers of agricultural products, including food. Urgent action is needed to redress this situation, including making agriculture one of the high priority sectors, and also to revive food processing industries and to encourage intra-African trade, by further developing agricultural services, capacity building and technical assistance from the developed countries in consistence with the Doha declarations.

12. ***Investment in Infrastructure:*** The meeting emphasized the importance of investment in Africa's infrastructure both for promoting intra-African trade and regional integration, and enhancing competitiveness of African economies in international trade. It was observed that reducing transaction costs in Africa could significantly improve the competitiveness of the continent's exports and provide a boost for the private sector, which has an important part to play in wealth creation. In this regard, it is recommended that more public/private partnerships need to be promoted.

13. African countries must mobilise domestic resources to meet their investment needs. It is only by demonstrating a capacity to mobilize and utilise its own resources efficiently that Africa can attract substantial foreign investment. In this connection policy makers should also ensure that appropriate policies are put in place to improve human resource development, and particularly the brain drain, and strengthen the financial contributions from Africans in the diaspora. The experts recommended recourse to triangular co-operation as a tool for financing the transfer of knowledge among African countries.

Discussion on the Conference Theme—Accelerating Africa's Progress and Performance: The Challenge of NEPAD (Agenda item 4)

14. The Committee had before it the document entitled, "*What NEPAD implies for African Policy Makers*". To set the stage for the discussion on this issues paper, the representative of the secretariat identified five key thematic areas drawn from the NEPAD document.

15. ***Theme 1: Sound Economic Policy-making and Execution for Operationalizing the Millennium Development Goals.*** Because the implementation of sound economic policies is crucial for realizing the goals of NEPAD, the role of Finance, Planning and Economic Development policy makers is critical in ensuring its success. The national poverty reduction strategies, programmes and plans, including country-owned Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) should integrate continent-wide priorities as enunciated in NEPAD in order to enhance the support of international partners, as well as accelerate progress towards meeting MDGs. In emphasising why poverty assessment and monitoring are essential, ECA noted that without a clear profile of the dynamics of poverty, it will be difficult to introduce, design or target poverty related programmes. It was emphasized that budget discipline through the adoption of medium-term expenditure frameworks (MTEFs) is critical for achieving macroeconomic stability and sustained poverty reduction..

16. ***Recommendations.*** The Committee of Experts recommended that African policy makers need to scale up efforts to establish: better statistical systems to monitor and evaluate progress; better public expenditure management systems to ensure efficiency of resource allocation; and better integration of poverty reduction strategies with macroeconomic targets in development plans. PRSPs and other country-owned poverty reduction strategies should be strengthened to focus on long term growth strategies—including trade and industrial policy, the modernisation of agriculture, technological progress and structural transformation.

17. Further, it was proposed that development partners should support capacity building in the technical areas needed for effective implementation of MTEFs. Key skills required are capacities for : integrating, planning and budgeting, establishing comprehensive and coherent budgets and medium-term expenditure plans; expenditure management and controls, economic forecasting and debt management; and building technical capacity for auditing and accounting.

18. In addition, the experts recommended that governments should vigorously ensure compliance with the eight codes and standards prioritized by the Heads of State as a basis to promote market efficiency, control wasteful expenditures, and consolidate democracy to encourage private financial flows.

19. ***Theme 2: Unleashing the Private Sector for Poverty Reduction.*** Domestic and foreign investment is a key ingredient in delivering prosperity through job creation, yet Africa's private sector remains weak. A key step that needs to be taken to enhance the private sector's role in the continent's development is good economic and corporate governance as well as the formation of strategic partnerships. The key is to achieve a balance between the freedom of action required to unleash entrepreneurial creativity, wealth creation and the guidance and safeguards required to ensure that growth helps reduce poverty and achieves other social goals. Experts also recommended that governments should take steps to harness remittances form Africans in the diaspora, which in some countries is more substantial than ODA and FDI, with a view to

channelling them towards productive investment. These remittances could generate income, employment and work opportunities, particularly in small and medium-sized enterprises.

20. **Recommendations.** The experts recommended that African policy makers need to emphasize the importance of a favourable investment climate to generate both domestic and foreign investment. They should make sure that reforms of the policy and regulatory framework, including adoption and implementation of codes of economic and corporate governance, are appropriate. African policy makers also have to ensure that an appropriate mix of public-private partnerships in the areas of social services is in place. The Committee of Experts recommended that African policy makers address the limited access of small- and medium-sized enterprises to formal bank credit and the mismatch between the short-term nature of available financing and longer-term requirements for productive investment.

21. The suggestion for development partners is to ensure that countries with sound policies receive financial assistance, including guarantees and technical assistance as deemed necessary to attract private investment. Countries experiencing difficulties particularly those who are emerging from conflicts also need appropriate assistance to get back to a path of macroeconomic stability that is necessary for unleashing the private sector. The need for development partners to support the private sector with a view to enhancing capacity in private sector.

22. **Theme 3: Capacity Building and Market Access for Deeper Integration into the Global Economy.** Expanding market access for African countries' exports is a clear priority. For instance, abolishing OECD agricultural subsidies would provide developing countries with three times their current ODA receipts. The elimination of all tariff and non-tariff barriers could result in static gains for developing countries of around \$182 billion in the services sector, \$162 billion in manufactured goods and \$32 billion in agriculture. However, African countries do not have the requisite technical capacity to defend their rights in the WTO multilateral negotiations. Indeed few African countries even have representatives at the WTO headquarters in Geneva where the negotiations are being conducted.

23. **Recommendations.** The Committee of Experts recommended that African policy-makers should integrate trade into national development strategies, take effective action to remove any anti-export bias in the tax and exchange rate regimes and implement other behind-the-border reforms that can ignite the supply response. The international partners also on their part need to scale up technical assistance for Africa's effective participation in multilateral trade negotiations due to the many African countries that lack representatives at WTO.

24. **Theme 4: Move to Self Monitoring and Peer Reviews.** In his presentation of the document on the African Peer Review (APR) mechanism, the representative of the secretariat said the proposed APR mechanism is an initiative established by Africans to produce more acceptable ways of ensuring compliance with nationally, regionally, and internationally accepted norms of political, economic and corporate governance. The ultimate goal is to help a country improve its policy-making; adopt best practices; and comply with established standards, principles, codes and other agreed commitments. The effectiveness of peer review lies in its voluntary acceptance, the influence of peer pressure and public scrutiny. Further decisions on the APR mechanism will be considered at a Heads of State Implementation Committee Summit in Abuja, Nigeria in 3 November 2002.

25. The basis for the APR mechanism is the assessment of key features of the state, looking at the political, economic, and institutional aspects of governance. It also necessitates the development of indicators of political representation and rights and institutional effectiveness (i.e., the nature and workings of the legislature, judiciary, and executive branches of the state, as well as the state of the

non-governmental sector) and economic management and (i.e., macroeconomic management, public financial management and accountability, monetary and financial transparency, accounting and auditing systems, and regulatory oversight of the monetary and financial sectors) and corporate governance..

26. APR consists of five stages. Stage One is the analysis of the governance and development environment of the country to be reviewed, which will be primarily based on ECA's work, including its governance projects. Stage Two requires a country consultation visit by a peer review mission team. Stage Three involves the preparation of the mission findings. Stage Four will be the adoption of the peer review findings by the NEPAD structures. It is also recommended that the findings be considered by a Technical Committee, which consists of policy makers from the country being reviewed. Finally, Stage Five is the formal and public tabling of the peer-review reports in subregional and regional structures, in particular the AU structures.

27. A number of experts expressed the concern that the implementation aspect of the APR mechanism might affect the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of states. Whether APR would simply replace old conditionalities by introducing another set of them was also raised. Experts wanted to know how countries would accede to APR. Experts were also concerned as to how APR would be funded and pointed out that the under-funding of previous African initiatives—such as the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) had contributed to their poor performance. The experts wondered whether APR would be used by the G-8 partners to reduce ODA to countries that did not get good reviews. The question of how the Independent Panel of Eminent Persons would be selected was also raised. The APR indicators should be made available as soon as possible to help member states decide on acceding to the process. The document on the indicators was withdrawn and not represented at this meeting.

28. The AU representative pointed out that the Conference on Security, Stability and Development Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA) Memorandum of Understanding adopted by the heads of state in Durban was similar to the peer review adopted by NEPAD. This development should be closely examined so as not to create parallel processes.

29. In responding to these issues, the ECA secretariat emphasized that APR is a voluntary exercise and there is no sanction on participating states. It is an African owned process, based on peer pressure and intends to work as a self-monitoring process. It is based on the recognition by participating countries that actions need to be taken to improve their political and economic environments. Secondly, African countries should do what they believe and not be influenced by what others think with regard to conditionalities.

30. **Recommendations:** The experts underscored the importance of participation in the APR mechanism as agreed by the heads of state guarantee that the conduct of the peer review process is free from political interference, ensure that APR is consistently conducted in an independent and technically competent manner; and that African countries strongly implement the outcome of the peer reviews. The APR mechanism should be funded by African states.

31. **Theme 5: Transforming Partnerships.** A key feature of NEPAD is the principle of transformed partnerships underpinned by African ownership of the continent's development strategies, joint commitment to shared development goals, mutual accountability in progress towards those goals, and focus on long-term predictable partnerships accompanied by increased resource flows, particularly to the countries that have a clear commitment to these shared goals. Transformed partnerships are needed for several urgent needs: more aid is needed and should be delivered more efficiently; and more debt relief is needed because even some countries at their Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) "completion point" now have unsustainable debt.

32. The principle of mutual accountability was elaborated on. For Africans, the commitment to self-monitoring and to peer learning is the linchpin to accountability. This is distinct from the accountability that has largely been characterized by a requirement on recipients to report on compliance to donor requirements, including conditionality. For partners, the key commitment has to do with ensuring that all policies impacting on African development prospects, including those in areas of ODA, market access, and debt are consistent with MDGs. Primarily this has to do with the *quality* and *volume* of support and the coherence in trade and aid policies.

33. One practical way to improve aid effectiveness and promote greater partnership in aid relationships is to institute systems for donor performance monitoring. Suggested indicators might include:

- The degree to which ODA expenditures flow through the government budget;
- The degree to which donor projects and expenditures are coordinated and integrated with national and sectoral plans are aligned behind the declared priorities of the recipient Governments;
- The predictability and reliability of aid inflows;
- The degree to which the time profile of donor disbursements is responsive to shocks which generate needs for liquidity and increased budget and balance-of-payments support;
- The degree of tying of procurement; and the percentage of aid spent on donor-country-tied technical assistance;
- The degree to which donors are making long-term commitments;
- The degree to which donors are enabling national ownership of development programmes;
- The extent to which aid is being allocated for development rather than provided as humanitarian assistance or debt relief.

34. The ECA secretariat stressed that institutional arrangements for mutual accountability already exist. Related to partners, there are several mechanisms currently being utilized. Within OECD, Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members monitor their aid practices routinely. There is also ongoing work to harmonize these practices. The Task Force on Donor Practices at

OECD is assessing financial reporting and public finance management tools. In fact, an agreement has been reached on untying ODA, and the OECD members need to accelerate the pace of implementation of this agreement.

35. The Strategic Partnership with Africa (SPA), chaired by the World Bank, focuses on several areas that Africans may need to emulate if NEPAD is to be effective. These include sharpening SPA partners' assistance to the PRSP process through expanded and higher quality of concessional support while reducing transaction costs; strengthening the PRSP ideals of African ownership, comprehensiveness, participation and coordination; and making SPA assistance more predictable and more dependable.

36. Further, at the continent-wide level, there are also mechanisms in place, such as ECA's Big Table Conference and the African Learning Group on PRSP. NEPAD recommends having an ODA forum by African countries to strengthen individual country positions in dealing with donors. A proposal was made that a sub-committee of the Experts Committee at this meeting could form this forum.

37. **Recommendations.** Experts recommended that countries that have already undertaken first- and second- generation reforms need to maintain the momentum. Development partners need to work strategically to provide the correct balance between financial and knowledge transfers. It was also recommended that regional and subregional organizations need to refocus existing forum so as to have dialogue with partners on mutual accountability issues, especially in the provision of regional public goods. Lastly, the United Nations global system will need to strengthen mechanisms for engaging with the international community on issues of mutual accountability.

Summary of further discussions and recommendations

38. Experts noted that for NEPAD to be successful, it will be necessary to take a broader, more holistic view of the process of regional integration, giving particular attention to the issue of peace and political stability as there can be no development without durable peace. In the context of post-conflict countries, development assistance, as recommended in the NEPAD and G-8 Action Plan for Africa, should consist of integrated and coordinated response, including in the political, economic and humanitarian areas (targeting the reintegration of ex-combatants, refugees, internally displaced and returnees). Furthermore, the experts pointed out that a cursory review of programmes and projects prepared thus far to fast-track the implementation of NEPAD appears not to include specific strategies that address the population and demographic dynamics of national poverty reduction goals and the achievement of MDGs. It was proposed that more attention be paid to the issues of HIV/AIDS prevention and control; employment for women, adolescents, and youth; and reproductive health policies, for example. It was also proposed that issues related to Africa's young, in particular health and education, need to receive greater emphasis in the implementation of NEPAD. As an essential element of capacity building for Africa's integration into the world economy.

39. Participants agreed that RECs have an important role to play in the implementation of NEPAD, by way of implementing subregional programmes and initiatives. However, there was concern about the overlapping memberships of certain countries. One recommendation was that a REC Coordinating Committee should put forth a plan of action for reducing duplication of efforts and gaps in coordination

40. There is a need to put in place a regular reporting structure on the processes and progress of NEPAD, perhaps in the form of quarterly reports available to countries. Continuous monitoring and review of performance by the participating countries was suggested.

41. It was continually emphasized that the NEPAD programme of actions is required to be streamlined to prioritize only those that are considered SMART: specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound; thus, avoiding the creation of a “wish list” of items.

42. It was recognized that one of the major reasons why similar initiatives in the past have not been very successful is because African countries have failed to “get their houses in order,” particularly with regard to budgetary discipline. Budgeting is a political process in essence and is not always technocratic. Governments, though, must prioritize expenditures in the face of severe budgetary constraints. Further, the need for stable development policies, particularly in agriculture was recognized. The frequent shifts in policies geared to addressing new donor paradigms and priorities have had negative impact on growth and development in Africa.

Presentation on the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, 2001-2010 (Agenda Item 5)

43. A representative of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) reviewed the *Brussels Programme of Action (PoA) for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) for the Decade 2001-2010* (E/ECA/CM.1/4), adopted by the third UN LDC Conference in May 2001.

44. With 34 of the world’s 49 LDCs in Africa, urgent measures are required to accelerate the development of the continent. In the second half of 1990s, almost nine out of 10 people in African LDCs were living on less than \$2 a day. A recent United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report indicates that 17 out of 20 countries that have shown weak performances in achieving many of the MDGs were the LDCs.

45. The objective of the Brussels PoA is to achieve substantial progress towards meeting MDGs. In carrying out its mandate, the Office focuses on country-level implementation with relevant entities of the UN family, multilateral organizations, as well as with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the private sector. UNDP, in particular, will ensure the full support of the Resident Coordinator system to LDCs.

46. The OHRLLS representative stressed that there are many areas of commonality between the Brussels PoA and NEPAD. Some of the important areas where there is convergence include human, institutional and productive capacity building for different sectors of the economy; mobilizing

financial resources; market access; and good governance. This suggests the need to promote synergy between PoA and NEPAD to accelerate sustained growth and development in LDCs.

The discussion from the floor focused on the following:

47. Concern was raised in relation to the new EU-ACP arrangements on LDCs. ACP countries are required to have Economic Partnership Arrangements with EU by 2008 and this requires reciprocity. Given the imbalances in the level of development between the EU and ACP countries, the latter are not in a position to extend reciprocal arrangements towards the EU partners. In response, OHRLLS emphasized that the Office is taking this issue seriously and this will be part of its work in the area of trade.

48. The committee noted that the final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) was recently completed by the Ad-Hoc Committee of the General Assembly. The committee further noted that the General Assembly at its High-level Plenary meeting held on 16 September 2002 adopted NEPAD. In this regard, OHRLLS will be working closely with the UN System Organizations in the implementation of NEPAD and the Brussels POA..

49. Some clarification was sought on the magnitude of donor support to LDCs and on progress made with regard to the establishment of a trust fund for LDCs. OHRLSS responded by noting that there is more emphasis on LDC issues by the international and bilateral donors. The UN funds and programmes are directing more than 40 per cent of the financial resources to the LDCs.

Statutory Issues (Agenda Item 6)

Statutory Issues Related to the Subsidiary Organs of the Commission.

50. A representative of the Secretariat informed the committee that the reports, resolutions, decisions, and recommendations from various subsidiary and sectoral bodies of the Commission, including the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE) of the Subregional Development Centres (SRDCs) as contained in the Annual Report, 2002 – Chapter V, were presented by the ECA Staff. The intergovernmental machinery of the Commission consists of organs focused on overall development issues; and subsidiary bodies that comprise seven committees. The meetings which took place in the respective host countries of the centres focused on the following issues: regional integration and trade capacity building; sustainable natural resource capital and development; science and technology promotion; poverty reduction, especially among women; and empowerment of African women.

51. The Committee of Experts was also briefed on specific initiatives, ongoing major field projects and special events supported by SRDCs. Particular reference was made to the Investments Forum in North Africa; the Zambia-Malawi-Mozambique Growth Triangle in Southern Africa; the Mano River post-conflict reconstruction initiative in West Africa; the Great Lakes peace and security initiative in East Africa; the re-launching of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS); and reinforcement of subregional knowledge networks in Central Africa. Other

major achievements at the subregional level included several technical cooperation activities in support of the strengthening of the major RECs.

52. The major recommendations made by the subsidiary organs during their deliberations are detailed in ECA's *Annual Report, E/ECA/CM.1/7*, chapter 5.

53. Since the last Conference of African Ministers, which approved several measures to strengthen ECA's subregional presence, ECA has strengthened its support to member States by focusing on building synergies between SRDCs and ECA Headquarters in Addis Ababa (Refer to E/ECA/CM.1/6 *Enhancing ECA's Operations: The Role of the SRDCs*). The Centres draw on the advocacy capacity of ECA to influence the policy process at the national and subregional levels. Toward this end, SRDCs work closely at the operational level with RECs, UN agencies and member States to support networking among governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), and the private sector; serve as forums for policy dialogue on priority development issues; and provide technical assistance to RECs to accelerate the integration process in the respective subregions.

54. In an effort to enhance synergies between Programme Divisions at ECA Headquarters and SRDCs, a programme performance evaluation of the regional centres was conducted in February 2000, which led to a re-focusing of the SRDC programmes on technical cooperation and outreach. These changes have been reflected in the 2002-2003 programme budget. Consequently, all SRDCs have made a significant shift to operational rather than analytical work.

55. To further increase ECA's impact in influencing member States' policy-making, steps are being taken to strengthen the functions of SRDCs to ensure that they effectively serve as the critical link between ECA Headquarters and stakeholders, through better promotion of ECA's advocacy work in fostering regional cooperation and integration, assisting member States in strengthening interregional networks as well as forging strategic alliances with RECs in the implementation of major programmes and initiatives for Africa. An SRDC Coordination Unit was established at ECA Headquarters to facilitate the implementation of these collaborative arrangements.

56. The Committee of Experts accepted the proposal to rename SRDCs to ECA Offices for a given subregion. The rationale of the change in name being to avoid unnecessary confusion regarding the linkage between ECA and its subregional offices that are in some cases viewed as different entities.

The discussion yielded several valuable recommendations:

57. A number of participants expressed appreciation of the accomplishments of SRDCs, especially in the harmonization of national policies and subregional cooperation and integration programmes. They, however, pointed out that much remains to be done, especially in the framework of the implementation of NEPAD as they expect the Centres to facilitate the exchange of information and best practices as well as the promotion of inter-country exchange of experiences.

58. In this context, the ECA Offices in the subregions should network with other subregional institutions and centres of excellence as well as other UN bodies and agencies, and ensure that CSOs are closely associated in the processes, activities and programmes.

59. The participants were also of the opinion that a critical area requiring technical assistance from ECA is institutional capacity building, particularly for national institutions and economic communities.

60. Some participants expressed concern about the multiplicity of subregional institutions and the overlap of membership. The issue of relocation of ECA Offices in the subregions in relation to the major RECs was also raised. It was recalled that this issue was on the agenda for the last two sessions of the Conference. It was also recalled that in Algiers last year, the Conference had been of the opinion that, since it is politically sensitive, it should be dealt with at the subregional level and possibly at the level of Heads of State and Government.

61. Related to the legislative processes for the African Centre for Meteorology and Development (ACMAD) which, though it is no longer an ECA sponsored institution, is closely cooperating with its office in West Africa; ECA made reference to the Commission's resolution on the harmonization of ECA's sponsored institutions and noted that as it belongs to the group of institutions for which ECA only maintains programmatic links, ACMAD should organize its own legislative processes.

62. While members acknowledged the effective strengthening of SRDCs' human and financial resource base as part of the renewal of ECA initiated in 1996, they recommended that in the framework of the implementation of NEPAD the financial resource base of the Offices in the subregions should be further strengthened.

"Statutory Issues Related to the Proposed Changes to the ECA Medium-term Plan 2002—2005"

63. A representative of the Secretariat made a presentation stating that the revisions to the Medium-term Plan (MTP) for the period 2002–2005 were considered by the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) at its forty-second session in June 2002. These revisions reflected the mandates and decisions emanating from various international conferences, as well as decisions of various legislative bodies. These include the UN Millennium Declaration together with the road map for its implementation; the African Consensus and Plan of Action on HIV/AIDS adopted by the 2nd African Development Forum; the Abuja Declaration on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Other Related Infectious Diseases; the Ministerial Declaration adopted by ECOSOC on the role of the UN in support of the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable development; the Brussels Declaration and Programme of Action; the coming into force of the Constitutive Act of the African Union in July 2001; and the adoption of NEPAD.

64. Since the meeting of the CPC, a number of important developments at the regional and global levels have necessitated further adjustments to the plan. The developments that have inspired these additional proposals include the UN Secretary-General's proposals for further strengthening the organization; the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the General Assembly debate and resolution on NEPAD as the framework for system-wide support for African development.

65. The Secretariat explained the revisions to its MTP for the period 2002–2005 (referring to the document entitled *Proposed Revisions to ECA's Medium-Term Plan 2002-2005* E/ECA/CM.1/5). The ECA urged delegates to also consider additional proposed changes circulated in a note entitled *Proposals for Further Changes to the ECA's Medium-term Plan* (referring to document E/ECA/CM.1/5/Add. 1). The ECA highlighted its proposed changes by subprogramme and there was subsequent discussion per theme area.

66. ***Facilitating Economic and Social Policy Analysis:*** The ECA Representative explained that emphasis is being placed on improving poverty indicators and the quality of data for monitoring progress towards achieving MDGs. Further, it is proposed that the component on mobilizing finance under the subprogramme on *Promoting Trade and Mobilizing Finance for Development* be brought under this subprogramme.

67. ***Promoting Trade and Mobilizing Finance for Development:*** The ECA proposed that the issues of trade and finance be integrated into the subprogrammes on *Promoting Regional Cooperation and Integration* and *Facilitating Economic and Social Policy Analysis* respectively. On the issue of financing for development, it was explained that there is a great need to support national development and reform policies geared toward achieving the MDGs, particularly the agenda on poverty reduction. With regard to trade and regional integration, these issues complement each other given the global and international challenges that require that effective and coordinated actions be undertaken to pursue promotion of intra-Africa trade, as well as international trade in a competitive environment. With the realignment of these elements, the ECA proposes the restructuring of its subprogrammes for greater coherence and effectiveness.

68. ***Promoting regional cooperation and integration:*** The ECA proposed that trade issues be brought under this subprogramme from the subprogramme on promoting trade and mobilizing finance for development. This will reinforce the regional integration process in Africa and ensure compliance with the WTO Agreements. The representative further explained that the subprogramme be renamed *Promoting Trade and Regional Integration*. In this regard, ECA proposed to establish a small secretariat unit in Geneva to provide direct support to the African Group in the WTO processes.

69. The discussion centered on the concern that some members of the Committee of Experts had with the proposal to realign the subprogramme on *Trade and Mobilizing Finance for Development*. Experts were concerned that the shift of trade to the subprogramme on integration will de-emphasize the importance the ECA should place on trade issues at this critical juncture. Further, it may crowd out the well-placed efforts on regional integration.

70. There was strong support for the setting up of an ECA office in Geneva in order to build Africa's capacity in trade negotiations and give Africa a stronger voice in WTO talks. However, participants stressed the need for cooperation between the new office and the AU office in Geneva in order to provide the common African position and voice on trade issues.

71. The ECA Secretariat explained that these issues of concern to Member State would be better addressed under the proposed structure. The representative explained the complementarity between regional integration and trade. It was emphasized that the areas that the ECA programme on trade wishes to address are a focus on establishing and strengthening intra-African trade, removing trade barriers, improving interregional transportation and other infrastructure that will promote trade. The representative further explained that finance as referred to in the promoting trade subprogramme was actually financing for development. It is therefore being merged with the *Economic and Social Policy Analysis* subprogramme because it has direct bearing with debt relief and poverty reductions, and all other aspects of reaching MDGs.

72. ***Enhancing Food Security and Sustainable Development:*** The Secretariat proposed that all survival issues that impact on sustainable development be regrouped under this subprogramme; that the Committee on Sustainable Development (CSD) and the Committee on Natural Resources and Science and Technology (CNRST) be merged to form one Committee on Sustainable Development; that this subprogramme be renamed "Fostering Sustainable Development."

73. The experts did not take issue at the proposed change of name. However, they reiterated the importance of food security in the overall development of Africa and underscored that it should continue to have prominence. The Secretariat responded that food security is seen as a cross-cutting key element of the three major pillars of sustainable development. Integrate food security into the sustainable development compact form, and will not reduce attention or focus on this important issue. Therefore the name change will not diminish the importance of food security; rather it will enable the Commission to address in a more integrated and holistic manner.

74. ***Strengthening Development Management:*** The Secretariat stated that it has worked closely with the NEPAD Steering Committee on a number of key areas related to the design of NEPAD, particularly on the peer review mechanism and governance related matters. As its contribution in support of the peer review arrangements, ECA expects to provide the analytical and technical underpinnings for the implementation of the APRM through such publications as the *State of African Governance* Report, publication aimed at developing codes and indicators for monitoring progress towards achieving good governance in Africa.

75. The representative emphasized that another important aspect of ECA's work in this area will be to foster and sustain a capable state by strengthening the institutional and human capacities of member States in adopting sound, transparent, and accountable public financial management practices for harnessing both domestic and external financial resources for development of Governments against set targets and objectives. Thus, ECA proposed that all the aforementioned activities be undertaken under the subprogramme on *Strengthening Development Management* where the main focus is on assisting member States in strengthening their commitment to good governance and sound macroeconomic management.

The experts discussed and supported ECA's proposal.

76. ***Promoting the Advancement of Women:*** The Secretariat stated that the Secretary-General's new reform proposals have placed well-deserved emphasis on the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the implementation of the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration. Therefore, ECA will expand the scope of its work in the area of gender. They proposed that the African Centre for Women (ACW) be *renamed* the African Centre for Gender and Development (ACGD) to appropriately reflect the need to address gender differences and inequalities in the development process.

The experts discussed and supported ECA's proposal.

77. ***Supporting Subregional Activities for Development:*** The Secretariat indicated that the subprogramme is currently implemented by the five SRDCs located in the five subregions of the continent. As part of efforts to enhance synergies between programme implementation divisions at ECA Headquarters and SRDCs, ECA proposed that the Centres be *renamed* ECA Offices in their respective subregions to appropriately reflect their roles and correct the misconception that these Centres are separate entities from ECA.

78. The experts observed that the indicators for monitoring ECA's performance as reflected in the MTP document were not clearly defined. The indicators that exist are not focused enough and therefore may not be able to give a clear measurement of ECA's performance. The meeting was informed that the ECA and the rest of the UN Organization are currently working to improve and enhance the performance indicators to provide more impact and relevance.

79. The experts observed that the indicators for monitoring ECA's performance were not clearly defined. The monitors that exist are not focused enough and therefore may not be able to give a clear measurement of ECA's performance. The meeting was informed that ECA is currently working on the performance indicators of the various subprogrammes as part of the UN-wide resource-based budgeting process.

80. The Committee of experts also proposed that the reform conducted by ECA since 1996 should be externally reviewed using the objectives then set and the development challenges now emerging in the region as the frame of reference. It was agreed that both the terms of reference and the modalities of implementation, particularly the financial aspect, should be articulated by the secretariat in consultation with the Bureau (extended to include the sub-regional deans resident in Addis Ababa). And a report thereon submitted to the next meeting of the committee.

Consideration and Endorsement of the New Strategic Directions for the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP)

81. The director of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) reviewed the medium-term strategy and indicative work programme of IDEP for the period 2003 – 2006 (Refer to E/ECA/CM.1/9). The primary purpose of IDEP, created in 1962, is to train African

middle-level and senior officials, representatives of African organizations, civil society and the private sector who are responsible for national and regional economic development and planning.

82. IDEP acts as an interface between the research and policy-making communities; promotes original thinking and research on Africa's policy issues; and has served as Africa's centre of excellence. IDEP's work has been utilized in government policy-making and by many African universities for teaching. However, there had been lack of visibility in recent years; yet, a greater need exists now to revitalize IDEP in view of the current challenges facing Africa, and new initiatives such as NEPAD and AU.

83. IDEP has recently assessed its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (i.e. SWOT analysis). Its strengths include the Pan-African nature of trainees and staff; wide outreach stemming from its many alumni in key positions throughout Africa; and its bilingual (English and French) nature. IDEP's current weaknesses include its modest financial and human resources; lack of adequate visibility; and its limited ability to conduct research and advocacy..

84. The director presented the proposed revisions to the statutes of IDEP (Document E/ECA/CM.1/8). The main thrust of remedies proposed is for IDEP to provide more focused and better quality training and undertake policy relevant research. It should leverage with regional, subregional, and African research institutions in order to build synergies.

During the discussions, the following points were put forth:

85. The meeting welcomed the new strategic directions of IDEP, particularly the introduction of new training programmes on WTO issues and regional integration. IDEP's new strategy will revitalize the institution and give it the prominence it requires. However, there are other training institutions in other countries focusing on similar work and for this reason, it was important for IDEP to continue to define its mission in order to carve a niche and avoid duplication. In this connection, it was pointed out that IDEP is working closely with other institutions and policy centres and has created a network of researchers and resource persons from many African countries in order to enhance the quality of their training and policy advocacy.

86. A recommendation was made that IDEP should assist in creating integrated economic and social plans at the subregional and regional levels. It was pointed out that IDEP has started working with regional organizations to undertake region-wide planning frameworks. For example, IDEP is planning to work with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) to build a model for regional planning for all members States.

87. Data from the report shows that while IDEP had a long history, It has so far only trained 2,000 African policy makers, i.e., an average of two persons per country per year. This underscores the need to provide more financial support for the institution. It was noted that African governments have emphasized the need to strengthen technical capacity in their countries and, in this regard, they need to support IDEP. It was pointed out that each African country is a member and was therefore expected to make contributions as agreed when IDEP was formed. Assessments for each country were done and have been made available to Ministries of Finance in each country. Also these assessments have been reviewed periodically.

88. Participants wanted to understand the financial implications of an expanded Governing Council and Executive Committee, which would also comprise of representatives of the private sector and civil society. They sought more information about the modalities of how representatives of the private sector and civil society would be selected. Furthermore, the meeting wanted clarification as to why some of the members of the Governing Council would be non-voting members. Finally, it was suggested that the Governing Council meet every year, rather than every two years as proposed in the revised Statutes.

89. While encouraging the proposal, the experts revised article four as contained in the received proposed statutes. The committee asked whether an external evaluation would be necessary to review the services of IDEP. However it was pointed out that an external review was recently undertaken, which led to IDEP's current medium-term strategy put before the committee.

Any other business (Agenda item 7)

90. One delegate raised the issue of the timing of the annual meetings of the Conference of Ministers and suggested that in order for the outcome of the meetings to feed into other regional and global conferences and fora such as the Annual Session of the World Bank and the IMF the Conference of Ministers should be convened in August. However, since the Conference is also to report to ECOSOC a follow-up Committee of the Conference should meet annually before ECOSOC to consider statutory issues.

91. The Committee recognized the importance of appropriately timing the sessions of the Conference of Ministers within the global calendar of meetings. However, in view of cost implications and the need to rationalize the number of meetings the Committee felt that it will not be appropriate to split the annual sessions of the Conference as proposed.

Consideration and adoption of the Report (Agenda item 8)

92. The Committee reviewed the draft report as presented by the Rapporteur. After making extensive comments on the draft, the Committee adopted the present Report.

Closure of the meeting (Agenda item 9)

93. In her closing remarks, the Deputy Executive Secretary thanked delegates and other representatives for their active participation in the deliberations of the meeting. She also thanked the Chairman of the Committee of Experts for his dynamism and the able and wise manner in which he steered the deliberations of the meeting.

94. The Chairman thanked the Secretariat for the support it had provided to the Bureau. He expressed appreciation to participants for their diligence and valuable contributions to the outcome of the meeting.

95. The Chairman then declared the meeting closed.

DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

DRAFT RESOLUTION I**PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN OF
THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA FOR THE PERIOD 2002-2005**The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling resolution MFC.1 of 5 May 2000 adopted by the Ministerial Follow-up Committee of the ECA Conference of Ministers by which the Committee endorsed the proposed Medium-term Plan for the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) for the period 2002-2005,

Having considered the proposals for changes to the medium-term plan as contained in document E/ECA/CM.1/5 entitled, *Proposed revisions to ECA's medium-term plan, 2002-2005*,

Aware that the Committee for Programme and Coordination of the United Nations (CPC) at its forty-second session in June 2002 have already considered the proposed revisions to the Medium-term plan and offered its comments and observations on the revisions,

Taking into account important developments and events that have taken place since the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan, in particular the proposals of the Secretary-General for further strengthening the United Nations, the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in September 2002, and the General Assembly Debate and Resolution on NEPAD as the framework for system-wide support for African development,

Bearing in mind that both the proposals of the Secretary-General and the Declaration adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development are currently before the General Assembly for its decision,

1. Expresses its appreciation to the CPC for its comments and recommendations on the medium-term plan, which have gone a long way in improving the plan;
2. Proposes the following additional modifications to the medium-term plan in the light of the new developments that have taken place since the CPC considered the plan:

(i) *Subprogramme 1: Facilitating economic and social policy analysis*

In view of the importance of financing in meeting the MDG goals, the component on mobilizing finance for development which is currently under subprogramme 2, *Promoting trade and mobilizing finance for development* should be brought under subprogramme 1 where ECA's work on meeting the MDG goal of poverty reduction will be addressed. The holistic treatment of the related issues of ODA, FDI, debt relief, capital flight will be critical in achieving coherence in financing for development and poverty reduction. Similarly, the

special needs of African least developed, land-locked and small island developing countries should be brought under this subprogramme from subprogramme 2.

(ii) *Subprogramme 2: Promoting trade and mobilizing finance for development*

The issues of trade and finance for which this subprogramme was responsible should be integrated into the subprogrammes on *Promoting regional cooperation and integration* and *Facilitating economic and social policy analysis* respectively, in order to achieve greater coherence. Accordingly, the subprogramme on Promoting trade and mobilizing finance for the development will be discontinued.

(iii) *Subprogramme 3: Enhancing food security and sustainable development*

The Conference *appeals* to the Committee for Programme and Coordination to reconsider its recommendation with respect to the change of name of this subprogramme. This subprogramme should be renamed, *Fostering sustainable development* to ensure that the work of subprogramme appropriately reflects the integrated nature of sustainable development that resulted from the World Summit on Sustainable Development which adopted a political declaration to take account of the three critical dimensions of sustainable development, namely economic development, social development, and environmental protection in development planning. In view of the new concept of sustainable development agreed to at the WSSD, all survival issues including food security that impact on sustainable development should be regrouped under this subprogramme to ensure that these interrelated issues are treated within a holistic framework, and still maintaining a strong programmatic focus on food security in the subprogramme. Accordingly, activities related to water, mineral and energy resources development and other natural resource issues presently under *subprogramme 6: Promoting regional cooperation and integration* will be brought under this subprogramme.

(iv) *Subprogramme 4: Strengthening development management*

The orientation of this subprogramme should be changed slightly to reflect ECA's role in support of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) of NEPAD. Accordingly the following text will be added as a separate paragraph in the section on *Strategy* under this subprogramme, in the MTP document: "*ECA will continue to work closely with the NEPAD Steering Committee and the Secretariat in elaborating the peer review mechanism. In this context, ECA's analytical work and in-depth country studies on monitoring good governance may provide an objective appraisal mechanism to facilitate the assessment of the progress and performance of African Governments in adhering to mutually agreed codes and standards on good governance*".

(v) *Subprogramme 6: Promoting regional cooperation and integration*

The component on promoting trade under subprogramme 2, *Promoting trade and mobilizing finance for development* should be subsumed under this subprogramme because of the importance of intra-regional trade in achieving regional economic integration. Thus, the

work under the trade cluster of this subprogramme will focus on examining how trade can contribute to regional integration as a step towards effective integration into the world economy seizing on the opportunities offered by the new multilateral trade framework established at Doha. This will require providing technical and other capacity-building support to African countries in trade negotiations especially in the context of the new WTO agreements and other protocols such as the Cotonou ACP/EU arrangements. To ensure that the subprogramme appropriately reflects the nature of issues it will be dealing with, the subprogramme should be renamed, *Promoting trade and regional integration*;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to take these proposals into consideration in the revisions to the Medium-term Plan of the Economic Commission for Africa for the period 2002-2005;
4. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to act on the revisions to the Medium-term Plan in the context of the decision of the General Assembly on the proposed changes.

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

INSTITUTE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING (IDEP)

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling the various resolutions that have implications on the mandate and operations of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) including, in particular, Commission Resolution 350(XIV) of 27 March 1979 on the adoption of the revised Statutes of the Institute as amended by the fifth Committee of the General Assembly and endorsed by the then Executive Committee of the Commission after amendment of article IV. 2(d) which is contained in the annex to the said resolution,

Recalling also its resolution 827(XXXII) of 8 May 1997 on the rationalization and harmonization of ECA – sponsored Institutions,

Taking note of the Proposed Revisions to ECA's Medium-term Plan, 2002-2005,

Having examined the proposed revisions to the Statutes of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning,

Convinced that the proposals contained in the medium-term strategy and indicative work programme of the Institute for the period 2003-2006 (document E/ECA/CM.1/9) will make a significant contribution to the effective operationalization of its mandate and the revitalization of its activities,

1. Endorses the revisions to the Statutes of IDEP (Document E/ECA/CM.1/8) and its medium-term strategy and indicative work programme for the period, 2003-2006;

2. Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in submitting the revisions to the Medium-term Plan, 2002-2005 to the General Assembly, to give special consideration to the work programme of the Institute as an integral part of the regular work programme of the Economic Commission for Africa under the proposed sub-programme 9, *Development planning and administration*;

3. Calls upon the General Assembly of the United Nations and its second and fifth Committees to ensure that adequate resources are made available to IDEP and the Commission for the implementation of the work programme of the Institute;

4. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to ensure that the implementation of this work programme is guided by the same principles that have underpinned reform and renewal at the Economic Commission for Africa: professional excellence, cost-effectiveness in product management and programme delivery, effective partnerships with African regional organizations, United Nations agencies and other multilateral and bilateral donors in support of capacity-building and Africa's development.

DRAFT RESOLUTION III

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BRUSSELS PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES FOR THE DECADE 2001-2010

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals which are aimed among other things at the eradication of poverty,

Taking note of resolution 55/279 of July 2001 by which the General Assembly endorses the Brussels Declaration (A/CONF.191/12) and the Programme of Action for the Decade 2001-2010 (A/CONF.191/11),

Aware that 34 of the 49 Least Developed Countries are in the continent of Africa;

Recalling the Cotonou Declaration adopted at the Ministerial Conference of the Least Developed Countries held in Cotonou, Benin on 7 August 2002,

1. Reaffirms strong support to the full realization of the seven commitments made at the third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and to the Programme of Action it adopted for the Decade 2001-2010;

2. Welcomes the establishment of the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) by the United Nations General Assembly, and extends full support to the High Representative in his endeavor to ensure the full mobilization and coordination of all stake holders for the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action;

3. Stresses the need for promoting synergy between the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries in order to accelerate sustained growth and development in the Least Developed Countries, bearing in mind the potential for South-South Cooperation;

4. Emphasizes the importance of optimal cooperation and coordination between the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States (OHRLLS) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to enhance the effective implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action;

5. Urges Least Developed Countries to make necessary arrangement, at country-level, with the support of the development partners, for the effective implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action in their countries;

6. Calls on the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa as well as the heads of all other African regional and subregional organizations to mainstream the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action as called upon by General Assembly resolution 56/227 in their programmes of work as well as in their intergovernmental processes.