Twelfth quarterly briefing meeting with African ambassadors

by Mr. Carlos Lopes, Executive Secretary, ECA

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The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa is convening the twelfth quarterly briefing with African ambassadors accredited to Ethiopia to exchange views on the work of the Commission. This note provides an overview of the substantive work carried out by the Commission over the past three months, highlights the key events that will be taking place over the next three months, and discusses some of the Commission’s new partnerships.

The Executive Secretary also takes this opportunity to report that the Commission has put in place a gender strategy that reaffirms and builds on the efforts the Commission has made to accelerate institutionalization of gender mainstreaming and to ensure gender parity in its operations, at all staff levels. Consultations have been under way to introduce a gender equality marker1 into the Commission’s work. The Commission will be the first entity within the United Nations Secretariat to use a gender marker to track resources used for gender equality. Once fully implemented, this tool will make it possible to track indicative figures for budget and expenditure related to gender equality; to monitor and analyse trends across the Commission’s Divisions; to identify gender gaps to enable appropriate adjustments in project planning; to ensure more efficient planning and decision-making as well as improve the Commission’s overall reporting and accountability on gender equality.

I. ACTIVITIES FROM JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2015

The present note focuses on substantive areas of work, grouped under topics relating to the Commission’s programme of work: key events, knowledge generation and capacity development, which includes providing technical support to member States and consensus-building.

A. KEY EVENTS

1. Third International Conference on Financing for Development

The third International Conference on Financing for Development, hosted by Ethiopia, was held in July at the Conference Centre of the United Nations in Addis Ababa. It was attended by over 11,000 high-level political representatives, including 5 presidents, 8 prime ministers, 4 first ladies, 3 vice-presidents and 162 ministers, as well as numerous institutional stakeholders, non-governmental organizations and business sector entities. A total of 174 countries, including all the African countries, were represented. The Conference resulted in the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to support the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. The Commission also partnered with various organizations and agencies of the United Nations to host 11 side events related to innovative financing. These covered a range of thematic areas including nutrition, renewable energy and climate resilience, industrial development, gender equality, agriculture, social protection, increasing Africa’s fiscal space, data revolution and combatting illicit financial flows.

2. Third African Road Safety Conference

The third African Road Safety Conference was held in July, in Ethiopia. It was organized in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the African Transport Policy Programme, the Global Road Safety Facility of the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the International Road Federation. The Conference was a midterm review of the implementation of the United Nations Decade of Action for

1 A gender equality marker is a tool that supports the planning for, and achievement, monitoring and reporting of results related to gender equality or the empowerment of women and girls.
Road Safety, aimed at reducing road fatalities, and the associated African Road Safety Action Plan, focusing on very specific road safety issues such as understanding of road safety institutional arrangements, road safety management and related activities. Over 40 per cent of African countries are in the process of implementing the Action Plan and the Conference resolved to further accelerate its implementation.

3. **High-level policy dialogue on the data revolution and its impact on development planning**

A high-level policy dialogue on the data revolution and its impact on development planning was held in July, in Benin. It was attended by Permanent Secretaries and Directors General or their delegates responsible for planning in African countries, representatives of United Nations organizations based in Benin, and senior officials of the Government of Benin. Forum participants reflected on the impact of the data revolution on development planning in Africa; the main elements of the Africa Data Consensus; constraints and obstacles in integrating the data revolution into development planning; and strategies for aligning the Africa Data Consensus with national development planning. As a result, a community of practice will be established to facilitate knowledge exchange and thus support the way forward.

4. **Subregional Conference on Building Democratic Developmental States for Economic Transformation in Southern Africa**

A Subregional Conference on Building Democratic Developmental States for Economic Transformation in Southern Africa was held in July, in South Africa. It was organized in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme in South Africa and in close partnership with two civil society organizations, the Southern Africa Trust and the Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa. The conference brought together high-level policymakers, scholars, development practitioners, representatives of Regional Economic Commissions, national and regional media establishments, and civil society actors from across 12 countries. The Conference provided policy guidance on how countries can achieve economic transformation and sustainable development through the developmental State paradigm.

5. **Launches of the Economic Report in Africa 2015: Industrializing through Trade**

Additional launches of the Economic Report in Africa 2015 took place at a number of high-level events in various cities, including Abuja, Addis Ababa, Johannesburg, Kampala, Kigali, Lusaka, Maputo, Nairobi and N’Djamena. Furthermore, the findings of the report were presented to members of the League of Arab States on the margin of the ninety-sixth ministerial meeting of the Economic and Social Council of the League of Arab States, held in Cairo.


The report, “Assessing progress in Africa towards the Millennium Development Goals”, which was produced jointly by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union, the African Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, was launched on the margin of the seventieth session of the United Nations General Assembly in September, in New York.

7. **Validation of a study on the “Root Causes, Impact and Human and Economic Cost of Conflict”**

A validation expert group meeting on a study entitled the “Root Causes, Impact and Human and Economic Cost of Conflict” was held in September, in Kenya. The study analyses the root causes of conflict in the Horn of Africa, its impact, and the human and economic cost of conflict. It contributes to the policy dialogue for sustainable...
development in the Horn of Africa and promotes economic structural transformation.

B. KNOWLEDGE GENERATION AND INFORMATION SHARING

The Commission’s knowledge-generating activities and products cover a wide range of topical economic issues. Some of the publications completed during the reporting period that have either been published or are in the process of being published include:

a) MDG report 2015: Assessing progress in Africa towards the Millennium Development Goals;

b) The promise of Paris: a critical inquiry into the issues, challenges and prospects of a post-Kyoto climate framework for Africa;


d) Five subregional reports and the Africa Regional Report on the Sustainable Development Goals;

e) Regional, subregional and national assessment reports on mainstreaming and implementing disaster risk reduction measures;

f) A review of the Guinea mineral fiscal regime;

g) Can a Stronger Patent Regime Result in Growth of Patenting Activities in Africa? Lessons Learned from Five African Countries;

h) Outcomes and recommendations for the regional review meeting “WSIS+10 and Beyond: Outcomes and Perspectives for Africa”;

i) Youth and innovation in Africa: harnessing the possibilities of Africa’s youth for the transformation of the continent;

j) A study on international transport and trade facilitation in North Africa.

C. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The Commission’s technical support to its member States over the past quarter consisted primarily of training, capacity development and technical advisory services in economic management and planning.

1. Training and capacity enhancement

a) The Commission’s training arm, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, continued to offer training courses to officials at the senior and mid-career levels from African member States on national development plans and improving economic policy formulation. Over 270 officials from 44 African countries benefited from training in various thematic areas that included: social policy for development planners; trade policy analysis using STATA software; mineral policy and contract negotiations for policy officials; and the collection and use of international migration data. In addition, a course on transport infrastructure development funded by the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) was inaugurated; and tailor-made courses were prepared (i) for Guinea-Bissau, on monitoring and evaluation of development policies, projects and programmes; and (ii) for Rwanda, on gender in economic policy management using a training-of-trainers element organized in partnership with the University of Rwanda and the Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion;

b) A series of other training initiatives continued to be offered to Commission staff; a course on capacity-building in macroeconomic models specifically
included the participation of representatives from research institutions;

c) To strengthen statistical capacities, the Commission provided technical assistance to the statistical centre of the West African Economic and Monetary Union in Ouagadougou to help develop a common road map for the deployment of an integrated database platform. Technical support was provided for the implementation and full establishment of the Pan-African Institute for Statistical Training, at the Institut National Polytechnique Félix Houphouët-Boigny, in Côte d’Ivoire. As part of a multi-agency mission, an evaluation of the national statistical system of Guinea-Bissau was undertaken: the resulting comprehensive assessment included recommendations to strengthen the production of statistics in Guinea-Bissau. Similarly, a comprehensive assessment of the Egyptian national statistical system was undertaken, resulting in important recommendations to improve the institutional and legal framework and to strengthen the production of statistics in Egypt;

d) At the global level, the Economic Commission for Africa, in close collaboration with the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank, organized a workshop to finalize Africa input to the global set of indicators for the sustainable development goals. The three organizations also completed mapping of the targets of the sustainable development goals against the targets of Agenda 2063 in support of the development of a regional set of sustainable development goal indicators;

e) The Economic Commission for Africa also led, together with other partners, the drafting of the document known as the Africa Data Consensus. The Africa Data Consensus introduced the concepts of “data communities” and an expanded “data ecosystem” for sustainable development data, beyond official statistics. These concepts were presented to the National Executive Forum, at the 2015 Environmental Systems Research Institute User Conference, held in San Diego, in the United States, in July. Even though the intergovernmental consultative process for the Africa Data Consensus is ongoing, Kenya has become the first country to organize a national data forum based on the concepts contained in the document.

2. Technical and advisory services

Over the reporting period, technical support and advisory services were provided in a number of areas. Highlights include:

a) Africa’s natural resources, environmental issues and sustainable development

- Technical support was provided to African meteorologists in Cabo Verde, with a specific focus on African small island developing States, operational numerical weather prediction systems and the deployment of early warning systems in Africa.

- Technical support and capacity-building sessions were provided in Cameroon, Liberia, Malawi and Swaziland towards preparation of their intended nationally determined contributions under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

- Technical and advisory support was also provided in the form of policy outreach on the Country Mining Vision initiatives undertaken in Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho and Malawi. Substantive support was provided to the regional dialogue of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) on taxation in the extractive industry in the subregions of the Economic Community of West African States and of the Economic Community of Central African States.

- Technical and strategic orientation continued to be provided for global initiatives, including the African Minerals
Geoscience Initiative; the African Mining Legislation Atlas; and the Strengthening Assistance for Complex Contract Negotiations, launched by the Group of Seven.

- Technical and advisory support was provided in Accra, Ghana; Conakry, Guinea; Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania; and Lusaka, Zambia on consolidating recommendations for action plans, including monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, in order to integrate gender equality and equity in mining policies, laws, regulations, standards and code.

- Technical and advisory support was provided in the area of energy planning capacity development, in the East African Community. In Djibouti, an energy resources assessment is being undertaken for a 10-year renewable energy development plan. In Rwanda, a sustainability framework for renewable energy technologies is under development following the completion of an energy sector planning capacity institutional assessment. In addition, an energy security policy framework for the East African Community region is currently being developed.

- Advisory and technical support was provided in various regional forums on harnessing the blue economy for Eastern Africa’s development, promoting it as a component of a regional road map on industrial development. The Economic Commission for Africa and the African Union Commission are now collaborating in the production of a blue economy policy handbook.

b) Trade-related issues, industry and infrastructure

- With regard to trade-related issues, technical support was provided in various forms, including: support to Swaziland in developing a trade and industrial policy that is to be presented to the cabinet for consideration. Capacity-building in trade policy analysis for stakeholders was also undertaken in conjunction with the African Capacity Building Foundation and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. Another capacity-building initiative, carried out on behalf of officials in Burkina Faso and member states of the Indian Ocean Rim Association, involved enhancing the contribution of preferential trade agreements for inclusive development; this issue was also included in a regional dialogue in Seychelles. Preparations are now under way to provide technical and preparatory support to African ministers of trade ahead of the tenth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference.

- With regard to industry, technical support was provided to Senegal in the areas of industrialization policy, management of macroeconomic framework, and statistics. Rwanda too received support in the areas of industrialization and domestic resources mobilization. Support was also provided in the promotion of sustainable tourism; initiatives that will continue include enhancing capacities to collect quality tourism data for policy formulation in both Rwanda and Uganda. Under the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) framework, a strategy on tourism safety and security is being formulated; the main beneficiaries will be post-conflict countries such as Somalia and South Sudan. There have been a number of research outputs in areas such as the implementation of the IGAD Sustainable Tourism Master Plan, tourism value chains in the Rwanda Tourism Value Chains Study and the Ethiopia National Tourism Master Plan. A recently held High-level Policy Dialogue on Smart Industrial Policies in Africa placed emphasis on the importance of industrialization in advancing structural transformation and inclusive growth in Africa through various policy options presented in the Economic Report on Africa, published by the African

• With regard to infrastructure, technical and advisory support continued to be provided in a range of areas that include: (i) support to unlock private sector investment in transboundary infrastructure through ongoing work for the harmonization of policies, laws and regulations relating to private investment in regional infrastructure in Africa and towards the development of a model law governing public-private partnerships in transboundary infrastructure across Africa; (ii) continued support to the Government of Benin in conducting feasibility studies on major infrastructure projects in support of the country’s Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy; and (iii) ongoing work with NEPAD on the implementation of the Dakar Agenda for Action, which includes repackaging the 16 transboundary projects endorsed at the 2014 Dakar Financing Summit for Africa’s Infrastructure into a new advocacy tool, entitled “16 Infrastructure Projects for Regional Integration”, which promotes public-private partnerships in the implementation of the 16 projects.

c) Land policy, food security and agriculture

• Technical assistance was provided to the Ministry of Lands, Environment and Natural Resources in Zambia in the process of land policy development. In addition, capacity of the civil society organizations platform has been enhanced to support evidence-based positions on land issues as well as advocacy on the land policy development process.

• With the support of the German Government and the World Bank, a Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa is being established to better secure land rights all across Africa. This Network of Excellence will link leading African academic and research institutions and help them to liaise with civil society, the private sector, land sector practitioners, and decision makers to address gaps in training, statistics and research on land governance.

• Within the framework of the Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural and Rural Statistics, technical assistance was provided in sampling agricultural surveys to estimate agricultural production in three countries, namely Cabo Verde, Cameroon and Mozambique.

• Technical support continued to be provided for the implementation of the United Nations Development Account project, “Strengthening capacities for the development of regional agricultural value chains in Africa”. The project was launched this quarter in Cameroon, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia and Namibia.

• Technical support for accelerating the implementation process of the commodity-based industrialization strategy, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and the 3ADI Programme (Agriculture, Agribusiness, and Agro Industries) continues to be provided.

• Technical support was also provided to Zimbabwe to strengthen capacity in the use of mobile technologies to monitor food market prices and the consumer price system.

d) Social policy

• Technical and advisory support continues to be provided to Guinea, as it recovers from the effects of the Ebola epidemic, primarily to develop a technical plan that reinforces Guinea’s planning framework, treatment of statistics, expertise in negotiating and carrying out independent analysis in mining issues, macroeconomic framework in relation to the calls for debt cancellation in the post-Ebola context, industrial and
• Trade policy, and competitiveness based on high-value productive sectors.

• Technical support was provided by assessing policy and making policy recommendations on ageing and development in four African small island developing States, namely, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritius and Sao Tome and Principe.

• In the areas of gender, technical and advisory support was provided to Botswana to integrate gender into their national development plan and public finance framework. Support was also provided to the National Observatory for Gender Parity in Senegal in order to strengthen the capacity of the Advisory Committee and the technical staff within the national framework for the structural transformation of the country.

e) Governance issues

• Technical and advisory support was provided to the Government of Namibia through a high-level retreat of cabinet members, which was facilitated by the Commission in collaboration with the United Nations Senior Staff College, on developing performance agreements for ministers to track their performance, enhancing the capacity of the political leadership for effective performance and improving public service delivery.

• Advisory support was provided to Kenya through a high-level engagement with the President and his cabinet on the devolution process and on how to build a prosperous and competitive country on par with its human, physical and natural endowments. As a result, the Commission will commence the preparatory process to facilitate a high-level leadership dialogue between the arms of government, the legislature and other key interest groups. This is scheduled to take place early next year.

• Advisory support was provided at a High-level Dialogue session on Financing for Development held in Uganda together with the President of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. The focus was to devolve the outcomes of the Conference, discuss Uganda’s focus and shift towards domestic resource mobilization for the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda and the need for official development assistance to focus on priority areas.

• Technical and advisory support was provided to the secretariat of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) in preparation for the APRM Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government, which was subsequently postponed. In addition, support was contributed towards the APRM country review for Djibouti. It is expected that the country review report for Djibouti will be presented at the upcoming African Union Summit in January 2016. Upon the request of the Government of the Sudan, support was also provided to finalize its country self-assessment report.

• Technical and advisory support to the African Union is ongoing in the formulation of the African development goals to advance the African agenda for integration and transformation.

• As part of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa, technical support was provided in convening the first subregional workshop on curbing illicit financial flows from Africa. This was done in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the African Capacity Building Foundation and the Open Society Initiative for West Africa.

• Technical and advisory support was provided at a High-level Policy Dialogue on Conflict and Development in Africa, which was attended by over 40 countries, to examine the triggers and cost of conflict
as well as possible solutions in the Great Lakes, the Horn of Africa and the Sahel subregions. The recommendations will now feed into the processes of the African Union and other key regional organizations for the design of comprehensive strategies and policy responses for governments in the countries/regions concerned.

**f) Regional economic communities**

- Technical support was provided to the West African Monetary Union regarding the use of the African Social Development Index in trend analysis and monitoring at the subregional level.

- Technical and advisory support continues to be provided towards the development of the East African Community, “EAC Vision 2050”.

- Capacity strengthening continued for the African Union, NEPAD, the Regional Economic Commissions, and the United Nations institutions and agencies working in Africa in joint programming as well as in monitoring and evaluation for greater coherence and effectiveness. Within this scope, technical studies were conducted on joint programming and monitoring and evaluation in support of the African Union and its NEPAD programme that were recently validated.

- Technical support was provided towards regional integration initiatives in West Africa with the Economic Community of West African States and the West African Economic and Monetary Union.

**D. CONSENSUS BUILDING**

The Commission has supported its member States in articulating common positions on important issues. Such support included the following:

- The organization of the Africa Climate Talks (ACT!) on democratizing global climate change governance and building an African consensus in the lead-up to the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and beyond.

- Support provided to the African Group of Negotiators in New York through the continued secondment of Commission staff members to the Group for the duration of the intergovernmental negotiations on both the third International Conference on Financing for Development and the post-2015 development agenda. The support focused on feeding regional and national consultation outcomes into the negotiating positions of the African Group; providing an empirical basis for the negotiating positions of the African Group through research and analytical studies; and mobilizing support for Africa’s positions through seminars, workshops and presentations in New York. In addition, a retreat was facilitated for the African Permanent Representatives in New York to help them take stock of the post-2015 development agenda, and the intergovernmental negotiations on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and to prepare them for the upcoming twenty-first session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the tenth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference, to ensure that the outcomes of the negotiations are largely aligned with Africa’s development priorities.

- A meeting with the African Group of Ambassadors in Geneva was convened to: (i) support Africa forge a bold and common negotiating strategy that adequately tackles Africa’s trade and development needs in the run-up to the tenth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference; and (ii) encourage Africa to improve its own trade policymaking and its alignment with industrial and other development strategies.
In order to support harmonizing policies and strategies designed to address gender-based violence and violence against children in Southern Africa, a subregional consultative forum was convened. It identified statistical key indicators and reviewed data collection instruments and sharing mechanisms. As a result, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe adopted a common position on harmonizing statistics as a tool for coordinating and formulating evidence-based policies in support of national and subregional development priorities.

E. KEY UPCOMING EVENTS

1. The fifth Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa on the theme “Africa, climate change and sustainable development: what is at stake at Paris and beyond?”

The fifth Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa on the theme “Africa, climate change and sustainable development: what is at stake at Paris and beyond?” will be held in October, in Victoria Falls. It will provide a moment of reflection on the performance of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in achieving its stated objectives of emissions reduction and sustainable development, as well as provide a forum to discuss climate change and development issues in Africa.

2. Senior Experts Dialogue (SED-2015) on Science, Technology and Innovation

A Senior Experts Dialogue (SED-2015) on Science, Technology and Innovation on the theme “Innovation Hubs, Clusters and Parks and Africa’s Transformation” will be held in October, in Nairobi. It will provide a forum for learning and sharing of experience and knowledge among African experts, and will facilitate the formulation of policies for the deliberate harnessing of science, technology and innovation to accelerate the African transformation agenda.


The tenth North African Development Forum on “North Africa and Free Trade Agreements” will be held in October, in Rabat. It will facilitate an information and exchange workshop with the private sector, include a training workshop with the North African economic media houses as well as the annual Mediterranean colloquium.

4. Annual Meeting of the Subregional Coordination Mechanism for Eastern and Southern Africa

The Annual Meeting of the Subregional Coordination Mechanism (SRCM) for Eastern and Southern Africa will be held in November, in Gaborone. It will focus on the theme “Towards Effective Mainstreaming of the SRCM Business Plan into Stakeholders’ Planning Processes and Priority Setting”. The meeting will bring together SRCM stakeholders, namely, Regional Economic Commissions, intergovernmental bodies and United Nations agencies in Eastern and Southern Africa.

5. 2015 African Economic Conference

The 2015 African Economic Conference will be held in November, in Kinshasa. The theme is “Addressing poverty and inequality in the post-2015 development agenda”. It will bring together policymakers, researchers and development practitioners from Africa and from around the world to make a strategic contribution to the implementation of Africa’s vision and the identification of concrete actions necessary for poverty and inequality reduction in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.
6. **Africa Pavilion during the twenty-first session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

The Commission will host the Africa Pavilion during the twenty-first session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in December, in Paris. It will provide a forum for the discussion of climate change issues relevant to Africa.

7. **Launch of the Africa Regional Integration Index**

The Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union and African Development Bank will launch the Africa Regional Integration Index in December, in Addis Ababa. The Index will help African member States to track their progress in implementing Africa's regional integration agenda; it will also support better policy analysis of African regional integration issues. In addition, the latest edition of the “Assessing Regional Integration in Africa” series will provide recommendations on innovation, regional integration and competitiveness.

8. **ECA-OECD Development Centre Policy Dialogue**

The Economic Commission for Africa and the Development Centre of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) will convene a high-level policy dialogue in December, in Addis Ababa. It will focus on “Addressing structural transformation in Africa within the new global landscape” and will be organized within the framework of the OECD initiative for policy dialogue on Global Value Chains, Production Transformation and Development, a global initiative which includes the Commission in its advisory board.

F. **PARTNERSHIPS**

In implementing its new partnership strategy, the Commission continues to work with pan-African organizations such as the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and the African Peer Review Mechanism. Some examples of the Commission’s new partnerships include those with:

a) Solution Exchange to develop a knowledge network for African development planners and other experts interested in planning;

b) The Rockefeller Foundation in the implementation of the African Social Development Index in select African countries;

c) The Global Agenda Council on Africa of the World Economic Forum on a number of activities that include skill-building for young people, and agricultural transformation;

d) The University of Pretoria, the Gxowa Foundation and the Harvard Business School in developing a research programme on women’s economic empowerment in Africa;

e) The African Peacebuilding Network of the Social Science Research Council, in organizing the Southern Africa Seminar Series, scheduled for October in Livingstone, Zambia;

f) The Nigerian Economic Society, to finance project activities related to advancing the African agenda for integration and transformation and the articulation of the African development goals;

g) The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva to conduct a survey of the evolution of African legislative policy on foreign investment issues, to help determine the extent to which African countries have adapted their legislative policies to bilateral and other investment treaties and to global developments in the field;
h) The World Bank, in organizing and hosting the third African Road Safety Conference of the African Road Safety Action Plan and also the implementation of the 2015 African regional technical development project on civil registration and vital statistics;

i) The Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of Germany and the World Bank, with which a memorandum of understanding has been formalized to establish a new Network of Excellence on Land Governance in Africa in order to better secure land rights across Africa;

j) IGAD on the implementation of a joint project on “Improving land governance in the IGAD Region”;

k) The United Nations System Staff College in supporting the organization of a retreat for senior government officials in Namibia;

l) The University of Cairo on a joint policy research journal in the Arabic language with the aim of bridging Arabic-speaking Africa with the rest of the continent, enabling Arabic-speaking economists in the academic and professional community to connect with their peers across Africa. A memorandum of understanding will be signed in the coming months.

In addition:

• Following the Commission’s statement at the opening session of the ministerial segment of the ninety-sixth meeting of the Economic and Social Council of the League of Arab States, there have been calls to intensify the Afro-Arab partnership for a sustainable future for both regions in the post-2015 development agenda. Opportunities to be leveraged include the areas of trade, food security and renewable energy.

• The Commission’s contributions to the high-level policy discussions at the fifteenth International Economic Forum on Africa on the theme of “Africa beyond 2015” have renewed the momentum to address the continent’s specific opportunities and challenges in the post-2015 development agenda.