



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

Eleventh quarterly briefing meeting with African ambassadors

by Mr. Carlos Lopes,
Executive Secretary, ECA

23 June 2015
Addis Ababa



Putting Africa First

Briefing Note

The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) is convening the eleventh 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 ECA 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.

I. ACTIVITIES FROM APRIL TO JUNE 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. Launch of the *Economic Report on Africa 2015*

Following the launch of the *Economic Report on Africa 2015*, the theme of which is "Industrialization through Trade", in Addis Ababa during the Conference of Ministers in March 2015, the report was also launched during the second African Think Tank Summit, the ninth Conference of African Union Ministers of Trade, in collaboration with the Economic Community of West African States in Ghana, in Dakar, and in Morocco. Further country launches are scheduled to take place over the coming months.

2. Second African Think Tank Summit

The second African Think Tank Summit was held in Ethiopia in April, on the theme "The

Rise of Africa's Think Tanks: Practical Solutions to Practical Problems". Other organizing partners included the Think Tanks and Civil Society Program, the University of Pennsylvania and the African Capacity-Building Foundation. The recommendations included the need for think tanks to develop a financial sustainability framework; to establish their value propositions as well as develop innovative marketing strategies, including ones on harnessing technology for increasing research capacity, revenue and reach; and to establish an African research collaboration facility to support inter-country think tank collaboration for policy research.

3. Workshops on remittances and their impact on development

Workshops on remittances from workers abroad and their impact on development were held in Tunisia in April and in Morocco in May. They provided a platform for brainstorming and exchanges of experiences, including best practices on the optimal use of remittances to finance economic and social development. The workshops and accompanying studies are part of a larger project covering nine countries, including Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, the Sudan and Tunisia, in preparation for a regional comparative study led by ECA and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

4. Expert group meeting to review the Millennium Development Goals

An expert group meeting to review the Millennium Development Goals and proposals for the sustainable development goals was held in Algiers, in May. The meeting provided perspectives on lessons learned in accelerating progress on the Millennium Development Goals and underscored the importance of the Millennium Development Goals Report in view of the com-

munication and monitoring it mobilized. Support was expressed for a successor report.

5. Policy dialogue on contract negotiation on mining and petroleum extraction

A policy dialogue on contract negotiation on mining and petroleum extraction was held in Ethiopia, in May. It brought together national experts to strengthen their capacities on mining contract negotiation and on petroleum extraction. The platform enabled reflections on: (i) the efficient breach of contracts theory to the benefit of national interests; (ii) potential risks and opportunities that the G7 CONNEX Initiative presents for Africa; and (iii) how to ensure that the current platform grows into a pan-African negotiations network. The participants at the meeting agreed that aligning national laws, policies and contracts to the Africa Mining Vision should be at the centre of any strategy in this field.

6. Global Land Forum and Africa Day

Held in Senegal, in May, the inaugural Global Land Forum and Africa Day formed part of the International Land Coalition's Global Land Forum on Land Governance. Support provided by ECA included the moderation of sessions on the guiding principles for large-scale land-based investments and on the land rights of indigenous people.

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) Journal of African Transformation, jointly produced with the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa;

- b) Report on Moving Forward on Africa's Regional Integration Agenda: Learning from Best Practices and Efforts;
- c) African Women's Report, on the theme of "Gender and the Agricultural Value Chain: Transforming Africa's Agriculture through Women's Empowerment";
- d) Agro-industry development for food and nutritional security in Southern Africa;
- e) Accelerating industrialization in Southern Africa through beneficiation and value addition;
- f) Five subregional reports and the regional report on the sustainable development goals;
- g) Fifth issue of the Sustainable Development Report on Africa, on the theme of "Achieving sustainable development in Africa through inclusive green growth";
- h) Reports on inclusive green economy and structural transformation in Burkina Faso and Ethiopia;
- i) Report on integrated assessment tools and methodologies for inclusive green economy in Africa;
- j) Regional, subregional and national assessment reports on mainstreaming and implementing disaster risk reduction measures.

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

The Commission's training arm, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, continued to offer training courses to senior and mid-career public officials from African member States on new approaches to development planning, with a view to improving economic policy formulation. It offered training courses in Dakar, on international trade negotiations; international trade policy for national and regional development; data analysis for development planners; macroeconomic modelling for development planners; industrial policy in Africa; and training on gender with a focus on the environment, natural resources and climate.

A series of other training initiatives were also undertaken. These included:

- A training on agricultural censuses and surveys held in Burundi, in collaboration with Burundi's *Institut de Statistiques et d'Etudes Economiques* and the *Direction de la Statistique et de l'Information Agricole* of the Ministry of Agriculture. It was targeted at staff from national statistics offices and ministries of agriculture as part of the activities of the Action Plan for Africa of the Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural and Rural Statistics.
- Training workshops for member States on the new African Social Development Index were convened in Kigali for East African countries, Douala for Central African countries, Cairo for North African countries and Cotonou for West African countries. The index measures the degree to which people are excluded from Africa's development, in a bid to help the continent to achieve inclusive social transformation.
- A training session on industrial policy formulation and management in Africa, which was held in Senegal and was attended by 25 officials of ministries of industry from member States.

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

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

- Technical support was provided to the Government of Malawi in reviewing the Mines and Minerals Act of 1981, as well as evaluating its alignment with other national laws and its harmonization with regional as well as international policies and legal frameworks such as the SADC Mining Protocol and the Africa Mining Vision.
- Advisory support was provided to the Government of Sierra Leone to review its draft national mineral policy and align it with the tenets and principles of the Africa Mining Vision. Support to help Governments to align components of their mineral regimes with the Vision is ongoing in Ghana, Guinea, Lesotho, Sierra Leone and the United Republic of Tanzania.
- The second Emerging Leaders in African Mining programme was co-organized with the International Mining for Development Centre and Investing in African Mining Indaba. Its objective was to support young professionals working in the African mining sector to enhance their effectiveness as leaders and to contribute to improved governance of the sector.
- Technical and advisory support was provided to the six African small island developing States (SIDS) – Cabo Verde, the Comoros, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritius, Sao Tome and Principe and Seychelles – to strengthen their resilience within the context of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the SIDS Lighthouse Initiative.

- Technical and advisory support was provided for African lawyers engaged in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiations, to strengthen analysis and review capacities, as well as to enhance skills for effective negotiations and drafting of position papers.
- Technical support was provided to experts from various subregions to develop a methodological framework for intended nationally determined commitments in Africa.
- Technical and advisory support was provided to an assessment of Djibouti's energy resources towards building a 10-year energy development plan. Similarly, in Rwanda, a framework for sustainable deployment of renewable energy technologies is being developed to ensure that renewable energy technologies introduced remain durable, viable and sustainable, to build on progress.

b) Trade-related issues, industry and infrastructure

- In preparation for the fifth Global Review on Aid for Trade, technical and advisory support was provided to strengthen the capacities of member States on aid for trade issues through a regional seminar jointly organized with the World Trade Organization.
- In collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, technical support was provided for analysing the human rights impact of the Continental Free Trade Agreement, focusing on employment, food security and agricultural livelihoods.
- Technical support was provided for the development of an action plan

and a policy implementation plan for Swaziland for their trade and industrialization policy. Technical support was also provided to Guinea-Bissau on strategic planning for structural transformation.

- At the request of President Macky Sall of Senegal, and in conjunction with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordinating Agency, technical and advisory support is ongoing towards repackaging the domestic resource mobilization study. This is in order to accelerate the implementation of the 16 African transboundary infrastructure projects endorsed at the Dakar Financing Summit in 2014. In order to propose a common regional framework on laws, practices and regulations pertaining to infrastructure financing in Africa, a comprehensive mapping exercise is underway, starting with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Technical support has also been extended to the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency on the monitoring and evaluation of regional infrastructure programme implementation.

c) Land policy and agriculture

- Technical consultations were held with the Zambian Ministry of Lands, Natural Resources and Environmental Protection to support the national land policy process in Zambia.
- Technical advisory services were provided to Botswana, Swaziland and the United Republic of Tanzania in implementing a bio-fuels and bio-energy development programme for the household and transport sectors. In addition, regional capacity-building on bio-fuel and bio-energy sector

development was provided to Egypt, Ghana, Swaziland and the United Republic of Tanzania.

- Technical support has been provided on strengthening capacities for the development of regional agricultural value chains in Africa, in Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Kenya, Senegal, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. The support is part of a project that aims to fast track the implementation process of the commodity-based industrialization strategy, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and the 3ADI Programme (Agriculture, Agribusiness and Agro Industries).

d) New technologies and innovation

- Advisory support was provided to the African Union Commission to develop the African Space Policy and Strategy to harness the potential benefits of space science and technology in addressing Africa's socioeconomic opportunities and challenges.
- Technical support was provided to the national geoinformation community in Senegal to define the road map for the implementation of the *Plan Géomatique National du Sénégal*, the country's national spatial data infrastructure.
- Advisory support was provided to the Regional Centre for Training in Aerospace Surveys on identifying innovative ways to mobilize resources for the Centre's daily operations.
- Technical and advisory support was provided to the International Steering Committee of the African Reference Frame programme to complete the roll-out of 10 global navigation satellite system reference stations in the following countries: Burundi, Chad,

Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The installation of the stations is currently being implemented with the assistance of Trimble Navigation.

e) Governance issues and social policy

- Advisory and technical support was provided to the Government of Namibia in the form of an induction seminar for cabinet ministers convened by the Office of the President of Namibia. It covered a range of issues including a review of performance contracts, the terms of reference for newly established ministries, land policy in Africa, and how to design an industrial policy that would best leverage the country's strengths.
- Technical and advisory support was provided to the Mano River Union's preparations of its Ebola Virus Disease Regional Recovery Plan, including the costing component of the plan. This followed the high-level conference on the Ebola epidemic organized by the European Union in Brussels in March 2015.
- Technical support was provided to the civil registration and vital statistics system in Zimbabwe, to provide guidance on the process of a comprehensive assessment as well as the development of an action plan based on the tools and guidance provided. This was undertaken in collaboration with the African Development Bank and the United Nations Children's Fund.
- Technical support was provided on the application of the African Social Development Index towards promoting inclusiveness and mapping out effective social policy options in North Africa and West African francophone countries. Support is underway for

countries from East, North and Central Africa.

- Technical support was provided to Malawi, to produce its Cost of Hunger Report in collaboration with the African Union Commission and the World Food Programme, and to Chad for data collection for the country study.
- Technical support was provided to the regional process for the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development in partnership with the African Union Commission and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). It includes ongoing support in drafting Africa's common position on the New Urban Agenda (Habitat III) as well as in drafting Habitat III regional report that will provide inputs to the global report and process on Habitat III.
- A scorecard on gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa was launched during the June summit of the African Union Commission. The scorecard will measure gender equality and women's empowerment as well as monitor the key objectives of Agenda 2063 from a gender perspective.
- Technical and advisory support was provided to the National Governance Commission of Senegal as well as to the technical research institutes, to improve understanding of the African Peer Review Mechanism process of self-evaluation, its tools and the underlying methodology.
- Technical support was provided to 52 member States to review the progress of the African Project on the Implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts, as well as provide guidance on the way forward. This resulted in important recommendations

on the national action plan for the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts as a planning and resource mobilizing tool.

- Technical and advisory support continued to be provided to the African Peer Review Secretariat. Meetings with the APRM Panel of Eminent Persons, the APRM National Focal Points as well as the Chair of APRM Head of States- the President of Liberia were held in the margins of the AU Summit. As an APRM Strategic Partner, ECA agreed to support the following: upcoming Review Missions in three countries- Djibouti, Chad and Senegal; the second Review exercise in Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa; to take the lead on an APRM Impact Assessment study to be completed by the end of the year; to organize a national workshop on the harmonization of APRM National Plan of Actions within national development plans in Mali; and to contribute to a Regional APRM workshop on best practices for East and West Africa
- Technical support was provided to develop a work plan on the implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows, following the adoption of both the report and the Special Declaration on Illicit Financial Flows by the African Heads of State at the twenty-fourth African Union Summit in January 2015.
- Technical and advisory support was provided to the African Union High-level Committee on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and to the African Group of Negotiators for the duration of the third International Conference on Financing for Development. This was facilitated through the secondment of a dedicated technical expert. The support has included tech-

nical reviews of the various drafts of the Financing for Development document; assisting the African Group of Negotiators to shape and strengthen their position; and preparation of the statements of the African Group of Negotiators.

- ECA is currently supporting the Government of Ethiopia in the preparations for the third International Conference on Financing for Development, which includes technical backstopping for side events being planned and organized with the Government of Ethiopia and other partners. Joint task forces have also been established to deal with matters pertaining to logistics, technical equipment, communications and media outreach, as well as security.

f) Regional economic communities

- Technical support and advisory services were provided to the SADC secretariat, the SADC Council of Ministers of Industry, and the Extraordinary Summit of the Heads of State and Government, towards developing and approving the SADC strategy and roadmap on industrialization.
- Technical support was provided to the secretariat of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) on development cooperation between COMESA and the Government of Western Australia in the areas of mineral resources, agriculture and capacity-building. Advisory services also continue to be provided in the implementation of those projects identified under the 2014 memorandum of understanding between COMESA and the Government of Western Australia.
- Advisory support was provided for the third session of the Steering Committee for the Restructuring of Regional Economic Communities in Central Africa, to review draft instruments covering 5 of the 12 priority areas for streamlining of the work of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC). The calls made by ECA to streamline the subregion's numerous criteria on economic convergence and to ensure the free movement of people across CEMAC were successfully met. The CEMAC Heads of State during the twelfth ordinary session lifted visa-based restrictions on free movement of citizens across the Community.
- Technical support was provided for the development of the East African Community (EAC) Vision 2050. To date, national consultations have been conducted in the following countries: Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.
- Technical and advisory support was provided to the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) to conduct a midterm review of its 2014–2015 multi-year programme to strengthen the General secretariat institutional mechanisms and capacities, promote structural transformation in North African economies and support social development. A gender strategy was developed specifically for the AMU General secretariat with a view to helping it to institutionalize gender mainstreaming into its policy and programme design and implementation.

D. CONSENSUS BUILDING

ECA has supported its member States in articulating common positions on important issues.

These included the following:

- In the area of trade, the organization of the African Union Ministers of Trade meeting to build consensus on the principles, scope, roadmap and schedule for the launch of the negotiations on the Continental Free Trade Area, as well as on other key issues of the trade agenda. These included the implications of the Mega-Regional Trade Agreements, the Economic Partnerships Agreements, the renewal of the African Growth and Opportunity Act and preparations for the tenth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization.
- In support of least developed countries, the organization of a regional technical meeting to prepare African least developed countries for the midterm review of the Istanbul Programme of Action, to take place in 2016 in Antalya, Turkey. The support included measures to improve the implementation of the Programme in the context of Africa.
- To prepare for Africa's proposals for the sustainable development goals, a meeting was convened of national statistics offices to develop indicators for the goals from the perspective of African countries. This was followed by an expert group meeting for the development of sustainable development goal indicators. These will be submitted to Africa's negotiators for the post-2015 development agenda in order to feed into the global process of developing indicators for the sustainable development goals.
- In support of the articulation of the African development goals in the context of Agenda 2063, a retreat was organized for experts from the different thematic areas of the NEPAD Agency. This led to a consolidated matrix mapping the aspirations and goals of Agenda 2063 against the different continental development commitments and frameworks, a better understanding regarding the monitoring required, and a concise definition of the African development goals.
- To prepare and agree on Africa's collective inputs to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, the ninth session of the ECA Committee on Sustainable Development and the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development was convened. A clear understanding and articulation of Africa's priorities and key messages have been formulated as an input to the global forum. They focus on: integration, implementation and review, including shaping the High-level Political Forum beyond 2015; new and emerging issues and the science-policy interface; sustainable consumption and production; and small island developing States and other countries in special situations.
- In collaboration with the Tony Elumelu Foundation, the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank, support was provided in convening an expert group meeting to develop a roadmap on how to implement the Africa Data Consensus to initiate a data revolution across Africa. This meeting was a follow-up to the High-level Conference on the Data Revolution, which was held on the margins of the eighth Conference of Ministers, where the Africa Data Consensus was adopted. In addition, as part of the Commission's efforts to advocate and build consensus on the Africa Data Consensus, it was presented at (i) the Cartagena Data Festival in Colombia, in April; (ii) the third International Open Data Conference in Canada, in May; (iii) a special meeting convened by the office of the Vice-President of Kenya to discuss a data revolution strategy for Kenya; (iv) and the United Nations Foundation strategy meeting in Washington, D.C. in June. The Africa Data Consensus has received significant endorsements including from a

data revolution task force involving several big foundations, led by the ONE Campaign and the Government of the United States of America. The World Bank and IBM have reached out to ECA to partner in a forthcoming conference on open data to be hosted by the United Republic of Tanzania around the Africa Data Consensus principles. In addition, ECA will co-convene a side event at the third International Conference on Financing for Development with the ONE Campaign, Governments, the World Bank, the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network and other multilateral organizations, where a call for action will be issued to major partners to support the global partnership.

E. KEY UPCOMING EVENTS

1. International Ebola Recovery Conference

The International Ebola Recovery Conference, to be convened by the Secretary General, will be held in July, in the United States. It will offer an opportunity for the Governments of the three most-affected countries to: (i) share detailed country and regional Ebola virus disease strategies with priorities for the immediate 12- to 18-month period; (ii) reaffirm their commitment to prioritize Ebola recovery in their national and regional development plans and budgets; (iii) commit to the application of mutually agreed New Deal principles in their recovery efforts; and (iv) secure pledges of international support to fill technical and financial gaps in resources needed to ensure the timely and efficient implementation of the recovery strategies for the 12- to 18-month period.

2. Third African Road Safety Conference

The third African Road Safety Conference will be held in July, in Ethiopia. It will provide an opportunity to examine recent developments and emerging issues, both within Africa and globally, that have a bearing on road safety on the continent and how these developments and issues

could be mainstreamed into the African Road Safety Action Plan at midterm. The Conference expects to adopt recommendations to accelerate the implementation of the Action Plan. It also expects to draft recommendations on Africa's effective participation at the global review of the decade to be held in Brazil in November 2015.

3. Third International Conference on Financing for Development

The third International Conference on Financing for Development will be held in July, in Ethiopia. It will target high-level political representatives, including Heads of State and Government, and ministers of finance, foreign affairs and development cooperation, as well as all relevant institutional stakeholders, non-governmental organizations and business sector entities. The Conference will result in an inter-governmentally negotiated and agreed outcome, which should constitute an important contribution to and support the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

4. Policy Dialogue on Data Revolution and its Impact on Development Planning

A Policy Dialogue on Data Revolution and its Impact on Development Planning will be held in July 2015, in Benin. The forum is intended to provide senior African development planners with an opportunity to discuss and identify the strategies, instruments, and mechanisms that can be adopted by member States to promote evidence-based decision-making as well as the integration of the African data revolution into their national planning processes.

5. Subregional Conference on Building Democratic Developmental States for Economic Transformation

A Subregional Conference on Building Democratic Developmental States for Economic Transformation will be held in July, in South Africa. The Conference will bring together high-level policymakers, scholars, development practitioners and civil society actors in promoting informed intellectual and policy debate on

options and strategies of building democratic developmental States in Southern Africa.

6. Expert meeting on Developing a Framework for Regional Cooperation on Intellectual Property Rights

An expert meeting on Developing a Framework for Regional Cooperation on Intellectual Property Rights in the SADC Region will be held in July, in Botswana. The expert meeting will bring together intellectual property experts to review two draft documents whose preparatory work is currently underway: (i) Template on intellectual property rights policy and regulatory frameworks; and (ii) Study report on the economic impact of intellectual property rights in SADC. This is part of technical assistance to SADC's initiative of strengthening intellectual property rights in the subregion.

F. PARTNERSHIPS

In implementing its new partnership strategy, ECA 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:

- The Africa Diaspora Policy Centre, to develop a new initiative aimed at examining the implication of international migration on development in Africa. A high-level policy dialogue is envisaged for the later part of the year, to galvanize Africa's input into the Global Forum on Migration and

Development, to be held in October 2015, in Istanbul, Turkey.

- The African Centre for Shared Development Capacity-Building, on promoting Africa's industrialization in the China-Africa Cooperation Framework. This new partnership aims to finance project activities related to advancing the African agenda for integration and transformation.
- The International Alliance for Responsible Drinking, to support conventions and approaches to preventing drink driving.
- The African Development Bank, for the implementation of the Nairobi Action Plan on Large-Scale Land-Based Investments in Africa.
- The University of Cape Town, with a memorandum of understanding that was signed with a view to deepening the relationship between the two institutions in support of Africa's development agenda. Areas of cooperation include the production and publication of a joint journal, The African Journal of Development Alternatives, internship and fellowship programmes, joint research, workshops and conferences, training and capacity development for young Africans, and exchange programmes by the two institutions.