



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

21st Intergovernmental Committee of Experts

Transformative Growth in Eastern Africa: *Catalysts and Constraints*

Venue: Moroni, Union of Comoros

Dates: 7-9th November 2017

**Session on the Union of Comoros:
Comoros : strategies for an emerging country**

I. Contextual Background

The Union of Comoros is on the path towards economic recovery. GDP growth is expected to reach 3 % in 2017, and 3.5 % in 2018, after 2.2 % in 2016. Under the new constitution and the power-sharing agreement it entails, the country has regained peace. Improvements have been achieved to improve investment climate, business environment and institutional governance, but results have been mixed. Growth rates remain low compared to other Eastern African neighbors and many challenges remain. As a Small Island Developing State (SIDS), the Comoros face a number of constraints including vulnerability to climate change, infrastructure and transport weaknesses, low levels of investments. The Government is aiming at addressing those challenges through its Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development (SCA2D), a five-year development plan initiated in 2015 targeting infrastructure and human development. The long term vision is for Comoros to become an emerging economy by 2040.

Among the biggest recent achievements is the resolution of the energy crisis which was hindering private sector investment and social development as well. In 2016, the government invested heavily in the rehabilitation of existing infrastructure and energy supply has been more steady since then. However, electricity supply remains largely of carbon origin, and relies on government grants. The shift towards a more sustainable energy mix is one of the recommendations of the national conference on energy which took place in August 2017.

United Nations agencies have been supporting the government of the Union of Comoros in designing its development strategy. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa has engaged with the government through technical assistance in the field of energy planning, climate policy and statistics. It has recently drafted a profile aiming at presenting the latest economic and social developments of the country. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is also working closely with the government of Comoros in the areas of cash crops, ecotourism, governance, and energy supply. The development of geothermal energy is one of the flagship projects currently carried out by the UNDP in Comoros.

The Intergovernmental Committee of Experts will provide an excellent opportunity for the host country to create awareness about the country recent achievements and strengthen regional partnerships. It will enable the government of Comoros to present its strategic plan and learn from peer review, debate and shared experience.

This session focused on the Union of Comoros will be jointly organised by the government of the Union of Comoros, ECA and UNDP.

II. Objectives of the Session

The objective of the session is to create awareness about the host country and debate about its most recent challenges and achievements . More specifically, the session aims at:

- a) Giving ICE participants an overview of the Union of the Comoros, its current challenges and perspectives regarding economic, social and environment issues ;
- b) Share with participants the draft of the strategic plan (SCA2D revised) ;
- c) Present the country's situation and perspectives in the energy sector.

III. Expected outcomes of the AEGM

The session hopes for increased awareness about the host country, as well as valuable inputs from peers to the country profile and revised SCA2D. Other specific expected outcomes include:

- a) ICE participants from outside the Comoros have acquired a better knowledge about the host country,
- b) The ECA profile of Comoros is presented during the session and valuable inputs are gathered for review,
- c) A draft of the government revised strategic plan (SCA2D) is presented and discussed among the participants,
- d) Strategic orientation and key projects in the energy sector are shared and assessed by ICE experts.

IV. Tentative programme

11.30 – 12.30 : Part 1: Overview of the Comorian economy

Joint presentation by UNDP and UNECA based on UNDP African Economic Outlook and UNECA Comoros country profile draft, followed by a debate

- Presented by :

Attoumane Boina Issa, National Economist, UNDP in the Union of Comoros,

Priscilla Lecomte, Associate Economic Affairs Officer, ECA in Eastern Africa,

- Moderated by :

Ms. Laïla Said Hassane, Executive Director, Meck Moroni,

Mr. Abdallah Nouroudine - Director, CNDRS, Centre National de Documentation et de Recherche Scientifique, Union of Comoros,

- Panelists to be confirmed.

13.30 – 14.30 : Part 2: Comoros strategic plan for an emerging economy

Presentation by the Government of the Union of Comoros on the draft of the revised SCA2D.

- Presented by **Mr. Fouady Goulame**, General Planning Commissioner of the Union of Comoros,
- Moderated by: **Ms. Laïla Sad Hassane**, Executive Director, Meck Moroni and **Mr. Abdallah Nouroudine** - Director, CNDRS,
- Panelists to be confirmed.

14.30 – 15.30 : Part 3: The energy sector, driver of growth and sustainable development

Joint presentation by the Government of the Union of Comoros, UNDP and ECA on the outcome of the national conference on energy, Comoros geothermal project and shared experience by ECA from renewable energy investments.

- Presented by :

Mme Farida Ahmed Karim, Renewable Energy Director, Union of Comoros,

Karim Ali Ahmed, Programme officer, UNDP in the Union of Comoros,

Yohanes Hailu Economic Affairs Officer, ECA in Eastern Africa,

- Moderated by: **Ms. Laïla Said Hassane**, Executive Director, Meck Moroni and **Mr. Abdallah Nouroudine** - Director, CNDRS,
- Panelists to be confirmed.

V. Participation

This will be a plenary session For further information and clarification, you may wish to contact the following focal points:

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