



**UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

***CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY***

**14<sup>th</sup> Session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa (RCM-Africa)  
of United Nations agencies and organizations working in Africa in support of  
the African Union and the NEPAD programme**

***Theme: United Nations Support to “Agenda 2063”***

**Welcome Remarks**

**by**

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**Excellency, Mr. Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union**

**Commission,  
Excellencies,  
Colleagues of the UN system,  
Ladies and Gentlemen**

**It is a pleasure to welcome you all to Addis Ababa for the 14th Session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa (RCM-Africa) of United Nations agencies and organizations working in Africa in support of the African Union and the NEPAD programme.**

**There is a well known proverb oft quoted by the wise on this continent, which says:**

***If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.***

**It has become particularly apt now because Africa, the continent with the youngest population in the world, is clamoring for more. The onus then is on key actors to go both “fast and far” to make the most of the immense opportunities offered by the continent’s human and natural resources.**

**Under the overall rubric of the African Union there is now a viable regional institutional architecture and programmes in place to assist in this journey. The goodwill and commitment of Africa’s partners is also evident. Nonetheless, there remains much work ahead to turn this commitment into the needed long term concrete results on the ground. To be truly effective partners have to align coherently with Africa’s priorities and cooperate strategically with each other and Africa’s regional institutions.**

**The RCM is therefore particularly important from the perspective of the UN in its quest to forge greater coherence in supporting regional and sub regional programmes and projects. Indeed, in recent years, the annual RCM-Africa**

**sessions have served as important forums for shaping African positions in global processes and the attendant role of the UN in this regard. Past RCM meetings contributed to Africa's preparations for Rio+20, climate change conferences, and the post 2015 development agenda.**

**This year's theme "United Nations Support to the African Union Agenda 2063" reflects the same spirit. This is in the sense that it underscores the important role that the RCM has to play in responding to emerging priorities in the continent. It moreover shows that ownership resides in the continent and the UN can only support and not drive the process.**

**It is in this regard that consultations are being undertaken with a wide cross section of stakeholders to give voice to various constituencies and ensure that their views are taken on board. It is a reflection of the value that the AU Commission places on partnership with the UN that it has been included in this process of consultation. Today's programme will accordingly allow engagement on Agenda 2063 across the economic, social, governance and peace and security dimensions in which RCM members have considerable expertise.**

**In deliberating on these issues we should bear in mind that support to Agenda 2063 has to be tailored around key milestones including those adapted from existing pan-African frameworks and programmes. Thus the imperative of framing African Development Goals as an integral part of AU Agenda 2063. These need not be incompatible with global goals in the sense that they can fit into global goals or indeed address an entirely different set of sectors and desired outcomes that are Africa specific. They will thus serve as an outlet for the African narrative and can cover sectors such as infrastructure, agriculture, governance, industrialization, and peace and security to mention but a few.**

**Since 2006, there has been considerable attention given to how to support the capacity requirements of the African Union within the context of the Ten-Year**

**Capacity Building Programme for the AU and NEPAD. It is in this regard then that this RCM session will also engage in preliminary discussions of the second triennial review of the Ten-Year Capacity Building Programme for the AU. Now with three years left of the programme, it is timely to reflect on the implementation of the recommendations made at the end of the first review.**

**Much of the original operational context and landscape has changed since the establishment of this programme in 2006 and the first review in 2009. It would be accordingly important to assess how the current context may require a completely novel approach that fits into the AU institutional architecture and priorities. The discussions on this issue will be informed by the report of an independent consultant. His report poses a number of important questions, the answers to which could significantly impact on the nature of the UN's support to the African Union in the future.**

**There remains the recurring issue of resources to facilitate the work of the RCM. This matter will continue to engage us and compels us to ensure that resources are properly embedded in business plans and the proposed Regional Development Assistance Framework to be aligned to AU strategic plan for 2014-2017. On its part, ECA has a new Capacity Development Division which by its establishment will help to boost the resources available to the Joint Secretariat of the RCM. We envisage that it will contribute to enhancing the work of RCM clusters.**

**In order to further deepen the impact of the RCM and enable even greater engagement with African leaders, the next annual sessions of RCM-Africa has been scheduled to take place back to back with the Annual Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. This will enable UN leaders to engage directly and effectively with this body of key stakeholders. The outcome of this RCM meeting would also serve to guide the preparations for that**

**forthcoming 15th session which will be convened in Abuja in the first quarter of next year.**

**Excellencies,**

**Colleagues,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

**We have much ground to cover in a very short time. With the spirit of Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance inspiring us forward, I have no doubt that the deliberations over the next two days will be fruitful and productive.**

**Thank you for your kind attention.**