

AUC NEWS



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AFRICAN YOUTH CHARTER LAUNCHED AT AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT FORUM V

AU AND UN SIGN COOPERATION AGREEMENT



Mr. Konare and Mr. Anan after signing the AU UN cooperation agreement



Professor Konare holding a copy of the Youth Charter at the official launch

The fifth edition of the African Development Forum (ADF V), organised jointly by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Union was held at ECA in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa from 16- 18 November. The ADF this year focused on "Youth and Leadership in the 21st Century".

At the official opening ceremony, AUC Chairperson Mr. Konare launched the African Youth Charter. 4 representatives of African youths received copies of the Charter from the Chairperson, who was assisted by the Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and technology professor Nagia Essayed.

Mr. Konare encouraged the youth of Africa to fight for liberty and accountability, to mobilise against HIV and Aids, say no to drugs, and to raise their voices to reject conflict and impunity. He

also urged the youths to acquire education and appreciate their cultures and languages.

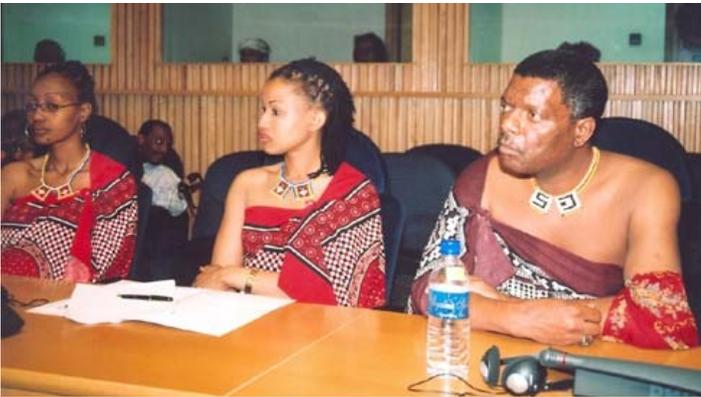
He asked for a moment's silence in memory of the many young African migrants who lost their lives en route to Europe in search of jobs.

Mr. Konare also recalled that Africa will host the Soccer World Cup in 2010 and called on the continent to ensure that the tournament shows African culture and values.

During the Forum, the UN and the African Union (AU) signed a cooperation agreement. The agreement was signed by AU Commission Chairperson and outgoing UN Secretary General., Mr. Koffi Anan.

ADF V honoured Mr. Anan, who was in Addis Ababa on his last official trip to Africa. The AU, through the Chairperson, thanked him for what he did for Africa and presented him with a map of the continent.

Hundreds of delegates attended ADF, including Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Mr Meles Zenawi, President of the African Development Bank, Mr. Donald Kaberuka, ECA Executive Secretary, Mr. Abdulie Janneh, government ministers, ambassadors, AU Commissioners, youth representatives and invited guests.



Many of the delegates came to the Congress in traditional clothes



AUC and other congress leaders standing to attention as the AU anthem played

AU COMMISSION HOSTS 1ST AFRICAN CULTURAL CONGRESS

From 13- 15 November the AU hosted the 1st Pan African Cultural Congress at its headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Congress was held in line with the decision of the 1st AU Conference of Ministers of Culture held in December 2006, which was endorsed by the AU Summit in Khartoum in January 2006.

The theme for the Congress was **Culture, Integration and African Renaissance**.

The Congress aimed to review and assess the cultural sector in Africa, and consider challenges and opportunities in order to draw strategies and appropriate programmes.

AU Commission Chairperson Professor Alpha Oumar Konare officially opened the congress, with a call for Africa to promote its culture as the basis for development.

"Africa is facing an identity crisis because we are working without reference to our history. Africa should realize that the foundations of development



A musical troupe provided music for the delegates

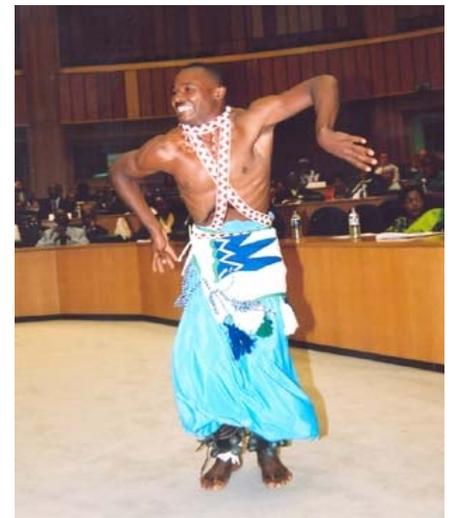


On the sidelines, a bazaar was organised to showcase African products

ought to be based on culture", he told the delegates.

At the same occasion, the Chairperson also launched the Cultural Charter for the Renaissance of Africa.

Commissioner Bience Gawanas said that the Congress was important in so far as it allowed the continent to take stock of where it is and reflect on where it wants to go, culturally.



A traditional dancer goes through his paces

At the end of the three days, the Congress came up with a consensus statement covering many aspects of culture such as memory and heritage; culture, language and education; culture, youth and gender; cultural development; culture, development and social transformation; culture rights, freedoms and the protection of cultural and intellectual property rights; and culture, the media and new technologies.

The Congress was attended by over 250 stakeholders .

HIGH LEVEL CONSULTATION ON THE SITUATION IN DARFUR HELD AT AU HEADQUARTERS



The Secretary General of the United Nations and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, on 16 November, co chaired a meeting of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council and a number of African countries, including Sudan. They met to identify concrete steps to be taken to improve the current situation. The group considered three areas: the need to re-energise the peace process, establishing a strengthened ceasefire, and the way forward for peace keeping in Darfur.

RE ENERGISED POLITICAL PROCESS

On the issue of a re energized political process, various proposals were put forward, including:

The various initiatives must be brought under one umbrella .

The next step is for the UN and AU to call a meeting of the non

signatories: SLA/M and the Government of Sudan (GoS), which should take place in time to have resolved outstanding issues by the end of the year.

ESTABLISHING STRENGTHENED CEASEFIRE

On establishing a strengthened ceasefire, the Ceasefire Working group, among others, welcomed the Government of Sudan's renewed commitment to a political process. It called upon all parties to immediately commit to a cessation of hostilities in Darfur in order to give the renewed discussions the best chance for success.

The group agreed that the AU should have a forum through which it can hold all parties accountable for ceasefire violations in Darfur. The group welcomed the mandate given by the latest Joint Committee meeting to the AU force commander to create direct links to non signatories.

WAY FORWARD FOR PEACE KEEPING

It was agreed that the aim of the UN support package, which consists of three phases, is to assist AMIS in the implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement. The peace keeping force should be capable of contributing to the restoration of security and protection of civilians in Darfur through the implementation of the security aspects of the DPA. It should also ensure full humanitarian access.

The peace keeping force should be logistically and financially sustainable and should be predominantly African in character. Backstopping and command and control structures will be provided by the UN. The group also noted the need to take into account the security situation along the Chad-Sudan- Central African Republic borders.

Picture: Mr. Konare and Mr. Anan, and Mr. Mazimhaka at the crucial high level dialogue on Darfur



TRIPOLI AU EU MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE TACKLES MIGRATION ISSUES

Ministers responsible for foreign affairs, migration and development from Africa and European Union member states met in Tripoli Libya from 22- 23 November to address various aspects of migration.

Among the issues considered by the ministers were migration and development, migration and management challenges, peace and security, human resources and the brain drain, human rights and the well being of the individual, harnessing the benefits of migration, illegal or irregular migration, and protection of refugees and internally displaced persons. Analyses and recommendations made to address each of the issues are contained in a joint declaration issued at the end of the conference

On financing mechanisms, the ministers recommended that the commitments made by the European Union to support the devel-

opment efforts of countries of origin or transit be implemented. They also agreed to examine the feasibility of setting up a fund to implement measures set out in their joint declaration.

Follow up to the joint declaration will take place in the context of the joint EU Africa strategy and the joint implementation matrix. A joint ministerial conference should take place every three years.

Migration issues have, over the years, grown in importance in continental and international agendas. Every country has become either a country of origin, transit or destination or a combination of the three. The fundamental causes of migration, as identified by the Tripoli conference are poverty and under development, aggravated by demographic and economic imbalances, unequal terms of global trade, conflicts, environmental

factors, poor governance, uneven impact of globalisation and humanitarian disasters. Experts say that in Africa, a growing aspect is the feminisation of migration as women have also started to migrate in search of greater employment and economic opportunities. Migration has also, in many cases, impacted negatively on the countries of origin due to the attendant brain drain.

Since migration is caused by and aggravated by a variety of causes, the Tripoli conference emphasised that the illegal or irregular migration cannot be addressed by security considerations only but should be based on broader development frameworks and on mainstreaming migration in development strategies, within a framework of partnership for development.

The conference also recognised that well managed migration is of benefit to both Africa and the EU and can help in the achievement of the MDGs.

AFRICA AND SOUTH AMERICA ESTABLISH COOPERATIVE FORUM

Heads of State and Government from Africa and South America agreed to establish the Africa-South America Cooperative Forum (ASACOF) of Heads of State and Government, when they met at the 1st Africa- South America (ASA) Summit in Abuja Nigeria from 26-30 November. There are also plans to establish a secretariat, to be confirmed at the next Summit in 2009 in Venezuela.

53 African countries and 12 South American countries were represented at the Summit. RECs, NEPAD, African Development Bank, and the League of Arab States were also present.

The leaders committed themselves to explore and exploit opportunities for cooperation and collaboration in the areas of trade and investment, agriculture, energy, technology, water resources and tourism. They also pledged to immediately activate and implement all bilateral agreements between their countries, particularly in the areas of trade, air services and agriculture.

In the Abuja Resolution on ASACOF, the Heads of State and Government agreed to adopt strategies that will translate the vision of the ASACOF into concrete benefits; to intensify cooperation and consultation; and to exploit the immense opportunities in the two continents in order to benefit their estimated 1.2 billion peoples.

Other documents adopted at the Summit are the Abuja Declaration



President Obasanjo (standing) addressing the opening session of the Summit

and the Abuja Plan of Action. In the two documents, the two regions propose a number of other priority areas for collaboration such as peace and security, multilateralism, democracy, respect for the rule of law, combating of illicit trafficking in arms, non proliferation of nuclear weapons, eradication of poverty and environmental protection, gender mainstreaming, science and technology, culture, education, and youth.

The ASA Summit adopted three important documents:

- Abuja Resolution on ASACOF
- Abuja Declaration
- Abuja Plan of Action

The following leaders addressed the opening session of the Summit; President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria who co chaired the meeting with President Lula da Silva of Brazil, Presidents Muammar Gaddafi of Libya and Evo Morales of Bolivia, and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission Alpha Oumar Konare.

In their statements, the leaders emphasized the need for South- South

cooperation and strategic partnerships, strengthening existing links, engaging in constructive dialogue, and working for a more equitable economic order. They agreed on the need to reform the United Nations and expansion of the UN Security Council. They acknowledged that the two regions have many historical links in the form of colonization and marginalization. As such they agreed that their challenges and aspirations are similar and should serve as a basis for mutual cooperation .

Professor Konare urged the two regions to work together based on common values. He encouraged the adoption of a common African language in international forums, free movement across the regions,

cancellation of debt, reduction of the digital gap, and attention to climate issues. He also said people of the two regions have a duty to remember their history, and to be in solidarity with the suffering people of Palestine.

The ASA Summit will be held every two years in Africa and South America on a rotational basis.

CONGRESS OF AFRICAN SCIENTISTS AND POLICY MAKERS



Commissioner Essayed of HRST addressing the 1st African Congress of Scientists and Policy makers

As part of preparations for the January Heads of State and Government of the AU Summit, one of whose themes will be “Science, Technology and Research”, the Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology (HRST) hosted the Congress of African Scientists and Policy Makers, which took place in Alexandria, Egypt, from 27 to 29 October 2006.

The Congress brought together Africa's leading scientists, executives and decision-makers from industry, research institutions, government and academia to discuss fundamental topics in science and technology for Africa's socio-economic development.

The objectives of the Congress were:

- To provide a platform for discussion between S&T practitioners and policy makers on the development of S&T in the continent.
- To create a common platform for focused discussion on factors affecting development of S&T in Africa.
- To make recommendations on the above issues and get endorsement from the Science and Technology Ministers and ultimately the Heads of State and Government

The Congress created a space for creative thinking on development and utilization of S&T. It also provided opportunity for African scientists to share experiences with countries that have successfully used S&T for their economic development such as India, Brazil, China and Finland.

“Making ICTs Available for African Youth”

The 2nd African ICT (Information Communication Technologies) Week was commemorated from the 14th to 20th November. It is an annual campaign to promote the use of ICTs for the socio-economic development of Africa.

The long-term aim with this campaign is to develop a digitally literate Africa.

In keeping with this campaign's traditions to promote greater use of ICTs and in support of various efforts to bridge the “digital divide”, the first day of the ICT Week, November 14th 2005 was the **African Paperless Day**.

In addition, the Human Resources Science and Technology Department in the AU Commission Launched the African Union Best Practices Award competition (AUBPA) in information and communication technology (ICT). The AUBPA award competition honors excellence in Web design, functionality and creativity.

More on the ICT week can be seen on www.AICTW.com

HOW SHOULD CSOs REPORT ON THE SOLEMN DECLARATION ON GENDER EQUALITY?

A two day meeting focusing on the role of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the monitoring and reporting of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA) was held in Addis Ababa at the AU headquarters from 2-3 November..



Commissioner Gawanas (right) opening the meeting as the Acting Director of Gender Directorate Mrs. Teriba looks on

The main objective of the Consultation was to see how the Gender Directorate can have a better coordinated approach in working with the CSOs, especially in the monitoring and reporting on the *Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa (SDGEA)*.

The Consultation was also expected to propose a way forward that would assist the AU in its commitment to advise the Pan-African Women's Organization (PAWO) so that it emerges from its next General Assembly to play a new and well-defined role within the AU and the broad African women's movement.

25 delegates from African civil society organizations in each of the five regions, the RECs, AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat attended the meeting which was organized by the Women, Gender and Development Directorate of the AU. Commissioner Bience Gawanas of the Social Affairs Department officially opened the meeting. Other AU professionals who addressed the meeting were Mrs. Yetunde Teriba of Gender Directorate, Mr. Ben Kioko, the Legal Counsel, who advised on the legal and regulatory framework for CSO/ AU collaboration and Mr. Jinmi Adisa, the Director of CIDO, who spoke about the CIDO experience.

AFRICAN UNION INTRODUCES THE MWALIMU NYERERE SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME FOCUSING ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The African Union Commission, through the Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology has established the Mwalimu Nyerere African Union Scholarship Scheme.

The Scholarship Scheme is designed to enable African students

to undertake degree programmes of study (Bachelors', Masters' and PhD) at leading African Universities, in the areas of science and technology, with a binding agreement that the beneficiaries will work in an African country for 2 to 5 years after graduation. It is expected that the scheme will

assist in the achievement of the African Union vision of peace, integration, prosperity and peagee in the global community.

An application form, the fields of study as well as the application procedures are available on the AU website, on www.africa-union.org.

AFRICAN UNION AND INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION ORGANIZATION TO FORGE A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FOR STRENGTHENING CIVIL AVIATION IN AFRICA



Dr Zoba (second from left) holding the meeting with ICAO officials

The Secretary-General of the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Dr Taïeb Cherif paid a working visit to the Office of the Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, Dr Bernard Zoba on 15 August 2006. Also, the President of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), Mr. Tshepo Peege and the Secretary General of African Airlines Association (AFRAA), Mr. Christian Folly-Kossi, attended the meeting.

The visit was part of a series of actions initiated by the two organisations aimed at strengthening cooperation between them geared towards the implementation of joint programmes for the development

of the aviation sector in Africa.

The ICAO Secretary-General, has shown keen interest in the development of the air transport sector in Africa and, in that regard, has maintained contacts with the African Union with a view to aligning ICAO's support to the AU programme in this key transport industry. In that connection, he participated in the Second Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Air Transport held in Libreville, Gabon in May 2005 where he expressed ICAO's desire to renew and enhance relations with the African Union in civil aviation matters.

During his visit to the Commission, Dr. Cherif expressed his appreciation for the work accomplished by the Commission during its first and second conferences of African Ministers

responsible for the air transport held in Sun City, South Africa and in Libreville, Gabon respectively in May 2005 and May 2006 followed by the High Level Meeting of African Airlines held in Tunis, Tunisia in late May 2006.

Specifically, the Secretary-General hailed the initiatives being taken to liberalise air transport markets, enhance efficiency of air transport and improve aviation safety and security on the continent through the implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision and the Ministerial Resolutions and Action Plans adopted in Sun City and Libreville as well as at the High Level Meeting of African Airlines held in Tunis. In that connection, ICAO had prepared a project concept paper for **Sustainable Air Transport in Africa** and was proposing it for joint implementation with the African Union.

It is envisaged that the project will contribute significantly to socio-economic progress in Africa through sustainable development of the air transport industry. It is expected to lead to the following outcomes:

- Strengthening of the capacity of the Commission in undertaking major studies and development projects with the support of the vast experience and technical know-how of ICAO;
- Mobilisation of substantive financial resources from donors and development partners for a massive intervention in the air transport sector, for the first time in Africa, with the support of the World Bank, European Union and ICAO;
- Enhancement of efficiency of the

Commission for the accomplishment of its mandate in the overall implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision especially the setting up of the Executing Agency which will benefit from the input of key studies and projects as well as associated financial support; and

- Improvement of the image and credibility of the African Union Commission in the air transport industry through strategic aeronautical cooperation with ICAO and special relation with international financiers.

In general, the Sustainable Air Transport in Africa project is a significant opportunity to the African Union Commission for:

- Consolidating and accelerating the efficient implementation of activities engaged for the African air transport industry since 2004;
- Halting the marginalisation of Africa in the global air transport industry; and
- Introducing a new development dynamic in the air transport sub-sector.

The two delegations held fruitful discussions on the project proposal of ICAO and agreed that it was a positive step towards the envisaged programmatic collaboration between the two organisations in civil aviation.

Emphasis was put on ensuring that the project adequately takes into account and builds on the initiatives and achievements of the AU Commission in developing the African air transport industry. These include particularly the ongoing implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision, the development of common continental air transport

policy and the elaboration of an integrated transport master plan for Africa.

As well, the two parties considered the role of the AU Commission in the implementation of the project which will last three years beginning January 2007, setting of the project team and its operationalisation, the constitution and the functioning of the Steering Committee and other issues such as the coordination mechanism.

The two organisations agreed that the African Union Commission should participate in the entire process of the preparation of the project. In this regard, the Commission would play a leadership role in co-chairing and the management of the project and be represented in all structures of the project including the Steering Committee.

ICAO will be associated in all activities related to the implementation issues identified by the Commission notably those related to the follow up of the Decision of Heads of States and Government on the air transport sector adopted at the Banjul Assembly, July 2006. ICAO committed itself to mobilise the requisite funds.

The two delegations agreed to sign a MOU to formalise and solidify their overall cooperation arrangement. Furthermore, it was agreed that a joint Africa-wide Conference on Aviation Security should be organized in early 2007 in the new framework of cooperation.

In addition to the foregoing, this meeting was deemed an appropriate opportunity to discuss matters of mutual interest such as the inter-

national dimension of unilateral measures of States or groups of States in civil aviation, ICAO's participation in the elaboration of the Integrated Transport Master Plan for Africa, ICAO database sharing, war risk insurance (Global Time Insurance Project); brain drain and the autonomy of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC).

Regarding the future of the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), which has been a recipient of substantive ICAO support, it was agreed that before 1st January 2006, the date at which the current arrangement between AFCAC and ICAO will end, a new mechanism of cooperation should be formulated by those organisations.

In view of the multitude of outstanding concerns of Africa in civil aviation, the Secretary General of ICAO proposed that a meeting between the AUC and his organization be convened in Montreal at a mutually convenient time to discuss critical issues affecting air transport in Africa and future cooperation between the two Organizations.

Following consultations, it has now been established that the meeting will take place from 20 to 24 November 2005. The Commissioner will lead the AUC delegation and, on 24 November, he will present to the 173rd Session of the ICAO Council the AU programme and activities in civil aviation.

In conclusion, the two Organizations agreed that ICAO should be the unique forum through which decisions on all issues with international implications in the field of civil aviation are taken.

AFRICA MARKS INTERNATIONAL TOLERANCE DAY



Commissioner
Joiner

On 16th November, the African Union Commission joined the international community in commemorating International Tolerance Day.

To mark the occasion, Commissioner Julia Joiner of Political Affairs Department issued a statement calling on Member States, political and religious actors, the media and civil society organisations and individuals to play a critical role in the promotion of tolerance, respect for democracy, good governance and human rights.

“We must not relent in our efforts to promote dialogue, greater understanding and trust in our communities, encourage peaceful co-existence and relations among different ethnic, religious, linguistic and other groups and ensure that the values of pluralism and respect for diversity and non-discrimination are effectively promoted” she said.

The Commissioners also called upon Member States that have not yet adopted and ratified international and regional human rights treaties and legislation for the promotion of equal treatment and opportunity for all groups and individuals in society, to urgently do so.

The 2006 African Statistics Day

The African Statistics Day (ASD) was marked on 18 November.

The ASD is a yearly advocacy tool aimed at raising awareness of the importance of statistics in the economic and social development of Africa. The 2006 celebration was devoted to raising awareness on the importance of National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) as new benchmarks in statistical planning aimed at facilitating the development of statistics in a coordinated manner using modern management principles such as free flow of information and ideas, participation, teamwork, innovation, creativity, and initiative.

AUC AND ICRC HOLD BRAINSTORMING DAY

The African Union Commission and ICRC (International Committee of Red Cross) organized their 9th Joint AU/ICRC Brainstorming Day, on November 1st 2006 at the Conference Center of the Commission of the African Union in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The main subject of the meeting was “International Humanitarian Law (IHL) and Protection of Civilians in Conflict Situation in Africa”.

Among topics discussed were: Prevention – The Role of Parliaments in the Promotion of IHL; Conflicts; and Post Conflict situations.

Many high level speakers were lined up for this important event including Mrs. Julia Dolly Joiner, the African Union Commissioner for Political Affairs, H.E. Mr. Bruno Zidouemba, Chairperson of the PRC Sub-Committee on Refugees and Ambassador of Burkina Faso to Ethiopia, and Jacques Forster, ICRC Vice President as well as Representatives of the Pan-African Parliament, and the African Parliamentary Union and high officials from AU and ICRC.

AU COMMISSIONER FOR PEACE AND SECURITY LAUNCHES PREPARATORY COMMITTEE OF DARFUR- DARFUR DIALOGUE AND CONSULTATION



Commissioner Djinnit

The AU Commissioner for Peace and Security Ambassador Said Djinnit formally launched the Preparatory Committee (PreCom) of the Darfur-Darfur Dialogue and Consultation (DDDC) and introduced its new Chairman Mr. Abdul Mohammad, on 9 November, 2006, at the Friendship Hall in Khartoum.

Mr. Djinnit also chaired an informal meeting of the DPA/ Assessment and Evaluation (D-AEC) Commission, which will serve as an oversight mechanism for the full and timely implementation of the DPA .

Other engagements during the visit included meetings with the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr. Al Samani Al Wasila and with Dr. Majzoub Al Khalifa and members of his Implementation Team on the implementation of the DPA.

The Commissioner also met with representatives of the African Group and the international partners. With the Acting UN representative Mr. Taye Zerihoun, he discussed matters related to bilateral cooperation between AMIS and UNMIS.

Finally, Mr. Djinnit had discussions with the representatives of the Signatories of the Declaration of Commitment (DoC) on matters relating to the implementation of the Darfur Agreement.

PRC HEARS ABOUT EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON AFRICA

Sir Nicholas Stern, head of the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change and Adviser to the British government on the Economics of Climate Change and Development visited the African Union headquarters on 20 November where he addressed the Permanent Representatives Committee and other members of the diplomatic community in Addis Ababa, on the Potential Impact of Climate change on the African Continent.



Sir Nicholas (top right) and his delegation having discussions with Commissioner Kurwijila and Dr Babagana prior to meeting the PRC

Sir Nicholas shared the results of the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change, which was undertaken in 2005. Its objective was to contribute to shared foundations of understanding climate change and policy towards it.

At the meeting, Commissioner Rosebud Kurwijila of the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture said the AU is aware of the serious impact climate change will have on Africa and that the issue needs the undivided attention of Africa’s leaders. It is for this reason, she said, that climate change is on the agenda of the forthcoming Summit of the AU Assembly to be held in January.



Swiss Confederation President Mr. Moritz Leuenberger paid a visit to the AU on Friday 17 November and had wide ranging discussions with Mr. Konare, including cooperation between the AU and Switzerland, and AU peace operations.



On 8 November, the Ambassador of Burundi (left) deposited the Protocol to the OAU Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism in the office of the Deputy Chairperson, Mr. Patrick Mazimhaka (right)

MINISTERS OF EDUCATION OF THE AU ADOPT PLAN OF ACTION FOR 2ND DECADE OF EDUCATION IN MAPUTO

Following the declaration of the Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2015) by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) in January 2006, the Ministers of Education of the AU Member States, met on 7th of September 2006 in Maputo, Mozambique in the Second Extraordinary session of the Conference.

They considered and adopted the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006-2015), in preparation for its launch.

At the end of the meeting, the ministers adopted a declaration in which they committed themselves to:

- Ensure enhanced political action and leadership, for the Second Decade of Education for Africa;
- Establish mechanisms for collaboration, follow-up and implementation of programmes of Second Decade of Education for Africa;
- Accelerate efforts towards attainment of full gender equality in all areas of education;
- Sensitize all development partners in education to support the collective vision embodied in the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa, for positive policies that will facilitate the implementation of the Decade;
- Strengthen the role of Education in the promotion of regional and continental integration through bilateral, regional and inter-institutional networks;
- Lobby for mobilisation of resources in ICTs, to bridge the digital divide, in particular increasing bandwidth and connectivity in Africa, as agreed at the World Summit on the Information Society (Tunis 2005), in order to facilitate the delivery of quality education, research and development in general and in support of the African regional integration. Expedite the formalization of working relations between the Commission and expert agencies such as the Association of African Universities and ADEA in support of the Plan of Action.



2 major documents came out of the Summit.

The first is the **Beijing Declaration** which is a political statement on the relationships between the two parties.

The second document is the **Beijing Plan of Action, 2007-2009**, which lists specific programmes and activities”

THE CHINA - AFRICA FORUM

From 3-5 November 2006, the Beijing Summit and the Third Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) were held in Beijing. Heads of state, government and delegations as well as ministers of foreign affairs and ministers in charge of economic cooperation from China and 48 African countries attended the Summit and ministerial meeting respectively.

The Chairperson of the AU Commission attended the meeting along with other senior delegates. The meeting was co chaired by China and Ethiopia.

According to Professor Fajana, who was with the AU delegation, the main objective of the meeting was to look at how Chinese- African relationships can be strengthened in a mutually beneficial manner. These relations started 50 years ago.

The meeting was also a progression on the two previous meetings, in 2000 and 2003, which were held at ministerial level. Professor Fajana said 2 major documents came out of the Summit.

He said the first is the Beijing Declaration which is a political statement on the relationships between the two parties. The second document is the Beijing Plan of Action, 2007-2009, which lists specific programmes and activities.

In the Action Plan, the two sides agreed on a wide spectrum of cooperation fields, such as political, economic, international affairs and social development. This is in an effort to build on the success of the Summit, chart the course for China Africa cooperation in all areas in the next three years and promote friendship, peace and development.

In the Plan, the role of the African Union, the sub regional organizations and financial institutions in building up Africa was applauded.

The Chinese government pledged to continue its cooperation with the AU and RECs, to support the AU's role in solving African issues and take an active part in UN peace keeping operations in Africa. The Chinese side also pledged to help the AU build a convention center in Addis Ababa.

The two sides commended cooperation between FOCAC and NEPAD. They also pledged to strengthen friendly contacts between the National People's Congress of China and parliaments of African countries, as well as with the Pan African parliament.

AUC MOURNS THE PASSING OF MR PATRICK TIGERE

The Commission learnt with deep regret of the passing away on 22 November of Mr. Patrick Tigere, Head of Division of Humanitarian Affairs, Refugees and Displaced Persons. Commissioner Joiner, in whose department he worked said Mr. Tigere, who was 38, died in hospital in South Africa and was buried in Zimbabwe on 26 November. He is survived by his wife and two children.

A memorial ceremony was held for him at the AU in Addis Ababa on the 24th November, attended by many in the Commission including the Chairperson Among the speakers were Commissioner Julia Joiner, Zimbabwean Ambassador to Ethiopia and Representative to the AU Dr Mtetwa, Chairperson of the PRC Sub Committee on Refugees, Director of Peace and Security, Acting Director of Administration, and representatives from the Zimbabwean community, the clinic and staff association.

In her eulogy, Commissioner Joiner said "Patrick was a true humanitarian, who put others first, by speaking what he felt and believed in and expressing himself openly on behalf of the AU Commission and the victims of forced displacement whom he served dutifully...Patrick was the embodiment of commitment, competence, and excellence. He was a brilliant writer, articulate in his speech, and an effective communicator.



In happier times....
Mr Tigere (left) discussing with the Chairperson during a visit to Darfur earlier this year

JANUARY SUMMIT ANNOUNCEMENT

The next Summit of the African Union will take place in Addis Ababa in January 2007 as follows:

22-23 January: 13th Ordinary Session of the PRC

25-26 January: 10th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council

29-30 January: 8th Ordinary Session of the Conference of the African Union

The themes of the Summit will be: Science, Technology and Scientific Research and Climate change in Africa,.

The launching of 2007 as the Year of African Football will also be on the agenda.

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