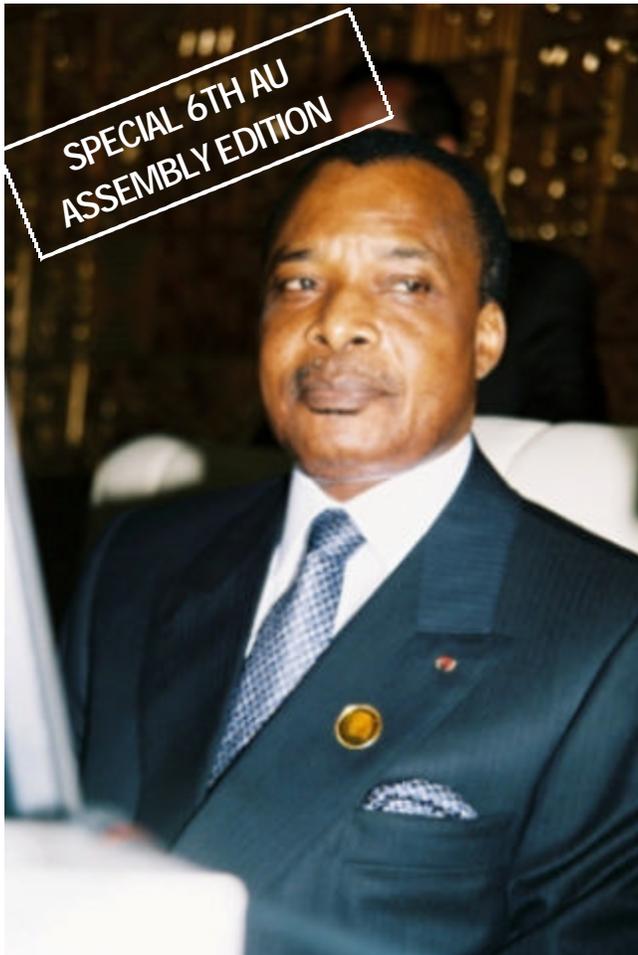


AUC NEWS



The newsletter of the African Union Commission

AUC NEWS Issue 5 January 2006



A new Chairman for the African Union

Decisions of the 6th Assembly of the African Union

- Education and Culture—Major themes at Summit 3
- Decision on AIDS Watch Africa progress report..... 5
- Decision on the drought situation in IGAD sub-region 5
- Decision on the 19th Activity Report of the African Commission on Human and People’s Rights 5
- Member States requested to sign and ratify Treaties 5
- Africa demands fair terms of trade 8
- Africa maintains its stance on UN Reform 8
- Leaders resolve Africa will remain as one entity .. 8
- 11 appointed to African Court on Human and People’s Rights 9
- 10 appointed members of Peace and Security Council 9
- 2007 declared Year of African Football 9
- NEPAD presents progress report 12

Chairperson Konare attends the AfCON finals in Egypt 10
 Venezuelan Minister visits African Union 11

PARTNESHIP

AU and UNESCO sign cooperation agreement 5

Plus

The Summit in pictures 6-7

Follow the book-
marks for links to
all the Assembly
and Executive
Council decisions



Africa’s first woman President does the continent proud as she takes her place at the Heads of State Summit 10

AFRICAN UNION GETS A NEW CHAIRMAN



President Denis Sassou Nguesso

The Sixth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union took place in the Sudanese capital Khartoum from 23 to 24 January 2006. It was preceded by an Executive Council meeting and a Permanent Representatives Committee meeting. All 53 member states of the African Union were represented.

The Heads of State and Government expressed their gratitude to the President of Sudan, Mr. Omar Hassan Al Bashir for the warm welcome and generous hospitality they had been accorded by the people and government of Sudan. They commended the Government of Sudan for the tremendous achievement made by concluding the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that brought to an end the civil war in Southern Sudan and wished the Sudan well in its post reconstruction efforts.

The Assembly agreed, after extensive consultations, that the Sudan will assume chairmanship of the Union in the year 2007. They also agreed that the central region of Africa would submit a candidate for the chairmanship of the Union for the year 2006. Consequently Mr. Denis Sassou-Nguesso, president of

the Republic of Congo was elected Chairman.

The newly elected African Union (AU) head has ruled his country twice - from 1979 to 1992 and then again from 1997 to date.

According to the United Nations Integrated Regional Information networks (IRIN), Mr. Sassou Nguesso was born in 1943 in a farming family in Edou, a village about 400 km north of the capital, Brazzaville. He received his early education at a teachers' college in Dolisie, in the southwest of the country. Afterwards, he pursued a military career, receiving training from 1961 to 1963 at the officers' schools of Cherchell in Algeria and at the infantry academy in Saint-Maixent, France.

In December 1969, after he returned to Congo, Mr. Sassou-Nguesso co-founded the Congolese Workers Party (PCT). The PCT was then the only political party in the country. He held senior posts in the Congolese security apparatus and at 25 years of age, was nominated defense minister.

On 5 January 1979, Mr. Sassou-Nguesso became the country's president. Seven years later, he became chairman of the Organisation of African Unity. At the OAU, he headed the "Africa Fund" against the apartheid system in South Africa - a role acknowledged during a visit to Brazzaville in 2005 by South African President Thabo Mbeki. In 1988, Sassou-Nguesso headed the "Protocol of Brazzaville", which dealt with the retreat of

Cuban troops from Angola. In 1990, the same protocol helped liberate Namibia from colonial subjugation.

In 1990, Mr. Sassou-Nguesso agreed to open the Congo to a multiparty system. In 1991, the country organised a national conference that created transitional institutions for democracy. In 1992, in the first pluralistic presidential elections ever to be held in the Congo, Mr. Sassou-Nguesso lost to President Pascal Lissouba. In 1997, he returned to power and organised a government of national unity. In March 2002, he won an election with 89.41 percent of votes cast.



The new chairman shares a moment with outgoing Chairman Olusegun Obasanjo and AUC Chairperson Alpha Oumar Konare

Besides being Congo's president, Mr. Sassou-Nguesso presided over the Economic Monetary Community of Central Africa from 2003 to 2004. He has also been president of the Central African Economic Community, known as CEMAC, for the last three years. The Republic of Congo has been a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council since September 2005.

Biography source: IRIN

EDUCATION AND CULTURE- MAJOR THEMES AT THE SUMMIT

The Heads of State and Government of the African Union agreed that Education and Culture should be the two principal themes at the 6th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the AU held in Khartoum, Sudan in January. As the Commission Chairperson Professor Alpha Oumar Konare said, this selection emphasized the fact that culture is both “source and resource” and highlighted the liberating aspects of education.

The Assembly proclaimed 2006- 2015 as the Second Decade of Education for Africa, following the recommendation made by a conference of ministers of education and culture held a week earlier at the AUC headquarters in Addis Ababa. The first decade had been proclaimed by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1997. The Khartoum assembly acknowledged that while there have been significant strides in many areas, a number of obstacles and challenges which confront the continent have prevented the full achievement of all the commitments made in 1997 by the OAU.

Professor Najia Mohammed Essayed, Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology, under whose department education falls, elaborated on the significance of the Summit decisions and the 2nd Decade for Education.

Q Why was it important to discuss education and culture at this summit?

A If our leaders become aware of the strong links between education and culture, this will give it a boost. Everyone will stop to think and consider the necessity of adopting the new approaches we are working on.



We believe this new approach (to education and culture) will also help African integration especially through the youth who will be more knowledgeable about conditions in other African countries. - Professor Essayed

Q How was education and culture chosen as a theme for this conference?

Many of our leaders and our Chairperson believe in the strong links between education and culture. Many African educationists believe that the limited success of efforts aimed at improving education has been the result of the separation of the two. We must also remember that in the colonial days, local cultures and languages were marginalized and undervalued. Therefore the education was weak.

Through the new approach which integrates education into culture and culture into education, we try to empower women, seek gender equity, emphasize

training of good quality teachers and revise curricula to concentrate on local aspects of history, geography, arts, architecture, music etc. We believe this approach will also help African integration especially through the youth who will be more knowledgeable about conditions in other African countries.

Q The first Decade of education met with a mixture of successes and failures. However, it was noted in the evaluation report that the Decade failed overall to have a direct impact at national, school, community and grassroots levels. For example, financial and enrolment targets were not met. What chances are there that the second Decade will succeed?

A First; the action plan of the first Decade took two years to be finalized and be recognized by member states. This time lag caused a number of problems. Secondly when the first Decade was launched, the AU was not yet in existence. The AU now has specialized organs which will work to ensure the success of the second Decade. Thirdly, we have learnt lessons from the failures of the first Decade and will correct them in this second Decade. We also believe that Africa is now more aware of the importance of education in overcoming its challenges and promoting sustainable development. Lastly, there are other initiatives which oblige us to meet the educational goals. For example, we must meet the Millennium Development Goal for education by 2015. All these factors that I have mentioned will combine to ensure the success of the second Decade. We do not want to have a third decade for education.

(Continued on page 4)

EDUCATION AND CULTURE- MAJOR THEMES AT THE SUMMIT

2006 declared Year of African Languages

On the cultural front, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government adopted the revised Charter for the cultural renaissance of Africa. 2006 was declared the Year of African Languages, which, as Chairperson Konare told the Assembly, will greatly assist the AUC to step up its efforts to establish the African Academy of Languages.

The Assembly adopted the draft statutes for the establishment of the academy as an AU specialized agency to be located in Bamako, Mali and noted the report of the first session of AU Conference of Ministers of Culture held in Nairobi in December 2005.

The leaders were convinced that African cultural values and heritages should provide the basis for education at all levels and recognize the importance of African languages as media for instruction and as vehicles for the achievement of the African renaissance.

The Assembly drew parallels between culture and education. It noted that culture and education are invaluable weapons in the fight against poverty and HIV AIDS and that they are important in the promotion of peace, stability and good governance. Ministers of education and culture on the continent were urged to create conditions for regular consultations and to streamline culture in education and education in culture, in particular through the rebuilding of African

educational systems.

The Commission, in collaboration with member states, was charged with the responsibility to follow up and facilitate the implementation of the Assembly's decision and to provide leadership in the process of reinstating the linkage between culture and education in Africa. Finally, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation, (UNESCO) and other relevant partners were invited to provide support to the ministries of culture and education in their efforts to strengthen the interface between culture and education.

Commenting on the outcome of the Summit, Commissioner Gawanas of Social Affairs, under whose department culture falls said the excitement of the Khartoum Summit was that all 53 Heads of State of member countries took the time to debate the linkage between education and culture. She commended the declaration of 2006 as the year of African languages because of the fundamental place of language in human life, not only as a means of communication but also as a vehicle of showing who a people are and where they want to go.

This major cultural project, she said, must be looked at in the context of Africa's renaissance. Based on the importance that Africa has now placed on culture, Commissioner Gawanas said the department of Social Affairs has an exciting year ahead, of cultural reawakening and renewal on the continent.



AU and UNESCO sign co-operation agreement

The African Union and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation, UNESCO, signed an important cooperation agreement at the AU Heads of State and Government Assembly which was held in Khartoum, Sudan. The agreement was signed by Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, UNESCO Director General and Professor Alpha Ouma Konare, Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

Under the terms of the agreement, the two organizations agreed to cooperate in the following fields:

- education ;
- human resources, natural sciences and technology;
- culture ;
- human and social sciences ;
- communication and information ;
- dialogue among civilizations ;
- culture of peace (post-conflict and reconstruction) ;
- management of natural resources and the environment ;
- crosscutting youth and gender issues ;
- pandemics and epidemics; and
- the harmonization and coordination of regional and sub regional organizations in UNESCO's fields of competence.

AFRICA'S LEADERS MEET IN KHARTOUM

MAKE MORE THAN 20 DECISIONS CRUCIAL FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION



In total, the Heads of State and Government reflected on 20 decisions, 3 declarations and 1 recommendation, which, together, represented a comprehensive look at Africa: yesterday, today and tomorrow as the continent continues on the path of development and integration.

There were progress reports from NEPAD, ECOSSOC, the Pan African Parliament, Peace and Security Council, Committee of Seven Heads of State and Government, Expanded Follow-Up Mechanism on the Reform of the United Nations Security Council, and AIDS Watch Africa. The one recommendation referred to the selection of the chairmanship of the African Union. The Republic of Congo was elected as the chair for the year 2006. The leaders also examined several items proposed by member states and made the appropriate decisions.

Decision on AIDS Watch Africa progress report

The leaders welcomed the decision to allocate each of the AWA Heads of State and Government a specific responsibility to spearhead advocacy to combat HIV/ AIDS and requested the Commission to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the AWA strategic framework and to report progress annually to the Ordinary Session of the Assembly.

Decision on the drought situation in IGAD sub region

The Assembly noted with serious concern, the drought affecting countries in the Horn of Africa, particularly Djibouti, Somali, Ethiopia and Kenya.

They called on the international community, in particular the UN agencies, to give maximum support and assistance to the affected countries.

Decision on the 19th Activity Report of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights

The Assembly adopted and authorized, in accordance with article 59 of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, the publication of the 19th Activity Report of the African Commission on Human and People's Rights (ACHPR) and its annexes, except for those containing the resolutions on Eritrea, Ethiopia, the Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

It requested the concerned member states to avail to the ACHPR within 3 months of the adoption of the present decision, their views on the said resolution and the ACHPR to report thereon to the next Ordinary Session of the Executive Council.

It also called upon the ACHPR to ensure that in future, it enlists the responses of all state parties to its resolutions and decisions before submitting them to the Executive Council and/ or Assembly for consideration.

For full details

Member States requested to sign and ratify treaties

The Khartoum assembly called upon all member states to sign and ratify the Treaties, Charters, Conventions and Protocols adopted by the Assembly and requested national parliaments to hold, if necessary, extraordinary sessions for their ratification.

This decision came in the wake of a Libyan proposal that decisions of the Assembly are of special importance and should therefore not be treated in the same way as other national issues.

Continued on page 8

SOME PICTURES FROM THE SUMMIT



Host President Mr. Al Bashir



Chairperson Konare talks to the head of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

AUC Deputy Chairperson Mr. Mazimhaka deep in discussion



Pan African Parliament Speaker, Mrs Gertrude Mongella



Commissioner: Infrastructure and Energy, Dr Bernard Zoba



Commissioner Julia Joiner: Political Affairs



Commissioners Najia Essayed and Maxwell Mkwezalamba: Human Resources, Science and Technology and Economic Affairs respectively



Commissioner Rosebud Kurwijila: Rural Economy and Agriculture



Commissioner Said Djinnit: Peace and Security during an interview



Commissioner Elisabeth Tankeu of Trade and Industry making a point during deliberations



Commissioner Bience Gawanas of Social Affairs Department during a debate



Professor Wangari Maathai of ECOSOC following the deliberations

SOME PICTURES FROM THE SUMMIT



Some of the First Ladies who attended the Summit



A poster that was part of a UNESCO Exhibition held on the margins of the Summit



Mr. Amr Moussa: Secretary General of the Arab League



The impressive Summit venue



More than 350 journalists converged in Khartoum to cover the Summit



Discussions and consultations sometimes went on well into the night

It was eight days of hard work at the Summit for AU staff and member state delegates



DECISIONS OF THE 6TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AU ASSEMBLY

Africa demands fair terms of trade at global talks

African leaders expressed deep concern and disappointment at the limited progress achieved in Hong Kong at the Doha trade talks. In a unanimous decision made at Khartoum, the leaders called on the international community, especially the industrialized countries, to show greater flexibility in their negotiating positions.

While welcoming the extension of the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement transition period for the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the incorporation of the temporary solution into an amendment of the TRIPS agreement, they reiterated the need for the simplification of the cumbersome procedure, which has rendered the solution ineffective and unworkable.

They requested African trade ministers and negotiators to remain engaged, vigilant and united and to intensify their efforts in order to ensure that the interests and concerns of Africa are adequately addressed in the final round of World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations.

Finally they directed the AU Commission to take necessary measures to continue to coordinate Africa's common position and, in collaboration with ECA and other organizations, to give the necessary technical support to member states in the WTO negotiations.

Africa maintains its stance on UN reform

African leaders meeting in Khartoum, Sudan, from 23-24 January reaffirmed the determination of Africa to correct the historical injustice that arises out of a situation in which the continent is the only region that does not have a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

They renewed the mandate of the Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government and the Expanded Follow Up Mechanism to continue consultations with a view to promoting and supporting the Common African Position as embodied in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Resolution on UN Reform, including reform of the Security Council. Accordingly, the Committee of Ten was requested to submit a progress report on this issue to the next Ordinary Session of the Assembly in July 2006.

The Ezulwini Consensus proposes the allocation of two permanent seats to Africa with all the privileges, including the right to veto and five non-permanent seats on the Security Council. It also proposes the strengthening of the UN General Assembly to "enable it to fully play its role as the most representative and democratic organ of the United Nations system and world parliament."

Leaders resolve that Africa will remain as one entity

The Heads of State and Government noted with satisfaction, the proposals of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya which reaffirmed Africa's political, geographic, human, cultural and economic unity based on its belonging to a single space- the African Union.

They emphasized that the African continent is a single human, geographical, political and cultural entity that can neither be partitioned, divided, annexed nor integrated into any other region.



Libya had argued that there is a new nomenclature currently being advocated, which links North Africa with the Middle East, thus ignoring a human and political reality which makes North Africa an integral part of the African continent.

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DECISIONS OF THE 6TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AU ASSEMBLY

11 appointed to Court on Human and People's Rights

The following were appointed judges of the African Court on Human and People's Rights, as elected by the Eighth Ordinary Session of the Executive Council:

Ms. Sophia A.B. Akuffo- 2 year term
 Mr. G.W Kanyiehamba- 2 year term
 Mr. Bernard Makgabo Ngoepe- 2 yrs
 Mr. Jean Emile Somda- 2 year term
 Mr. Hamdi Faraj Fanoush- 2 year
 Mrs. Kelelo Justina Mafoso- Guni-4
 Mr. Jean Mutsinzi- 6 year term
 Mr. Fatsah Ougeurgouz- 4 year term
 Mr. Modibo Tounry Guindo- 6 year
 Mr. El Hadji Guisse- 4 year term
 Mr. Gerard Niyungeko- 6 year term

The court has jurisdiction over all disputes and requests submitted to it in respect of interpretation and implementation of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights.

2007 declared Year of African Football

The success of the Africa Cup of Nations tournament hosted by Egypt this year, and of other tournaments hosted by other countries in previous years bears testimony to the fact that African football is among the best in the world. Many Africans are playing in top leagues in Europe, Asia, Middle East, the United States and in Africa itself, with the Confederation of African Football (CAF) at the helm of the continent's soccer affairs.

Placards exhorting peace in Africa and condemning racism which viewers saw every time they watched one of the AfCON matches in Egypt, show that soccer is much more than the

10 appointed members of Peace and Security Council

The Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union has been commended by the AU Assembly for its contribution to the promotion of peace and security in Africa. The heads of state and government also requested the PSC to put particular emphasis on conflict prevention and post conflict reconstruction.

However, the leaders noted the serious financial and logistical constraints facing the African Union Mission (AMIS) in Darfur, which has lost some of its members, but commended it for its achievements. As a way forward, they stressed the need for all parties to abide by their commitments as spelt out in the agreements already signed and to extend full cooperation to the AU led mediation to facilitate the early and successful conclusion of the Abuja Inter Sudanese Peace Talks on the conflict in Darfur.

"beautiful game" in Africa. It is also a viable means to promote unity, solidarity, peace and reconciliation and reaching out to the youth. For all these efforts, CAF was congratulated by the Assembly of Heads of State meeting in Sudan.

Next year will be even more momentous for CAF because it celebrates its fiftieth anniversary. Accordingly, the Assembly declared 2007 the "Year of African Football". It invited all member states to support their national football associations in the organization of the anniversary celebrations, while highlighting the hosting of the FIFA World Cup in South Africa in 2010.

CAF was founded in Khartoum, Sudan in 1957 by South Africa, Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sudan

The Assembly paid tribute to all African leaders, the United Nations and the Regional Economic Communities, as well as the AU partners for their commitment and contribution to the promotion of peace and stability in Africa.

Meanwhile, the following countries were elected to the peace and Security Council for a two year term.

Cameroon and Congo (Central)
 Rwanda, Uganda (East)
 Egypt (North)
 Botswana, Malawi (South)
 Burkina Faso, Ghana, Senegal (West)

According to the Constitutive Act of the African Union, the Peace and Security Council, composed of 15 members, is responsible for the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa, preventive diplomacy and restoration of peace.

ALL ASSEMBLY and EXECUTIVE COUNCIL DECISIONS CLICK HERE

One appointed to the Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

Mrs. Dawlat Ibrahim was appointed as a member of the African Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

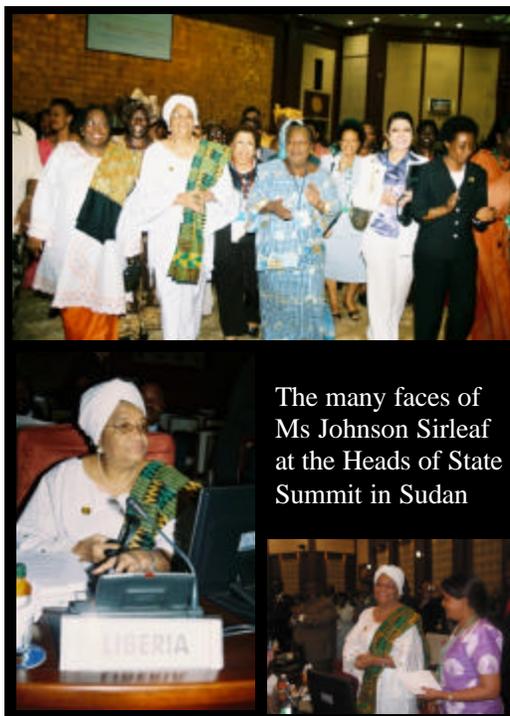


A new day dawns for African women as Johnson– Sirleaf is inaugurated and takes her place at the 6th AU Assembly

January 16 Jan 2006 witnessed the largest gathering of regional leaders and international dignitaries to grace the Liberian capital, Monrovia since war broke out in 1989. For on this day, Liberians witnessed the inauguration of the country's first ever elected female president, indeed Africa's first, in Ms Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. Her election was hailed by Professor Konare as heralding the emergence of other women presidents in Africa, which in itself, would be a fine measure of the success of the gender policy adopted by the heads of state and government a few years back.

Ms Johnson Sirleaf promised peace and restoration for the war-torn nation. She told the 1000 strong crowd that Liberians must work together to put 14 years of conflict behind them and promised rapid, tangible action for Liberia's war-weary population, including restoring electricity to the capital within 150 days. Corruption will be another key battleground for the former World Bank official who has already started efforts to tackle it in the finance ministry. The new president also promised that Liberia would not be used as a launch pad for regional instability.

The then AU Chairman and President of Nigeria Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo attended the inauguration ceremony. Other African heads of state and government included Presidents Thabo Mbeki of South



The many faces of Ms Johnson Sirleaf at the Heads of State Summit in Sudan

Africa, Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal, John Kufuor of Ghana, Laurent Gbagbo of Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone's Ahmad Tejan Kabbah.

After her inauguration, UN Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan was quoted as assuring Madam Sirleaf of the continued support of the UN family. He congratulated the people of Liberia who he said had given Mrs. Sirleaf "a historic mandate".

Meanwhile, Ms Johnson Sirleaf took her place among other African heads of state and government at the 6th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union held in Khartoum Sudan, from 23-24 January.

BBC- IRIN- Herald-PANA

Chairperson Konare attends the final of the African Cup of Nations (AfCON 2006)

Prof. Alpha Oumar Konaré, Chairperson of the African Union Commission attended the final of the 25th African Cup of Nations (AfCON) which was held in Egypt on February 10.

The presence of the Chairperson of the Commission at this eminent football feast, shared by all in Africa and throughout the world, was in line with the support of the African Union to all events and gatherings which celebrate universal peace, friendship, loyalty and sportsmanship.

It also constituted a strong message of love and of consideration towards those African youths who are earning a living through sport, and who are offering to the world the image of a winning Africa, ready to take the challenges and to win fair victories.

President Konaré's visit to Cairo, was also an opportunity for him to meet and discuss with many high level political and sports personalities.

Host country Egypt clinched a record fifth African title in a 4-2 penalty shoot out victory against Cote d'Ivoire, after 120 minutes without a goal at Cairo International Stadium. Cameroon's Samuel Eto'o was the tournament's top scorer with 5 goals.

Venezuela Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs for Africa visits Africa Union

On February 9th, Mr. Patrick Mazimhaka, Vice-President of the Commission of the African Union received the Venezuelan Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs for Africa, Mr. Bolivar Reinaldo.

among their deliberations.

Mr. Mazimhaka said that the Commission aspires to develop the fields of collaboration with its regional and international environment, in



H.E Patrick Mazimhaka: Deputy Chairperson of AU Commission with the Venezuelan Vice Minister Mr. Bolivar Reinaldo

The two leaders exchanged views on ways and means of consolidating the existing cooperation between the African Union and Venezuela, and explored ways of diversifying the cooperation.

They underscored the need to consolidate the relations of solidarity and assistance within the framework of South-South cooperation, in particular in the fields of health, culture, social and political affairs.

The organization of the second edition of the Conference of the intellectuals of Africa and the Diaspora, scheduled for July 2006 in Brazil, as well as the Africa-South America Summit, planned for May 2006, also featured

particular with the Latin-American region, to create the necessary synergies to enable the AU to find solutions to the problems which the African Continent continues to face.

For his part, Mr. Reinaldo José Bolívar emphasized his country's will to reaffirm the bonds of co-operation and friendship with the African Union, which he described as the most important organisation working for peace on the Continent.

He also announced his government's intention to request observer status within the Union, indicating that his country carries out, under the control of President Hugo Chaves, a voluntary African policy based on solidarity and the mutual aid and bonds of friendship.

African Union extends peacekeeping mandate-UN take-over of Darfur peacekeeping a possibility

In January, the African Union extended the mandate of its peacekeeping force in Sudan's Darfur region for two months, but it would evaluate the option of handing the operation over to the United Nations.

In a report presented at a meeting of the Peace and Security Council AU Chairperson Alpha Oumar Konare said that the 7000 -strong AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) cannot be sustained beyond March without more financial support. He noted the serious financial burden of supporting a mission with operating costs of US \$17 million a month. "The funds received so far under the enhanced AMIS are almost exhausted. At present, no commitment has been made by partners for funding of the mission beyond March 2006", Professor Konare said.

In a related development, IRIN news agency quoted UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan as calling for the international community to continue to finance the current AU mission. He told reporters in New York that any force trying to maintain peace in the region would need to be highly mobile. The UN would also look at putting more troops on the ground, he said.

Meanwhile, the Peace and Security Council of the AU, at its 45th meeting held on 12 January 2006, expressed its support, in principle, of a transition from AMIS to a UN operation, within the framework of a partnership between the AU and the UN in the promotion of peace, security and stability in Africa. **IRIN**

NEPAD presents progress report to Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee

At the AU Assembly in Khartoum, the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee (HSGIC) met on 22 January, where the Chief Executive of the NEPAD secretariat Professor Firmino G Mucavele presented a progress report.

In his report, Prof Mucavele outlined a number of achievements registered by NEPAD, which is a programme of the African Union, in the year 2005. Some of them are:

The Economic Community for Central African States (ECCAS) received a budget for capacity building which had been obtained from the Africa Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). The fund will be used to enhance the implementation of NEPAD, as well as to recruit a NEPAD focal point.

India's \$200 million credit line, secured through the NEPAD process, is being accessed by African countries. A credit line of \$18 has been extended to Senegal for the purchase of buses, and another line of credit has been extended to Angola for the rehabilitation of the Mocamedes railway. Negotiations are at an advanced stage for the extension of a 28 million dollar line of credit to the governments of Mali and Senegal for the acquisition of

railway coaches and locomotives from India.

Memoranda of Understanding have been signed for collaborating in the planning and implementation of backhaul links under the Eastern African Submarine Cable System which connects Mtunzini in South Africa to Port Sudan in Sudan, a distance of 9000 km. The backhaul links connect land locked countries to the sub marine cable. 21 countries have signed the MOUs.

The NEPAD E Schools programme was launched. Uganda, Ghana, Lesotho and Kenya were among the first beneficiaries. 3 other countries have signed the NEPAD E Schools Demo which sets out the rights and obligations of the parties involved in implementing the Demo in their countries.

In collaboration with the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), NEPAD is currently supporting national food fortification initiatives in 8 countries.

Funds have been received from the World Bank and the African Development Bank for improvements in Agriculture and food security.

Draft guidelines on tourism have been developed in the SADC region.

A bio sciences network for

Southern African has been established with the regional hub hosted by the Council for Scientific and industrial Research in South Africa. The hub for Eastern and Central Africa is in Nairobi, that for West Africa is being hosted by Senegal and Egypt is hosting the North Africa Bio Sciences Network.

A panel of 14 eminent African Scientists and policy analysts was established by the secretariat and the AU Commission to prepare a comprehensive common African position on the development and use of genetically modified crops and other products of modern biotechnology.

A financing agreement for 4 million Euro has been secured for resource mobilization and strengthening of partnerships.

According to the Maputo declaration, integration of NEPAD includes review of the contents of NEPAD programmes and portfolios of the AU as well as integration of the processes and structures. Joint meetings were held in all areas of NEPAD and the processes are being discussed between the NEPAD secretariat and the AUC for the provision of legal status and international engagement.

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AUC NEWS

is published by the Communications and Information Division of the African Union Commission. Its views do not necessarily reflect the views of the African Union

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