

AFRICAN UNION

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AALLOCATION DE DR. MAXWELL M. MKWEZALAMBA

COMMISSAIRE AUX AFFAIRES ECONOMIQUES

UNION AFRICAINE

A L'OCCASION DU

SEMINAIRE SUR L'HARMONISATION DES STATISTIQUES

28 -29 SEPTEMBRE 2006

BAMAKO, MALI

Monsieur le Directeur national de la Statistique et de l'Informatique du Ministère du Plan et de l'Aménagement du Territoire,

Monsieur le Directeur des Affaires économiques de l'Union africaine Dr. René N'Guettia Kouassi

Représentants des Institutions Panafricaines

Représentants des Communautés économiques régionales

Représentants des Instituts statistiques nationaux

Représentants des Organisations internationales

Représentants de AFRISTAT

Représentant de PARIS 21

Distingués invités

Mesdames et Messieurs,

After two days of excellent presentations of well researched papers followed by intensive and extensive deliberations, we can now have a sigh of relief that the Seminar has come to an end.

But this should not be our stance! There is a lot of work ahead of us and we all need to put our heads together.

It is often said that our countries have well-prepared plans. The problem, however, is that of one of lack of implementation.

I, therefore, call upon all of you to ensure that we do not find ourselves in this situation.

The recommendations made by this important Seminar on harmonization of statistics in Africa will need to be implemented at our various levels – national, regional and continental.

Of course, there are recommendations that will need to be taken to the Policy Organs of the African Union. I have in mind the recommendation that there be a Charter on Statistics in Africa as well as a Fund at the AU for capacity building.

There are also recommendations that will require availability of financial and human resources for them to be implemented.

It is pleasing to note that the issue of capacity building for the national statistical offices was discussed. As I mentioned in my statement during the opening session, our national statistical offices are “weak and vulnerable both in terms of human and financial resources”.

The seminar also dwelt on the issue of co-ordination on development and harmonization of statistics in Africa. The concerns raised by the participants are highly appreciated. Africa cannot afford to waste its limited human and financial resources. It was disheartening to hear some of you raise concerns regarding being

pulled in different directions to attend meetings organized by our Pan-African organizations and Regional Economic Communities (RECs).

In this regard, I wish to assure you that efforts are being undertaken to ensure that the various pan-African organizations work in a co-ordinated manner.

You may wish to note that earlier this year (March 2006), the Heads of the ECA, AfDB and the AUC met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to rejuvenate the ECA-AfDB-AU Joint Secretariat as a framework for co-operation and co-ordination. Following this high level meeting, there have been several coordination meetings at technical level, including meetings on development and harmonization of statistics held in Addis Ababa and Tunis, reported on at this Seminar.

As spelt out by a number of the delegations, the AU on one hand has the political mandate to co-ordinate the implementation of Africa's development and integration agenda. On the other hand, the ECA and the AfDB are expected to provide technical support to the AU. This is the current understanding of the Heads of these institutions. For example, the current ECA Strategic Plan is intended to support the implementation of the AU's development agenda and its programme, NEPAD.

I also take note that there are several initiatives on development and harmonization of statistics in Africa. The African Union Commission undertakes to take stock of these in collaboration with the RECs as well as with ECA and AfDB, and of course the Member States, as recommended by this seminar.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Looking at the outcome of this meeting, we at the African Union believe that this Seminar has been a great success.

In this regard, on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. Prof. Alpha Oumar Konare, I invite you all to join me in sincerely thanking the Government

and the people of Mali for making it possible for this Seminar to take place in Bamako, and making available to the disposal of the Seminar the excellent facilities.

I congratulate the Government and the people of Mali for their keen interest in the development and harmonization of statistics in Africa.

The collaboration and excellent support rendered to the African Union Commission in the organization of this Seminar by the Ministry of Planning and Territorial Development and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and other Government Departments and Agencies are highly appreciated.

I would fail in my duties if I do not put on record the support, in various ways, received from AFRISTAT, the ECA, the ADB, Association of African Central Banks (AACB), the RECs and the Member States. I also wish to thank PARIS 21 and the IMF for their participation. We undertake to work closely with them and look forward to their participation in our activities in the future.

Finalement, je voudrais dire “merci beaucoup” à tous pour votre participation, merci aux interprètes et nos hôtessees et merci à tous le monde ici.

Je déclare clos les travaux du Séminaire des experts sur l’harmonisation des statistiques en Afrique.

Je vous remercie pour votre attention.

Bon voyage à tous.