



AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION



ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

CONCEPT NOTE

FIRST FORUM FOR AUC-ECA STRATEGIC PARTNERS DIALOGUE

AUC-ECA

11/10/2009

A Note to Introduce the Background, Justification, Period, participation, Expected Outcomes and Agenda of the Partners Forum.

1. BACKGROUND

The African Union Commission (AUC) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) have forged a close and complementary bond working together for Africa. Within this framework it is appreciated that the strategies and efforts of these two important organisations need to be interdependent and inter-linked based on the principles of complementarity and comparative advantage. In line with this the two organisations along with the African Development Bank have established a Joint Secretariat to coordinate the implementation of their programmes to avoid duplication of effort and resources and to promote synergy. It is within this context that the two organisations have taken the initiative to launch a forum for dialogue with carefully identified strategic and development partners. This will take place in the first week of December, 2009 and the proposed name of the Forum will be the **AU-ECA Annual Partners Dialogue**. **The theme for this forum is: “Redefining the AUC / ECA role in global affairs”**

2. WHY THE FORUM?

The AUC /ECA Strategic Partners Dialogue seek to initiate a process to redefine the emerging role of Africa in the changing political, economic, environmental and security architecture of the world, and to identify ways in which these two organisations together with their strategic partners can provide the support required to enable Africa play a meaningful role as a global partner.

Several initiatives have in the past been undertaken on related subjects. However, the specific focus of this forum is

- I. to reflect on the need for a new partnership for the continent with the African Union as the interlocutor, supported by the Economic Commission of Africa and,
- II. To re-evaluate options to for developing a more strategic and equitable partnership that will be assessed based on the achievement of concrete results and outcomes in African and global affairs.

From the perspective of the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa, such a partnership should entail a shift in paradigm from the current donor-recipient relationship to a genuine partnership based on dialogue and a better appreciation of Africa's role in the emerging world order and achievement of common positions on continental and global issues.

Towards the future, the AUC / ECA see themselves as having clearly defined roles to support Africa's political and economic reorientation. In this regard, the AUC/ECA is seeking the collaboration of its partners to strengthen existing partnerships based on mutual respect and understanding for each other. In this new relationship, the AUC/ECA is looking for a partnership that will be measured more by the quality of its impact as opposed to the volume of financial and technical resources. The cooperation should also be geared towards promoting greater synergy and coherence on the activities of the two institutions working closely with the international community.

Under this process, a critical look into existing cooperation arrangements and partnerships will be undertaken within the framework of the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa, with a view to determining what form they should take going forward, to achieve the desired results both at the continental levels and for the respective organisations.

3. POINTS OF DISCUSSION

Discussion will be based on a few key subjects around which, future cooperation will be developed. The content of the discussion will be focussed on the emerging trends on the continent and globally; the perceived current and future roles of the institutions and how the development and strategic partners would cooperate in the circumstances.

The subjects to be considered at the Forum will be as follows:

(a) Global Perspectives of the AU and ECA

- *Africa and the AU in the global context.*
- *Peace and Security*
- *Climate Change and Food Security*
- *Governance Issues*
- *Development and Infrastructure*
- *Institutional Arrangements and capacities (AU's evolution into an Authority)*

(b) AUC and ECA Medium Term Priorities

- *Reforms Programme at the AUC.*
- *Medium term goals of the AUC.*
- *An Introduction to the ECA Business Plan*
- *ECA-AUC-RECs Cooperation.*

(c) Development and Strategic Partnership for the AUC and ECA.

- *Broad View of Existing Cooperation Arrangements*
- *Proposed new Cooperation Policy*
- *RECs engagement and way forward*

4. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- *An agreement on the character and content of strategic partnership*
- *A clear process and framework for the transformation of existing partnership arrangement into results oriented relationships.*
- *A commitment of partnership and support from AUC/ECA strategic partners.*

5. PARTICIPATION.

- Policy makers of the two institutions and the strategic and development partners

6. DATES, VENUES AND PERIOD OF THE FORUM

The dates, venues and details of the programme are contained in the draft Agenda.