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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

First Session of the Committee on
Development Information, Science and Technology (CODIST-I)

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
28 April – 01 May 2009

Guidelines for Chairpersons, Speakers, Panelists, Rapporteurs, Drafters, Delegates and Observers

I. General Information

1. The Committee on Development Information Science and Technology (CODIST) was constituted to replace the Committee on Development Information (CODI) at the fortieth session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in their Review of the Intergovernmental Machinery of ECA in light of the Repositioning of the Commission (Resolution 853-XL), 2-3 April 2007. CODI was one of the seven statutory committees of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) that were established by the Conference of Ministers in May 1997.

2. The role of CODIST is to review challenges and issues pertaining to information and communication technology (ICT), Geo-information, Science and Technology (S&T) sectors, formulate policies and strategies to address Africa's development challenges and determine priorities to be reflected in the work programme of the ICT, Science and Technology Division (ISTD) of ECA. Specifically, CODIST will strengthen the role of ECA in assisting its member States to develop their national information and communication infrastructure plans (NICIs) and their national spatial data infrastructure, as well as integrate S&T into their development programmes and implementation strategies by bringing experts and policymakers together to provide advice in these areas. The Committee also addresses issues related to knowledge and information services that are key in moving the African development agenda forward. The membership includes experts from ICT, geo-information and S&T fields.

3. The mandate of the Committee includes:

- a) Promoting the growth of an information society in Africa by using information and communications technologies to organize, manage and disseminate information in Africa;
- b) Advising on measures to improve all aspects of science and technology development in member States according to the recommendations of the United Nations Commission on Science and Technology;
- c) Advising on the building, maintenance and dissemination of regional development databases, including textual and spatial databases, and assist in strengthening the capacity of member States to improve their national information systems;
- d) Promoting the development and utilization of geographic information technologies as decision support tools for the socio-economic development of member States;
- e) Fostering regional cooperation and integration among members States, with the participation of key stakeholders in the field; and
- f) Offering a platform for African participants to interact with their counterparts from the developed world, and promote negotiations on bilateral and multilateral technical assistance.

4. This is the first session of the Committee on Development Information Science and Technology (CODIST-I) after the repositioning of the Commission. CODIST-I is aimed at strengthening the role of ECA in assisting its member States to develop their NICI plans, and integrate S&T in their development programmes and strategies by using its convening power to bring together experts and policymakers from the respective fields. The Committee will also address issues related to an enabling environment, innovation and economic growth that are key to move the African development agenda forward. This session will also review progress made by the Commission and member States towards implementing the recommendations of CODI-V.

5. The Committee meets every two years in accordance with Resolution 826 (XXXII), adopted at the aforementioned ministerial conference. CODIST-I will conduct its technical deliberations under three subcommittees, namely:

- Sub-Committee on Information and Communications Technologies;
- Sub-Committee on Geo-information; and
- Sub-Committee on Science and Technology.

II. Theme and Sub-themes of CODI-V

6. The theme of CODIST-I is “**Scientific Development and the Knowledge Economy**”. The reports and discussions under this theme will focus on the following sub-themes:

- The enabling environment for innovation;
- Innovation and Economic Growth.

III. Objectives of CODIST-I

7. The main objectives of CODIST-I are:

- To review and share best practices on the progress achieved by member States in building inclusive, people-centered knowledge societies through national, regional and international initiatives and cooperation programmes;
- To review and share best practices on the progress made in building national and regional science, technology and innovation systems, policies and mechanisms for socio-economic development of the continent;
- To create opportunities for benchmarking Africa’s use of innovation in the key pillars of the knowledge economy – education/capacity-building, ICT infrastructure or “infostructure”, regulatory and economic/institutional regimes, etc.;
- To review progress achieved with follow-up to the recommendations and actions taken by CODI-V; and
- To provide a roadmap (policy directions) for member States to enhance African scientific development and the knowledge economy.

IV. Contents of the Report of CODIST-I

8. With the above background and specific objectives in mind, the report of CODIST-I, which will be submitted to the Conference of Ministers shall contain:

- Specific recommendations for action to be taken by governments and intergovernmental organizations to enhance the contributions of S&T, geo-information, and ICT towards knowledge and innovation for economic growth in a knowledge economy;
- Actions to be taken by non-governmental and civil society organizations towards developing and harnessing the identified information resources for innovation and scientific development in the knowledge economy;
- Re-orientation necessary to enhance the contributions of academic and research institutions to science, technology and innovation (STI) for economic growth and development;

- Recommendations of activities to be taken by ECA to stimulate greater policy changes in member States in the use of information and knowledge as a catalyst for boosting STI and growth; and
- Appraisal of progress made by member States and by ECA in the implementation of the recommendations of CODI-V.

V. Election of Officials

9. At the beginning of the session, the Committees will elect a chairperson, two vice-chairpersons and two rapporteurs. Each sub-committee will appoint a chairperson, a vice-chairperson and a rapporteur.

VI. The Role of the Chairpersons of the Committee and Sub-Committees

10. Chairpersons preside over meetings of the session and see to it that the sessions achieve their objectives. Specifically, chairpersons:

- Ensure that presenters keep the allotted time;
- Facilitate broad participation among delegates and observers on the issue under discussion;
- Ensure that interventions are relevant to the topics under discussion; and
- Diligently sum up presentations, discussions and recommendations at the end of each session in such a way as to facilitate easy amalgamation into the final reporting.

VII. The Role of Rapporteurs

11. Rapporteurs play a key role in producing a suitable report for CODIST. Therefore, they should understand and keep in mind the overall objectives of CODIST, the specific objectives of CODIST-I, and the proposed contents of the report. Each meeting should have two rapporteurs: one Anglophone and one Francophone. These rapporteurs are expected to concentrate on their own languages, with the language of the session presenter determining the lead role of one of the rapporteurs.

VIII. Specifically, rapporteurs:

- Take the format and content of the final report into account when recording the proceedings and presentations (not just bullet points), and ensure that they are word-processed concisely;
- Collect and submit the speakers' presentations along with the notes they have made to the General Rapporteur;
- Integrate their notes immediately after a set of presentations and submit to the secretariat **within two hours** of a set of presentations; and
- Identify recommendations to be included in the report.

IX. The Drafters:

- Run the secretariat of the meetings of the session and will assist the rapporteurs to ensure that the reports are produced according to United Nations standards;
- Bearing in mind, the final report integrate notes and salient contents of speakers' presentations and any other inputs;
- Are expected to be present and available at all times to work on the submitted notes and drafts; and
- Are responsible for timely delivery of the key recommendations and key resolutions for translation before submission to the closing session.

X. The General Rapporteur:

- Coordinates the work of the rapporteurs and drafters;
- Ensures that key inputs and recommendations are integrated and translated as quickly as possible;
- Ensures the integrity and correctness of the content of the final report, answers any queries and cross-checks facts; and
- Takes the responsibility of ensuring that the final report is edited and translated **within 5 hours** of the last presentation.

To facilitate the coordination of the work of chairpersons, vice-chairpersons, rapporteurs and drafters, coordination meetings must be held every morning before the first presentation, and every evening after the last presentation.

XI. The Role of the Keynote Speaker

12. The keynote speaker will deliver an address on scientific development and the knowledge economy. This address will set the tone for CODIST-I, pose pertinent questions, outline the main challenges, point out best practices, and proffer policy and strategic options. Specifically, the keynote speaker is expected to:

- Prepare a background paper discussing scientific development and the knowledge economy challenges for Africa with an executive summary of no more than sixteen (16) pages;
- Present a summary of the paper in 20 minutes during the opening session of the meeting; and
- Participate in discussions during the opening session, the plenary sessions, and in the meetings of preferred sub-committee(s).

XII. The Role of Respondents

13. Each respondent is expected to:

- Read the background paper prepared by the Keynote Speaker, which shall be provided beforehand;
- Prepare a concise paper of up to sixteen (16) pages which dwells on one or more sub-themes of the session and responds to the issues and challenges raised in the keynote paper, outlining how a particular approach or methodology will contribute towards bringing about improvements in STI systems, policies and strategies for socio-economic development of the continent;
- Make a 10-minute oral presentation during the opening session based on the aforementioned points; and
- Participate in discussions during the opening session and in the plenary sessions, and also act as a resource person in meetings of the sub-committees.

XIII. The Role of Session Panelists

14. Presentations have been programmed for plenary and some sub-committee meetings. These presentations are designed to provide background material to lead into the discussions on the sub-themes or topics of the session.

15. The presenters of these papers are expected to:

- Prepare a paper of about sixteen (16) pages, that shows the technical competence of the presenter at the policy level in the respective area under discussion;
- Make a focused 10-minute oral presentation on the assigned topic; and
- Participate in discussions following the presentation and in other meetings of the session.

XIV. The Role of Official Delegates

16. Every member State should be represented by an official delegation comprising officials from ICT agencies, STI institutions, national mapping agencies and other geo-information management organizations. In addition to government officials, member State delegations are expected to include representatives of other relevant stakeholder organizations, representatives of the youth, women, and the media, of higher education and research institutions and of the private sector.

17. Delegates are expected to:

- Familiarize themselves with the mandates of CODIST as contained in its terms of reference;
- Provide feedback and suggestions to the Secretariat during the planning stages of CODIST meetings;
- Prepare and submit reports on how their countries harness information and knowledge for development;
- Attend the plenary and the sub-committee meetings and effectively contribute to the discussions;
- Present their countries' official positions on topics discussed during the sessions; and
- Report back to their countries on the outcome of the meeting, especially on action plans proposed for member States.

XV. The Role of Observers

18. It is recognized that there are stakeholders in the work of CODIST outside government agencies in member States. Provision is therefore made for the participation of delegates from intergovernmental organizations, academic institutions, research centres, agencies of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as observers.

19. Observers are expected to:

- Provide feedback and suggestions to the Secretariat during the planning stages of CODIST sessions;
- Provide advice in their areas of expertise to members of government delegations during CODIST preparations and during the meetings;
- Attend the plenary and the sub-committee meetings and make technical inputs to the discussions;
- Present the official positions of their agencies on topics discussed during the sessions;
- Report back to their agencies and organizations on the outcomes of the meeting, especially on action plans proposed; and
- Assist in the implementation of the recommended programmes in Africa.