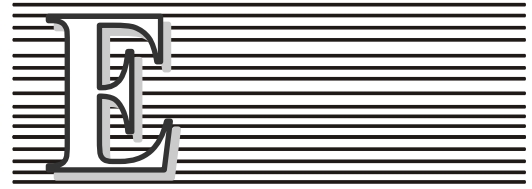




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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

**Fourth meeting of the Committee on Human Development
and Civil Society**

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
22-23 November 2007

REPORT

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List of Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
AGR	African Governance Report
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
BIANCO	<i>Bureau Indépendant Anti-Corruption</i>
CHDCS	Committee on Human Development and Civil Society
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DPMD	Development Policy and Management Division
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ES	Executive Secretary
FEMNET	Women's Network for Communication and Development
GPAD	Governance and Public Administration Division
IGO	Intergovernmental organization
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OIC	Officer-in-Charge
OSIWA	Open Society Initiative for West Africa
PAP	Pan-African Parliament
PSD	Private Sector Development
REC	Regional Economic Community
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UN	United Nations

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The fourth meeting of the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society (CHDCS) was held in the United Nations Conference Center in Addis Ababa, from 22 to 23 November 2007. The meeting was convened by the Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD) under the theme “ Public Management and Good Governance in Africa”.
2. The objectives of the meeting were twofold: first, to review the activities implemented during the biennium 2006-2007 and to present to participants the activities planned for 2008-2009. Secondly, to review the new role, structure and mandate of the committee, following the repositioning exercise.

B. ATTENDANCE

3. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following African member States: Algeria, Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Morocco, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia and Togo.
4. The following Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), non governmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and private sector organizations also participated in the meeting: Africa Leadership Forum (ALF), *Bureau Indépendant Anti-Corruption* (BIANCO), *Comité National de Droits de l'Homme* (CONADHO), Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA), FemNet, First Consult PLC, Geramn Technical Cooperation Agency (GTZ), Inter Africa Group (IAG), International Association of Educators for World Peace, *Observatoire de Lutte contre la corruption et les malversations économique*, Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA), Partners in Development Services, Partnership Africa Canada (PAC), Stra Consult, and University of South Africa.
5. Representatives of the African Union (AU) also participated in the meeting. The list of participants is attached in Annex 3.

C. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

Opening of the meeting

6. Opening remarks by the Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary of ECA, Mr. Abdoullie Janneh, were read by the Officer-in-Charge of the Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD). The remarks reminded the participants of the repositioning exercise and how it had re- focused ECA's work and allowed for better and more efficient collaboration with the regional institutions, such as the African Development Bank (AfDB), the African Union Commission (AUC), the Pan- African Parliament (PAP), and the new partnership for Africa's development (NEPAD). As a consequence of this exercise, the Development Policy and Management Division was re-structured and renamed Governance and public Administration

Division. The division is made up of four sections, namely: the Public Administration (PAS), the Civil Society and the Private Sector and Enterprise Development (PSEDS) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) support Unit. The ES speech reminded participants that the primary purpose of the meeting was to reflect on the new mandate of GPAD and to suggest how its work can better deepen democratic culture and promote regional and national development in Africa. The ES noted that political inclusiveness is a major hallmark of good governance which African countries should strive to achieve and that the nature of the committee underlies the essence of popular participation and good governance. The main challenge of many African countries as evidenced in the findings of the AGR, is one of genuine capacity deficit for both State and non-state institutions. As such capacity development is a major task for many countries. In his concluding remarks, the Executive Secretary recognized the work of the outgoing Bureau and wished the meeting fruitful deliberations. The full text of the opening statement is attached in Annex 1.

Election of the Bureau

7. A lengthy discussion took place to elect the bureau as some participants questioned the membership of CSOs to the committee's bureau and suggested that they should only have an observer's role since it was an inter-governmental committee. The Secretariat reminded the participants that the CHDCS was the only committee that allows for full participation of the three actors, namely: government, private sector and civil society in the bureau. To further clarify this issue, the Secretariat circulated the document ECA/DMD/ESPD/CHDCS/99/6, entitled: "Constitution and Functions of the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society." According to this document, the representation at the committee should be as follows: (i) governments of ECA member states; (ii) Umbrella organizations of CSOs at national, subregional and regional levels; (iii) umbrella, regional private sector organizations; (iv) OAU. In addition, the constitution stipulates that the bureau will be composed of five members representing the committee's three constituencies, as follows: two (2) representatives from Government; two (2) representatives from CSOs and one (1) representative from the private sector. It was agreed on those basis that there should be sub-regional consultations for the participants to propose the members of the bureau, as stated in the document.

8. Within the above understanding, the Bureau was constituted as follows:

- Chair: Tanzania (representing government);
- 1st Vice Chair: Ghana (representing government);
- 2nd Vice Chair: Sudan (representing civil society);
- 3rd Vice chair: Congo-Republic of (representing civil society);
- Rapporteur: Mauritius (representing private sector);

9. Following the election of the Bureau, the outgoing chairperson delivered a statement. In his remarks he thanked the Secretariat for the support given to him during his chairmanship and pointed out two major challenges that Committee is facing: low participation at meetings and lack of national representatives to channel the activities of the committee at country level. He finally expressed best wishes for the new bureau in addressing those challenges.

Adoption of the agenda

10. The agenda and programme of work were adopted without major modifications (see annex 2).

Presentation of GPAD's Work Programme

11. The GPAD work programme was presented by a staff member of the Secretariat and focused on the implemented activities for the biennium 2006-2007, looking particularly at African Governance Report 2005 (AGR I), Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness (MRDE), and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). The presenter mentioned that through the division's technical support to African countries a more conducive environment for ensuring greater participation of stakeholders in the development process is expected. He then gave a detailed overview of the main activities addressing governance in the division: The African Governance Report, which will cover in its second edition 35 African countries: 27 from the first edition are being monitored while the remaining 8 have conducted their baseline study through the household survey. The presenter also explained the extensive support that the APRM unit is providing to the APRM process, through advisory services, training programmes and country review missions, among others. The role of GPAD in the MRDE was also illustrated. ECA's GPAD and OECD were tasked with the preparation of the MRDE by the NEPAD heads of state and governments in 2002. GPAD is the focal point at the ECA for this project. The main GPAD publications were also listed, as reflection of the division's focus, in particular: "Harnessing Traditional Institutions of Governance"; "Promoting codes and standards for good economic and corporate governance"; "The role of parliament in the MTEF process" and "Deepening Judiciary's effectiveness in combating corruption".

12. The presenter further introduced GPAD's priority activities/projects for 2008-2009. In this respect, he noted that activities for 2008-2009 biennium were geared towards the new strategic focus and intervention of ECA, which are Africa's regional integration, and meeting the continent special needs. In addition, the Division will continue to provide support to its member States through technical support, drafting, publishing, and disseminating recurrent and non-recurrent publications, facilitating group training targeting civil society organizations as well as SMEs and by using its convening power to organize continental fora to facilitate exchange of experiences and promote dialogue.

13. The discussion following the presentation focused on the relationship between the Committee and the Division and the meeting suggested that a closer collaboration should be established so that the committee can be able to monitor, comment and evaluate the implementation of the work programme of the Division on a more regular basis. The meeting raised the issue of duplication of work as some of the activities seemed to be similar to those implemented by the RECs and also suggested closer collaboration with civil society organizations. Several delegates, sought clarification on the African Governance Report (AGR). The questions included the criteria for selection of participating countries, as well as the relationship with the APRM and the consultations between the Secretariat and the Governments of the countries surveyed. Participants stressed the need to ensure stronger involvement of

governments in the AGR process, including the involvement of their respective embassies and missions based in Addis Ababa.

14. In response, a GPAD staff clarified the issues raised endorsing and strongly affirming confidence in the AGR project. The Secretariat also explained in detail the criteria for selection of countries as well as the methodology that the AGR adopts to survey the countries. In addressing the questions related to the overlap of work with the regional economic communities, the Secretariat indicated that it works very closely with the Regional Economic Communities as well as regional institutions. The Secretariat also welcomed the suggestion of closer collaboration with the Committee and in particular with the bureau. Finally the Secretariat reminded the participants that ECA has undergone a repositioning exercise, which has refocused its work. It should also be kept in mind that some of the sections in the Division were only recently established and although their mandate was clear, it might have been too early to evaluate some of the recently delivered work.

Presentation of background papers

(i) Political parties and Public Policies

15. The paper addressing *Political Parties and Public Policies* was presented by a GPAD staff and focused on political parties, democratization processes and policy agenda. It highlighted the institutional mechanisms for policy formulation at the level of the legislature, the executive and local governance structures. The paper noted that political parties in Africa have weak capacity in the articulation of public policies as the manifestoes and agenda of those parties are rarely different. The parties mostly lack professional internal capacity for policy issues and there is little internal dialogue on institutional processes for policy discourse. The paper concluded by providing recommendations on how to enhance the capacities of parties in public policy through internal structures and processes for policy discourse and articulation, by strengthening the civil society – party interface, by invigorating the parties' role in elected institutions, and by developing mechanisms to strengthen popular participation. The presentation was well received as it was considered a very crucial issue for promoting governance in Africa.

16. During the discussion, participants raised several issues related to the peculiarities of political parties in different African countries. The issue of election campaigns and civic engagement was also brought up. The meeting drew the attention to the fact that in some sub-regions issues related to religion may be more relevant than those related to ethnicity. It was also suggested that good practices should be given as much attention as negative ones in the analysis of the issues. The meeting also underlined the importance of civic education that it should be promoted and supported in all African countries. The meeting also sought clarification on abuse of power by most ruling parties as well as intimidation of opposition members during elections.

17. Addressing the questions raised, the presenter explained that the presentation focused purposely on trends instead of case studies as this was thought to be more appropriate for the audience. As regards the query on the abuse of incumbency, the presenter explained that although it was not a direct focus of the paper it was a matter that has been considered in the AGR.

Removing Economic and Corporate Bottlenecks

18. The Secretariat presented a report entitled “Economic and Corporate Governance Bottlenecks to Private Sector Development”. While the document acknowledged recent progress made in many African countries, the presentation identified major challenges for private sector development (PSD). It highlighted the status and trend of major economic and corporate governance parameters that included: the high cost of doing business as a result of inadequate legal and regulatory framework including starting/closing a business, and dealing with licenses; inefficient infrastructure of services and management; complicated tax system and weak institutional legal regime including property rights and enforcing contracts; corruption; limited access to key production factors such as credit and land; and the lack of institutional support to businesses. The presentation aimed at providing policy makers – in the areas of economic and corporate governance, as well as doing business environment – with practical solutions for tackling constraints to the PSD. Based on a comparative analytical methodology across regions and Africa sub-regions, the Secretariat recommended top-three priority areas at the regional and sub-regional level: good governance to improve the image of Africa through regional cooperation with RECs and neighbouring countries to handle negative externality; supporting regional integration to create economies of scale and enhance the investment climate; developing inter-country infrastructure to create larger economic spaces and enhance the investment climate, in particular through public-private partnership. The presentation concluded with recommendations at the country level that included improving access to finance and land as well as collateral and bankruptcy laws to protect the rights of borrowers and lenders. The Secretariat urged member States to take bolder reforms in tax system by simplifying tax laws.

19. The delegates discussed the need to have a comprehensive review of the legal framework, which has an impact on Private Sector and Enterprise Development in Africa. The Meeting recognized the need for secure land titling and appropriate infrastructure that would allow for land registration and transferability, and enforcement of property rights by the legal and judicial systems. This would foster incentives to invest in land and provide improved access to credit. However, some delegates cautioned that the paper should highlight the conflicts that may exist between formal property rights to land and communal rights on the one hand, and access to land of peasant communities on the other. In addition to the factors internal to member States themselves, the participants suggested that the paper should also include external or exogenous factors that may influence private sector development, such as geopolitical issues, and competition with multinational corporations.

Strategies for Promoting Accessibility and Accountability in Public Service Delivery

20. The report on Strategies for Promoting Accessibility and Accountability in Public Service Delivery provided an overview of the situation of public enterprises and mentioned in its introduction that while wide public enterprise reforms during the structural adjustment era were assumed to lead to a shift from state-owned enterprises to total or partial privatisation, in Africa state-owned enterprises remained prevalent. In 1991, they accounted for a 17.3% of GDP in African countries. Hence the challenge of utility regulation is significant for making regulations more efficient, affordable, and accessible from the perspective of ending poverty. The paper

discussed the need for strengthening utility regulation with a view to strengthening governance mechanisms and improving service delivery of these competitive sectors. Furthermore the paper indicated that privatization might help improve efficiency of utility services as it identifies political control as a key hindrance to state owned enterprises.

21. The discussion from the floor suggested some concrete recommendations. Even though the paper supports the idea that privatization may be Africa's best response to its ineffective and inefficient public utility services, participants cautioned that privatization should not be the only alternative, as water and electricity in particular are life and death services which every citizen deserves to be provided with. As such the meeting suggested that state intervention is quite important in those services and where there are inefficiencies with regards to public agencies providing those services, the challenge is on how to improve on the governance of those enterprises rather than privatizing them. Similarly, it was recommended that privatizations should be a last resort, often detailed analysis and research have been carried out and not as a first option. Also, even when those services are privatized, state regulation and support for the poor in having access to those services remains important.

(iv) GPAD statutory agenda

22. A representative of ECA presented the document entitled "GPAD Statutory Agenda: Issues and Recommendations". In his introduction, the presenter reported that the present Committee on Human Development and Civil Society was established on 8 May 1997 by resolution 826 (XXXII). The members of the Committee are African experts drawn from government, private sector and civil society groups.

23. He underlined the activities and the achievements of the Committee during the last 10 years. He then informed the meeting about ECA's recent reform exercise, which came into effect on 3 August 2006, aimed at repositioning the Commission to strategically realign its program priorities with the priorities of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union. As a result of this reform, the former Development Policy and Management Division (DPMD) was restructured and renamed as Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD) to reflect the new priority areas of the Commission.

24. The presenter went on to describe the four sections composing the new Division namely: a) the public administration section, which mission is to assist African countries enhance their public administration systems and improve public service delivery in line with the increasingly changing and complex problems of managing a democratic and pluralistic society; b) the civil society section, with a mission to strengthen its support to African civil society by providing capacity building programs and through the establishment of new platform for communication, exchange of information and mutual learning opportunities, such as the African Civil Society Forum, which is being institutionalized as requested by the CSOs; c) the private Sector and enterprise development section, which fosters a sustainable and stable business environment for the creation of viable private sector enterprises in African members states by addressing the major constraints to their existence and growth and d) the APRM support Unit, which is geared towards supporting the APRM process, using its technical and analytical expertise in all the

APRM assistant areas and the wealth of data on African governance system derived from its flagship publication, the African Governance Report.

25. The presenter underlined the importance of partnership for the implementation of GPAD work program, particularly the ones with the AUC, the RECs and the CSOs partners including the one with the Conference of NGOs in consultative status with the UN (CONGO) and the Women's Network for communication and development (FEMNET).

26. Finally the presenter requested the meeting to reflect on the broad mandate of the GPAD and its constituents and in order to capture the new organizational structure of the division. Additionally, he requested the Committee to consider the changed name of the Committee, as approved by the conference of ministers, "Committee on Governance and Popular Participation" as well as the improvement of the Committee's constitution and the identification of the focal ministry for the Committee in every country.

27. During the discussion session, the committee endorsed the new name decided at the last conference of ministers.

28. Regarding the preparation/drafting of the new constitution/statute of committee, it was agreed that the Bureau, which already has members from different regions and is tripartite in nature, shall assume the responsibility in collaboration with the Secretariat to prepare the revision of the statute. In so doing, the bureau shall consult with other members from the respective regions, who in turn are expected to communicate to the Bureau any proposals they may have in this respect. The revised draft shall be submitted to the next committee meeting in 2009.

29. As far as the identification of focal points for ministries, it was agreed that ECA will communicate with the member States through their embassies in Addis Ababa so that they liaise with the respective governments to be informed as to the chosen national focal points.

D. RECOMMENDATIONS

30. In addition to the recommendations made under each paper presented, the meeting also made some additional recommendations of general nature. These are:

- GPAD should explore the possibility of continuing further research on strengthening political parties in Africa and ensuring that they perform better, as parties constitute the platform for recruiting and training the future leadership in Africa.
- GPAD should explore conducting further research on the public utilities, particularly looking into internal governance of those enterprises and suggest concrete recommendation for their improvement.
- Civil Society Section should be coordinating with other divisions at corporate level to ensure that CSOs are recognized as critical players in the commission's

work. In this respect it was suggested that the African Centre for Civil Society should be re-established to coordinate CSOs capacity building programmes as well as establishing a platform for information and experience sharing. The section should focus its work on encouraging partnership modalities, which is one of the hardest challenges for CSOs on the field

31. The participants further recommended that:

- Frequent and regular communication between the Secretariat and the Committee on the activities of GPAD, should be enhanced through the bureau;
- All communication from ECA to the countries should be copied to the respective embassies resident in Addis Ababa;
- Documents for the committee should be circulated to the embassies at least one month in advance.

F. CLOSING

32. Two speeches were made at the closing session of the committee meeting. The representative of the ECA Executive Secretary, the OIC of GPAD, thanked participants for their participation and commitment to the meeting and to the development of ECA and to Africa in general and promised that ECA will continue to strive to serve the continent better, with their full cooperation and support.

33. The chairman of the bureau delivered the closing speech. He thanked the delegates for electing him into office of chair of the bureau and promised that he and his team will serve the committee conscientiously and shall devise regular communication mechanisms with the committee members. The chairman at the end of his speech declared the meeting closed.

ANNEX I
Opening Statement

By

Abdoulie Janneh
UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary
of the Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

Mr. Chairman,
Honourable Ministers,
Distinguished Representatives of Governments, the Private Sector and Civil Society Organizations,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), let me warmly welcome you all to Addis Ababa for this Meeting of the Committee on Human Development and Civil Society. This is the fourth Meeting of this Committee since the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Economic and Social Development and Planning established it in 1997 as a platform for constructive consultations among experts in the public and private sectors, as well as civil society, on issues relating to human development and civic activities in Africa.

In this regard, and in view of the recent developments that have taken place here at ECA and Africa on the one hand and at the global level, on the other, we find this consultation most timely, and I am delighted at such diverse and senior level of participation. We are particularly gratified to see among the participants some seasoned personalities, whose intimate knowledge of the issues at hand will greatly enhance our deliberations. This meeting is indeed another valuable opportunity for us at ECA to engage in fruitful dialogue, which will contribute to our quest in achieving not only the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but also sustainable development in Africa.

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished participants,

Since your last meeting that took place here in Addis Ababa from 4 to 6 May 2005, ECA has undergone a repositioning exercise in 2006. The aim of the reform was to reposition the Commission in order to strategically realign its program priorities with emerging global, regional, and national challenges. The emergence of major new continental institutions and initiatives, particularly the African Union Commission (AUC), the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), that are providing leadership to advance the African development agenda made it imperative for us at ECA to rise to the challenge by partnering with these new institutions in order to respond proactively to the new realities and to achieve results in the most efficient and effective manner.

The ECA repositioning exercise outlined how the Commission is reorganizing itself to better address Africa's development challenges, and how it plans to deepen its work in the identified priority areas. It also highlights how the Commission plans to work with the AU, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and other development partners to tackle the continent's development priorities.

As a result of the reform, what was previously called "Development Policy and Management Division" (DPMD) was restructured and renamed the "Governance and Public Administration Division" (GPAD) to reflect the new priority areas of the Commission and the central role of governance in achieving the MDGs. GPAD is organized into four sections, namely Public Administration Section, Civil Society Section, Private Sector and Enterprise Development, and the African Peer Review Mechanism Support Unit. The overall strategic objective of the Division is to promote good governance practices in all sectors of society including civil service, public sector, private sector development and civil society organizations, and support to the APRM as an African driven and owned process to institutionalize the practice of good governance on the continent.

Political inclusiveness, which allows for voice and power by the people especially the rural communities, is a core component of good governance. Indeed, poverty reduction/eradication is now closely linked with the access of people to decision-making structures, their participation in local governance and how their choices are reflected in public policies and resource distribution. The challenge therefore is on how to crowd in non-state actors-both civil society organizations and the private sector in the governance agenda, through which they can mobilize the people for effective governance.

In the light of these developments the primary purpose of this meeting is two-fold. First, to reflect on the new mandate of GPAD and its constituent sections in order to chart a strategic future direction; and secondly, to suggest how the Division could improve its governance and public administration activities and working relations with continental, sub-regional and national institutions as well as non-state actors in order to deepen democratic culture and promote national and regional development in Africa.

Mr. Chairman,

Distinguished participants,

As indicated in our business plan for 2007-2009, of all the challenges facing governance and public administration systems in Africa today, none is more daunting than how African countries can build and sustain effective and efficient institutions, both at state and non-state levels.

The findings of our research at ECA through the Africa Governance Report (2005) indicates clearly that capacity deficits across state and non-state institutions remain enduring and continue to pose obstacles to poverty reduction. Capacity deficits are replete in the parliament, judiciary, educational institutions, public and private sectors. Enhancing the capacity of these institutions will involve building a functional bureaucracy and educational system, efficient law enforcement mechanisms, credible and accessible judicial and legal systems, and inclusive and democratic decision-making institutions and processes. All of these will promote better delivery of services, engender investors' confidence in the economy, promoting private sector development and facilitate overall national and regional development and, in the end, eradicate poverty.

Of course, capacity development follows different paths in different circumstances. The last four decades of development practice has thought us that there is no "one size fits all" approach. Yet, good practices can be learned, replicated and scaled up. In this respect, it is gratifying to note that since the early 1990s, many African countries are engaged in the process of institutional re-engineering aimed at evolving democratic structures, processes and institutions essential to building a capable state.

It is heartening to know that there are clear signs of political and economic progress in Africa in spite of the daunting governance challenges. The democratization project has recorded remarkable gains. For instance, in many countries elections are becoming the only way for government and regime change; women participation in governance has increased in many countries; there is media explosion with the establishment of private media and the resultant better access of the people to quality and diverse information; anti-corruption institutions have been established in many countries to stem the tide of corruption; and there is better observance of human rights and the rule of law. In the economic arena, Africa in the last decade recorded an average growth rate of 5.5%, which partly shows the returns of our political investment in good governance.

It is therefore our sincere hope at ECA that the current efforts would be sustained while reducing the difficulties that some countries are confronted with. In this regard, the Economic Commission for Africa stands ready to work with African governments, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the United Nations system and other development partners including NGOs and CSOs, as they embark on measures aimed at making our continent a better place to live.

**Mr. Chairman,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

Looking at the agenda of your meeting I noticed that you will be discussing, amongst others, a proposal from ECA Secretariat related to the new structure, role and mandate of your Committee with a view to realigning its activities with ECA's new program orientation.

I wish to emphasize that in addition to reflecting on the broad mandate of the Division and its constituents, we particularly expect you to concentrate on three major aspects related to the overall Commission's interaction with member States in the areas of governance and public administration at the country level.

First, the new scope of activities of the Division obviously calls for a realignment of the name of your Committee. Secondly, the changing of name of your Committee will imply the preparation of a new constitution/statute for the Committee and finally, perhaps most importantly, you would reflect and identify the focal ministry that would be liaising with the Commission on matters related to governance and public administration, through this Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

At this junction, allow me to acknowledge the efforts made by the outgoing Bureau of the Committee in trying to redefine the role and operational modalities of the Committee. I must admit that your proposal to that effect came to ECA at a very critical moment when the Commission was changing its leadership. This meeting offers us a good opportunity to reflect on the proposal and other challenges and take appropriate decisions on them to make the Commission more efficient and relevant in the area of governance and public administration. In this respect, the outcome of this meeting is very important to us and can make a pivotal contribution to our efforts in building good governance on the continent.

Distinguished participants, your insightful deliberations will help shape our programmes and agenda and indirectly the course of Africa's development process. I therefore look forward to lively discussions and, interesting and rewarding conclusions and recommendations that will assist us in serving the continent better.

With these few remarks, Mr. Chairman, I wish you a very successful meeting and very fruitful deliberations.

Thank you for your attention.

ANNEX II

Agenda

1. Opening remarks by the Director of Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD)
2. Election of officials
3. Adoption of agenda and programme of work
4. Review of **GPAD work programme** in 2006-2007 and report on the work priorities for the next biennium 2008-2009
5. Session on **GPAD statutory agenda**
6. Report on issues and prospects concerning political governance: Parliamentary documentation on **political parties and public policies**
7. Report on perspectives to economic/corporate governance: Parliamentary documentation on **removing economic and corporate governance bottlenecks to private sector development**
8. Report on public service delivery: Parliamentary documentation on **strategies for promoting accessibility and accountability in public service delivery**
9. Any other business
10. Adoption of the report of the meeting
11. Closing of the meeting

ANNEX III**List of Participants****I. Government****Algeria**

H.E. M. Nor-Eddine Aouam
Ambassador
Embassy of Algeria
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel. :251 11 3719666
Fax : 251 11 3719668

Hafida Djaoud
Embassy of Algeria
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel. : 251 11 3719666
Fax : 251 11 3719668
E-mail: y_hafida@yahoo.fr,
hbelhodi@yahoo.fr

Benin

Henriette Donhossou
Embassy of Benin
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel.: 251 911 416493
E-mail: henriette852@yahoo.fr
Burkina Faso,

Kambiré Jean-Baptiste
Embassy of Burkina Faso
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel.: 251 11 6615863/64
Fax : 251 11 661 5855
E-mail : jbbesso58s@yahoo.fr

Burundi

Bernadette Simvura
First Counsellor
Embassy of Burundi
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel. :251 9 12 14 0414
Fax : 251 14 651299
E-mail : bernd_sim@yahoo.com

Côte d'Ivoire

Toussaint Gbi
First Secretary
Embassy of Côte d'Ivoire
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel.: 251 15 159866/25115521430
Fax: 251 15 159867
E-mail: toussinclair@yahoo.fr

Congo

Kalala Niemboua Cyprien Prosper
Conseiller du président de la Commission
Economique
aux études et projet de développement au
conseil économique et social
Brazzaville, Congo
Tel. :00242 531 32 61
E-mail: kalala_cyprien@yahoo.fr

Mossa M. Ramaric
Embassy of Congo
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Djibouti

Kenedid M. Hadi
Embassy of Djibouti

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel. :251 11 6613800
Fax: 251 11 6612786
E-mail: kenedid@ethionet.et

Egypt

H.E. Mr. Tarek Ghoneim
Ambassador Extraordinary and
Plenipotentiary
Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Fax: 251 11 1226432

Maher El-Adawy
Minister Plenipotentiary
Deputy Head of Mission
Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Fax: 251 11 1226432

Mohamed Mounir
Second Secretary
Embassy of the Arab Republic of Egypt
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Fax: 251 11 1226432

Ethiopia

Liku Damtew
Advisor to the Minister and CEO of the
National APRM Secretariat of Ethiopia
Ministry of Capacity Building
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Cell: +251 92 112990
Fax: 0111 239889
Email: likudametew@yahoo.com

Filmon Hailu
Economic Issues Expert
Office of the Prime Minister
P.O.Box 1031
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Cell: +251 91 118 1008

E-mail: fil_hai2005@yahoo.com

Ghana

Moses A. Ajaab
Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning
Accra, Ghana

Yaw Nyako
Ministry of Finance
Accra, Ghana

Emmanuel Enos
Minister Counsellor
Embassy of Ghana
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Florence Ashami Oku
Chief Economics Officer
Ministry of Finance
Accra, Ghana
Tel:00 233 21 686135
E-mail: ashamioku2000@yahoo.co.uk

Kenya

Jane Kahjki
Embassy of Kenya
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Libya

Immhamed A. A. Shamekh
Embassy of Libya
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel. :251 11 5511077
Fax : 251 11 5511383

Morocco

Driss Isbayene
Morocco Embassy
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel.: 251 11 550 84 40
Fax: 251 11 551 18 28
E-mail: isbayene@gmail.com

Malawi

Nkhupsya J. Namfuko
Economist
Ministry of Economic Planning and
Development
Lilongwe, Malawi
Tel :01788888
Fax: (265) 01788247
E-mail: jnanfuko@yahoo.com

Mozambique

Lourençon Sambo
Economic Advisor
Ministry of Development and Planning
Maputo, Mozambique
Fax: (258) 42 01 37

Namibia

Jan Brandt
First Secretary
Embassy of the Republic of Namibia
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Niger

Amadou Sonrhäi Oumarou
Consellor
Embassy of Niger
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel.: 251 11 465 13 05
Fax: 251 11 465 12 96

Nigeria

Sierra Leone

Mohamed A. Hashim
Embassy of Sierra Leone
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel. :251 11 3710033/0911 686 002
Fax : 251 11 3711911
E-mail : alhashim22@yahoo.com

Sudan

Ali-Tigani Saleh Fidail
Minister of International Cooperation- Head
Delegate
Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 11 5516477
Fax: 251 11 5519989

Amb. Mohieldin Salim
Head of Sudan Mission and Permanence
Representative to the ECA
Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 11 5516477
Fax: 251 11 5519989

Mr. Christopher Kwajok
Counsellor
Embassy of the Republic of the Sudan
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 11 5516477
Fax: 251 11 5519989
E-mail: jada@ties.itu.int

Tanzania

Ibrahim Fokas Shao
APRM Unit
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Tel.: 00 255 754 263760
E-mail: ifshao@udsm.ac.tz

Hon. Gaudence Kayombo (MP)
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Planning, Economic and
Empowerment
P.O.Box 9242

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
Tel: 255 22 2121629
Fax: 255 22 2121629
Mobile: 255 754 302290
E-mail: gaudence@plancom.go.tz

Vincent J. Kibwana
Chargé d'Affaires
Embassy of Tanzania
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Msafiri W. Marwa
First Secretary
Embassy of Tanzania
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Tunisia

Zaidi Zied
Embassy of Tunisia
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel. :251 11 662 1840
Fax : 251 11 661 4568
E-mail :a.t.addisabeba@ethionet.et

Togo

Djanda Koumsa
Ministère des Finances, du Budget et des
Privatisation
Lome, Togo
Tel.: 228 222 40 11
Fax.: 229 221 09 05

II. International Organizations

Africa Leadership Forum

Olumide A. Ajayi
Deputy Director/COP

Africa Leadership Forum
Ogun State, Nigeria
Tel.: 234-8023011543
(Cell)/2348060019380
E-mail: ajayi@africaleadership.org
mideshine@yahoo.co.uk

Bureau Indépendant Anti-Corruption (BIANCO)

Rabeharisoa Voahangy Tiana
Deputy Legal Advisor
Bureau Indépendant Anti-Corruption
(BIANCO)
Villa "La Piscine" Ambohibao –
BP 399
Antananarivo, Madagascar
Tel: 261 33 02 135 65
Fax: (261 20) 22 489 93
Email:bianco.cja@moov.mg;
bianco@wanadoo.mg

CONADHO

Thomas Emerson Mavangui- (CSO)
Président de CONADHO
B.P. 900
Brazzaville, Congo
Tel: +242 5318914/242 6749483
Fax:+242 811 828/
E-mail:thomasmavangui@yahoo.fr
/conadho_nl@yahoo.fr

CRDA

Semira Al Hadi
CRDA
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
FemNet

Mary Okioma
Board member
FemNet
Nairobi, Kenya
E-mail : info@womenforjustice.org

First Consult PLC

Nebil Kellow
First Consult PLC
P.O. Box 40394
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel. :251 11 5546 533
Fax : 251 11 5546 536
E-mail : firstconsult@ethionet.et,
nebil@firstconsultet.com

Yodit Beyene
First Consult PLC
P.O. Box 40394
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel. :251 11 5546 533
Fax : 251 11 5546 536
E-mail : yodit@firstconsultet.com

GTZ

Armin Nolting
GTZ
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel.: 251 116 182586
Cell: 251 911 214548
Fax: 251 116 182588
E-mail: armin.nolting@gtz.de

Inter Africa Group

Tamrat Kebede
Executive Director
Inter Africa Group
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
E-mail: tamratkg@yahoo.com

Timnit Abraha
Inter Africa Group

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
E-mail: timnit@yahoo.com

**International Association of Educators
for World Peace (IAEWP)**

Aloise Makouele-Goma
International Association of Edcators for
World Peace (IAEWP)
P.O.Box 1873, Chaptal street
Brazzaville, Congo-Brazzaville
Tel: (242) 563 39 46
E-mail: makouelegoma@yahoo.fr

Observatoire de Lutte contre la corruption et les malversations économiques

Bakevyumusaya Dismas
Secretary General
Observatoire de Lutte contre la corruption et les malversations économiques (OLUCOME)
P.O.Box 6616
Bujumbura, Burundi
Tel.:00257 77 758 445
E-mail:bakevyadismas@yahoo.fr

Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA)

Nana Tanko
Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA)
BP, 008
Dakar –Fann, Senegal
Tel: 221 869 1024/221 824 0942
E-mail: ntanko@osiwa.org

Partners in Development Services

Ahmed Abu Sin
Executive Director
Partners in Development Services
P.O.Box 8202
Khartoum, Sudan
E-mail: absin4@yahoo.com

Partnership Africa Canada,

Bernard Taylor
Executive Director
Partnership Africa Canada
323 Chapel, Ottawa,
Ontario, K1N 7Z2, Canada
Tel: +1-613-237-6768 Ext. 3
Fax: +1-613-237-6530
E-mail : btaylor@pacweb.org

Engudai Bekele
Coordinator
Partnership Africa Canada

Addis Ababa
E-mail: pac@ethionet.et

Stra Consult

Louis Amedee Darga
Managing Partner
Stra Consult
2, Johanna Street
Port Louis, Mauritius
Tel: +230 2595783/2107033
Fax: +230 2107177
E-mail: straconsult@intnet.mu,
straconsultoff@intnet.mu

University of South Africa

Prof. A. Okharedia
University of South Africa
Unisa –Graduate School of Business Leadership
UNISA
P.O.Box 392
Tel: 27 0 825941417
Fax: 27 0 116520299
E-mail: aokharedia@sbleds.ac.za

African Union Commission

Tshimanga Mukadi
African Union Commission
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel.: 233 21 686135/233 0244271920

Amb. Edile Ognimba
Director of Political Affairs
African Union Commission
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Tel: 251 911230583 (Mobile)/251 11 5510033 DL
Email: ognimba@hotmail.com

III. ECA SECRETARIAT

Onyejekwe Okey
Director

Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 0115 516108/5511227
E-mail: oonyejek@uneca.org

Said Adejumobi
Chief, Public Administration Section
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 0115 445468
E-mail: sadejumobi@uneca.org

Jalal Abdel-Latif
Chief, Civil Society Section
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.251 1 551 1227

Kojo Busia
Chief, APRM Support Unit
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: kbusia@uneca.org

Guillermo Mangué
Development Management Officer
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)

Addis Ababa
Tel.:251 1 5445468
E-mail:gmangué@uneca.org

David Kamara
Development Management Officer
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail : dkamara@uneca.org

Sam-Gwang Cho
Economic Affairs Officer
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail : scho@uneca.org

Kaleb Demeksa
Development Management Officer
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail:kdemeksa@uneca.org

Gonzague Rosalie
Associate Administrative Officer
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel. 251 1 551 1227

E-mail: grosalie@uneca.org

Monique Nardi Roquette
Development Management Officer
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: mnardiroquette@uneca.org

Hodane Youssouf
Development Management Officer
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: hyoussouf@uneca.org

Guy Ranaivomanana
Development Management Officer
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: graniavomanana@uneca.org

Juliana Gonsalves
Economic Affairs Officer,
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227/544 5656
E-mail: jgonsalves@uneca.org

Emebet Mesfin
Associate Development Management
Officer
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: emesfin@uneca.org

Almaz Mitikou
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: amitikou@uneca.org

Bethelehem Teshager
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: bteshager@uneca.org

Yeshimebet Araya
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: yaraya@uneca.org

Loule Balcha
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic

Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: ibalcha@uneca.org

Rebecca Benyam
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: rbenayam@uneca.org
Yetenayet Mengistu
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: ymengistu@uneca.org

Meaza Molla
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: mmolla@uneca.org

Abijah Yeshaneh
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: ayeshneh@uneca.org

Guenet Beyene
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)

Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: gbeyene@uneca.org

Daniela Casula (Intern)
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227

Ya Adam Fye (Intern)
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227

Solomon Gashaw (Intern)
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227

Mawro Hervé Dalo (Intern)
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227

Omowale Dipeolu
Governance and Public
Administration Division (GPAD),
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 1 551 1227
E-mail: odipeolu@uneca.org

Merci Wambui
Information and Communication Service
United Nations Economic
Commission for Africa (UNECA)
Addis Ababa
Tel.: 251 155423
E-mail: mwambui@uncea.org