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PROGRESS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AGENDAS INCLUDING NEPAD, MDGs AND OTHER SPECIAL INITIATIVES IN THE SUBREGION



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I. INTRODUCTION

In 2002, the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as the framework within which the international community, including the United Nations system, would channel its support to Africa's development. In this regard, the UN system developed a comprehensive structure at the global, regional and country levels to support the initiative and ensure maximum results. In its capacity as the regional arm of the UN, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) was assigned the responsibility for coordinating UN support to NEPAD at the regional and sub-regional levels (General Assembly resolution 57/7 of 2002). To this end, the Regional Consultation Mechanism (RCM) was established in 2002 for coordinating all United Nations agencies and organizations working in Africa in support of NEPAD, and ECA was designated coordinator. Thematic clusters, based on the priorities of NEPAD were created within the framework of the RCM. These clusters have undergone continuous reconfiguration to effectively support the implementation of NEPAD. Currently, there are nine thematic clusters as follows:

- Infrastructure Development, convened by ECA;
- Governance, convened by UNDP;
- Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development, convened by FAO;
- Environment, Population and Urbanization, convened by UN-Habitat;
- Human resources development, employment and HIV/AIDS, convened by UNICEF;
- Science and technology, convened by UNESCO;
- Advocacy and communications, convened by the UN Department of political affairs (DPA);
- Peace and Security, convened by the UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA); and
- Industry, Trade and Market Access, convened by UNIDO.

However, the present report will review some activities undertaken within six thematic clusters.

Regarding the Africa's performance on the implementation of the MDGs, recent surveys conducted by the United Nations and others organizations have shown that despite significant efforts made on public policy reforms, a great majority of African countries will not achieve these objectives by 2015. The third section of the report highlights the level of achievement on MDGs which remains disquieting in many East African countries. In the framework of NEPAD agenda, Eastern African countries acknowledge the need for peace and security as a precondition for sustainable development. Major initiatives in this regard have been succeeded in the subregion notably by IGAD and ICGLR who are more than ever determinedly engaged in the peaceful settlement of conflicts in several countries.

The overall aim of the report is to inform ECA member States of the subregion on the UN system-wide support to the AU and its NEPAD programme during 2008. The report also features the main outcomes of the five RCM and highlights issues and recommendations on implementation of the multi-year program in this subregion.

II. ACTIVITIES TAKEN UNDER THE NEPAD PROGRAMME

2.1 GOVERNANCE

The status of APRM acceded countries.

ECA undertook in 2008 a number of activities in support to the APRM process and the African Governance Forum (AGF). In close collaboration with ECA and AfDB, UNDP provided consultative services at high level and participated on regular basis to the NEPAD steering Committee meetings; the Heads of States and Government meetings, as well as to the Africa Partnership Forum (APF). UNDP also supported the implementation of two important initiatives, namely: the Strategic Framework for Capacity Building and the *Advocacy and Communications Strategy for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)* UNDP, ECA and AfDB also provided financial contributions, advisory and consultative services in support to the APRM Secretariat the implementation of the APRM process in many countries. So far:

- Twenty nine AU member countries have acceded to APRM process. These are *Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Republic of Congo, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Malawi, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Togo, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia*
- Sixteen out of the twenty nine have launched the process by receiving Support Missions and follow-up support missions, namely: Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tanzania Togo, and Uganda.
- Three of the sixteen have finalized the self-assessment exercise and just received the Country Review Team, namely : Mali, Mozambique, and Lesotho
- Nine countries, namely Algeria, Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, have now completed the APRM Review process and have gone through the Heads of State Peer Review.

The Ad Hoc Experts Group Meeting on “Assessing the efficiency and impact of national anti-corruption institutions in Africa”

Corruption constitutes a major challenge to economic progress, governance and development in Africa. Corruption not only distorts economic decision-making, it also deters investment, undermines competitiveness and, ultimately, weakens economic growth. Indeed, there is clear evidence that the social, legal, political and economic aspects of development are all linked, and that corruption in any one of these sectors impedes progress in all of them. In the socio-political arena, corruption poses a major threat to social justice, political stability, the rule of law, and sustainable peace. In some cases, corruption has resulted in undermining the legitimacy of governments, eroding confidence in the political leadership, diverting public money away from development projects, reducing productivity, worsening poverty, marginalizing the poor, and spreading unrest and violence.

Despite these efforts, Africa still appears as the most corrupt region in the world. Independent studies conducted both within and outside Africa underscore the severity and magnitude of the problem on the continent.

An Ad-Hoc Expert Group Meeting was organized by UNECA in collaboration with the Bureau for Development Policy of the UNDP, New York, met in Kigali, Rwanda from 16th to 17th February 2009 to explore ways of strengthening the capacity of national anti-corruption institutions in Africa. The meeting examined a study report produced by the ECA on “*Assessing the efficiency and impact of national anti-corruption institutions in Africa*” and discussing international and regional instruments with regard to their domestication and implementation.

The meeting was well attended by participants including former and current heads and officials of national anti-corruption institutions, civil society leaders, academics, media practitioners, members of parliament, international and regional institutions like the African Union Commission, CAFRAD, UNDP, and the UNODC.

The meeting reviewed two thematic issues, namely: (a) International Instruments in combating corruption: The challenge of adaptability and domestication; (b) Specific problems confronting national anti-corruption institutions in Africa and possible solutions. At the meeting, an online knowledge sharing and information portal on governance established by the ECA was also launched.

2.2 INFRASTRUCTURES

Outcomes of the First COMESA- EAC - SADC Tripartite Summit

During the Summit held on 22 October 2008 in Kampala, Uganda the Heads of State and Government of the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC, launched in the area of infrastructure, the Joint Competition Authority (JCA) on Air Transport Liberalization which will oversee the full implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision on Air Transport in the three RECs commencing January 2009. The JCA comprises seven members, two members each from EAC, COMESA and SADC plus a chairperson on a rotational basis.

The Summit directed the three RECs to put in place, within one year: a joint programme for the implementation of a single seamless upper airspace; a joint programme for the implementation of an accelerated, seamless inter-regional ICT Broadband Infrastructure network; and a joint programme for implementation of a harmonized policy and regulatory framework that will govern ICT and infrastructural development in the three RECs.

The Summit directed the three RECs to effectively coordinate and harmonize, within one year: the Regional Transport Master Plans of the three RECs; and the Regional Energy Priority Investment Plans and the Energy Master Plans of the three RECS. The Summit directed the three RECs to develop joint financing and implementation mechanisms for infrastructure development within one year.

Regional Conference on Development of an Equitable Information Society: the role of African Parliaments

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) represented a unique opportunity to both strengthen democratic participation and accountability, to improve effectiveness and efficiency of public service and to create the conditions for economic growth and development. With these opportunities come challenges. The conditions for an information society in which affordable access to communications by all is a reality has to be created through an enabling policy, legal and regulatory framework, in which Parliament plays a critical role.

The central challenge in Africa is ensuring that these opportunities do not further extend the gap between the haves and the have-nots – what has become known as the digital divide. This was the focus of the Kigali conference on the *Role of Parliaments in the Development of an Equitable Information Society in Africa*: The conference was hosted by the Parliament of Rwanda and organized in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). It brought together African parliamentary leaders from different nations under the aegis of the Pan African Parliament, with the aim of creating an awareness on the important opportunities and challenges of development of information societies in Africa.

The conference explored and debate several topics that are relevant to the growing need to use the “digital revolution” as an opportunity to advance the social and economic development of the African continent. The sessions ranged from ensuring access to infrastructure to access to knowledge – from developing the institutional arrangements necessary for ICT sector development to where Africa stands in terms of current policy outcomes. The conference also focused on strategies to address these challenges in African and applying ICTs in support of parliamentary initiatives to support Africa integration and harmonization agenda and build national capacity, among others.

2.3 AGRICULTURE

Land Issues in Agricultural Development in Eastern Africa

NEPAD identified agriculture as the one economic sector that would deliver broadly based economic advancement and act as the economic spearhead or the engine of economic growth, mainly because more than 70% Africa’s poor reside in rural areas and the percentage is even higher in Eastern Africa due, mainly to a combination of factors - conflicts, wars, droughts, floods, declining agricultural productivity and high population growth.

In recognition of the criticality of land issues in agriculture development, the African Union, the African Development Bank and the Economic Commission for Africa in collaboration with Regional Economic Communities, within the framework of NEPAD and inline with MDGs launched the Land Policy Initiative for 2006-2009 so as to develop a comprehensive land policy framework and guidelines. The initiative would serve as a tool for consensus building on land policies, facilitate land policy formulation, ensure economic efficiency, social relevancy and environment reliability.

The overall objective of the Land Policy includes:

- Equitable access to land
- Improved governance in the land sector

- Reduction in land related conflicts

The first step of the Land Initiative Programme was the consultative workshop held in Addis Ababa, 27-29 March 2006 and was followed by five regional assessments/studies of land policies and four regional consultations/meetings which took place Kigali, Rwanda (East), Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (West), Yaoundé, Cameroon (Central Africa and Windhoek, Namibia, South Africa.

The regional consultative meeting for Eastern Africa which was co-organised by ECA, AU and AfDB took place in Kigali, Rwanda from 16th to 18th January 2008. The meeting:

- Identified the key land related issues that should guide/inform land policy and institutions reforms;
- Gained consensus on key regional-specific issues that should enrich the continental skeleton framework;
- Identified the key gaps and challenges to policy and administrative reforms;
- Explored mechanisms for knowledge management, lesson sharing and capacity building in support of land reforms – including the role of actors.

The workshop came up with specific recommendations towards the formulation of Draft Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa to be presented to Heads of Government and State for approval.

2.4 ENVIRONMENT

The Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the third Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007 mandated the negotiation, by 2009, of an international climate change agreement for the full and comprehensive implementation of the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol beyond 2012.

The twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment was held on 7-12 June 2008 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The Ministers recommended that the African Union, at its thirteenth summit in June and July 2009, consider, with a view to its final adoption, a common African position on the comprehensive international climate change regime beyond 2012. AMCEN reiterated their support to the process of developing the Climate Information for Development in Africa programme (ClimDevAfrica) promoted by the Commission of the African Union, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank.

AMCEN also requested the Commission of the African Union: “(i) to provide high-level political support to the successful implementation of the action plan for the environment initiative of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEDAD); (ii) to strengthen its environment section and those of the relevant technical units of the regional economic communities (RECs) to enable them to carry out their responsibilities of the action plan for the environment initiative of NEPAD.”

The Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change was adopted during the meeting of the COMESA Ministers of Agriculture and Environment held in Nairobi, Kenya on 7 November 2008. The Ministers supported expansion of beneficiaries of carbon credits as well as inclusion in climate change related negotiations of sustainable land management, forestation and reforestation as part of “greener agriculture” in view to enhance the carbon storage capacity of or reduce further emissions from agricultural and forest ecosystems,. They called for the promotion of the African

Biocarbon Initiative as well as for further collaboration between COMESA, EAC and SADC to enhance the knowledge about carbon sequestration in above and below-ground biomass of agricultural systems. They also agreed that “COMESA shall engage with all regional economic communities and other relevant organizations in Africa, specifically with the Congo Basin Initiative members, through the Commission of Forest Ministers of Central Africa (COMIFAC), in developing a coordinated policy position inclusive of the full spectrum of bio-carbon linking conservation agriculture, afforestation and reforestation, and reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation”. This initiative was communicated to the Africa Union Commission and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) for their consideration.

In the context of action plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, UNEP, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the NEPAD secretariat provided financial and technical support to the regional economic communities to develop the action plans for all the subregions in Africa. AMCEN called upon the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to take measures to initiate coordination, in collaboration with the East African Community (EAC), to implement the Eastern Africa Subregional Environmental Action Plan.

Following the Resolution of the Ministers of IGAD member States on the environment and natural resources (March 2007), and recommendations from the IGAD Environment Outlook, IGAD Member States had resolved to (1) develop common approaches in national environmental policies taking into account peculiarities and interests of each country; (2) create a regional information network in the field of environmental protection and management of natural resources taking into account existing national, sub-regional and regional initiatives; (3) encourage Private-Public Partnership; (4) enhance synergies among and implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements and Conventions; (5) enhance synergies and collaboration with other organizations of the region involved in the field of environment and natural resources; (6) call upon international community, donor countries, non-state actors and other interested parties to support and assist IGAD countries in their efforts of managing and maintaining the sustainability of the natural ecosystems and the livelihoods of the people of the region.

Other projects in different areas such as biodiversity, sustainable land management, international waters, climate change and persistent organic pollutants (POPs) were developed and implemented through support from GEF. In order to effectively tackle the serious problems caused by land degradation in Africa, GEF committed \$150 million as grant funds to leverage a total of between \$750 million and \$1 billion from domestic sources and bilateral and multilateral partners in support of investments in sustainable land management in Africa through its implementing and executing agencies – the World Bank, the African Development Bank, UNDP, UNEP, FAO and IFAD. The programme is intended to support and strengthen implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, together with both the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP) and the action plan for the environment initiative of NEPAD. The programme was prepared with the support of the above-mentioned agencies under the leadership of the NEPAD secretariat and in close consultation with the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the regional economic communities.

The High Level Task Force of EAC adopted provisions on environmental management that would be governed by the existing EAC Protocol on Environment and Natural Resources Management as well as the Protocol for the Sustainable Development of Lake Victoria Basin and underlined the need for the Partner states to develop common policies in regard to emerging issues on environment.

African countries support the *Strategic plan to build Africa's capacity to implement global and regional environmental conventions*, which overall objective is to enable African countries to implement in a coordinated and comprehensive manner their commitments under global and regional environmental conventions and other international legal instruments. It will also promote sharing of experiences at the national, subregional and regional levels and encourage South-South cooperation. The plan focuses on capacity needs identified by countries themselves.

2.5 INDUSTRY, COMMERCE AND MARKET ACCESS

Historic First EAC-SADC-COMESA Tripartite Summit

The First COMESA- EAC - SADC Tripartite Summit was held on 22 October 2008 in Kampala, Uganda at the Commonwealth Resort, Munyonyo, attended by the Heads of State and Government of the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC).

In their Final Communiqué issued at the conclusion of the Tripartite Summit, which was read by the secretary General of the East African Community Ambassador Juma Mwapachu, the Heads of State noted that the Summit was held In pursuit of the broader objectives of the African Union to accelerate economic integration of the continent, with the aim to achieve economic growth, reduce poverty and attain sustainable economic development.

The Tripartite Summit agreed on a programme of harmonization of trading arrangements amongst the three regional economic communities (RECs), free movement of business persons, joint implementation of inter-regional infrastructure programmes as well as institutional arrangements on the basis of which the three RECs would foster cooperation. The Tripartite Summit underscored the fact that the tripartite arrangement is a crucial building block towards achieving the African Economic Community as outlined by the Treaty of Abuja.

In the side of Trade, Customs and economic liberalization, The Tripartite Summit reviewed the progress on the implementation of joint programmes in trade, customs and economic liberalization amongst the three RECs and economic liberalization amongst the three RECs.

In the area of trade, customs and economic integration, the Tripartite Summit: approved the expeditious establishment of a Free Trade Area (FTA) encompassing the Member/Partner States of the 3 RECs with the ultimate goal of establishing a single Customs Union; and directed the three RECs to undertake a study incorporating, among other things, the development of the roadmap, within 6 months, for the establishment of the FTA which would take into account the principle of variable geometry; the legal and institutional framework to underpin the FTA; and measures to facilitate the movement of business persons across the RECS.

In a major development, the Tripartite Summit resolved that the three RECs should immediately start working towards a merger into a single REC with the objective of fast tracking the attainment of the African economic Community. The Tripartite Summit directed the Tripartite Task Force to develop a road map for the implementation of this merger for consideration at its next meeting.

On measures to facilitate the movement of business persons across the RECs, the Summit directed that the study report on the road map and legal framework, be presented to a specially convened Tripartite Council of Ministers for consideration within 12 months to, among other things, determine the time frame for the establishment of a single FTA encompassing the three RECs.

The Tripartite Summit directed the Chairpersons of the Councils of Ministers of the three RECs to ensure that the three RECs speed up the development of joint programmes that enhance co-operation and deepening of co-ordination in industrial and competition policies, markets and Commodity Exchanges.

The Tripartite Summit directed the Chairpersons of the Councils of Ministers of the three RECs to financial and payments systems, development of capital ensure that the Secretariats participate, co-ordinate and harmonize positions on the EPA negotiations and other multilateral negotiations, including the WTO Doha Development Round Negotiations

COMESA's Regional Industrial upgrading and Modernisation Programme (RIUMP)

COMESA has organised a validation Workshop for the Regional Industrial upgrading and Modernisation programme, (RIUMP) which took place on 28th – 29th July 2008, in Kigali, Rwanda. The main objective of the meeting was to evaluate and validate the programme of upgrading and modernisation of industries within the COMESA region in order to respond to supply side constraints to be able to trade in high value and processed and manufactured goods, to increase both intra – and extra regional exports of COMESA member States.

The programme was very timely as COMESA is in the process of deepening integration to become a customs union in December 2008 but also within the framework of the Economic Partnership Agreements, EPA which the region is negotiating with its EU partners. This programme is in line of the decision of the Eleventh Heads of State Summits held in November 2006 in Djibouti which directed COMESA to formulate a regional Industrialisation strategy based on value addition and industrial linkages and compile a comprehensive inventory of production and manufacturing structures and identify industries that would be upgraded to boost exports in the region taking into consideration of SMEs. The programme is in part the implementation of the African Productive Capacity Initiative and its Flexible Facility, APCI/F, which was formulated by UNIDO at the request of CAMI 16, adopted by the African Heads of State in 2004 as a NEPAD component on sustainable industrial development within the framework of NEPAD's common vision for robust economic growth through employment and wealth creation.

While acknowledging that a Customs Union was a deeper state of integration, this programme is among other planned intervention programmes that will support member States to respond to supply side constraints in order to increase productivity and enhance competitiveness

2.6 REGIONAL CONSULTATION MECHANISM (RCM)

Outcomes of the Review Meeting on Measures to Enhance the RCM in Support of the African Union and its NEPAD Programme

The 9th Meeting of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) of UN Agencies and Organizations working in Africa in support of the AU and its NEPAD Programme was held on 21 and 22 October 2008, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, at the United Nations Conference Centre.

The meeting took note of the progress, achievements and challenges related to activities carried out in the context of the RCM and its clusters from the presentations made by the RCM Secretariat and all the clusters. The meeting raised and discussed issues regarding the following four main points: (i) improved governance structure of clusters; (ii) enhanced coherence, harmonization and

synergy; (iii) strengthened capacity at the level of regional and sub regional organizations and (iv) improved commitment and leadership at the highest level.

Following the presentation of the outcomes of the review meeting by the RCM Secretariat, the meeting emphasized the centrality of the RCM and its cluster system to enhance efficiency and coherence in the UN support to the AU and its NEPAD programme. The Mechanism is more relevant than ever to respond to the needs of the African regional and sub regional organizations. UN support to the NEPAD programme is critical and enhanced coordination on the UN side is key to make the support more effective. The meeting pointed out the need to take stock of the achievements and challenges of the RCM and its cluster system so as to critically analyze the factors of its success. It reiterated the need to address structural, systemic, operational and governance issues as well as those related to resource mobilization, capacity building, monitoring and evaluation, and communication, outreach and advocacy.

The meeting raised particular concern on the ability of the UN agencies and organizations to presently provide meaningful and impactful capacity building support to the AU, the NEPAD Secretariat and the RECs considering their current financial and human resource constraints and that there is no perspective of support from their respective headquarters. It also sought clarification on how the RECs would be involved in the RCM process considering its importance and the role that they would need to play in the RCM, particularly at the sub regional level.

The meeting specifically recommended the following:

- Move from consultation to coordination. The RCM would therefore become the “*Regional Coordination Mechanism*”.
- Strengthen coordination and collaboration between UN agencies and African organizations and among UN agencies at the regional and sub regional levels to ensure that the objective of delivering as one is met.
- Request for a mandate to fund the RCM Secretariat and the nine clusters to enhance their role in coordinating activities and implementing joint programming. In this regard, ECA and OSAA, in consultation with the AU, African Ambassadors based in Addis Ababa and the African Group in New York, should prepare a draft resolution to be presented to the General Assembly for approval.
- Establish a system of communication between clusters.
- Align activities of the RCM to the AU and its NEPAD programme, drawing attention to the opening address of the AU Chairperson.

Emphasize the importance of cross-sectoral coordination and linkages between the nine clusters in any cluster reconfiguration.

- Keep migration in the Environment-Population-Urbanization Cluster.
- Actively involve the RECs’ in the establishment of the subregional coordinating mechanism. The subregional coordination mechanism should also build on the existing mechanism of the Regional Directors Team (RDT) and should be integrated into the RCM.
- Put greater focus on the evaluation of the partnership with the beneficiaries, the African Union Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat, at the next meeting of the RCM.
- UN agencies and organizations to learn from the UNDAF experience of contributing and committing resources for country level activities to establish a financing mechanism for their joint activities. This would greatly facilitate the development of a consolidated business plan for the RCM and move the mechanism forward.

- Review the terms of reference of the clusters, outlining in detail the role and responsibility of the cluster convener, co-convener and its members.

Revisit the proposed impact indicators of the monitoring and evaluation framework taking into account the quality of impact. A taskforce including experts in results-based approach should be constituted to fully develop a monitoring and evaluation system for the RCM.

III. ACTIVITIES TAKEN UNDER THE MDG's

3.1 Overview

In 2000, the UN Millennium Declaration adopted at the largest-ever gathering of Heads of State, committed countries –rich and poor- to do all they can to eradicate poverty, promote human dignity and equality and achieve peace, democracy and environmental sustainability. World leaders promised to work together to meet concrete targets for advancing development and reducing poverty by 2015 or earlier.

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals remains a complex and enormous challenge, especially for the poorest countries. Yet, there has been real progress towards some of the MDGs, even in regions where the challenges are greatest. It is true that progress towards achieving the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals has been uneven, and that many developing countries are on track to achieve only some of the MDGs. But these accomplishments do show how developing countries and their development partners have come together as never before to put the Millennium Declaration into practice.

When world leaders vowed at the United Nations Millennium in September 2000 to “spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanizing conditions of extreme poverty”, they recognized that special measures would be required for the weakest members of the international community to achieve this goal (...). The attainment of the MDGs is the central pillar of the programmes of action for the free groups of countries: the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (2001); the Almaty Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries (2003); and the Mauritius Strategy for the Implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for Small Island Developing States (2005). At a minimum, these three programmes of action can be viewed as international frameworks for the achievement of the MDGs in the respective groups. However, while the rest of the world has made significant progress towards the achievement of the Goals, these groups of countries, particularly the LDCs, continue to lag behind.

3.2 New Challenges facing Africa

The first Joint AU Conference of African Ministers of Economy and Finance and ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development held its meeting from 31 March to 2 April 2008 to assess new challenges facing Africa in the 21st century, and the new international economic environment within which they must be tackled.

The Ministers noted that while economic growth in Africa has been over 5% in recent years, this has not yet translated into job creation and poverty reduction on a wide scale. They concluded their consultation by stating that there was a need to implement strategies to achieve sustained, shared

and broad-based growth in order to accelerate progress towards the MDGs and effectively confront the challenges in the 21st century.

Also, noting that knowledge is a critical factor in the new world economy, the Ministers committed to mobilizing resources to improve the quality of overall education, with a specific emphasis on research and development, and science and technology.

The Ministers also noted with concern the rising price of oil and foodstuff. They urged the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank to conduct a feasibility study on establishing an African Oil Fund, which would provide assistance to low-income oil-importing African countries to mitigate the effects of high oil prices. Ministers also committed to undertake “vigorous measures” to implement the comprehensive African agricultural development programme.

Another major issue of discussion was climate change, where ministers committed to “effectively integrate and implement climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies into our national and regional development frameworks.” They endorsed an ECA initiative to establish the African Climate Policy Centre, which will be the policy arm of the Clim-Dev Africa programme.

Ministers adopted resolutions covering financing for development, climate change, research and development, and endorsed the Economic Commission for Africa's proposed strategic framework for the 2010 – 2011 biennium.

3.3 Linking Poverty Reduction Strategies to MDGs

Research workshop on poverty reduction strategies and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Africa was held in Mauritius from 19 to 20 June 2008. This workshop was a follow-up to the outcome of the March 2006 Cairo African Plenary on Poverty Reduction Strategies and the Millennium Development Goals jointly Organized by Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Union Commission (AUC) in collaboration with the African Development Bank (AfDB) and United Nations Development Programme Regional Bureau for Africa (UNDP/RBA).

The Plenary mandated ECA to expand the remit of the African Learning Group on Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP/LG) to include peer-learning and experience sharing on the MDGs. The purpose of the workshop was therefore to explore possible new areas for research and experience sharing by member states in order to more effectively accompany African Countries in their efforts to achieve the MDGs by the target date. The workshop also prepared grounds for the re-lunch of the Learning Group in September 2008.

Complimentary to the annual meetings, ECA launched in 2005 the web-based Enhancing Knowledge Sharing to Support the Poverty Reduction Process in Africa project to create a mechanism for enhanced sharing of existing knowledge, while at the same time encouraging the creation of new knowledge on poverty reduction strategies.

3.4 Gender and Social Development

About 30 experts from government ministries, academia, civil society and the United Nations system representing 14 countries held from 5th to 7th May 2008 a three-day workshop on “*Developing supplementary targets and indicators to strengthen social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion in the Millennium Development Goals*”.

Organized by Economic Commission for Africa, the meeting was a component of a project undertaken jointly with the other United Nations Regional Commissions and aims to enhance the capacity of member States to design and implement development policies and programmes which contribute to social inclusion, gender equality and health promotion.

The expert group meeting specifically reviewed a report prepared by ECA on social exclusion in the African context, which addressed the key concepts, the different forms and causes of social exclusion in Africa and presented case studies on Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali and Sudan.

By drawing on the situation in their countries, the experts proposed supplementary targets and indicators, that would improve the capacity of countries to measure progress towards inclusion of vulnerable groups, promote gender equality and address health inequities, thereby improving the effectiveness with which MDGs are monitored.

3.5 Delivering on the Global Partnership for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals

On 25 September 2008, the UN Secretary General, together with the President of the General Assembly, convened a special high-level meeting in New York, which gathered world leaders to discuss and translate their existing commitments into decisive and timely action to ensure that all countries can achieve MDGs.

At the mid-point between the adoption of the Millennium Declaration and the deadline of 2015, world leaders reaffirmed that achieving the MDGs remains a vast and demanding challenge requiring common resolve and commitment by governments and other stakeholders to focused collaborative action at the national and international levels. What has been achieved up to now confirms how important it is to forge a shared strategy to achieve enduring development for all. Whatever is done from this point onwards must build on this shared strategy for social and economic development, where the actions of development partners complement and support each other, and where all stakeholders have a role and the space to realize that role.

The high-level event provided governments, civil society and the private sector the opportunity to examine and strengthen commitments, as well as to launch new initiatives, partnerships and alliances, to undertake the many demanding tasks in the years ahead to ensure the achievement of the MDGs by 2015.

IV. PROGRES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MULTI YEAR PROGRAMME

In line with the main thrust of the Repositioned ECA and in pursuit of implementing the ECA Business Plan 2007-2009 where ECA and especially Sub regional offices (SROs) are to support and build the capacities of RECs by providing technical and advisory services. In this regard SROs are “privileged” partners of RECs and support their efforts on regional integration programmes because they are the building blocs for the African Economic Community. ECA has been supporting the process of regional integration as part of Africa's strategy to achieving robust and self-sustaining economy recovering and growth.

The SRO-EA concluded in November 2007, bilateral multi-year programmes with five (5) RECs and IGOs, namely: EAC, IGAD, CEPGL, IOC and ICGLR and has signed two (2) MoU for the joint undertakings of important subregional projects and programmes.

4.1 The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

Collaboration with focussed on four development sectors and thematic issues including economic development and regional integration; food security and environment protection; political and humanitarian affairs; and other crosscutting themes mainstreaming gender issues, HIV/AIDS and science and technology.

SRO-EA supported in 2008 the preparation of development strategies for the sub sectors of transport Infrastructure, Industry and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The study reviewed progress made in the implementation of transport infrastructure and facilitation programmes and made recommendations for improving transport infrastructure in the sub-region

ECA/SRO-EA provided in November 2008 a major study to assist the Secretariat of IGAD in formulating a strategic “Minimum Integration Plan”. The study ultimately will strengthen the capacity of the IGAD Secretariat to strengthen the capacities in its member States on development issues of peace and security; trade and macroeconomic policies; natural resources management; social development policies; as well as transport and infrastructure; industrial sector; and Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

In 2009, ECA/SRO-EA has commissioned a project on “Institutional capacity building within the IGAD Secretariat. The programme aims at developing IGAD organizational and functional structure and strengthening capacity among the staff.

4.2 The East African Community (EAC)

ECA has closely collaborated with EAC on programmes which centered on the capacity building at EAC secretariat to improve its capacity in the formulation and implementation of sound trade policy and trade negotiations. As a subregional partner, the SRO-EA will play an active role in the work of the Trade Policy unit at the EAC Secretariat since the focus of this phase is on supporting Regional Economic Communities (RECs), trade related institutions and other regional groupings in building their analytical capacities in trade related issues as well as cross cutting issues of gender, environment and HIV/AIDS.

The conclusion of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) and the multi-year programme remains a major missing link in ensuring concrete and more meaningful cooperation between the two institutions. It is hoped that this will soon be resolved with the adoption of the draft proposed Multiyear Programme between SRO-EA and EAC.

4.3 The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)

ECA and ICGLR have developed a Multiyear Programme and concluded a Memorandum of Understanding. In April 2008. The multiyear programme which encompasses 15 core projects be jointly implemented will be initially focusing on three priority projects , namely Microcredit, Transborder Development Basins and Food security.

4.4 Communauté Economique pour les Grand Lacs (CEPGL)

SRO-EA and CEPGL have already agreed a Multiyear Programme and a Memorandum of Understanding is under process for signature by the the Secretariat of both institutions. The Multiyear Programme includes programmes and five (5) priority projects and programmes that

were defined by the Ministers Counsel held in Bujumbura, on April 17th 2007. These are: Energy, Infrastructures et Communications; Agriculture et food security; Investments; Education and Research; and Peace, Security, Democracy and good Governance.

4.5 Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)

The IOC Secretariat is preparing a programme of cooperation with SRO-EA which will focus on : Capacity building of the IOC Secretariat; Management of natural disasters; and Harmonization of macroeconomic policies and poverty reduction.

It is hoped that the first draft of the Multi-year programme will be agreed during the present Ad-Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Multiyear Programmes and the ICE meetings.

V. OTHER INITIATIVES: PEACE AND SECURITY

In the Eastern Africa Sub region, three RECs namely ICGLR, IGAD and CEPGL are engaged in peace and security related programmes. Since CEPGL is a sub set of ICGLR and has not already finished his revival process, we analyse the peace and security programmes and initiatives in the two remaining RECs.

5.1 IGAD

Since its launching, IGAD has worked extensively on peace and security. Many programmes and projects have been initiated. We can mention among others ICPAT and CEWARN.

Capacity Building Program against Terrorism (ICPAT)

In IGAD, the Capacity Building Program against Terrorism (ICPAT) is working to build capacity to fight against terrorism. It is administered by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), a non-profit applied policy research institution based in South Africa.

Conflict early Warning and response mechanism (CEWARN)

CEWARN has born in 2002, following a protocol agreement signed by the IGAD Council of Ministers. In June 2003, it was officially opened in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The decision also reflected IGAD's realization that timely interventions to prevent escalation or mitigate the worst effects of violent conflicts was more effective and much cheaper than the material and human costs involved when dealing with full blown crises.

Initially, CEWARN has a mandate to monitor and report on cross border pastoral and pastoral related conflicts. Its operation fields grew and cover a wide range of projects including livestock rustling, conflicts over grazing and water points, nomadic movements, smuggling and illegal trade, refugees, land mines and banditry, etc.

Furthermore, IGAD has worked extensively on the regional conflict particularly in Somalia. As a regional institution, IGAD remains strongly involved in peace building process and peaceful resolution of conflicts within the subregion at large.

5.2 ICGLR

ICGLR is conducting a Programme on Peace and Security. The objectives, strategy, institutional mechanisms and priority projects have been adopted by Member States of ICGLR in order to create, reinforce and sustain peace and security in the Great Lakes Region. The main objective is to transform the Great Lakes Region into a space for sustainable peace and security through coordinated efforts and within a regional framework for the prevention, management and peaceful settlement of conflicts. The so called pact on Security, Stability and Development falls in this framework.

In the recent past, ICGLR has been involved in conflict resolution in the region, particularly in Democratic Republic of Congo. And, to build border security architecture in the region, four specific projects have been identified:

- Management of Border Zones and Promotion of Human Security in the Great Lakes Region;
- Disarmament and Repatriation of all Armed Groups in Eastern DR Congo;
- Disarmament of Armed Nomadic Pastoralists and Promotion of Sustainable Development in Zone 3 (North-western Kenya, South-eastern Sudan and North-eastern Uganda);
- Demining and Mine-Action in the Great Lakes Region.

Additional initiatives exist to promote inter-state cooperation on general security issues and two additional projects exist, namely: Combating illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons; and Fighting transnational crime and terrorism.

VI. THE WAY FORWARD

6.1 NEPAD

The effective implementation of activities undertaken on the wide initiatives is a must, if the momentum is to be sustained, support to the AU and its NEPAD programme enhanced, and the desired impact made. This calls for increased commitment and institutional leadership, as well as concerted effort on the part of all concerned; UN agencies and organizations on the one hand and the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and RECs on the other. Cooperation among the participating agencies is also essential

6.2 MULTI YEAR PROGRAMMES BETWEEN ECA/SRO-EA AND RECs AND OTHER IGOs

The multi year programmes are the frameworks within which collaboration between Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as well as Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) through Sub regional offices should be agreed upon and implemented.

Generally, the major constraint that is faced by SRO-EA in the implementation of MYPs has been financial resources especially as regards:

- Adequacy;
- Timeliness; and,
- Predictability so as to plan specific timelines for the various MYP activities.

The lessons learnt for better outcomes and successes in the implementation of MYPs include:

- Joint mobilization of resources and getting buy-ins of external partnerships is important to a dynamic implementation process;
- Inclusion of “generic MYP elements” in the biennium budget. This calls for early consultations with RECs before the ECA biennium programme budget exercise is started;
- Inclusion of MYPs in next “ECA Business Plan” might facilitate the allocation of XB resources to specific activities of MYPs.
- For sake of practicability in the collaboration it would be useful for each REC/IGO to assign a focal point to directly liaise with a corresponding focal point in the SRO-EA. For each REC/IGO there is already a focal point in SRO-EA.