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**Economic Commission for Africa
Committee of Experts of the Conference of African
Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development**
Fortieth meeting

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

Statutory issues**Update on the strategic framework of the Economic
Commission for Africa****Note by the Executive Secretary****A. Background**

1. In September 2021, the Secretary-General issued his report entitled “Our Common Agenda” (A/75/982), in response to the call by member States for strengthened global governance, following the outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the need for the global community to work together in strengthening collective response to current and future challenges. Our Common Agenda is an agenda of action, designed to strengthen multilateral agreements and accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Our Common Agenda includes some 90 proposals for action, under four broad subject areas: first, a renewal of the social contract; second, a focus on the future; third, the better delivery of global public goods; and fourth, upgrading the United Nations. Our Common Agenda is expected to serve as an accelerator to get efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals back on track, with tangible proposals that will also contribute to reinvigoration of the multilateral system.

**B. Aligning the strategic directions of the Economic Commission for
Africa with Our Common Agenda**

2. Following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 76/6 on follow-up to the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Our Common Agenda”, the United Nations system has engaged on internal consultations on how the proposals can be best put into action in support of both the pandemic recovery effort and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

3. Where Africa is concerned, the COVID-19 pandemic led to the worst economic recession for the continent in half a century, with real GDP contracting by 3 per cent in 2020. Public financing needs surged as governments responded to the crisis, leading to elevated debt vulnerability levels. An estimated 55 million people

* E/ECA/COE/40/1.



were pushed into poverty and 30–35 million saw their formal jobs at risk of reduction in working hours and wages, intensifying the risk of poverty. Development financing gaps have increased, with Africa projected to need \$154 billion annually to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The war in Ukraine is having an additional impact on the capabilities of countries to recover fully and rebuild from the pandemic. In those circumstances, implementation of Our Common Agenda is imperative for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa.

4. In 2018, member States of the Economic Commission for Africa endorsed the five strategic directions of the Commission, framed around the overall vision of delivering ideas and actions for an empowered, inclusive and transformed Africa. In this process, the Commission was informed by the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union. At the time, the repositioning took cognizance of changing global and regional dynamics, including the new macroeconomic environment in Africa, global and continental development frameworks and United Nations reforms.

5. The onset of the pandemic has brought to the fore many of the shortcomings of global governance and international cooperation in ensuring fairness, justice and equity in support for vulnerable countries. African countries, many of which are among the world's most vulnerable, have faced unprecedented social and economic stresses, further exacerbated by the ongoing climate crisis and looming challenges to their peace and stability.

6. These realities have also required the Commission to respond to the emerging needs of member States in the delivery of its work programme. In addition, following the issuance of Our Common Agenda, the Commission, like other United Nations entities, is also aligning its strategic objectives and actions with the implementation of Our Common Agenda and in support of the efforts by member States to achieve the goals and aspirations of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, as outlined in the following figure, showing the areas in which Our Common Agenda is mainstreamed into work by the regional commissions.

Mainstreaming Our Common Agenda



Source: ECA secretariat.

C. Conclusion

7. Implementation of Our Common Agenda provides an opportunity for the Economic Commission for Africa to respond more effectively to future challenges and opportunities, and also to deliver tangible results that will support recovery and resilience on the continent.