

DRAFT AFRICAN DIASPORA PROGRAMME OF ACTION

I. POLITICAL COOPERATION

In the area of political cooperation, we commit to the following:

A. Intergovernmental Cooperation

- a) Enhance South-South Cooperation through closer collaboration between the African Union (AU), Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) the Community of South American Nations (UNASUR) and the League of Arab States;
- b) Leverage the collective efforts of the AU and CARICOM states in multilateral organizations to promote and advance issues of critical importance to Africa and its Diaspora;
- c) Create platforms for closer interaction, solidarity and effective collaboration between and amongst governments and civil society of Africa and its Diaspora;
- d) Encourage and intensify the participation of the African Diaspora in conflict prevention, management and resolution as well as post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation, and disaster mitigation in Africa and the Diaspora regions;
- e) Strengthen the participation of the Diaspora population in the affairs of the African Union;
- f) Reflect on the modalities for the participation of the Diaspora as the sixth region;
- g) ***Continue to integrate the African Diaspora agenda in its engagement with international partners*** (NEW)
- h) Encourage AU and CARICOM to create a conducive environment for the African Diaspora to invest, work, and travel on the African continent and the Caribbean;
- i) Support efforts by the AU to accelerate the process of issuing the African Union passport, in order to facilitate the development of a transnational and transcontinental identity;
- j) Explore the possibility of establishing a Pan-African Secretariat in Dakar, Senegal for the Conference of Intellectuals of Africa and the Diaspora (CIAD) as recommended by CIAD I.

B. Mobilization of Support

- a) Encourage the civil society in the Diaspora and in Africa to support, advocate and mobilize resources for the development of Africa and its Diaspora;
- b) Express mutual support and solidarity between Africans on the Continent and in the Diaspora in circumstances of violation of human and peoples' rights;
- c) Campaign for the ratification and full implementation of all relevant instruments that enhance the protection of women, youth, children and other vulnerable groups, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination, the United Nations Convention against all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, and the UNESCO Convention for the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions;
- d) Encourage the ratification and full implementation of the United Nations Convention on Crimes across Nations as a means of stemming trans-border criminality;
- e) Encourage Africans in the Diaspora to campaign against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Africa especially in countries where they are domiciled and in those that are arms producers.

II. ECONOMIC COOPERATION

In the area of political cooperation, we commit to the following:

A. Government Action to Foster Increased Economic Partnership

- a) Develop effective regional integration mechanisms that would enhance closer interaction between AU, CARICOM and other relevant multilateral institutions of the South, as well as the Diaspora;
- b) Facilitate the movement of people, goods and services within Africa and between African and CARICOM states, and the broader African Diaspora;
- c) Take concrete measures that would promote and sustain linkages amongst AU, CARICOM and the Diaspora in the following priority areas: trade and investment, science and technology, travel and tourism, communication and transportation infrastructure, information and communication technology and cultural industries;
- d) Create an environment conducive for the growth and development of Small, Medium and Micro-Enterprises and promote entrepreneurship in Africa and the Diaspora.

B. Mobilization of Capital

- a) Identify and review existing studies on the mobilization and utilisation of remittances as a developmental tool;
- b) Explore the possibility of creating a Development Fund to address development challenges confronting Africans in the continent and the Diaspora.

C. Partnership in Business

- a) Enhance partnership between the African and Diaspora private sectors through efforts such as regular meetings of Chambers of Commerce and listing in African Stock Exchanges and vice-versa;
- b) Build on Africa's and the Diaspora's comparative advantages in culture to translate it into economic gains through collaborative programmes that would facilitate the strategic development and marketing of their cultural goods and services.

D. Science and Technology

- a) Promote coordination and development of institutions in the African Diaspora and Africa, dedicated to innovation and invention for social and economic development of Africa and the Diaspora;
- b) Examine the merit of using the decisions of the Tunis phase of the World Summit on Information Society, particularly the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Declaration, as well as the Digital Solidarity Fund as a means of creating e-linkages between Africa and the Diaspora.

E. Knowledge Transfer and Skills Mobilization

- a) Promote the utilization of African and Diaspora expertise on economic development issues at regional and continental levels, and explore the possibility of creating a Diaspora Advisory Board(s);
- b) Promote trade and investment opportunities linked to indigenous knowledge systems, while ensuring that the related intellectual property rights are secured for the benefit of Africa and the Diaspora;

F. Infrastructural Development

- a) Support the development of Africa related undersea cable and terrestrial fibre optic connectivity initiatives; and
- b) Harmonize regulatory structures related to infrastructure, such as telecommunication and transportation.

G. Information Gathering and Dissemination Capacity

- a) Develop an overarching communications strategy for disseminating information on Africa Union programmes (including NEPAD) and Diaspora initiatives;
- b) Support the development of an updated and reliable census and statistics on employment, unemployment and entrepreneurship in Africa and the Diaspora with special focus on the Youth.

H. Climate Change

Work closely to advance the international agenda on climate change in international fora given its devastating effects on Africa and the Caribbean.

III SOCIAL COOPERATION

In the area of social cooperation, we commit to the following:

A. Knowledge and Education

- a) Design and develop platforms for African and Diaspora educators and scholars to address the developmental agenda of the Continent and the Diaspora. These would include, among others, the establishment of African- centred institutions and programmes; and increased collaboration efforts between academic and research institutions in Africa and the Diaspora regions;
- b) Ensure the harmonisation and implementation of regional and international protocols protecting indigenous knowledge systems and intellectual property rights;
- c) Emphasize the importance of literacy campaigns as a basic condition of achieving human development.
- d) Support the creation of linkages between Diaspora Academic, Research and Development Institutions and those in African.
- e) Ensure the participation of Diaspora Experts in the development and implementation of AU-Diaspora initiative.

B. Arts and Culture

- a) Promote the coordination and funding of cultural exchange programmes between Africa and the Diaspora;
- b) Encourage the participation of Africans on the Continent and in the Diaspora in festivals in Africa and the Diaspora such as CariFesta in Guyana in 2008, The International Maroon Convention in Jamaica in 2008, and the World Festival of Black Art to be held in Senegal in 2009;
- c) Further encourage and disseminate information to all Member States on African-Diaspora projects which are being implemented such as the Museum of Black Civilisations, an African Remembrance Square, the African Renaissance Monument and the Joseph Project.

C. Media and Image Building

- a) Coordinate efforts of the existing media and promote new media to re-brand Africa and to counter stereotypes about Africans and people of African descent; and
- b) Continue communication efforts to popularise this initiative, and to promote positive image about Africa and people of African origin, as well as promote investment opportunities in Africa and the Diaspora regions.

D. Immigration

Engage developing countries with a view to creating favourable regulatory mechanisms governing migration; and to address concerns of African immigrants in Diaspora Communities.

E. Human and People's Rights

- a) Work for the full implementation of the Plan of Action of the United Nations World Conference Against Racism;
- b) Engage developing countries to address the political and socio-economic marginalisation of Diaspora communities in their countries of domicile;
- c) Strengthen the implementation of legislation and other measures aimed at eradicating child trafficking, human trafficking, child labour, exploitation of children and women in armed conflicts and other modern forms of slavery;

F. Social and Cultural Issues

- a) Allocate more resources on social spending programmes such as health, education and housing;
- b) Cooperate, in order to make social security institutions more efficient in protecting Africans and members of the Diaspora;
- c) Ensure expansion of access to the Internet for social, health, business and development and trade;
- d) Coordinate with the African Diaspora regarding the question of the illegally acquired cultural goods that exist outside the African continent, with the aim of speeding their return to their countries of origin in Africa;

