REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL EXPERTS MEETING ON THE AFRICAN DIASPORA (TCEM), PRETORIA, SOUTH AFRICA, 21-22 FEBRUARY 2011

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Council will recall that the 16th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 31 January 2011 adopted Decision 354 (XVI) which, included a Roadmap for the Implementation of the Diaspora Initiative in the build up to the Global Diaspora Summit. The Roadmap stipulated the need for a Technical Experts meeting (TCEM) on the African Diaspora in the second half of February 2011. The Technical Experts meeting was held in Pretoria, South Africa from 21-22 February 2011.

Objectives

The meeting had four main objectives. First, it examined, reviewed and updated the Ministerial Outcome Documents prepared in 2007, with emphasis on seeking to remove bracketed areas in which consensus or agreements could not be reached previously. Second, It also considered additional elements that could provide new inputs in view of the submissions of the Caribbean leaders to the AU Summit at its 15th Ordinary Session of the Assembly held in Kampala, Uganda, in July 2010 as well as developments that have arisen in the wider context of the AU's Diaspora Initiative since the Ministerial meeting on the African Diaspora held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in November 2007. Thirdly, it identified priority areas of intervention for action to implement the draft plan of action contained in the Ministerial Outcome Document of 2007. Finally, the meeting sought to develop proposals for "bankable projects" in the thematic areas of political, economic and social co-operation that can be translated into concrete or programmatic deliverables through appropriate and effective implementation plans or framework of action.

Agenda and Work Programme

The agenda and work programme are attached. The meeting was conducted through a combination of plenary and breakaway working sessions. It began with an opening session that highlighted the purpose and objectives of the meeting and its expected outcomes. The design was to set the pace for the thematic discussions on political, economic and social cooperation that was conducted in three breakaway groups. The meeting then reconvened in a plenary session that reviewed outcomes and set the tone for subsequent discussions. A final plenary session reviewed and summarized the final outcome.

Attendance

The meeting was attended by about 100 participants comprising a mix of delegates and technical experts from Diaspora communities in Europe, the Caribbean, South and North America and the Middle East and Gulf regions as well as officials from CARICOM, the World Bank, Member States of the African Union and representatives of the African civil society covering the five main regions of the continent and the Diaspora. It also included representatives of the South African Government, particularly the Departments of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO) as well as the AUC.

Opening Session

The opening session included five main presentations. The first was a brief welcome note by Ambassador Rakwena, the focal point for the Technical Experts meeting within the South African Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO). This was followed by a short address by Ambassador Kudjoe, the Deputy Director-General of the Department, who stood in for Dr. Ayanda Ntsabula, the Director-General of DIRCO. In the address, Ambassador Kudjoe acknowledged the presence of the representatives of various states, international organizations as well as Diaspora communities as representing an effective stakeholder community that would enable its successful outcomes. She outlined the purpose and objectives of the meeting as contained in the Roadmap approved by the Assembly of the Union and the organizational procedures and processes that had been taken to ensure that the meeting was convened in conformity with these objectives. She then urged all the participants that were present to contribute effectively towards a meaningful outcome that can serve as the basis for a second Ministerial meeting that is tentatively scheduled to be held in New York on the margins of the UN General Assembly in September 2011 in the lead up to the Global Diaspora Summit envisaged for 2012.

The third presentation by the Director, CIDO, AU Commission, Dr. Jinmi Adisa, was on behalf of the Chairperson of the Commission, His Excellency, Mr. Jean Ping. The presentation situated the meeting in the wider context of the development of the AU's Diaspora Initiative. It traced the history of the initiative and its various benchmarks in order to locate the importance and orientation of the Technical Experts meeting (TCEM). It reiterated the objectives and expected outcomes of the TCEM and stressed its significance for the preparation of the Global Diaspora Summit. He then provided details of activities and programmes that would be part of a follow-up process leading to the Summit and the ultimate implications and significance of the Summit itself.

The fourth presentation by Ambassador Dudley, who is widely acclaimed as the doyen in the Pan-African Movement was on the chronicles of the African Diaspora: Building Bridges between the Motherland and the African Diaspora." The presentation was a major contribution on the genealogy of the African Diaspora Movement and its various phases from the pre-colonial through the colonial to the post-colonial and contemporary

periods. Ambassador Dudley underlined the lessons learnt and accumulated through the process and emphasized that they should be condensed and enveloped within a progressive vision that would determine and establish the roadmap for the future. The presentation was instructive particularly as the ninety-four year old veteran used his own participation and experience throughout the history and different phases of the Movement as a guide to establish the principles and objectives that must guide this roadmap for effective action in this context.

The final presentation was the keynote address by the Deputy Minister, Department of International Relations and Cooperation of the South Africa, Mr. Marius Fransman. His presentation went beyond the contextual premise of the preceding ones to focus on substantive issues and set the tone for the Experts Meeting. The Minister traced the origins of the meeting to the 1st Extra-Ordinary Summit of the Assembly of the Union held in January 2003 in Addis Ababa, which adopted the Protocol on Amendment to the Constitutive Act of the Union. In that Protocol, the AU declared that it shall "invite and encourage the full participation of the African Diaspora as an important part of our continent, in the building of the African Union." The Minister added that the AU built upon this premise by adopting a definition of the Diaspora that would enable its participation in the affairs of the Union. The AU defined "the African Diaspora as consisting of peoples of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union."

The Minister saw this definition as derived from the primordial paradigm and ideological imperative of the Pan African project and established its roots in the successive waves of the African migration, particularly across the Atlantic, in the period of the Slave Trade. He recognized that some elements of the African Diaspora have found issues with the definition but regarded it as encompassing and well-adapted to the requirements of the Union. He, thus urged participants to look beyond procedural and definitional issues to focus on how the Diaspora Initiative would be translated to ensure structured and full integration of Diaspora actors and communities in structures and processes of the AU and its Member States. Simultaneously, the discussions should also focus on how the African Diaspora would assist and contribute effectively to the development of national economic strategies and the integration and development efforts of the African continent as a whole. He urged the Experts Meeting to tease out programmatic issues that would enable a framework of action through which Africa can assist the well-being of its Diaspora and in which the African Diaspora can play an effective and sustainable role in the economic advancement of Africa and enhance the pursuit of regional political and economic development of Member States of the Union and accelerate and consolidate the integration and development agenda of the African continent.

Summary of the outcomes of Discussions by Breakaway Thematic Groups on Political, Economic and Social Cooperation.

I. <u>Political Cooperation</u>

In the area of political cooperation, the Meeting identified the following priority areas of intervention as required to establish the effective framework of action to implement the Plan of Action contained in the Ministerial outcomes of 2007.

a) *Ratification of Protocol of Amendment to the Constitutive Act*

Urgent ratification of Protocol of Amendment to the Constitutive Act that enables the effective participation of the African Diaspora in the affairs of the African Union through its Article 3(q).

b) *Strengthening relations between the AU and regional bodies and Diaspora Communities*

Strengthening relations between the AU and regional bodies and governments of states in which significant Diaspora formations reside to promote a wider stakeholder community that supports this process.

c) *Special Status for the Caribbean*

Assigning special status to the States of the Caribbean Community which are closest to Africa in historical and spiritual terms, as "associate" Members of the African Union. Concurrently, the African Union should develop special ties with CARICOM as the regional body comprising all of these states through a Memorandum of Understanding. The AU should establish a precise cooperation agenda with CARICOM that will support these objectives.

d) *Enhanced opportunities for Diaspora Participation in AU Affairs*

AU should provide enhanced opportunities for the closer involvement of Diaspora formations, communities and organizations as well entrepreneurs and investors in the affairs of the regional organization through appointment of Diaspora Experts, preferential dispositions and treatments of Diaspora populations. These would include invitation to Diaspora leaders and organizations and their close association with processes of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation across the broad range of the integration and development agenda of the AU.

Such collaboration should also be leveraged for the promotion of a progressive global governance agenda, with pronounced emphasis on encouraging multilateralism and developmental approaches as well as the creation of a global Afrocentric movement.

e) Facilitation of Diaspora Inclusion in AU Structures and Processes

In the process of its institutional development, the AU must consolidate the ideal of the sixth region by urgent facilitation of direct involvement and participation of the Diaspora in AU structures and processes. Accordingly, there is the need to establish quickly and precisely the social and legal criteria that would facilitate such participation as well as organizational processes within Diaspora communities that would support such processes. This requirement should also be situated in the transformation of the AUC into an AU Authority.

f) Targeting the Needs of the Diaspora

The AU agenda of regional integration and development must also target the needs of the African Diaspora as the sixth region of Africa as well as Africa's relationship with the rest of the World especially within the framework of it strategic partnerships. It should also acknowledge the conditions and situations of African Diaspora populations, including the desire for reparations and the right of return.

II. Economic Cooperation

The meeting identified eight key platforms of intervention as building blocks for a framework of action to implement the draft action plan on economic cooperation contained in the Ministerial Outcome Document of 2007 as follows:

a) Government Action to develop Integration Mechanisms

Government action is required to foster increased economic partnership by developing effective integration mechanisms to enhance close interaction between the AU and multilateral institutions of the South, especially those where the Diaspora reside. Such actions must include mechanisms that would facilitate or support the free movement of people, services and goods.

b) *Mobilization of Capital to ensure sustained economic cooperation and government and business entities in Africa and the Diaspora*

Mobilization of capital was underlined as necessary to ensure sustained economic cooperation amongst government and business entities in African and regions where the Diaspora are resident. Harnessing resources in this sphere should not be limited to remittances, which relate largely to recent migrants but should include finding mechanisms that would enable the Diaspora to invest in programmes arising out of this initiative. The resources must be used to promote development, entrepreneurship and business opportunities in African and Diasporan regions.

c) *The building of business linkages to associate the African Diaspora to the processes of social and economic development*

It is essential to build business linkages between organized businesses in the African continent and the Diaspora on the basis of active collaboration, with a strong focus on small and medium size business as these promote entrepreneurship.

d) *Use of Science and Technology*

Premium must be placed on harnessing the opportunities offered by developments in the fields of science and technology to associate the Diaspora in developed countries with the processes of economic and social development in Africa. This will require the coordination of centres of excellence in science and technology in Africa and the Diaspora to promote innovation that will enable Africa to respond to the challenges of modern economies including climate change.

e) *Prioritization of knowledge transfer and skills mobilization in areas of effective needs*

Implementation plan would require focus on prioritization of knowledge transfer and skills mobilization in areas of Africa's critical needs, particularly in regard of social development and economic rejuvenation. In this respect, skills institutions in the Caribbean and Latin and South America should be engaged for exchange and knowledge.

f) *Infrastructure Development*

Priority must be assigned to enabling infrastructure development as an important catalyst for economic cooperation, with special emphasis on big projects and hard infrastructure like transport and communications that must also include the building of soft infrastructure.

g) *Information Gathering and Dissemination Capacity*

Priority should also be placed on the use of information gathering and dissemination capacity to produce accurate data that would inform policy development. The provision of accurate and reliable data on demographics and economic profile of Diaspora communities as well as on Africa's development needs will enable the implementation plans to match the supply of skills and asset to needs.

h) *Climate Change*

Economies in Africa and regions where the African Diaspora resides needs to adapt by adopting the new technologies for green economy cooperation between Africa and the rest of the global South towards a legally-binding climate change agreement that affirms the Kyoto Protocol and advance the principle of common, but differentiated responsibilities as a common goal.

III. Social Cooperation

The meeting identified six platforms of interventions as required for an effective framework of action to implement the draft plan of action contained in the Ministerial Outcome document of 2007 as follows:

a) *Knowledge and Education*

Emphasis must be placed on knowledge and education with special focus on the schooling of the girl child and universal primary education. Such emphasis must assign priority to an inventory of Afrocentric educational institutions, adaptation of curriculum and textbooks, teacher certification, audio-visual equipment, the use of indigenous knowledge systems and existing special education programmes, with a focus on creating a common African educational platform on the basis of these data.

b) *Coordinated Protection of Indigenous knowledge system to promote innovation*

Concurrently, the use of indigenous knowledge require coordinated protection through international property and copyright mechanisms as well as a special AU Protocol on promotion and protection of indigenous knowledge systems. The challenge in this context is to create a reliable single scientific portal containing information that would facilitate appropriate economically valuable and socially useable indigenous knowledge system as this will give Africa and the Diaspora an edge in respect of innovation.

c) Arts and Culture

Plans and interventions in this area should focus on broadening the definition of culture to include belief systems rather than the kind of culture that lends itself to comodification. This approach would build on the factor of heritage to facilitate greater awareness and common purpose between continental and Diaspora Africans. Festival and cultural shows would be part of these endeavors but should focus not on their exotic nature but on the celebration of African civilization.

d) Media Outlets

Media outlets that exist in Africa and the Diaspora especially those that focus on citizens and their development issues must be brought together and linked in a structured fashion. The creation of a single media portal for Africa and the Diaspora would be critical for Africa to respond to its image challenges, created by world media's Afro-pessimistic coverage. As special focus on new media technologies such as social networking portals is a necessary part of media reforms that should include promoting media freedoms on the whole.

e) Human and People's Rights

Social cooperation must place premium on human and people's rights representing a common heritage of Africans and the Diaspora given the history of slavery, colonialism and oppression after independence. In this sphere, the Diaspora Initiative should not seek to re-invent the wheel, given the existence of the AU protocols and human rights institutions already in place. Rather the plan of action in the area of social cooperation must ensure that special attention, full respect and implementation of existing protocols and decisions should be placed on the international implementation of the outcomes of the World Conference against Racism held in Durban, South Africa, in 2002.

f) Migration

Migration should be underlined as a fundamental point of concern for the Diaspora with emphasis on urgent need to stem human trafficking, especially of children that were sent to work in the West and in Asia. The plan of action should promote greater awareness of this problem and cooperation with Western and Asian regions to resolve it. There is also a need for strategies to root out the causes of risky migration and to reverse the brain drain.

MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTING MEASURES RECOMMENDED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF PRIORITY AREAS OF INTERVENTION

Based on these priority areas of intervention, the meeting put forward specific lines of action or recommendation that will serve as implementation tools as follows:

Political Cooperation

1) The AU should formulate a plan of action that would facilitate the necessary signatures that are required to operationalize the Protocol of Amendment to the Constitutive Act by the end of the year 2012 in which the Global Diaspora Summit will take place.

2) Increasing emphasis should be given to the establishment and consolidation of regional Diaspora networks. In particular, networks in Europe, the US, South American and Middle East should be established by 2012 while the Caribbean networks should be effectively consolidated in the same period. The other networks in Asia, Oceana, and Australasia etc. should be established in 2013-2014, while the previous ones are being consolidated.

3) The process of Regional Consultative Conferences should continue and be intensified particularly in areas where they have not yet taken place, with special focus on the Middle-East – and the Gulf regions.

4) Legal and Social criteria for the participation of the Diaspora in the organs and institutions of AU should be finalized between 2011/2012. This would involve an AU framework document setting out the political and social criteria and differential access structures which would be complemented by set legal criteria for determining appropriate institutions and organizations that can take advantage on this process. This process would also involve a clearer definition of the obligations and responsibilities of members of the Sixth region as well as the 6th region itself within the wider African Community of the AU.

5) The AU Commission and CARICOM should finalize and adopt a Memorandum of Understanding that will facilitate closer relationship between Africa and Caribbean and address issues considered earlier on in this context.

6) Effective political measures should be taken to facilitate effective community relationship between continental Africans and its Diaspora. These would include the creation of a Diaspora webpage on the AU website in 2011, facilitation of movement of students and professionals of the African Diaspora to and within the African continent through improved visa arrangements and consideration of the

implementation of a Schengen-type visa on the African continent based on agreement and collaboration among AU Member States.

7) Harnessing Diaspora support for the integration and development agenda of AU and its Member States would involve creating effective synergies between national and continental Diaspora. A meeting of Diaspora Desks and Ministries of Member States and the AU should be called as soon as possible to establish a foundation for this process.

8) The AU should revive and strengthen the OAU initiative on Reparations as contained in the Abuja Declaration on Reparations that was championed by the Group of Eminent Persons. The Chairperson of the Commission should assume responsibility for reviving this initiative and serving as its champion in order to give it the necessary profile. Within this context, the AU should campaign for the implementation of all reparations oriented resolutions contained in the UN Durban Declaration and Programme of Action of 2011 and the Review conference of 2005.

9) The AU should establish a Diaspora Advisory Board to support its policies, plans and programmes to address overarching issues of concern to Africa and its Diaspora. The Advisory Board should also assist the AU to create a Global Afrocentric movement dedicated towards the creation of a world order that would promote African empowerment and a related world order based on hope, equality and social justice.

Economic Cooperation

1) An economic partnership arrangement should be established and fostered between the AU and CARICOM. All the States involved therein should promulgate preferential procurement policies that would enable the interlinkage of African and Diaspora organizations to support Africa's development and integration agendas.

2) Financial Instruments focusing on remittances and Investments should be established to facilitate the mobilization of capital that would strengthen links between Africa and the Diaspora.

3) The AU should adopt and promote the "Development Market Place for the African Diaspora Model" DMADA as a framework for innovation and entrepreneurship that would facilitate development. Similarly, an African business portal should also be established as a source of information on resources and projects.

4) A Research and Development fund should be established to promote science and technology partnerships and concrete support must be provided for the square kilometer away project.

5) The AU should develop sector-specific data base to facilitate knowledge transfer and skills mobilization.

6) Africa should establish an "Africa News Network" covering radio, television and online broadcasting to enable information gathering and dissemination capacity.

7) The AU must develop a green corridors programme and a continental renewable energy initiative to promote a green agenda in the area of climate change.

Social Cooperation

1) For the purpose of creating information accessibility and guidance the African Union should develop information hubs throughout Africa and the Diaspora regions with coordinated participation of relevant centers of Diaspora organizations such as the Diaspora African Forum.

2) Ministries of Education of Member States of the Union and Diaspora government and communities all over the world should carry out an inventory of established African-centered educational institutions and use them to determine and recommend a common educational platform for Africans that would promote universal access to education.

3) Similarly, there should be an inventory of best practices by governments and civil society on traditional knowledge systems. This will facilitate the process of their harmonization and a special AU Protocol for the protection of indigenous knowledge systems and property rights.

4) A framework that would enable Ministries of Culture of Member States of the Union and Diaspora formations to conduct mapping exercises of international arts and culture events, festivals and film expos should be established. These should include festivals of traditional arts and culture and trade fairs. The AU should formalize collaboration with the African Museum Association, the Caribbean Museum Association and the Southern African Museum Association for this purpose.

5) AU Member States should convene a Media Summit in collaboration with African and Diaspora Media Organizations to identify best practices models and agree on a framework for the establishment of a new portal. The Summit should also encourage AU Member States to enact legislation regarding freedom of information

and develop internet access as a means of enhancing Africa's image and popular participation in continental programmes.

OUTCOME, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Outcomes and Achievements

The process and outcome of the Technical Experts meeting was a significant and important step in the evolution of the Diaspora Initiative for a number of reasons. First, it revived and accelerated the momentum of the Diaspora Initiative that was stalled by the postponement of the Global Diaspora Summit in 2007. Second, it was timely and held in accordance with the schedule set by the Roadmap that was adopted through Decision 354(XVI) of the 16th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union on 31 January 2011. Thus it not only fulfilled and implemented the Decision of the collective African leadership but also set the pace for the implementation of consequential and related aspects of the Roadmap. Thirdly, the meeting afforded an important opportunity for a global engagement of Africans to refine and build on the agenda for rebuilding the global African family. The agenda of the Experts meeting was embracing and extensive providing the necessary context for updating, improving and elaborating the Ministerial Outcome documents of 2007. Fourth and finally, the Technical Experts meeting added the extra-dimension of focusing on key platforms of interventions in the various sectors as well as mechanisms that can be used to implement the frameworks of action in such intervention platforms. The design is to tease out bankable projects that could be accompanied by feasibility studies that would enable the Diaspora Programme to support processes of selecting projects that would help the AU extend the benefits of the Diaspora programme to its wider African populations within and outside the continent.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Technical Experts Meeting offered a framework for a critical examination of the Ministerial Outcome Documents of 2007 in the light of current developments. The outcome reaffirmed, in a broad sense, the validity of the Ministerial Outcome Document. Improvements and elaborations were made in the context of the previous documents. There were also innovative thrusts and nuances arising out of developments that have taken place overtime since 2007 but the broad texture and contents of the documents would remain largely the same. The advantage of the Technical Workshop therefore, is that it establishes a framework for using all these elements to select specific projects that can enlarge the benefits of the Diaspora project in specific and small and general terms. Of course, the need for such specific projects, eventual choices and the derivation of resources to implement them must be subject to the political authority of the executive organs of the Union, namely the Executive Council and Assembly of the Union. The Technical Expert meeting has simply highlighted possibilities and prospects in this regard.

NEXT STEPS: RECOMMENDATION

The Technical Experts meeting ended with a recognition that the actualization of the objectives of the Diaspora Programme and adequate preparations for the Global Diaspora Summit would require urgent and effective follow-up process. The AU Commission and the Government of South Africa have reflected further on this and would like to offer recommendations as follows:-

a) The Report of the Technical Experts Meeting should be used as inputs to revise the Ministerial Outcome Document of 2007 as appropriate. This could have been done automatically but both sides felt that endorsement of the PRC is a prior requirement for enabling such inputs.

b) We also propose that the refined and improved Ministerial Outcome Documents should be considered by a new Ministerial Meeting that should be convened on the margins of the UN General Assembly in New York in September 2011. The outcome of the reconvened Ministerial Meeting in New York should then serve as the working document for the Global Diaspora Summit that is envisaged in South Africa in 2012 and would be planned to coincide with the hundred anniversary of South Africa's ruling party, the ANC, which forms the government.

c) The proposal for a 2nd Ministerial Summit in the margins of UNGA is a good one because it would enable the presence of all African Ministers. However, the timing and preparation requires careful deliberation. The pattern of the Diaspora Ministerial Meeting is more inclusive than the Ordinary Executive Council pattern. It involves Ministers of the CARICOM and some other states in South and Latin America with significant Diaspora communities as well as civil society representatives of the Diaspora communities in the various regions of the world. If this pattern is to be repeated (and its adoption was deliberate the last time around) then there is clearly a need for effective forward planning. We also need to examine appropriate timetables for the event bearing in mind that effective discussion cannot take place within an hour or two as would be the likely preference in the crowded schedule of UNGA. Hence, the event should be well timed before or after other landmark events in New York. Within this context, the Commission and the Government of South Africa in collaboration with appropriate organs of the Union must begin the planning process immediately.

d) The Commission in partnership with Member States as appropriate, should continue to implement other elements of the roadmap as anticipated in the Assembly/AU/Dec. 354(XVI) adopted by the Assembly of the Union. Foremost among this, is the agreement on a Workshop involving Diaspora Ministries of all

Member States in order to build an appropriate synergies between national and continental programs.

e) Due consideration should also be given to the issue of the Diaspora Summit. In particularly, the precise timing needs to be established soon to allow for effective planning. It cannot be in January 2012 because that would coincide with AU Summit. The location in South Africa is already established but the planning process must commence in earnest so that the relevant issues such as host agreement, agenda, list of participants, work programme, and expected outcomes would be dealt with in a proper and appropriate time frame.