



Press Release N°382/2016

The Consultative Meeting with MPs, Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Civil Society to Promote Constitutionalism, Rule of Law and Good Governance through the AU Instruments concludes with Policy Recommendations



Kigali, Rwanda: 16 November 2016 – In line with the priority areas for the First Ten-Year Implementation Plan for Agenda 2063 (2014 - 2023) regarding good governance including capable institutions and transformative leadership; human rights; justice and the rule of law, the consultation which involves the efforts of the Department of Political Affairs of the African Union Commission, together with Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), supported by International Alert (IA) and

International IDEA concluded today.

Addressing participants at the closing ceremony, the representative of the Government of Rwanda, Ambassador Fatuma Ndangiza, Deputy CEO in charge of Decentralization, Good Governance and Research, Rwanda Governance Board expressed her sincere gratitude for to all stakeholders in promoting good governance and proposing actions to make this happen.

Ambassador Fatuma Ndangiza reiterated her government's commitment to take necessary actions to work hand in hand with the AU Commission to ensure the full implementation of AU treaties and charters as well as motivate the population to develop greater interest in the development agenda of the African Union and rule of law and urged delegates to implement the charters and consultation recommendations in their respective countries.

In his concluding remarks Dr. Khabele Matlosa, Director of Political Affairs, AUC thanked the participants on behalf of the Commissioner for Political Affairs H.E. Dr. Aisha L. Abdullahi (Amb.). He appreciated the partnership with Pan African Parliament (PAP), The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), International Alert (IA) and International IDEA

Dr. Matlosa spoke about the vision of the African Union which is: “An integrated, *prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic*

force in global arena.” to achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries. He elaborated on the three pillars of Agenda 2063 and specifically: Socio-economic development and structural transformation; Democratic and participatory governance; and Peace and security. He maintained this meeting and gave a clear roadmap on how to proceed on these Charters.

Interventions from different delegates enriched the discussion. They highlighted the role of the AU and Civil Society organizations (CSOs) have to play in civic as well as voter education for ordinary Africans. In this regard, ECOSOCC was urged to offer strategic leadership and technical support to CSOs.

During the consultation discussions were held to assess the progress, challenges and opportunities, as well as to share best practices and comparable lessons on how the AU Shared Values Instruments can be effectively and efficiently operationalized. The consultation facilitated an understanding of the workings of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) (adopted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on the 30 January 2007 and entered into force on 15 February 2012) and the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development (adopted in June 2014), with an ultimate aim of enhancing ownership of the AU Shared Values Instruments by Member States of the African Union in the East Africa Region. The Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG) grants specific obligations on State Parties including: upholding constitutional order and rule of law; respect and promotion of human and peoples’ rights; effective participation of African citizens in democratic, governance; conduct of credible and legitimate elections; transparency, accountability and addressing impunity. The Charter requires State Parties to submit every two years a report to the African Union Commission on the legislative and relevant measures taken to give effect to the principles and commitments of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG).

It was observed in Eastern Africa Member States that decentralization is slowed by lack of political will by the central governance and insufficient resource allocation to local government, coupled with high rates of corruption and embezzlement of funds. It was therefore recommended that central governments adopt policies and allocate adequate fund towards effective decentralization, local governance and local development. In addition, Member States were urged to initiate income generating activities to fund local development initiatives, including reducing on tax holidays for investors.

During the consultation it was observed that the AU has over 50 normative instruments, in addition to other Regional and International instruments, which all bestow obligations and commitments on Member States. It was therefore suggested that the African Governance Architecture (AGA), develop mechanisms and provide technical support to Member States to lessen the burden of adherence and reporting requirements on normative frameworks and avoid duplication.

For effective promotion of constitutionalism and rule of law, it was suggested that continental, regional and national promotion initiatives are situated in a given country’s

context, taking into account its development, socio-economic, and peace and security situations. In view of this, AU Commission was requested to commission a study to establish the underlying challenges to the adherence to constitutionalism and rule of law in Africa.

It has been suggested by participants that media has to understand the provisions and objectives of the charters; Inform the public about the charters; Provide a platform to stakeholders to discuss issues pertaining to the ratification and implementation of the charters; Actively participate in setting agendas relating to the charters, including promoting constitutionalism and rule of law; and Critically and independently comment on the implementation of the charters.

Worth mentioning that 25 African countries, members of the AU, have ratified the Charter on Democracy and Governance and only 11 African countries signed the Charter on Public Service. Delegates urged the AUC through DPA to work with government line ministries and CSOs to popularize the charters. Through this, AUC was urged to impress it upon Member States to ascend to the charters.

The consultation was attended by representatives of national parliaments, and representatives of ministries of foreign affairs of East African Region, Member States of IGAD and East African Community (EAC), the PAP, African Union Commission, the African Union Organs, Experts in constitutionalism and rule of law, local government and local development, representatives of civil society organizations, think tanks and other organizations.

Notes to the Editors:

THE FIRST TEN-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The document seeks to: identify priority areas, their associated targets / expected outcomes and indicative strategies to stakeholders; highlight the fast track programmes/ projects that will bring quick wins and generate and sustain the interest of the African Citizenry in the African Agenda; assign responsibilities and accountabilities to all stakeholders in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the plan and outline the strategies required to ensure resource and capacity availability and sustained citizen's engagement for plan execution.

The plan document comprises seven chapters:

1. Introduction: Covers the context, purpose and foundation and preparatory process. It situates the plan within the context of Agenda 2063 and highlights its foundations as the AU Vision, The AU 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration and the Seven African Aspirations with the purpose of providing a common results framework for Africa's socio-economic transformation within the first ten years of the 50 year horizon.
2. Goals and Priority Areas: Looks at the current development situation in the seven aspirational areas and provides the selection criteria for Goals and Priority Areas which form the basis for

the plan framework; lastly it provides a snapshot of Africa in 2023 when all the set goals and targets have been attained.

3. Plan Framework It outlines for each of the 7 aspirations -the goals, the priority areas for each goal, the target(s) for 2023 (national, regional and continental) , the indicative strategies and key process actions/ milestones towards 2023 on continental frameworks (e.g. PIDA, CAADP).

4. Implementation Plan: It presents the principles (e.g. diversity, subsidiarity, inclusiveness, results orientation, leveraging of existing institutions) which will guide all stakeholders in the implementation of the First Ten Year Implementation Plan, the key stakeholders–national/sub-national, RECs and AUC, PAP, ECA, AfDB etc. are identified and their roles indicated; timelines, policy guidelines for execution of key implementation activities and issues related to capacity and communication are presented.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation: It outlines the rationale for an M&E, structure of results framework, policy guidelines on M&E and knowledge and experience sharing required for the successful execution of the ten year plan.

6. Financing: It identifies the financing need of the First Ten Years together with the facilitative measures that will ensure funds availability; it also presents the implementation arrangements which will ensure funds availability.

7. Partnerships: It outlines the recommendations on partnerships with respect to having an AU common position on partnerships, measures to maximize Africa’s benefits from partnerships and deepening of transformative benefits from partnerships.

The First Ten-Year Implementation Plan document can be accessed from the link below:

<http://agenda2063.au.int/en/documents/agenda-2063-first-ten-year-implementation-plan-2014-2023-september-2015>

For further information, kindly contact the coordinators of the meeting:

1. **Mr. Calixte Aristide Mbari**, Ag. Head of Division, Democracy, Governance, Human Rights, and Elections at the Department of Political Affairs, E-mail: MbariC@africa-union.org; Mobile: +250785924741
2. **Mr. Issaka Garba Abdou**, Senior Political Officer, E-mail: Garbaabdoul@Africa-union.org; Mobile: +250782000683
3. **Ms. Darsheenee Singh Raumnauth**, Constitutionalism and Rule of Law Analyst, E-mail: Raumnauthd@africa-union.org ; Mobile: +250780302386
4. **Mr. Naba Nindia Marc**, Democratic Governance Analyst, Email: MarcN@africa-union.org

Media Contact:

Mr. Gamal Ahmed Karrar, Directorate of Information and Communication, African Union Commission, E-mail: gamalk@africa-union.org ; Mobile: +250780302316

For further information contact

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: dic@africa-union.org | Web Site: www.au.int | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

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