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First Joint Session of the Committee of Directors General
Of National Statistics Offices and the Statistical
Commission for Africa

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I. Background and justification

1. In its effort to deal with the rapidly growing population of Africa, while ensuring food self-sufficiency and food security, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union adopted the Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa at the Second Ordinary Session of the Assembly, which was held from 10 to 12 July 2003 in Moputo.¹ In the Declaration, they resolved, as a matter of urgency, to implement the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP). Based on four pillars – land and water management, market access, food supply and hunger, and agricultural research – CAADP is a framework that is aimed at helping African countries reach a higher path of economic growth through agriculture-led development. Its objective is to improve food security and nutrition, and increase incomes through raising agricultural productivity by at least 6 per cent per year and increasing public investment in agriculture by a minimum of 10 per cent of national budgets annually.

2. Since the adoption of the Declaration, 40 African countries have signed the compact and 28 countries have set investment plans for the agriculture sector. Nevertheless, much remains to be done, as only 13 countries have successfully achieved the goals defined in CAADP.

3. Special attention must be placed on developing the tracking and evaluation component of CAADP. Even with the development of the Africa Action Plan for Improving Statistics for Food Security, Sustainable Agriculture, and Rural Development in Africa (2011-2015) in 2010 by the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the production of agricultural statistics in Africa remains limited. Very few African countries produce quality statistics and updates on agriculture, while agricultural censuses and surveys are becoming increasingly rare, despite pleas from pan-African organizations and FAO for a revival of agricultural statistics.

4. This dismal state of agricultural statistics in Africa remains a dominant monitoring and evaluation obstacle against the implementation of CAADP. Reports produced by the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System on the implementation of CAADP need to be strengthened with quality statistics, as most statistics are derived through estimates from United Nations agencies and universities. This is detrimental, as those estimates often do not reflect the African reality. Overall, the objective of the reports should be to promote evidence and outcome-based policy planning and implementation, which in turn would facilitate benchmarking and review, as well as the mutual learning processes for which it was intended.

5. To mark the 10th anniversary of the implementation of CAADP, the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government declared 2014 as the Year of Agriculture and Food Security during its nineteenth ordinary session – which was held in Addis Ababa on 15 and 16 July 2012 – and devoted two summits in 2014 towards that theme. The Assembly, in its twenty-third ordinary session, which was held in Malabo on 26 and 27 June 2014, adopted the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agriculture Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods. In that Declaration, the Assembly, under the theme “Mutual accountability to actions and results”, committed

¹ See Assembly/AU/Decl.7 (II).

to a systematic regular review process, using the CAADP Results Framework, of the progress made in implementing the provisions of the Declaration and resolved, among other things, to strengthen national and regional institutional capacities for knowledge, data generation and management that support evidence-based planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.²

6. The review will be conducted using the CAADP Results Framework, which was transformed from the four CAADP pillars in order to accelerate the implementation of CAADP over the next 10 years. The CAADP Results Framework is divided into the following three levels of results:

- (a) Level 3 - Transformational Change as a result of CAADP;
- (b) Level 2 - Sustained inclusive agriculture growth;
- (c) Level 1 - Contribution to social and economic development in Africa.

II. Theme of the meeting

7. To monitor the commitments made pertaining to CAADP by the Assembly of the African Union Heads of State and Government, AUC and ECA will devote the first Joint Session of the Committee of Directors General of the National Statistics Offices and the Statistical Commission for Africa (StatCom-Africa) to the theme “Strengthening the production of agricultural statistics in Africa for better monitoring and evaluation of CAADP”.

A. General goals

8. The main objectives of the Joint Session are:

- (a) To discuss challenges related to the production of agricultural statistics in Africa;
- (b) To review the implementation of the African Charter on Statistics and the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa, as well as the operationalization of the African Union Institute for Statistics and the Pan-African Statistical Training Centre;
- (c) To contribute to the formulation of indicators for African development agenda beyond 2015.

B. Specific objectives

9. The specific objectives of the Joint Session are to do the following:

- (a) Discuss the status of production, publication and dissemination of agricultural statistics in Africa;
- (b) Discuss how to strengthen the capacity of African countries in conducting agricultural surveys and censuses;

² See Assembly/AU/2(XXIII).

- (c) Discuss the production of a core set of data to monitor CAADP implementation relevant to all African Union member States;
- (d) Review reports of the specialized technical groups;
- (e) Review the implementation of the African Charter on Statistics and the advocacy strategy to accelerate its ratification;
- (f) Review the indicators of the common African position on the development agenda beyond 2015, including the proposed sustainable development goals (17 goals and 169 targets) that were proposed by an open working group;
- (g) Exchange views on the indicators proposed for the development agenda beyond 2015, particularly the sustainable development goals proposed by an open working group;
- (h) Discuss and adopt the compositions of the specialized technical groups;
- (i) Discuss ways to revive the production of agricultural statistics;
- (j) Prepare for the following meeting of the Statistical Commission;
- (k) Discuss rules and the format of future joint meetings of the Committee of Directors General of National Statistics Offices and the Statistical Commission for Africa.

10. Also during the Joint Session, AUC will present the technical documents associated with the establishment of the African Union Institute for Statistics and the Pan-African Statistical Training Centre, including the programmes of work and strategic plans.

C. Venue and date

11. The first Joint Session of the Committee of Directors General of the National Statistics Offices and the Statistical Commission for Africa will be held in Tunis from 8 to 12 December 2014.

12. In parallel to the Joint Session, the first session of the United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management Africa (UN-GGIM Africa) will be held.³ Other side events, which will be held on 8 and 9 December, are: Forum on African Statistical Development; a meeting on establishing an African regional integration index; a meeting on the African Geodetic Reference Frame; a meeting of the Steering Committee for the Regional Project on the System of National Accounts; an expert consultation meeting on renewable energy statistics; a seminar on scaling up natural capital accounting for industrialization and sustainable development in Africa; an expert group meeting on the use of mobile devices for data collection; and a meeting on agricultural statistics (in the framework of the Action Plan for Africa of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, in collaboration with AfDB and FAO).

³ See <http://ggim.un.org>.

D. Conduct

13. The first Joint Session of the Committee of Directors General of the National Statistics Offices and the Statistical Commission for Africa will be held in plenary.

E. Participants

14. The Joint Session will bring together directors general of national statistics offices of African countries, heads of departments of statistical units of regional economic communities, schools and institutes of statistics, and representative of the Economic and Statistical Observatory of Sub-Saharan Africa (AFRISTAT) and other development partners.

F. Working languages

15. English and French will be the two working languages of the Joint Session.

G. Contact information

16. Information regarding the Joint Session, including reports, technical papers and presentation, will be available from www.au.int/en.

Mr. Dossina Yeo

Acting Head of Statistics Division,
Economic Affairs Department
African Union Commission
Tel : (251) - 115 182651 / 115 51 77 00
Fax: (251) 11 551 78 44
E-mail: DossinaY@africa-union.org

Mr. Jose Awong Alene

Statistician, Statistics Division
Economic Affairs Department
African Union Commission
Tel: (251) 115 51 77 00
Fax: (251) 115 51 78 44
E-mail: AleneJ@africa-union.org

Mr. Joseph Tinfissi Ilboudo

Chief, Statistical Development Section
African Centre for Statistics
Economic Commission for Africa
Tel: (251) 115 44 55 33
Fax: (251) 115 51 03 89
E-mail: JIlboudo@uneca.org

Mr. Oumar Sarr

Statistician, African Centre for Statistics
Economic Commission for Africa
Tel: (251) 115 443614
Fax: (251) 115 51 03 89
E-mail: osarr@uneca.org