



United Nations  
Economic Commission for Africa

Distr.: General

ECA/SRO-NA/ICE/31/3  
March 2016

English  
Original : French

---

Thirty-First session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE)

Rabat (Morocco)  
1 – 4 March 2016

**Review of the implementation of the regional  
and international development agendas**

## Table of contents

I.	Introduction .....	1
II.	2030 program for sustainable development: « Transforming our world » .....	2
III.	Addis-Abeba Action Program for financing development .....	4
IV.	Climate change negotiations.....	5
V.	Stakes for Africa .....	6
VI.	Move to COP 22- stakes involved .....	7
VII.	United Nations Commission on the Status of Women 2015 .....	8
VIII.	ICT 4 All and WSIS monitoring.....	10
IX.	WTO Ministerial Conference .....	11

## **I. Introduction**

1. For the international community, the year 2015 was a decisive turning point in many ways. First in September, the leaders of the international community adopted the sustainable development Agenda for 2030, a road map for sustainable, inclusive and ambitious development for the next 15 years. Subsequently in December, they signed a legally binding universal climate change agreement. In that same month of December, the World Trade Organization (WTO) held its Ministerial Conference which is the ultimate decision-making mechanism of the organization.
2. We also need to recall that during the whole year of 2015, akin to such major get-togethers, other world forums made it possible not only to discuss a number of crucial issues such as sustainable and inclusive development, but also made it possible to come out with world consensus on these topical issues. Amongst such forums, we can mention by way of example: the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which is the principal world body dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and which met in March 2015 to assess the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Action Program 20 years later. The 2015 Forum of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) held in Geneva (Switzerland) in May 2015 is another example of such world meetings designed to reach a common vision for an optimal use of information, knowledge and new technologies to achieve sustainable development objectives. And lastly, the ECA hosted the third International Conference on development funding in July 2015 at Addis-Abeba (Ethiopia) during which decision-makers from all over the world discussed the funding mechanisms and strategies to support the implementation of the post 2015 development program.
3. All of these processes nurtured and enriched the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development which is one of the most ambitious, participative and inclusive ever, considering that on one hand consultations took place at the national, regional and world levels and, on the other hand all development actors became involved in these forums, in other words governments, the private sector, civil society, academia, and development partners.
4. This report therefore seeks to take stock of the events which occurred in 2015. It is structured around the following major focus areas which are the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, the Paris Climate Conference (COP21), the outcomes of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the 2015 review of the « ICT 4 All » program, follow up of the World Information Society Summit (WSIS), and finally the World Trade Organization ministerial Conference.

## II. 2030 program for sustainable development: « Transforming our world »

5. The 2030 program for sustainable development was adopted by 193 States on 25 September 2015 at the special United Nations Summit. This was the result of a consultative process which lasted for three years. Consultations were held in more than 100 countries and over 8 million people took part of a survey through which they expressed their needs and priorities. The program consists of a Declaration, of an ambitious set of 17 universal sustainable development goals (SDGs 17)<sup>1</sup> and 169 targets, a section on the means of implementation and renewal of the world partnership, and a framework for review and monitoring. The framework of world indicators that the United Nations Statistics Commission is currently working on will lead to the publication of a report in March 2016 which the Commission will submit to the high level policy forum (HLPF) at the July 2016 session.

6. These indicators will be included in a short list so as to keep up with the progress accomplished internationally. The program recognizes that the objective of sustainable development requires a global and integrated response to economic, social and environmental issues. Poverty alleviation must go hand in hand with a plan ensuring economic growth dealing with a series of social needs, notably education, health, social protection and job opportunities while catering for climate change and environmental protection. It also covers issues such as inequality, infrastructure, energy, consumption, biodiversity, the oceans and industrialization.

*“The agreement deals with a universal, transformatinal and integrated program heralding a historic shift in our world.” “It is the program of peoples, an action plan for the irreversible eradication of poverty in all its forms, in all places, leaving no one behind”. [Ban Ki-Moon]*

7. The 2030 sustainable development program also includes the Addis Abeba action program adopted by the United Nations in 2015 dealing with the means required for the implementation of sustainable development goals among which domestic resources, private funds, public aid for development, and innovative approaches for ways of funding and entering into partnerships. The policies and measures spelled out in the Addis-Abeba action program will provide essential support to the World Partnership (SDG 17).

8. The 2030 sustainable development program considers that the action engaged by the countries constitutes the principal means of implementation that must be supported by by international action. The States must therefore translate this global framework via coherent policies and integrated approaches into action plans at the local and national levels while ensuring implementation and monitoring. Firstly, this implies a change in the development policies and approaches, a new distribution of the actors’ roles and revamping of our consumption and production practices. It also implies building the capacities of local and national actors and innovation capabilities strengthening. Finally, this will require improvement of cooperation and coordination at all levels.

9. The implementation of the program and monitoring of the progress achieved will require coherent, simple but effective systems at the local, national, regional and world levels at the same time. These should be based on quality and efficient information made available in a timely fashion.

---

<sup>1</sup> The new SDGs replace and complete the Millennium Development Goals ending in 2015. They have a much wider scope than the Millennium Development Goals.

10. The High Level Policy Forum for sustainable development (HLPF)<sup>2</sup> is entrusted with task of reviewing the progress achieved in implementing at the world level the 2030 Program and the Addis-Abeba Action Program. It will promote coherence and coordination of sustainable development policies throughout the entire United Nations system<sup>3</sup>. An annual world report on sustainable development will also be referred to the Forum which will provide guidelines to speed up the integrated implementation of the Program.

11. At the national level, the monitoring and implementation analysis will make it possible to assess the progress achieved and identify the problems at the regional and world levels. They will therefore contribute to the monitoring and review at world level particularly in the framework of the high level policy forum for sustainable development. The current national monitoring systems will require some modifications (scope, content, data collection and analysis, indicators, drafting of reports and dissemination of information, governance of data systems, etc.) to face up to the challenges related to the multi-dimensional and integrated nature of sustainable development goals.

12. The Economic Commission for Africa will provide support to its Member States to adapt and modernize the existing information systems in the framework of the implementation of the 2030 sustainable development program.

*« This agreement is a crucial phase toward the building of a sustainable future for everyone. It proposes global framework for the funding of sustainable development. The outcomes of the Addis-Abeba Conference provides us with the foundations for a reactivated world partnership for sustainable development that will leave no one behind », said Ban Ki Moon, United Nations Secretary General.*



<sup>2</sup> The HLPF meets every four years under the auspices of the General Assembly and during the intermediate years under the auspices of the economic and social council. It met for the first time in 2013 under the auspices of the General Assembly after its creation in 2012 by the United Nations Conference on sustainable development.

<sup>3</sup> The next meeting of the high level policy forum will be held in 2019 coinciding with the complete quadrennial review in support of more coherent planning at the United Nations system level.

### **III. Addis-Abeba Action Program for financing development**

13. The third international United Nations Conference on financing development took place from 13 to 16 July 2015 at Addis-Abeba. At this Conference, countries agreed on a series of measures designed to reform world funding practices and generate the requisite investments to face up to the economic, social and environmental challenges.

14. The Addis-Abeba action program agreement is the basis for the financing of the world sustainable development Program. The 193 United Nations Member States attending the Conference signed this agreement after several months of negotiations. The word partnership aiming of boosting inclusive and universal economic prosperity and improving well being is therefore strengthened thanks to this agreement.

*"A simple increase of 0.44% per annum in tax collection in African countries could mobilize approximately 22 billion USD per year, in other words sums that could be used for funding development projects, said Mr. Calos Loges, ECA Executive Secretary at the third international Conference on funding development ."*

15. The outcome of this Conference is a solid foundation for the countries to finance the sustainable development program adopted in September in New York.

16. The issue of financing the new sustainable development program that will supported by the implementation of the 17 sustainable development goals is indeed a prerequisite for the success of this Program. Indeed, more than 100 tangible measures have been identified in the Addis-Abeba Action Program to provide support to the implementation of the sustainable development goals.

17. The action program based on the outcomes of the two previous conferences on financing development held in Monterrey (Mexico) and Doha, (Qatar) placed the issue of domestic resources mobilization at the heart of the program. Widening of the basis of proceeds, improvement in the collection of taxes and the fight against fraud and illegal financial flows constitute many focus areas of agreement and concrete measures for the implementation of the action program.

18. Also underscored was the importance of private investment and its alignment with the development objectives. The public authorities are called upon to create the appropriate incentive-based environment to get private investment involved.

19. In this regard, a new mechanism facilitating financing of new technologies for developing countries was also agreed.

20. The Addis-Abeba action program comprises political important commitments and key objectives in critical areas for sustainable development including infrastructure, social protection and technology. The Conference also reached agreements on international cooperation to finance specific areas where significant investments are required, namely for infrastructures, energy, transport, water and sanitation.

21. The countries also stressed the importance of integrated national financing in support of the national sustainable development strategies. Indeed, the agreement stipulates « we reassert that each country is responsible for ensuring first its own economic and social development and that we cannot emphasize enough the role of national development policies and strategies. »

## IV. Climate change negotiations

### *Paris climate change Conference (COP21), Paris (France)*

22. The Paris climate change Conference (COP21) held from 30 November to 12 December led to the adoption by 195 countries of a legally binding universal agreement on the climate. This agreement is expected to be ratified by 55 countries producing at least 55 % of greenhouse gas emissions and scheduled to come into force as of 2020. Its aim is a carbon free world between 2050 and 2100. The intergovernmental panel of experts on climate change was mandated to submit in 2018 a special report on the consequences of a rise in earth temperature above 1.5 °C in comparison to pre-industrial levels.

#### *Main points of the Paris Agreement*

- Limiting the rise in earth temperature compared to the pre-industrial era at less than 2°C and if possible to 1.5°C, by 2100
- Mobilizing financing of 100 billion USD per year till 2020 in support of developing countries (Copenhagen goals 2009) and
- Revising upwards INDCs every 5 years starting 2020

23. If climate change is a global phenomenon, the agreement recalls the principle of «common but differentiated responsibilities of the United Nations Convention on climate change dealing with equitable and fair distribution of efforts between emitters and developing countries according to their respective capacities and national contexts.

24. All the contributions intended and determined at the national level to reduce greenhouse gases (INDC)<sup>4</sup> presented by 186 out of 195 countries are currently insufficient if the global objective set to reduce global warming is to be met. According to the experts, the current configuration of the contributions would lead us to warming temperatures of 2.7 to 3°C. These contributions take account of the national specificities and constraints of each country and should be revised upwards every 5 years as of 2020 in the framework of a period review mechanism of national commitments. The Paris agreement also provides for the right to withdraw “at any moment” by “notification” three years after entry into force of the law. The departing countries are requested to submit by 2020 to the secretariat their long term low greenhouse gas emissions development strategies.

25. In addition, the agreement calls for the holding of a facilitation dialogue between the parties to take stock of the situation in 2018 on the collective efforts deployed by the parties to reach the declared goal and shed light on the contributions determined at the national level.

26. The issue of financing climate change was one of the most complex matters negotiations dealt with. Till 2025, developed countries will continue their efforts geared to the mobilization of resources to the benefit of developing countries reaching 100 billion USD per year. In 2025, a new target figure will be discussed starting from a basis of 100 billion USD, taking into account the needs and priorities of developing countries. The green Climate fund, the Global environment Facility, the least developed countries fund and the special Fund for climate change, managed by the global environment Fund support the implementation of the agreement.

---

<sup>4</sup> INDC: Intended Nationally Determined Contribution.

27. For capacity building, a work plan (2016-2020) will be devised. It shall include a) identification of gaps and needs, as well presenting recommendations bridge and meet them, b) promote the development and dissemination of tools and methods used for capacity strengthening and, d) promote global, regional, national and infranational cooperation.

28. With regard to technology transfer, periodic assessment of the efficiency and pertinence of the support provided by the technological mechanism will be done for the implementation of the agreement.

29. The agreement recognizes the need to take into account the adaptation requirements expressed by a big number of developing countries in their nationally determined contributions. Adaptation-oriented actions will have to follow an approach driven by the countries and take inspiration from the available scientific data, and traditional and local knowledge, in order to integrate adaptation in the policies and socio-economic and environmental measures. The climate green Fund should accelerate the availability of support for the least developed and other developing countries for the purpose of devising national adaptation plans and implementation of policies, projects and programs. In compliance with the Cancun adaptation framework, the parties should intensify their cooperation, particularly at the regional level for adaptation and necessary creation of regional networks and centers particularly in developing countries. A technical review process of the adaptation measures will be launched in 2016-2020 to study the concrete possibilities of strengthening resiliency, reducing vulnerability and boosting knowledge and implementation of the adaptation measures.

30. The Warsaw international mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts will be reviewed in 2016. A special team will be appointed to prepare recommendations related to integrated approaches to prevent and reduce population displacements further to the negative effect of climate change and how to manage them.

31. The Paris agreement “recognizes the crucial role of initiatives designed to reduce the emissions produced by (economic) activities including tools such public policies and the carbon price”. An OECD report showed that “most countries did not give a price for carbon emissions sufficient enough to reflect the impacts on the climate”.

## **V. Stakes for Africa**

32. Africa is responsible for only 4 % of world greenhouse gas emissions, but is one of the regions most harshly hit by the effects of climate change (GIEC<sup>5</sup>, 2014) which are already altering Africa’s GDP by approximately 1.4 % and adaptation- induced costs are expected to reach 3 % of GDP per annum in 2030, or even 7 % by 2100 if the warming scenario reaches 4°C (UNDP). The number of people displaced due to climate change will increase. In 2012, they came to a total of 8,2 million in Africa, i.e. four times more than for the previous years (Joint IDMC<sup>6</sup> and NRC<sup>7</sup> Report, 2013). In addition, climate changes destroy social infrastructures worsening water stress and the challenges related to food security (in Africa only 5 % of arable land is irrigated). In spite of a substantial potential for development of renewable sources of energy, the current global electricity

---

<sup>5</sup> Intergovernmental Panel of expert on climate change (IPCC)

<sup>6</sup> IDMC : Internal Displacement Monitoring Center

<sup>7</sup> NRC : Norwegian Refugee Council



output capacity is estimated at 150 giga watts and more than 600 million people on the Continent are without access to electricity”. Over the past few years, large renewable energy development programs have been initiated.

33. African countries<sup>8</sup> presented their INDCs and now should adapt their development strategies accordingly. In addition, the implementation of policies and adaptation measures constitutes a priority objective for the Continent, but commitments to access technology, effective project funding and strengthening of the capacities of countries to achieve this objective are lagging behind.

34. Africa must strengthen its capacity to gain access and efficiently use the other sources of funding available for climate issues to bolster funding of adaptation.

#### **African renewable energy development initiative**

To promote universal access to energy in Africa and respond to future increase in demand driven by economic development and urbanization of the Continent, an African initiative for the development of renewable energy was formally launched at COP21. The initiative aims to build at least 10 gigawatts / year of new production capacity by 2020 and 300 gigawatts by 2030. For its implementation, developed countries have already mobilized € 10 billion of funding public. an African initiative for the development of renewable energy was formally launched at COP21. The initiative aims to build at least 10 gigawatts / year of new production capacity by 2020 and 300 gigawatts by 2030. For its implementation, developed countries have already mobilized € 10 billion of funding public. African initiative for the development of renewable energy was officially initiated at COP21. This initiative aims at the contraction by at least 10 gigawatts/year in new output capacities by 2020 and 300 gigawatts by 2030. By way of implementation the developed countries have already mobilized 10 billion Euros of public funding.

## **VI. Move to COP 22- stakes involved**

35. The next world climate conference (COP22) will take place from 7 to 18 November 2016 in Marrakech. Morocco already hosted COP7 in 2001. Today Morocco has become one of the

« The climate green fund created in 2010 was provided with an initial capital of more than 10 billion USD in 2014 and approved 8 projects in November 2015. This capital is highly insufficient in comparison to the needs as an amount of 400 billion USD per year is clearly required in the long term if investments of developing countries are to be resilient and ecological », says the green Fund executive director; Addis-Abeba, Conference on financing development, July 2015. .

world’s leading actors in energy transition and more specifically on the African Continent. In early 2016 it inaugurated its first solar power plan in Ouarzazate (first in Africa and 7<sup>th</sup> solar powered plant in the world). Eventually its total electrical output capacity will reach 580 megawatts.

36. Morocco has committed to reduce by at least 13 % of its greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 (INDC), and intends to have the share of renewables (wind, photovoltaic, solar and hydraulic) move from 28 % in 2008 to 42 % in 2020 and 52% by 2030 (King’s speech at COP21).

<sup>8</sup> Only Libya failed to submit its INDC.

37. COP 22 is expected to review the implementation of the Paris Agreement and adapt the spirit of the "Tangier call for joint and vigorous climate action" initiated on 20 September 2015 by H.M. King Mohammed VI and French President Hollande. This call addresses all the actors asking them to accelerate the transition to a « global green economy » aiming at innovation with regard to adaptation and mitigation of the effects caused by climate change".

## **VII. United Nations Commission on the Status of Women 2015**

### **Beijing + 20: The global balance sheet gives confirms the conclusions of the African regional assessment**

38. The ECA has extended support to the region's countries in the lead-up to the the 59<sup>th</sup> session proceedings of the Commission on the status of women (CSW59), marked this year by the celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the fourth World Conference on women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and action program. This helped the North Africa region's countries to optimize their participation in this Conference which attracts each year NGO members and hundreds of representatives to deliberate on issues critical to women and development. Also it made it possible to raise greater awareness of relevant actors in their commitment to promote women's rights and gender equality.

39. Held under the title "Empowering Women, Empowering Humanity: Picture It", the session broke a new record this year with the registration of more than 1100 NGOs and 8600 representatives in total. During this session, managers and activists from all over the world discussed the progress made and remaining challenges for the implementation this historic agreement promoting women's rights as well as the recommendations pertaining to 12 critical areas, all of which currently still raise real challenges.

40. These challenges were reviewed in the « Beijing +20 Secretary General Report on the «progress accomplished which is inadmissibly slow, and some of the aspects could be qualified as "stagnating or even in regression ». The SG report is based on the contributions made by the governments and civil society in no fewer than 167 countries. It shows that in spite of some advances, world leaders are still far from doing what they should to respect the commitments entered into via the visionary « Declaration and action Program ».

41. The report notes that progress has been made in a certain number of areas such as girls' education, the revision of discriminatory laws and the adoption of legislation to end violence against women and girls. Furthermore, the participation of women in the job market has risen, and since 1989 maternal mortality has dropped by 45 percent. However, these advances are in contrast with the fact that in spite of clearly improved female education, this segment of the population continues to occupy the least attractive posts and far from being equal to men in managerial positions in both public and private institutions, while gaps in remuneration between males and females remain significant. Furthermore, violence against women and girls persists in all countries and sometimes in horrible forms of violence.

42. These challenges highlighted by the CSW recall the conclusions of the African regional Conference on Women (Addis-Abeba, November 2014) and the outcome of the African balance sheet pertaining to the implementation of the Beijing Platform held by the ECA in November 2014 covering all Member Countries including those of the North Africa sub-region.

43. Indeed, the African Regional Conference on women Beijing+20 noted that, in spite of the progress made and the efforts deployed to find a solution to discrepancies between males and females, formidable hurdles still exist made worse by emerging problems such as climate change, terrorism, armed conflicts, the world economic and financial crisis and growing socio-economic inequality.

44. This evaluation has been and is all the more crucial in North Africa due to the political changes occurring in the majority of member countries since the winter of 2011, reinforcing the urgency of the various grievances expressed by the local people including women who continue to face huge challenges, such as:

- The absence of specific national “gender” policies in most of the sub-region’s countries who simply make do with “ women action plans” the implementation of which is not always construed as a national priority;
- Chronic under-investment which impedes the move towards equality in all areas of activity;
- Too little integration of the gender approach in the devising, implementation and monitoring of national development policies;
- Very low female participation in the decision-making process at all levels.

45. Like the African Regional Conference Beijing+20 organized in 2014 by ECA, the 59<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women emphasized some of the main factors hindering progress and in so doing affecting the efforts geared to strengthening equality and the promotion of female rights. Among these factors one finds conflicts, the rise of extremism and reaction against women’s rights, socio-cultural complications, still steeped in discriminatory practices, economic crises and the fallout from climate change.

46. In its final Declaration, CSW 59 pointed out that the key elements of expected improvement evolution include the transformation of standards and stereotype, change in economic structures that should be conducive to the gender equality, securing female participation at all levels of the decision-making process, significant rise in investment to promote gender equality, and a genuine and sustainable commitment to defend the rights of women and girls.

47. It should be recalled that the Declaration emanating from the African Regional Conference Beijing+20 also called upon African governments to allocate adequate resources to cover what is needed for the Platform implementation. It also called upon international, bilateral and multilateral partners to boost their technical and financial assistance to support development efforts made by Africa. The Declaration asked the respective governments to strive toward the achievement of male/female equality by 2030, as stipulated in the «AU 2063» Program.

48. The Beijing+20 global evaluation provided the opportunity to mobilize public opinion, the international community and international leaders in order to reinvigorate the letter and spirit of the Beijing Platform, to the extent that at the Heads of State and governments Summit on Agenda 2030 and the sustainable development objectives (25-27 September 2015), approximately 80 international leaders personally committed to end discrimination against women by 2030. They also announced concrete and measurable measures they commit to take to bring about rapid change in their respective countries. No other issue solicited so much political attention.

49. Given the conclusions of the Beijing+20 world evaluation, three areas of action are still considered as priorities: i) devising coherent policies for gender equality and ensuring proactive implementation; ii) earmarking substantial funding in support of gender equality for commitments to come true; iii) ensuring monitoring of the progress made for all governments to take on mutual responsibility for the commitments taken.

50. At the current pace, it would take 81 years to reach gender parity regarding participation in economic activities, and approximately 50 years to achieve parity in parliamentary representation. Also to galvanize governments in their commitments taken for them to act, a new initiative was launched under the theme “Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step It Up for Gender Equality”

### **VIII. ICT 4 All and WSIS monitoring**

51. The global review process of the world Summit on the information Society, more than a decade after its adoption, took place through several international events. The annual Forum of the world Summit on the Information Society held in Geneva (Switzerland) from 25 to 29 May 2015, and later the « ICT4All » Forum held in Hammamet (Tunisia) and finally the the United Nations General Assembly high level meeting for the review of the texts issued by the world Summit on the Information Society held in New York (United States) on 15 and 16 December 2015, can be considered as the most important in this process.

52. Looking foreword to the 2030 sustainable development Program, these high level meetings allowed for the identification of the stakes and challenges related to all dimensions of the WSIS achievements compared to the sustainable development goals in which the ICTs must be adequately recognized as catalysts for sustainable development. The experts coming from across the world and from different horizons established direct and explicit links between the objectives of world Summit of information society action plan and sustainable development goals.

53. These various meetings also made it possible to report on the important progress achieved in the use of information technologies in our societies. Today, 43.4% of the world population, that is 3.2 billion individuals enjoy internet connection compared to only 12% in 2005 and more than 7 billion persons have mobile phone subscriptions. Nevertheless, it is to be observed that a wide digital gaps still divide developed and developing countries, and between different regions within the same county or between men and women.

54. These gaps constitute challenges to be confronted and reduced through the establishment of policies fostering access to affordable digital technologies via adequate investment and financing, technology transfer and international cooperation. It was also pointed out that special attention must be paid to the specific situation of developing countries, particularly in Africa. These policies must take account of the specific needs of children, young people, the disabled, the elderly, indigeneous people, refugees, etc...

55. In the framework of this review process, ECA undertook different activities to built consensus among African countries on the stakes for their own development and the challenges they will have to face. In this exercise it was generally established that digital technologies can help accelerate the implementation of the sustainable development program by 2030. For this reason, it was recommended that all the concerned stakeholders such as governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations and academia must integrate digital technology in their strategies to achieve sustainable development goals.

## **IX. WTO Ministerial Conference**

56. The tenth WTO Ministerial Conference was held in Nairobi, Kenya from 15 to 19 December 2015. It was the first meeting organized by an African country since the creation of the WTO in Marrakech.

57. A series of ministerial decisions on agriculture, cotton and other issues pertaining to the least developed countries were the results emanating from this Conference and are often referred to as the “Nairobi Package”. This package includes a commitment to do away with subsidies for the export of agricultural products deemed to be «the most significant outcome of the past 20 years of the Organization for agriculture».

58. The other decisions on agriculture cover a special safeguard mechanism for developing countries and other measures for cotton. Decisions were also made regarding preferential treatment for the least developed countries (LDCs) in the area of services in particular and for the rules of origin in general.

### **Agreement on agriculture and cotton**

59. The main piece of the Nairobi Package therefore concerns export competition and specifically the commitment to remove subsidies on agricultural products.

60. Further to the ministers’ decision, developed countries committed to remove immediately exports subsidies except for a handful of products, while developing countries will do so by 2018. The latter will then maintain the flexibility required to cover the costs of marketing and transport of agricultural exports till the end of 2023. The poorest and food products importing countries would be granted a longer period of time.

61. This decision also contains rules designed to make sure that other trading policies are not used as a covert type of subsidy.

62. Moreover, a special safeguard mechanism (SSM) for developing countries has been put in place to authorize the latter to temporarily increase the customs duties in case of imports surge.

63. As for the cotton sector, the Conference underscored the vital important of the cotton industry for the least developed countries. It came out with ministerial decision specific to this industry comprising three components: market access, internal support and export competition.

64. For market access the decision calls upon developed -and developing countries in a position to do so- to leave in franchise duty and without quotas for cotton originating from the least developed countries as of 1 January 2016. This decision also recognizes the importance of reforms in the Member Countries regarding policies for internal support to the cotton industry, and calls for intensifying related measures. On export competition, developed countries called upon to immediately cease cotton exports dubsidies. Developing countries can proceed likewise at a later date.

### **The decisions benefiting LDCs**

65. The Nairobi package contains other specific decisions for least developed countries, in particular with regard to improved preferential rules of origin and services preferential treatment.

- Preferential rules of origin for the least developed countries

66. The Nairobi decision is based on the Bali ministerial decision on preferential rules of origin for the least developed countries. It provides more highly detailed guidelines on specific issues such as the methods to determine the origin of a product and the cumulation rules, calling upon the Member Countries to grant preference to the least development countries by authorizing them to use non originating materials to up to 75% of the products end value.

- Least developed countries trade in services

67. The Conference decided to lengthen by 15 years (to 31 December 2030) the current waiver period, according to which the WTO Member Countries can grant preferential treatment to the services products from the least developed countries.

### **Memberships**

68. The Ministers of Commerce welcomed the conclusion of negotiations with Liberia and Afghanistan becoming members. These two countries will become official WTO members thirty days after the organization is notified of the ratification of the membership conditions.

### **Conclusion**

69. In 2015 the international community made strong and decisive commitments for the future of the planet and world population. The universal climate change agreement and the 2030 sustainable development Agenda with its multi-dimensional approach constitute cornerstones of this shared vision of a better world for all. The African Continent participated very actively in all the international negotiations leading to the adoption of these development frameworks serving as a reference at the world level. Within of its mandate, the ECA contributed to to making sure our countries remain highly committed for the entire duration of these processes, and also pushed for the adoption of a common African position on their priorities in front of global development challenges.

70. In the framework of the implementation of these development plans, and in close collaboration with the other development partners, ECA sets the objective of providing support to the Member Countries so the latter integrate the new sustainable development objectives in their national development plans and strategies. The choice of indicators and targets for monitoring the 2030 Agenda requires as well the mobilization of considerable resources to improve the availability and pertinence of statistical data.

71. The building of capacities to monitor and assess sustainable development progress achieved constitutes one of the major focus areas of the ECA program. Devising of country-profiles will allow for the production and dissemination of in-depth analysis and pertinent recommendations for the economic transformation of our societies, which will be in the long run conducive to sustainable development, regional integration and good governance.