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and

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Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development

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**The Africa Regional Preparatory Process for the United Nations
Conference on Sustainable Development**

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Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference on the Environment
AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
AUC	African Union Commission
CCDA-I	First Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa
CFSSD	Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
EAC	East African Community
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
IEG	International Environment Governance
IFSD	Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NCSD	National Council for Sustainable Development
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NSSD	National Strategies for Sustainable Development
PFIA21	Programme for Further Implementation of Agenda 21
REC	Regional Economic Community
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDRA	Sustainable Development Report on Africa
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCSD	United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTO	World Trade Organization

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted a Resolution ([A/RES/64/236](#)) in December 2009 to hold the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, also known as “Rio+20”, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012. The objective of the Conference was to secure renewed political commitment to sustainable development, assess the progress and implementation gaps, and address new and emerging challenges. The Conference focused on two themes: a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and the institutional framework for sustainable development.

2. In order to ensure high-quality inputs to the Conference, the General Assembly called for efficient and effective preparations at the local, national, regional and international levels by Governments and the United Nations system and encouraged the active participation of all major groups at all stages of the preparatory process. In this context, and in recognition of the important role that Regional Commissions (RCs) of the United Nations play in bridging the gap between global level agreements and national level priorities and actions, the Assembly called for the Regional Implementation Meetings (RIMs) coordinated by RCs in preparation for the sessions of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to be converted to Regional Preparatory Meetings for Rio+20 in 2011.

3. An effective regional preparatory process was deemed essential to support Africa in effectively preparing for and participating in the Conference. The process was also intended to strengthen the regional consultative mechanism to support national, subregional and regional level implementation following the Conference. In this context, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) spearheaded the process jointly with the African Union Commission (AUC) and the African Development Bank (AfDB), in strong partnership with Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

4. The process was designed as a multi-stakeholder bottom-up process, whose overall objective was to provide guidance and facilitate consultations in order to ensure the coordination of Africa’s preparations for the Conference in an effective and efficient manner. The intent was to arrive at a consensus on Africa’s key sustainable development concerns and priorities, to effectively articulate them and to ensure that they were adequately reflected in the Conference outcomes.

5. A website dedicated to the Africa Regional Preparatory Process for Rio+20 and Africa’s participation at Rio+20 can be accessed at: <http://uneca.org/rio20>

II. RCM-Africa 11 and Rio+20

6. The eleventh session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism of United Nations Agencies and Organizations Working in Africa (RCM-Africa 11) in Support of the African Union and its New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) Programme was held 14 -15 November 2010 under the theme Rio+20. RCM-Africa 11 provided a platform to raise awareness and mobilize support for Africa’s effective preparations for and participation in Rio+20. The session adopted recommendations that contributed to guiding Africa’s preparatory process.

III. AUC/ECA Joint Conference of Ministers

7. The Fourth Joint Annual Meetings of the AUC Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development adopted a resolution in March 2011 on climate change and sustainable development. The Ministers, inter alia, commended the establishment of the process and called for effective support by Africa's partners.

IV. Milestones

8. Following RCM-Africa 11 and the Fourth Joint Meeting of the AUC/ECA Conference of Ministers, ECA and partners undertook the following activities:

A. Workshop on institutional and strategic frameworks for sustainable development

9. ECA, in collaboration with AUC, AfDB, UNEP and UNDP, organized the Workshop on Institutional and Strategic Frameworks for Sustainable Development, which took place from 7 to 9 March 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The workshop was attended by more than 90 policymakers and experts from economic, social, and environment ministries and agencies of member States, as well as major groups and RECs. The workshop examined institutions, policies and strategies for sustainable development at regional, subregional and national levels, taking into account the extent to which such institutions incorporate key requirements of sustainable development, including balanced and integrated development, and intra- and inter-generational equity issues.

10. The workshop provided the opportunity to further disseminate the findings of the two ECA-led studies on National Councils for Sustainable Development (NCSDs) and National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSDs), and to obtain relevant updates from selected countries and agencies. It discussed and adopted recommendations on concrete actions and partnerships needed to support RECs and member States to implement their sustainable development priorities, including the outcomes of Rio+20. It also agreed on next steps towards effective regional preparations for the Conference. The recommendations of the workshop contributed to informing the Africa Report on Institutional Frameworks for Sustainable Development prepared under the leadership of ECA within the context of the Africa Regional Preparatory Process.

B. Workshop on sustainable development indicator framework for Africa

11. ECA in collaboration with AUC, AfDB, UNEP and UNDP organized the Workshop on Sustainable Development Indicator Framework for Africa, which took place from 10 to 11 March 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The main objective of the workshop was to conduct a thorough review of the proposed sustainable development indicator framework and compendium of indicators, taking into account the need for a well-framed and robust analysis and Africa's priorities and specificities.

12. The workshop was attended by more than 100 policymakers and experts from planning, finance, economic, social, and environment ministries, national statistics offices of member States, and African regional and subregional organizations. It provided participants the opportunity to share views and propose recommendations on the way forward towards systematically measuring and tracking progress on sustainable development in the region, within the framework of the Sustainable Development Report on Africa (SDRA) process. It agreed on the proposed sustainable development

indicator framework for Africa and enriched the suggested compendium of sustainable development indicators. It also adopted action-oriented recommendations for effective use and further improvement of the indicator set.

C. Preparation of thematic and review reports

13. ECA and partners prepared review and thematic reports that responded to the objective and themes of Rio+20 to inform the consultations at the subregional and regional levels as indicated in table 1.

14. In addition, the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC), the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) collaborated with ECA and AfDB in the preparation of five subregional review reports on progress towards sustainable development in North, Central, West, Eastern and Southern Africa, respectively. The reports were informed by data and information collected through consultations conducted in selected member States of the different subregions. Five subregional consultative meetings were jointly organized by ECA and RECs between 27 September and 7 October 2011 to validate and enrich the reports. The subregional review reports and outcomes of the consultative meetings contributed to informing the Africa Review Report on Progress towards Sustainable Development and the thematic reports.

Table 1: Reports responding to themes of Rio+20

Report	Responsible party
Africa Report on Progress towards Sustainable Development	ECA
Africa Report on New and Emerging Challenges	AfDB
Africa Report on a Green Economy in the Context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication	UNEP
Africa Report on Institutional and Strategic Frameworks for Sustainable Development	ECA
Report on International Environmental Governance	UNEP
Means of Implementation: Bridging the Gap	ECA

D. Seventeenth African Union Summit

15. AUC, UNEP, ECA, and AfDB organized a high-level round table on Rio+20 on the margins of the Seventeenth Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government held in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in June/July 2011. The round table was titled “Mobilizing African Leadership for an Effective Regional Preparatory Process for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development”.

16. The AU Summit adopted a decision on Africa’s preparations for Rio+20, common positions and strategies in the face of the challenge of the green economy and international governance of the environment. Through this decision, the Summit, among others, commended ECA and its partners for their commitment and initiatives to prepare Africa for Rio+20, and mandated the Republic of the Congo to coordinate Africa’s preparations for the Conference at the political level, in consultation with member States, supported at the technical level by ECA, AUC, AfDB and other partners.

E. Fourth Special Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment

17. The Fourth Special Session of AMCEN, which was held in Bamako, Mali, from 12 to 16 September 2011, adopted the Bamako Declaration on Consolidating the African Common Position on Climate Change and Preparation for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). In their Declaration, the Ministers reaffirmed that Africa would present a common position to Rio+20. The Ministers adopted decisions on the green economy, and on the institutional framework for sustainable development (IFSD)/international environment governance (IEG), which advocates for strengthening, consolidating and transforming UNEP into an international specialized institution for the environment based in Nairobi, Kenya.

F. Africa Regional Preparatory Conference for Rio+20

18. The Africa Regional Preparatory Conference for Rio+20 was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 20 to 25 October 2011. The Conference was organized by ECA jointly with AUC and AfDB, in partnership with RECs, UNEP, UNDP and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). The Conference comprised two segments, an Expert Segment held from 20 to 23 October for which the Committee on Food Security and Sustainable Development (CFSSD) provided a platform, and a Ministerial Segment held from 24 to 25 October 2011.

19. The main objective of the Preparatory Conference was to deliberate on the objective and themes of Rio+20 and other substantive matters of importance to Africa, with a view to arriving at a consensus on Africa's key priorities and concerns to be reflected in the outcomes of Rio+20. During the Expert Segment, experts prepared a draft Africa Consensus Statement to Rio+20, detailing Africa's position on the objective and themes of Rio+20. The draft Consensus Statement was considered and adopted by Ministers during the Ministerial Segment.

20. The Conference was attended by over 400 participants, including two Heads of State, Ministers, eminent persons and high-level policymakers and experts from African member States, regional and subregional organizations, United Nations agencies, development partners and representatives of the nine major groups recognized by Agenda 21. Given the multi-dimensional nature of sustainable development, members of delegations included experts and ministers from economic, social and environment ministries and agencies, as well as experts and diplomats from foreign affairs ministries in Capitals, Addis Ababa and New York.

21. The Conference was held back to back with several events whose outcomes contributed to informing the deliberations. The First Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa (CCDA-I) was held from 17 to 19 October. The outcomes of that event provided key inputs into several sessions of the Preparatory Conference, including those on the green economy and new and emerging challenges. The outcomes of the High-level Policy Dialogue on Migration held on 17 October fed into the second session of the Committee on Human and Social Development, held from 18 to 19 October. The outcomes of the latter fed into the deliberations of the Conference. This helped enhance the discussions on the social dimension of sustainable development, which, compared to the other two pillars, had received less attention in mainstream sustainable development deliberations and actions.

22. The main outcome of the Conference was the *Africa Consensus Statement to Rio+20*, which can be accessed at: <http://new.uneca.org/rio20/CFSSD7.aspx>

G. Twelfth Session of RCM-Africa

23. The twelfth session of RCM-Africa was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 21 to 22 November 2011, on the theme “Capacity-building”. As part of the deliberations, ECA, as the lead technical coordinator of the regional preparations for Rio+20, presented a progress report on Africa’s preparations for Rio+20. The meeting expressed appreciation for the successful implementation of bottom-up and multi-stakeholder preparatory activities which culminated in the Africa Regional Preparatory Conference, and adoption of the *Africa Consensus Statement*. It recommended the strengthening of the capacity of African negotiators for Rio+20 and the mobilization of financial and technical support to enhance preparatory activities.

H. Briefing of member States by Regional Commissions

24. The Regional Commissions Office in New York (RCNYO) took the opportunity presented by the second Inter-sessional Meeting for Rio+20 held on 15 and 16 December 2011 to organize briefings of member States by the five RCs, and a joint side-event on the margins of the meeting.

25. ECA provided a detailed briefing to the African regional group on the Africa Regional Preparatory Process for Rio+20 and the outcomes of the Preparatory Conference that was held from 20 to 25 October 2011. The presentation was well received and issues raised included the following: the need for submissions/interventions by member States to be guided by the *Africa Consensus Statement*; need for enhanced support to the implementation of NEPAD; the need to effectively address new and emerging challenges; and to ensure that developed countries meet their commitments in terms of providing adequate means of implementation to address priority sustainable development concerns.

26. During the RC side-event held on 15 December, ECA made a short presentation on the outcomes of the Preparatory Conference. In their general observations on the presentations, the vice-chairs of the Rio+20 process expressed their appreciation for the work of RCs and pledged their continued support to the processes in the different regions.

I. Eighteenth Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government

27. The Republic of the Congo with the technical support of the AUC, ECA and UNEP prepared and submitted a draft decision and a report on Rio+20 for consideration by the Eighteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 23 to 30 January 2012. The Summit adopted a decision on “Africa Consensus Statement to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)” (Assembly/AU/Dec.400(XVIII)). Through the decision, the Summit approved the *Africa Consensus Statement to Rio+20* as Africa’s common position for Rio+20.

28. Following the endorsement of Africa’s common position for Rio+20, a Steering Committee was established to guide the preparations for Africa’s effective participation in Rio+20, supported by a number of sub-committees. The Committee comprised AUC, ECA, AfDB, UNEP, UNDP, the Office of the Special Advisor on Africa (OSAA), and the Republic of the Congo. The Steering Committee and its sub-committees met regularly to ensure effective planning and preparations for Africa’s participation in Rio+20, as well as the provision of the required technical support to the African Permanent Representatives to the United Nations and negotiators in New York.

J. Technical support to African Permanent Representatives to the United Nations and Rio+20 negotiators

29. Partner institutions provided the required technical support to the African Permanent Representatives and negotiators in New York between March and June 2012. This included the provision of technical assistance to African Rio+20 negotiators in the form of:

- Organization of a capacity-building and consultative meeting aimed at complementing the knowledge and experience of African negotiators and supporting the consolidation of Africa's negotiating strategies;
- Substantive servicing of the retreat of African ambassadors and Rio+20 negotiators in New York to further strategize on Africa's collective negotiating position;
- Preparation of analytical papers on the Institutional Framework for Sustainable Development, Means of Implementation and Sustainable Development Goals;
- Analysis of the draft text of the Rio+20 Outcome Document; and
- Estimation of the level of financial resources required to fund Africa's sustainable development agenda.

V. Africa at Rio+20

30. At Rio+20, AUC, ECA, AfDB, OSAA, UNEP and UNDP jointly organized the following events:

(a) *Institutional framework for sustainable development: integrating the three pillars*, which provided a platform for Africa and its partners to share and deliberate on the findings of the Africa Report on Institutional and Strategic Frameworks for Sustainable Development. It facilitated discussions on the institutional frameworks needed at various levels to promote a balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development.

(b) *Financing sustainable development: transition towards green economy in Africa*, which facilitated dialogue on the challenges and opportunities related to long-term financing for sustainable development and transition towards a green economy in Africa, with a particular focus on innovative sources of financing and renewed commitment to financing sustainable development and green growth.

(c) *Promoting Inclusive Green Growth and building a Green Economy as a means to achieve sustainable development* provided a platform to discuss and identify opportunities, gaps, and challenges for advancing green economy transition in Africa tailored to its specific development needs.

(d) The *Africa Day*, held on 19 June 2012 was sponsored by the Republic of the Congo and organized jointly by ECA, AUC, AfDB, UNEP, UNDP and OSAA. It consisted of a high-level roundtable discussion to deliberate on Africa's progress towards sustainable development. It was followed by a press conference and reception.

31. Furthermore, brochures on Africa's preparations for, and participation in, Rio+20, electronic copies of publications on the objective and themes of Rio+20 prepared by the coordinating partners, as well as the *Africa Consensus Statement to Rio+20*, were distributed widely at the Conference. A joint exhibition space was also secured to showcase various products of the Africa preparations for the conference.

VI. The outcomes of Rio+20

32. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development convened from 20 to 22 June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The Conference was preceded by the third and final meeting of its Preparatory Committee and Pre-Conference Informal Consultations facilitated by Brazil. In addition to the official events, numerous side-events and exhibitions took place.

33. At Rio+20, governments were expected to adopt clear and focused practical measures for implementing sustainable development that could reduce poverty while promoting inclusive and green growth, and a more sustainable and fair use of resources. Governments were also expected to define the global institutional architecture for a balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development and reach an agreement on strengthening the environmental pillar within an overall sustainable development institutional framework.

34. The 10 days of negotiations in Rio resulted in the Rio+20 Outcome Document, entitled *The Future We Want*, which sets the stage for future goals and targets, as well as for a reformed institutional framework for sustainable development. In particular, *The Future We Want* calls for the United Nations General Assembly, at its next session in September 2012, to take decisions on a number of important issues, including:

(a) Identifying the format and organizational aspects of the Universal, Intergovernmental High-Level Forum, which is to replace the Commission on Sustainable Development;

(b) Strengthening the United Nations Environment Programme;

(c) Constituting a working group to develop global Sustainable Development Goals to be agreed by the General Assembly;

(d) Establishing an intergovernmental process under the General Assembly to prepare a report proposing options on an effective sustainable development financing strategy;

(e) Considering a set of recommendations from the Secretary-General for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies;

(f) Launch of a programme of work on broader measures of progress to complement Gross Domestic Product;

(g) Designating a member State body to operationalize the 10 year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production (10-YFP-SCP).

A. The future we want vis-à-vis Africa's expectations from Rio+20

Common vision and renewing political commitment

35. The *Future We Want* adequately reflects Africa's position to reaffirm the Rio Principles, in particular the Principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibility (CBDR), past actions plans and the need to accelerate implementation of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Outcome Document acknowledges the need to mainstream sustainable development at all levels, integrating economic, social and environmental aspects, as well as recognizing their interlinkages. It calls upon the United Nations Statistical Commission, in consultation with relevant United Nations System entities and other relevant organizations, to launch a programme of work on broader measures of progress to complement Gross Domestic Product.

36. In their common position to Rio+20, African countries reaffirmed the commitment to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and called for its enhanced implementation. The Rio+20 Outcome Document underscores support to Africa's sustainable development efforts by the international community as a key priority. In this context, it reaffirms commitment to NEPAD.

Green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication

37. The pronouncements on the green economy contained in the Outcome Document are in line with Africa's thinking. The *Future We Want* emphasizes that the model is but one tool/pathway for achieving sustainable development. The text also recognizes the main elements of a green economy as elaborated by Africa, such as: the need for the green economy to be rooted in national priorities and plans, to ensure that the green economy does not become a barrier to trade, the provision of adequate means of implementation, and the promotion of sustainable production and consumption patterns.

38. Africa also called for the establishment of an international investment strategy to facilitate the transition towards a green economy, but the Rio+20 outcome document though recognizing the need for enhanced international support and the provision of adequate means of implementation, is silent on how the green economy is to be financed in developing countries.

Institutional framework for sustainable development

39. Africa supported efforts to reform the United Nations Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) to promote a balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development. It emphasized the importance of increased synergies, coherence and coordination among and between the United Nations system, International Financial Institutions and Rio Conventions.

40. The *Future We Want* reaffirms the role of the General Assembly as the chief deliberative, policymaking and representative organ of the United Nations, and calls on the Assembly to further integrate sustainable development in its agenda, including through periodic high-level dialogues.

41. While the *Future We Want* recognizes the critical role of the Economic and Social Council as the principal body for policy review, dialogue and recommendations, and follow-up to the MDGs and commits leaders to strengthening ECOSOC, in particular to foster the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, it also establishes a Universal Intergovernmental

High Level Political Forum for the balanced integration of the three dimensions building on, and eventually substituting, the CSD. In this regard, the Conference launched an intergovernmental process under the General Assembly to define the format and functioning of the Forum, with a view to convening the first meeting of such a Forum at the beginning of the Sixty-eighth General Assembly.

42. Africa strongly supported the strengthening of international environmental governance within the context of the institutional framework for sustainable development, in order to promote a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development. In this respect, it called for strengthening, consolidating and transforming UNEP into an international specialized institution on the environment based in Nairobi, Kenya, and for such an institution to be provided with the required political leverage and means of implementation to enable it effectively deliver on its mandate.

43. The outcome document stops short of taking a decision on establishing an international specialized institution on the environment, but invites the General Assembly, at its sixty-seventh session, to adopt a resolution on strengthening UNEP. Nonetheless, the principles on which such strengthening is to be based are largely aligned to Africa's position – such as universal membership; secure, stable and adequate financial resources; a strengthened role of UNEP within the United Nations system; and consolidation of its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.

Framework for action and follow up – thematic areas and cross-cutting issues

44. The Rio+20 outcome document identifies a number of key thematic areas and cross-sectoral issues that need to be addressed, and sets out key actions to be implemented, supported by adequate means of implementation. The areas identified are: poverty eradication; food security and nutrition and sustainable agriculture; water and sanitation; energy; tourism; transport; cities and human settlements; health and population; employment, decent work and social protection; oceans and seas; disaster risk reduction; climate change; forests; biodiversity; desertification, land degradation and drought; mountains; chemicals and waste; sustainable consumption and production; mining; education; and gender equality and the empowerment of women. These are in line with, and even go beyond areas identified in the *Africa Consensus Statement*.

45. On land degradation and drought, Africa called for a commitment to a land degradation neutral world, with targets towards achieving zero net land degradation. The outcome document stops short of this, though recognizing the need for urgent action to reverse land degradation it does not refer to targets, but encourages countries to strive towards achieving a land degradation neutral world.

46. On sustainable consumption and production, the *Future We Want* adopts the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production patterns and invites the General Assembly, at its sixty-seventh session, to set up a body made up of member States and to take necessary steps to fully operationalize the framework – which is in line with Africa's position on the same.

47. This chapter of the *Future We Want* also addresses regional efforts and specific needs of country groupings, including Small Island Developing States (SIDS); Least developed countries (LDCs); landlocked developing countries; and Africa. In the section on Africa, the Conference recommitments to fully implement the internationally agreed commitments, including the MDGs and those contained in the United Nations Declaration on NEPAD, the Monterrey Consensus, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, as well as the 2008

political declaration on Africa's development needs. Furthermore, it welcomes the efforts by development partners to strengthen cooperation in the implementation of NEPAD. Worthy of note is that Africa is the only region of the world to which the outcome document dedicates a specific section.

Sustainable Development Goals

48. Africa's common position was silent on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were introduced late in the process. However, during the negotiations, the region called for such an agenda to complement rather than substitute the MDGs. Africa expected Rio+20 to *lay the basis* for the elaboration of SDGs, to be linked to the MDGs, thus leading to the establishment of goals that become part of the post-2015 development agenda.

49. The *Future We Want* underscores the importance of the MDGs, and the commitment of the international community to their achievement. The document further recognizes the important role that sustainable development goals, based on Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, could play in pursuing sustainable development, coherent with and integrated in the Post-2015 development agenda, and without diverting focus on efforts to achieve the MDGs.

50. Rio+20 resolved to establish an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process on SDGs that is open to all stakeholders, with a view to developing global SDGs to be agreed by the General Assembly. In this regard, the Conference called for the constitution of an open working group before the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly, comprising 30 representatives, nominated by member States from the five United Nations regional groups. The group is to submit a report to the sixty-eighth session of the Assembly, containing a proposal for SDGs for consideration and appropriate action.

Means of implementation

51. On means of implementation, Africa called for the adoption of concrete measures, supported by adequate means of implementation that would ensure accelerated implementation of sustainable development commitments, including those to be adopted at Rio+20. It called on developed countries to fulfil previous commitments and pledges.

52. The *Future We Want* reiterates that each country has primary responsibility for its economic and social development, but reaffirms that developing countries need additional resources for sustainable development. However, the Outcome Document falls short of providing firm commitments on additional financial resources, capacity building and technical assistance, and green technologies, to support developing countries in implementing sustainable development commitments. However, the Document reaffirms previous commitments, including on means of implementation.

53. On financing, Rio+20 agreed to establish an intergovernmental committee, comprising 30 experts nominated by regional groups, with equitable geographical representation, to assess financing needs, consider the effectiveness, consistency and synergies of existing instruments and frameworks, and evaluate additional initiatives, with a view to preparing a report proposing options on an effective sustainable development financing strategy to facilitate the mobilization of resources and their effective use in achieving sustainable development objectives. The work of the committee is to conclude by 2014. United Nations Agencies are called upon to support the process at the technical level. However, it is noteworthy that in the section on Africa, the outcome document

recognizes the need for the international community to make continued efforts to increase the flow of new and additional resources for financing development.

54. On technology development and transfer, Africa called for among other things, technology transfer that targets appropriate and safe technologies based on fair and equitable principles. The Outcome Document stresses the need for technology transfer to developing countries, but with a caveat that this transfer should be mutually agreed, thereby falling short of making technology transfer a binding commitment on the part of developed countries. However, it requests relevant United Nations agencies to identify options for a facilitation mechanism that promotes the development, transfer and dissemination of clean and environmentally sound technologies, and requests the Secretary-General to make recommendations regarding the mechanism to the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

55. On capacity-building, Africa called for the full implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building. The Outcome Document's call does not qualify *full implementation*. However, it stresses the need for the *continued and focused implementation* of the Bali Strategic Plan, which, with the commitment and support of developed countries, could lead to full implementation. Furthermore, the Document emphasizes the need for enhanced efforts for sustainable development, calling for strengthened technical and scientific cooperation, and highlighting the importance of human resource development, including through training and knowledge transfer. It also calls on relevant United Nations agencies and other international organizations to support developing countries in capacity-building for developing resource-efficient and inclusive economies.

56. On trade, Africa called for a development-oriented universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system, and to reinvigorate multilateral trade negotiations, to achieve a development-oriented outcome of the Doha Round. It also called for facilitating the accession of developing countries to the World Trade Organization (WTO). The Outcome Document fully addresses Africa's priorities in this regard. It reaffirms the role of trade as an engine for development, and the importance of an equitable, rules-based, and non-discriminatory trading system and of meaningful trade liberalization. It reaffirms commitment to address, among others, trade-distorting subsidies and trade in environmental goods and services. Furthermore, it urges members of the WTO to step up efforts to successfully conclude the Doha Development Agenda and, in this regard, it recognizes the need to provide assistance to enable developing countries to participate meaningfully in the work programme of the WTO.

Voluntary commitments

57. Participants at Rio+20 were encouraged to make voluntary commitments for actions to implement the Conference's goals, and almost 700 had been received by the close of the Conference, with financial commitments from governments, the private sector, civil society and other groups reaching over \$500 billion. Africa stands to benefit from these commitments, which include afforestation, energy and waste management projects, greening the desert and supporting women entrepreneurs in green economy businesses.

VII. In the Wake of Rio+20

58. Following the Rio+20 Conference, the Nineteenth Ordinary Session of the African Union Summit of Heads of State and Governments, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 15-16 July 2012, adopted a decision on Rio+20 (Doc. Assembly/AU/9(XIX)), commending the AUC, AfDB, ECA, UNEP, UNDP, OSAA and other partners for the successful organization of joint events, including

the *Africa Day*, in Rio during the Conference, and requesting them to continue providing the necessary facilitation and coordination support towards effective implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes in Africa. The decision further called on AMCEN, at its next ordinary session, to undertake an analysis of the Rio+20 outcomes and to prepare an action plan for Africa.

59. Given the multi-dimensional nature of sustainable development, which embodies economic, social and environmental dimensions, it is deemed pertinent for all relevant ministerial bodies within their respective mandates, to be actively engaged in the implementation of the Rio+20 outcomes, including undertaking the necessary analysis and preparing plans of action.

60. The Inter-Cluster Meeting of RCM-Africa held in Naivasha, Kenya in July 2012, noted that the Rio+20 outcomes provide an opportunity for the different clusters of the mechanism to develop and implement joint activities. In this respect, the meeting called for the cluster coordinators and members to review the outcomes and propose areas of intervention relevant to their clusters for inclusion in their respective business plans. It also requested ECA, as lead technical coordinator for Africa's preparations for, and participation in Rio+20 to undertake an analysis of the implications for Africa of the Rio+20 outcomes, including the voluntary commitments to inform the work of the clusters. The thirteenth session of RCM-Africa to be held in November 2012 will deliberate on, among other matters, the Rio+20 outcomes.

61. The fourteenth session of AMCEN convened in Arusha, Tanzania from 10 to 14 September 2012 with the main objective of deliberating on the Rio+20 Outcomes. The Conference adopted Decisions and Declarations, as well as flagship programmes that would contribute to the implementation of the Outcomes in Africa.

62. ECA, AUC, AfDB and UNDESA will organize the Africa Regional Implementation Meeting (Africa-RIM) for the twentieth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-20), which will focus on the main outcomes of Rio+20. The Africa RIM, which will be held from 19 to 21 November 2012, will deliberate on the implications of the main outcomes of Rio+20 for Africa, with a view to charting the way forward for effective implementation. It will prepare and adopt an Outcome Document to serve as Africa's collective input to CSD-20.