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**Economic Commission for Africa**  
**Committee of Experts of the Conference of African**  
**Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development**  
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Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*

**Statutory issues****Review of the intergovernmental structure of the  
Economic Commission for Africa pursuant to  
resolutions 943 (XLIX) and 957 (LI)****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The present document is submitted pursuant to resolutions 943 (XLIX) of 5 April 2016 and 957 (LI) of 15 May 2018, in which the Executive Secretary was requested, respectively, to undertake an independent, comprehensive and thorough review of the intergovernmental structure of the Commission, and to report to the Conference of Ministers at its fifty-second session on restructuring the conference structure and subsidiary bodies of the Economic Commission for Africa, including the intergovernmental committees of experts.

The findings of the review carried out by external experts on the existing intergovernmental structure of the Commission along with recommendations for consideration by the Commission are presented in the document.

**I. Introduction**

1. The Conference of Ministers, at its forty-ninth session, adopted resolution 943 (XLIX) of 5 April 2016, in which it requested, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to undertake an independent, comprehensive and thorough review of the intergovernmental structure of the Commission, including the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts, and its link to the programme priorities of the Commission on the basis of the priorities of Africa, and to report back to the Commission at its fiftieth session.

2. Pursuant to the above-mentioned resolution, the ECA secretariat (“secretariat”) entrusted an independent expert to conduct the review from November 2016 to January 2017. The preliminary findings of the initial review were presented to the Commission at its fifty-first session (May 2018).<sup>1</sup> In view of the methodological limitations encountered by the initial review and of anticipated programmatic changes of the Commission, the Conference of Ministers, in its resolution 957 (LI) of 15 May 2018, decided to grant additional time to the secretariat to conduct further review and analysis

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\* E/ECA/COE/38/1.

<sup>1</sup> E/ECA/COE/36/8.

of the intergovernmental structure, and requested the Executive Secretary to report to the Conference of Ministers at its fifty-second session. Accordingly, the secretariat entrusted two external experts with conducting the further review (“Review”) from May to December 2018.

3. The Review entailed assessing the functioning of the current intergovernmental structure of the Commission, which consists of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (“Conference of Ministers”) and the Committee of Experts, subregional Intergovernmental Committees of Experts, and the following sectoral subsidiary organs: Committee of Gender and Social Development; Committee on Sustainable Development; Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration; and Commission on Statistics. Also assessed were the functioning of the Governing Council of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP). Included in the Review are recommendations to strengthen and restructure the intergovernmental structure to be fit for purpose. In assessing the functioning of the intergovernmental structure of the Commission, the focus of the Review was on the effectiveness and efficiency of each intergovernmental organ of the Commission, so that the Commission, as a whole, can respond to the evolving needs and demands of its member States, the changing institutional landscape and shifting priorities pertaining to national, regional and global economic and social development.

4. The Review used a combination of various methods, including, among them, a desk review, interviews with a range of stakeholders (representatives of member States, the secretariat’s senior management and staff), surveys with participants of the Commission and its subsidiary organs, a focus group at a retreat of permanent representatives of member States, and observations by the two external experts themselves at sessions of the Commission and its subsidiary organs.

5. The Review also took into consideration that since the previous change to the ECA intergovernmental structure, in 2013, a number of major global development agendas have been adopted within the United Nations system. These include the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, adopted, in July 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted at the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda in September 2015; and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, adopted in December 2015. Additionally, the African Union adopted the Agenda 2063, in January 2015.

6. At the end of 2016, the General Assembly, in its resolution 71/243, reaffirmed the importance of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system through which the General Assembly establishes key system-wide strategic policy orientations and operational modalities for the development cooperation and country-level modalities of the United Nations development system, and requested Member States to initiate discussions on the working method of the respective governing bodies in order to improve their efficiency, transparency and quality of official sessions and , ensure more systematic follow-up by the entities of the United Nations development system on issues raised by their governing bodies.

7. Since the beginning of his term of office in January 2017, the Secretary-General has made proposals to reform the United Nations to improve the delivery of its mandate. Reforms are being made in the areas of development, management and peace and security. At the ECA-level, following the appointment of the current Executive Secretary in April 2017, a new vision of the Commission was framed.

8. These new developments, at the United Nations and at ECA, require adjustments to the approach to the work of ECA, which also has implications on the intergovernmental structure. The review of the intergovernmental structure, accordingly, presents an opportunity for reflection on how the intergovernmental structure can be strengthened to be fit for purpose.

9. In the present note, the secretariat presents to the Commission a summary of the findings of the review and proposes recommendations for its consideration.

## II. Findings

### A. Conference of Ministers

10. The Conference of Ministers provides legislative mandates and policy guidance to the work of the Commission and considers and endorses the work programme of the secretariat. It also examines the statutory reports and the strategic framework and programme budget, and serves as an intergovernmental forum for articulating the position of Africa on key development issues. A ministerial statement, adopted by the Conference, in addition to resolutions, serves as a guideline for action by member States and the development partners of Africa on the issues addressed by the Conference.

11. The Committee of Experts is an integral part of the session of the Commission. It meets prior to the Conference of Ministers and provides technical support for the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. A Bureau of the Commission is constituted at the commencement of the first meeting held in the course of each session. As part of the servicing of the Conference session, the ECA secretariat, with guidance from the Steering Committee composed of the ECA Senior Management Team, provides high-level guidance and oversight on the substantive part of the preparations of the meeting, while a task force led by the Secretary to the Commission provides day-to-day support for the preparations of the Conference of Ministers and the Committee of Experts and coordinates the planning, organizing and servicing of the Conference.

12. The Review included an assessment of the effectiveness and efficiency of the annual Commission session by examining the planning process, ownership and engagement of member States, the content and relevance of the theme and programme of work in addressing the continent's priorities, the quality of documentation, presentations and debates, delegates' incentives for participation, effectiveness of the mechanisms in monitoring and evaluating outcomes of the Conference and the quality of the knowledge repository of the Commission sessions. It also included an evaluation to determine if the duration, frequency and timing of its sessions are optimal and the efficiency of the session in terms of costs, time and logistical arrangements.

13. Overall, the Conference of Ministers, together with the Committee of Experts, is assessed as functioning well. Annual Commission sessions are seen to be well planned in advance, scheduled, and held as projected. Based on interviews with a wide range of participants of the Conference and feedback gathered from 184 respondents to a self-evaluation conducted at the Conference of Ministers at its fifty-first session (May 2018), the main reasons for their participation at the Conference of Ministers were the statutory nature of the meeting and the opportunity for networking. Relevance of the theme, and the opportunity for advocacy and consensus building were also cited as key incentives for their participation.

14. The Conference of Ministers is generally well attended by member States. The country delegations are usually headed by ministers, including in some cases, two or three ministers. According to the review, this is an indication that the Conference of Ministers is of great interest to member States and that they derive benefits from it. Delegations not headed by ministers are led by directors generals, heads of divisions or permanent secretaries. Efforts have also been made to ensure that observers are invited to the Conference.

15. The Conference of Ministers is also sometimes attended by high-level persons, such as former heads of state and government, United Nations executives, heads of multilateral institutions or academics. Representation at the expert level has also increased to include economists, finance and planning specialists, lawyers, accountants, engineers, bankers, gender specialists and researchers.

16. Representatives of member States indicated that the publications of studies, research and analyses presented at the Conference of Ministers and the speakers at thematic round tables were of a high quality. They also expressed satisfaction with the recently established practice of being consulted about the theme of the Conference,

which, according to the review, demonstrates ownership of the process by member States, and ensures the relevance of the Conference of Ministers as a platform to set a collective agenda for the continent. In doing so, the Conference of Ministers remains an effective standing intergovernmental organ through which the Commission delivers one of its key three functions, i.e. the convening function.

17. Regarding the distribution of the Conference documents, which are in the process of becoming “paperless”, based on a review of the recent practice, most, if not all documents, are communicated to member States in the three working languages within the deadline set in the rules of procedure, namely 42 days prior to the opening of the session. As for the duration of the Conference of Ministers, the interviewed member States representatives held the view that it was adequate. They also gave a positive assessment of the Conference facilities and the registration process.

18. The allocation of time for presentation and discussions on substantive issues, in particular, statutory items at the Conference of Ministers and the Committee of Experts received the most unfavourable assessment. More than 50 per cent of the respondents indicated that the time allocated to discussions during sessions of the Conference of Ministers were insufficient. Indeed, at the fifty-first session of the Conference, 12 statutory items were scheduled within three hours and 15 minutes, which means that only 16 minutes were allocated to each statutory agenda item.

19. In the Review of the most recent Conference, it was noted that only 14 per cent of the participants were women and that the Conference sessions needed to have more equitable geographical representation.

20. In the Review, it was also noted that in considering proposals and recommendations, the Commission does not systematically take into consideration provisional budgetary implications.

## **B. Sectoral subsidiary organs of the Commission**

21. Currently, the following four sectoral subsidiary organs of the Commission meet biennially and report to the Commission: Committee on Gender and Social Development; Committee on Sustainable Development; Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration; and Committee on Statistics.

22. Generally, the themes of the sectoral subsidiary organs of the Commission were found to be relevant to the priorities of member States. In recent meetings, the focus was on one or several aspects of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063.

23. The level of participation at the sectoral subsidiary organs of the Commission is high. For example, the tenth session of the Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration, held in Addis Ababa from 31 October to 2 November 2017, was attended by 48 member States. The format of conducting committee meetings back to back with other events has helped to increase participation of member States in committee sessions.

24. In the review, it was noted that the lack of the sense of “ownership” of these committees by member States may, however, require attention. This may be attributed to the lack of interaction between the committees and the secretariat between Committee sessions. The bureau of the respective Committees tends to meet only near to the opening of the session to discuss the proposed agenda.

25. The servicing of committee sessions by the secretariat was generally assessed as being positive. However, more effort is needed to ensure the timely circulation of documents in relevant languages, greater involvement of, and consultations with, member States in the substantive preparation of meetings, timely communication of the dates of meetings and effective coordination with other pan-African institutions, especially the African Union Commission, to attain synergy and strengthen the role of regional economic communities in the committees.

26. The frequency of the committee meetings – biennium – is considered adequate.

27. It was noted that the meetings tended to have too many agenda items. Also, a procedure should be put in place to monitor and follow-up on the implementation of the recommendations and outcomes of committee meetings. This should also include how those recommendations and outcomes feed into the main body of the annual Commission sessions.

### **C. Subregional intergovernmental committees of experts**

28. The five subregional intergovernmental committees of experts meet annually and report to the Conference of Ministers. They oversee the overall formulation and implementation of the programme of work of the respective subregional offices and make recommendations on issues concerning economic and social development in the respective subregions and on the promotion and strengthening of subregional economic cooperation and integration.

29. Since 2007, the number of participants has generally increased with some fluctuations, depending on the subregions. However, it would be important to encourage participation of not only experts but also of senior officials in member States delegations to ensure effective uptake of policy recommendations at the country level. It is suggested that consulting with them on the theme of the committee session in advance and strengthening communication between member States and the secretariat between sessions may help to improve the sense of “ownership” of, and more active involvement in the work of the committees by member States.

30. Duration and frequency of the intergovernmental committees of experts meetings are considered adequate.

31. As for the format and organization of the subregional intergovernmental committees of experts, the majority of those interviewed have expressed the view that the presentations and discussions are of good quality. An issue of concern, however, is that not enough time is allocated to discuss and deliberate on each issue on the agenda. In addition, in some cases, statutory matters do not receive the attention they deserve during the meetings and the untimely sharing of documents negatively affects the effectiveness and efficiency of the meetings.

32. It is suggested that the monitoring and evaluation of the impact of the discussions and outcomes related to the policies and programmes of member States and regional economic communities be strengthened.

33. It also has been noted that the joint meetings of various subregional intergovernmental committees of experts would help to strengthen South-South collaboration and peer learning of best practices across subregions.

### **D. Governing Council of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning**

34. The African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) is a pan-African institution created by the General Assembly in 1962 with the primary objective to support newly independent African countries in their quest to build their human resource capacities as a prerequisite for promoting socioeconomic development. Its main activities, derived from its mandate, are organized around a portfolio of capacity development and training programmes and a set of policy research and dialogue initiatives. It also offers on-demand advisory services to governments and public institutions and serves as a forum for exploring alternative thinking on African development.

35. In the strategy of the Commission, IDEP is a subprogrammes, which has a functional position and role in the overall organizational structure of the Commission. The work of IDEP is guided by its Governing Council, which is chaired by the Commission’s Executive Secretary and comprised of representatives of member States, with two representatives from each of the continent’s five subregions appointed on a

rotational basis; a representative of the host country (Senegal); and a representative of the African Union Commission. The Council is assisted in its work by the IDEP Technical Advisory Committee, which consists of experts who report to the Council on programme content, quality and relevance.

36. The statutes of IDEP were revised by the Governing Council during its fifty-fifth session, which was held in Addis Ababa from 23 to 25 March 2017, and approved by the Conference of Ministers at its fifty-first session, which was held in Addis Ababa from 11 to 15 May 2018.

37. Although the Review has not thoroughly examined the effectiveness of the governing structure of IDEP, it has been noted that the new strategic plan should be disseminated to all relevant stakeholders. Member States should also be informed about the new e-learning programmes of IDEP. In addition, African countries in arrears of contributions should be invited to settle those payments.

#### **E. The secretariat's engagement with permanent missions of member States based in Addis Ababa and members of the Bureau of the Commission**

38. Many of the permanent missions of member States in Addis Ababa appear to have limited knowledge about the mandate of the Commission and its activities and intergovernmental structure. Even the missions that are familiar with the Commission's work acknowledged that its work is not known in their respective capitals.

39. According to the review, permanent representatives indicated that while the Commission carried out significant work in Africa, its outreach-related activities needed to be enhanced. They noted that the interaction with them was the first step but that more needed to be done to enhance the Commission's visibility in Addis Ababa and in the capitals of member States. Permanent representatives also indicated that because they represented their respective governments in dealings with the African Union, the Commission and Ethiopia, they unfortunately did not have the sufficient capacity to fully devote their time to the Commission.

40. It was broadly agreed among permanent representatives that improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the functioning of the Commission's intergovernmental structure would require political will of member States, and in particular, of the Bureau.

41. During the retreat of Ambassadors in October 2018, clarification was provided by the ECA secretariat that efforts would be made to interact more effectively to help Permanent Representatives of ECA member States gain a better understanding of the Commission, including its mandate, functions and operational activities. The Executive Secretary reiterated her commitment to interact more frequently and effectively with permanent representatives of member States in order to inform member States of the Commission's work.

42. Permanent representatives, on their part, recognized the importance of establishing a more comprehensive and clearer flow of communication among their respective capitals, permanent missions for the United Nations in New York and permanent missions in Addis Ababa.

43. Permanent representatives agreed that fostering more effective engagement among the Commission, the African Union Commission and their permanent missions would require a commitment from all parties and contribute towards strengthening collaboration and coordination among them. They welcomed the opportunity to take an active role in supporting the delivery of the Commission's mandates and fostering a more accessible ECA that works in tandem with permanent representatives and their respective capitals.

44. Finally, permanent representatives suggested that the Ambassadors' Quarterly Briefing sessions discuss, among other topics, updates on the implementation of the Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was signed by the African Union and the United Nations. They also

suggested that the first Quarterly Briefing of the year focus on the Commission's policy priorities and overall annual workplan and that the last Quarterly Briefing of the year focus on an assessment of achievements and challenges.

## **F. Within the context of the reform of the United Nations and that of the Commission secretariat**

45. Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, Member States recognized that countries, the international community and the United Nations would have to adopt major bold changes and reforms if the far-reaching Goals were to be achieved. To improve the delivery of the United Nations mandate, the organization has, therefore, embarked on reforms in the areas of development, management and peace and security.

46. The overall objective of the repositioning of the United Nations development system at the regional level is to transform the regional architecture in order to perform more efficiently the functions required to implement the 2030 Agenda.

47. The Commission has embarked on its own reform, in a complementary and supportive manner, with the above-mentioned reform of the United Nations. The objective of the reform is to make ECA nimbler and more innovative in its work with its member States, and more adept in responding effectively to the needs, requests and priorities of its member States. In particular, ECA plans to actively engage with the expanding private sector of Africa, strengthen economic cooperation in the subregions of the continent and reorganize the structure of the secretariat at the headquarters and in the five subregional offices.

48. The vision of ECA is framed around delivering ideas and actions for an empowered, inclusive and transformed Africa and is informed by the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In its revised 2018–2019 strategic framework, ECA set out the following five strategic directions: (a) advance the position of ECA as a premier knowledge institution by strengthening the knowledge profile of staff; (b) develop macroeconomic and structural policy options to accelerate economic diversification and job creation; (c) design and implement innovative financing models for infrastructure, human, physical and social assets for transforming Africa; (d) contribute solutions to regional and transboundary challenges, with a focus on peace, security and social inclusion as an important development nexus; and (e) advocate the position of Africa at the global level and develop regional responses to contribute to discussions on global governance issues.

49. In close collaboration with the regional offices of the United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, the United Nations regional economic and social commissions, including ECA, perform three major functions: (a) convening to support intergovernmental platforms; (b) operating as a think tank by serving as a source for knowledge, data, statistics and evidence-based analysis of member States on priority policy issues; and (c) extending policy advice and targeted capacity development to assist member States in efforts to achieve results on regional and global agreements and transboundary and subregional issues. Moreover, the regional economic commissions act as policy integrators of the 2030 Agenda at the regional level by leveraging those three functions.

50. In the light of the above aspirations, the ECA subprogrammes were accordingly rearranged, taking into consideration the Commission's comparative advantages and programmatic priorities. The overall ECA programme of work was organized around the following nine interdependent and complementary subprogrammes: macroeconomics and governance; regional integration and trade; private sector development and finance; data and statistics; climate change; environment and natural resource management; gender and women in development; subregional activities for development, economic development and planning; and poverty, inequality and social policy.

51. The importance of a peaceful, stable and secure environment, and respect for human rights to achieve sustainable development is recognized in the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Accordingly, the implementation of the new programme of work of ECA

also builds on commitments made in the joint African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and United Nations and African Union Framework for an Enhanced Partnership on Peace and Security in which stronger coordination between the two institutions is envisioned to ensure that the two agendas are mainstreamed and integrated into national planning frameworks and contribute positively to a people-centred and planet-sensitive structural transformation in Africa. In the review, the implications of the new vision of ECA on the Commission's intergovernmental arrangements were addressed.

52. In that context, the Conference of Ministers and its subsidiary organs provide critical platforms. To be fit for purpose and aligned with the requirements associated with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, the discussions on those platforms should be on issues in such a way that their respective programmes of work, content, policy recommendations and resolutions reflect an integrated and coherent approach to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Accordingly, the ongoing reform of United Nations development system and the Commission was taken into consideration while making recommendations for the revised intergovernmental structure of the Commission.

### **III. Recommendations and considerations**

#### **A. Conference of Ministers**

53. Greater political will on the part of ministers of finance is essential in terms of mobilizing greater and high level participation at the Conference and in ensuring substantive contributions, including on global agendas that have implications for the African continent.

54. African Governments may wish to coordinate in a coherent and effective manner the participation of their delegates from sectoral ministries at the Conference and with the subsidiary organs.

55. Member States may desire to vigorously identify, articulate, and defend the work of the Commission in support of the continent's development, while also ensuring that their development partners give close attention to the continent's own stated priorities and agenda.

56. Member States may wish to support efforts to ensure that policy decisions taken at the regional level in Addis Ababa are fully endorsed at global multilateral forums in New York, Geneva and other relevant locations. A strategic approach to the selection of African candidates in the United Nations governing bodies can contribute towards strengthening the engagement of Africa in the promotion and defense of its common positions and vital interests.

57. African Governments may wish to ensure that key policy decisions of the intergovernmental bodies of ECA are accompanied by the necessary provisional budgetary implications and are ready for discussion. This would enable the appropriate United Nations governing bodies to approve the necessary budgetary resources.

58. Permanent representatives are encouraged to engage more proactively in the work of the Commission. In that connection, member States are invited to ensure that all relevant ministries are aware of the meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary organs. The Commission's secretariat, in turn, should more actively engage in the substantive aspects, for example, by following-up on the implementation of resolutions and decisions of the Conference, in close coordination with the Bureau and its subsidiary organs.

59. The Bureau of the Commission may consider interacting with that of the Permanent Representatives' Committee of the African Union Commission on a regular basis with a view to promoting cooperation between their respective governing bodies.



60. The Executive Secretary and her Senior Management Team should intensify their outreach efforts to member States, in particular, permanent representatives based in Addis Ababa, finance ministers, the Bureau of the Commission, and the Commission's partners, such as the African Development Bank and other regional commissions, to encourage their attendance at meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary organs.

61. The secretariat should work more closely, more systematically, and in a more effective manner, with the Bureau of the Commission and the Bureaus of the subsidiary bodies with a view to ensuring more effective follow-up and implementation of policy decisions taken by them.

62. During the time leading up to the Commission and its subsidiary organs sessions, the secretariat should make a special effort to reach out to the regional directors of United Nations Sustainable Development Group, the United Nations Resident Coordinator of the host country, other representatives of relevant international organizations, regional economic communities and the private sector, who until now, have not participated in the Conference of Ministers on a regular basis.

63. Members of the bureaus of the sectoral subsidiary organs and the intergovernmental committees of experts may wish to participate and effectively engage in the Commission sessions.

64. Building on recent developments related to global, regional and ECA-wide reforms, the work of ECA in support of the Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063 should be well articulated and presented during the discussions on statutory agenda items at the Conference of Ministers. The secretariat should also ensure that outcomes of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development are presented to the Commission and its subsidiary organs.

## **B. Sectoral subsidiary organs**

65. It is recommended that the sectoral subsidiary organs be reorganized to better reflect the recent restructuring programme of the Commission organized around the following nine interdependent and complementary subprogrammes: macroeconomics and governance; regional integration and trade; private sector development and finance; data and statistics; climate change; environment and natural resource management; gender and women in development; subregional activities for development, economic development and planning; and poverty, inequality and social policy.

66. It is, therefore, recommended that the sectoral subsidiary organs be reorganized to be aligned with the above-mentioned new subprogrammes by leveraging more effectively internal synergies, building on the Commission's mandate to deliver its integrated analytical, policy tools, convening platforms and expertise as follows:

### **(a) Committee on Economic Governance**

The Committee on Economic Governance will coordinate the work of ECA to ensure coherence and results in the support given to member States and other stakeholders in their effort to build and strengthen economic governance institutions and policies, and foster peer learning to accelerate sustained and inclusive social and economic development. The Committee will provide evidence-based advice and guidance on economic governance issues relating to promoting sound macroeconomic management and inclusive development strategies, fighting corruption and illicit financial flows out of Africa. In addition, it will encourage networking, and support regional and global governance processes, such as the African Peer Review Mechanism, and efforts to ensure African representation in international forums, such as the Group of 20 Summit.

### **(b) Committee on Statistics and Data**

The Committee on Statistics and Data will address issues related to statistics and data in Africa. It will meet once every two years to review activities dealing with statistics and statistical capacity-building; data (traditional data sources and new data sources); and technology and innovation that affects

statistics, such as geospatial information technology and big data, for the production, management, processing and analysis of data and statistics.

The Committee will provide a forum to do the following: deliberate on issues related to statistics and data; extend guidance on emerging issues in data production, exchange and analysis; and introduce innovation related to data and determine capacity and data gaps. The Committee will also be tasked with ensuring that all member countries have the capability to provide data on a variety of development issues, and will promote coordination of statistical activities and the fostering of good statistical practices and ensure that statistical system in Africa functions consistently.

**(c) Committee on Private Sector Development, Regional Integration, Trade, Infrastructure, Industry and Technology**

The Committee on Private Sector Development, Regional Integration, Trade, Infrastructure, Industry and Technology will review the work carried out in the biennium under the relevant programmes of ECA dealing with issues related to private sector development and finance, regional integration and trade and infrastructure, industry and technology. It will provide a forum for dialogue and consensus-building in these important areas with regard to the African development agenda, and more significantly serve as a catalyst for accelerating progress at the national and regional levels in these fields. The Committee will focus on topical and emerging issues of relevance to its identified areas of focus, with a view to taking stock of progress made by African member States in these areas.

**(d) Committee on Climate Change, Blue Economy, Agriculture and Natural Resources Management**

The Committee on Climate Change, Blue Economy, Agriculture and Natural Resources Management will provide guidance and direction related to the work of the Commission aimed at advancing sustainable development, particularly through agricultural transformation, enhanced management and the transformation of the continent's land and natural resources, integration of climate resilience into national development plans, and the transition to a green and blue economies, including through technology and innovation.

Acting as a policy dialogue and consensus-building forum, the Committee will provide direction on the future work and strategic focus of the Commission on key emerging issues relating to agriculture, blue economy, climate change, land and natural resources management, and green economy in support of the attainment of the development objectives of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, and will support the implementation of the Africa Mining Vision and the African Union Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges, both of which were adopted by African Heads of State and Government in 2009, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

**(e) Committee on Social Development, Poverty and Gender**

The Committee on Social Development, Poverty and Gender will meet on a biennial basis at ECA Headquarters to review the work carried out under the subprogrammes on gender equality and women's empowerment and poverty, inequality and social policy. The Committee will provide a forum for analysing the work of ECA as it relates to the African priorities on poverty and inequality reduction, sustainable urbanization, gender equality and women's empowerment, and social policy. The Committee will also provide a policy dialogue and consensus-building forum to strategically direct future work in these important areas of the African development agenda, and more significantly serve as a catalyst for accelerating progress at the national and regional levels in these fields. The Committee will focus on topical and emerging issues of relevance to its identified areas of focus, with a view to also take stock of progress made by African member States in these areas and identify policy directions.

67. The above-mentioned sectoral subsidiary organs, which will meet biennially for a maximum duration of three days, may consider organizing joint meetings to discuss cross-cutting issues.

68. The secretariat should organize the meetings of the sectoral subsidiary organs so that the number of meetings are evenly divided, rather than organizing almost all of them in the same year.

### **C. Subregional intergovernmental committees of experts**

69. To ensure participation of senior government officials in meetings, it is recommended that the intergovernmental committees of experts be renamed the “intergovernmental committees of senior officials and experts”.

70. To strengthen South-South cooperation and peer learning, the subregional intergovernmental committees of experts may choose to meet jointly across the subregions.

### **D. Sectoral subsidiary organs and subregional intergovernmental committees of experts**

71. The sectoral subsidiary organs and subregional intergovernmental committees of experts may wish to consider streamlining the work programmes of their meetings so that sufficient time is allocated to discussions on technical and statutory matters, including on follow-up to recommendations from previous sessions.

72. The sectoral subsidiary organs and the intergovernmental committees of experts may consider reviewing the extent to which recommendations are being regularly implemented, monitored and evaluated. Bureau members and the secretariat may wish to begin to advise member States to formulate SMART recommendations to feed into the Conference of Ministers and for effective follow-up.

73. The secretariat should improve its servicing of the sectoral subsidiary organs and intergovernmental committees of experts, specifically through timely distribution of documents in all the working languages, including through the Commission’s website, and systematically administering self-evaluation as a way to assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of each meeting.

74. Each of the sectoral subsidiary organs and the intergovernmental committees of experts may consider developing its own terms of reference on their scope of work.

### **E. African Institute for Economic Development and Planning**

75. Based on the approved strategic orientations for the period 2018–2021, the full strategic plan for the same period should be disseminated to all relevant stakeholders. Member States should also be informed about the e-learning programmes recently launched by IDEP.

76. Member States in arrears of financial contributions are strongly encouraged to make the required payments, possibly, through installments.

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