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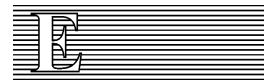
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**UN system-wide support to the African Union and its New Partnership for
Africa's Development (NEPAD) programme**

1.0 Introduction

In 2002, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as the framework within which the international community, including the United Nations system, would channel its support to Africa's development. In this regard, the United Nations system developed a comprehensive structure at the global, regional and country levels to support the initiative and ensure maximum results. In its capacity as the regional arm of the United Nations in Africa, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) was assigned the responsibility of coordinating United Nations support to NEPAD at the regional and subregional levels (GA resolution 57/7 of 2002). To this end, a regional consultation mechanism was established in 2002 for cooperation and coordination of support to NEPAD by all United Nations agencies and organizations working in Africa, with ECA as the designated coordinator. Thematic clusters based on the priorities of NEPAD were created within the framework of the regional consultation mechanism. These clusters have undergone continuous reconfiguration to effectively support the implementation of NEPAD. Currently, the nine thematic clusters are:

- (a) Infrastructure Development, convened by ECA;
- (b) Governance, convened by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);
- (c) Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development, convened by Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO);
- (d) Environment, Population and Urbanization, convened by United Nations-Habitat;
- (e) Human Resource Development, Employment and HIV/AIDS, convened by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF);
- (f) Science and Technology, convened by United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO);
- (g) Advocacy and Communications, convened by the Office of the Special Adviser for Africa (OSAA);
- (h) Peace and Security, convened by the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (DPA); and
- (i) Industry, Trade and Market Access, convened by United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

In 2003, based on the Maputo Declaration, African Heads of State and Government expressed their desire for NEPAD to be properly integrated into the structures and processes of the African Union. This was followed by a series of meetings, brainstorming sessions and further declarations between 2004 and 2007. In response to this new reality, at the seventh regional consultative meeting (RCM) held on 14-15 November 2006 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, it was agreed that clusters of the regional consultation mechanism, which had up to then focused exclusively on the implementation of NEPAD, should undertake a clear and traceable alignment of programmes

and resources with the priorities of the African Union (AU). The meeting also called for improved cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and the African Union Commission (AUC), the NEPAD Secretariat, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the regional economic communities (RECs); and also endorsed the expansion of the RCM to include the AU Commission.

The Declaration on enhancing United Nations–African Union cooperation signed in November 2006, by the then – chief executives of the two organizations established the Framework for the United Nations Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the AU. The Framework is based on AU needs and strategic priorities and provides the overall United Nations strategic framework for cooperation with AU. The Declaration calls for aligning the support of United Nations agencies and organizations for NEPAD with the Framework.

Against this backdrop, this paper presents an update on United Nations system-wide support to the AU and its NEPAD programme. The paper provides an overview of support to the AU and its NEPAD programme since the seventh RCM. It draws attention to the support provided by ECA, including to the APRM process and highlights the main issues and recommendations of the eighth RCM, including those pertaining to subregional coordination. It underscores the achievements and impacts of support provided. In concluding, the paper makes a number of proposals on the way forward for consideration and endorsement by Ministers, with a view to providing effective support to the AU and its NEPAD programme.

2.0 United Nations System-wide Support to the AU and its NEPAD programme

This section highlights some major activities undertaken by the thematic clusters and sub-clusters of the United Nations agencies and organizations working in Africa in support of the AU and its NEPAD programme, in 2007. It is based on the reports of clusters and sub-clusters prepared for the Eighth RCM held on 5 and 6 November 2007.

2.1 Infrastructure Development Cluster

ECA is the convener of this cluster, which comprises four sub-clusters: water, energy, Information Communication Technology and transport.

Water: The sub-cluster, which operates under the auspices of United Nations-Water/Africa, actively contributed to the strengthening of regional cooperation in 2007. The group's members worked closely with the water units of their respective RECs, as well as with the African Network of Basin Organizations. The AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat were closely involved in the activities of United Nations-Water/Africa. The group's joint activities included sustained institutional support to the African Ministerial Council on Water (AMCOW), development of common positions and perspectives on water, publication of key policy documents on water and establishment of financing mechanisms.

Energy: United Nations-Energy/Africa (UNEA) made commendable efforts to improve United Nations-support for the implementation of the energy-related components of NEPAD. The group cooperates with the African ministerial bodies responsible for energy. The cooperation encompasses a number of areas, including: (a) strengthening capacities in decision-making at

national and subregional levels; (b) providing support to the AU Commission in developing its Africa Energy Vision 2030; and (c) developing tools to bridge institutional gaps in addressing the low level of access to and consumption of energy in rural areas. At the international level, United Nations-Energy/Africa contributes to the development of Africa's perspectives and/or positions on key issues.

Information Communication Technology: In the absence of a formal inter-agency grouping, ECA, working in close cooperation with the relevant United Nations agencies, the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and the AfDB assumes the lead role for the sub-cluster. The main activities in 2007 emanated from the NEPAD Short-Term Action Plan (STAP) on infrastructure. Other key intervention areas included the follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society and the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy, as well as the CONNECT Africa Summit held in Kigali, Rwanda, in October 2007.

Transport: Pending the establishment of a formal inter-agency grouping for transport-related issues, ECA, working in close collaboration with the AU Commission, assumes responsibility for the sub-cluster. The sub-cluster's collaboration with African institutions focused on the main decisions of the regional institutions. The Durban Declaration of the First African Union Conference of Ministers responsible for Road Transport (South Africa, October 2007) provided new impetus. The United Nations system supported the NEPAD programme on transport and actively participated in relevant ministerial conferences.

2.2 Governance Cluster

This cluster is convened by UNDP and is organized around two sub-themes: (a) political governance (UNDP) and (b) economic and corporate governance (ECA).

Political Governance: The main activity undertaken in 2007 under this sub-theme was to provide support to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and the Seventh African Governance Forum (AGF-VII). UNDP worked very closely with ECA and the AfDB in providing advisory services at the highest level and has, together with other cluster members, consistently participated in the NEPAD Steering Committee meetings, the Heads of State and Government meetings and the Africa Partnership Forum.

Economic Governance: Support provided under this sub-theme contributed to the creation of a positive environment for investment and economic growth, the enactment of needed economic reforms, the restructuring of international aid; and the reduction of the debt burden. To this end, ECA contributed to improvements in macroeconomic policy through the Economic Report on Africa (ERA) of 2007 and the Conference of African Ministers of Finance and Planning and Economic Development. Additionally, various ECA publications that advocate for the promotion of sound economic policies served as important vehicles for transmitting ECA policy recommendations to member States.

2.3 Agriculture, Food Security and Rural Development Cluster

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is the convener of this cluster. From November 2006 to October 2007, various members of the cluster, especially the Rome-based United Nations agencies, undertook a number of collaborative activities in support of the AU/NEPAD agriculture, food security and rural development agenda. These included support to the implementation of the NEPAD Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and to various ministerial conferences related to food security and agricultural development. Support was also provided to the NEPAD Secretariat and to various regional and subregional bodies and initiatives.

2.4 Environment, Population and Urbanization Cluster

Convened by UN-HABITAT, the activities of this cluster focused on three thematic areas: (a) sustainable NEPAD cities led by UN-HABITAT; (b) data monitoring and evaluation of progress in the achievements of NEPAD goals relating to environment, population and urbanization led by United Nations Food Programme (UNFPA) and World Maritime Organization (WMO); and (c) development and implementation of the Environment Initiative of NEPAD led by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Cluster members have carried out many activities in support of the AU and its NEPAD programme. Notably, UNEP and the NEPAD Secretariat have provided financial and technical support to the RECs to develop subregional environmental action plans for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD for the five subregions of Africa.

2.5 Human Resources Development, Employment and HIV/AIDS Cluster

UNICEF is the convener of the cluster, which comprises three sub-clusters: (a) Human Resources Development with UNESCO as convener (with support from UNICEF); (b) Employment, with ILO as convener; and (c) HIV/AIDS, with UNAIDS as convener. The cluster prepared a joint AU/NEPAD-UN/UNICEF work plan, integrating specific deliverables aligned to AU/NEPAD priorities for 2007, guided by the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the AU. In addition, cluster members have, in collaboration with the AU Commission, worked to support the development of indices and a compendium to measure progress and commitment on HIV declarations and to follow up on these commitments. The cluster also contributed to the implementation of the Plan of Action of the Second Decade of Education for Africa. Cluster members jointly participated in the AU/NEPAD strategic annual activities in support of child survival, development and protection.

2.6 Science and Technology Cluster

UNESCO is the convener of the cluster and ECA is the designated vice-convener. The cluster actively participated in the elaboration of the AU/NEPAD Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA), which was formally adopted by the AU Summit in Addis Ababa in January 2007. In October 2007, the General Conference of UNESCO adopted a plan to contribute to the implementation of the CPA, which included joint activities with other agencies.

2.7 Advocacy and Communications Cluster

The Office of the Special Advisor for Africa (OSAA) is the convener of the cluster and ECA is the designated vice-convener. The cluster collaborated with the NEPAD Secretariat in preparing and presenting the report of the General Assembly on the implementation of NEPAD. Several cluster members were involved in the NEPAD-organized communications workshop held in Ghana from 12 to 14 April 2007, and in the follow-up meetings and related events.

2.8 Peace and Security Cluster

The Department of Political Affairs (DPA) is the convener of the cluster, which comprises three sub-clusters: (a) Peace and Security Architecture of the AU, convened by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO); (b) Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development, convened by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR); and (c) the Human Rights, Justice and Reconciliation Sub-Cluster, convened by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

Peace and Security Architecture of the AU Sub-Cluster: The United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations –African Union Peace Support Team (DPKO-AU PST) was created to deliver support to the implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme. It was tasked with “The provision of capacity-building expertise/support to the AU in the establishment of the African Standby Force and the planning, mounting and managing of peace support missions.” Since becoming functional in January 2007, the sub-cluster has actively provided support to the African Union-PSOD and the AU Commission in the areas of training, military, police, logistics, finance and communication.

Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development Sub-Cluster: The sub-cluster supported the AU to develop a comprehensive and strategic policy on post-conflict reconstruction and Development (PCRD). The sub-cluster, both as a group and through the individual efforts of member agencies, actively supported activities related to the implementation of the African Union-PCRD policy. As part of the capacity-building support, members of the sub-cluster provided the AU with financial, material and technical support. The sub-cluster undertook the preparation of country assessment reports to document the status of post-conflict recovery and reconstruction in twelve countries.

Human Rights, Justice and Reconciliation Sub-Cluster: During the period under review, the sub-cluster held a series of meetings with partners, including the AU Commission and the Human Rights Court, on the operationalization of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme. These meetings and consultations with other continental bodies such as the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights led to the adoption by the African Commission of a resolution in support of the operationalization of the programme.

2.9 Industry, Trade and Market Access (ITMA) Cluster

UNIDO is the convener of the ITMA cluster. Cluster members undertook a variety of ITMA-related activities in support of the AU and its NEPAD programme. Programmes implemented with

UNIDO as lead agency included experts group meetings on the Africa Quality Infrastructure Survey and on youth employment. Programmes implemented with UNCTAD as lead agency included the Regional Trade Programme for the East African Community and capacity-building on Economic Partnership Agreements negotiations. The International Trade Centre took the lead in the implementation of the Trade Support Programme for COMESA.

3.0 ECA support to the AU and its NEPAD programme

3.1 General support

Based on its mandate, ECA supports the priorities of the AU and NEPAD. In line with the new developmental landscape that calls for measures, steps and actions towards the effective implementation of the AU integration agenda and NEPAD sectoral programmes, ECA has adopted regional integration as a key area of intervention and aligned its priorities with the AU agenda, including NEPAD. The biennial programmes of ECA reflect the nature and scope of the AU and its NEPAD programme. Activities in support of the AU and its NEPAD programme include analytical studies, advisory services, policy advocacy and capacity-building. ECA has also provided technical support to the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat, the APRM Secretariat, the APRM Panel, the RECs and other implementing organs at the subregional and national levels.

ECA provides tangible support to the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat on the basis of the UN-AU Cooperation Programme and the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat. Under the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the AU, ECA is providing support to the AU and RECs in the areas of health and infrastructure. With regard to health, alongside its partners, ECA provides technical assistance to the RECs in setting up of mechanisms for regional bulk purchasing and local production of generic AIDS-related medicines and commodities. Within the framework of UN-Energy Africa, ECA has supported the AU Commission to develop an African energy vision and policy. ECA is also supporting the Commission to develop a transport master plan.

ECA has provided support to the implementation of NEPAD initiatives, such as the Infrastructure Short-Term Action Plan (STAP) and the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Plan (CAADP). ECA continues to provide assistance in many other areas, including ICT, water resources development, trade and regional integration and gender. In addition, ECA participates actively in AU Summits and the NEPAD Steering Committee meetings. It provides technical advice and inputs, particularly in the discussions on the integration of NEPAD into AU structures and processes.

The NEPAD Support Section created in the NEPAD and Regional Integration Division of ECA has undertaken key activities to enhance United Nations system support to the process. These include substantive servicing of the RCM; functional support to the nine thematic United Nations clusters of the RCM; and preparation of substantive publications. The Section's weekly newsletter, *NEPAD Briefs*, is an important promotional material that advocates for NEPAD and informs the public on NEPAD-related activities. The Section is in the process of organizing a training workshop for journalists in an effort to increase media coverage and reporting on NEPAD.

With increased emphasis on strengthening collaboration with RECs in order to facilitate integration and address Africa's special needs, the subregional offices (SROs) of ECA are in the process of developing multi-year programmes with the RECs. Memoranda of understanding detailing modalities for implementing the multi-year programmes would be signed with the RECs. This would enable ECA and the RECs to leverage their collective resources for the implementation of the regional integration programme, ensure synergy and enhance delivery capacity. SROs are also working to bring United Nations agencies together in support of AU/NEPAD at the subregional level. To this end, they are developing issue papers and undertaking discussions with United Nations agencies in their respective subregions, particularly those with subregional presence.

In addition, SROs continue to facilitate capacity-building activities for RECs and the implementation of infrastructure projects. In the area of institutional support to NEPAD, the SROs continue to assist NEPAD national and subregional coordination offices and to their respective regional NEPAD task forces, through the provision of advisory services and the servicing of meetings. In order to mainstream NEPAD priorities for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a number of SROs have assisted member countries in the preparation and dissemination of technical papers on progress and prospects for the implementation of NEPAD and the attainment of the MDGs. These papers propose a strategic framework towards achieving the MDGs in the respective subregions through NEPAD.

3.2 ECA support to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

3.2.1. Background

The APRM, a brainchild of NEPAD, was adopted by African Heads of State and Governments as a systematic peer learning and self-assessment mechanism based on the NEPAD declaration on democracy, political, economic and corporate governance. This innovative mechanism is a clear manifestation of African leaders' determination on good governance. Although APRM is an instrument voluntarily acceded to by member States of the African Union, the demand for technical and advisory assistance from ECA, as a strategic partner in the APRM process from member States is substantial and growing, since the peer-review process is recognized as crucial for the successful implementation of NEPAD.

Although a formal memorandum of understanding was never signed between ECA and the APRM Secretariat, ECA was presumed responsible of the economic governance, socio-economic development and political governance pillars during the review missions.

To respond systematically to the growing demand of technical support, ECA put in place the necessary institutional arrangements, by creating a specific APRM Support Unit within its organizational structure in September 2006.

3.2.2 ECA contributions to the APRM

Since its establishment, ECA has made tremendous contributions and participated actively in the entire APRM process. During the period under review, ECA continued to make a significant

contribution towards the successful implementation of the APRM process, focusing on four (4) areas in particular.

Advisory Services

ECA rendered substantial advisory services to APRM participating member States for their review process through: (a) APR country support missions (Mali); (b) follow-up support missions (Mozambique and Benin); and (c) country review missions (Benin, Uganda, Nigeria and Burkina Faso). During the period under review, Algeria, South Africa (July 2007) and Benin (January 2008) were peer reviewed by the APRM Heads of States Forum.

During these missions, ECA assessed the independence of the process, the suitability of the institutional arrangements and mechanisms established by the country to undertake the self assessment exercise, reviewed the countries' self assessments through extensive consultations and interactions with national stakeholders, and collaborated in the drafting of the country review reports and the national programme of action (NpoA).

Training Workshops

ECA initiated a peer-learning exercise. In June 2007, it organized one training workshop on "Participation of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the APRM". This workshop brought together francophone representatives of civil society organizations to learn about best practices to adopt and pitfalls to avoid from APRM pioneer countries (Algeria, Benin, Mauritius, Ghana, Kenya and Rwanda). It allowed CSO representatives to apply strategic tools and methods for participating effectively and efficiently in the APRM process and enabled them to create networks among themselves for their future engagement in national governance systems. In this exercise, ECA developed a training manual for CSOs (in French), which is now available.

Advocacy for the process

As a lead strategic partner of the process, ECA advocated for international community understanding of the APRM concept and peer review process by: (a) providing guidance for the review of the APRM methodology and instruments; (b) integrating the APRM-NPoA into existing national development strategies and providing a strategic financing framework for the NPoA by devising a costing methodology based on certain assumptions (one out of the three-country case studies has now been completed for Ghana); and (c) making presentations at many forums, such as the OECD-NEPAD round table on "Strengthening the Investment Assessment and Reform in NEPAD Countries", as well as serving as an expert resource for the High-Level Task Force on the Right to Development of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

Database of independent African Experts

In implementing its mandate to contribute to the institutionalization and mainstreaming support to the APRM process, ECA has developed a database of African experts and the diaspora on governance to help the APRM continental secretariat in identifying competent independent African experts in all areas of governance for the country review missions. As of today, the ECA database, which is a work in progress contains 170 profiles.

4.0 The Eighth Regional Consultation Meeting

The Eighth Regional Consultative Meeting of United Nations agencies and organizations working in Africa in support of the AU and its NEPAD programme was held on 5 and 6 November 2007 to build on the achievements of the seventh RCM and to strengthen the partnership with the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat. The meeting was graced by the presence of Dr. Asha Rose Migiro, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations. There was high-level representation from the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and most United Nations agencies as well as the RECs, the AfDB and other multilateral agencies. The meeting provided the opportunity to share information and lessons learned and concrete and actionable recommendations on ways of strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the cluster system; the accelerated implementation of the United Nations Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the AU; the institutionalization of subregional coordination of United Nations support to the AU and its NEPAD programme; and furthering the regional agenda on post-conflict reconstruction and inter-agency peace-building efforts.

4.1 The cluster system

The meeting agreed that the effective functioning of the cluster system is central to enhancing efficiency and coherence in the delivery of support to the AU and its NEPAD programme. It reiterated the need for stronger commitment and leadership; consideration of structural and systemic issues; increased accountability; enhanced coordination and collaboration; increased resource mobilization and capacity-building; more systematic monitoring and evaluation; and increased communication, outreach and advocacy. In this context, the RCM called for improved leadership, the establishment of a steering committee and the further alignment of the activities of the cluster system with AU and NEPAD priorities, within the framework of the United Nations Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the AU. The RCM also called for the development by the clusters, of three-year business plans and the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues such as gender, health and culture.

4.2 Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union

The RCM reiterated its commitment to the effective implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the AU. It recognized the need to address priority needs of the AU Commission within the African Union-United Nations cooperation framework; enhance AU internal capacity to coordinate support provided under the programme; and involve the AfDB in the programme. In this regard, the RCM recommended the further development of the framework to accommodate existing cooperation and bilateral agreements between United Nations agencies and the AU, and to form the basis for United Nations assistance to AU capacity-building. It called for stronger leadership on the part of the AU Commission and for the participation of the AfDB in the implementation of the Programme.

4.3 Subregional coordination of United Nations Support to the AU and its NEPAD Programme

On the issue of subregional coordination, the RCM endorsed the recommendations of the ad hoc expert group meeting held in October 2007 to review the report on the assessment of the cluster system which provided the opportunity to discuss issues pertaining to subregional coordination. The meeting recognized that there was a gap between regional-level and national-level development interventions and that coordination at the subregional level was virtually absent. It also noted that there was inadequate knowledge of the work of United Nations agencies at the subregional level, particularly regarding their areas of focus, operation modalities and coordination mechanisms. However, the meeting realized that subregional coordination might be difficult if regional integration issues were not clearly factored into the cluster system. In this respect, the meeting endorsed the recommendation that a stock-taking exercise be conducted to ascertain the agencies that have subregional presence and programmes as well as their different areas of focus and existing coordination mechanisms, in order to identify gaps and shortcomings. The meeting also endorsed the recommendation that regional integration be addressed in the cluster system to enhance coordination at the subregional level and strengthen the capacity of the RECs.

4.4 Post-conflict reconstruction and development

The RCM acknowledged that post-conflict reconstruction and development (PCRD), which was the theme of the meeting, was a complex, multidimensional issue involving many actors and interventions at the global, regional, subregional and national levels. It emphasized the need to increase coordination of efforts and to adequately reflect gender, women's empowerment, youth unemployment, socio-cultural, environmental and other sectoral issues in PCRD interventions. It also recognized the need to provide adequate resources to support post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts and to increase awareness of the AU PCRD policy at the global level. In this context, the RCM recommended the coordination of efforts at various levels to ensure coherence and effectiveness in the delivery of support for post-conflict reconstruction and development. It called for faster implementation of the AU PCRD policy in order to positively impact the situation on the ground in countries emerging from conflict. The meeting made several other recommendations related to cooperation and collaboration, the enhancement of participation by all stakeholders and the financing of programmes.

5.0 Overall achievements and impacts

Achievements related to the implementation of the recommendations of the seventh RCM included the commissioning of an external review of the cluster system to improve its operational efficiency and effectiveness and the organization of an expert group meeting to review the report. Another notable achievement was the strengthening of the coordination of United Nations support for AU and NEPAD, including the repositioning of the RCM Secretariat at ECA around a strategic coordinator. Additionally, ECA subregional offices initiated discussions with United Nations agencies in their respective subregions on the issue of subregional coordination. The advocacy and communication cluster started to develop a comprehensive communication and advocacy strategy for NEPAD. Furthermore, ECA, UNDP and OSAA provided advisory support to the AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat. However, little progress was made in mainstreaming

gender and youth into the clusters, and cluster activities had not been monitored and evaluated in a systematic manner.

Other notable achievements included the launching of two new clusters by the RCM and the repositioning of ECA as a strategic coordinator. ECA now participates more in and provides secretariat support to the clusters. Regular RCMs are now convened once a year in Addis Ababa to facilitate attendance and participation. The Deputy Secretary-General attendance at the last RCM attests to the importance attached to the consultation process. The AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and the RECs are participating more in the RCM and cluster meetings and activities. The AU Commission and the NEPAD Secretariat now co-chair meetings of the RCM and the clusters, which have resulted in enhanced leadership for the RCM, improved coordination of the clusters, increased interaction within and among clusters and sharpened focus of cluster activities for greater relevance and effectiveness. United Nations agencies continue to commit substantial amounts of material and financial resources to the cluster support system, and to implement a growing number of projects. Communication between ECA, the NEPAD Secretariat, the AU Commission and some cluster conveners has been enhanced. There is also continuous communication and advocacy and increased support for the AU and NEPAD at the national, regional and global levels.

Overall, the seventh RCM generated important momentum for United Nations support to NEPAD, including the strengthening of partnerships with African regional and subregional organizations. However, in spite of the achievements, many challenges remain. The performance of the different clusters and the participation in the RCM of regional and subregional bodies need to be improved. Furthermore, subregional coordination is yet to be institutionalized. ECA and the other United Nations agencies have therefore resolved to intensify their efforts to fully implement the recommendations of the seventh RCM and to build on its achievements.

As regards support to the APRM process, advisory services, technical supports and training workshops of ECA have contributed significantly to advancing the implementation of the APRM process in the participating countries, based on the official records, the results of Web-based research and post-event evaluation comments, as well as the continued demand for ECA advisory services. Consequently, APRM participating countries have become generally more effective in addressing the challenges of good governance and the adoption of best practices in codes and standards. The APRM training workshops have resulted in technically competent and efficient APRM processes in member States, greater stakeholder participation and more credible and transparent processes free from political manipulation. The enhanced profile of civil society organizations in the APRM process would improve the state of governance and socio-economic development in participating countries.

The study on financing and costing of the APRM-NPA led by ECA will allow APRM participating countries to be able to systematically develop a formal framework for a detail costing of the APRM national programmes of action. The overall impact would be a template for the APRM participating countries in tracking programme of action expenditures, especially where APRM/PoA expenditures overlap with other initiatives such as the PRSP process. In conclusion, the overall impact of these outputs and activities in APRM participating countries has been concrete and substantial.

6.0 Lessons learned and the way forward

To sustain the existing momentum and intensify support to AU and its NEPAD programme, various recommendations must be implemented, increased commitment and institutional leadership, as well as concerted efforts on the part of United Nations agencies and organizations, the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and the RECs. Cooperation among the participating agencies is also essential.

Inter- and intra-cluster communication needs to be enhanced to ensure a holistic and integrated approach to the support being provided. Communication with the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and RECs should be enhanced to provide an effective link between United Nations agencies and organizations and regional and subregional bodies.

Subregional coordination is essential for linking regional-level agreements with national-level priorities and actions. Confidence-building between the United Nations agencies and the AU Commission, NEPAD Secretariat and RECs and among United Nations agencies should continue to be strengthened. Capacity-building of the AU Commission, NEPAD Secretariat RECs and participating agencies is crucial for optimal delivery and should therefore be enhanced. This will facilitate joint programming and implementation of activities in support of the AU and its NEPAD programme. Clusters must prioritize the development and implementation of business plans that are aligned to the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the AU and to the strategic plans of the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and the RECs.

Increased institutional capacity (human, financial and material) is essential. This necessitates stronger commitment, leadership and institutional support on the part of United Nations agencies and African regional and subregional organizations. In view of its expanded mandate (repositioned from a mere convener to a strategic coordinator), the RCM Secretariat must be adequately resourced to enable it to effectively carry out its strategic coordinating role and meet expectations. ECA and United Nations agencies and organizations participating in the RCM must act accordingly.

The APRM process provides ECA with a unique opportunity to monitor and promote good governance in Africa. Yet, as attested by ECA experiences in the process, a number of critical challenges have appeared and need to be addressed. First, the continental Secretariat lacked the requisite capacities, particularly human and research capacities, to effectively and technically manage and lead the APRM process, with ECA having to constantly fill these capacity gaps. Secondly, the exercise takes up a considerable amount of human and financial resources of ECA, with ad hoc and prolonged review missions. APRM review shall be realistically planned with regard to the availability of ECA experts.

ECA plays a key role in the APRM process and its participation is crucial to ensure the independence, credibility and integrity of the APRM review. APRM presents an important opportunity for ECA to engage in constructive national dialogue and to establish a new governance culture on the continent. As more and more countries express their readiness to start the review process (five more countries in 2008), the demand for technical assistance from ECA will continue to grow. In addition, there are continuous requests from other international development institutions

and United Nations agencies that rely on ECA for knowledge and technical advice regarding the peer review concept and lessons learned from its implementation.

In the light of the above, the following issues are tabled for consideration:

- (a) Enhancement of institutional commitment and leadership on the part of all United Nations agencies and organizations and continental and regional organizations participating in the RCM;
- (b) Provision of additional resources to the RCM Secretariat at ECA to provide the support necessary for the effective functioning of the RCM;
- (c) Enhancement of capacity-building support to the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat and the RECs;
- (d) Enhancement of the capacity of the APRM continental Secretariat (research, planning, organization and outreach);
- (e) Conclusion of a formal agreement between ECA and the APRM Secretariat through an MOU;
- (f) Enhancement of capacity-building support to relevant APRM national stakeholders (civil society organizations, parliamentarians, private sector etc.) and national research capacities on governance;
- (g) Enhancement of the post-review process, in particular by monitoring the implementation of the national programme of action; and
- (h) Encouraging APRM participating countries to accelerate the national launching of the APRM and non-participating members to accede to the process.