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Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

Statutory issues

Report on United Nations system support for the African Union and its New Partnership for Africa's Development Programme

Introduction

1. The present report contains a summary of the support extended by the United Nations system to the African Union Commission and its New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) programme for the period April 2017-March 2018. The report covers the support given for the implementation of selected African Union Assembly decisions, Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the framework of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa, and to the African Peer Review Mechanism and the regional economic communities. Support from United Nations agencies, jointly and individually, are presented based on the framework of the thematic clusters of the Regional Coordination Mechanism.

I. Implementation of African Union Assembly decisions

2. The United Nations system provided support for the implementation of African Union decisions throughout the reporting period. Generally, the decisions pertain to the priorities of the African Union and its NEPAD programme, especially, in such areas as regional integration, trade, and infrastructure.

A. Development of a continental framework to enhance investment in transboundary infrastructure

3. Subsequent to African Union Decision 563 in which the Assembly requested the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency to collaborate with the regional economic communities and other stakeholders in developing a common framework for the harmonization of policies, laws and regulations to enhance private financing specific to the 16 identified Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) projects. Following a comprehensive pping of the relevant policies, laws and regulations across the region, a model law was

* E/ECA/COE/37/1

developed, which tackles the major challenges faced by the private sector in making investments, including transparency, procurement, movement of goods and personnel, project ownership and dispute resolution. The model law harmonizes cross-border rules, regulations, laws and policies governing transboundary infrastructure projects in Africa. Consequently, the law facilitates private sector investment and financing in transboundary infrastructure projects; and ensures transparency, efficiency, accountability and sustainability of transboundary infrastructure projects, while promoting intra-African trade and opening domestic markets to international trade.

4. The African Union Assembly, in its Decision 685, adopted in January 2018, welcomed and endorsed the final version of the Model Law for Transboundary Infrastructure Projects in Africa (PIDA Model Law), which was developed by ECA, and called on ECA, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and regional economic communities to assist member States in incorporating the Model Law within their respective national legislative bodies.

B. The establishment of a continental free trade area

5. The Economic Commission for Africa has played a significant role in developing the template agreement for the establishment of a continental free trade area. The template is a significant input to the continental free trade area negotiation process and covers trade in goods and trade in services and investment. The Commission provided significant technical assistance to the meetings of the Continental Free Trade Area Negotiating Forum, including through an analysis of the modalities on tariff negotiations. The analysis contributed to the adoption of African Union Decision 647 in which the Assembly approved the modalities for tariff negotiations with level of ambition of 90 per cent and urged ministers to conclude negotiations on sensitive and exclusion lists.

C. Implementation of the African Union Agenda 2063 and the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development

6. The United Nations is committed to assisting the African Union in implementing Agenda 2063. It is also committed to supporting countries in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In that regard, to reduce transaction costs and deepen inter-agency coherence, the United Nations, based on the framework of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa, has realigned its clusters to deal with the major themes of both agendas. ECA had carried out a comprehensive mapping of the agendas and found a high level of convergence between them. It also has developed and deployed a tool that enables African countries to monitor and evaluate the level to which their national development plans comply with the two agendas. The clusters are the following:

- Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, industry, trade agriculture and agro-processing and regional integration;
- Infrastructure development;
- Human capital development, health, nutrition, science, technology and innovation;
- Labour, employment creation, social protection, migration and mobility;
- Gender equality, women and youth empowerment;
- Humanitarian matters and disaster risk management;

- Environment, urbanization and population;
- Advocacy, information, communications and culture;
- Peace and security.

7. The African Development Bank (AfDB), the African Union Commission, ECA and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), jointly prepared the 2017 Africa regional report on Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda. The 2017 Africa Sustainable Development Report: Tracking Progress on Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals, provided an assessment of the continent's performance in incorporating and implementing the two development frameworks since their adoption in 2013 and 2015, respectively. In the report, it was highlighted that progress in reducing poverty in Africa was underscored by the lack of inclusiveness and sustainability of primary-commodity driven growth, and a call was made for the structural transformation of Africa anchored by commodity-based industrialization and an accelerated reduction in inequality was reiterated.

II. United Nations support to the African Union

8. Support to the African Union and its NEPAD programme was organized and rendered based on the framework of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa (RCM-Africa) and the aforementioned nine clusters, while taking into account Agenda 2063. It is elaborated in the following paragraphs.

A. Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, industry, trade, agriculture and agro-processing and regional integration

Activities in this cluster are aimed at economic transformation and economic integration in Africa

9. The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, in collaboration with Member States of the United Nations, ECA, the United Nations Department of Public Information, the African Union Commission, the African Peer Review Mechanism, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and regional economic communities, organized Africa Week 2017 under the theme "Supporting an integrated, prosperous, people-centered and peaceful Africa: towards the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". The high-level event focused on progress and challenges in implementing the two agendas. Discussions were held on the efforts already underway and the need to share insight and experiences that are of critical importance to the implementation of the agendas. During the event, emphasis was also placed on the importance of financing mechanisms and the need to promote the engagement of the private sector, including through public-private partnerships and blended finance, and to thwart illicit financial flows from Africa. Another topic of discussion at the event was the climate-change-migration nexus and its implications for peace and security in Africa.

10. The theme of the eighth edition of Assessing Regional Integration in Africa, a joint publication of ECA, the African Union Commission and AfDB is "Bringing the continental free area about". The report provides a status update on regional integration in Africa, and includes a discussion on how to ensure that the potential of the proposed continental free trade area can be tapped. ECA organized the tenth session of the Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration, which was held in Addis Ababa on 3 November 2017, under the theme "Implementation of the continental free trade area and share gains". The session examined efforts made to fast track the implementation of the Action Plan for Boosting Intra-African Trade and the negotiations for a continental free trade area.

11. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), in collaboration with the African Union and ECA, organized a symposium under the theme “African industrial development: a pre-condition for an effective and sustainable continental free trade area (CFTA)” to celebrate African Industrialization Day. The symposium, held in Vienna on 20 November 2017, reviewed the industrial challenges faced by Africa, with an emphasis on industrial development as a foundation for the implementation of a continental free trade area. During the event, the symposium recommended relevant policies, strategies and regulations for developing industrial policy in coordination with free trade agreements. In addition, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) provided technical input, a mapping of intra-African trade flows in goods and services and analyses of regulatory frameworks that support activities related to trade and services that contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and presented a dispute settlement model adaptable for use during the Continental Free Trade Area Negotiating Forum.

12. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the African Union Commission, AfDB, ECA and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, reaffirmed their commitment to a broad-based international partnership to industrialize Africa in a socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable manner at an event entitled, “Third Industrial Decade for Africa: From political commitment to actions on the ground”. During the event, which was held in New York on 21 September 2017, UNIDO proposed to implement its new innovative approach to bring about the necessary structural transformation in Africa. The approach is based on its country-owned model known as the Programme for Country Partnership, which leverages financial and non-financial resources, promotes regional integration and mobilizes cooperation among development partners in Africa to bring about the necessary structural transformation.

13. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the African Union Commission have signed an agreement to launch sustainable school food and nutrition programmes in Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. The project, “Creating an Enabling Environment and Capacity for School Food and Nutrition in Eastern Africa”, is based on a strategic framework that links smallholder agriculture systems with school food programmes that prioritize nutrition education and the development of rural economies. FAO and the African Union Commission also signed a technical cooperation agreement on 6 October 2016 in Addis Ababa on the margins of the African Union Second Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment to control the fall armyworm in Africa. Under the agreement, the two organizations are working together to help boost crop production and incomes of farmers by improving the capacity of stakeholders with the objective to ensure the rapid identification of pests, timely evidence-based decisions on appropriate management approaches and minimal use of pesticides.

14. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Health Organization (WHO) organized a regional symposium on sustainable food systems for healthy diets and improved nutrition, in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 16 and 17 November 2017. The symposium provided recommendations on how to optimize sustainable food systems to improve nutrition outcomes in Africa through nutritionally balanced diets and healthy lifestyles. During the event, FAO launched the third edition of Africa Regional Overview on Food Security and Nutrition and WHO launched the first edition of Nutrition in the WHO African Region.

15. As part of a strategic cooperation agreement between ECA and FAO, the two organizations conducted a joint training on monitoring progress in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 – end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. The course covered key concepts pertaining to the application of the Food Insecurity Experience Scale methodology;

the underlying statistical theory; related analytical techniques; and the framing of related indicators within the Sustainable Development Goal monitoring process.

16. The International Trade Centre, through its Partnership for Investment and Growth in Africa programme, organized a series of meetings in Changchun, China to enable entrepreneurs from China and Africa involved in agro-processing to network with each other. The programme was designed to increase sustainable economic growth in African countries through investment-led exports and local development of agro-processing and light manufacturing.

B. Infrastructure development

This cluster seeks to support the implementation of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and the development of world-class infrastructure criss-crossing the continent for improved connectivity, networks and services

17. The Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and the African Union, have continued to accelerate the implementation of the Dakar Agenda for Action to enhance investment in the 16 Dakar Financing Summit-approved infrastructure projects by, for example, promoting the Continental Business Network, carrying out analytical work on de-risking and, most recently, promoting the increase in pension funds investment in infrastructure to 5 per cent over five years. The three organizations also provided technical support for the launch of the single African air transport market in June 2017 and the revision of the duties and responsibilities of the Monitoring Body of the Yamoussoukro Decision.

18. The role of tourism in the development process in Africa with regard to job creation is examined in the Economic Development in Africa Report 2017: Tourism for Transformative and Inclusive Growth of UNCTAD. The objective of the report was to offer guidance in support of the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the NEPAD Tourism Action Plan. The report also included, four key recommendations related to developing tourism in Africa: strengthen inter-sectoral linkages; enhance the capacity of tourism to foster more inclusive growth; tap the potential of intraregional tourism by deepening regional integration; and harness peace and stability for tourism.

C. Human capital development, health, nutrition, science, technology and innovation

This cluster aims to having well-educated, skilled, healthy and well-nourished populations underpinned by science, technology and innovation

19. The Economic Commission for Africa extended training to delegates from 26 member States on domestic resource mobilization in Dakar during the reporting period. The objective of the course was to provide policymakers with a clear understanding of the key constraints to effective domestic and international resource mobilization. During the training, a range of policy options to increase capacity to boost resource mobilization at several levels were presented.

20. The Economic Commission for Africa organized three expert group meetings on science, technology and innovation in Addis Ababa. The meetings were held in August, October and November 2017. The first meeting focused on governing science; technology and innovation to achieve the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and the aspirations of Agenda 2063, while for the second and third meetings, the topics were building research infrastructure capacity in Africa to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and understanding the potential of block

chain technology in Africa, respectively. ECA, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, also organized a senior experts dialogue under the theme “Higher education, science, technology and innovation and the African integration and development agenda” in Dakar from 28 to 30 November 2017.

21. The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), under the auspices of the Government of Gabon, hosted a pan African youth forum on culture and peace in Libreville from 30 November to 2 December 2017. The forum focused on the fight against radicalization with a view to creating an early warning system in Central Africa. During the event, experts exchanged experiences related to the prevention of radicalization and the deradicalization of young people and referred to a new subregional project, which is aimed at building the capacity of young people in managing associations and in detecting early warning signs that could lead to the radicalization of young people and a breach of peace and security in Central Africa.

22. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), through its International Institute for Capacity-Building in Africa, assisted the African Union Commission in developing a continental teacher mobility protocol for Africa, which is intended to promote fair and improved recruitment of migrant teachers across education systems in the continent. The protocol is being developed within the framework of Agenda 2063 and the Continental Education Strategy for Africa and is meant to serve as a guiding framework to facilitate the integration of African education systems.

23. The Africa Health Forum to explore health-care priorities and challenges in Africa was held in Kigali on 27 and 28 June 2017. The meeting, which was convened by the WHO Regional Office for Africa under the theme “Putting people first: the road to universal health coverage in Africa”, provided a platform to forge new partnerships for delivering universal health. The Forum discussed issues related to health financing, research and innovation, and the role of the private sector in promoting universal health coverage in Africa.

24. The UNDP Regional Service Centre for Africa, in collaboration with African Union Commission, convened the second Africa Partnership and Coordination Forum, in Johannesburg, South Africa, in November 2017, to fast track efforts to eradicate the “big three” diseases: HIV; tuberculosis; and malaria in Africa by 2030. The Forum discussed and reviewed progress and challenges in implementing the recommendations and agreed priority actions since the inaugural meeting in 2016.

D. Labour, employment creation, social protection, migration and mobility

This cluster is about bringing a high standard of living, quality of life and well-being. It also works on migration and the protection of vulnerable groups

25. The African Regional Consultative Meeting on the Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration was organized by ECA jointly with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and African Union Commission in Addis Ababa on 26 and 27 October 2017. The meeting agreed that Africa needs to drive and to own its migration narrative to ensure that the continent’s perspective and priorities are adequately reflected in the global compact for migration. It provided a forum for Africa to identify and articulate key migration issues; analyse regional perspectives and priorities; come up with actionable commitments and recommendations; to discuss potential means of implementation, and to review mechanisms at national, subregional and regional levels.

26. The International Labour Organization (ILO) played an integral role in the establishment of the SADC Forum on Dispute Prevention and Resolution. The

meeting to establish the Forum was hosted by the Government of South Africa and was held in Durban, South Africa, on 18 and 19 July 2017. During the meeting, member States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), shared experiences and information pertaining to institutional structures, mechanisms, processes, procedures, and challenges related to the process to dispense justice in the labour market through dispute prevention and resolution. The meeting resolved that the role of the SADC Forum on Dispute Prevention and Resolution would be to promote harmonized approaches to dispute prevention and resolution.

E. Gender equality, women and youth empowerment

This cluster aims at achieving gender equality and women's empowerment in all spheres of life and engaged and empowered young people and children through harnessing the demographic dividend

27. Phase III of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme to Eliminate Female Genital Mutilation, covering the period 2018-2021 began by linking the programme to Sustainable Development Goal 5, target 3 – eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation. The programme will focus on countries with the highest rates of female genital mutilation, with the objective to alter social norms in affected communities while working with governments to put in place viable national response systems. Under this programme, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in close partnership with African Union Commission and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection of Ghana, convened a high-level ministerial meeting on female genital mutilation, in Accra on 15 and 16 November 2017, as part of the Campaign on Accelerated Maternal Mortality in Africa Week.

28. The United Nations Development Programme and the African Union Commission hosted a dialogue on gender mainstreaming in regional economic communities and documenting existing models for accelerating the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of the Agenda 2063, in Accra from 2 to 4 August 2017. The dialogue, which focused on the challenges and opportunities for better delivery of gender equality, was part of the Building an Enabling Environment for Women's Economic Empowerment and Political Participation in Africa project of the African Union Commission, which receives technical support from the UNDP Regional Service Centre in Africa.

29. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization conducted a training for teachers on gender-responsive pedagogy for an inclusive, gender-responsive and favourable learning environment for boys and girls in Ethiopia, as part of the UNESCO-HNA Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education. UNESCO also gave a course on literacy, numeracy and entrepreneurship for young women in Somali as part of its literacy and life skills project and commenced the second phase of its Better Education for Africa's Rise project, which promotes skills development and employment of young people in Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda.

30. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development offered an eight-week tailored online course in May 2017 for 80 participants from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) region. The topic of the course was mainstreaming gender into trade policy through the inclusion of gender considerations in policy formulation and implementation, and in the negotiations of trade and other agreements. The course discussions focused on the interactions between trade and gender and their links to countries' inclusive development strategies and the influence of trade integration on gender outcomes in COMESA member countries in different economic sectors.

31. To promote leadership among women in Africa, UN-Women, the African Union Commission and the Permanent Mission of Germany launched the African

Women Leaders Network, following the High-Level Women Leaders Forum for Africa's Transformation, which was held in New York from 31 May to 2 June 2017. The objective of the initiative is to enhance the transformation of Africa with a focus on governance, peace and stability.

F. Humanitarian issues and disaster risk management

This cluster aims at ensuring the implementation of commitments under the African Common Position on Humanitarian Effectiveness, the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030

32. The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) supported the African Union Commission by identifying priority activities from the matrix of the Programme of Action for the Implementation of Sendai Framework in Africa for the period 2017/2018-2020. UNISDR is also assisting the African Union Commission in its efforts to increase the number of national disaster loss databases set up by member States and to develop a training programme for the roll-out in 2018 of the Sendai Framework Monitor, a management tool to help countries develop disaster risk reduction strategies, make risk-informed policy decisions and allocate resources to prevent new disaster risk.

33. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) contributed to the implementation of the African Union Humanitarian Law and Training project, which is part of the African Union 10-year Plan of Action. The objective of the project is to popularize and promote the implementation of African Union normative instruments to strengthen governance of humanitarian issues in Africa. UNHCR and the African Union co-organized the second Humanitarian Law and Policy Training Programme in Malabo from 6 to 8 December 2017. Based on the theme "The legal, political and socioeconomic consequences of migration, situation of refugees and internally displaced persons in Africa", the training was comprised of six modules: introduction to the African humanitarian situation; international framework for protection and assistance of refugees; regional framework for protection and assistance of refugees; case study on internal displacement; international and African Regulatory framework on internal displacement; addressing root cause and durable solutions; and implementation of African Union instruments.

34. In July 2017, IOM hosted its first regional consultative process meeting on migration for COMESA member States, the Migration Dialogue for COMESA member States, in Lusaka. The meeting, which was held under the theme "Enhancing regional cooperation and mobility through effective governance mechanisms, data and dialogue", facilitated information exchange and cooperation among member States and ultimately led to the establishment of a regional and holistic approach for dealing with migration. The meeting also provided a forum for participants to engage in non-binding dialogue similar to the Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa and the Migration Dialogue for West Africa.

G. Environment, urbanization and population

This cluster aims at achieving environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies and communities and implementing African Union instruments and the Addis Ababa Declaration on Population and Development in Africa beyond 2014

35. The Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission and UN-Habitat jointly validated a harmonized regional framework to support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in Africa. Under the framework, African countries are urged to strategically integrate and link urbanization to their national development priorities. The New Urban Agenda, which emerged from the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat

III), held in Quito from 17 to 20 October 2016, defines the global framework for urban development for the next 20 years.

36. UN-Habitat and ECA are offering an integrated suite of tools to help countries conduct urban monitoring and meet specified requirements in a seamless way. Two of the tools are the City Prosperity Index and the National Sample of Cities. UN-Habitat and ECA also jointly organized a technical workshop on the importance of disaggregation in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and disaggregation methodologies for meeting the non-spatial indicators for Sustainable Development Goal 11 – make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable – for two pilot countries, Botswana and Tunisia. The workshop provided a platform for participants to exchange insights on their national experiences and challenges associated with the production of disaggregated data and the development of innovative solutions for overcoming their disaggregated data needs related to Sustainable Development Goal 11 and (statistical) capacity gaps, and opportunities to reinforce national statistical systems to produce disaggregated data.

37. The African Institute for Economic Development and Planning organized a high-level policy dialogue under the theme of the Economic Report for Africa 2017, “Urbanization and industrialization for Africa’s transformation”. The discussions during the event focused on urbanization and its effects on efforts to enhance agricultural and industrial productivity. Also during the event, the participants considered possible actions to accelerate industrialization in order to make it a catalyst for the structural transformation in Africa by building on the possibilities stemming from rapid urbanization based on cases in Cameroon, Republic of the Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Sudan.

38. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization launched a project to promote peace in the Lake Chad basin through the sustainable management of natural resources. Applying the Model of Transboundary Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Sites to Promote Peace in the Lake Chad Basin through the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources project is aimed at strengthening the capacities of the member States of the Lake Chad Basin Commission to safeguard and manage the hydrological, biological and cultural resources of the Lake Chad basin across their borders in order to support poverty reduction and promote peace.

H. Advocacy, information, communications and culture

This cluster aims at making Africa a major partner in global affairs and to promote peaceful coexistence on the continent and the African cultural renaissance

39. The UNESCO Regional Office for Eastern Africa organized the Regional Conference and Ministerial Roundtable on the Protection of Cultural Heritage, in Balaclava, Mauritius, on 18 and 19 July 2017. The Conference focused on the protection of cultural heritage in times of armed conflict and the fight to stop illicit trafficking of cultural property. At the conclusion of the event, the attending African ministers issued a joint statement in which they called for the strengthening of synergies for the protection of cultural heritage in Eastern Africa and the adjacent Indian Ocean island States, and included their intention to ratify international normative instruments in the field of cultural heritage protection. At the same time, in Dakar, UNESCO convened a regional working group meeting that focused on illicit trafficking of cultural property in the Sahel region.

I. Governance, peace and security

This cluster aims to provide support in the areas of conflict prevention, crisis management, resolution of ongoing conflicts and electoral assistance

40. United Nations Secretariat and the African Union Commission signed the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhancing Partnership in Peace and Security in New York on 19 April 2015. The Framework includes four key action areas: preventing and mediating conflict and sustaining peace; responding to conflict; addressing root causes; and the continuous review and enhancement of partnership between the United Nations and the African Union. Priorities were set to enhance coordination between the African Union and relevant African Union organs and regional economic communities in order to create better synergies between the African Governance Architecture and the African Peace and Security Architecture.

41. The Economic Commission for Africa organized the High-Level Conference on Conflict and Development in the Horn of Africa in Addis Ababa from 13 to 15 November 2017. The objective of the conference was to share the findings of Horn of Africa, the Great Lakes and New Fringe Pastoralism Reports with key stakeholders and member States of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The focus of the report was on analyzing the root causes of conflict and their impact on development. ECA also organized a dialogue, based on the theme “Good governance in land administration in IGAD region” in Addis Ababa on 8 and 9 November 2017. Discussions during the dialogue focused on the implementation of the African Union Declaration on Land, especially with regard to land governance and administration, and the importance for Africa to optimally leverage its land resources to tackle the challenges of poverty, food and nutrition insecurity and natural and environmental degradation.

42. The African Economic Conference 2017, which was jointly organized by ECA, UNDP and AfDB, focused on governance for structural transformation. Held in Addis Ababa, from 4 to 6 December 2017, the Conference was intended to assist policymakers and researchers as they strive for the successful transformation of African economies, which requires effective governance underpinned by institutions and organizations that are inclusive, responsive, transparent and accountable.

43. The United Nations Development Programme, in partnership with the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, organized a high-level policy dialogue under the theme “The future of governance in Africa: Is a new concept of governance the key to accelerating the prosperity agenda?”, in Accra on 29 and 30 September. Following the dialogue, a conceptual framework was developed for creating a road map for transforming governance in Africa, built on African realities and to respond to African needs. The framework will be used as a basis for elaborating a theory of change to be applied to deepen democratic governance transformation in Africa.

44. The United Nations Development Programme organized a technical training workshop to help African countries capture data electronically from governance, peace and security surveys to enable them to produce harmonized and quality data in a timely and efficient manner. The data are to be used to inform policy responses and the surveys are part of the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa, a joint initiative of the African Union Commission, AfDB, UNDP and ECA.

III. United Nations support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development

A. Support for the African Peer Review Mechanism

45. The Economic Commission for Africa has provided technical assistance to Côte D'Ivoire, Liberia and Uganda in completing the self-assessment process and country review report. It also has extended technical assistance to the United Republic of Tanzania in harmonizing the African Peer Review Mechanism National Programme of Action with its national development plans.

46. Additionally, ECA and the African Peer Review Mechanism secretariat organized two expert group meetings to validate a study conducted by the African Peer Review Mechanism on the bottlenecks associated with the transformation of Africa and to validate the African Peer Review Mechanism monitoring, evaluation and reporting guideline system. The first meeting was held in Kigali on 15 and 16 September 2017 and the latter one took place in Djibouti on 30 and 31 October 2017. A key outcome of the second meeting was the formation of a committee responsible for aligning the indicators of the African Peer Review Mechanism, Agenda 2063 and the 2030 with each other and to monitor the key governance outcomes of the two agendas. The proposed MER system will be used as the guideline for national governing councils and other African Peer Review Mechanism stakeholders in carrying out monitoring, evaluation and reporting activities.

47. An African Peer Review Mechanism sensitization workshop for Northern Africa was held in Cairo on 10 and 11 December 2017, back-to-back with a national sensitization workshop for Egypt to commence its self-assessment process. The workshop for North Africa was intended to enhance participating countries' knowledge on the role of the African Peer Review Mechanism in advancing good governance, accountability, peace and security and development in Africa.

B. Support to regional economic communities

1. On macroeconomic policy

48. The Economic Commission for Africa provided advisory services to policymakers to improve the design and implementation of sustainable and equitable growth-oriented policies and strategies in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals. The policymakers were from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe or worked for the IGAD secretariat. ECA also provided technical assistance to Benin in developing its national development plan and signed memoranda of understanding with Burkina Faso, Liberia, Nigeria and Sudan to provide technical assistance in various activities, including, the developing, planning and statistics, incorporating the Sustainable Development Goals in national development plans, managing macroeconomic frameworks and negotiating and implementing mining contracts, among others.

49. The 2017 Horn Economic and Social Policy Institute Conference on IGAD Economies was held from 24 to 27 September 2017 in Khartoum under the theme "Youth unemployment and creating opportunities through trade and investment in IGAD". The Conference provided a platform for policymakers from the member States of IGAD to gain knowledge about appropriate trade and investment policies and inclusive social policymaking, which will be useful for setting policies aimed at facilitating and promoting trade and investment in the IGAD region.

50. The second and third meetings of the Illicit Financial Flows Working Group were held in Nairobi in June 2017 and in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in October 2017, respectively. During the meetings, the Group finalized the work plan for the Anti-illicit Financial Flows Project, which is scheduled to be implemented in 2018 and possibly for a longer period. The implementation plan calls for the establishment of a consortium of stakeholders to oversee the implementation of the project and ultimately stem the growth of illicit financial flows from Africa.

2. Industrialization (regional integration)

51. The Economic Commission for Africa has supported the midterm reviews of strategic initiatives, such as PIDA, the continental free trade area and the African Growth Opportunity Act through advocacy and suggesting policy options. It has also extended technical assistance to the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Task Force, in particular, for the negotiation process to realize a developmental free trade area, which, included technical backup, research and analysis on trade policy and the provision of advisory services and technical assistance in the area of industrial policy and trade to the Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Nigeria, Malawi and Sierra Leone.

52. The East African Community, in partnership with UNIDO and the Government of the Republic of Korea, launched the EAC Industrial Competitiveness Report 2017 in Dar es Salaam on 13 November 2017. Based on the theme “Harnessing the East African Community market to drive industrial competitiveness and growth”, the report includes an assessment of the industrial performance of the East African Community compared to other regions and role models in Asia and Africa and sheds light on strategic short- and long-term industrialization paths that the East African Community should pursue.

53. The United Nations Conference of Trade and Development, together with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union Commission, provided technical support to an expert meeting organized by ECOWAS on the continental free trade area modalities in the trade of goods and services. The meeting was held in Accra on 16 and 17 May 2017.

3. Development planning and public administration and management of the natural resources in Africa

54. The Economic Commission for Africa and the Budget and National Planning Ministry of Nigeria hosted a high-level policy dialogue on mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goal, into national plans in Abuja, Nigeria, from 28 to 30 June 2017. The main objective of the dialogue was to discuss relevant content and approaches, including tools and guidelines, for mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals into national development planning processes, with particular emphasis on policy planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

55. The Economic Commission for Africa has extended assistance to Chad, Djibouti, Madagascar, Rwanda, Togo, Uganda and Zimbabwe, Uganda and the East African Community in dealing with issues related to the blue economy, which encompasses, among other areas, mining, energy resources, fisheries and marine life, tourism and maritime transportation and trade. Among the notable accomplishments was support given to Chad in drafting and adopting mining and policy codes that are aligned with the principles of the African Mining Vision.

56. The Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with UNCTAD and the Government of Equatorial Guinea, organized a four-day training to build capacity in negotiating mining contracts and on the structuring effects of the extractive sector on the economy, in Malabo from 15 to 18 February 2017. It also collaborated with the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning to hone the skills of senior African civil servants in designing and managing mineral contracts in a training organized in Dakar in September 2017. In addition, ECA organized the third Annual Workshop on International Economic Agreements in Accra from 5 to 8 December 2017. Participants of the workshop gained insight on techniques for proper

economic negotiations within the African context regarding trade agreements, taxation agreements, natural resources contracts and investment agreements.

C. Delivering as one for the African Union and its New Partnership for Africa's Development programme – Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa

57. The Economic Commission for Africa hosted two expert group meetings related to the African Union and NEPAD in Nairobi in July 2017. The first meeting, held on 10 and 11 July, reviewed and endorsed the draft of the information-sharing and collaboration network and implementation plan. The framework will serve as a guide to enhance the effectiveness of the coordination of United Nations organizations and agencies in their efforts to support the African Union and its NEPAD programme at the subregional and regional levels. The framework covers management, communications and intra-organization collaboration and will be used to develop a platform for the Southern Africa Regional Coordination Mechanism and the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa. The second meeting, held on 12 and 13 July, discussed the report of the Final Triennial Review of the Ten Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union and the transition plan for the renewed Partnership for Africa's Integration and Development Agency. The participants reviewed and assessed the impact and effectiveness of the programme by taking into account the recommendations of the First and Second Triennial Reviews.

IV. Conclusion

58. The United Nations system will continue to support the aspirations, initiatives and programmes of the African Union, as it implements far-reaching reforms that have been approved by the African Union Assembly. The United Nations system will also continue to give tangible technical support to the African Union in the implementation of its various decisions at the national, subregional and regional levels. In that regard, ECA will continue to take the lead in incorporating the PIDA Model Law in African countries as directed by the African Union Summit, subject to a request by African countries. It will also continue to help member States reap the benefits of the African Growth and Opportunities Act and assist in the finalization and full implementation of the continental free trade area.