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Introduction

1. The present annual report of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) covers the period from 31 March 2015 to 31 March 2016, and has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 18 of the Commission's terms of reference. The report was adopted at the Commission's forty-ninth session, which was held as part of the ninth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, which took place in Addis Ababa on 4 and 5 April 2016.

I. Matters brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council

2. The Commission deliberated and made a number of recommendations on the theme of the ninth Joint Annual Meetings, "Towards an integrated and coherent approach to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals". The discussions and recommendations focused on the implications of adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and domesticating Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan; the development of an integrated and coherent framework for monitoring and evaluating both agendas; and mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 into national strategic frameworks, actions plans and programmes.

3. The Commission also discussed a number of other issues of relevance for Africa's development as part of the expert and ministerial segments of the ninth Joint Annual Meetings. The issues discussed included: progress on regional integration in Africa; the first five-year priority programme on employment, poverty eradication and inclusive development; the challenge of international migration; the status of statistical development in Africa; the outcome of the second annual survey of partners' opinions of the work of ECA; the Commission's strategic framework for 2018-2019; progress in the work of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning; the outcomes of the first session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development, the ninth session of the Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration and the ninth session of the Committee on Sustainable Development; the reports of the meetings of the intergovernmental committees of experts; United Nations system-wide support to the African Union and its New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) programme; the need for a coherent development approach and integration of the results framework, monitoring and evaluation; and financing for development.

4. At the end of its session, the Commission adopted a ministerial statement, which is appended to the present report as annex I, and 17 resolutions, set out in annex II. They provide mandates to ECA and the African Union Commission (AUC) to undertake work in key areas of relevance to Africa's development.

II. Work of the Commission since its forty-eighty session

A. Activities of subsidiary bodies

5. During the period under review, the secretariat prepared for and serviced meetings of various subsidiary bodies of the Commission, including the meetings of the intergovernmental committees of experts of the five subregional offices of ECA. Details of these meetings are set out in chapter III of the present report.

B. Other activities

1. Macroeconomic Policy Division

6. The subprogramme on macroeconomic policy aims to promote policies, strategies and programmes for sustainable growth and development in Africa. The main strategic focus of the subprogramme is to accelerate the transformation of African countries from low-income to middle-income status. An important element of the strategy is to engage in applied research to develop policy recommendations to support member States in the design of appropriate macroeconomic policies and programmes to achieve rapid, inclusive and environmentally sustainable growth, create employment opportunities and accelerate the process of poverty reduction and overall economic development within a framework of good governance and stability.

7. As part of the implementation of the ECA programme of work, the subprogramme influenced policy formulation and development processes by disseminating its policy research findings and associated policy recommendations, using its knowledge of such flagship ECA publications as the Economic Report on Africa series, Socioeconomic Impacts of Ebola on Africa and the Millennium Development Goals reports.

8. During the period under review, ECA produced the 2015 edition of the Economic Report on Africa, under the theme “Industrializing through trade”. The 2015 edition built on previous editions, which had emphasized the need for developmental States and development plans to foster Africa’s structural transformation, benefiting from the continent’s natural resources to promote commodity-based industrialization and embracing dynamic industrial policy frameworks underpinned by innovative institutions, effective processes and flexible mechanisms. The key messages and recommendations of the report were widely disseminated through various launch events in more than 20 major cities within and outside of Africa.

9. The ECA forecasting model was formulated and refined during the period under review and aims to enhance policy development and planning among African countries. Nine countries (of a target of 10), and from a baseline of zero in the biennium 2012-2013, have begun using ECA knowledge products to support the design and implementation of sound macroeconomic policies and national development planning frameworks. The beneficiary countries included Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia, for which ECA produced a research report on the socioeconomic impacts of the Ebola outbreak, with economic growth forecasts for the three countries; Angola and Rwanda, for which ECA provided macroeconomic policy advice; and Algeria, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa, for which the ECA forecasting model is being customized and adopted. ECA organized a training workshop involving representatives from research institutions of four of the six countries in the latter group, as well as ECA staff from various divisions and subregional offices. The workshop provided an opportunity for participants to acquaint themselves with the theoretical and technical aspects of the model’s design and development in order to produce credible forecasts for both Africa as a region and the specific countries of interest.

10. During the review period, ECA also contributed to and launched the 2015 edition of the World Economic Situation and Prospects, a joint annual publication of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the five regional commissions. The World Tourism Organization also contributed to the report. The publication provides an overview of recent global economic performance and short-term prospects for the world economy, and some key global economic policy and development issues.

11. In the area of renewal of planning, ECA undertook country case studies to distil lessons learned in development planning in Africa. A report entitled “Economic development planning in Africa: 50 years of experience” was edited and finalized

in 2015, with translation and printing scheduled for 2016. It is the result of a major research exercise based on the planning experiences of nine African countries from all of the five subregions of the continent, in addition to eight Asian countries. The objective of the report is to inform policymakers on the value of development planning, while drawing attention to potential pitfalls in its practices and policy directions. The document is already proving useful: in October 2015, it served to support the Directorate of Planning of Senegal in the restructuring of the country's national planning system. The findings of this work, combined with a similar study on lessons learned in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, provided an analytical basis to support member States in their transition to and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The revitalization of the network of development planners in 2015 created a platform for peer learning and experience sharing among African-based development practitioners.

12. To advance the objective of ECA to become the think tank of reference in Africa, the subprogramme represented the Commission at the Think Tank Innovations Summit, organized by the Lauder Institute of the University of Pennsylvania. At the Summit, it discussed a book on think tanks and the Sustainable Development Goals¹ that explores the key opportunities and challenges surrounding the Goals while documenting the role think tanks are playing in engaging the public and policymakers on them. The book highlights the specific strategies and programmes that 14 think tanks, including ECA, have developed around the world to help implement the Goals. Invariably, the strategies and insights contained in the book will be used by think tanks and policy-oriented groups around the world as they help implement the Goals.

13. ECA, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, published the Millennium Development Goals Report 2015, which not only assesses the performance of African countries in relation to the Goals, but also highlights successful policy interventions in Africa that should guide implementation of the post-2015 development agenda going forward. The report was officially launched on the margins of the General Assembly in September 2015. It was also widely disseminated within and outside of Africa, including at the tenth African Economic Conference, held in Kinshasa in 2015.

14. ECA has made substantial investments in supporting the design, adoption and roll-out of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and Agenda 2063 – the blueprint for continental development. Through the secondment of a staff member, ECA assisted the African Group of negotiators in New York in ensuring that Africa's priorities were duly reflected in the Goals and the Action Agenda. Indeed, the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda and financing for development were informed by the Common African Position on post-2015 development agenda (as outlined in the Millennium Development Goals Report 2014), a document that was developed with the assistance of ECA. In addition, ECA provided technical support to the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) for the design of Agenda 2063, which was adopted by African Heads of State and Government in early 2015. Subsequently, ECA provided support to the African Union Commission and African member States in refining the global indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals prior to the Statistical Commission meeting in Bangkok in November 2015. ECA is currently working with the African Union to develop an integrated set of indicators to track performance on the Goals and Agenda 2063. This will ensure a coherent and integrated approach to the implementation and follow-up of both agendas.

¹ J. McGann, ed., *Think Tanks and SDGs: Catalysts for Analysis, Innovation and Implementation* (University of Pennsylvania, 2016).

15. As part of efforts to support African least developed countries, the subprogramme organized a regional technical meeting in Algiers in May 2015, to prepare those countries for the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020, which is to be held in June 2016 in Antalya, Turkey. Participants at the Algiers meeting discussed how to improve performance in the implementation of the Programme of Action in the context of Africa.

16. ECA, through its research and advocacy work, also influenced policy in 10 countries (of a target of 10) concerning private sector development and mobilization of domestic and/or external resources for development. The countries are Algeria, Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Djibouti, Sierra Leone and Swaziland. That achievement represents a 100 per cent increase over the baseline of zero countries having adopted new policies on private sector development and resource mobilization for development.

17. Furthermore, the subprogramme played a critical role in raising awareness and facilitating consensus-building on Africa's priorities for financing for development. It provided technical support during the regional consultations towards the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa in 2015. The support provided by ECA included the preparation of analytical papers, which contributed to the enhancement of the negotiation strategies of the Africa Group during the Conference process and the refinement of the commitments that will shape Africa's policy direction for years to come. During the Conference, ECA partnered with the Government of Ethiopia and the consultancy company McKinsey and Co. to host a side event on increasing Africa's fiscal space. The meeting was attended by over 130 participants, including representatives of African Governments, the private sector, researchers and civil society. The subprogramme also contributed to a side event organized by the five regional economic commissions on the theme of "Regional perspectives on implementing an ambitious, transformative and sustainable development agenda".

18. The subprogramme undertook a study entitled "Enhancing domestic private sector development in Africa: a focus on renewable energy". The study explored how Governments in Africa can effectively employ interventionist industrial policy to grow private entrepreneurship and stimulate domestic production, especially in sectors such as construction and energy. As a follow up to the Marrakech Consensus, which informed Africa's deliberations on financing for development in preparation for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and consequently the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the subprogramme also prepared a study on strategies for the mobilization of resources and investment for structural transformation. Using case studies from Ethiopia, Morocco and Nigeria, the study provided examples of strategic approaches and best practices in mobilizing resources and investment for structural transformation. In addition, research into the use and sustainability of impact investment is being undertaken. The 2014 Marrakech Consensus also contributed to the 2015 report of the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa by informing efforts to forge partnerships to reverse illicit financial flows from the continent.

19. As a follow up to the production of the final report of the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows, in collaboration with the African Minerals Development Centre, the subprogramme undertook further research on the impact of illicit financial flows in Africa. The research will improve current understanding of the nature of illicit financial outflows as well as the main sources, and provides recommendations on how to address policy challenges related to such flows, with a specific focus on the mineral sector.

20. The subprogramme, together with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, produced the 2015 edition of the Mutual Review of Development Effectiveness, mandated by the NEPAD Heads of State and Government

Implementation Committee in 2003. The review focuses on 19 topics under four key clusters: sustainable economic growth; investing in people; good governance; and financing for development. The 2015 edition was officially launched at the tenth African Economic Conference, held in Kinshasa. It was widely disseminated at the launch event and other events organized by ECA and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development within and outside Africa.

21. The subprogramme facilitated the exchange of ideas and promoted research through the tenth African Economic Conference, which deliberated on the theme “Addressing poverty and inequality in the post-2015 development agenda” and was jointly organized by the African Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme. The Conference drew a total of 250 participants, including Ministers of Economic Planning and Finance, high-level government officials and development practitioners in Africa, and concluded with the issuing of the Kinshasa outcome document, in which the severity of poverty, the high cost of doing business on the continent, governance issues, gender inequality and poor health infrastructure and education quality were highlighted as some of the factors currently hindering inclusive economic growth in Africa.

22. In the area of economic governance, ECA fully met its target of increasing from 18 to 24 the number of African countries using ECA research and advocacy work to improve good economic governance practices, policies and standards. The six additional countries are Cameroon, Chad, Ghana, Djibouti, Sierra Leone and Swaziland. Furthermore, ECA supported four additional countries (Cameroon, Chad, Ghana and Djibouti) in adopting policies on economic governance, thereby meeting its target for the 2014-2015 biennium of bringing the total number of countries to 22.

23. Moreover, ECA prepared the fourth edition of the African Governance Report on the theme “Measuring corruption in Africa: the international dimension matters”. The report provides a critique of current perception-based corruption measurements – highlighting the fact that such measurements do not take into account the international dimension of corruption – and calls upon African countries and partners to focus on approaches to measuring corruption that are fact-based and built on more objective quantitative criteria, paying particular attention to the international dimension.

24. Also on the issue of corruption, the subprogramme undertook two studies – on “Corruption in public procurement study: the case of infrastructure” and “Corruption in local governance and traditional institutions” – that provide important policy recommendations to African countries in their effort to reduce corruption.

2. Regional Integration and Trade Division

25. Within the framework of its subprogramme on regional integration and trade, ECA aims to promote effective regional cooperation and integration among member States, including regional approaches to tackling the challenges of trade, industry, agriculture and land. Current discourse on the structural transformation of African economies, and the recent launch of both the Tripartite Free Trade Area (between the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the East African Community and the Southern African Development Community) and the continental free trade area negotiations, provide a big-picture indicator of the salient objective being achieved.

26. ECA has continued to contribute significantly in supporting member States to adopt policies and regional initiatives to promote intra-African trade and better leverage other trade developments, such as the economic partnership agreements. It has also been intensively involved in major developments in the area of trade in Africa through the provision of technical support. One particular example is the support provided to the three regional economic communities involved in the negotiation of the Tripartite Free Trade Area which was launched in June 2015, and led to the kick-off of the continental free trade area negotiations. In cooperation with the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank, and through a consultative process involving the regional economic communities and the member States, ECA

finalized the first edition of the African regional integration index. It also produced the upcoming seventh edition of *Assessing Regional Integration in Africa*, highlighting the need to promote innovation in Africa for successful structural transformation. The ECA human rights impact assessment of the continental free trade area, focusing on employment, food security and rural livelihoods, is expected to address vulnerabilities to be taken into account in the ongoing negotiations relating to the area. To that effect, ECA exceeded or met its targets, with 29 countries and three regional economic communities now developing or implementing policies or programmes in the context of free-trade areas or customs unions.

27. Technical assistance was delivered in the formulation and validation of the national and regional action plans for boosting intra-African trade and the continental free trade area (Gabon, Nigeria, Tunisia, the United Republic of Tanzania, East African Community, Economic Community of Central African States, Economic Community of West African States, Southern African Development Community and Arab Maghreb Union) and also in the formulation and validation of the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act national response strategy (Ethiopia and Lesotho). To make trade agreements more inclusive and equitable, member States were made aware of the evidence-based economic implications of not only the economic partnership agreements, but also mega-regional trade agreements. Technical support was also provided to the African group of countries in preparation for the tenth WTO Ministerial Conference. The number of common positions adopted or implemented by member States in the area of international trade or trade negotiation increased from 10 in the biennium 2012-2013 to 16 in 2014-2015 (compared with the biennium target of 15).

28. In addition to informing member States on the status of food security in Africa, ECA developed an initiative aimed at promoting and developing regionally coordinated agricultural strategic commodities value chains, with a view to strengthening the capacity of member States and regional economic communities to develop effective policies and strategies for the development of regional agricultural value chains. The initiative and related outputs are highly commended and supported by the African Union and fit into the framework of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme to promote and develop value chains, agribusiness and agro-industries. The initiative engages the development of a number of outputs, notably five regional assessment studies of regional agricultural value chains and agro-industrial cluster development; a capacity framework for the development and implementation of regional agricultural value chains and agro-industrial clustering; five cluster baseline assessment studies; and a draft policy framework and guidelines for the development and promotion of regional agricultural value chains in Africa, to be presented before the assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union for possible endorsement.

29. Concerning agricultural issues, ECA fully met its target to increase the number of countries from five to six (with the addition of the Democratic Republic of the Congo) and the number of regional economic communities from two to five (Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, East African Community, Economic Community of Central African States, Economic Community of West African States and Southern African Development Community) that have designed or implemented policies or programmes aimed at achieving agriculture development and food security.

30. ECA conducted a pan-Africa study to assess the existence of the necessary conditions for successful agriculture transformation. The findings of the study would feed into the development of a policy framework, to be adopted at the highest political level in Africa, aimed at promoting successful agricultural and rural transformation. The study should be launched in 2016. Farming systems analysis is a key approach for the development of the agriculture sector in Africa, and is expected to produce considerable economic gains for Africa's agriculture and agribusiness sectors. In this context, ECA has developed a comprehensive review of agricultural production and

food systems in Africa in the context of emerging trends. The contribution of ECA to farming systems in Africa has helped to enrich informed debate on reforming Africa's agricultural productions and food systems in the post-Malabo context and in the light of Agenda 2063.

31. Cognizant of the role that private equity can play as a potential alternative source of investment in support of development efforts in Africa, ECA has, among other initiatives, raised the prospects for private equity in economic growth in Africa. In this context, ECA has developed a pan-Africa study entitled "Private equity and its potential role in economic growth in Africa: demystifying the asset class for policymakers". The ninth African Development Forum provided an opportunity for ECA to propagate the findings of the study among stakeholders, including member States, the private sector and civil society organizations. The recommendations from the Forum on this matter were part of the body of knowledge that is encapsulated in a book by ECA,² which, apart from its wide dissemination, also fed into the Third International Conference of Financing for Development. All of those efforts are expected to generate a high level of policy influence going forward. At this point, it can be said that the study has helped to generate awareness among member States on the existence and viability of private equity in the development finance discourse on Africa. It has also helped to demystify this asset class among policymakers, which, indeed, was one of the intended objectives of the study.

32. ECA has initiated ongoing policy dialogue surrounding bilateral investment agreements and investment policies, both at the national and continental levels. In the debate, emphasis has been on whether signed bilateral investments have significantly influenced the levels of trade in African member States.

33. Concerning energy, ECA has continued to provide support to member States and regional economic communities (including the East African Community and the Economic Community of West African States) in adopting clean energy technologies and policies with a view to achieving inroads to sustainable energy for all. ECA undertook a continent-wide initiative to strengthen the capacity of African countries to promote the use of renewable energy to achieve sustainable development and poverty reduction. The project looked at the potential of bioenergies and of policies in support of their development in the African context, with particular emphasis on liquid biofuels owing to their far-reaching positive effects.

34. ECA, dubbed the "champion" of Africa's structural transformation, is now reviewing many of the existing industrial and trade policies of its members, including Guinea-Bissau and Swaziland, as well as those of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. For instance, ECA has developed a comprehensive stand-alone industrial and trade policy for Swaziland that spells out the economic philosophy of the Government in terms of industry and trade intervention measures and strategies to drive the country's sustainable development in support of other programmes to meet its targets for 2022.

35. Furthermore, during this review period, ECA conducted a review of industrial policies and strategies in Africa, which provided information on the development of industrial capabilities across the continent to fill the observed gaps in this area. The review comprised quantitative and qualitative analysis on current policies and initiatives regarding industrial development and on the status and trends of industrial indicators. In that connection, ECA organized the ninth session of the Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration, on the theme "Enhancing productive integration of Africa's structural transformation". Apart from presenting the salient results and achievements of the subprogramme over the biennium 2014-2015, the session aimed at enhancing the awareness of African policymakers on the importance of industrialization and productive integration as the bedrock of Africa's

² Abdalla Hamdok, ed., *Innovative Financing for the Economic Transformation of Africa* (ECA, Addis Ababa, 2015).

transformation. The session saw the participation of 49 member States and 6 regional economic communities. In parallel to the session, a policy dialogue on structural transformation in the new global landscape was jointly organized by ECA, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, with the participation of the German Agency for International Cooperation, with a view to implementing concrete actions for knowledge-sharing in development policy for better understanding of policy challenges in the realm of production transformation and development. The event saw the participation over 100 stakeholders from international organizations, the private sector, academia, African officials and non-governmental organizations.

36. Concerning infrastructure, ECA has contributed to the development of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa monitoring and evaluation model for trans-Africa infrastructure projects to enhance regional projects implementation. A road map for the accelerated implementation of the African Action Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety was adopted by the African Union Commission during the regional review meeting on road safety, held in July 2015. ECA, in collaboration with the African Union Commission and the World Bank, organized a side event on implementing and achieving the goals for that Decade, in particular the challenges and opportunities for Africa, at the second African Road Safety Conference, held in November 2015.

37. In general, full progress was made towards increasing the number of countries and regional economic communities developing policies or programmes in the areas of industrialization, infrastructure, energy or investment, from 8 to 17 and 1 to 3, respectively.

38. Concerning the implementation of the Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa, progress was made with regard to increasing the number of member States and regional economic communities designing or implementing policies and programmes to address land governance challenges. The 11 additional States were Angola, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Niger, Somalia, South Sudan, Swaziland and Zambia, while the communities were the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Economic Community of West African States and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. The subprogramme contributed to that achievement by strengthening the capacity of member States and the communities through the implementation of joint programmes aimed at mainstreaming land governance issues in strategies and programmes, undertaking research to generate evidence for robust land policy options and developing a monitoring framework to track progress in land policy processes

39. ECA inaugurated a biennial conference on land policy in Africa, which attracted over 350 participants and produced 85 papers. ECA also established a dedicated website on its land policy initiative, which serves as a useful source for access to land-related information and as a land information database.

40. To enhance the capacity of land stakeholders and land governance and administration institutions in Africa, ECA, in partnership with the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, produced a background document and capacity development framework, and organized several training activities with partners – such as the Pan-African Parliament and the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development – for Economic Community of West African States lawmakers and over 50 land stakeholders from 20 English- and French-speaking countries. In addition, ECA developed training programmes on gender and grass-roots participation in land policy. Furthermore, it conducted a number of studies covering a broad range of land issues, including the role of parliamentarians in land governance, women's land rights and the development of guidelines for land governance curricula in universities and higher-education institutions. ECA also managed to secure financial support from the Government of Germany to support the establishment of a pan-African network of excellence on land governance. ECA also conducted advocacy activities in various

international forums or high-level events on agriculture within and outside Africa to increase awareness of land governance. ECA is currently reviewing over 20 requests for technical assistance from member States and partners, and has continued to support a series of country and regional pilot projects on land governance and land mainstreaming with partners such as civil society organizations, the Pan-African Farmers Organization, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the European Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. ECA, in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, is providing transversal support to 10 African countries for the integrated implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, and the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa, to improve land governance in those countries for improved food security.

41. Following a report on the progress in implementing the Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges in Africa, presented to the inaugural Conference of the Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment in October 2015, the African Union Conference of Ministers endorsed a number of recommendations on land policy. They included the establishment of an African land policy centre and a fund to facilitate resource mobilization for the centre; the adoption of a monitoring and evaluation framework to track progress on land policy; the commitment to apply the Guiding Principles on Large Scale Land Based Investments in Africa³ in order to promote agricultural investments; and a target to allocate 30 per cent of land to women and to secure their land rights through legislative reforms and other mechanisms.

3. Special Initiatives Division

42. This subprogramme continues to promote the adoption and implementation of new initiatives in the areas of natural resources management, climate change and new technologies and innovations to support Africa's economic and social transformation. Consequently, over the course of the review period, ECA consolidated its research, policy development and analytical work related to innovations and technologies, green transformation, minerals and extractives and climate change. Those activities are aimed at establishing pro-poor policies and sound decision-making and policy processes as a conduit for sustainable development. The subprogramme increased the number of national, subregional and regional initiatives harnessing new technologies and innovations for development, from 15 initiatives in the biennium 2012-2013 to 28 in 2014-2015. The initiatives included technical and advisory services for the formulation, review and implementation of national and regional information and communications technology-related policies and strategies, and support for the development of e-government strategies and measurement frameworks for eight countries (Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, the Gambia, Guinea, Morocco, Mozambique and Namibia). The main objective of the initiatives is to significantly improve the performance of Governments in terms of developing service delivery and governance support.

43. During the reporting period, ECA organized several information and communications technology-related events, including the third African Internet Governance Forum, in partnership with the Ministry of Communications Technology of the Government of Nigeria, with implications for the Global Multi-stakeholder Meeting on the Internet Governance Forum, held in Istanbul, Turkey.

44. In the run-up to the 10-year review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, ECA commissioned a number of country studies to examine the implementation of those Outcomes in Africa. Building

³ African Union, African Development Bank and ECA, *Guiding Principles on Large Scale Land Based Investments in Africa* (Addis Ababa, 2014).

on the findings of the country reports, a report was completed on the outcomes and perspectives for Africa, including recommendations for policymakers.

45. In the area of science, technology and innovation, ECA fully met its target of increasing the number of institutions and networks of innovators and inventors supported by member States and regional economic communities as a result of the Commission's research and advocacy work. This was achieved by promoting the development of biomedical engineering programmes in African universities, which was adopted by 11 universities by the end of 2015. About 220 students were enrolled in such programmes using the generic curriculum, and 33 students had graduated by the end of 2015. The component of the programme on youth innovation and entrepreneurship continues to gain momentum and relevance. In 2015, ECA held the third biomedical engineering innovation and entrepreneurship summer school, designed to promote youth innovation and entrepreneurship. Those programmes achieved significant successes in Uganda, where every graduate from the generic university curriculum found employment or established his/her own private firm, offering invaluable services to hospitals and partnering with top suppliers in developed countries. The research component of the biomedical engineering programme focuses on the medical device market, regulation and opportunities for the emergence of a biomedical device industry. Case studies on Kenya and Malawi have started and two additional studies on Egypt and Nigeria have been launched.

46. ECA also launched an annual senior experts' dialogue on science, technology and the African transformation agenda, to provide a forum for the articulation of science, technology and innovation policies and for learning and experience/knowledge-sharing among African policymakers, experts and the private sector. The dialogue enabled member States to provide inputs into ECA science, technology and innovation programmes and enabled ECA to disseminate its outputs. The 2015 dialogue was co-organized with and hosted by the Government of Kenya, with a focus on the role of innovation hubs, clusters and parks in the industrialization process. The meeting was informed by ongoing ECA research that formed one of the outcomes of the first dialogue, held in Nigeria in 2014 on the theme of science, technology and innovation and the African transformation agenda.

47. In the area of the green economy, two countries began to formulate or implement policy reforms to achieve a green transformation. Significant progress was also made towards preparing knowledge products to enhance the capacity of member States to formulate and implement policy reforms towards green economies. In that context, case studies were completed in five countries (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Gabon, Mozambique and Tunisia), of which three (Ethiopia, Mozambique and Tunisia) have begun policy reforms relating to the green economy. Three main knowledge products were produced, the first of which, a report entitled "Inclusive green economy and structural transformation in selected African countries", was based on case studies conducted in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Gabon, Mozambique and Tunisia.

48. The above report explored the linkages between inclusive green economy policies and structural transformation with a view to promoting policy coherence necessary for a seamless transition. The second report, entitled "Integrated assessment methodologies and tools for inclusive green economy policies in Africa", is an evidence-based methodology and tool to inform the development and implementation – and evaluate the impact – of inclusive green economy policies. A third output, entitled "Enabling measures for an inclusive green economy in Africa", highlighted measures for the transition to green growth. In addition, policy briefs on the three knowledge products were produced. ECA also produced a report entitled "Enhancing water resources management through inclusive green economy: a survey of selected projects in the Lake Victoria Basin".

49. The fifth issue of the "Sustainable Development Report on Africa" was produced under the theme "achieving sustainable development in Africa through

inclusive green growth". In addition to providing a holistic assessment of progress towards sustainable development in Africa, the report highlighted the significance of promoting inclusive green growth in selected sectors. As part of the report process, country reports on inclusive green growth case studies were prepared for Ethiopia, Ghana, Morocco and South Africa. The subprogramme also successfully implemented a project to strengthen the capacities of African policymakers to mainstream natural disaster risk reduction into national and regional development policies and strategies in Africa. As part of that project, two subregional reports (on Southern and Western Africa) and four country reports (on Burkina Faso, Malawi, Mozambique and Nigeria) were produced.

50. The subprogramme played a role in supporting African countries in the international discussions on the post-2015 development agenda. In that regard, it produced regional and subregional reports on the Sustainable Development Goals. In June 2015, the subprogramme also provided substantive support in the organization and servicing of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development. The outcome document of the Forum constituted Africa's collective input to the 2015 meeting of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

51. ECA promoted the adoption and implementation of new initiatives aligned with the Africa Mining Vision. Five countries (Guinea, Lesotho, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and the United Republic of Tanzania) adopted policies or regulatory frameworks for the management of mineral resources, in line with the Vision.

52. Guinea established a number of policy priorities aligned with the Africa Mining Vision for its mineral sector. Subsequently, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and the national Chamber of Mines, ECA has been engaged in developing a comprehensive national corporate social responsibility policy that will reflect priorities set by the Government. This request came directly from the President's Office. Lesotho has launched a legislative reform of its mining sector aligned with the Vision, while Sierra Leone embarked on developing a minerals policy framework based on the Vision. Furthermore, ECA has commissioned research on gender and mining, including African small mining, and commensurate policy matters. The outputs from that project included a compendium showcasing the opportunities and challenges that women face, as principal agents of artisanal mining, and the financial mechanisms supporting the transition to small-scale mining operations.

53. ECA is also undertaking an assessment of mineral beneficiation policies across all of the 15 member States of the Southern African Development Community, profiling the best practices and lessons in the region with the ultimate goal of advancing the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa mineral beneficiation agenda. Beneficiaries' knowledge and capacities in gaining benefit from the mineral sector have also been enhanced through regional initiatives on extractives in Africa, including: leveraging the Africa Mining Vision for quality of governance; a country mining vision guidebook for the domestication of the Vision and the design of compliant country-level policy and regulatory frameworks; analyses of the capacity gaps of African geological survey organizations; and a study on illicit financial flows. A study on African small mining was also undertaken, including fieldwork and data, establishing a profile of such mining on the basis of field evidence from 16 countries, including Angola, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Mozambique, the Niger, Nigeria, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

54. Through the African Climate Policy Centre, ECA continued to support member States in addressing the challenges that climate change poses to vulnerable development sectors. Major achievements included an increase from 10 to 27 in the number of countries that have factored climate change into development frameworks and policies using ECA research and advisory work. A total of 58 technical support

activities were carried out, including 33 activities involving training, workshops, awareness-raising, consensus-building and policy dialogues.

55. In 2015, the main achievements related to the technical and advisory support provided to African countries before and during the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, including a notable contribution at a meeting on the theme “Understanding the evolving landscape of Africa in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiations: from Kyoto to Paris”. The outcome of the meeting was the launch of key findings that will deepen the understanding of different elements of the negotiations. ECA also created a platform to promote dialogue between policymakers, researchers and civil society on climate change and sustainable development in Africa. The event, held in preparation for the Conference and dubbed the “Africa climate talks”, was convened jointly with the University of Dar es Salaam on the theme of “Democratizing global climate change governance and building an African consensus towards the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris and beyond”.

56. The fifth annual Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa was convened in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, on the theme “Africa, climate change and sustainable development: What is at stake at Paris and beyond?”. The conference provided an opportunity to reflect on progress towards the stated objectives of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as reflected in its article 2, of stabilizing atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations and enabling sustainable development.

57. ECA also developed a methodological framework for developing the intended nationally determined contributions, including the national ambitions and contributions of States parties to reducing emissions. This methodological framework was endorsed by the African Group of Negotiators and made available to member States, with assistance from ECA provided to Cameroon, Liberia, Malawi and Swaziland, in their preparations of the contributions.

58. ECA worked collaboratively with the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank to host more than 100 events, including a high-level event of Africa Day, and a dinner dialogue focusing on different perspectives on climate change issues specific to Africa. The Africa Pavilion at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris represented both an intellectual and physical space that enabled Africa to speak with one voice and to ensure that its priorities for climate change and development were reasonably reflected in the Paris Agreement.

4. African Centre for Statistics

59. The work of ECA on statistics aims at increasing the statistical capabilities of African countries to collect, compile and use quality, comparable and harmonized statistics in support of national, regional and international development efforts.

60. During the period under review, 24 member States received technical assistance from ECA (with contributions from other partners) to design and implement the current version of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics, surpassing the 2014-2015 biennium target of 21, from a baseline of 14. In the process, comprehensive assessments of the national statistical systems were undertaken in the following countries: the Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Nigeria, South Africa and Zimbabwe. The evaluations led to key outcomes and recommendations and new requests from some countries for technical assistance to develop a capacity-building programme to strengthen the legal and institutional framework, human capacity and advocacy for resource mobilization for statistical production.

61. African Statistics Day, which takes place on 18 November, increased public awareness of the important role that statistics plays in all aspects of social and economic life in Africa. On 18 November 2015, ECA took part in the official launch of the Network of the African Statistical Community.

62. Within the framework of the Global Strategy for Improving Agricultural and Rural Statistics, the capacity of countries to undertake sampling agricultural surveys was enhanced through hands-on training workshops in Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Morocco, Mozambique, Rwanda and Zambia. Six long-term scholarships for masters' level studies in agricultural statistics were awarded and a syllabus for harmonized programme of specialization in agricultural statistics was developed and shared with the statistical training centres.

63. ECA continued to provide leadership in the implementation of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics. The Programme is designed to support countries to comprehensively assess their systems and, if required, completely overhaul their systems by revising existing laws, changing organization structures, overhauling the business process of registration and flow of information and records, training staff, and using information and communications technology to register and compile vital statistics and causes of death statistics. One of the key aspects of the Programme is to develop tools and guidelines to support countries in building and strengthening their civil registration and vital statistics systems, based on United Nations principles and recommendations. ECA developed tools and guidance, aligned with those principles and recommendations, for the comprehensive assessment of: policy and legal framework; the organization and management of birth, death, marriage and divorce registration; vital statistics; and causes of death. In total, 22 countries have already conducted civil registration and vital statistics system assessments or have either developed or have initiated the process of conducting an assessment and developing national plans of action based on the assessments. The countries are Angola, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Mali, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Swaziland, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia.

64. ECA developed a handbook on civil registration and vital statistics digitization, which will serve as a guiding tool for the development of such systems in African countries and beyond. The handbook was launched during the eleventh African Symposium on Statistical Development, held in Libreville in November 2015. Furthermore, in order to better record deaths and the causes of deaths in Africa, ECA, WHO and the African Symposium on Statistical Development – led by the organization Statistics South Africa – jointly developed a technical strategy on improving mortality statistics in Africa for the period 2016-2020.

65. In collaboration with United Nations System Staff College, ECA developed a gender statistics online training toolkit, an interactive e-learning tool for producers and users of gender statistics. A guidebook on the development of a national gender statistics programme was also produced to assist countries in adopting a more systemic and systematic approach to producing and using gender statistics.

66. ECA led the process of coordinating African countries in the development of global indicators relating to the Sustainable Development Goals. In collaboration with the African Union Commission, African Development Bank and Statistics South Africa, it organized a series of workshops for the African members of the global Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators to finalize African input. Furthermore, the global targets and indicators for the Goals were mapped in relation to the aims, aspirations and indicators of Agenda 2063.

67. In the area of geo-information, ECA led the establishment of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Africa, which created new partnerships with national officials in all geospatial fields, as well as non-governmental organizations, academia, research institutions and the private sector. Through the work of the Regional Committee, member States agreed on a basic set of concepts, practices, standards and guidelines for the development and management of geospatial information in Africa. In addition, ECA coordinated the deployment of 10 new global navigation satellite system reference stations in Burundi,

Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The installation of the stations is currently being implemented with the assistance of Trimble, Inc. ECA also supported the development of criteria for establishment of data holding and analysis centres for the African Geodetic Reference Frame at the national and regional levels. Implementation of the Frame contributes to having harmonized geographic data and statistics in Africa.

68. ECA produced a document on volunteer geographic information in Africa that outlines the guiding principles that could be used to sensitize national mapping agencies and find ways of incorporating such information into national mapping programmes. The document was validated by an expert group meeting, which also raised issues related to the application of such information and reviewed some best practices and the current status on its mapping.

69. ECA improved the capacities of six pilot African countries (Cameroon, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Kenya, Tunisia and Zimbabwe) in the use of mobile technology in statistical process. That activity has increased capacity of national statistics offices to work with training and research institutions to develop methodologies and systems for mobile data collection and has increased the capacity of those offices to develop geo-enabled data collection systems running on mobile devices. As part of the project, ECA published guidelines on the use of mobile devices in data collection. A regional conference on the use of mobile technology for statistical processes was held to share the experience gained and lessons learned with practitioners and academics.

70. ECA, in collaboration with African Development Bank and the African Union Commission, published the 2015 edition of the African Statistical Yearbook, which helps to minimize the use of inconsistent information by those three organizations, reduces the reporting burden on member States and contributes to making available African data. The process of producing the yearbook involves external validation of data, and the exercise for the 2016 edition of the yearbook has been conducted.

71. ECA continues to work with African Development Bank, the African Union Commission and other partners to implement the data revolution in Africa. Following the organization of a high-level conference on the data revolution, held on the margins of the eighth Joint Annual Meetings in March 2015, and subsequent follow-up activities, a special expert group meeting was organized for directors general of national statistical offices on data revolution. The meeting provided a focused discussion of the outcome of the conference and the role of national statistics offices in implementing the data revolution and its embedding into the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa.

72. ECA continued to lead the implementation of the System of National Accounts in Africa, in order to address the challenges African countries face in producing timely and quality national accounts and economic statistics. In this regard, ECA achieved 100 per cent progress in the target to increase to 44 the number of countries for which a comparable set of System of National Accounts data is included in the African statistical database, from a baseline of 38. Technical assistance to develop country plans and follow-up actions to improve the compilation of national accounts and to implement the 2008 System of National Accounts was provided to six member States (the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Mauritania, Namibia, Senegal and the Sudan).

73. Furthermore, two technical documents were developed: a handbook on supply and use tables and a guidebook on the use of administrative data in national accounts. ECA also produced a report on the needs of member States to implement the 2008 System of National Accounts, matched against the capacities of partners to provide technical assistance and training. This has contributed in better targeting of training, technical assistance and other support by ECA and other partners.

74. Lastly, ECA has continued to act as the secretariat for the continental steering committee of the African project on the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts. At its fourth meeting, the steering committee reviewed the progress report on the first phase of the project (for the biennium 2014-2015) and a project document for the second phase (for 2016-2018).

75. ECA fully met its target to increase from 50 to 54 the number of member States with 30 or more Millennium Development Goals indicators, having had at least three data points since 1990.

5. Capacity Development Division

76. Under the framework of capacity development, ECA aims to strengthen the capacity of the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, the secretariat of the African Peer Review Mechanism and regional economic communities to implement their development priorities in line with the priorities and vision articulated in Agenda 2063, and the internationally agreed development goals, such as Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

77. During the review period, ECA continued to advance the ideals of the African Peer Review Mechanism and assisted countries in the development of national action plans. For instance, ECA provided substantive support for the preparation of the extraordinary summit of Heads of State and Government participating in the African Peer Review Mechanism. As a member of the technical team, ECA contributed to the issue papers and the outcome of the Summit. ECA also participated in three technical meetings held in South Africa on 26 July 2015, and in Kenya on 7 and 23 and 24 August 2015. The meetings were organized by the national focal point of Kenya for the African Peer Review Mechanism, of the Ministry of Planning and Devolution, the current chair of the committee of focal points for the Mechanism, and the Kenya secretariat for NEPAD and the Mechanism.

78. In August 2015, ECA provided technical assistance to the national focal point of the Sudan for the African Peer Review Mechanism and the national governing council to finalize the country self-assessment report. The mission provided an opportunity to assess the composition of the governing council and to review the draft chapters of the report, which will be dispatched to continental secretariat of the Mechanism for the preparation of the external review.

79. ECA also contributed to the external country review mission in Djibouti in August 2015. ECA experts contributed to the drafting of the country review report, mainly on development planning, medium-term expenditure framework and management of natural resources. The report was tabled at the January 2016 African Union Summit, where the country was peer-reviewed.

80. A technical training workshop was organized in Senegal in April 2015 on methodologies and questionnaires relating to the African Peer Review Mechanism, to equip national stakeholders with a good understanding of the self-assessment process and their roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders, the structure of the questionnaire and the surveys for households and other target groups, and the overall process of preparing the national report and programme of action.

81. In December 2015, as part of the revitalization of the African Peer Review Mechanism process, ECA, in joint collaboration with the Kenya secretariat for NEPAD, organized a regional sensitization and revitalization workshop on the Mechanism, for participating and non-participating countries in Eastern Africa. Non-participating countries were given information on how to accede to the process, and the capacity of member State that were to undertake their first country review was strengthened. A number of recommendations were highlighted to revitalize the mechanism, such as a review of the selection criteria for the Panel of Eminent Persons, an improvement of the participation of Heads of States at the African Union/African Peer Review Mechanism Summit, etc. Those recommendations fed into the issues that will be discussed at the Special Summit.

82. An expert group meeting was held in Lagos on 15 and 16 December 2015 to review and validate a study on mainstreaming the governance of natural resources in the African Peer Review Mechanism process. The meeting, attended by around 40 experts from participating countries and experts on extractives industries, allowed exchanges of experiences from Botswana, Chile and Australia.

83. In response to the recommendations of the fifteenth session of RCM-Africa, the RCM-Africa clusters have been aligned with the African Union strategic plan for the period 2014-2017 and Agenda 2063; an all-inclusive and results-oriented regional development cooperation framework has been developed; and a technical working group (comprising the African Union, the United Nations, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, the regional economic communities and the African Development Bank) has been set up that will formulate a comprehensive long-term United Nations support programme to the African Union within the strategic framework of Agenda 2063 and the successor to the 10-year capacity-building programme upon its expiration in 2016. In addition, it has been agreed that future sessions of RCM-Africa will continue to be held on the margins of the Joint Annual Meetings, and RCM-Africa will harmonize its 10-year capacity-building plan with Agenda 2063.

84. With respect to the Subregional Coordination Mechanism, the main achievements in the biennium included a study on the feasibility of a self-financing mechanism for regional integration, conducted with regard to strengthening the capacities of the Arab Maghreb Union; and a regional food security programme in East Africa covering six pilot countries and mainstreaming intelligent transport systems in corridor infrastructure. Furthermore, throughout the year, RCM-Africa continued with the joint implementation of demand-driven business plans focusing on key cluster activities that respond to the priorities of the African Union Commission and the regional economic communities. Subregional Coordination Mechanisms are operational in all five subregions; more recently, a mechanism was officially established in North Africa (June 2014), with seven thematic clusters.

85. In 2015, ECA was instrumental in the endorsement of the Framework for a Renewed United Nations-African Union Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda 2017-2027, in a resolution of the 2015 Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. The Framework was also endorsed in a decision of the June 2015 Summit of the African Union. The Partnership was prepared by RCM-Africa, with ECA coordination, as the secretariat of the mechanism.

86. ECA also influenced national policies on NEPAD. For instance, through an ECA intervention, a technical team from NEPAD Nigeria visited NEPAD Kenya to understudy its operations and agree on modalities for cooperation. ECA also assisted in constructing the justifications, arguments and rationale for enhancing NEPAD in Nigeria in technical briefings to the President.

87. Furthermore, ECA reached the 15 member States of the Southern African Development Community and other regional economic communities through its research knowledge products. Industrialization was the topic of the 2015 edition of the Economic Report on Africa and, as a result, the majority of requests for technical support focused on industrialization and development.

88. ECA also provided technical assistance in the form of a review to finalize the Economic Community of West African States community strategic framework for the period 2016-2020.

89. Overall, ECA supported the accomplishment of 20 projects in the context of implementation of the priorities of the African Union, NEPAD, regional economic communities and member States (from a target of 15). The projects aimed to strengthen the capacity of those bodies to implement, monitor and evaluate the priorities and programmes of its organs and institutions.

6. Technical cooperation: United Nations regular programme of technical cooperation and the United Nations Development Account

(a) Regular programme of technical cooperation

90. The regular programme of technical cooperation is used to support African countries in their capacity development efforts. Those efforts are geared towards achieving inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in support of accelerating Africa's structural transformation, in line with the priorities and vision articulated in Agenda 2063, the NEPAD programme and the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the outcomes of other major United Nations conferences and international agreements concluded since 1992. In synergy with Development Account projects, the regular programme of technical cooperation enables ECA to make its expertise and body of knowledge available to member States, the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency, the regional economic communities, and other intergovernmental organizations in support of the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes geared towards their development. The programme is implemented under four themes, namely, macroeconomic policy, regional integration and trade, development planning, and natural resources contract negotiation, and contributes to the results achieved through the regular programme of work of ECA.

91. ECA continued its cooperation with the NEPAD Agency on the domestic resource mobilization study in Africa and on implementation of the Dakar Agenda for Action by repackaging the 16 transboundary projects endorsed at the 2014 Dakar Financing Summit for Africa's Infrastructure in a new publication entitled Infrastructure Projects for Regional Integration, designed to serve as a tool for advocacy. The publication will be launched at high-level regional and global events, with the primary objective of securing the firm interest of high-net-worth investors across the globe and promoting public-private partnerships in the implementation of the 16 projects.

92. As a follow-up to the technical study on enhancing the policy, legal and regulatory environment for regional infrastructure financing in Africa, ECA prepared a study aiming to enhance private investment in transboundary infrastructure through the harmonization of policies, laws and regulations relating to private investment in regional infrastructure in Africa. ECA is also currently collecting data to develop a special initiative to build the capacity of member States, regional economic communities and the African Union, by bringing all stakeholders to the same level of understanding and knowledge with a view to achieving the implementation of the continental free-trade area by 2017.

93. Through its support for meetings involving intergovernmental organizations and regional bodies, ECA was able to convey its analytical insights on various issues related to Agenda 2063. These meetings included:

- (a) Extraordinary session of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Trade, held in May 2015 in Addis Ababa;
- (b) High-level policy dialogues on the data revolution, smart industrialization, African challenges in mining and petroleum contracts;
- (c) High-level policy dialogue on conflict and development in Africa;
- (d) High-level training course in economic contract negotiation.

94. In addition, ECA influenced trade and industry policies in African countries and the regional economic communities. The Heads of State and Government of the Southern African Development Community, at their extraordinary summit in Harare in March 2015, approved the strategy and road map for industrialization in the Southern African Development Community and reaffirmed the importance of industrial development in poverty alleviation and the economic emancipation of the

people of the region. The strategy and road map, developed with the support of ECA, will facilitate accelerated industrialization through effective and practical interventions, while enabling the region to use its diverse resources to achieve economic and social development through the processes of beneficiation and value addition.

95. Another policy achievement for ECA was the development of the trade and industrialization policy for Swaziland. In that process, ECA supported the development of an action plan and a policy implementation plan to present options to the Swazi authorities on the way forward. The policy framework was formulated through an inclusive process which involved key public and private stakeholders in both the initial consultative process and the development of practical policy interventions.

96. The curbing of illicit financial flows is another area where ECA was able to exercise significant policy influence in the period under review. The Commission provided technical and functional support to the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa, chaired by former South African President Thabo Mbeki, in the production of its report on this practice, which has a severe impact on the continent's development and governance agenda. Illicit financial flows drain foreign exchange reserves, reduce the proceeds from tax collection, discourage investment and worsen poverty. Preliminary evidence shows that prompt action to curtail such flows from Africa would provide a major source of funds for development programmes on the continent. It was against this background that, at their fourth joint annual meetings in 2011, the African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development adopted a resolution mandating the establishment of a high-level panel on illicit financial flows. The Panel report reviews various policy options and their implications in the light of the impact of illicit financial flows on Africa's macroeconomic landscape.

97. With the aim of enhancing understanding of the developmental costs and consequences of conflicts and promoting conflict prevention, peace and State-building initiatives, ECA conducted a study on the conflict in the Sahel region. With the same aim in mind, a study on the conflicts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and their causes, impact and implications for the Great Lakes region was launched in Accra, during the high-level conference on conflict and development held on 2 and 3 October 2015. In addition, an expert group meeting to validate the Horn of Africa research programme on the root causes, impact and human and economic cost of conflict was held in September 2015 in Nairobi. The study looked at substantive issues underlying the causes of conflict in the Horn of Africa and at ways of measuring the cost of conflict in social, economic and human terms.

98. ECA has received several requests to undertake research on the causes of conflict and its consequences on development among the pastoralist communities. In response, ECA has made it a priority to examine the underlying issues and challenges facing those communities with regard to preventing conflict and fostering peace as critical conditions for sustainable growth and development. To that end, ECA is finalizing a study entitled "The new pastoralism: the promise and peril of a globally mobile networking Africa".

99. In the context of development planning and public administration, ECA made a significant contribution by supporting Guinea in its recovery as it recovered from the effects of the Ebola epidemic. A multidisciplinary team composed of ECA technical specialists from all divisions assisted Guinea in designing and implementing an institutional, organizational, and technical capacity development programme for the Guinean infrastructure projects coordinating agency, which is responsible for harmonizing the country's post-Ebola economic recovery. In addition, ECA provided technical assistance to the Government of Benin in conducting feasibility studies on major infrastructure projects in support of the country's overall growth and poverty

reduction strategy. The support provided to the Government is harmonized with the regional and subregional initiatives under way in the area of infrastructure development, which constitute a major driving force behind economic transformation, and in conformity with Agenda 2063 and the emphasis placed on this issue in the post-2015 common African position.

100. At the subregional level, ECA supported the development of the subregion's forward-looking policy document, Vision 2050, which provides a broad outline for efforts to harness the value of East Africa's resources in order to narrow gaps in social well-being and productivity. It depicts a future for East Africa of individual prosperity in cohesive societies, competitive economies, and strong inter-regional interaction. It is envisaged that, by 2050, per capita incomes will grow tenfold, situating the region in the upper-middle income category.

(b) United Nations Development Account

101. The United Nations Development Account is a capacity development programme of the Secretariat aimed at enhancing the capacities of developing countries in the priority areas of the Organization's development agenda. The Development Account is funded from the Secretariat's regular budget and implemented by 10 entities of the Secretariat (the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the five regional commissions, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime). Development Account projects at ECA serve to link the normative and analytical work of the Commission to its operational activities and to build strong synergies with other United Nations entities, drawing on the strengths and comparative advantages of each. The Development Account is a critical source of funding in support of the ECA regular budget to help member States address their capacity development priorities.

102. During the period under review, ECA initiated four new projects covering the area of accountability frameworks, support to member States in implementing the post-2015 development agenda, data and statistics, and evidence-based policy and planning.

103. In total, the 13 Development Account projects currently being implemented by ECA are benefitting over 40 member States, with the purpose of developing national policies centred on the three dimensions of sustainable development.

104. Specifically, current operational projects under the Development Account have contributed to the gathering of knowledge in key areas for Africa's transformation, such as the development of competitive regional agricultural value chains, the use of renewable energy, the effective implementation of the African Peer Review Mechanism and the capacity for African Governments to negotiate equitable, transparent and sustainable contracts in extractive industries. Development Account projects also contribute to the creation of knowledge through policy research and practice in the area of development planning and the production of continuous and reliable data by enhancing the capacity of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa.

7. Gender and women in development

105. Subprogramme 6 on gender and women in development aims to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of international and regional commitments. The subprogramme is implemented by the African Centre for Gender in the Social Development Policy Division.

106. During the reporting period, ECA made significant progress in enhancing the capacity of member States and regional economic communities to implement and report on their gender equality and women's empowerment obligations and to address emerging issues that have an impact on women. In all, 52 countries – well above the

target of 15 – submitted national review reports on progress in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, as part of the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Africa regional summary report prepared by ECA for the review revealed significant achievements in such areas as enhancing the capabilities of women in the social sectors, in particular primary education and health, and strengthening the voices and agency of women, while more work was needed to pull women out of poverty through the implementation of targeted innovative economic empowerment programmes.

107. The Africa regional report on progress towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment, which was discussed during the ninth African Regional Conference on Women, on the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, was presented at the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and contributed to the Commission's outcome document, which placed gender equality and women's empowerment at the centre of the post-2015 development agenda and the proposed sustainable development goals.

108. ECA continued work on the African gender and development index, an instrument that enables countries to compile data and assess their own performance in terms of achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, both quantitatively and qualitatively. During the reporting period, the index was rolled out to an additional 12 countries, namely, Gabon, Guinea, Liberia, Morocco, Namibia, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Swaziland and Zimbabwe. With the 25 countries already covered – Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, the Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal, South Africa, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia – this brings to 37 the total number of countries covered by the index.

109. At the behest of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, ECA developed the African scorecard for gender equality and women's empowerment. The scorecard is an efficient and easy-to-use tool, designed to assess progress by member States in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in critical development sectors, such as health, education, access to and control over land, finance, political participation, and others. Using information from the African gender and development index, the scorecard provides a simplified version of the index and is primarily intended for the offices of Heads of State and Government. The outcome of the scorecard was published and disseminated at the June 2015 session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held in Johannesburg. It was also used by the Chairperson in selecting best performing countries for awards and to call for prompt action to accelerate the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment on the continent.

110. In the area of policy research, ECA has been working on the 2015 edition of the African Women's Report under the theme "Gender and agricultural value chains: transforming Africa's agriculture through women's empowerment". The report is based on research and case studies from Cameroon, Ethiopia, Mali, Morocco, Uganda and Zimbabwe. It documents the gender-based constraints that prevent women farmers from full participation and enjoyment of the benefits of the agricultural value chains, such as horticultural and modern food processing value chains, across the continent. It emphasizes the need to address both structural and emerging gender issues at all stages of the value chains, and recommends robust measures to link gender and women's empowerment to agricultural value chains, as these are key to Africa's structural transformation agenda.

111. A review of existing mining legislative frameworks was undertaken from a gender perspective in six countries (the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Guinea, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe), with a focus on artisanal and small-scale mining. The review was included in a compendium of best

practices on gender mainstreaming, which profiled the experiences of women and showcased policy innovations in this area. The review resulted in the production of two special issues on women in artisanal and small-scale mining in the New African Woman Magazine and a documentary film on women in artisanal mining, analysing the impacts of regional and national policies on the situation of women. The review has led to five successful national workshops in the countries where the studies were undertaken and to plans for the implementation of key recommendations, calling for affirmative action in procurement and the identification of innovative forms of financing. Information and data management centres for gathering statistics on artisanal and small-scale mining operators have been developed for four African Governments.

112. As a result of the ensuing policy dialogue on this issue, the Ministry of Gender and Social Protection in Ghana has requested technical support from the African Centre for Gender in improving its draft gender policy and in carrying out the women's capacity-building programme in artisanal and small-scale mining. Following the review, a policy brief for the United Republic of Tanzania was requested by the Permanent Secretary of Gender and Community Development of that country to be used as a policy information tool for its new National Assembly, which opened in November 2015.

113. At the regional meeting on gender equality in the extractive industries, held in Nairobi in 2015, ECA and UN-Women forged new collaborative relationships and alliances with the African Union, with the aim of spearheading a new agenda for the mainstreaming of gender in mining. In addition, ECA prepared a toolkit on women in informal cross-border trade in Africa, for use in the compilation of gender statistics. The aim of the toolkit is to help African Governments to collect, analyse and disseminate cross-border gender-disaggregated data and statistics on informal cross-border trade.

114. ECA developed a gender strategy to inform gender mainstreaming processes in the Commission. The strategy has three mutually reinforcing components – the gender policy; the gender equality marker; and the capacity development programme. For its part, the African Centre on Gender is collaborating with the ECA Strategic Planning and Operational Quality Division to develop and implement a gender equality marker at ECA with the technical assistance of a consultant provided by UN-Women. This initiative is in line with the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, a system-wide accountability framework designed to promote a common understanding of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and a common method for the monitoring of progress towards this goal. The gender equality marker is being integrated into existing planning instruments and its results will feed back into strategic planning by guiding planning and the allocation of resources. The gender policy and the capacity development programme are currently being formulated and are expected to be completed by the end of 2016.

115. At the request of the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs of Botswana, ECA provided technical support to the Ministry's Directorate of Gender and Women's Empowerment for the integration of gender into the country's economic and public finance policy. Through this technical support, the Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs and the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning were able to identify strategic opportunities for mainstreaming gender into the country's eleventh national development plan. Technical support was also provided to the Gender Parity Observatory of Senegal, to support the integration of gender into the Plan Sénégal Émergent, the country's main development framework. The technical support resulted in two policy products that aim to support the integration of gender issues into the Plan.

116. The e-network is an electronic platform for access and exchange of information and good practices by national gender machineries and other national mechanisms for

the advancement of gender equality and women's empowerment. It features current information on global, regional subregional and national gender equality issues relevant to the daily work of staff and partners of national gender machineries and mechanisms. During the reporting period, an e-network session was held on the preparations for the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The e-discussions on the preparations for the session of the Commission on the Status of Women focused on how national gender machineries could accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, while working as advocates for gender equality and women's empowerment within Governments in Africa.

117. ECA is continuing its work to upgrade and expand the African Women's Rights Observatory, a technical platform that facilitates the sharing of information and networking on issues of women's rights in Africa. During the reporting period, the database of Observatory focal points in the national gender machineries of 24 African countries was updated. As part of the initial phase of the project to ban female genital mutilation, which was established as a partnership between the African Centre for Gender, the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children and the international non-profit organization No Peace without Justice, the Centre developed a baseline study on the legal and normative framework on female genital mutilation. The study revealed that female genital mutilation was practised in 21 African countries. In addition, a fact sheet on normative and legal frameworks banning the practice in 12 countries was produced and uploaded to the African Women's Rights Observatory website.

118. During the reporting period, the Centre recorded the following strategic successes: first, in relation to the gender and mining project, there was a paradigm shift in the countries where the project was undertaken, with the recognition that mining policy and regulatory formulation must include women's needs and their crucial contribution to national output in the various aspects of the artisanal and small-scale mining value chain. This has led to two outcomes at the national and regional levels. First, at the national level, in those same countries and for all government construction projects, Governments have accepted the need to stipulate a 35-40 per cent procurement quota of locally sourced stones and chippings for female stone quarry miners. This will influence the follow-up work that ECA will undertake with member States in the 2016-2017 biennium. At the regional level, the African Minerals Development Centre now recognizes that women in mining groups need to be included in all country mining vision processes. In addition, in the light of the current downturn in the mining industry, the project's recommendations have led to national Governments acknowledging the need to build the capacity of female artisanal and small-scale miners and of the operators of such mines generally, and the multiplier effects of employment in artisanal and small-scale mines on rural and national outputs.

119. Second, at the regional level, the African gender scorecard has led to more accountability and a stronger focus on achieving gender equality and women's empowerment commitments by Heads of State and Government in Africa. Ministers of gender and women's affairs are expected to be more accountable and every year to demonstrate their achievements in all undertakings relating to gender equality and women's empowerment, which will be showcased through the scorecard at the mid-year sessions of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union. The scorecard has also stimulated a regional call for more action in response to the data revolution embracing gender-disaggregated statistics, which are being collected and analysed by national statistical offices on the continent, so as correctly to demonstrate countries' performance. In addition, the Addis Ababa Declaration on Accelerating the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action: Towards a Transformational Change for Women and Girls in Africa has been an important outcome of the 20-year review process, providing a baseline for the scorecard and also tracking the implementation plans of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063.

120. The main challenges facing the subprogramme are threefold: first, its limited staff and financial resources in a context of growing demands from member States; second, the late response or lack of response from member States to requests for data and information; and, third, countries' limited capacity to sustain the support provided by the subprogramme, in particular as a consequence of staff turnover at senior levels in African ministries of gender and women's affairs.

8. Subregional activities for development

121. Substantive responsibility for subregional activities for development is vested in the five subregional offices of ECA. The objective of the subregional offices is to strengthen the capacity of member States, regional economic communities and intergovernmental organizations to formulate evidence-based policies in support of structural transformation for inclusive and sustainable development in the five subregions.

122. The following sections highlight results achieved by the five subregional offices.

(a) Subregional Office for North Africa

123. Through its activities, the Subregional Office for North Africa has helped to build the capacity of member States in such areas as the role of industry in developing the green economy, continental free trade agreements, harmonization of customs procedures and the exchange of computerized documents between customs administrations. The mechanism for the production of country profiles, a key document in the Commission's new strategic orientations, was improved during this period and eight country profiles were prepared. ECA continued its provision of support to the secretariat and the institutional framework of the Arab Maghreb Union and to the monitoring of the subregional coordination mechanism.

124. The 2015 session of the North Africa Development Forum was held in Rabat, from 27 to 30 October 2015, under the theme "North Africa and continental free trade agreements", and facilitated the exchange of views and experiences among a wide range of stakeholders on the challenges of trade integration in North Africa in the context of free trade agreements. The Forum brought together economic journalists and operators from the North African private sector and aimed to boost their understanding of continental free trade agreements, and of the implications of trade agreements in North Africa and the rest of the continent. It was organized in three major components: a training workshop for the media; a regional workshop for the private sector on the challenges involved in commercial integration in the context of the continental free trade area agreement; and an international colloquium on African integration and major regional trade agreements, 20 years after the founding of the WTO.

125. The countries of the Arab Maghreb Union initiated work on a draft free trade agreement in June 2010. This agreement calls for the adoption of a Maghreb memorandum of understanding on the rules of origin which constitute a key component of the agreement. A working group has been established to prepare the memorandum. The Subregional Office for North Africa, working in close collaboration with secretariat of the Arab Maghreb Union, organized a training workshop for the working group, to meet its training and capacity-building needs, to equip it for the preparation of the memorandum and to provide it with the substantial and technical instruments necessary for it to fulfil its mission. The workshop was also attended by national experts and members of the working group involved in the negotiations for the establishment of the Maghreb free trade zone, who reported to national ministries responsible for foreign trade, customs, industry and agriculture of the Union's five member countries.

126. The country profiles developed between March 2015 and February 2016 cover Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco (two profiles), the Sudan and Tunisia (two profiles). Issues relating to the green economy were explored in four country profiles,

according to the specific circumstances of the countries in question: Algeria – diversification and reduction of dependence on hydrocarbons; Mauritania – green economy and governance in the fishing sector; Morocco – industrialization and new trades; Tunisia – green jobs and regional development; and the Sudan – sustainability of public finance, given the significant repercussions of the secession of South Sudan. For Egypt, the issue of subsidies was the primary concern of public authorities in their endeavours to rationalize public finance and boost the efficiency of the social system. Accordingly, the Egypt country profile includes reflections on the subsidy system. Lastly, the second Morocco country profile considers the issue of social exclusion, a genuine concern for the country in its attempts to ensure more inclusive development. The country profile of Libya is currently being finalized and will be published before the end of 2016. In addition, an assessment of the economic and social situation in the subregion has been prepared in the form of a regional profile.

127. During the period under review, initiatives and programmes to support the Arab Maghreb Union and its member States were assessed and adapted to the new social and economic context of the subregion and resulted in three main subregional initiatives, which were formally launched in December 2015, thus meeting the target for the biennium. A regional platform to support the Union was adopted to strengthen and improve the efficiency of integration partnerships in North Africa. A programme of cooperation for the period 2014-2015 between the subregional office and the Arab Maghreb Union has been adopted. In addition, an action plan for North Africa, designed to simplify and harmonize customs formalities and inter-State transport and transit and to reduce the direct and indirect costs of commercial transactions, was validated by experts from member States of the Union. The Union's capacities have been reinforced in such domains as rules of origin, customs harmonization and the electronic exchange of customs documents between member States.

128. Regarding the strengthening of the Arab Maghreb Union's secretariat and its institutional framework, significant progress was recorded in three areas: support by ECA for the mobilization of partners to strengthen subregional integration and initiatives in North Africa; the organization of a meeting of experts from the Union's Member States on the funding of integration; support for the Union's secretariat in the framework of the initiative on boosting intra-African trade and the continental free trade area; and the organization of a workshop for the members of the Arab Maghreb Union's technical group on rules of origin. Actions taken to accelerate regional integration included the promotion and development of regional value chains; the facilitation of transport and trade in North Africa; and the harmonization of customs procedures and electronic exchange of customs documents.

(b) *Subregional Office for West Africa*

129. The Subregional Office for West Africa has focused on enhancing the capacity of member States to produce and disseminate high-quality and timely statistics in support of national and subregional development activities. In line with the target set for the biennium, the Office has prepared eight country profiles, covering the following countries: Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, the Niger, Nigeria and Senegal, using data provided by member States. In addition, as part of efforts to reinforce the capacity of national statistical systems of Economic Community of West African States member countries to compile development information for their economic and social profiles, the Office provided substantial support to Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, the Niger and Senegal in the formulation of their respective long-term development plans, with a timeframe of 25-30 years and in the context of Agenda 2063.

130. To improve the process of economic and social forecasting, and to facilitate the comparability of statistics within the subregion, priority was given to national statistical data systems in the finalization of the country profiles. The Subregional Office for West Africa has intensified its efforts to strengthen the capacity of the national statistical systems of the countries belonging to the Economic Community of

West African States. In all, 12 regionally agreed initiatives (as against the biennium target of 10) have been implemented by member States, the Economic Community of West African States and the West African Economic and Monetary Union, with support from ECA. This has been achieved through the harmonization of forecasting methodologies and datasets in member States, as part of the global strategy of producing good-quality and on-time data. In compliance with the African Charter on Statistics adopted by the African Union, which is used as the reference for all member States and regional economic communities, the Office has revised its statistical flow mechanisms and succeeded in securing the commitment of countries to produce and compile good-quality statistics for a better analysis of situations and to ensure the wide dissemination of statistics.

131. In 2015, the process launched by ECA to restructure the subregional offices and to strengthen their mandates led to the strategic recalibration of the core programme activities of the Subregional Office for West Africa, to ensure that the Office was better positioned to foster development and provide more efficient and relevant services, in addition to the technical assistance given to member States and regional economic communities. As a result, emphasis has shifted to the provision of up-to-date regional data collection to inform continental, regional and national policy formulation, and also to the up scaling of advocacy efforts for the structural transformation of African economies. As the assessment of economic and social performance is contingent on the availability of up-to-date and accurate statistics, attention is also being given to ensuring the comparability of data relating to different member States and communities.

132. In addition, the Subregional Office for West Africa has contributed to the endeavour to strengthen the capacity of national statistical systems to compile development information for their economic and social profiles, in particular on the impacts of the Ebola outbreak in Africa, and to monitor the regional integration process through the consolidated deployment and maintenance of the Ecobase project and the Phoenix database in West Africa.

133. In line with these efforts, the Office has taken significant steps to secure the establishment of accurate and reliable mechanisms for statistical data collection by taking stock of the subregion's stakeholders in the field and coordinating the adoption of the West African Economic and Monetary Union regional statistics programme for the period 2015-2020. In addition, the Office has supported the designation and institutionalization of statistical focal points in each member State, stressing the need for extensive and consistent engagement in regional meetings on statistics. In this way, the Office has been instrumental in securing deeper collaboration and commitment from member States aimed at ensuring the effective development of the country profiles as an invaluable tool for policymakers. As an extension of these efforts, the Office has contributed actively to the preparation and presentation of Nigeria's country profile, one of the first generation of country profiles, which was tabled for discussion at a side event on 28 March 2015 at the Conference of Ministers held in Addis Ababa.

134. Cooperation with statistics offices in West Africa, including those of the regional economic communities (Mano River Union, West African Economic and Monetary Union and Economic Community of West African States) and major intergovernmental organizations, including the Observatoire économique et statistique d'Afrique subsaharienne (AFRISTAT), that specialize in data collection and analysis, has been revived through a range of field missions, workshops and other measures to exchange experience. As a result, the subregional database is being enriched thanks to the strengthened data-flow mechanisms propelling the statistical information downstream from member States to the data centre at the Subregional Office for West Africa.

135. During 2015, the Subregional Office for West Africa supported a wide range of activities in the region, which included advocacy and awareness-raising missions

to the International Organization of la Francophonie, the International Association of French-speaking Mayors and the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21). Other activities carried out by or with the participation of the Office included the examination of possible domains of cooperation, such as civil registration, vital statistics and fund-raising; assistance with and participation in workshops in support of country reforms (Côte d'Ivoire, February 2015; Benin, May 2015; and Cameroon, November 2015); attendance at the fiftieth Annual Meetings of the African Development Bank in Abidjan in May 2015; the sharing of successful experiences as part of country visits, including to Slovenia; and the development of collaboration in areas of common interest with the United Nations Children's Fund and the African Development Bank. In addition, in relation to promoting gender awareness, the Office participated actively in panel discussions on the African Economic Outlook, addressing the issue of gender equality. It has also contributed to efforts to strengthen the capacity of the regional support group for the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics for francophone countries.

136. In addition, in response to a recommendation by the Assembly of African Heads of State and Government of the African Union, at its session in July 2012, technical assistance was provided by the Subregional Office for West Africa to Côte d'Ivoire for the development of a framework for the planned pan-African institute for statistical training, to be established at the Félix Houphouët-Boigny National Polytechnic Institute in Yamoussoukro. Also at the national level, the Office has provided continued technical assistance to the Gambia for the initiation of a capacity-building pilot project, aimed at strengthening the use of mobile technologies for the collection of data, and boosting the operational efficiency for the timely provision of statistics of better quality.

137. Prominent among the major challenges faced in this subregion in 2015 was the expanded impact of the 2014 pandemic of Ebola virus disease, which had drastic consequences for the economies of the worst affected countries – Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In an endeavour to mitigate this critical situation, the Subregional Office for West Africa coordinated preparation of the ECA study on the social and economic impacts of Ebola on Africa, which was published in two editions, in December 2014 and January 2015. Through the sharing and wide dissemination of relevant information, this report helped significantly in raising awareness of this epidemic disease and drawing attention to the issue of preparedness management. Others activities undertaken in this regard included raising the awareness of partners and mobilizing their financing assistance and involvement in the recovery plan of the Ebola-affected countries, through the dissemination of the report and calls for external debt cancellation, which yielded encouraging results. The policy recommendations aimed at reinforcing member States' resilience to the crisis were presented to the Assembly of African Heads of State and Government of the African Union, at its session in January 2015, and thereafter widely disseminated in the region and beyond. In response to requests from individual countries, the Subregional Office for West Africa formed part of advisory missions and supported efforts to reduce to zero the number of new cases of Ebola, and also assisted the stabilization and recovery plan in its efforts to mitigate the social and economic impacts of the disease.

138. The Subregional Office for West Africa also worked actively on the launch of the joint African Development Bank-World Bank Group post-Ebola recovery programme. As part of the joint programme, the Office responded to the request of Mano River Union for technical assistance in the preparation of its regional recovery plan, which was presented at the high-level conference on the Ebola epidemic organized by the European Union in Brussels, in March 2015. The conference took stock of existing emergency measures put in place to control the epidemic, and adapted those measures to the evolving situation on the ground with a view to eradicating the disease. The conference also resulted in the formulation of long-term

strategies aimed at supporting affected countries in their recovery efforts, including the revamping of their health systems.

(c) *Subregional Office for Central Africa*

139. The ECA Subregional Office for Central Africa met its target of enhancing the capacity of member States to produce and disseminate quality and timely statistics in support of national and subregional development priorities. ECA contributed to policy recommendations and development process through the production and dissemination of eight country profiles – thus meeting its target for the biennium – for Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (two profiles), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Sao Tome and Principe. These profiles were reviewed and used as inputs at two meetings of the intergovernmental committee of experts, which formulated policy recommendations, in particular on the need to accelerate the pace of regional integration and economic diversification within the subregion. The country profiles also contributed to the debate on the structural transformation agenda for Central Africa, responding, among other matters, to the call for the development of a timber transformation strategy for the subregion, as advocated by experts from member States attending sessions of the intergovernmental committee of experts. Work by ECA has assisted member States in formulating national and subregional policy recommendations based on accurate and up-to-date data supplemented with thorough analysis.

140. ECA also undertook capacity-building activities to enable member States, regional economic communities, intergovernmental organizations and other subregional development stakeholders to formulate and harmonize evidence-based policies and plans in support of economic and social transformation in Central Africa. It also focused on sectoral and emerging issues, such as macroeconomic convergence, road safety and climate change, with a view to accelerating the implementation of subregional initiatives.

141. The thirty-first session of the intergovernmental committee of experts for Central Africa, held in March 2015 in Brazzaville, provided a platform for delegates from member States, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa and their specialized institutions to debate current and emerging development issues. The theme of this session of the committee was the development of the forestry industry as means of supporting structural transformation of the Central African economies. To this end, participants advocated the development of a strengthened subregional timber transformation strategy designed to generate value addition that would contribute to job creation, in particular for women and young people. ECA and experts from the subregion agreed that a strengthened timber transformation strategy would also strengthen economic diversification and reduce dependency on oil rents.

142. In its efforts to strengthen the capacities of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community and the Economic Community of Central African States to accelerate the implementation of subregional initiatives, ECA supported four initiatives (meeting its target for the biennium) mounted by the above regional economic communities. The first such initiative was the adoption by Economic Community of Central African States member countries of a road map for the upgrading of enterprises in Central Africa, to enable them to shift to a green economy, and the second was the decision by Heads of States of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community to lift the visa requirement for citizens of the community. This decision also responded to the call by the Subregional Office for Central Africa for regional integration in general and the free movement of people in particular, advocated through the publication and dissemination of a report on measures to improve Central Africa's business climate with a focus on the free movement of people and the organization of a subregional ad hoc expert meeting to raise policymakers' awareness of the benefits of regional integration.

143. The third initiative was the decision by Heads of State of West and Central Africa regarding support for countries affected by Boko Haram. ECA influence on this process consisted in the contribution made by the Subregional Office for Central Africa to the Secretary-General's report on the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, by drafting semi-annual notes in 2015 on the economic and social conditions in Central Africa and on short-term prospects. The Office's contribution was acknowledged with gratitude by the Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa.

144. Lastly, through the Subregional Office for Central Africa, ECA played a critical role in influencing Central African experts on the fourth initiative, which consisted in extending the Central African Economic and Monetary Community macroeconomic convergence framework to the entire Economic Community of Central African States area. This was achieved during an ad hoc expert group meeting organized by the Office in Brazzaville on 2 and 3 March 2015, and attended by 52 experts, who shared their views on the institutional framework of multilateral surveillance, the effectiveness of the penalty and incentive mechanism and the relevance of nominal convergence criteria. The findings of the technical study prepared by ECA on progress and prospects for macroeconomic convergence in the Central African subregion were carefully discussed and validated during the meeting.

145. At a training workshop held in Douala, in December 2015, ECA contributed to building the capacity of high-level decision makers from regional economic communities and member States to mainstream climate change into agricultural policies. The workshop raised awareness of the impact of climate change on agriculture in Central Africa and of the contribution of the agricultural sector to the emission of greenhouse gases and culminated in the adoption of two strategies: one on adaptation to climate change in the agricultural sector and the other on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

146. ECA further supported ad hoc expert group meetings on harnessing the potential of extractive industries for structural transformation; improving Central Africa's business climate; and, exploring prospects for macroeconomic convergence in the subregion. A significant output of this subprogramme was the production of a social and economic report on Central Africa for the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa. The subprogramme also provided substantial support to the steering committee for the rationalization of the regional economic communities of Central Africa, of which it was also a member.

147. To strengthen efforts to combat corruption and to promote partnership among stakeholders in the subregion tackling this problem, in October 2015, ECA organized a workshop in Libreville, at which the network of national anticorruption institutions of Central Africa was launched. Several statutory documents of the network were prepared by ECA and reviewed during the workshop. An electronic platform was also put in place by ECA, to disseminate the activities of the network and to facilitate the exchange of information and experience among its members.

148. With regard to the communities of practice and the knowledge networks, ECA continued its efforts to disseminate information and knowledge through the United Nations knowledge-sharing platforms. Three thematic workspaces for communities of practices were created for the purpose of engaging experts from the subregion in discussions on a range of issues, as outlined below:

(a) Improving Central Africa's business climate: some 40 participants exchanged views on the relevance and applicability to the realities of Central Africa of business climate indices, including the World Bank's Doing Business indicators; the Ibrahim Index of African Governance; the global competitiveness index of the World Economic Forum; and the Transparency International corruption perceptions index;

(b) Strategies to improve collaboration between the public and private sectors in the promotion of investments and to enhance the effectiveness of institutional arrangements and mechanisms to improve the business climate at the national and subregional levels;

(c) Progress and prospects for macroeconomic convergence in the Central African subregion: a total of 51 experts exchanged views on shortcomings in the institutional framework for multilateral surveillance, the effectiveness of the penalty and incentive mechanism and the relevance of nominal convergence criteria. They shared ideas on the importance of the multilateral surveillance mechanism of Central African Economic and Monetary Community and the possibility of extending it to the Economic Community of Central African States;

(d) Mainstreaming the green economy into development policies in Central Africa: this community of practice was created on the recommendation put forward by the intergovernmental committee of experts at its thirtieth session, held from 5 to 7 March 2014 in N'Djamena. It helped to raise awareness of the need for a transition to the green economy in Central Africa, with discussions on such issues as how African small island developing States can be supported in their efforts to build resilience to the adverse impacts of climate variability and change, and how Central African countries can develop their forest industries in order to speed up structural transformation in the subregion.

149. ECA undertook an assessment study, which was examined during an experts' meeting, held in November 2015 in Douala, with a view to accelerating implementation of the African road safety action plan. The study finds that, midway through the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020, Central Africa is lagging behind all the other African subregions in the implementation of the African road safety action plan. Low commitment, the lack of ownership of the action plan, the weak capacity of stakeholders and insufficient financial and human resources devoted to road safety were identified by the experts as the major impediments to the implementation of the plan. They stressed the need for accurate and comprehensive statistics on road accidents and adopted recommendations calling on the regional economic communities, member States and development partners to accelerate implementation of the African road safety action plan.

150. At the country level, ECA provided support to the Cameroon National Institute of Statistics in the implementation of a pilot project on the collection of statistical data through mobile technology. It also assisted efforts by the African Minerals Development Centre to promote its project on strengthening the capacity of African Governments to negotiate transparent, equitable and sustainable contracts in extractive industries for broad-based sustainable growth and social and economic development, which was launched at an event held in N'Djamena. In addition to its participation in the activities of the United Nations country team in Cameroon, the Office strengthened its partnership with the United Nations country team in Equatorial Guinea and provided assistance for the launching of the "Delivering as one" approach in the country.

151. Lastly, to enhance the understanding and ownership of Agenda 2063 and of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ECA provided technical support to the Government of Cameroon by participating in a workshop on the Sustainable Development Goals and the demographic dividend, held in Yaoundé on 8 and 9 December 2015 and jointly organized by the Government of Cameroon and the country office of the United Nations Population Fund. The Office prepared and made a presentation which identified linkages between these two development agendas. Participants at the workshop recommended, among other measures, the large-scale production and dissemination of documents on this issue.

(d) *Subregional Office for Eastern Africa*

152. The ECA Subregional Office for Eastern Africa prepared eight country profiles (meeting its target for the biennium), for the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda, Uganda, Somalia and the United Republic of Tanzania, using high-quality and up-to-date statistical data provided by member States and with support from the ECA Macroeconomic Policy Division, the Regional Integration and Trade Division, the African Centre for Statistics and the Social Development Policy Division. In the course of their preparation, the country profiles were examined at a meeting of the intergovernmental committee of experts, held in Madagascar in March 2015, which provided an opportunity to elicit feedback from stakeholders and government ministries on their respective country profiles.

153. As a follow-up to the December 2014 high-level engagements of the ECA Executive Secretary with the President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame, and other senior Rwandan government officials, and in the policy discussions between Rwandan senior officials and ECA senior management team held in February 2015, the Government of Rwanda and the Subregional Office for Eastern Africa organized a high-level workshop on accelerating economic growth in Rwanda on 7 and 8 December 2015. The two-day meeting was attended by ministers, directors general and directors from the Rwandese Government, international experts, representatives of the Institute of Policy Analysis and Research and ECA experts. In preparation for the meeting, considerable assistance was furnished to the Rwandan Government in developing its policy analysis and statistics in support of national development initiatives, in particular in respect of alternative development frameworks, Economic Community of Central African States market opportunities and the development of the dairy sector.

154. The nineteenth session of the intergovernmental committee of experts for Eastern Africa, held in Antananarivo in March 2015, presented an opportunity for participants to explore the theme of the session: “Harnessing the blue economy for Eastern Africa’s development”, through presentations, high-level panels, and plenary and group discussions. At the session, experts explored means of achieving sustainable growth by maximizing countries’ access to and use of marine resources through sustainable management of their ocean ecosystems. Repeated mention was made of the importance of the “blue economy” concept as a tool for supporting structural transformation and promoting sustainable development, poverty eradication and climate change mitigation in the subregion. Participants observed that, by taking advantage of the infrastructure networks, trade linkages, resource interdependence and strategic partnerships connecting coastal and island States with landlocked countries, the benefits of a robust blue economy could be harnessed for the development of the entire subregion. In support of this growing agenda, publications produced by the Subregional Office for Eastern Africa, such as the policy handbook on the blue economy and the background study on harnessing the blue economy for East Africa’s development, played an instrumental role in helping four member States (the Comoros, Djibouti, Madagascar and Seychelles) to produce sustainable blue economy policies and the Indian Ocean Commission to finalize its blue economy action plan.

155. The Subregional Office for Eastern Africa also organized ad hoc expert group meetings that contributed to the structural transformation agenda in the subregion; assessed how new trading and investment relations, in particular with China and India, were contributing to the diversification of the economies of East Africa; reviewed case studies and strategies to improve social cohesion; and helped to expose the limitations of international trade regimes and bilateral investment treaties as development tools.

156. The Subregional Office for Eastern Africa also contributed to efforts to strengthen the capacity of East African member States and regional economic communities to accelerate the implementation of subregional initiatives relating to tourism, energy and the blue economy. Its work on tourism entailed high-level

engagement with key government officials and capacity-building at the country level on the key tenets of the sustainable tourism master plan launched by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in December 2013. In that context, ECA is supporting the systematic incorporation of policy guidelines in relevant policy instruments of the beneficiary countries. This policy advice is based on sound evidence and best practice approaches to the implementation of regional tourism frameworks, and underpinned by an analysis of existing global frameworks, taking into account the reasons for their success or failure. Likewise, the work being done on national tourism development instruments, as in the case of Ethiopia, entails a detailed situational analysis based on both primary and secondary data to inform appropriate strategy formulation. This work served to position ECA as a partner of choice in the tourism domain. The main beneficiaries of the Office's work on tourism were Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. The final draft of the sustainable tourism master plan for Ethiopia, the first of its kind for that country, has been concluded and its launch is planned for 2016.

157. Given that tourism is a relatively new area for ECA and, by extension, has only recently been embraced in a comprehensive and systemic manner by member States and regional economic communities in the region, there is still a paucity of data on this subject. As a result, work on tourism by the Subregional Office for Eastern Africa is based on primary sources – generated by the Office – or secondary data sources from partners, such as the World Tourism Organization, the World Bank and the World Travel and Tourism Council. In order to ensure the reliability of data from other sources, data collected from those sources were consistently cross-checked and corroborated by the member States. To ensure that the data would have a strong impact on stakeholders in the subregion, full advantage was taken of cutting-edge technology, with the use of visual effects both in written reports and presentations.

158. In the area of energy, the Subregional Office for Eastern Africa contributed to achieving the expected goals through the provision of support to member States in three principal areas, namely: strengthening energy planning capacity at national and regional levels, including through support for energy resources assessments and their development planning; promoting the Sustainable Energy for All initiative in East Africa, including through policy support, with a view to expanding energy access across the region; and providing policy support for the design of regional and country-level energy security policy to mitigate energy insecurity. More specifically, the Office continued to make its expertise available in the continuing formulation of the energy security framework for the East African Community and its Vision 2050. The framework is both comprehensive in scope, encompassing biomass, oil and gas and electricity subsectors, and multidimensional.

159. The Subregional Office for Eastern Africa also assisted in the development of a range of policy tools to support member States and regional economic communities, including: an energy resources assessment and their development planning in Djibouti; a framework for the sustainable deployment of renewable energy technologies in Rwanda; an energy security policy framework for the East African Community; a national solar energy strategy and action plan for Rwanda, to be finalized by April 2016; an energy resources assessment and development planning advisory service for Djibouti; an assessment of the natural gas policy of the United Republic of Tanzania; and the provision of recommendations and advisory services to the East African Community member States on national and regional energy security policy.

160. Where strategic partnerships are concerned, in addition to those with energy institutions in its member States, the Subregional Office for Eastern Africa also built partnerships with universities, such as the University of Rwanda, University College London, Virginia State University, Michigan State University and the Georgia Institute of Technology. Partnerships were also established with international organizations, such as the International Renewable Energy Agency, the International Energy Agency (on data), the International Atomic Energy Agency (on use of the

model of energy supply strategy alternatives and their general environmental impacts (MESSAGE) planning tool), with the United Nations agencies in Rwanda and with national organizations such as the Stockholm Environment Institute and the Argonne National Laboratory in the United States.

161. In line with the recommendations of the intergovernmental committee of experts of the Subregional Office for Eastern Africa at its nineteenth session, the Office conducted pioneer work on the blue economy. This included finalization of a blue economy background study, a comprehensive report which seeks to inform Eastern African policymakers, regional economic communities and other stakeholders – at regional, national and local levels – about the role and contribution of the blue economy to social and economic growth and structural transformation in East Africa. The Office worked in partnership with a number of regional and international organizations, including the Indian Ocean Commission, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the East African Community, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to review and contribute to this background study and policy handbook; to share experiences among themselves and pursue networking opportunities; and to mainstream blue economy principles in their respective programmes and strategies. The background study also provides an overview of opportunities and the actions required to create an enabling environment for the blue economy to thrive. Equally significant was the accelerated exercise – known as a “book sprint” – conducted in December 2015 to produce a blue economy policy handbook. The handbook seeks to provide a step-by-step methodology for member States, regional economic commissions and intergovernmental organizations to mainstream blue economy-related principles into their respective plans and programmes. All these actions will help to consolidate the leadership and influence of ECA in this domain.

(e) ***Subregional Office for Southern Africa***

162. During the period under review, the ECA Subregional Office for Southern Africa continued to assist member States, regional economic communities, intergovernmental organizations and other subregional development stakeholders to strengthen their capacity to formulate and harmonize evidence-based policies and programmes in support of economic and social transformation in the subregion. The Office continued its work on the preparation and updating of country profiles, as a recurrent ECA flagship publication aimed at providing economic and social data, institutional and policy information, policy and risk analysis and recommendations to serve a variety of clients, including member States, civil society, policymakers and the private sector in Southern Africa and beyond. Thus, eight country profiles (meeting the target for the biennium) have been prepared, for Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

163. In addition, the Office has held consultations with individual national statistical offices and with regional economic communities, namely the Southern African Development Community and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, to explain the country profile initiative. These consultations culminated in a subregional consultative meeting for statistics producers and users, convened in 2015. Through this broad consultative process, the statistical capacity needs of national statistics offices and related institutions were identified, crystallized and prioritized; a common platform for sharing best practices and experiences of networking and coordination in statistics was established; discussions on statistical harmonization in the Southern African Development Community and Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa were stimulated; awareness was raised on the ECA country profile initiative and the organization’s overall focus on strengthening the capacity of national statistics offices to facilitate the production of credible statistics for policy purposes; and the Office’s partnership with national statistics offices and related institutions was further strengthened.

164. The Subregional Office for Southern Africa continued its efforts to strengthen the capacity of regional economic communities, member States and other development stakeholders to accelerate the design and implementation of priority subregional initiatives in Southern Africa. To date, seven regionally agreed initiatives (meeting the target for the biennium), from a baseline of three initiatives, have been implemented by the regional economic communities and member States with assistance from ECA.

165. The Subregional Office for Southern Africa also provided technical support to the Southern African Development Community secretariat, at its request, in developing its industrialization road map and strategy and a revised regional indicative strategic development plan for the period 2015-2020. These two policy frameworks were subsequently approved by the Southern African Development Community Council of Ministers of Industry and thereafter endorsed and adopted by the Southern African Development Community Heads of State and Government at their extraordinary summit meeting in April 2015. The Southern African Development Community has since expressed appreciation to the Office for its support and requested further support in drawing up an action plan for the implementation of the strategy and road map. The Office has also provided technical assistance for the implementation of the Southern African Development Community mining programme, by supporting the identification and development of two projects: one on a mineral sector skills assessment study; and the other on mineral beneficiation profiling, both of which have been under implementation since June 2015.

166. At the member State level, the Subregional Office for Southern Africa has continued to provide advisory services in such areas as the process of developing a national minerals and mining policy for Lesotho, which was launched in late 2013. The country's aspirations in this regard are for a policy to underpin sustainable social and economic growth and to tackle poverty that is in line with the aspirations of the Africa Mining Vision. Thanks to the support provided by the Office, a minerals and mining policy that is compliant with the Africa Mining Vision was finalized and subsequently adopted by the Government of Lesotho and officially launched in June 2015. With further support from ECA and partners, the Government has since embarked on the process of aligning its legal and regulatory framework to underpin the new policy.

167. In addition, ECA provided support to the Government of Malawi in reviewing and updating the country's Mines and Minerals Act of 1981, by providing substantive technical input for the 2015 mines and minerals bill and by actively participating in the technical review workshop, convened in May 2015. In addition to working to ensure consistency and clarity in the bill's articulation of the Government's intentions and related mechanisms for the country's social and economic development, and its intentions regarding regulatory and sectoral enforcement, the review also evaluated the alignment of the bill with other national local acts and bills, and its harmonization and alignment with regional and international policies and legal frameworks, including the Southern African Development Community mining protocol and its framework for harmonization of mining policies, along with the Africa Mining Vision. The workshop's recommendations, which addressed such issues as sector-specific governance, national ownership, community development, artisanal and small-scale mining, transparency and disclosure, contract negotiations, technical capacity of the State, sectoral funding, creation of sovereign wealth funds and trust funds, transfer pricing, double taxation, and stabilization clauses, have been submitted to the Ministry of Mines for consideration in revising the bill prior to its finalization and tabling in parliament for enactment.

168. ECA provided technical support to the Government of Swaziland in preparing its trade and industrial policy. With this assistance, a policy document was prepared, reviewed at a validation workshop held in May 2015, and subsequently adopted by the Government. The Government of Swaziland has sent a formal letter of

appreciation to ECA in this regard, and has requested further support from ECA in developing an implementation plan for the implementation of the policy.

169. The Government of Zambia embarked on the process of developing a national industrial policy with support from the United Nations Development Programme country office in Zambia. ECA lent technical support for the process, on request from the Government of Zambia, by providing substantive input to the draft policy document, and actively participating in consultative and technical review meetings at different stages since the launch of the process in September 2014. As of June 2015, the draft policy document and its draft implementation plan had been finalized and circulated to line ministries for final comments in readiness for its submission to Cabinet for approval.

170. In collaboration with the University of Cape Town, the Subregional Office for Southern Africa organized a regional workshop on accounting for progress in regional integration, focusing on the issue of evidence and accountability, which was held on 24 November 2015 in Lusaka. The one-day workshop brought together a wide range of stakeholders, who looked at the different dimensions of accountability in promoting regional integration and the role of various national and regional stakeholders, from regional economic communities to parliaments, civil society and the media. The workshop also gave its attention to the issues of the relationship between national and regional agendas; the role of evidence, data and indicators in promoting accountability; the role of the media and civil society organizations in regional agendas; and the importance of parliamentary oversight in promoting integration. The workshop also explored how evidence-based research could promote accountability in examining trends and patterns related to regional integration outcomes.

171. The Subregional Office for Southern Africa held the first seminar in its inaugural Southern African seminar series on 7 and 8 October 2015, in Livingstone, Zambia. The seminar was held in collaboration with the African Peace-building Network of the Social Science Research Council, on the theme: "Conflict, peace and regional economic integration in Southern Africa – bridging the knowledge gaps and addressing the policy challenges". The seminar was attended by scholars, policymakers and government officials, and representatives from civil society, regional institutions, United Nations agencies and regional economic commissions. Participants came from across Southern and Eastern Africa and also from other regions, including the United States. Key speakers, including the Deputy Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of Namibia, underscored the importance of promoting peace and stability in the region as a necessary condition for achieving regional economic integration in Southern Africa, and Africa as a whole.

172. The seminar provided a platform for the presentation of original research findings and the dissemination of research papers. Presentations and discussion were made in plenary session and discussions then conducted on a wide range of topics, including conflicts and regional integration in Africa; the scope, regional responses and implications of crises and conflicts in Southern Africa; xenophobia, migration and regional economic integration in Southern Africa; the economic costs and consequences of conflicts in Southern Africa; measures to improve governance for economic development in Southern Africa; and the need for regional cohesion and people-driven regional integration in Southern Africa. The seminar sought to promote debate, discussion and policy options on the topical issues of conflict, peace and regional economic integration in Southern Africa, in support of the efforts by regional institutions and the member States in the subregion to ensure a stable and prosperous Southern Africa. A robust and intensive debate took place on the theme of the seminar and, on its conclusion, a communiqué was adopted setting out recommendations and proposing a way forward for the conference organizers, participants and key stakeholders.

173. ECA organized and provided substantive services for the annual meeting of the subregional coordination mechanism for Eastern and Southern Africa. The

meeting was held in Gaborone, on 10 and 11 December 2015, and hosted by the Southern African Development Community secretariat, which succeeded the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa as the new chair of the subregional coordination mechanism. The meeting was attended by representatives of the regional economic communities, intergovernmental organizations, transport corridor organizations and civil society organizations, United Nations regional directors and representative of the United Nations country teams, and representatives of other partner organizations. The meeting, which was held under the theme: “Towards effective mainstreaming of the subregional coordination mechanism business plan into stakeholders’ planning processes and priority setting”, provided a platform for stakeholders to take stock of progress made to date on the mechanism’s flagship projects. It also provided an opportunity to identify specific action points for mainstreaming the mechanism’s business plan into stakeholders’ planning and priority-setting processes.

174. At the meeting, in its keynote address as chair of the mechanism, the Southern African Development Community underscored the importance of continued support from United Nations agencies for the existing priorities of regional institutions. It was also stressed at the meeting that it was the responsibility of the regional economic communities and intergovernmental organizations to set the priorities at subregional level, as mandated by the member States which they served. Emphasis was placed on the key role played by the United Nations system in supporting development policy and programme initiatives formulated and implemented by regional economic communities and intergovernmental organizations. Participants reiterated that subregional coordination mechanism stakeholders needed to work together to update the business plan for Eastern and Southern Africa, to ensure that it reflected the most recent strategies and priorities of the regional economic communities and intergovernmental organizations, including the revised Southern African Development Community regional indicative strategic development plan for the period 2015-2020 and the tripartite free trade area.

175. As the knowledge delivery arm of ECA in the subregion, the Subregional Office for Southern Africa launched the ECA publication: Economic Report on Africa 2015: Industrializing through Trade, in Lusaka on 14 July 2015. This flagship report was officially launched by Margaret Mwanakatwe, Minister of Commerce, Trade and Industry of Zambia. The launch was attended by participants from the Government of Zambia, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the private sector, civil society organizations, universities and research institutions. It provided a platform for the dissemination of the report and for in-depth policy debate on industrialization at the regional, subregional and national levels.

9. African Institute for Economic Development and Planning

176. The main objective of the subprogramme managed by the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, is to improve public sector management and development planning in support of economic and social transformation in Africa through training and other capacity development – related activities. The Institute’s activities are organized around a portfolio of capacity development and training programmes, as well as policy research and high-level dialogue initiatives, which are designed to support member States in their efforts to achieve the core goal of structurally transforming their economies and societies. It also offers on-demand advisory services to Governments and public institutions, and serves as a forum for alternative thinking on African development.

177. At the end of the reporting period, the Institute had surpassed its target of increasing the number of countries adopting new approaches in policy formulation and analysis and appropriate measures from a baseline of 5 to 25 (biennium target – 18). Similarly, it fully met its target to increase the number of national or subregional public sector departments and institutions applying appropriate new policy approaches in planning and analysis as a result of the Institute’s work, from a baseline

of 11 countries to 30. The Institute also made full progress in increasing the number of countries and subnational regions adopting policies and measures or implementing activities in the area of development planning in line with the Institute's recommendations, from a baseline of 11 countries to 34 (target – 30 countries). In summary, a total of 1,118 public officials, 33 per cent of whom were female (363), benefited from the Institute's capacity development interventions in the areas of economic management and development planning. Specifically, participants underwent training in areas that included the formulation, analysis, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of and negotiation on a number of macroeconomic issues and sectoral policies, including economic accounts, gender, economic policies for employment, public debt management, regional integration, trade policy, industrial policy, agricultural policy, minerals policy, energy policies, development planning, data analysis and microeconomic modelling for development planners, social policy, migration policy, youth and employment, land policy, transport and infrastructure, science and technology, governance and development, gender and the environment, minerals governance and natural resource management.

178. In order to meet the evolving needs of its member States, the Institute has continued to expand its short course offerings over the course of the biennium, notably by proposing a range of new courses on issues that are critical for the achievement of member States' structural transformation and sustainable development agendas. As can be noted in the list of areas covered in the above-mentioned training courses, in addition to its regular courses, the Institute delivered training in new areas through its courses on development infrastructure, migration data for development, and environment, climate and natural resources management. The Institute also finalized a course on domestic resource mobilization and investment to be launched in 2016. Following capacity needs assessments and advisory missions conducted in 2015, the specific needs of a number of member States for capacity enhancement were addressed through the delivery of tailor-made courses in areas such as gender-responsive economic policy management and the planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation of development programmes and infrastructure projects. For instance, in partnership with the Centre for Gender Studies of the University of Rwanda, the Institute led the development of a tailor-made course on gender-responsive economic policy management for Rwandan officials. The training was delivered in Kigali in August 2015. A training-of-trainers component was added to support the country's strategy to accelerate the development of capacity in gender-responsive budgeting required to operationalize gender policies.

179. To enrich its course delivery and contribute to the acceptance of innovative policy practices in strong support of Agenda 2063, the Institute organized high-level policy dialogues, including a key dialogue on the theme "The process, substance and key goals of Agenda 2063". Twelve other high-level dialogues and five expert group meetings were organized in addition to the Institute's monthly development seminar series, which continues to be a much-appreciated dialogue platform and a key institutional tool for fostering multi-stakeholder engagement on Africa's development trajectory. These dialogues and seminars, which in total gathered about 900 public officials, policymakers, experts and academics, as well as representatives from the private sector and civil society from across the continent and beyond its frontiers, addressed primarily topics that lie at the heart of Africa's sustainable structural transformation agenda, such as the developmental State, industrialization, intra-African trade, private sector development, land policy and governance, natural resources management, minerals fiscal policy, international economic negotiations, corporate governance and migration for development. The events served to influence policy in domains ranging from minerals, industry, regional integration and trade, agriculture, public debt, public finance, resource mobilization and investment. They also served to deepen reflections by senior and executive level officials from African Governments, experts and academics, and to broaden the Institute's engagement with various other stakeholders to feed into policy review, design and implementation processes. The level of engagement of high-level officials at the events is suggestive

of their high-level involvement in policy matters and hence prime evidence of the events' influence on policy.

180. Additionally, in its quest to work with regional economic communities, in collaboration with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Institute delivered courses on trade policy analysis using EViews and Stata tools for officials from the economic bloc. The course was aimed at training policy officials on the practical aspects of trade policy analysis using those analytical/statistical tools to explore policy options and to demonstrate how different policy instruments are prescribed to inform trade policy development in Africa. Technical staff from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa secretariat and coordinating ministries from the economic bloc involved in trade were equipped with skill sets to implement evidence-based policies to address trade concerns and to derive maximum development benefits. A total of 29 people were trained. In support of the push towards a unified market (continental free trade area) in Africa, the Institute, also delivered a course on deeper regional integration, in collaboration with the Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute, which was designed to build on these achievements and to tackle more complex regional integration processes, which is essential for addressing the economic challenges posed by the high production and transaction costs, infrastructure deficit, deficient investment climate and low per capita incomes. A total of 24 people from Eastern and Southern African countries were trained.

181. The Institute also completed the groundwork for its revamped master's degree programmes. The MPhil programme in industrial policy (in collaboration with the University of Johannesburg) was launched in February 2016 with a first cohort of up to 20 public officials (10 fully sponsored by the Institute) from the five subregions of the continent. Furthermore, having delivered its first ever course in Arabic with the Institute of National Planning of Egypt in December 2014, the two Institutes further consolidated their partnership by undertaking the second session of the Arabic-language version of the course and are in the final stages of preparations for a joint master's degree programme in economic management and development planning.

182. Significant strides were made towards launching the e-learning programme of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, with preparations at a well advanced stage. The first set of online courses to be offered to officials from African member States is scheduled for 2016. As the Institute is currently developing its strategic plan for the next five years, it has set for itself a primary goal of becoming a premier African virtual training Institute by 2020, which will be a great benefit for member States in terms of coverage, costs and opportunities for continuing capacity development for their civil servants and, in turn, their institutions. A more gender-balanced participation via e-learning is anticipated.

183. In a bid to continue to expand its offerings to meet member States' diversifying needs and ensure local presence, visibility, a pool of potential trainees and impact across different parts of the African continent, the Institute has continued to enhance its established network of strategic partnerships. It is consolidating its collaborative work with African Union Commission, NEPAD, United Nations agencies and regional development banks, as its contribution towards fulfilling the ambition of ECA to enhance its policy influence at a continental level and become a think tank of reference on African planning and development policy issues. At the same time, the Institute is increasingly focusing on developing partnerships with universities, research centres, think tanks and civil society organizations across the continent. During the period under review, the Institute consolidated and enlarged its collaboration with the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, Egypt's Institute of National Planning and the University of Johannesburg – both for short courses and master's programmes – in addition to developing new partnerships with the Centre for Gender Studies of the University of Rwanda, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United

Nations, and the Poverty-Environment Initiative of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme.

184. The fifty-fourth session of the Institute's Governing Council was held on 5 February 2016 in Addis Ababa. At the session, the Council welcomed and approved management's programme work plan and budget proposal for the biennium 2016-2017, alongside a number of key human resource capacity changes in line with the strategic direction of the Institute. Members of the Council were also appraised of the challenges the Institute is facing with payment of both annual assessed contributions and arrears by member States, the latter currently standing at \$16 million. An appeal to member States to consistently pay annual assessed contributions and clear up their arrears is scheduled to be made at the upcoming ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. A resource mobilization strategy will also be set in order to increase the level and predictability of the financial resources needed to implement its work programme. Following recommendations made by members at the fifth-third session of the Governing Council, and others made at the fifty-fourth session, revisions were made to the statutes of the Institute and are scheduled to be presented to the 2016 Conference of Ministers and then to the Economic and Social Council for review and ratification.

185. The Ebola crisis, which affected parts of West Africa, was a challenge that the Institute had to contend with in the implementation of its programme for the biennium. Course participation was affected quite significantly from mid-2014 to early 2015. The demand for tailor-made courses, especially for countries in West Africa, was also affected, on account of funding challenges at the level of member States faced with the crisis. Extrabudgetary resource mobilization was also a challenge, especially in 2015, as the Institute underwent a leadership transition that has since been completed.

10. Social Development Policy Division

186. The core objective of the ECA Social Development Policy subprogramme is to promote inclusive and equitable human and social development for transformation in Africa, more specifically in the areas of employment and social protection, young people and population, urbanization and women's empowerment.

187. The target of increasing the number of member States mainstreaming employment, social protection, population and youth issues into national policies or strategies was fully met. ECA knowledge was mainstreamed into policies and strategies in 13 countries (compared to the biennium target of 12): Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Rwanda and Zambia. For instance, the findings of the joint studies undertaken in nine countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Rwanda, Swaziland and Uganda) by ECA, the World Food Programme and African Union Commission on the cost of hunger in Africa estimated the cost of inaction on malnutrition and demonstrated that child malnutrition is not only a social issue but a quantifiable economic challenge that results in significant loss of resources, owing to child undernutrition both in the present and in the past. The studies were able to generate a platform at the country level for building awareness and political and technical discussions on the urgent need to set more aggressive goals for the reduction of hunger, child malnutrition and stunting. They helped to create a political mandate for addressing the problem of child undernutrition and resulted in two separate declarations adopted by the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government at its twenty-third ordinary session, held in Malabo in July 2014: the Declaration on Nutrition Security for Inclusive Economic Growth and Sustainable Development in Africa; and the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods. Countries such as Burkina Faso, Ghana, Malawi and Rwanda have acknowledged the negative effects of child stunting and supported the endorsement of the Malabo Declaration, which included a call for an overall policy shift on child malnutrition.

188. The endeavour to understand and address inequality in Africa forms the very core of ECA social development analytical work, as tackling inequality in all its forms is a social imperative and essential for sustainable and equitable growth in Africa. To that end, an analytical study for the African Social Development Report focused on linkages between informal employment and inequality, predicated on two key development challenges facing Africa today: the lack of sufficient and decent jobs, in particular for women and young people; and the high levels of social and economic inequality within countries and population groups. The report on the findings, which were based on studies conducted in Namibia and the United Republic of Tanzania, shows that inequality of opportunities in education, with unequal access across gender, income and location, is largely carried on to the labour market, which has a large informal sector. This in turn perpetuates income inequalities and vulnerabilities across different population groups. In this regard, aligned to the United Nations Development Account project on promoting equality, the policy recommendations are designed to strengthen the capacities of selected countries to design and implement equality-oriented public policies and programmes.

189. The work on the African social development index gathered momentum in 2015. The Index was presented in 2015 at a side event at the eighth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in 2015. Following that, five regional capacity-building workshops have been organized covering 46 African States (but not the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Libya, Mozambique, Seychelles, South Africa and United Republic of Tanzania) and nine regional economic communities (East African Community, Southern African Development Community, West African Economic and Monetary Union, Economic Community of West African States, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Community of Sahelo-Saharan States, Arab Maghreb Union and Economic Community of Central African States). This has in turn driven the demand for ECA technical assistance both in specific countries and at subregional level to monitor human exclusion. In addition, the Pan-African Parliament Committee on Education, Culture, Tourism and Human Resources has expressed great interest in the index and future collaboration. The inclusion of the index in the corporate flagship Economic Report on Africa 2015 series and ECA country profiles has further enhanced its policy outreach and relevance. The strategic interest in human exclusion that the index has raised is reflected in the requests for specific training made by Botswana, Burkina Faso, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the West African Economic and Monetary Union. The introduction of the index's results in the next batch of country profiles attests to the use of national data to monitor exclusion and how this reflects the relevance of the index in explaining national and subnational trends in social outcomes and assist in identifying policy directions.

190. Work continued on the Joint Labour Migration Programme – an initiative with the African Union Commission, the International Labour Organization and the International Organization for Migration. During the period under review, the Programme was endorsed by the special session of the Labour and Social Affairs Commission of the African Union, held in Windhoek, Namibia, in April 2014 and also by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, held in Addis Ababa in January 2015. ECA has been involved in the design and development of the programme document for this joint initiative. As a next step, the partners will now focus on mobilizing resources for implementing the programme. In addition, ECA, in partnership with the African Diaspora Policy Centre and the German Agency for International Cooperation, organized a conference on migration dynamics in Africa. The meeting facilitated a South-South experience exchange by providing a platform where key African policymakers from Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Morocco and Tunisia had discussions with migrants about their migration journey and reflected on how migration realities were considered in their policies. The strategic interest of

migration globally and regionally has been captured at the corporate level with the Social Development Division Policy as the focus. The high-level policy dialogue planned for the ninth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development responds to migration, as an African priority and this forum will place this issue squarely on the development agenda.

191. ECA continues to engage in efforts geared towards harnessing the demographic dividend in Africa and mainstreaming population dynamics in national planning. A demographic profile report of Africa has been prepared to help policymakers understand the unprecedented challenges and opportunities presented by Africa's rapid population growth and mega demographic trends. Furthermore, in recognition of the relevance and critical role of older persons in achieving the demographic dividend in Africa, the subprogramme undertook research on ageing and development in the small island developing States of Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritius and Sao Tome and Principe. The report presents robust information on ageing: the demographics, the living conditions of older persons, the impacts of ageing on development policies, particularly on the work force and pension systems, and the policies and prospects for the future. The findings of the research will also inform the third review of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in Africa during 2016.

192. As part of a three-year joint development account project (for the period 2014-2017) with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic and Social Commission for West Asia to strengthen the capacity of Governments to respond to the needs of young people ECA generated authoritative evidence on the situation of young people in Africa. A regional analysis was undertaken to assess the participation of young people in social, economic and political spheres in Africa and propose alternative and impact-based policy responses. The final output of the project is to develop a youth policy toolbox which will be a repository of good practices on inclusive and responsive youth policies.

193. Furthermore, ECA fully met its target of increasing from zero to seven the number of countries incorporating partially or fully sustainable urbanization principles advocated by ECA into policies or legislation or strategies. Seven countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Gabon, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal and Uganda) responded positively to adopting policies and strategies based on the Common African Position on the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, which is consistent with the work of ECA on urbanization and the structural transformation agenda, so as to meaningfully harness the opportunities that urbanization presents for development in these countries. This was achieved through partnership between the ECA, the United Nations Human Settlements, Programme and the African Union Specialized Technical Committee No. 8 on Public Service, Local Government, Urban Development and Decentralization, which jointly provided technical support for the development of Africa's policy framework on sustainable and urban development, that is, the African Urban Agenda, as well as the above-mentioned Common African Position, which will serve as input for defining the global "New Urban Agenda", to be adopted at the Conference in October 2016.

194. ECA also led the Africa regional review process for the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development. This involved assessing the implementation of commitments on urbanization and development that were made during the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, in 1996, specifically, on urban governance, the urban economy, social equity and the environment. The assessment identified the implementation gaps and emerging issues that will inform Africa's urbanization priorities, which are also set out in the Common African Position on the Conference.

195. In view of the implementation and monitoring responsibilities of member States related to targets for cities and human settlements in Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030, ECA conducted an assessment of existing urban data and capacity gaps in Africa, which will be used to strengthen urban concepts, indicators and methodologies in the current 2020 round of population and housing censuses (from 2015 to 2025). Accordingly, an urban statistics programme, recommended by Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia, Equatorial Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, the Niger, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia, will be established in the upcoming biennium by the Statistical Commission for Africa. Improvements in urban data and statistics will strengthen the evidence base for policymaking on urbanization and development in Africa.

196. The programme partnered with varied stakeholders, including the African Union Commission, regional economic communities, United Nations organizations, funds and agencies and member States, to leverage resources and influence ECA messaging on urbanization and development in Africa. This has been well reflected in the outcome documents and resolutions pertaining to the Common African position on the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, and to the Conference.

11. Programme support

197. During the period under review, ECA pursued its efforts to improve results through higher quality products and services, greater organizational effectiveness and improved accountability. This section contains information on the measures taken by ECA to build a more transparent, client-oriented, accountable and results-based organization, with particular focus on strengthening strategic planning, evaluation and operational quality, improving business processes, knowledge management and communications, and enhancing partnerships and technical cooperation.

198. ECA took specific steps to enhance its focus on results, a process which started with the consolidation of strategic programming and planning, budgeting, evaluation and quality assurance into one office – the Strategic Planning and Operational Quality Division – as part of the framework for managing results in support of the strategic re-orientation introduced in March 2013.

199. In 2015, ECA developed the strategic planning and accountability system, a framework intended to enable ECA to act as a single, cohesive entity when planning, budgeting, monitoring, carrying out quality assurance and evaluation of, and reporting on its strategic priorities, outputs and results. The major elements of the system are strategic planning instruments, including the strategic framework, the proposed programme budget, the annual business plan, the evaluation and quality assurance functions, the revitalized executive performance management dashboard and the annual reports. It aims to align resources and operational activities with the Commission's mission of becoming a think tank of reference on African development issues, and to allow for the identification and tracking of results that contribute to effectively influencing policies for structural transformation across the region.

12. Proposed biennium programme plan 2018-2019

200. The Strategic Planning and Operational Quality Division prepared the proposed biennium programme plan for the period 2018-2019. The programme plan was prepared in the context of positioning the Commission's programmatic orientation in terms of the continuity of work that it carried out in the biennium 2014-2015, with enhancements to effectively support the implementation and follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the African Union's Agenda 2063. The programme plan for 2018-2019 was endorsed at the forty-ninth session of the Commission, which was held as part of the ninth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, which took place in Addis Ababa on 4 and 5

April 2016. During the meetings, the participants called upon the Commission to continue its support for member States, the African Union Commission, the NEPAD programme and the regional economic communities in the implementation of, follow-up to and review of Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

201. The main feature of the 2018-2019 biennium programme plan is the inclusion of the seven interrelated areas in support of Agenda 2063's first 10-year implementation plan (2013-2023): (i) strengthening the capacities of member States, regional economic communities and the African Union Commission to ensure coherence, consistency and coordination across the African development goals; (ii) integrating Agenda 2063 and the African development goals into national planning and fiscal frameworks; (iii) strengthening capacities for follow-up and review of Agenda 2063 and the African development goals; (iv) strengthening the statistical systems of member States; (v) identifying and promoting the financing of Agenda 2063 in terms of domestic and external resource mobilization, including addressing illicit financial flows; (vi) leveraging science, technology and innovation; and (vii) leveraging South-South and regional partnerships.

202. The modalities for implementation will continue to include a combination of policy research to generate knowledge, advocacy and consensus-building, advisory services and technical cooperation. This will be done through economic and social analysis and preparation of reports to monitor and track the progress of Africa on global and regional commitments; the formulation of policy recommendations, guidelines and standards to support policy dialogue; the organization of policy dialogue to facilitate consensus-building and the adoption of common regional positions on key issues; and providing technical assistance and capacity-building in the form of advisory services and training to disseminate best practices. Strategic partnerships with the African Union Commission; the African Development Bank; United Nations entities; other regional organizations, major policy think tanks; universities and research institutions; private sector and foundations; and civil society organizations will continue to be central to the implementation of the programme.

13. Executive performance management dashboard

203. The executive performance management dashboard was developed to support results-based monitoring and evaluation through sustained, integrated and coherent management of performance. It combines critical strategic, operational and financial information to aid strategic decision-making, and reports on the efforts to bring together streams of ECA work in policy research and knowledge delivery. The executive performance management dashboard is organized into four clusters: policy influence; credibility and trust; accountability and learning; and operational effectiveness. In 2015, the dashboard underwent a substantial upgrade to improve the quality and reliability of the data entered into the system. Additionally, the IT platform was significantly revamped to enable the system to generate real-time reports and to modernize the user interface. The sources of data include internal operations and systems, online media monitoring and analysis data, and the perception survey of the Commission's partners. ECA issues quarterly reports to regularly track progress, as well as an annual performance report that provides a review of the progress made against selected key performance indicators from the four clusters of policy influence, credibility and trust, accountability and learning, and operational effectiveness. The results of the 2015 performance report demonstrate that ECA is on the right course to meet its commitments regarding influencing priorities and programmes on African development policy issues, empowering Africa, and supporting member States' efforts to implement structural transformation policies and programmes based on their own priorities.

204. The 2015 survey of the Commission's partners revealed a favourable perception by partners of the contribution made by ECA in terms of its influence on policy in support of Africa's transformation agenda; the credibility and trust that it

inspired through the production of high-quality, evidence-based and good-fit policy research and knowledge delivery services; its accountability mechanisms and learning culture; and its operational effectiveness in delivering its knowledge production and capacity development services on time.

205. According to the 2015 survey, ECA knowledge products were perceived by 77 per cent of survey respondents as being of high quality and effective in promoting discussion on Africa's transformative agenda. More than 70 per cent of survey respondents indicated that ECA knowledge delivery was highly sensitive to context, relevant and tailored. Close to 80 per cent of survey respondents said that ECA generated reliable and relevant policy ideas. Some 74 per cent of survey respondents said that the Commission's products were "cutting edge". Lastly, 75 per cent of survey respondents had a positive opinion of ECA, with the Commission perceived as a reliable and constructive partner that provided policy leadership and high-quality, cutting-edge expertise and knowledge.

14. Annual business plan for 2016

206. During the period under review, ECA developed its annual business plan for 2016. It provides a road map of the annual implementation of activities to achieve the outputs and outcomes set out in the approved programme budget. The business plan facilitates the alignment of the outputs of the ECA divisions, subregional offices and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning with the corporate strategic objectives of policy influence, credibility, accountability and learning, and operational effectiveness. ECA incorporated gender markers into the 2016 business plan to estimate the extent to which each output and the proportion of resources allocated are expected to contribute to or support changes in gender equality and women's empowerment.

15. Evaluation policy and plan

207. As part of the Commission's enhanced strategic planning and accountability system, evaluation has a critical role to play in determining as systematically and objectively as possible the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of the Commission's new programmatic focus, as well as its new business model. It will do so through the provision of learning information that should lead to the identification and adoption of optimal programme implementation strategies as well as by sharpening the focus of its processes, products, services and tools.

208. During the reporting period, therefore, ECA devoted time to conceptualizing and formulating a common institutional basis for the evaluation function in ECA. A corporate evaluation policy and a 2015-2017 results-based evaluation plan were endorsed by the Executive Secretary of ECA in December 2014. The policy seeks to increase organizational learning and support accountability, transparency, coherence and efficiency in generating and using evaluative knowledge for effective management for results.

209. In so doing, the ECA evaluation policy aligns itself with United Nations evaluation norms and standards approved by the United Nations Evaluation Group in April 2005, outlines the objectives and details the mechanisms to be put in place to promote and further strengthen the evaluation culture across the Commission. Internal efforts are under way to streamline evaluation across the Commission through better in-house understanding of value addition of evaluation and strengthened self-evaluation, which in turn will improve programme performance and increase operational transparency and accountability towards beneficiaries and stakeholders.

210. With strong policy statements committing to systematically evaluate all programmes of more than US\$ 1 million dollars as well as by recommending a minimum level of investment in evaluation of 3-5 per cent of the total programme budget, the Commission's evaluation function will generate evidence to ensure more informed and results-oriented management and strategic decision-making.

211. As a result of the Commission's recent efforts to strengthen the evaluation function across all programmes, the Commission registered positive scores in the 2014 edition of the scorecard of the Office of Internal Oversight Services. Out of the 17 indicators measuring the structure, practice, evaluation plan and reports, quality assurance, accountability, resources allocated for evaluation, and implementation of evaluation recommendations, ECA improved its scoring on every single indicator compared to the 2010-2011 assessment.

212. In addition, and with a view to enhancing the Commission's accountability systems and deepening a learning culture across all streams of work, self-assessments and evaluations of major flagship events were systematically conducted, and opinion surveys of external partners and staff were carried out to assess perceptions of the influence that ECA has in the area of knowledge generation and delivery, as well as on its overall business performances.

213. As for audit, regular and systematic monitoring of oversight body recommendations was undertaken, which resulted in a 100 per cent implementation rate of critical audit recommendations.

16. Operational quality policy and plan 2014-2017

214. The operational quality policy and plan outlines the Commission's quality assurance policy for the period 2014-2017 and provides a framework to guide the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of quality assurance activities. There are six objectives: to support ECA in offering innovative thinking for Africa's structural transformation; to strengthen the capacity of ECA to deliver high-quality products and services that are relevant, credible and effectively influence policy choices and decisions for African transformation; to enhance the use of the results of the quality assurance system to support accountability, programme learning and resource allocation; to ensure that risks threatening the quality and sustainability of ECA products and services are appropriately and continuously assessed, monitored and managed; to promote compliance with the mandates of the Economic and Social Council and United Nations system-wide initiatives on gender mainstreaming; and to contribute, through the ECA quality assurance function, to building a competent organization.

17. Quality assurance manual

215. During the period under review, ECA developed a quality assurance manual, which sets out quality assurance procedures for the Commission's strategic products and services. These include quality assurance procedures for publications; programme management; indices; the performance management dashboard; events; the Commission's carbon footprint; and the country profiles. The major objective of the manual is to support the implementation of operational quality at ECA by guiding the approval, delivery, monitoring and review of its programmes and ensuring that its products and services and the processes that support them are of high quality. It also describes the main components of the quality system of ECA, including its management responsibility, resources, measurement and improvement. The procedures are aimed at assisting the ECA subprogrammes to improve the quality of their products and services.

18. Administration

216. During the period under review, the General Assembly approved the allocation of US\$ 56.9 million to finance the renovation of the Africa Hall, which is located on the ECA compound. ECA proceeded with the recruitment of a project manager and the definition of the governance structure for the implementation of the project and a detailed planning schedule for the following phases, that is tendering and construction. ECA is currently in the process of recruiting a dedicated project team, completing the design process and planning for the procurement of a construction company.

217. ECA was in cluster 4 of the Umoja deployment plan. ECA successfully deployed Umoja as planned on 9 November 2015, following a long period of preparation, data cleansing and conversion from legacy systems that involved all aspects of the Commission's administration (including human resources, travel, finance, funds, grants, real estate, supply chain management, conference management and facilities management). Additionally, before deployment ECA delivered a comprehensive training plan aimed at building the capacity of key staff members and focal points. Additional online training and awareness-raising programmes for all staff members were also delivered in advance of deployment in November. A significant number of staff members were sent for intensive training and training for trainers in New York and Geneva, to enable them to become local process experts and thereby ensure that the Commission would be in a position to sustainably manage the transition and share learning more broadly across ECA in the post-implementation phase.

218. ECA is participating in the global post-implementation review task force and critical post-implementation activities, which includes the provision of support to the subregional offices and the coordination of activities in all functional areas. Post-implementation support is ongoing, with significant challenges faced in the areas of user access mapping, workload changes, knowledge gaps in the end-to-end cross sectional Umoja processes, business intelligence reporting and systemic technical difficulties, as well as slow resolution of issue tickets raised. Additionally, ECA is also participating in new initiatives such as the global service delivery model, which is working to consolidate services such as personnel administration, payroll, procurement and travel management.

219. The Commission's overall learning and development strategy is aligned with United Nations policy of promoting continuous learning with a view to maximizing skills for effective implementation of the Organization's mandate and at the same time helping staff members to develop their careers. Learning and development in 2015 concentrated largely on retooling staff members following the re-orientation of the Commission and efforts towards building capacity for Umoja deployment and sustainability. The re-profiling courses were introduced following the launch of the Commission's programme and structural reforms agenda in 2013. The training strategy was designed to support the agenda of repositioning ECA as a leading policy and knowledge think tank. Priorities in training were linked directly to new programme priorities and revised structures within the divisions. The re-profiling courses were developed through a consultative process led by a staff task force. The courses were conducted for over 100 core staff members in areas such as macroeconomic modelling, communication, research methods and analysis, forecasting and management and leadership. The re-profiling programme has been extended, with additional courses approved in areas of new or continued relevance to the Commission's work.

220. As regards training in preparation for Umoja deployment, a number of activities were undertaken in terms of staff training and orientation, to ensure readiness for go-live and to build capacity for sustainability beyond deployment. First-level orientation and awareness workshops were held with all staff and managers. High-level policy and process training programmes for supervisors and managers were conducted, with at least 70 per cent of the target audience covered. Computer-based training programmes for all staff members were rolled out and a successful campaign to enforce completion was launched.

221. Moving beyond deployment, the priority regarding Umoja training is to increase the number of internal process experts and trainers to ensure the sustainability of support, learning and capacity-building programmes. ECA is on track with this strategy as process experts and/or trainers now exist for more than half of the functional areas and processes, and training is ongoing to acquire, enhance and maintain knowledge and skills in all areas. Knowledge gaps in end-to-end processes are being addressed with improved integrated cross-sectional training programmes.

222. ECA successfully adopted and implemented the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) on 1 January 2014 with a clean unqualified audit report outcome. Following the adoption of IPSAS, the Finance Section of ECA put plans in place to stabilize and comprehensively apply the IPSAS standards across all business operations. ECA is now fully IPSAS compliant. The implementation of IPSAS was one of the key business transformation initiatives adopted by the Organization and it has indeed changed the way the United Nations conducts its business, utilizes resources and carries out financial reporting, with a greater emphasis on increased transparency and accountability to stakeholders. One of the main benefits of IPSAS is comprehensive reporting on the assets and liabilities of the Commission, which has had a positive impact on strategic decision-making. As ECA enters the IPSAS post-implementation stage, efforts are being geared towards the long-term sustainability of IPSAS compliance and institutionalization. Going forward, ECA will equip staff with the skills and training needed to continue to successfully follow IPSAS and adopt a rigorous internal control system supported by automated reporting tools to enable monitoring and audit, thereby realizing the full benefits of IPSAS.

19. Public Information and Knowledge Management Division

223. The target of ensuring enhanced communication, advocacy and promotion of ECA knowledge products through strategic communication, information, marketing and advocacy was met through effective communication, the promotion of knowledge products, and media and advocacy interventions.

224. The activities implemented during the reporting period contributed to influencing policies at national and subregional levels. For example, in order to amplify the key messages contained in the Economic Report on Africa and other issues such as the threat posed by the Ebola virus disease and climate change, opinion editorials (op-eds) were published in high-profile newspapers and media outlets, including CNN, The Financial Times, Le Monde and The Guardian. The messages were timed around key events to ensure the attention of policymakers and key constituencies. In addition, knowledge guides were developed on the 2014 edition of the Economic Report on Africa, on Ebola, and on other thematic areas to increase the influence of ECA.

225. Unprecedented rises in the numbers of followers of the Commission's social media outlets were recorded over the past 24 months, surpassing earlier projections by more than 600 per cent. There was also a marked increase in media articles referencing the work of the Commission. In 2015, close to 9,000 articles were published, versus about 1,000 in 2014. The target of achieving 14.5 million hits on the ECA website was also surpassed, with close to 16 million hits in 2015. The increases can be attributed to the stabilization of the Commission's website following the finalization of the migration of content, the redistribution media partnership agreement established with All Africa.Com and Financial Afrik, the steady dissemination of content in both English and French (in 2015, close to 1,200 press releases in both languages were distributed on the website, through social media and directly to the media), and the support of divisional focal points. As evidenced by the requests for advice on how to emulate the Commission's web presence received from the Economic Commission for Europe, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and Headquarters, the Commission's internal web policy has encouraged others to revamp their own websites.

226. ECA's web and social media presence has added value to Africa's transformation agenda by enhancing the visibility of key research and policy recommendations, thereby influencing policymaking on the continent. For instance, the social media uptake of the Commission's Ebola study led to numerous requests from the BBC for a high-profile interview in the 48 hours following its launch. The outputs produced by ECA are attractive and accessible thanks to their visuals. For instance, the Commission's publication on financing for development received a great deal of attention on Twitter because of its attractive presentation.

227. In addition, the Public Information and Knowledge Management Division has strived to ensure that stories disseminated on the website and to the media contain gender-neutral language and that the images posted on the website do not stereotype women.

228. ECA launched two communities of practices through its Solution Exchange service to African professionals. Solution Exchange is a United Nations-sponsored peer-to-peer facilitation service for professionals with similar interests and concerns (“communities of practice”), with a view to tapping their knowledge in order to solve problems. By December 2015, membership of the first community, the African development planners, had risen to 420 active participants, from 51 countries, while the second community, the African statistical community, had 381 participants, from 22 countries. More than 127 responses were received for the 9 queries posed by experts from member States. The African development planners community of practice facilitated five discussion sessions based on queries submitted by the community members on several topics, including investment in a tight fiscal environment, planning for competing development goals, drafting a national sustainable development strategy, applying a standardized economic forecasting model for Africa, and addressing poverty and inequality towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The queries received a total of 86 responses from 38 countries. Similarly, the African statistical community facilitated four discussion sessions on issues such as using mobile technology to collect data, ensuring census data collection quality, estimating informal cross-border trade and improving the accessibility of statistical data, with a total of 41 responses from 17 countries.

229. The African Knowledge for Development Network is a platform that provides support to the Subregional Office for Southern Africa, the Subregional Office for West Africa, the Subregional Office for North Africa, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and the African Internet Governance Forum.

230. The ECA knowledge repository is an online platform for managing and disseminating ECA knowledge products, including publications, conference proceedings, parliamentary documents, flagship reports and policy briefs. The upgraded repository provides improved functionality and tracking of usage statistics. In 2015, use of ECA knowledge products increased, with over 170,000 document downloads and more than 1 million website hits, which reflects the growing credibility and relevance of the Commission’s knowledge products.

231. In 2015, work was undertaken to reorganize the knowledge repository into thematic collections based on the main areas of the Commission’s work, namely macroeconomic policy, gender, social development, regional integration and trade, natural resources management, innovation technology and governance. These thematic clusters allow for the reviewing of individual work programmes over a period of time, thus facilitating the identification of gaps and best practices, as well as opportunities for new areas of engagement. Moreover, through this knowledge audit, the Commission was able to identify its centres of excellence and accordingly reorganize funding for credible and high-impact programmes.

232. The Access to Scientific and Socio-Economic Information in Africa initiative, known as ASKIA, is an online, one-stop shop for socioeconomic knowledge on and from Africa. In 2015, the ASKIA online portal was updated with interfaces and knowledge resources in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese. This was needed to reach out to researchers across African member States in the official languages of their respective countries. An Arabic language interface is under development, which will increase the platform’s reach to Arabic-speaking member States.

233. Together, the knowledge repository, the ASKIA initiative, the African Knowledge for Development Network and the Solution Exchange all played significant roles in the dissemination of the Commission’s knowledge products. The increased number of page visits and downloads and active participation in the online

discussions can be attributed to the multilingual interfaces and content of the platforms.

234. In its efforts to improve the quality and consistency of the Commission's documents and publications, the Division worked to ensure that the outputs produced by ECA were a coherent, well-coordinated representation of the overall goals and aspirations of ECA and were attractively produced and efficiently distributed for maximum policy influence. As part of these efforts, in June 2015 a set of guidelines for users were issued on the preparation and submission of documents. The guidelines, which are available online, provide staff members with detailed operating procedures, with a view to ensuring the delivery of high-quality work in a timely manner.

235. In addition, to make its publications more accessible to the public at large, ECA introduced high-quality reader-friendly formats with more infographics. To date, the Economic Report on Africa and the Commission's other flagship, special and headline thematic publications have all been processed using the new in-house harmonized format.

236. ECA continued to implement the International Standards Organization (ISO) 14001:2004 certification of its print shop. The focal staff pursued their training on environment management and the print shop continued to be mindful of its environmental management system and operations. ECA used only 100 per cent recycled paper and all conference documents and reports were printed in black and white to reduce the use of chemicals. In addition, ECA reduced the number of posters for key meetings to the bare minimum or none, instead making use of electronic screens.

237. These achievements were recognized by Headquarters when ECA won the 2014 UN 21Award in the "Efficiency" category. In December 2015, ECA was also awarded the Kodak Sonora Green Leaf Award for its commitment to the environment, sustainability and minimizing wastage and chemical pollution by using chemical-free computer-to-plate technology. As a result of the technology, ECA reduced its chemical and water consumption by 80 per cent between 2014 and 2015.

238. Lastly, the archives and records management programme also contributed to the enhancement of programme work and "greening" the Commission by simplifying access to, retrieval and sharing of 34,039 digitized records and by recycling 47 tons of obsolete records. The waste material was recycled back into paper; the Commission was thus able to save about 800 trees, 2.8 million gallons of water, 150 cubic yards of landfill space and 10,500 kilowatts of energy. In addition, over 100 cubic metres of storage space where the obsolete records had been kept were able to be repurposed for other needs.

III. Issues from the subsidiary bodies of the Commission, including the intergovernmental committees of experts of the subregional offices

239. The present chapter provides an overview of the major issues and outcomes of the meetings of ECA subsidiary bodies, including the intergovernmental committees of experts of the subregional offices. It highlights the key recommendations from the meetings that need to be brought to the attention of ECA for action or information. The chapter also includes a preview of meetings that had not yet taken place at the time the present report was finalized.

A. Organs dealing with overall development issues

1. Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and its Committee of Experts

240. The Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development provides the necessary legislative mandate and policy guidance to ECA, considers and endorses its work programme, serves as a forum for articulating the position of Africa on development issues and reviews the recommendations of ECA subsidiary bodies and its Executive Secretary. The annual session of the Conference is held jointly with the annual session of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration, with a view to achieving greater coherence in articulating Africa's position on key development issues.

241. The Committee of Experts meets prior to the Conference and provides technical support. The Bureau of ECA includes a representative from each of the five subregions and consists of a chair, three vice-chairs and a rapporteur elected on a subregional basis.

2. Intergovernmental committees of experts of the subregional offices

242. The five intergovernmental committees of experts of the subregional offices meet annually, prior to the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, to which they report through the Conference's own Committee of Experts. The intergovernmental committees oversee the overall formulation and implementation of the programme of work and priorities of their respective subregional offices and make recommendations on economic and social development and the promotion and strengthening of subregional economic cooperation and integration. When the need arises, the sessions of the intergovernmental committees of experts are held back-to-back with major ministerial conferences of the regional economic communities in order to provide a platform for subregional ministerial caucuses to discuss specific subregional development challenges. The outcomes of such meetings are brought to the attention of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

B. Functional and sectoral subsidiary organs of ECA

243. There are four organs under ECA: the Committee on Gender and Social Development, the Committee on Sustainable Development, the Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration and the Committee on Statistics.

244. The committees meet in ordinary sessions once every two years and report to ECA at its annual session through the Committee of Experts. The sessions of the committees bring together policymakers and other stakeholders, including development experts, to inform and guide the work of ECA in various sectors.

C. Meetings held during the period under review

1. Ninth session of the Committee on Sustainable Development

245. The ninth session of the Committee on Sustainable Development was held on 16 June 2015, at ECA. The objectives of the ninth session were three-fold: to review and provide guidance on ECA subprogramme on innovation, technology and management of Africa's natural resources; to oversee the implementation of the 2014-2015 work programme; and to review the priorities of the subprogramme for the 2016-2017 work programme in the context of the ECA strategic framework and the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017.

246. The Committee considered the programme performance report on innovation, technology and the management of Africa's natural resources for 2014 and 2015 and parliamentary documents on harnessing innovation, technology and the management of Africa's natural resources for Africa's transformation. It also approved the subprogramme activities for the remaining months of 2015 and for the biennium 2016-2017.

247. The participants commended ECA for the work carried out during the period under review and emphasized the need for it to continue supporting the continent's transformative agenda, which was based on inclusive, sustainable economic growth that generated jobs and promoted resource efficiency and value addition to Africa's natural resources. The Committee called upon ECA to support research into finding specific examples of where information and communications technology and science, technology and innovation had contributed to sustainable development.

248. In line with the promotion of the green economy on the continent, the participants called upon ECA to increase its support to African countries in their transition to a green economy development pathway, which was one of the main strategies for moving towards a low-carbon, resource-efficient and sustainable economy.

249. The Committee recognized the following eight pillars as a good basis for enhancing the green economy: green building; sustainable transport and infrastructure; clean energy and energy efficiency; natural resource conservation and management; sustainable waste management and practices; agriculture, food production and forestry; water management; and sustainable consumption and production.

250. With regard to the Africa Mining Vision, the Committee welcomed the establishment of the African Minerals Development Centre and suggested that the Centre should look critically at the link between conflict and minerals, as there could be no sustainable development without peace. The participants called upon the member States to prioritize the formulation and effective implementation of their respective Country Mining Visions, which were vital for creating an enabling environment for the transparent, equitable and optimal exploitation of mineral resources.

251. The Committee noted that sustainable development in the mining sector needed to embrace initiatives and policies emanating from the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Global Compact and other relevant international and regional instruments. It called upon ECA, the African Union Commission and its partners to strengthen their support for countries with regard to mineral policies and legal and regulatory frameworks to accompany mining codes.

252. In relation to climate change and development, the Committee commended ECA on the support lent to member States in addressing key climate change challenges and putting in place appropriate plans and mechanisms to reflect national development priorities, policies, strategies and programmes. It also recognized the need to consolidate climate science and research on the continent. The Committee called upon ECA to prioritize co-designed multidisciplinary research aimed at improving climate forecast skills and reliability across temporal and spatial scales (towards operational, user-relevant and seamless forecast products) and filling the data gap, which could be tailored to facilitate decision-making and capacity-building at all levels and in various sectors; the mainstreaming of climate services into decision-making; linking knowledge with action; and more effective communication between climate science and policy to identify end users' needs.

253. The participants also called upon ECA to significantly increase its support for climate change adaptation efforts in African small island developing States. Specifically, they called for increased support for the effective implementation of the

Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway.

254. It noted that it was important to ensure the coordination of the activities of the African Group of Negotiators, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change.

255. The Committee had thrown its full weight behind Africa's preparations for the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate change. The participants noted that the new legal agreement could not be limited to mitigation action only and that it must give adaptation the same level of priority as mitigation. Parity between mitigation and adaptation needed go beyond mere normative affirmation (so-called "political parity") and must include both qualitative and quantitative aspects. The Committee recognized the important place that energy occupied in the development matrix of the continent and said there was a need for ECA to take into account the importance of the energy sector, also in the context of the development of the mineral sector.

256. Lastly, the Committee called upon ECA, its partners and the member States to work together to establish indicators for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. First session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development

257. The first session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development was held on 17 and 18 December 2015, in Addis Ababa, and was attended by 53 representatives from 38 member States. Other funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system were also represented, including the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the United Nations Office for Project Services.

258. The main objective of the session was to review the progress made by the ECA subprogrammes on gender and women in development and social development policy, analyse the challenges, and identify successes, progress made and implementation gaps to ensure the achievement of desired results and impacts.

259. The Committee provided guidance and expert opinions on the priorities and activities of the Social Development Policy Division and issued recommendations for strengthening its work, with a view to better supporting member States and regional economic communities in achieving gender equality, women's empowerment and sustainable social development on the continent.

260. The Committee noted with appreciation the strategic focus that was adopted, the issues that were addressed and the results that were achieved by ECA in 2014 and 2015. The efforts made by ECA to identify similarities in the gender and social development dimensions between Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030, and the implications for national development planning, were considered timely and valuable.

261. In its general recommendations, the Committee asked ECA to support member States in domesticating both Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030, while stressing that global commitments and frameworks needed to be contextualized and take into account national development priorities in Africa. It also asked ECA to continue its ongoing good collaboration with the African Union Commission. In its opinion, the priorities of the Economic Commission for Africa should include collecting best practices and case studies on gender and social development for sharing and learning in support of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030, including through knowledge products and platforms.

262. The Committee's specific recommendations were as follows:

(a) ***Preparing for the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development at the national level***

263. The Committee called on member States to prepare national implementation plans, with the support of ECA, while stressing that preparation and/or revision of national development plans was an opportunity to mainstream Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030. ECA was asked to map and assess the differing needs and requests for assistance of member States with respect to the implementation of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030 and provide technical support accordingly. ECA was also requested to support member States in the domestication and monitoring of gender and social development indicators for both agendas through technical and advisory services.

(b) ***Gender equality and women's empowerment***

264. The Committee called on member States to urgently align Agenda 2063, Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals and to mainstream gender issues into their national implementation plans. It also asked ECA to support capacity-building for the collection of gender-responsive data and statistics, including through training for national statistical offices and economists on national satellite accounts on household production. Strengthening collaboration within ECA was needed to ensure that the gender dimension was integrated into all ECA products and activities. The Committee also asked for support in harmonizing the African gender and development index with the indicators of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030.

(c) ***Urbanization***

265. The Committee called upon ECA to strengthen its work by focusing on the opportunities and accompanying challenges that urbanization presented. It stressed that ECA should consider the critical role of rural areas for growth and transformation, support the necessary urban-rural linkages and synergies and consider the linkages between urbanization and industrialization for job creation and the provision of services and infrastructure.

(d) ***Social protection***

266. The Committee encouraged ECA to expand the coverage of the African social development index to additional countries, use statistics obtained through official channels for the calculation of the index, take into account the lessons learned in its ongoing application in selected countries, and broaden its engagement at the national level to include ministries of gender to ensure that the gender dimension was integrated into all components of the index.

(e) ***Population and young people***

267. The Committee stressed that demographic data should go beyond describing key trends, and in addition include analysis of underlying drivers, possible strategies for responding to challenges and the gender perspective.

3. Ninth session of the Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration

268. The ninth session of the Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration was held from 7 to 9 December 2015, in Addis Ababa. The main objective of the session was to examine the efforts being made to enhance productive integration for Africa's transformation. The participants also took stock of developments under the subprogramme on regional integration and trade, in areas including intra-African and international trade, infrastructure, food security and agriculture, investment and land policy.

269. The session was attended by 47 member States, as well as delegates from the African Union Commission, the Arab Maghreb Union, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on

Development, the Southern African Development Community and the World Customs Organization.

270. A number of presentations were given showcasing the activities of the subprogramme on regional integration and trade, following which the Committee provided guidance, expert opinions and recommendations on priorities and activities.

271. With regard to regional integration in Africa, the Committee recommended stepping up efforts to improve the higher education system, with a view to ensuring good learning outcomes and adequate numbers of graduates in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, and closing the gender gap in such subjects. In addition, it was recommended that pan-African institutions should take the lead in establishing a coherent mechanism to serve as a platform for learning and exchanging best practices and information, given the acute need to enhance the contribution of science and technology to regional integration. To foster the development of the Africa regional integration index, the Committee called upon member States and pan-African institutions to exert all possible efforts, including putting in place a multi-stakeholder system in all member States to ensure the collection of uniform, comparable and high-quality data for all indicators.

272. Regarding international and intra-African trade, the Committee stressed that trade policy reforms should be sequenced. Africa's markets should be opened gradually after measures to improve regional integration had been put into place. The successful establishment of the continental free trade area was critical for boosting the industrial content of Africa's exports and strengthening intra-African trade. Efforts should also be made to reduce the cost of trading on the continent.

273. On land governance, member States were encouraged to use the African Union's guiding principles on large-scale land-based investments when negotiating land deals to ensure that Africa harnessed and sustainably utilized its abundant land resources towards the structural transformation of its economy. To improve food security, it was recommended that national and regional food reserves be established and a mechanism developed to channel food from surplus areas and countries to those in deficit. To promote regional agricultural value chains, the Committee suggested that regional value chains should be assessed against storage facilities, infrastructure, processing capacity, potential for job creation (particularly for women and young people), export and business opportunities, and investment requirements.

274. In order to have an enabling investment environment, African countries should review existing and new bilateral investment treaties in order to preserve policy space and strike a balance of obligations between the host country and investors, and ensure that domestic and regional courts were included in the mechanisms for dispute settlement.

275. Given the critical role infrastructure played in promoting economic transformation, African countries were advised to build their capacity to carry out feasibility studies, project design and preparation in order to formulate bankable infrastructure projects, and to consider public-private partnerships as an effective mechanism for funding infrastructure projects.

276. Special attention and efforts should be directed towards Central Africa, at the level of member States and regional economic communities, with a view to strengthening the capacity to collect and analyse the data needed to construct the indicators used to develop the Africa regional integration index.

277. ECA should share the methodology applied to develop the Africa regional integration index. In addition, there was a need to validate the data used for the construction of the index at the national and regional levels. ECA, with its partners, should continue improving the methodology and strengthening the capacity of member States to collect relevant data.

278. Noting the need to maintain an African land policy development agenda, as per the African Union's Declaration on Land Issues and Challenges, ECA should provide leadership to guide the transition of the tripartite Land Policy Initiative into the African Land Policy Centre, with a view to enhancing leadership, coordination, advocacy and partnerships in support of the efforts of member States.

279. ECA should deepen its important work on bilateral investment treaties with further research at country level to assess their impact on attracting investments, creating jobs and promoting economic growth. It should also examine the impact of double taxation treaties on Africa's regional integration.

4. Thirty-second session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Central Africa

280. The thirty-second session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Central Africa was held from 24 to 26 February 2016 in Douala, Cameroon, under the theme "Harnessing the agricultural potential of Central Africa for food security and the structural transformation of the subregion".

281. A total of 88 delegates from the member countries of the Economic Community of Central African States and subregional institutions attended the session, which was opened by Yaoba Abdoulaye, from the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development of Cameroon.

(a) Reports and agendas

282. The session started with a report on the activities of the Subregional Office for the financial year, which was reviewed and positively appreciated, including a call for the Office to continue supporting the regional economic communities of Central Africa and member States.

283. The Subregional Office then made a presentation on four soon-to-be-published country profiles, on Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Congo and Sao Tome and Principe. The Office explained the rationale behind the country profiles, briefed attendees on their quarterly periodicity and underlined the challenges faced in obtaining reliable national statistics.

284. The session also gave the regional economic communities and certain institutions operating in the subregion the opportunity to inform delegates on their own recent initiatives. They included the Economic Community of Central African States, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

285. Meanwhile, ECA briefed participants on recent milestones reached by the Regional Coordination Mechanism for support throughout the United Nations System to the African Union and its New Partnership for Africa's Development programme, and informed the meeting of the stakes of the ninth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

286. A debate then ensued on a convenient period to host the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts in future, in view of feeding its outcome into the Conference of Ministers. The delegates requested that the current approach of organizing the meeting in the first quarter of the year be maintained, so that the outcomes of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts sessions could continue to be fed into the Conference of Ministers.

(b) Core deliberations and key messages

287. At the session, four panel discussions took place. During the first of the discussions, which centred on considering the potential for an agricultural revolution in Central Africa, the participants deplored the negative impact of sociopolitical

instability in the subregion on livestock herders, noting that cattle owners were often displaced during periods of crisis, thus increasing conflicts with farmers.

288. With respect to the second discussion, on how to exploit the existing agricultural potential for the subregion's structural transformation, the experts noted the disconnect between the consumption patterns and the production scheme of the subregion, and stressed the negative impact that the serious deficiencies in transport infrastructure and storage facilities have on the development of the agricultural sector in Central Africa.

289. Regarding the third discussion point, on how to develop agribusiness in Central Africa, the experts noted the four main challenges of low productivity, lack of financing, infrastructure deficiencies and lack of national/subregional norms and standards for agricultural products.

290. Lastly, in connection with the fourth topic of discussion, on how to address the challenges of climate change and land-grabbing, it was recalled that the Central Africa subregion represented an area of high stakes for pharmaceutical, cosmetic, biotechnological and biofuel-producing companies, thus increasing the risk of large-scale land acquisitions. In that regard, the lack of transparency in large-scale land acquisition deals was deplored. The experts also noted the vulnerability of agricultural production in the subregion in the face of climate change and decried the low impact of research on agricultural production in Central Africa.

(c) **Recommendations**

291. The participants called upon Governments to adequately address the serious deficiencies of transport infrastructure and storage facilities, invest more in research institutions in order to improve the value of agricultural products, disseminate the results of different studies on agriculture carried out in the subregion, instil confidence between agricultural producers and buyers, set standards and norms for the production and transformation of agricultural commodities by industrial plants and be transparent on land acquisition deals while raising their peoples' awareness about the real value of their land. They urged member States to help build links between agro-producers and industrialists in order to address the problem of quantity and quality of raw agricultural commodities to be transformed, while calling upon Governments to seek advice from professionals of the food industry in order to emphasize the production of what people really like to consume.

292. The participants called upon ECA and other policy advisory institutions to always take into consideration the full spectrum of countries within the subregion in studies to evaluate the zone's agricultural potential and use, and to assist member States to restructure their agricultural sector in such a way that farmers are able to better negotiate the price of their production.

293. Specifically addressing ECA, the experts called for support the capacity-building of experts of the subregion in data collection and analysis. They urged ECA to ensure that specialized institutions be included in the field project on building the capacities of national statistics offices of Central Africa in the use of modern technologies for the collection and processing of comparable and harmonized statistics.

5. Twentieth session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Eastern Africa

294. The twentieth session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Eastern Africa was held from 8 to 11 February 2016 in Nairobi, under the theme "Institutions, decentralization and structural transformation in Eastern Africa".

295. The session was attended by 306 participants from across the subregion. Participants included delegates from the 14 member States covered by the Subregional Office; funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system; and national, subregional, regional and international organizations.

(a) ***Proceedings and main issues discussed***

296. The theme of the session was a response to the 2014 edition of the Economic Report on Africa, on “Dynamic industrial policy in Africa”, in which member States were urged to refocus their development strategies on industrialization. The report’s advocacy for designing and implementing industrial policies anchored on strong and inclusive institutions and flexible and dynamic processes was central to all aspects of the session. One particularly important component of institution building is the decentralization of political systems of governance. The session was structured so that this topic could be explored in detail and delegations could discuss how decentralization could occur in ways that balanced national and local interests, enhanced social equity and national unity for development and generated a fair deal for all.

297. Background report entitled “Institutions, decentralization and structural transformation in Eastern Africa” was prepared and circulated in advance by the Subregional Office and the National Economic and Social Council of Kenya. The report was presented in plenary on the opening day of the session. The ensuing discussion focused on a number of aspects of the theme, including the need to ensure that agricultural development was not forgotten, the challenge of achieving an appropriate balance in the devolution of power between local and central institutions and the importance of achieving inclusive growth. The theme of the session was further discussed during a round-table dinner, plenary sessions, and group and bilateral discussions.

298. In addition, three ad hoc expert group meetings were organized on the following subjects within the broad theme of the session:

- (a) The impact of trade regimes on industrialization: evidence from Eastern Africa;
- (b) Social and economic inequality in Eastern Africa;
- (c) From theory to practice: unravelling sustainable development opportunities at the county level in Kenya.

299. Lastly, the upcoming ninth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was discussed. The annual report of the Subregional Office, including performance and results, was reviewed and ideas for maximizing its impact and reach were discussed.

(b) ***Key messages***

300. The outcome document of the session, the Nairobi communiqué, which was agreed upon by all delegations and participants, sets out in full the complete list of messages and points agreed on at the session. The key messages are summarized as below.

(i) ***Economic environment and structural transformation***

301. The participants said that Eastern Africa had achieved notable economic growth over the past 10 years and made considerable progress on many socioeconomic indicators, including income poverty, child mortality and literacy. However, there were still disparities and it was crucial to ensure that future growth was inclusive and sustained.

302. The participants also noted that there were emerging threats to the subregion’s rapid economic progress, including declining commodity prices, a slowing global economy and reduced growth prospects in China. They noted with concern that Eastern Africa had yet to successfully diversify its production and export patterns, which left some countries in the subregion vulnerable to adverse changes. Acknowledging the importance of structural transformation, the participants agreed

that the pace of structural transformation progress in Eastern Africa had generally been slower than the pace of economic growth.

303. The member States welcomed the progress made by the Subregional Office in producing country profiles and expressed support for profiles to be produced for all countries in the subregion.

(ii) *Decentralization and institutions*

304. Cognizant of the important role that institutions play in governance and service delivery, the participants explored the central theme of decentralization and its capacity to reduce economic, social and spatial inequalities, especially across subnational and local jurisdictions. They noted the complexities of designing and implementing decentralization strategies.

305. The participants acknowledged that member States had different forms of decentralization and that they were at different levels of implementation.

306. They also acknowledged that through de-concentration, important opportunities to reduce geographical and spatial imbalances could be harnessed. Such opportunities could be better realized through the establishment of growth poles and regional centres of excellence where subnational jurisdictions were encouraged to collaborate as much as possible to avoid duplication of effort and exploit economies of scale.

(iii) *Social cohesion and inequality*

307. Noting that economic and social inequalities were high in some Eastern African countries, the participants stressed the importance of tackling inequalities of opportunity throughout the subregion, as doing so was critical for social cohesion, broad-based development and overall political stability.

(c) *Action points*

308. The Nairobi communiqué committed member States and participants to the following action points:

(a) Member States were encouraged to adopt smart industrial policies, because the policy space for traditional industrial policy tools had shrunk in view of the prevailing international trade regimes. Smart industrial policies need to be anchored on strong and inclusive institutions capable of translating development visions into actions and facilitating public participation in vision setting, policy formulation and decision-making. The participants further recognized the importance of the developmental State combined with purposeful leadership at all levels, in government, academia, the private sector, civil society, professional associations and local communities, and in national and subnational jurisdictions;

(b) Member States should enhance the interface between the private sector and research institutes, including academia, with a view to tackling the low rates of innovation in the subregion. They should also provide incentives for the private sector to invest in innovation and skills development, and work to strengthen the protection of intellectual property rights at the subregional level;

(c) The participants recommended the establishment of relevant communities of practice, the benchmarking and documenting of case studies, and the creation of shared inventories of lessons learned;

(d) It was agreed that the Subregional Office would continue to explore opportunities to ensure that all member States in the subregion were included in its work, in particular advisory services;

(e) The participants agreed that a macroeconomic subregional report, produced by the Subregional Office, would provide a valuable insight into the overall performance of the subregion;

(f) Lastly, member States agreed to continue to discuss and cooperate on issues relating to institutions, decentralization and structural transformation. Member States also agreed that the implementation of the commitments articulated in the communiqué should be a joint responsibility shared between the member States and ECA.

6. Thirty-first session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for North Africa

309. The thirty-first session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for North Africa was held in Rabat from 1 to 4 March 2016, under the theme “The green economy to accelerate industrialization in North Africa”. During the four-day meeting, more than 150 delegates from the seven member States, experts, academics, private sector and civil society representatives studied the potential role of the green economy in accelerating industrialization in North Africa. A session was also devoted to the country and subregional profiles, and an expert group meeting was organized on the margins of the session.

310. The green economy session was held to prepare delegations for continental deliberations during the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development. The session helped to share knowledge and experiences on the green economy and its relationship with industrial processing, and foster better understanding of the role of businesses in the transition to a green economy in North Africa. It also allowed participants to come up with recommendations to revise industrial policies and promote the development of green businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises. Participants agreed that the green economy offered prospects for improved well-being and social equality, while significantly reducing the risk of environmental disasters. The green economy encompasses economic, social and environmental policies and focuses on finding new opportunities for economic growth that reduce pressure on the environment. Opting for green growth would help put Africa’s development on a stronger, more sustainable basis.

311. The transition to a green economy must take into account countries’ specificities. Moving to a greener economy requires the use of a holistic approach, with the alignment of macroeconomic, industrial and commercial policies and public initiatives that encourage supply and demand, such as incentives and strategies to change behaviours. Delegates also agreed that the green industry should be developed within the context of inclusive growth, with a special focus on the impact of industrial policies on the environment, employment, growth and trade.

312. Regarding the subregional profile of North Africa, the Committee noted with satisfaction the progress made by the subregion in terms of economic performance and intra-regional trade. The socioeconomic indicators suggested that structural change was under way in North Africa, but at a slower pace than in other parts of the continent. The Committee stressed the need for the subregional profile to include comparisons between North Africa and other subregions in order to better understand the trends of those indicators, and for there to be further analysis of tax systems and the issues relating to financing for development.

313. Regarding the country profiles, the delegates were informed about the contents and final format of the country profiles produced in 2014 and 2015, including the issues examined, the structure, the challenges encountered and the data required to improve the country profiles. The Committee agreed on the need to build partnerships with national statistics agencies in the form of formal cooperation agreements and data sharing, in accordance with the recommendation adopted at the Conference of Ministers in Abuja in 2014. While ECA was already working in partnership with the regional economic communities and other United Nations agencies to collect data and produce the country profiles, a number of challenges remained, including the lack of disaggregated and quarterly data, which the data model of the country profiles called for, particularly for the social sector; and the need for greater involvement of member States in identifying the issues to be addressed in the 2016 country profiles based on

their challenges and priorities, and for effective cooperation with member States, including access to the necessary information and data.

314. In addition, following an expert group meeting organized on the margins of the session on “Industrialization through trade in North Africa in a multi-agreement context”, participants called for regional integration to be considered as a strategic industrialization lever. They urged countries in the subregion to accelerate such an integration to speed up industrial development and learn from major trade agreements, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. They called upon member States to participate actively in the construction of the continental free trade area in order to contribute to the overall coherence of the agreement and improve the potential economic gains for the African continent and North African countries.

315. In addition, delegates deliberated on statutory issues, including the activity report of the Subregional Office for North Africa, the ECA activity report, the strategic framework of the Subregional Office for the biennium 2018-2019 and the report on the international agenda and special initiatives.

316. Lastly, the participants discussed changing the periodicity of Committee meetings so as to hold them in the last quarter of each year, starting in 2017. The Committee agreed that the Conference of African Ministers should make a decision regarding the date of the next session, taking into account the need to harmonize with other subregional offices.

317. At the end of the session, participants called for the development of an environmentally friendly industry and a more inclusive growth model in the subregion. They encouraged States to pay special attention to the impact of industrial policies on the environment, employment, growth and trade, and on the potential role of the green economy in development.

318. The green industrialization challenge in North Africa requires stronger regional cooperation in order to share experiences and pool efforts and thereby generate and take advantage of as many opportunities as possible in the sector.

319. More specifically, the recommendations included that ECA create a database to showcase good practices in the area of the green economy in the region; strengthen regional cooperation, especially with regard to negotiations on climate change and renewable sources of energy; provide assistance to member States with regard to reporting on their achievements in the area of corporate social responsibility, with a view to generating macroeconomic data for the follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of public policies promoting the green economy; help member States to carry out more in-depth studies on areas of interest identified in various industrial strategies, with a view to better understanding opportunities for integration and the creation of regional value chains; and assist member States in designing a regional approach vis-à-vis regional trade agreements, including the identification of a complementary mechanism between the Arab Customs Union and the continental free trade area for the countries of the region.

7. Twenty-second session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Southern Africa

320. The twenty-second session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Southern Africa was held on 17 and 18 March 2016, in Lilongwe, under the theme “Implementing the Southern African Development Community industrialization strategy and road map: options and prospects”.

321. The session was opened by Mr. Goodall Gondwe, Minister of Finance and Economic Development of Malawi, in the presence of Mr. Leopold Auguste Ngomo, representing the Southern Africa Regional Office of the African Union; Mr. Anthony Ngororana, representing the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Malawi; Mr. Mohamedain E. Seif Elnr, representing the Secretary-General of the Common Market

for Eastern and Southern Africa; Mr. Angelo Mondlane, representing the Executive Secretary of the Southern African Development Community; and Mr. Willard L. Manungo, Chair of the Bureau of the twenty-second session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Southern Africa.

322. Participants included delegates from Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, as well as representatives of various organizations, including ActionAid, the African Capacity Building Foundation, the African Union Southern Africa Regional Office, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, ECA, the New Partnership for Africa's Development, Oxfam, the Port Management Association of Eastern and Southern Africa, the Southern Africa Trust, the Southern African Development Community and the United Nations Development Programme office in Malawi.

(a) *Proceedings and main issues discussed*

323. The theme of the session was inspired by the Southern African Development Community industrialization strategy and road map for 2015-2063, which was adopted in April 2015. The road map's primary orientation is the necessity for the structural transformation of the Southern African Development Community through industrialization, modernization, upgrading and closer regional integration. It calls for a shift in the strategy thrust, from reliance on resources and low-cost labour to increased investment and enhanced productivity of both labour and capital. At the session, the participants sought to unpack the road map into concrete actions that State and non-State actors should take to ensure its successful implementation.

324. Background issues paper entitled "Implementing the Southern African Development Community industrialization strategy and road map: options and prospects" was prepared and circulated in advance by the Subregional Office. The paper was also presented in plenary on the opening day of the session. The ensuing discussions focused on a number of aspects related to the theme, including mineral value addition and beneficiation and support for the agricultural sector and agribusiness.

325. The theme of the session was further discussed during a round table on financing industrialization programmes and plenary sessions on social development and how to address the macroeconomic challenges brought about by low global demand and prices for commodities and the El Niño phenomenon.

326. In addition, the expert group meeting, entitled "The energy crisis in Southern Africa: perspectives for the future", focused on energy challenges, which undermine industrialization efforts.

327. Representatives from ECA also made presentations in plenary, in which the lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals and the issues of domestication and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 were discussed. The participants acknowledged that some of the targets of the Millennium Development Goals had proved unattainable, but said that the experience had provided a number of insights into how to shape more effective strategies for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, which should be underpinned by domestic resource mobilization. They noted that Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals were complementary and said that their integration into national, subregional and continental plans was critical to achieving the ultimate objectives. However, the participants raised concerns about the lack of a clear division of the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders involved in the implementation of both agendas and recommended prompt action on the matter by the regional economic communities and the African Union Commission.

328. Lastly, the performance of the Subregional Office was reviewed and ideas to maximize its impact and reach discussed. The Office tabled a proposal on the reform of the architecture of the intergovernmental committee of experts, which the participants approved.

(b) Key messages

329. The final outcome statement agreed on by all the delegations and participants sets out in full the complete list of messages and points of the session. The following is a summary of the key messages.

(i) Economic environment

330. The participants observed that in 2015, Southern African member States had faced a decline in commodity prices that resulted in a worsening macroeconomic environment. They also noted that drought caused by El Niño had severely affected agricultural production, resulting in food shortages and rising food import bills; caused drought-induced electricity shortages; and resulted in sharp cuts in growth rates. El Niño and low commodity prices had brought increasing unemployment as companies suspended activities or closed down. Poverty had also increased, undermining progress made regarding the Millennium Development Goals and reducing the prospects for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063.

(ii) Industrialization

331. The participants viewed the implementation of the Southern African Development Community industrialization strategy and road map as a means to leverage the subregion's vast natural resources for growth, job creation and poverty reduction. The participants underscored that the financing the road map would require a redoubling of efforts from all national and regional stakeholders, including taking advantage of available funding from sources such as the African Development Bank. The delegates agreed that industrialization efforts required strengthened capacity at both national and regional levels, which could be achieved through development partners such as the African Capacity Building Foundation and ECA.

(iii) Poverty reduction and social development

332. The participants agreed that the socioeconomic development gains achieved under the Millennium Development Goals were insufficient to meet the key objectives and that much would have to be undertaken through the post-2015 development agendas (the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063). They said that the domestication of Agenda 2063 would ensure the alignment of national policies and strategies with global and continental frameworks.

(c) Action points

333. The outcome statement committed member States and development partners to a number of action points, set out below.

334. Member States were encouraged to adapt to the current global commodity slump and its consequences. Accordingly, member States should take advantage of periods of weak currencies to boost exports, thereby supporting growth in the manufacturing sector. Infrastructure projects should be prioritized in the light of reduced fiscal resources. Borrowing in foreign currencies should be conducted prudently given the high exchange rate risk, which could divert resources away from social spending towards servicing external debt. Looking ahead, the delegates urged member States to utilize increased savings during high-growth periods to maintain spending during economic downturns.

335. Reiterating concerns that lack of finance was undermining industrialization efforts, the participants urged member States to explore the viability of pension funds, financial services levies and sovereign wealth funds in financing industrial infrastructure and key commodity value chains. Member States should consider introducing a levy on payroll to fund skills development.

336. Noting further that industrialization was being hindered by a lack of appropriate technology and skills, the participants urged member States to prioritize science, technology and innovation in national and subregional programmes as the

major catalyst for industrialization. Furthermore, they should ratify the Southern African Development Community protocol on science, technology and innovation. The participants called upon member States to carry out research to identify the value chains in which the subregion had a comparative advantage, so that those chains could be targeted. The participants also called for capacity development around specific sectoral chains. In order to make training relevant, the participants urged member States to dialogue with relevant stakeholders (private training institutions and development partners) to ensure that training courses targeted the skills required for industrialization.

337. The participants said that the regional economic communities had a critical role to play in promoting industrialization. Accordingly, they urged the regional economic communities to restructure and create technical expertise in mineral processing to enhance regional coordination of minerals sector development. The regional economic communities were also asked to organize comprehensive regional capacity-building programmes for value chain identification, analysis and development. Furthermore, they should identify and develop concrete projects of a regional nature to kick-start the industrialization process. On the road map, the participants urged the regional economic communities to develop an implementation plan for the industrialization strategy with clear milestones.

338. Lastly, the participants said that the recommendations from both the expert group meeting and the session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts should be implemented expeditiously to address the energy crisis and to accelerate the industrialization process in Southern Africa.

(d) Follow-up

339. In line with the outcome statement, the Subregional Office for Southern Africa committed itself to continuing to provide technical support to the Southern African Development Community secretariat towards developing an action plan for the industrialization strategy and road map; and spearheading evidence-based research to support member States in addressing the adverse impacts of El Niño and exchange rate movements.

8. Nineteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for West Africa

340. The nineteenth session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for West Africa was held on 25 and 26 February 2016 in Dakar. The session was co-organized by the Subregional Office for West Africa and the Government of Senegal.

341. The session was officially opened by Birima Mangara, Budget Minister under the Minister of the Economy, Finance and Planning, in the presence of Dimitri Sanga, Director of the Subregional Office for West Africa, and Vincent Martin, representing the United Nations System Coordinator in Senegal. The proceedings were presided over by Senegal, with Ghana serving as Vice-President and Côte d'Ivoire serving as General Secretary.

342. A total of 103 experts attended the meeting. Fifteen members of the Economic Community of West African States sent delegations. A number of regional economic communities, inter-governmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations also participated in the session.

343. The main theme of the session was "ECA country profiles: tools to serve the structural transformation of West African countries". The country profiles aim at providing African countries with an analysis of their economic and social situation, supported by a certain number of indices, notably the African social development index, the African gender and development index and the Africa regional integration index.

344. In addition to the main theme, the general objective of the session was to enable members States and other actors in West Africa to debate emerging issues that could

affect the economic and social development of the subregion, in order to identify the main challenges and to make recommendations to accelerate the growth and structural transformation of the subregion.

345. With that perspective, and on the basis of reports prepared by the Subregional Office, the participants focused their attention on the economic and social conditions in West Africa in 2015 and the outlook for 2016; the country profiles for West Africa; the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals; the mineral linkages and the Africa Mining Vision; and the preliminary results of the African social development index in West Africa.

346. At the end of the rich and constructive discussions, the participants:

(a) Noted that the remarkable growth that West Africa had experienced for over a decade had started to decline in 2015, requiring leaders to take adequate measures to stop the trend and to relaunch growth, making it more robust, durable, inclusive and capable of creating jobs;

(b) Welcomed with interest the country profiles presented by ECA and the Subregional Office for West Africa, recognizing that the profiles constituted good instruments for decision-making on economic and social policies for the structural transformation of the economies of the subregion;

(c) Requested that ECA and the Subregional Office coordinate and pool efforts to collect, process and produce statistical data, and strengthen the capacities of national statistical systems in order to ensure better monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals;

(d) Requested that ECA and the Subregional Office help develop a joint road map at the subregional level for the national application, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals;

(e) Underlined the urgency for States to mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals into national development strategies and programmes, with the perspective of the achievement of the objectives of Agenda 2063;

(f) Underlined the need for States to put in place an adapted incentive policy in order to ensure the retention of qualified human resources in national mining administrations;

(g) Underlined the need for States to best exploit innovative financing opportunities in order to mobilize more internal resources for the structural transformation of their economies, taking into account the challenges, risks and constraints that surround them;

(h) Adopted, after discussions, the proposal of ECA and the Subregional Office to shift the period of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts from February/March to a period after the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, but emphasized that it should not be too close to the end of year, a period usually overloaded for member countries.

IV. Report of the ninth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

A. Opening of the meeting [Agenda item 1]

1. Attendance

347. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following member States: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

348. The meeting was attended by a representative of the following associate member: Western Sahara.

349. Observers from the following member States of the United Nations were present: Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Finland, Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Japan, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

350. The State of Palestine, a non-member observer State of the United Nations, was also represented.

351. The following regional economic communities were represented: Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, East African Community, Economic Community of Central African States, Economic Community of West African States, Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Southern African Customs Union, Southern African Development Community, West African Economic and Monetary Union.

352. The following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies were represented: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Labour Organization, International Monetary Fund, International Telecommunication Union, International Organization for Migration, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Office for Project Services, United Nations Capital Development Fund, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, United Nations Office to the African Union, United Nations Population Fund, World Bank, World Food Programme, World Health Organization.

353. Representatives of the following intergovernmental and regional organizations were present: African Development Bank, League of Arab States, New Partnership for Africa's Development Planning and Coordinating Agency, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

354. Observers were present from the following organizations: Action Aid Ethiopia, Advectas, Afei Diagnosis Center, Africa Forum, African Capacity-Building Foundation, African Economist, African Tax Administration Forum, AgriDevCo, Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, Arab Reform Initiative, China Hyway Group, China-Africa Business Council, China-Africa Development Fund, Chongqing Haifu Medical Technologies, Consulting Development Associates, Deer Jet Medical Company, Echnoserbe Consulting, Fight Against Desert Encroachment, Garment Industry Transparency Initiative, Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization, German Agency for International Cooperation, Global Green Growth Institute, Green Thinkers Youth Association and Network for African Youth Development, GRID-Arendal, International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas, International Planned Parenthood Federation, International Road Transport Union, Jiangsu Bioperfectus Technologies, Mother and Child Multisectoral Development Organization, BlueEnergy, One Campaign, Oxfam, Pan-African Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Poken, Reality of Aid African Network, Rotary International, Sanbao Pharmaceuticals, Save the Children, Shapoorji Pallonji, Tax Justice Network Africa, Times of Zambia, Transparency International Secretariat, Ubuntu Leadership Institute, Upbeat Marketing, Wideway Sinostar Investment, World Vision International, Wuhu Kanggi Pharmaceutical, Yuemei Group.

2. Opening statements

355. The opening session was chaired by Ms. Ashatu Kijaji, Deputy Minister of Finance of the United Republic of Tanzania, and moderated by Ms. Zeinab Badawi, Chair of the Royal African Society. Mr. Carlos Lopes, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, and Ms. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, delivered opening statements. Mr. Augustin Matata Ponyo, Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Mr. Nickey Iyambo, Vice-President of Namibia, also delivered statements. Mr. Hailemariam Dessalegn, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, made the keynote address.

356. Ms. Kijaji, the Chair of the outgoing Bureau, welcomed the participants to the conference and thanked the Government of Ethiopia, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Union Commission for the warm hospitality extended to all guests and for organizing the event. Introducing the theme of the conference, she said that the previous year's conference had focused on the implementation of Agenda 2063, Africa's continental development framework. In that regard, due recognition had been given to the need to harmonize Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and mainstream them into national development plans. Reviewing the outcome of the expert group meeting which had preceded the present conference, on the implications of adopting the 2030 Agenda and domesticating Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan, she said that the experts had underscored the need to implement both agendas, which were mutually reinforcing, in a coherent and integrated manner to ensure that synergies were leveraged and to avoid a siloed approach, which could be counter-productive and increase the burden on national policymakers.

357. Mr. Lopes noted that 2015 had been an exceptional year for Africa, with the continent contributing to discussions on the Sustainable Development Goals, illicit financial flows, domestic resource mobilization and industrial policy. Turning to the global economic development context, he said that the fall in prices of primary products was having a considerable negative impact on Africa. In 2016, with the price of oil down to US\$ 30.8 per barrel, Africa was going to earn \$47.1 billion less in trade compared to 2015, equivalent to 8 per cent of the total value of Africa's exports

in 2014. Nevertheless, that was unlikely to change the development trajectory of the entire continent: the fall in oil prices was more likely to have large adverse impacts on the few African countries whose economies depended on oil exports. Governments could seize the opportunity offered by low oil prices to scrap wasteful oil subsidies. Mr. Lopes noted that the majority of African countries were net importers of primary commodities and therefore should benefit from falling prices. It was, however, difficult to predict the long-term effect of low commodity prices on Africa's development trajectory. While the situation was a challenge for Africa, it also provided a rationale for the continent to re-orient itself towards sustainable use of the economic resources affected by price fluctuations.

358. Ms. Dlamini Zuma said that there was a 90 per cent convergence between Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda and urged all stakeholders to work together to ensure that an integrated and coherent framework for monitoring and evaluating both agendas was put in place. She then highlighted five critical trends that could either derail the implementation of Agenda 2063 or help to accelerate Africa's economic transformation. The five trends were: one, the shortage of skilled workers, which undermined Africa's competitiveness in the areas of science and technology; two, green industrialization, which could be a catalyst for economic diversification; three, modernization of agriculture and agro-processing to ensure food security and resilient growth; four, domestic investment in infrastructure, which was a driver of economic diversification and industrialization; and five, the development of the African private sector, with a view to increasing its competitiveness, innovativeness and transformative impact. She also noted the growing cost of non-integration in aviation, other transport sectors, the energy sector and the blue economy, and the need to build viable regional value chains and address the skills deficit. In addition, she called for more inclusive allocation of private and public resources for the empowerment of women and young people, greater domestic resource mobilization, and the development of African financial institutions for financing Agenda 2063, particularly an African central bank and an African monetary fund. In conclusion, she underlined the importance of platforms for improving dialogue and cooperation for the successful implementation of both agendas, highlighting successful platforms such as the African Economic Platform, the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa and the Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa.

359. Mr. Matata Ponyo said that the conference was being held at a challenging time for Africa owing to falling commodity prices, given that commodities constituted the backbone of Africa's growth. The theme of the present conference was noteworthy as the continent was shifting from an economy based on natural resources to a productive economy based on industrialization. Such a structural transformation was critical to reinforce the continent's resilience to external asymmetric shocks and ensure inclusive and sustainable development. In that regard, he noted that 2015 had been a critical year for the advancement of the continental and global development agenda, with the adoption of Agenda 2063, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement.

360. To ensure the successful implementation of both Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda, there was a need for a coherent and harmonized framework for their smooth integration into national development plans. In that regard, the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank should work together to harmonize the continental and global agendas. Regarding the continental integration agenda, he underscored the experience of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in supporting African integration to foster economic and social transformation. Concluding, he lauded the commitment of the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa to supporting Africa's development and adopting a unified approach to the implementation of both agendas. African integration could not be achieved without good governance and sound leadership.

361. Mr. Iyambo said that Africa's pursuit of an integrated and coherent approach to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals showed that development had taken centre stage on the continent. Given the considerable sums of money needed to fund both agendas, curbing illicit financial flows from Africa and mobilizing internal revenue from the continent's natural capital were viable sources of income. Talking about Namibia's development experience, he emphasized the importance of peace and security. The country had used the past 26 years to build a robust political, legal and macroeconomic architecture but needed to improve in the area of social development. The current Government was focusing, therefore, on effective governance, transparency, fighting corruption, ensuring inclusivity and addressing inequality. Namibia relied on domestic resources to fund its development agenda, with support from external partners seen as complementary. Namibia's fifth national development programme would address both national and global commitments. In tackling challenges relating to climate change, persistent drought, unemployment and widespread poverty, the country would achieve its goals under Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda.

362. Mr. Hailemariam Dessalegn said that lack of economic diversification and high dependency on commodity exports exposed many African economies to external shocks. Pursuing industrialization and structural transformation was imperative to strengthen African economies. He noted that the theme of the conference was timely and pertinent, as it focused on the operationalization of global and regional development frameworks within the context of national planning processes. Africa's priorities, as contained in the common African position, were integrated into both the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. However, the continent's development priorities, challenges and opportunities were not only global in nature but also shaped by regional and national dimensions. While the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda provided a supportive and enabling global environment for the implementation of African countries' national development plans, the frameworks were not designed to capture the totality of the continent's development priorities. Agenda 2063, together with its first 10-year implementation plan, constituted Africa's regional development framework. It complemented and reinforced the global agenda by taking into account region-specific and transboundary initiatives, such as strengthening Africa's cultural identity and common heritage and fostering an integrated and politically united Africa based on the ideals of pan-Africanism and the African renaissance.

363. Turning to the experience of Ethiopia in integrating global and continental frameworks into national development plans, he said that Ethiopia's growth and transformation plans represented a new generation of development frameworks that went beyond poverty reduction. The second growth and transformation plan, which covered the period 2016-2020, was intended to transform the country's economy and facilitate its graduation from least developed country status. In the spirit of adopting an integrated approach to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, Ethiopia had already started reflecting the goals of both agendas in the second growth and transformation plan. He concluded by urging ministers to be ambitious and disciplined in the implementation of national development objectives whilst ensuring judicious use of limited resources. He then declared open the 2016 session of the Conference of Ministers.

B. Election of the Bureau and adoption of the agenda and programme of work [Agenda item 2]

364. The following countries were elected to form the Bureau:

Chair:	South Africa
First Vice-Chair:	Democratic Republic of the Congo
Second Vice-Chair:	Algeria

Third Vice-Chair: Côte d'Ivoire

Rapporteur: Uganda

365. The agenda and programme of work were adopted with no amendments:
1. Opening of the meeting
 2. Election of the Bureau and adoption of the agenda and programme of work
 3. High-level ministerial policy dialogue on the theme of the ninth Joint Annual Meetings: "Towards an integrated and coherent approach to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals"
 4. High-level round-table discussions
 5. Consideration of the report and major recommendations of the meeting of the Committee of Experts, and consideration and adoption of the draft resolutions
 6. Consideration and adoption of the draft ministerial statement
 7. Other matters
 8. Closing of the meeting

C. High-level ministerial policy dialogue on the theme of the ninth Joint Annual Meetings: "Towards an integrated and coherent approach to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals" [Agenda item 3]

366. Prior to the start of the high-level ministerial policy dialogue, the participants heard from two representatives of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization. Ms. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Board Chair of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization, said that more than 60 per cent of the Global Alliance's funds were spent in 40 African countries. Highlighting the important role that vaccines and immunization could play in social development, she cited the high rate of return of immunization, which was the most efficient way of spending health dollars. Ministers of finance and health had an important role to play in the promotion of immunization at the national level by pushing for adequate resources to be allocated to it in national budgets. Lastly, she commended those countries that were doing well with regard to immunization and encouraged others to follow.

367. Mr. Seth Berkley, Chief Executive Officer of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization, highlighted the important role that vaccination and immunization played in increasing gross national income. He said that immunization led to reduced sickness, reduced caretaker burden, improved learning and increased productivity, with a return on investment of up to 44 times as a result of immunization. However, children continued to die from lack of immunization due to remote locations, lack of political will, inadequate monitoring and competing health priorities, among other reasons. The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization had managed to reduce the vaccine cost for the collection of current vaccines from about \$950 to \$35, although that was still considered high. He outlined the cost-sharing agreement between the Global Alliance and member countries, which was dependent on the wealth of the country, and warned that the cost of inaction was high, with substantial amounts of funding required in the event of outbreaks. Concluding, he called upon countries to prioritize investment in immunization; ensure a vaccine line

item in health budgets; focus on equity by investing in health to fully immunize every child; act now to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063; and become immunization champions.

1. Presentations

368. The high-level ministerial policy dialogue was chaired by Mr. Lopes. The panel was made up of Ms. Zaine Shasuna-Ahmed, Minister of State for Budget and National Planning of Nigeria; Mr. Maged Abdelaziz, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Africa; and Mr. Anthony Mothae Maruping, Commissioner for Economic Affairs at the African Union Commission. The Chair explained that Ms. Shasuna-Ahmed would talk about the country perspective vis-à-vis the implementation of the various development agendas; Mr. Abdelaziz would discuss how the United Nations envisaged the unfolding of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and Mr. Maruping would talk about Africa's perspectives on the domestication of Agenda 2063 and how Africa could align the various agendas.

369. Ms. Shasuna-Ahmed said that there were high levels of poverty and inequality in Nigeria. Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals would help to improve livelihoods and diversify the economy. Domestic resource mobilization was a priority for Nigeria and the country was looking to formalize the informal sector in an effort to increase the tax base. The country was working to domesticate Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda and mainstream them into the national development plan. In that regard, a national monitoring and evaluation framework incorporating the two agendas was being developed to allow for integrated reporting. She called upon the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa to help the continent to harmonize the selection of priorities, goals and indicators and to develop a harmonized monitoring and evaluation framework for a coherent approach in implementing the two agendas.

370. Mr. Abdelaziz said that the post-2015 development agenda should be viewed holistically to include the Sustainable Development Goals, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement. He commended the efforts of the various stakeholders, which had led to the post-2015 development agenda being a success for Africa. In order to achieve synergy between the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063, there was a need to understand the people-centred approach of both agendas. Many of the continent's priorities had been included in the Sustainable Development Goals thanks to the common African position on the post-2015 development agenda, although there were differences regarding implementation times and ambition. The Office of the Special Adviser on Africa could play a role in bridging the reporting gap among the global, continental and national agendas. Agenda 2063 could spur regional integration through the implementation of its flagship programmes. He highlighted the important role that the United Nations system could play in helping Africa to implement Agenda 2063 through the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa. In that regard, it was necessary for the United Nations to allocate financial resources and to issue a General Assembly resolution in support of Agenda 2063 as the new development agenda for Africa.

371. Mr. Maruping, addressing the question of how Africa was approaching the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda in an integrated manner, said that the 17 goals of the 2030 Agenda had emanated from Africa through the common African position on the post-2015 development agenda. Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda were, therefore, already in harmony with one another because the same African stakeholders had been consulted in the formulation process. However, Agenda 2063 was broader than the 2030 Agenda as it encompassed political and cultural aspects of development, in addition to the economic, social and environmental aspects of the 2030 Agenda. By

implementing Agenda 2063, Africa would therefore also be on track to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. A great deal had already been done in the area of integrating the two agendas into one, including mapping of goals, targets and indicators to identify areas of convergence and divergence. A technical team composed of officials from the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the African Capacity-Building Foundation was working on a monitoring and evaluation framework that would cater for both agendas. A single unified report would be prepared to track progress in the implementation of the integrated agenda. He concluded by stressing that Agenda 2063 was ambitious but achievable, as it had been inclusive in the formulation process and means of implementation identified.

2. Discussion

372. In the ensuing discussion, the participants raised a number of issues. They underscored the importance of strengthening national capacities in statistics for sound monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals. In that regard, the need to establish a global partnership for data as a matter of urgency was emphasized.

373. Given the mitigated success of the Millennium Development Goals, the participants also said that there was a need to improve the tracking of progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and experience-sharing among countries. In that regard, they suggested that the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Union Commission should join forces to develop a composite, synthetic indicator that would be able to summarize progress in the three dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals and rank countries according to their progress, to enable them to emulate and learn from one another.

374. The participants noted the differences in context and technical capacities of countries for the integration of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda at the national level. In that regard, they emphasized the need for clear and specific guidance from the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa, in addition to information-sharing from countries that had already conducted the domestication exercise, on how to reflect the two agendas into national plans and frameworks. They called on the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa to provide technical assistance and capacity-building to countries in order to facilitate the integration process at the national level, particularly for post-conflict countries, which might face particular challenges.

375. Lastly, the participants noted the importance of setting up effective institutions to ensure the successful implementation of the two agendas at the national level.

3. Recommendations

376. In the light of the discussions, the Conference of Ministers made the following recommendations:

(a) The African Union Commission, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa and other partners, should streamline the reporting process to ensure coherence, tracking and monitoring and evaluation;

(b) The Secretary-General of the United Nations should prioritize the establishment of a global partnership for data under United Nations intergovernmental processes, consistent with principle-based partnerships and as provided for in the Secretary-General's synthesis report entitled "The Road to Dignity by 2030";

(c) The African Union, the United Nations and other partners should provide technical and financial assistance to both post-conflict countries and countries experiencing conflict to help them to implement Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals;

(d) The General Assembly of the United Nations should adopt a resolution and allocate financial resources to the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa in support of Agenda 2063 as the new development agenda for Africa.

D. High-level round-table discussions [Agenda item 4]

1. Harmonization, synergies and sensitization: the need for a coherent development approach

377. The first round-table discussion was moderated by Ms. Dlamini Zuma. The panel was made up of Ms. Frannie Lautier, Senior Vice-President of the African Development Bank; Mr. Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development; and Mr. Abdou Kolley, Minister of Finance and Economic Affairs of the Gambia.

(a) Discussion

378. Introducing the topic of the round-table discussion, the moderator emphasized the need for synergies and harmonization between the regional long-term development framework (Agenda 2063) and the global framework (the 2030 Agenda), given that the two had similar objectives. Cross-collaboration between government policymakers and the private sector, civil society and other relevant stakeholders was necessary. In addition, she stressed the need to raise awareness of both agendas among the public with a view to harnessing national ownership, which was essential for effective implementation.

379. There was general consensus among the panellists on the need to enhance harmonization and synergies between the two agendas in order for the continent to achieve the expected results. Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the agendas had two important purposes, namely accountability and learning. The Joint Annual Meetings were seen as an important platform to share best practices and learn from other countries regarding the implementation of development agendas. It was also highlighted that some of the initiatives currently being implemented by key pan-African institutions were also encompassed in Agenda 2063. For instance, four out of the five priority areas of the African Development Bank (feed Africa, power Africa, integrate Africa and industrialize Africa) were integrated into Agenda 2063, which was an advantage for the implementation of Agenda 2063 on the continent. The continent should take advantage of ongoing flagship projects and fast-track initiatives of the African Union, such as the African commodity strategy, the continental financial institutions and the pan-African e-network, as instruments to fast-track implementation.

380. All the panellists underscored the need for member States to focus on implementation and effective communication at all levels. Prioritizing the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals should be key to all government policymakers. Pan-African institutions such as the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank, working in close collaboration with other stakeholders including universities, should provide support to member States in designing sound strategies aimed at promoting effective implementation of the two agendas.

381. Implementation of the two agendas in parallel was a huge and complex task and that developing a coherent framework that integrated both agendas was crucial. There were challenges ahead, in particular falling commodity prices, which had negative implications for the gross domestic product (GDP) and fiscal space of commodity-exporting countries. In addition, the substantial decrease in official development assistance (ODA) was also having a negative impact on many developing countries. The current drop in ODA flows to Africa had been triggered by the massive influx of migrants to developed countries, especially in Europe, which meant that a number of international partners had switched their support from ODA to the migrant crisis.

382. The panellists noted that the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 were not dissimilar, with both aiming to achieve similar objectives. Given that Africa was part of the global community, there was a need to harmonize the two agendas, to bring them into line with national development strategies and ensure effective implementation. This would play a significant role in reducing implementation costs and improving evaluation and reporting at national and international levels. However, there were two main challenges to consider. First, the timeframes set for each agenda were different. Thought would have to be given to how a long-term continental framework divided into 10-year implementation plans could be reflected in a 4- or 5-year national plan. Second, the financial resources needed were considerable. In addition to ODA, mobilizing domestic resources would be critical in order for member States to achieve the goals and targets of the agendas.

383. Following the panel's discussion, the participants agreed that the two agendas were similar and complemented each other. To ensure effective implementation, the participants emphasized the need to domesticate the indicators contained in the two agendas into national development strategies. That would go some way to addressing the problem of scarce financial resources for the implementation of development goals, which many African countries were facing. Indeed, harmonization of global and continental agendas into national development strategies and programmes would help member States by prioritizing budget allocation to the implementation of such programmes. There was also a need for increased domestic resource mobilization to avoid the heavy dependency of member States on donor support in the implementation of the two agendas.

384. The need for data to monitor the implementation of both agendas was raised by many participants, with concerns raised regarding the unavailability of data in many African member States despite efforts made by the continent to improve statistics. They called on the pan-African institutions, including the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank, to help member States to develop a framework linking the indicators of both agendas to current development goals for easy monitoring and accountability. Member States should also make use of existing research institutions, universities and initiatives such as the African Peer Review Mechanism to monitor and assess development indicators. Nevertheless, despite the call for improved monitoring, the participants said it was more important to focus on implementation of the agendas first, before trying to measure the results.

385. Although there were calls to accelerate the harmonization of the implementation of the two agendas at national level, others pointed out that how to achieve such harmonization was a challenge given that African countries were at different levels of development. Solidarity among African countries was one of the solutions put forward, with participants proposing that countries with strong economies could assist ones with weaker economies, including landlocked countries, in the implementation and achievement of both agendas. Some participants noted that there was ongoing harmonization of activities and

programmes in some subregions of the continent, such as the use of integrated accounting systems, the introduction of monetary integration such as the West African Monetary Zone, and the construction of energy power pools such as the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, which would be able to supply electricity not only to Ethiopia but also to neighbouring countries. In that regard, the participants called for incremental harmonization and implementation of the agendas.

386. In addition to financial resources, achieving the development goals required the coordination of regional efforts by all African member States, such as visa exemptions through the implementation of protocols on free movement of people and trade facilitation to improve the movement of goods, persons and capital across the region. Competitive advantages should also be fostered. Where necessary, public-private partnerships should be encouraged in the implementation of development agendas, although there was a need to strike a balance between government and private sector involvement. Governments should play a leading role in areas where they traditionally did better, and vice versa.

387. Lastly, the participants underscored the need for member States to improve international communication and coordination in the implementation of the developmental goals. At the national level, there should be coherence and coordination among line ministries. All ministries should be aware of and involved in the implementation of the developmental goals. At the continental level, Africa should be able to speak with one voice when communicating with the international community.

(b) Recommendations

388. Following the discussion, the following recommendations were made:

(a) Member States should accelerate the harmonization of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda with their national development strategies and plans in order to concurrently achieve the targets of the two agendas;

(b) Member States should focus their efforts on indicators that are measureable and achievable;

(c) Member States should enhance their efforts to improve data in order to effectively measure the indicators of the development agendas;

(d) Member States should enhance domestic resource mobilization for the achievement of the developmental agendas;

(e) Development partners should strengthen their commitment to providing financial resources for the implementation of the development agendas;

(f) Member States should prioritize the domestication of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda into their national development strategies and plans;

(g) Cross-collaboration between government policymakers and the private sector, civil society and other relevant stakeholders should be encouraged;

(h) Regional coherence should be improved by working closely with the regional economic communities to reach out to various stakeholders and identify best practices;

(i) Given that effective public-private partnerships are critical in order to respond to resource constraints, off-budget provision for such partnerships should be allocated as a short-term solution.

2. Integration of the results framework, monitoring and evaluation

389. The second round-table discussion was moderated by Mr. Calle Schlettwein, Minister of Finance of Namibia. The panel was made up of Mr. Bahati Lukwebo, Minister of Economy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo; Ms. Edith Clemence Yaka, Minister Delegate to the Budget of Burkina Faso; Mr. Gyan Chandra Acharya, United Nations Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States; and Mr. Emmanuel Nnadozie, Executive Secretary of the African Capacity-Building Foundation. Each panellist gave a short presentation and a general discussion ensued thereafter.

(a) Presentations

390. Mr. Lukwebo talked about his country's experience and explained that the Democratic Republic of the Congo had integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into its national plans. In recognition of the convergence between Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda, the monitoring and evaluation frameworks of national implementation plans should be brought into line with those envisioned in both agendas.

391. Ms. Yaka said that Burkina Faso was on track regarding defining its national development plan, which was known as the national social and economic development programme. That was being done through a national institutional mechanism comprising a strategic guidance committee, a technical committee and a drafting committee. A round table would be held to bring together both technical and financial partners to internalize international and regional commitments, including Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda into the country's national plan.

392. Mr. Acharya said that, owing to the high convergence and synergies between Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda, there was a need for a common, integrated framework for results, monitoring and evaluation. Such a framework would facilitate the early achievement of results and keep the momentum going with a view to creating greater impact. To that end, innovative technologies must be utilized to facilitate production and utilization of new analytical insights emanating from disaggregated data. The importance of an integrated approach had become increasingly apparent, especially in the context of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States with limited existing national capacities.

393. Mr. Nnadozie said that integration of the results framework was possible given that the Sustainable Development Goals were embedded in Agenda 2063 and hence the latter could serve as a vessel to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals, as the Goals dealt with economic, social and sustainability issues, while Agenda 2063 addressed the same issues in addition to political, cultural and continent-specific matters such as regional integration. Under the leadership of the African Union, Africa had already adopted a credible integration approach for the results framework that would lead to the domestication of the harmonized agendas at the regional and national levels, the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation framework that would cater for both agendas, the compilation and issuance of a single periodic performance report, and the establishment of an accountability channel. The 12 flagship projects of Agenda 2063 that were already being implemented were a sign of the progress being made by Africa. He acknowledged the critical role of data and statistics for implementation and called for more support for the continent's statisticians. Recognizing the role that the African Union was already playing, he singled out financing, capacity and coordination as the key things that Africa must pay attention to. He concluded by pledging the continued support of the

African Capacity-Building Foundation to member States in addressing capacity and financial challenges.

(b) Discussion

394. During the ensuing discussion, the participants raised a number of points, including the definition and harmonization of indicators, capacity development and financing.

395. With regard to the definition of indicators, the participants acknowledged the work that had already been done on the results framework and agreed that monitoring should be gradual to ensure that the indices and indicators developed captured the process within member States based on their capabilities and priorities.

396. A common framework was necessary to ensure that data were collected using the same standards. Harmonization, including *ex ante* or prior harmonization of the indicators, would provide the necessary metadata against which progress could be measured. That would require defining a systematic pyramid and hierarchy of indicators.

397. There was a need for skills development and capacity-building to ensure proper monitoring, evaluation and reporting. Well-trained professionals such as statisticians were needed to ensure that each sector was taken into account. Financing was also identified as critical to the success of the Agendas, especially as far as monitoring, evaluation and reporting were concerned.

(c) Recommendations

398. Based on the discussion, the following recommendations were made:

(a) African countries should set up a results framework within a harmonized monitoring and evaluation framework at the national level with a view to achieving the harmonization of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda 2030 with national plans;

(b) The African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa should prepare guidelines on how to integrate the results framework, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda and provide support to African countries in adapting such guidelines to their own context;

(c) To ensure coherence in the follow-up process, the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and the Bahir Dar follow-up mechanisms should constitute the platform for follow-up and review of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda;

(d) The African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa, other United Nations agencies and the African Capacity-Building Foundation, in collaboration with statistical training centres, should support the development of capacity in monitoring, evaluation, reporting and statistics at all levels in African countries.

3. Financing

(a) Discussion

399. The third round-table discussion was moderated by Ms. Malado Kaba, Minister of Economy and Finance of Guinea. The panellists were Ms. Monah Quartey, Deputy Minister of Finance and Economic Planning of Ghana; Mr. Fred Omach, Minister of State for Finance, Planning and Economic Development of Uganda; and Mr. Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

400. The moderator set the scene by noting that the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 would require increased financing. At a time when ODA was decreasing owing to the migrant crisis and falling oil prices, it was essential to mobilize domestic resources. Indeed, at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, it was said that 70 per cent of the continent's financing should be raised domestically, which would bring more stability to financing for development. Public-private partnerships, remittances and widened tax bases were also important. However, some types of financing came with risks. Referring to Guinea's experience, the moderator said that public-private partnerships, for example, could endanger fiscal sustainability if they were not set up correctly. In addition, Africa needed strategies to reduce its vulnerability to external shocks.

401. Ms. Quartey said that Ghana's national development agenda – the Ghana shared growth and development agenda – set out the country's development priorities for the period 2014-2017. It had four primary pillars: putting people first, having a strong and resilient economy, ensuring transparency and accountable governance, and filling infrastructure gaps. Ghana was also working on a longer-term development strategy for 2057, within which short- and medium-term plans would be derived. All the plans would be aligned with Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

402. At the start, Ghana had financed its development agenda from both the usual external sources such as ODA and foreign direct investment, as well as internally. However, when Ghana had become a lower-middle-income country, external sources of finance had dwindled, requiring the country to find alternative, internal sources of financing.

403. Ghana had succeeded in creating investment confidence among its external partners, such as the International Monetary Fund, by holding regular performance reviews, ensuring fiscal discipline and widening the fiscal space to ensure macroeconomic stabilization. Ghana had increased tax revenues by undertaking reforms in tax administration and revenue management and introducing electronic platforms for tax collection and expenditure tracking. The country had also introduced an integrated financial management system to rationalize public expenditure, including paying salaries electronically to get rid of ghost employees. State-owned enterprises had started borrowing on State guarantees to decrease public debt service. Thanks to the Eurobonds that the country had begun issuing, Ghana had created fiscal space. The country was also approaching private equity funds operating both internationally and continentally. Using revenue from oil, the country had set up a sovereign wealth fund and an infrastructure investment fund to protect itself from fluctuations in the price of oil. Ghana had issued diaspora bonds for various infrastructure projects, and was exploring the use of municipal bonds to provide local authorities with the resources to fund priority local projects. Ghana had also subscribed to the Africa50 Infrastructure Fund as a means to find future sources of funding of its infrastructure programme.

404. Mr. Omach said that Africa's central bank reserves, totalling some \$600 billion, were kept in Europe and the United States of America, rather than on the continent. The African Development Bank was governed by Africa and had an AAA rating, yet the bank was not used enough for financing projects. He asked why African countries should continue to struggle to secure loans from development partners when they could potentially access national or regional resources through central banks and investment banks. Moreover, funds borrowed from external sources were frequently not fully utilized, with a rate of absorption of only 50 per cent, despite the fact that interest had to be paid fully on such loans. Insisting on the importance of utilizing African institutions to achieve the goals set out in Agenda 2063, he said that the African Development Bank should finance the implementation of Agenda 2063, while

instruments such as diaspora bonds should facilitate its implementation and financing. A declaration should be issued calling for all of Africa's reserves to be lodged in the African Development Bank to enable the funds to yield a good dividend and to be utilized in Africa to further the goals of Agenda 2063.

405. Africa should allocate some of those resources to industrialization, power generation and the development of power grids. Hydroelectric power could be extended across borders for the effective industrialization of Africa. There was also a need to add value to raw materials to ensure that more revenue was generated for development programmes. Domestic revenue collection and low domestic capital formation were two other major challenges for Africa. Lastly, efforts should be made to increase intra-African trade, which accounted for less than 20 per cent of the continent's total trade.

406. Mr. Erastus Mwencha said that Africa was committed to implementing Agenda 2063 as a strategy for economic transformation and inclusive growth. The key feature of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals was the need to transform, industrialize and change the structure of African economies. If this was to happen, the current growth trajectory needed to change. The current growth rate of 4 per cent was unlikely to yield the results required; instead Africa needed to be growing by at least 7 per cent. The continent must plug the large investment gap and strive to raise the investment rate to around 25 per cent of GDP. Africa also needed to mobilize sufficient domestic resources. The continent should strive to cover 100 per cent of administrative costs and develop a portfolio of bankable projects to utilize idle funds such as those in pension funds and central bank reserves. In addition, domestic resources should fund 75 per cent of Agenda 2063's first 10-year implementation plan and 25 per cent of African peacekeeping efforts. African sovereign funds contained in excess of \$600 billion, but the returns did not benefit Africa. Another major challenge facing the continent was how to mobilize international funds. The Middle East and China were sitting on huge sovereign funds and Africa needed to be able to attract those funds with viable projects. Lastly, he said that industrialization was key for transformation. Governments needed to prioritize the flow of financing and channel it towards industry in particular.

407. The moderator then opened the floor for general discussion. Some participants voiced the opinion that Africans had the wrong attitude towards development, which jeopardized the successful implementation of development frameworks at the national and regional levels. For instance, up to 75 per cent of the African Union's budget was funded by external partners because African countries were not paying their contributions. Similarly, some African countries continued to rely on external support to finance their development initiatives.

408. Participants observed that accurately assessing the tax potential of countries and sustaining tax revenues in the long-term was essential for increasing financing for development. Tax potential was difficult to assess, owing to large informal sectors in most African countries and tax exemptions. In that regard, reliable data were essential.

409. Among the measures for enhancing domestic resource mobilization discussed by the participants, it was noted that a flexible tax system could be beneficial to the development of the private sector and could lead to increased public revenues. Exploiting pension funds was also identified as a good option. The contribution of the financial sector was also important.

410. Financial inclusion reforms and interventions were key to expanding access to finance and financial products, thereby creating jobs, facilitating self-employment and reducing poverty. In particular, participants underscored the importance of making financing accessible and affordable for small and medium enterprises. Financial inclusion reforms and interventions targeting

smallholder farmers and leveraging value chain systems would boost domestic resource mobilization and strengthen institutions and joint programming, particularly between central banks, tax revenue authorities and national statistics offices.

411. The potential of illicit financial flows to finance Africa's development was highlighted, with participants pointing out the importance of reliable data and statistics. In particular, statistics on revenue, balance of payments and reserves could help to curb illicit financial flows. African central bank reserves, pension funds, remittances and diaspora bonds were also identified as having the potential to finance Africa's development priorities and structural transformation needs. Regarding external borrowing as a potential source of development finance, participants said that risk-sharing and mitigation measures were necessary in order to relieve national balance sheets of debt-related risks. In addition, there was a need to educate citizens and engage them through measures such as a simplified citizens' budget, which would allow them to understand what their Government was doing.

412. Participants also highlighted the importance of the World Bank's International Comparison Programme. The findings of the programme could be used to compare regional markets in terms of consumption and production, which would be useful for devising proper industrial strategies for African countries, based on consumption and production patterns. It would also help to better define the infrastructure needed to foster intra-African trade and industrialization. The findings of the International Comparison Programme should be better exploited by policymakers, with the involvement of statisticians. Cross-border financing for development programmes, supported by the African Union and the regional economic communities, was also discussed in the context of high-quality data, especially on the tax potential of countries, and markets of consumption and production.

413. The participants reflected on the need to enhance intra-African trade and establish an African commodity stock market that would be effective in building investor confidence. In that context, it was important to share success stories and expertise among African countries.

414. A representative of the African Development Bank said that the bank had an ambitious 10-year strategy called the High Fives to transform the continent's economic landscape. The five main areas were "light up and power Africa", "feed Africa", "integrate Africa", "industrialize Africa" and "improve quality of life for the people of Africa". In September 2015 the bank had launched a new deal for energy in Africa worth \$12 billion over the following five years. The bank would also inject \$40-50 billion into energy initiatives and work with finance ministers to increase the share of national budgets spent on the energy sector from 0.3 per cent of GDP to over 3 per cent. There were also plans to scale up investment in water and sanitation, skills development, education and combatting youth unemployment, with the bank working actively with the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa on such initiatives. Providing Africa's youth with relevant skills would enable the implementation of the continent's growth agenda, create at least 25 million jobs and help stem the tide of migration.

(b) Recommendations

415. In the light of the discussions, the following recommendations were made:

(a) Countries should enhance domestic resource mobilization, making it the first source of financing for Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals; undertake tax reforms and establish a flexible tax system to allow the private sector to grow and increase public revenue; take action to

deepen and widen their financial systems; and promote financial inclusion and access to finance through financial sector reforms, in particular for small and medium enterprises and smallholder farmers;

(b) Bold action should be taken to curb illicit financing through the strengthening of institutional frameworks. A cross-country institutional arrangement should be introduced, with integrated statistics. Joint initiatives aiming to foster cross-border exchanges through improved financial systems should be supported by the regional economic communities to help land-locked countries;

(c) Beyond mobilizing financing for Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals, emphasis should be placed on the quality of spending. Every cent spent on the implementation of the two agendas should bring about optimum outcomes;

(d) There is a need to take advantage of the development potential of the African diaspora by setting up an optimal environment. There is also an urgent need to take advantage of the resources of African central banks to catalyse the investments needed for Africa's structural transformation;

(e) Insisting on the importance of utilizing African institutions to achieve the goals set out in Agenda 2063, a declaration should be issued calling for all of the continent's reserves to be lodged in the African Development Bank to enable the funds to yield a good dividend and be utilized to finance Agenda 2063. The African Development Bank should finance the implementation of Agenda 2063, while instruments such as diaspora bonds should facilitate its implementation and financing;

(f) There is a need to educate the public and engage them through measures such as a simplified citizens' budget to enable them to understand what their Governments are doing. In line with this, it is important to link the financing of Agenda 2063 to the most vulnerable people to ensure that they are the ones who galvanize change from the bottom. More generally, Africa needs a paradigm shift, a change of mind-sets and attitudes towards development. To achieve that, countries need, among other things, a better focus on education, health and communication.

E. Consideration of the report and major recommendations of the meeting of the Committee of Experts, and consideration and adoption of the draft resolutions [Agenda item 5]

416. The participants considered the report of the meeting of the Committee of Experts, together with the Committee's recommendations, set out as 17 draft resolutions. Following a discussion on some issues in the report and the resolutions, the participants took note of the report and endorsed the draft resolutions with some amendments.

F. Consideration and adoption of the draft ministerial statement [Agenda item 6]

417. The participants considered a draft version of the ministerial statement, made general comments and observations and proposed minor amendments. Following those observations, the ministerial statement was unanimously adopted, as amended.

G. Other matters [Agenda item 7]

418. No matters were raised under the agenda item.

H. Closing of the meeting [Agenda item 8]

419. Closing remarks were made by Mr. Lopes, Ms. Dlamini Zuma and Mr. Matata Ponyo. They applauded the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa for their strong and fruitful collaboration in serving Africa and the successful organization of the ninth Joint Annual Meetings. They also commended the proactive and effective participation of the experts and the in-depth discussions on the theme, which had resulted in comprehensive recommendations and 17 resolutions that would shape countries' priorities moving forward.

420. They emphasized the fact that Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda offered important opportunities to accelerate the inclusive and sustainable structural transformation of Africa. They noted with satisfaction the agreement and collective commitment of member States to urgently build synergies between Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda and their clear articulation on what it would take to incorporate both agendas into their national development plans.

421. They emphasized the importance of statistics, noting that accurate, high-quality and timely statistics were essential for the effective implementation of the integrated agendas, as well as for tracking progress.

422. They also stressed the importance of domestic resource mobilization given the drastic reduction of ODA. In that regard, they underscored the need to promote mutual financial and technical support mechanisms among countries through which those with more resource endowments would lift up less developed ones.

423. Lastly, they stressed that the spirit of pan-Africanism would help to turn the rich ideas discussed during the Joint Annual Meetings into a call to action and encourage all to rise to the challenge.

424. After the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chair then declared the meeting closed.

Annex I

Ministerial statement

We, African ministers of finance, planning, economic development and integration,

1. Meeting in Addis Ababa on 4 and 5 April 2016, for the ninth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development,
2. Honoured by the presence of the Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Hailemariam Dessalegn, the Vice-President of Namibia, Nickey Iyambo, the Prime Minister of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Augustin Matata Ponyo, members of the African Forum of former Heads of State and Government, governors of our national and regional central banks, and other high-level dignitaries and special guests,
3. Having deliberated on the theme “Towards an integrated and coherent approach to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals” and cognizant that, with the advent of these two agendas, the continent now has the frameworks for a qualitative transition towards a new transformative and people-centred development trajectory that combines economic, social, and environmental and other developmental considerations,

Do hereby state that:

4. We note that Africa’s growth rate declined slightly to 3.7 per cent in 2015, from 3.9 per cent in 2014. Nevertheless, the continent’s growth rate remained above the global average and that of all other regions, except for East and South Asia, owing to continued improvement in economic governance and macroeconomic management, increased domestic demand, and diversified trade and investment ties within Africa and between Africa and the rest of the world. Growth is expected to increase in 2016 and 2017, driven mainly by strong domestic demand and investment. Internal and external risks, however, such as the weak recovery of the global economy and the economic slowdown in emerging economies, low commodity prices and the depreciation of currencies, weather-related shocks and security concerns in some African countries, still pose threats to Africa’s endeavours to achieve growth.
5. We recognize that Africa has made considerable progress towards social outcomes, with poverty levels dropping in the various subregions, albeit at a slow pace. Notwithstanding these improvements, however, inequalities persist with regard to income, gender, youth, people with disability, access to opportunities and geographical location.
6. We also recognize that multiple development frameworks have not met Africa’s imperative for accelerated, inclusive and sustainable growth, thus weakening the continent’s prospects for structural transformation.
7. We acknowledge that Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development offer a unique opportunity for Africa to achieve inclusive and transformative development with equity. In this context, we underscore the importance for Africa of adopting an integrated and coherent approach to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.
8. We also acknowledge that the implementation of, reporting on, and follow-up to both agendas require a coherent strategy for the integration of goals, targets and indicators, along with a harmonized review and reporting platform.

9. We recognize that reporting on these two apparently separate frameworks could prove to be onerous and thus recommend that a unified reporting platform should be set in place consistent with the equivalence of goals and targets established through the goal, indicator mapping and costing exercise that has been undertaken.

10. We take note of the huge capacity requirements for the implementation of both Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda and the critical importance of prioritizing related capacity-building at all levels.

11. We welcome continuing efforts by the African Union Commission, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa and other affiliated United Nations agencies, the African Development Bank, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, the regional economic communities and African statisticians, to develop a core set of continental indicators to track progress on both agendas, taking into account the levels of development of individual countries, in order to facilitate benchmarking and comparability. In this regard, we urge all relevant stakeholders to enable the operationalization of the pan-African institute for statistics with the proposed name of the Nelson Mandela African Institute for Statistics in Tunisia and the Pan-African Statistical Training Centre in Côte d'Ivoire.

12. We also encourage technical partners (the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, the African Development Bank and the African Capacity Building Foundation), in consultation with the regional economic communities, to continue to develop a common instrument for following up and reviewing progress made with regard to Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda and reporting to platforms such as the Africa Regional Forum for Sustainable Development, the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and the Bahir Dar follow-up mechanism.

13. We acknowledge the efforts of the African Union Commission, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa and other affiliated United Nations agencies, the African Development Bank, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, the African Peer Review Mechanism, the regional economic communities and member States, to mainstream Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals into the national development plans of African countries, following the African Union reporting architecture.

14. We also note that, through the process of their incorporation into national development plans, the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 endeavours to integrate the two agendas. We appreciate that the measurement framework that has been developed highlights the convergence of the two agendas at the target level, which has made it possible to identify common indicators. We recognize that these synergies provide an opportunity to implement the two initiatives without unduly burdening policymakers with multiple development frameworks and onerous transactions and coordination costs.

15. We are cognizant that Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals have to be integrated into national development plans and the strategic plans of the regional economic communities. We are aware that the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development currently serves as the continent's platform for dialogue on issues of sustainable development in the context of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. To ensure coherence in the follow-up process, the Forum and the Bahir Dar follow-up mechanism should constitute the platform for follow-up and review of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda.

16. We note that a pivotal role in the process of raising global awareness is played by such issues as Africa's contribution to the crafting of the 2030 Agenda, setting out the Sustainable Development Goals, the similarities between these Goals and Agenda 2063, and the implications of these commonalities for the implementation process. We recognize that both agendas are comprehensive, underpinned by an extensive consultation process, and share common aspirations of structural transformation and sustainable development, and therefore compatible.

17. We recognize that the implementation of both agendas will require substantial amounts of financial and non-financial resources from all sources. Cognizant of the unpredictability of official development assistance, we underscore the role of domestic resources as the main source of finance for the two agendas, in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.

18. We recall the commitment of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to establish an infrastructure platform aimed at coordinating investments in infrastructure; developing a technology facilitation mechanism to support innovation, science and technology; strengthening international cooperation on tax matters to stem the tide of illicit financial outflows; and improving capacities for domestic resource mobilization.

19. We are mindful that climate change undermines Africa's ability to attain its development goals. We therefore welcome the adoption of the Paris Agreement by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and recognize the opportunities that the agreement presents for the transition to a low-carbon development pathway in Africa.

20. We call upon the African Union Commission, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, to assist member States in the implementation of the Paris Agreement, in particular with their nationally determined contributions, to ensure alignment of their national development plans with the Agreement.

21. We recognize the key role of regional integration in the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We call upon the United Nations to continue its support for Africa's transformative agenda by aligning itself with, and supporting the priorities of, the African Union, in particular Africa's aspirations for a continental free trade agreement, regional integration and trade, industrialization and the related goals of Agenda 2063, including the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa and the Action Plan for the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa.

22. We also underscore the benefits of migration for economic and human development in Africa. We therefore stress the importance of cooperation at the national, regional and international levels to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration with respect for the human rights and dignity of migrants, regardless of their origin and status.

23. We acknowledge that promoting peace and security and combating terrorism are critical for Africa to achieve the desired development. We therefore invite member States to join together to ensure that peace and security are upheld in Africa and across the world.

Vote of thanks

24. We thank the Government and people of Ethiopia for the hospitality that they have continued to afford the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa, and also for the courtesies extended to us, which ensured the success of our meetings.

25. Finally, we wish to extend our gratitude to the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa for successfully convening the ninth Joint Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

Annex II

Resolutions

A. Joint resolution of the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa

937 (XLIX). Mainstreaming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 into national strategic frameworks, actions plans and programmes

The Conference of Ministers,

Welcoming with deep appreciation the adoption by the African Union Assembly in January 2015 of Agenda 2063,

Welcoming the adoption by the General Assembly in September 2015 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the call for its full and effective implementation,

Mindful of the challenges associated with the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, and aware that the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will pose even greater challenges for member States owing to the larger number of goals, targets and indicators involved and the focus on multidimensional sustainability, including related global challenges of technology, financing and statistics,

Taking note of the convergence of the two agendas and the need to ensure coherence and build synergies between them,

Concerned about the limited financial and human resources for implementing and monitoring development plans, in particular given the resource constraints already experienced by the national statistical offices,

Aware that the core set of continental indicators should be derived from the indicators in the 10-year implementation plan for Agenda 2063 and the global set of indicators in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, taking into account the commonalities and variations that exist between the two agendas,

1. *Calls upon* the African Union Commission, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, regional economic communities and the Planning and Coordinating Agency of the New Partnership for Africa's Development to create awareness among member States about the importance of a coherent and integrated approach to the implementation of and follow-up to Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

2. *Requests* the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank to work together to establish composite indicators to facilitate the strategic monitoring of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

3. *Requests* the African Union Commission, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, regional economic communities and the Planning and Coordinating Agency of the New Partnership for Africa's Development to foster the incorporation of both agendas into national strategic frameworks;

4. *Requests* the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank to develop an integrated monitoring and evaluation framework that will inform a single annual progress report on the implementation of both agendas;

5. *Requests* the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Union Commission to call upon the Secretary-General of the United Nations to establish expeditiously the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data under United Nations intergovernmental processes, consistent with principle-based partnerships and as provided for in the Secretary-General's Synthesis Report entitled "The Road to Dignity by 2030";

6. *Requests* member States to take the necessary measures to incorporate the goals, targets and indicators of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

7. *Requests* member States to take the necessary steps to integrate Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goal indicators into their national development plans.

B. Resolutions of the Economic Commission for Africa

938 (XLIX). Integrated reporting and follow-up on sustainable development

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling that, since 2005, the progress reports on the Millennium Development Goals in Africa have provided a rigorous assessment of Africa's progress in achieving the Goals and served as a basis for policy discussion, peer learning and advocacy,

Noting that the reports have also provided the impetus for strong and coordinated action by Africa's top decision-makers to accelerate progress towards attainment of the Millennium Development Goals,

Acknowledging that the reports were jointly produced by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme pursuant to the mandate conferred by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union at its fourth ordinary session, in January 2005,

Recalling the commitments made by member States in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,

Reaffirming that the transition to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the adoption of Agenda 2063 call for a renewed mandate for integrated reporting on both agendas by the partner institutions,

Noting that, beyond tracking progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, it is important to develop a single platform to discuss gaps, opportunities and lessons learned in implementation and to propose measures for corrective action,

Recalling that, in the outcome document of the 2015 United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development",⁴ the Heads of State and Government and high representatives undertook to provide systematic follow-up and review at the various levels, as set out in the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action

⁴ General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015.

Agenda, and emphasized that quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data would be needed to help with the measurement of progress and to ensure that no one was left behind,⁵

Recognizing the need for follow-up on both Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

1. *Requests* the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank to use the integrated results framework as the basis for producing an annual report on progress in the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which will be supported with information on the status of the data system on the continent;

2. *Calls upon* the Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the African Development Bank and other partners, to take all necessary steps, in the context of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, to designate the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development as the platform for the review of progress on and follow-up to Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; to align the consultations of the Africa Regional Forum with the annual reporting cycle of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda; and to enlarge the mandate of the Africa Regional Forum to include a review of progress, challenges and gaps in meeting the commitments outlined in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda;

3. *Calls upon* member States to formulate strategies to enhance domestic resource mobilization, as called for by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, including by stepping up efforts to combat illicit financial flows and to strengthen tax administration and by adopting policies to generate additional resources and to combat corruption in all its forms.

939 (XLIX). Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

The Conference of Ministers,

Reaffirming the commitments on sustainable development made by African countries at major United Nations conferences and summits on economic, social and environmental development, in the outcomes of their review conferences, and in declarations and decisions adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union,

Welcoming General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, in which the Assembly recognized the importance of building on existing follow-up and review mechanisms at the regional level, encouraged all Member States to identify the most suitable regional forum in which to engage, and encouraged the regional commissions to continue supporting member States in this regard,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 67/290 of 9 July 2013, in which the Assembly formally established the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development to replace the Commission on Sustainable Development, invited the regional commissions to contribute to the work of the Forum, and decided that the Forum, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, should conduct regular reviews, starting in 2016, on the follow-up to and implementation of sustainable development commitments and objectives,

Acknowledging that the Addis Ababa Action Agenda comprises a comprehensive set of policy actions by member States, with tangible measures to finance sustainable development, transform the global economy and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals,

⁵ Ibid, paras. 47 and 48.

Recalling its resolution 930 (XLVIII), in which it invited the Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the African Union Commission and other partners, to take all necessary steps to convene the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development,

Acknowledging the need to align the biennial consultations of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development with the annual meetings of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development,

1. *Requests* the Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the African Union Commission and other partners, to convene on an annual basis the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for follow-up to and review of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

2. *Urges* the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission and the relevant United Nations funds and programmes, to foster the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development;

3. *Decides* that the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development will build on existing platforms, avoiding the creation of additional administrative structures, and will promote coordination and coherence, learning and the sharing of best practices within the United Nations development system, and with other regional and subregional forums and organizations;

4. *Also decides* that reviews of the implementation of all regional outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits should be sequenced and synchronized with the work of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, to ensure that such reviews contribute to the assessment of the regional implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

5. *Encourages* member States to participate in the Africa Regional Forum for Sustainable Development scheduled to take place from 18 to 20 May 2016, proposed to be held in Cairo, and the High-level Forum on Sustainable Development scheduled to take place from 11 to 20 July 2016, in New York.

940 (XLIX). International migration in Africa

The Conference of Ministers,

Mindful that the key role of migration in promoting development has been recognized in Agenda 2063 and in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Recalling decision EX.CL/Dec.305 (IX), adopted by the African Union Executive Council at its ninth ordinary session, held in Banjul in June 2006, in which the Executive Council endorsed the Migration Policy Framework for Africa,

Acknowledging decision Assembly/AU/20 (XXIV), adopted by the African Union Assembly on the joint programme of the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union, the International Labour Organization and the International Organization for Migration on labour migration,

Acknowledging also the Declaration on Migration,⁶ adopted by the Assembly of the African Union at its twenty-fifth ordinary session on 15 June 2015, in which the Heads of State and Government of the African Union undertook to expedite the introduction of an African passport and the abolishment of visa requirements for all African citizens in all African countries, to encourage the free movement of people, capital, goods and services across the continent,

⁶ Assembly/AU/Decl.6 (XXV).

Recalling the Second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, held in New York on 3 and 4 October 2013, which provided a useful opportunity to address constructively the issue of international migration and development and explore the opportunities and challenges that international migration presents, including the protection of the human rights of migrants and the contribution of migrants to development,

Recognizing the need for African member States to work together to develop a common African narrative that highlights the positive benefits of migration for comprehensive economic growth and human development in Africa and eliminates misleading stereotypes and perceptions of migration and migrants,

Recognizing also the need to update the Migration Policy Framework for Africa developed 10 years ago with stronger empirical research and analyses that respond more effectively to the current situation of migration on the continent,

Appreciating the importance of cooperation at the national, regional and international levels to ensure safe, orderly and regular migration with respect for human rights and humane treatment of migrants, regardless of their origin and status,

1. *Requests* the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa to enhance the production of migration-related data;

2. *Also request* the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa to undertake studies using the latest available data to determine the nature and patterns of international migration streams in Africa, assess the impact of irregular migration, in particular in transit countries, and the impact on border communities, assess skilled migration both for countries of origin and of destination and the long-term implications of remittance flows for development;

3. *Further requests* the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa to establish a high-level panel on international migration in Africa, to provide overall guidance and support to policy dialogues on an African perspective on international migration in Africa;

4. *Calls upon* the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Union Commission to provide the necessary technical backstopping to the high-level panel and to report on the progress made on the actions identified above to the Conference of Ministers at its next joint meetings;

5. *Requests* all development partners, in particular the relevant organizations of the United Nations development system and the regional economic communities, to support member States, the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa in their implementation of the actions identified above.

6. *Further calls upon* the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa to develop a continental strategy to address the issue of irregular migration in collaboration with the international community and in the framework of shared responsibilities.

941 (XLIX). Organization of an annual African regional review of progress in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on Information Society

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 56/183 of 21 December 2001, in which the Assembly welcomed the resolution adopted by the Council of the International Telecommunication Union at its 2001 session, endorsing the proposal of the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union to hold the World Summit on the Information Society at the highest possible level in two phases,

Recalling also the Tunis Commitment and the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society, in which the World Summit on the Information Society called on the General Assembly to undertake in 2015 an overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the Summit,

Recalling further General Assembly resolutions 68/198 of 20 December 2013 and 68/302 of 31 July 2014, in which the Assembly set out the modalities for undertaking the overall World Summit on the Information Society,

Reaffirming the potential of information and communications technology as a powerful tool to foster socioeconomic and environmental development, in particular in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

Acknowledging with appreciation that the Economic Commission for Africa organized a regional 10-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Addis Ababa in 2015, with the participation of member States and regional organizations,

1. *Welcomes* the adoption by the General Assembly of the outcome document of the 10-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society, which included a commitment to the vision of the Summit to build a people-centred, inclusive and development-oriented information society;

2. *Notes* that the overall review of the General Assembly of the World Summit on the Information Society has strengthened the role of the regional commissions, and that the outcome document of the high-level meeting of the Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the Summit⁷ included a call for the continuation of the work of the United Nations Group on the Information Society in coordinating the work of United Nations agencies, according to their mandates and competencies, and an invitation for the regional commissions to continue their work in the implementation of the action lines of the World Summit and their contribution to the reviews thereof, including through regional reviews;

3. *Calls upon* the Economic Commission for Africa and other partners to take all necessary steps to organize on an annual basis an African regional review of progress in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063.

942 (XLIX). African Institute for Economic Development and Planning

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 2013/2 of 5 July 2013, by which the Council endorsed the updated statute of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, on the recommendation of the Economic Commission for Africa, as set out in Commission resolution 908 (XLVI) of 26 March 2013,

Recalling also article IV, paragraph 3, of the updated statute of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, by which the Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development is required to appoint the 10 members of the Governing Council of the Institute who will serve as representatives of African Governments,

Taking note of the progress report on the work of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning,

Taking note also of the recommendations of the Governing Council of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning at its fifty-third and fifty-

⁷ General Assembly resolution 70/125 of 16 December 2015.

fourth meetings, held in February 2015 and February 2016, respectively, calling for the revision of the statute of the Institute,

Taking note further of the renewal of the Governing Council of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, as recommended by the Council at its fifty-fourth meeting,

Recognizing the central role of planning in meeting Africa's development priorities, in particular in support of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063,

Acknowledging the critical role that an adequate capacity-building policy and programme will play in the achievement by member States of their development objectives,

Commending the Economic Commission for Africa on its continued support for the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning,

Concerned that the current level of financial support from member States, through payment of annual assessed contributions to the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, is low and that the Institute is thus limited in its ability to sustain its support to member States through capacity-building,

1. *Recommends* that the Governing Council further considers the revised statute of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, based on the approved amendments;

2. *Recommends* that the Bureau of the 2016 Conference of Ministers to conduct consultations with member States, to secure nominations for and appoint members of the Governing Council of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, as early as is feasible, and preferably before 30 April 2016;

3. *Calls upon* member States to pay their annual assessed contributions to the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning regularly and to take steps towards the settlement of their arrears, where applicable;

4. *Calls upon* Economic Commission for Africa partners to support the capacity development activities of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning;

5. *Calls upon* the Economic Commission for Africa to strengthen further its support for the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning.

943 (XLIX). Proposed strategic framework and biennial programme plan of the Economic Commission for Africa for the biennium 2018-2019

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 41/203 of 11 December 1986 and all subsequent resolutions on programme planning,

Recalling also its resolution 844 (XXXIX) of 15 May 2006, in which it endorsed the repositioning of the Economic Commission for Africa to respond better to Africa's priorities, and its resolution 908 (XLVI) of 26 March 2013, in which it mandated the Economic Commission for Africa to establish its new strategic direction and programme structure,

Noting the unique role of the Economic Commission for Africa and its comprehensive mandate as the main economic and social development centre of the United Nations development system for the Africa region,

Noting also the importance of strengthening cooperation and creating synergies within the United Nations development system at the global, regional and country levels in the Africa region through enhanced collaboration between the secretariat and the funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other entities of the United Nations development system, and the need to build new partnerships within that system,

Recognizing the need for the Economic Commission for Africa to adapt and respond to the evolving development challenges and opportunities for the Africa region in the light of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,

Underlining that the effectiveness and efficiency of the intergovernmental structure of the Economic Commission for Africa benefits from enhanced transparency, engagement and communication between member States and the secretariat, and with other stakeholders, in accordance with its rules of procedure,

Taking note with appreciation of the Economic Commission for Africa programme performance report for the biennium 2014-2015,⁸ in which the Commission highlighted the significant results achieved in all its programme areas, namely, knowledge generation, sharing and networking, advocacy and consensus-building and advisory services and technical cooperation,

Noting with appreciation the continued efforts of the Economic Commission for Africa to secure additional resources to supplement its regular budget with a view to enabling it to deepen its work in identified priority areas and giving it the flexibility to respond adequately to emerging issues that cannot be covered by the regular programme of work,

Encouraging the Economic Commission for Africa to continue its support for member States, the African Union Commission and its New Partnership for Africa's Development programme and the regional economic communities in the implementation of, follow-up to and review of Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda,

Having examined the Economic Commission for Africa proposed strategic framework and biennial programme plan for the biennium 2018-2019,⁹

1. *Endorses* the Economic Commission for Africa proposed strategic framework and biennial programme plan for the biennium 2018-2019;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa 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;

3. *Decides* to postpone the holding of the meetings of the intergovernmental committees of experts for 2017 pending the finalization of the independent review.

⁸ E/ECA/COE/XX/XX.

⁹ E/ECA/COE/35/5.

C. Resolutions of the African Union

944 (XLIX). Joint strategy of the African Union Commission and the Association of African Central Banks on the establishment of the African central bank and the other financial institutions

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling article 19 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its thirty-sixth ordinary session, held in Lomé on 11 July 2000, in which the Assembly decided to establish the African financial institutions: the African central bank, the African monetary fund and the African investment bank,

Reaffirming the commitment to the establishment of the African financial institutions as a means of ensuring African financial autonomy for the successful implementation of the continent's development plans, primarily Agenda 2063,

Considering the minimum integration programme adopted by the Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Integration at its fourth meeting, held in Yaoundé in May 2009,¹⁰ in the spirit of the Sirte Declaration,¹¹ with a view to enhancing the capabilities of the regional economic communities, the African Union Commission and the member States to fast-track the integration of Africa,

Recalling that a joint technical committee of the African Union Commission and the Association of African Central Banks was established to define a joint strategy for the establishment of the African central bank,

Welcoming the strong collaboration between the African Union Commission and the Association of African Central Banks in formulating the joint strategy,

Taking note of the report of the joint technical committee on the joint strategy for the establishment of the African central bank and the reservations expressed by the Southern Africa subregion,¹²

Expressing its appreciation to the joint technical committee for the joint strategy for the establishment of the African central bank,

1. *Takes note of* the recommendations set out in the report of the joint technical committee on the joint strategy for the establishment of the African central bank;

2. *Calls upon* the African Union Commission, in collaboration with the Association of African Central Banks and other partners, to take all necessary steps to ensure the effective and successful implementation of the recommendations on the joint strategy and, in particular, of the five-stage approach stipulated therein;

3. *Recommends* the joint strategy for the establishment of the African central bank for adoption by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union at its twenty-seventh ordinary session, to be held in Kigali in July 2016, taking into consideration the reservations expressed by the subregional committee for Southern Africa of the Association of African Central Banks.

4. *Encourages* member States of the African Union to sign and ratify the legal instruments of the African monetary fund and the African investment bank.

¹⁰ Available from: www1.uneca.org/Portals/ctrci/6th/MinimumIntegrationProgrammeEng.pdf.

¹¹ Adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its fourth extraordinary session, held in Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on 9 September 1999.

¹² E/ECA/COE/35/13-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/13(II).

945 (XLIX). Strengthening of economic research in Africa

The Conference of Ministers,

Taking note of the Declaration of the Fourth Congress of African Economists, held from 16 to 18 November 2015 in Accra, on the theme of industrial policy and economic performance in Africa,¹³

Reiterating the importance of economic research as a key instrument in meeting the pressing needs of African countries for economic and social transformation through the appropriate formulation, monitoring and evaluation of development programmes, policies and initiatives, such as Agenda 2063,

Reaffirming that industrialization is a major strategic priority that can contribute to the structural transformation of Africa by the target date of 2063, through the development of dynamic and coherent industrial policy frameworks, the diversification of industries and production structures in Africa and their integration into global value chains, in order to achieve robust and sustained economic performance for sustainable and inclusive development,

Noting with appreciation the work on the implementation of Agenda 2063 currently being undertaken by the African Union Commission, the African Capacity-Building Foundation and other partners,

1. *Approves* the recommendations set out in the report of the Fourth Congress of African Economists;
2. *Calls upon* the African Union Commission, supported by the African Capacity-Building Foundation and African economic research centres, to work closely for the production of a publication on the dynamics of African economies, based on an African perception of African development challenges and opportunities;
3. *Encourages* the African Union Commission, in collaboration with the African Capacity-building Foundation and regional economic communities, to establish an African forum for think tanks to address Africa's development;
4. *Encourages* member States and partners to scale up their commitment to and support for the strengthening of economic research in Africa for the successful implementation of Agenda 2063.

946 (XLIX). Draft statute of the African Institute for Remittances

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling decision Assembly/AU/Dec.440 (XIX), in which the Assembly of the African Union at its nineteenth session, held in Addis Ababa in July 2012, endorsed the establishment of the African Institute for Remittances,

Recalling decision Ex.CL/Dec.808 (XXIV), in which the Executive Council of the African Union at its twenty-fourth session, held in Addis Ababa in January 2014, selected Kenya to host the African Institute for Remittances and requested the African Union Commission to conclude the host agreement with Kenya so as to ensure the formal launch of the Institute in 2014,

Welcoming the formal take-off of the African Institute for Remittances,

Welcoming the preparation of the draft statute of the African Institute for Remittances,

¹³ E/ECA/COE/35/14-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/14(II).

1. *Requests* the member States of the African Union to review the draft statute of the African Institute for Remittances and provide their comments to the African Union, in writing, within four months;

2. *Request* the African Union Commission to submit the amended version of the draft statute of the African Institute for Remittances to the legal experts of the African Union for their review before submitting it for consideration and adoption by the relevant organs of the African Union.

947 (XLIX). Draft pan-African investment code

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling that the third Conference of African Ministers in charge of integration, held in Abidjan on 22 and 23 May 2008, urged the African Union Commission, the regional economic communities and development partners, such as the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank, to develop a comprehensive investment code for Africa with a view to promoting private sector investment,

Recognizing the need for a comprehensive instrument aimed at promoting, facilitating and protecting investments that foster sustainable development in each member State of the African Union, in particular in the member State where the investment is made,

Commending the work of the African Union Commission in developing and elaborating the draft pan-African investment code,

1. *Takes note of* the pan-African investment code;
2. *Requests* the African Union Commission to proceed with deeper consultations with member States in order to finalize the pan-African investment code.

948 (XLIX). Creation of the African inclusive markets excellence centre

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling the declarations of the African Private Sector Forum at its fifth and seventh meetings, held from 5 to 8 November 2012 in Abidjan and from 3 to 5 December 2014 in Nairobi, respectively,

Recognizing the need to promote regional economic integration, in particular through transformative regional value chains, inclusive markets and business development, leading to job creation, income generation and poverty eradication in Africa,

Having considered the concept note on the creation of the African inclusive markets excellence centre,¹⁴

Bearing in mind that such a centre would make an immense contribution to the realization of Agenda 2063,

Requests the African Union Commission to recruit an independent consultant to conduct a feasibility study on the creation of the African inclusive markets excellence centre and recommend options for its operationalization and financial autonomy, and to submit the findings of the study to the member States of the African Union for their consideration.

¹⁴ E/ECA/COE/35/19-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/19(II).

949 (XLIX). Report of the ninth session of the meeting of the Committee of Directors General of Statistics

The Conference of Ministers,

Taking note of the report of the ninth session of the meeting of the Committee of Directors General of Statistics, held from 26 to 28 November 2015 in Libreville, on the theme of the data revolution, the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063,

Reaffirming the importance of statistics as a key instrument in meeting the pressing needs of African countries for economic and social transformation through the appropriate formulation, monitoring and evaluation of development programmes, policies and initiatives, such as Agenda 2063,

Noting with appreciation the work of the African Union Commission and other regional institutions on the harmonization of statistics in Africa,

1. *Approves* the recommendations set out in the report of the ninth session of the meeting of the Committee of Directors General of Statistics;
2. *Calls upon* the African Union Commission, in collaboration with regional economic communities and other partners, to work closely for the rapid operationalization, by the end of June 2016, of pan-African institutions of statistics, such as the pan-African training centre for statistics in Yamoussoukro and the Nelson Mandela pan-African statistics institute in Tunis;
3. *Encourages* member States to allocate at least 0.015 per cent of their budget to statistics development;
4. *Invites* member States that have not ratified the African Charter on Statistics to do so and implement the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa.

950 (XLIX). Report of the seventh meeting of the African Union Subcommittee of Directors General of Customs

The Conference of Ministers,

Aware of the ultimate objectives of the African Union integration agenda, as provided for in the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community, the Constitutive Act of the African Union and Agenda 2063 and the global objectives under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals,

Respectful of the decisions and declarations of African Union, in particular its decisions Assembly/AU/Dec.394 (XVIII), on boosting intra-African trade and fast-tracking the continental free trade area, and Assembly/AU/DEC.531 (XXIII), on trade issues, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union at its eighteenth and twenty-third ordinary sessions, held in Addis Ababa on 29 and 30 January 2012 and in Malabo on 27 June 2014, respectively.

Convinced that customs administrations in Africa play an important role in collecting government revenue, protecting society, facilitating legitimate trade and collecting vital statistics to support policy formulation,

1. *Requests* member States to continue to support the work of the African Union Subcommittee of Directors General of Customs, as it has a direct impact on continental integration;
2. *Urges* member States of the African Union to make adequate resources available to their respective customs administrations to enable them to fulfil their mandates effectively;

3. *Undertakes* to build the capacity of African customs administrations on matters that are vital for revenue collection, including trade facilitation and integration;

4. *Affirms* its commitment to implementing the recommendations, policies and programmes on the single-window concept, coordinated border management and the interconnectivity of computerized customs clearance and information systems, and other allied trade facilitation measures, based on international best practices;

5. *Requests* partners and other international organizations to continue to support the implementation of initiatives for regional integration in Africa, and the programme on boosting intra-African trade;

6. *Undertakes* to enhance the effectiveness of customs administrations in Africa.

951 (XLIX). Financing social protection in Africa

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling the goals of Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan on achieving social security and social protection for all, and the goals of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development,

Considering the social policy framework for Africa, including that long-term funding for social protection should be guaranteed through national resources with specific and transparent budget lines,

Considering also the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, their additional protocols on women and older persons and protocols that are being developed on persons with disabilities and the rights of citizens to social protection and social security,

Recalling the Addis Ababa Declaration on Social Protection for Inclusive Development and the establishment of the African Risk Capacity Agency for the protection of the most vulnerable populations when faced with natural disasters,

Recognizing and commending the significant efforts by member States to develop social protection policies and programmes and subsequently to improve budget allocation and introduce innovative funding mechanisms, yet gravely concerned that Africa is the global region with the lowest level of expenditure on social protection,

Alarmed that formal social security regimes cover on average 10-25 per cent of the workforce on the continent and do not cover the majority of workers in the informal economy and rural sectors,

Conscious of the need for equitable fiscal policy and efficient and transparent budgetary allocations that support social protection expenditure as a means of reducing inequality, eradicating poverty and building social cohesion,

1. *Agrees* to encourage and support the progressive realization of universal social protection as a key tool to help Governments to build solid economies to ensure sustainable and inclusive development for all as a means of achieving lasting peace;

2. *Undertakes* to engage with national and regional stakeholders and international partners to develop policies and strategies incorporating the social protection and social security targets of the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063;

3. *Agrees* to consider setting nationally appropriate spending targets for social protection floors and social security, and undertakes to increase the mobilization of effective domestic resources, through tax reforms and innovative

forms of financing that can provide the fiscal space for greater investments on social protection in Africa;

4. *Also agrees* to support the necessary reforms to enhance the technical, infrastructure and institutional capacities of those ministries responsible for social protection, for national dialogue, including employers and workers, and to support the African Risk Capacity Agency on natural disaster management, including increasing its coverage of the most vulnerable populations;

5. *Undertakes* to focus on extending national systems of social security to all, and agrees that the combination of microinsurance with microfinance policies may be used temporarily as one of the possible options to extend the reach of social security to include excluded categories of workers in the informal sector and rural sector;

6. *Calls upon* international partners to assist in evaluating and promoting different policy options for financing social protection and social security, and help member States to benefit from various debt cancellation initiatives;

7. *Agrees* to establish a joint follow-up mechanism on the implementation of the present resolution with the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment.

952 (XLIX). First five-year priority programme for the implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling the Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development,¹⁵ and taking note of the first five-year priority programme for the implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action,

Recognizing that the Declaration and Plan of Action are cornerstone policies for achieving the aspiration of Agenda 2063 on a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development,

Recalling its resolution 872 (XLIII), on promoting high-level sustainable growth to reduce unemployment in Africa, adopted at its third Joint Annual Meetings, held in Lilongwe on 30 March 2010,

Gravely concerned about the persistent high levels of unemployment, underemployment and the working poor and how unemployment negatively affects vulnerable groups on the continent, such as young people, women, older persons and persons with disabilities,

Alarmed by the poor progress made towards reducing the productivity gap between Africa and other developing regions of the world and by the competition which is placing significant constraints on the realization of continental policies towards industrialization and productive agriculture,

Conscious of the need to improve the quality and level of funding of employment and social protection policies on the continent to achieve better social cohesion, reduce inequality and eradicate poverty,

Considering the goals and targets of the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 in terms of employment, social protection, social security, poverty eradication and productivity, and the related goals and indicators of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,

¹⁵ African Union document Assembly/AU/20(XXIV).

Considering also the relevant provisions of the first 10-year implementation plan for Agenda 2063 in terms of funding, monitoring and evaluating processes for the implementation of continental policies, in particular the Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development, at the national, regional and continental levels,

1. *Undertakes* to integrate the Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication on Employment and Poverty Eradication and its first five-year priority programme into national and regional long-term, medium-term and short-term planning systems, using the relevant goals, priority areas and targets of the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063, and the related baseline information matrix;

2. *Calls upon* the African Union Commission to engage with member States and regional economic communities to provide assistance and support in the development of national and regional plans in 2016 and 2017;

3. *Undertakes* to engage international partners in supporting the efforts of the African Union Commission, member States and regional economic communities in promoting the creation of decent jobs, access to social protection and social security, labour migration and social cohesion;

4. *Also undertakes* to increase significantly and appropriately the budgetary resources allocated to employment policies and to work with international partners to place employment among the development priorities, in the spirit of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action;

5. *Calls upon* the African Union Commission, in line with the funding principles of Agenda 2063, to accelerate the establishment of an employment and social cohesion fund as the agreed financing mechanism for the Declaration and its Plan of Action, and to submit to it a proposal for such a fund at the next Joint Annual Meetings of the Conference of Ministers in March 2017;

6. *Undertakes* to enhance collaboration with African ministries of labour, labour migration, employment and social protection on planning and funding processes.

953 (XLIX). Address and postcode systems in Africa and the electrification and connectivity of post offices in rural areas in Africa

The Conference of Ministers,

Considering the 2010 Addis Ababa Declaration on Information and Communication Technologies in in Africa: Challenges and Prospects for Development, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union at its fourteenth ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa on 2 February 2010,

Recalling decisions 435 (XIII), 545 (XVI) and 900 (XXVIII) of the Executive Council of the African Union on the sustainable development of the postal sector in Africa,

Recalling also the important role of address and postcode systems in social integration and economic development and, in particular, the right of every individual to have an address, along with the need to facilitate the efficient distribution of basic goods and services,

Taking note of the reports of the African Union Commission on guidelines on address and postcode systems in Africa and the electrification and connectivity of post offices in rural areas in Africa in the framework of leveraging postal networks to foster inclusive social and economic development,

Emphasizing the potential contribution of the postal networks in rural areas to remedying the gaps in infrastructure and providing tangible solutions to the needs of rural populations in the area of communications, access to financial services and government services and logistics, with a view to contributing to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and the fulfilment of Agenda 2063,

Observing the global changes in development of new technologies, the advent of substitution and competition, the emergence of new regulatory frameworks, new policies and new laws affecting the postal industry,

Noting the negative impact of the widening infrastructure gap on the lives of the rural populations in terms of their financial exclusion, the cost of remittances, the digital and communications divide, their limited access to government services and the lack of economic opportunities, as rural inhabitants have limited access to credit and little information on external markets,

Noting also the growing evidence of the powerful role that postal networks can play in social, digital and financial inclusion,

Underscoring the need for postal networks to use broadband and to deploy advanced information and communications technology in order to provide adequate access to basic financial and other services,

Convinced that, by setting up communication centres at the heart of local communities, the project on the electrification and connectivity of post offices in rural areas in Africa will increase the access of rural populations to the internet and business services,

1. *Decides* to prioritize and to include in national development plans the address and postcode systems as part of the infrastructure needed to increase access to basic services;
2. *Encourages* member States implementing such projects to make the necessary political commitment, to prioritize effective internal coordination for implementation and to resolve project funding challenges prior to the start of the project;
3. *Supports* the implementation by the Pan-African Postal Union of its continent-wide project on address and post codes;
4. *Calls upon* member States, in particular the thirteen pilot countries engaged in the project on the electrification and connectivity in rural areas, to take ownership and integrate it into their national development plans and strategies;
5. *Encourages* other member States to join the project;
6. *Urges* member States to explore multiple sources of funding, such as national budgets, universal service funds, public-private partnerships and international development partners, with a view to ensuring successful implementation of the project;
7. *Calls upon* donors to support and commit funds to ensure the implementation of both projects, on address and postcode systems and on the electrification and connectivity of post offices in rural areas;
8. *Requests* the African Union Commission, in collaboration with the Pan-African Postal Union, to report to its relevant organs on the implementation of both projects.

Annex III

Report of the Joint Committee of Experts

Introduction

1. The meeting of the Joint Committee of Experts of the ninth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was held in Addis Ababa from 31 March to 3 April 2016.

Part One

I. Opening of the meeting [agenda item 1]

A. Attendance

2. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following member States: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Swaziland, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

3. The meeting was attended by a representative of the following associate member: Western Sahara.

4. Observers from the following States Members of the United Nations were present: Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Cuba, Denmark, Ecuador, France, Finland, Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Japan, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

5. The State of Palestine, a non-member observer State of the United Nations, was also represented.

6. The following regional economic communities were represented: Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, East African Community, Economic Community of Central African States, Economic Community of West African States, Intergovernmental Authority on Development, Southern African Customs Union, Southern African Development Community, West African Economic and Monetary Union.

7. The following United Nations bodies and specialized agencies were represented: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Labour Organization, International Monetary Fund International Telecommunication Union, International Organization for Migration, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Office of the United Nations High

Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Office for Project Services, United Nations Capital Development Fund, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Human Settlements Programme, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, United Nations Office to the African Union, United Nations Population Fund, World Bank, World Food Programme, World Health Organization.

8. Representatives of the following intergovernmental and regional organizations were present: African Development Bank, League of Arab States, New Partnership for Africa's Development Planning and Coordinating Agency, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

9. Observers were present from the following organizations: Action Aid Ethiopia, Advectas, Afei Diagnosis Center, Africa Forum, African Capacity-Building Foundation, African Economist, African Tax Administration Forum, AgriDevCo, Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, Arab Reform Initiative, China Hyway Group, China-Africa Business Council, China-Africa Development Fund, Chongqing Haifu Medical Technologies, Consulting Development Associates, Deer Jet Medical Company, Echnoserbe Consulting, Fight Against Desert Encroachment, Garment Industry Transparency Initiative, Gavi the Vaccine Alliance, German Agency for International Cooperation, Global Green Growth Institute, Green Thinkers Youth Association and Network for African Youth Development, GRID-Arendal, International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas, International Planned Parenthood Federation, International Road Transport Union, Jiangsu Bioperfectus Technologies, Mother and Child Multisectoral Development Organization /BlueEnergy, One Campaign, Oxfam, Pan-African Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Poken Team, Reality of Aid African Network, Rotary International, Sanbao Pharmaceuticals, Save the Children, Shapoorji Pallonji, Tax Justice Network Africa, Times of Zambia, Transparency International Secretariat, Ubuntu Leadership Institute, Upbeat Marketing, Wideway Sinostar Investment, World Vision International, Wuhu Kanggi Pharmaceutical, Yuemei Group. Opening statements

B. Opening statements

10. The opening session of the Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development was chaired by Naimi Aziz, Ambassador of the United Republic of Tanzania, on behalf of Hamisi Mwinyimvua, Chair of the outgoing Bureau of the Joint Committee of Experts, Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Finance and Planning of the United Republic of Tanzania.

11. The Chair's opening remarks were interrupted by the representatives of Morocco, who called for the postponement of the meeting on the grounds that they had received the programme of work and relevant conference documents on 16 March 2016, in breach of the 42-day rule of the Economic Commission for Africa. They also objected to the format of the meeting, demanding that deliberations are suspended until consensus is reached within and across countries represented at the meeting. The representatives of Senegal expressed their agreement with Morocco. The representatives of Uganda then asked for clarification on the procedures for convening the Joint Annual Meetings. In response, the Chair suggested that, in the absence of jointly agreed procedures between the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa, the delay on the part of the secretariat in sending out the relevant conference documents was not grave enough to warrant the postponement of the meeting. In the ensuing discussion, the representatives of Liberia, South Africa and

Uganda took the floor and said that, while the concerns raised by Morocco were valid, the meeting should proceed as planned. It was suggested that the issue of establishing joint procedures should be discussed as an agenda item or at another meeting, and that arrangements should be made so that the representatives of Morocco could discuss their concerns in detail. As no major objections were raised, the Chair then proceeded with the opening remarks.

12. In her opening remarks, the Chair welcomed all participants to the ninth Joint Annual Meetings and thanked the Government and people of Ethiopia for the warm reception accorded to all guests in Addis Ababa. She also commended the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, and the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, Carlos Lopes, on the excellent organizational arrangements. She went on to remark that the theme of the 2016 Conference of Ministers, “Towards an integrated and coherent approach to implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals,” built on the deliberations and recommendations of the 2015 Conference of Ministers, on the theme: “Implementing Agenda 2063 – planning, mobilizing and financing for development”, and was therefore critical in promoting the adoption of a common framework for implementing, monitoring and evaluating Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals. She emphasized that the success of both Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals depended heavily on their incorporation at the national level, and on coherence in planning and reporting mechanisms supported by robust statistics. That in return would accelerate the much needed inclusive and sustainable structural transformation on the continent.

13. Opening statements were then delivered by Anthony Mothae Maruping, Commissioner for Economic Affairs, African Union Commission; Abdalla Hamdok, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa; and Admasu Nebebe, Director, Ministry of Finance and Economic Cooperation of Ethiopia.

14. In his statement, Mr. Maruping thanked the experts for their attendance at a time of economic hardship on the continent, and noted that the meeting provided an invaluable opportunity for the exchange of views, sharing of experiences and collective decision on a way forward. He highlighted the decline in commodity demand and prices, which had led to cuts in production, increased unemployment, falling incomes, eroded tax bases and reduced foreign exchanges; the prolonged and severe drought that had affected agricultural production and disrupted the supply of hydropower, clean water and sanitation services; the floods which had displaced people, destroyed infrastructure and caused the spread of waterborne diseases; and the strengthening of the United States dollar, which had caused a jump in dollar-denominated external debt and had increased inflationary tensions. He indicated that, in combination, those factors had caused financial and macroeconomic imbalances, downward revision of growth rates, regressions in social and economic development, and an increase in poverty. He highlighted the importance, in that context of the ministerial round table to be held during the Conference on the theme: “Addressing the impact of drought; floods and declining commodity prices in Africa.”

15. He also noted that in 2015, amidst the adoption of key global initiatives such as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on climate change, the African Union had adopted Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan and highlighted the comprehensive bottom-up approach through which Agenda 2063 and the first 10-year implementation plan had been formulated. He noted that Agenda 2063 was a timely and relevant framework for increasing productive capacities, strengthening competitiveness, fostering diversification, engendering value addition and enabling intra-African trade and the effective participation of Africa in global value chains.

16. In closing, he urged experts to embrace an integrated and coherent approach to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable

Development Goals, as recommended by the Joint Coordination Committee of the chief executives of the African Union Commission, the regional economic communities, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank and the African Capacity-Building Foundation at its meeting in 2016, and as was likely to be recommended by the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa at its forthcoming meeting in April 2016.

17. In his opening statement, Mr. Hamdok pointed out that Agenda 2063 had been developed and adopted through a consultative process among African people, pan-African institutions and the leadership of the continent. Africa was now confronted with two interconnected processes: Agenda 2063 and its 10-year implementation plan at the continental level, and the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals at the global level. He stressed that a shared understanding of those continental and global frameworks, including their relevance to national development agendas and the relationship between the two, would be crucial to their effective implementation. That understanding would provide an opportunity to implement the two agendas without unduly burdening policymakers with multiple development frameworks, while at the same time minimizing the related coordination challenges. It would also ensure that benefits were widely shared, with a view to reducing poverty and raising living standards for all Africans.

18. In that context, he recalled that the number of Africans living in absolute poverty remained high and that inequality was still a major concern as growth in many African countries had not been inclusive. Accordingly, the two frameworks should add momentum to the existing efforts to bring about Africa's structural transformation and to enhance trade, create jobs and increase income for African people through product diversification and value addition underpinned by industrialization. African countries should seek to enhance intra-African trade by strengthening regional integration, lowering the cost of trade and making a strong commitment to the creation of a continental free trade area. He noted the need to consider greening Africa's economic transformation to avoid the mistakes that developed countries had made and to build the capacities of African negotiators to secure better deals for their natural resources.

19. In closing, he called for continued support for the advocacy work led by the Chair of the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa, Thabo Mbeki, and said he looked forward to fruitful discussions during the current Conference of Ministers.

20. Mr. Nebebe, speaking on behalf of his country's federal authorities, welcomed delegates to the meeting. He highlighted Africa's notable economic growth performance in recent years and the challenges facing the continent and stressed the need to explore bold and transformative options for sustained economic growth and inclusive and sustainable development. He also emphasized the need to leverage the synergies and complementarities of long-term global and regional development frameworks to facilitate the realization of the continent's aspirations for structural transformation. To that end, it was vital for countries to implement both agendas in a coherent and integrated manner.

21. Turning to how African countries implement and monitor implementation of the global and continental agendas, he underscored the substantial convergence of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as the latter had taken on board many of Africa's aspirations, as reflected in the common African position on the post-2015 development agenda. With a view to reducing the burden on national structures and ensuring coherent implementation, follow-up and review processes, he called for the development of an integrated results framework that embraced both the continental and global development agendas.

22. Turning to the experience of Ethiopia in integrating and mainstreaming global and continental development frameworks into its national development plan, he noted that the process required extensive consultations with a wide array of stakeholders,

strengthened policymaking and statistical capacities, and the active participation of subnational institutions. He stated his expectation that the Conference would afford opportunities for sharing experiences, particularly on how sustainability could be integrated into national development plans, which was vital for the successful implementation of global and continental development agendas.

23. In conclusion, he stressed that the deliberations at the Conference of Ministers would have a significant bearing on Africa's efforts towards ensuring an integrated and coherent approach to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals. His country remained committed to the implementation of both agendas, as they had a shared objective of changing the lives of the continent's 1 billion people.

II. Election of the Bureau and adoption of the agenda and programme of work [agenda item 2]

24. The following countries were unanimously elected by the Committee to form the new Bureau:

Chair:	South Africa (Southern Africa)
First Vice-Chair:	Democratic Republic of the Congo (Central Africa)
Second Vice-Chair:	Algeria (North Africa)
Third Vice-Chair:	Côte d'Ivoire (West Africa)
Rapporteur:	Uganda (East Africa)

25. The newly elected Chair delivered his statement. The Joint Committee then adopted the following agenda, based on the provisional agenda that had been circulated and as amended:

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Election of the Bureau and adoption of the agenda and programme of work
3. Overview of recent economic and social developments in Africa
4. Assessment of progress on regional integration in Africa
5. Presentation on the theme of the ninth Joint Annual Meetings: "Towards an integrated and coherent approach to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals"
6. Selected social development issues
7. Status of statistical development in Africa
8. Statutory issues of the Economic Commission for Africa
9. Statutory issues of the African Union
10. Date and theme of the tenth Joint Annual Meetings
11. Other matters
12. Consideration and adoption of the draft report of the meeting of the Joint Committee of Experts and consideration and recommendation for adoption of the draft resolutions
13. Closing of the meeting

26. The representatives of Morocco continued to raise objections to the format of the meeting. They also objected to the participation of Western Sahara, which they believed was not in accordance with the rules of the United Nations. In response, the Chair informed the participants that the terms of reference and rules of procedure of

the Economic Commission for Africa, a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council, as adopted by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 671 A (XXV) of 29 April 1958, provided that non-self-governing territories situated within the whole continent of Africa shall be associate members of the Commission. He said that the United Nations considered Western Sahara to be a non-self-governing territory under Chapter XI of the Charter of the United Nations. Therefore, Western Sahara participated in sessions and meetings of the Commission on the basis of its associate membership of the Commission, in line with United Nations rules, practice and procedures and the various legal opinions and positions expressed by the Office of Legal Affairs, as well as the General Assembly in its resolution 34/37 of 21 November 1979, operative paragraph 7 of which states that the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguía el-Hamra y de Rfo de Oro is “the representative of the people of Western Sahara”. He said that as far as the United Nations was concerned, that position had not changed.

Part Two

Account of proceedings

III. Overview of recent economic and social developments in Africa [agenda item 3]

A. Presentation

27. The representative of the secretariat provided an overview of recent economic and social developments in Africa, highlighting the main messages in the overview report in document E/ECA/COE/35/2-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/2(II). Despite the global economic slowdown, Africa’s growth was still relatively strong and would remain positive in the medium term, underpinned by domestic demand, improved macroeconomic management, increasing public expenditure and diversification of trade and investment ties. There were still internal and external risks, however, including the weak global recovery, low commodity prices, tightening of monetary policy in the United States and the European Union, weather-related shocks, and security and political instability. Africa was also making steady progress towards social goals. Improvements had been registered in terms of poverty reduction, universal education, gender parity, under-5 mortality and access to safe drinking water, but progress remained limited. Absolute poverty numbers were on the rise, and only a marginal decline in unemployment had been observed, amidst an increasing working-age population. Meanwhile, rapid urbanization offered opportunities for growth and transformation. Looking ahead, Africa had made major gains in economic growth. The region therefore needed countercyclical fiscal policies, intra-African trade and integration and strategies to harness urbanization and the youth bulge for industrialization.

B. Discussion

28. In the ensuing discussion, experts noted that strong continental and subregional financial institutions and organizations were essential to provide support for investment programmes. In that regard, innovative strategies for domestic resource mobilization were critical, including tax reforms, unused financial resources such as pension funds, capital markets and savings. The potential for Governments to borrow on international markets was also highlighted. The sharing of experiences across countries in respect of domestic resource mobilization was noted.

29. The threat to macroeconomic stability from rising inflation in some countries in 2016 and the need for appropriate policy instruments was noted. African countries had, however, managed inflation risks and weathered the impact of global economic shocks relatively well. They could therefore engage in countercyclical policies without risking macroeconomic instability. Reconciling short-term macroeconomic stabilization with long-term diversification strategies was thus possible with the right policy mix.

30. Employment creation was a core priority for Africa's transformation agenda and new approaches were needed to address that challenge. In that regard, technology transfer was essential for the development of innovative enterprises for employment creation, especially in sustainable development. Skills development and investment in research and development were also necessary to support commodity-based industrialization, value addition and the realization of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Furthermore, the urgent need to shift from informal to formal economic activities and employment by leveraging existing opportunities in the informal sector was emphasized.

31. Although experts acknowledged the progress made in advancing the continent's development agenda, they noted the need for domestic structural reforms to optimize development outcomes in the light of declining commodity prices and limited fiscal space. The commodities sector was also important in financing other industries and creating jobs.

32. In addition, a concern was raised that the report seemed to encourage a focus on traditional markets while market diversification might also be required. It was highlighted, however, that markets in both traditional and emerging markets were important.

C. Recommendations

33. In the light of the discussions, the Joint Committee made the following recommendations:

(a) Given the economic slowdown and Africa's dependence on commodities, the region needs to diversify its economic sectors and markets and adopt the right policy mix to enable African countries to withstand the effects of the economic crisis;

(b) As intra-African trade is more conducive to industrialization, Africa needs to produce more consumer goods and services for national and regional markets to reduce import reliance;

(c) There is an urgent need to shift from informal to formal economic activities and employment by leveraging existing opportunities in the informal sector through appropriate policies, structural reforms, and skills development;

(d) Recommendations on structural transformation should take into account the experience of countries from the global South;

(e) Africa's development model should be oriented in line with national contexts and priorities;

(f) Domestic resource mobilization should be the main strategy for financing Africa's development in a sustainable manner. In addition, international development partners should be encouraged to honour their official development assistance commitments.

IV. Assessment of progress on regional integration in Africa

[agenda item 4]

A. Presentation

34. The representative of the secretariat outlined the status of regional integration at the subregional and continental levels, including the major achievements of the regional economic communities along the steps identified in the Abuja Treaty. Tremendous efforts had been made by all the Regional Economic Communities in the area of regional integration, but the pace of integration was relatively slow. Despite the achievements, the implementation of regional integration continued to face challenges such as poor infrastructure, poor governance, conflicts and insecurity, concerns over sovereignty, barriers to trade and the movement of people and overlapping memberships of regional economic communities.

35. He outlined the synergies between the objectives of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and observed that the two were complementary and that their implementation would therefore contribute significantly to the acceleration of the integration process on the African continent. He drew attention to the risk of prioritizing the implementation of global agendas rather than African ones, as had been done in the past. The adoption of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda brought new challenges to the regional economic communities and African countries. Countries should work towards aligning their respective strategic and development plans with Agenda 2063 and its first 10-year implementation plan, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and should mobilize and allocate the necessary domestic resources for their implementation.

B. Discussion

36. In the ensuing discussion, it was noted that the pace of integration in Africa was relatively slow and that increased momentum was needed to meet the milestones established in the Abuja Treaty. Participants observed that strong continental institutions were needed to enable Africa to roll out its development agenda.

37. Experts were informed about the challenges that some countries experienced in applying Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda at the national level. An assessment of previous development agendas in terms of implementation and lessons learned could be critical to success in implementing the two agendas. Experts noted the need to implement the Agendas within national contexts, and that countries needed to adopt specific tools and mechanisms to successfully integrate the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 into their national development plans. It was recommended that a road map be developed to facilitate the integration of the two agendas into national contexts.

38. Regarding the financing of Agenda 2063, it was noted that the dependency on partner funding represented a major impediment to the implementation of Africa's development plans, as witnessed in past experiences. Although many initiatives and solutions had been proposed, the lack of implementation represented a major challenge. It was therefore necessary for countries to mobilize internally the required financing.

C. Recommendations

39. In the light of the discussion, the Joint Committee made the following recommendations:

(a) Member States should step up the operationalization of the three pan-African financial institutions, namely, the African central bank, the African monetary fund and the African investment bank, by signing and ratifying the respective founding statutes;

(b) The African member States should take ownership of their continental development agendas by, among other strategies, implementing alternative and innovative financing mechanisms, including domestic resource mobilization;

(c) The African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa should be requested to assist member States in designing a road map for the implementation of both Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national level, and to put in place a common comprehensive and harmonized monitoring and evaluation framework for the two agendas.

V. Presentation on the theme of the ninth Joint Annual Meetings: towards an integrated and coherent approach to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals [agenda item 5]

A. Presentation

40. The representative of the secretariat presented the draft concept note on the theme of the Conference of Ministers (E/ECA/COE/35/Inf/1-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/Info.1(II)), which focused on the background to Agenda 2063 and its objectives and outlined the objectives and thematic areas that would be considered by the Conference of Ministers. He stressed the need for harmonization, the harnessing of synergies, awareness-raising and a coherent development approach in the process of implementing Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

41. A steering committee comprising representatives of the African Union Commission, the Planning and Coordination Agency of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and the African Symposium on Statistical Development had been established to guide the process of developing a measurement framework for the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 and to prepare progress reports on implementation for the African Union policy organs.

42. He highlighted the importance of convergence of the two frameworks, in particular since there were more goals in Agenda 2063 (20) than the Sustainable Development Goals (17) that were of particular relevance to Africa: Agenda 2063 also covered cultural, political and governance issues in addition to the social, economic and sustainability issues addressed by the Sustainable Development Goals. Work on integrating the frameworks into national planning systems had started in the fourth quarter of 2015, with a view to building awareness among State institutions and ordinary citizens, and promoting engagement and ownership of Agenda 2063 in order to catalyse and sustain momentum for transformation.

43. The African Union Commission, working together with the NEPAD Agency and the regional economic communities and supported by the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank, had started the process of developing a monitoring and evaluation system aimed at leveraging their respective strengths that would ultimately enhance their roles individually and collectively in the implementation of Agenda 2063. To that end, member States, regional economic communities and all implementing agencies had agreed to adopt a unified implementation, reporting and monitoring platform for continuous review of the findings of progress reports relating to both agendas, so as to avoid overburdening

policymakers. In carrying out the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063, Africa would also be implementing the 2030 Agenda.

44. Since financing both agendas would require substantial financial and non-financial resources, he drew attention to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which, among other goals, called for the establishment of an infrastructure platform aimed at coordinating investments in infrastructure. That was in addition to a domestic resource mobilization strategy aimed at facilitating the development of the financial sector, with a view to widening the tax base. In conclusion, he called for the mobilization of resources to facilitate implementation of the two frameworks and their ambitious goals.

B. Discussion

45. In the ensuing discussion, experts recognized the need to harmonize Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda and to ensure their effective implementation by incorporating them in national frameworks. Harmonizing the agendas would avoid placing an excessive burden on the human and financial resources of member States. At the same time, account should be taken of the specificities of the continent and of the differences in the context, resource endowment and development priorities of each individual country. Member States also requested technical support from the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa to offset their inadequate capacity for implementation.

46. Experts stressed the need to harmonize the terminology of the two agendas and to align their goals, priority areas, targets and indicators at the regional level. They underscored the importance of clear monitoring and evaluation and reporting mechanisms, which would bring together the two agendas and national priorities, as articulated in national development frameworks and medium-to-long term visions. In that context, they noted that the current mapping exercise conducted between Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda should be extended to align the harmonized framework with national development priorities. A clear reporting mechanism was recognized as being important for countries to assess progress, share experiences, learn from one another and improve implementation. They recognized that sound coordination between the different national sectors was essential to ensuring that the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the two agendas were effected in an integrated manner.

47. Experts identified financing constraints as the primary impediment to the effective implementation of the two agendas at the national level. In that context, and in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, they emphasized the need to reduce dependency on external resources by identifying alternative sources of financing, primarily by enhancing domestic resource mobilization efforts. In that context, they called for further clarity on how to take full advantage of commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and stressed the need to curb illicit financial flows, which were costing the continent \$50 billion each year, as reported by the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows. The development by the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa, under the leadership of Thabo Mbeki, of measures to counter illicit financial flows was recognized.

48. Experts also identified the inadequacy and poor quality of data and statistics as constraints on the implementation of the two agendas, as good-quality and easily available data were critical for the setting of baselines and measurement of progress.

C. Recommendations

49. In the light of the discussion, the Joint Committee made the following recommendations:

(a) Countries should take steps to incorporate the harmonized framework in their own development planning systems and to adapt it to the specific contexts of their countries;

(b) The African Union Commission, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, the NEPAD Agency, the African Capacity-Building Foundation, the regional economic communities and other partners, should harmonize the terminology relating to priority areas, goals, indicators and targets in the two agendas through the mapping exercise.

(c) At the continental level, the African Union Commission, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, the NEPAD Agency, the regional economic communities and African statisticians, should establish a harmonized monitoring and evaluation and reporting framework for the agendas, while, at the national level, countries should coordinate their process of integrated reporting;

(d) The African Union Commission, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank and the NEPAD Agency, should continue to assist member States and regional economic communities in:

- (i) Incorporating Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals into national development plans and the strategic plans of regional economic communities;
- (ii) Adopting an integrated and coherent approach to implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (iii) Completing the design of a monitoring and evaluation framework that caters for both Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals;

(e) Measures to curb illicit financial flows should be intensified, including investment in a financial intelligence system in Africa; enhancing political commitment to fighting the problem of illicit financial flows; deepening engagement with receiving countries to tackle the unfavourable practices of multinationals by implementing the recommendations set out in the report of the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa;

(f) The capacities of national institutions involved in revenue collection, including customs and revenue authorities, should be strengthened to improve domestic resource mobilization;

(g) Efforts should be made to rationalize national expenditures and the resulting savings should be redirected towards building and maintaining the good-quality infrastructure needed to enhance productive capacities on the continent;

(h) The capacity of national statistics systems should be strengthened to support effective implementation, monitoring and assessment of the two agendas.

VI. Selected social development issues [agenda item 6]

A. First five-year priority programme on employment, poverty eradication and inclusive development

1. Presentation

50. The representative of the secretariat, introducing the background paper on implementation of the first five-year priority programme on employment, poverty eradication and inclusive development, set out in document E/ECA/COE/35/12-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/12(II), recalled that the member States of the African Union

had in 2015 adopted the Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development and also the Joint Labour Migration Programme. The latter was being implemented by the African Union, the International Labour Organization, the International Organization for Migration and the Economic Commission for Africa, joined recently by the United Nations Development Programme.

51. The first five-year priority programme on employment, poverty eradication and inclusive development covered the six key priority areas of the Declaration and Plan of Action: political leadership, accountability and good governance; youth and women's employment; social protection and productivity for sustainable and inclusive growth; well-functioning and inclusive labour market institutions; labour migration and regional economic integration; and partnerships and resource mobilization.

52. The priority programme was linked to Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through an alignment of indicators and targets. Regional economic communities and member States had a key role to play in adapting the priority programme and incorporating it into regional and national development plans, in line with the related indicators and targets of the first 10-year implementation plan for Agenda 2063, and with the associated process for incorporating continental policies into national development frameworks. The African Union Commission, regional economic communities and member States would also have to agree to incorporate the priority programme into regional and national development plans by the end of 2017.

2. Discussion

53. In the ensuing discussion, experts noted that the role of the developmental State in Africa had weakened. Social protection had not been adequately mainstreamed and prioritized in national development planning. In particular, social security for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, needed to be strengthened. In that regard, they emphasized the importance of the welfare State in reducing inequalities through better redistribution policies, which should be applied to ensure decent employment and income.

54. They also highlighted the need to substantiate social development policies with reliable data, including in the areas of employment and social protection. To that end, the African Union Commission was collaborating with member States and partners to strengthen labour data and statistics. There was a critical need to reflect the informal sector in those statistics, as it accounted for most of Africa's employment.

55. Educational curricula were still not sufficiently aligned to the need of Africa's labour markets, an area where the role of national Governments was underscored. That was especially critical in the light of Africa's young population structure and the need to harness the demographic dividend. Member States should invest in enhancing the skills and capacities of youth, including through health and education.

56. The experience of some countries in respect of social protection, poverty reduction and employment policies and programmes was shared.

3. Recommendations

57. In the light of the discussion, the Joint Committee made the following recommendations:

(a) Member States should sharpen the focus on inequality and exclusion as sources of poverty in the context of social development policies;

(b) Member States should strengthen the productivity and capacities of the poor through adequate social protection measures, financial inclusion and the provision of decent jobs;

(c) Member States should enhance the role of technical and vocational education and training in the priority areas of the five-year priority programme in

order to harness the demographic dividend and ensure an alignment of skills with the needs of the economies;

(d) Despite the challenges of data availability, member States should endeavour to integrate the informal sector into national development planning;

(e) The regional economic communities and the African Union Commission should agree on a road map for the incorporation of the five-year priority programme into regional and national planning by 2017, in line with the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(f) Each member State should develop and implement national comprehensive employment policies backed by effective labour market information systems, inclusive labour market institutions and strong political will, with appropriate funding.

B. Addressing the challenge of international migration

1. Presentation

58. The representative of the secretariat outlined the context of migration in Africa, together with related key trends. Much of the migration of Africans was taking place within the continent, and the profile of migrants was increasingly young and feminized. Africa's youthful population offered great potential for economic development, yet high youth unemployment could also be a source of social and political instability. Remittances, which represented Africa's largest source of foreign inflows after foreign direct investment, had increased phenomenally over the past two decades.

59. Africa urgently needed to develop a common response to migration based on its own perspective and address some key challenges, including limited data availability, the lack of national migration strategies and incoherence across regional and subregional policy frameworks and strategies. Political support from member States to strengthen dialogue and coordination among key stakeholders was also critical.

2. Discussion

60. In the ensuing discussion, experts agreed that migration presented considerable opportunities for Africa. In the case of intra-Africa migration, Governments needed to assess and harness migrants' skills for their own development programmes. Remittances also represented a considerable source of economic growth and financing for development in Africa. Yet, there was a serious paucity of reliable and up-to-date statistics on migration in Africa. In particular, remittances were largely underestimated and monitored irregularly.

61. Experts also highlighted the linkages between migration, insecurity and terrorism. It was also noted, however, that countries should take a cautious approach and avoid over-securitizing the migration issue. They emphasized the importance of ensuring safe and orderly migration flows within and outside Africa, with full respect of the rights and dignity of migrants. That applied to origin, destination and transit countries.

62. In order to harness migration for Africa's development, it was important to strengthen institutions and macroeconomic stability, so as to restore confidence and encourage the inflows of remittances and investment. Accordingly, Africa needed more coordinated interventions and policy responses on migration. In that respect, it was noted that the region had already put in place continental strategies, including the Joint Labour Migration Programme, the Declaration on Migration of the June 2015 African Union Summit, and the African Institute for Remittances. It was necessary to continue to build on what existed while identifying gaps.

3. Recommendations

63. In the light of the discussion, highlighting the crucial question of addressing the root causes of migration and establishing a link between migration and development, the Joint Committee made the following recommendations:

(a) Accurate databases should be established for recording migrant flows and skills, including mapping migration patterns at both national and regional levels;

(b) The African Union Commission, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, the NEPAD Agency and the regional economic communities, should set up a continental initiative to negotiate and intervene on behalf of migrants to protect them on hazardous international routes;

(c) Member States should harness the role of remittances as a source of economic growth and development in Africa by creating an institutional environment and policies conducive to attracting inflows and investment;

(d) The African Union Commission, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, the NEPAD Agency and the regional economic communities, should strengthen their coordination on migration in Africa;

(e) Member States should create economic opportunities for youth in Africa in order to retain skills and to limit unsafe and irregular migration;

(f) The African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa should work together to develop a continental strategy to address the issue of irregular migration in collaboration with the international community and in the framework of shared responsibilities.

VII. Status of statistical development in Africa [agenda item 7]

A. Presentation

64. The representative of the secretariat introduced the report on the status of statistical development in Africa, set out in document E/ECA/COE/35/12-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/12(II), outlining the progress made to date, the challenges faced and measures taken to address those challenges in the future. To tackle the problems faced on the continent and respond adequately to the needs and aspirations of their citizens, African countries had adopted Agenda 2063 and joined the international community in adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In order to track the progress made in implementation of those agendas, there was a need for quality statistical information that was comparable among countries, accessible and produced in a timely manner.

65. National accounts were important for their ability to assist with the definition, implementation and monitoring of a country's economic and social development policies. It was clear, however, that very few African countries used the 2008 version of the System of National Accounts. The African strategy on the implementation of the 2008 System of National Accounts would enable the African Union Commission, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and regional economic communities, to mobilize adequate financial and technical resources for the effective implementation of the 2008 System.

66. He noted that, in recent years, monitoring and evaluation of various programmes in Africa had failed because of the lack of reliable and continuous data. To overcome the deficit of available statistics, the report of the High-level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda had called for a data revolution in the world and especially in Africa. The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union had adopted two major decisions to strengthen the production of quality

statistics in Africa, namely, the decision on the establishment of the Nelson Mandela pan-African statistics institute (to be based in Tunis) and the decision on the establishment of the pan-African training centre for statistics (to be based in Yamoussoukro). Those institutions would build on the progress already made, in particular in the following areas: civil registration and vital statistics, governance and peace and security statistics, national accounts and other emerging issues such as the data revolution. One of the major problems facing national statistical systems in Africa that hindered the production of quality statistics was the lack of adequate funding. At its most recent meeting, in March 2016, the Committee of Directors General of National Statistical Offices had recommended that the African States should allocate 0.015 per cent of their national budget to the development of statistics.

B. Discussion

67. In the ensuing discussion, experts agreed that statistics were fundamental for economic and social development. Statistics were needed for the implementation of Agenda 2063, and therefore member States should continue to advocate the development of statistics.

68. Civil registration was too centralized and was disconnected from local data. The majority of Africa's population lived in rural areas, and civil registry systems needed to include them. As most civil registration acts took place on paper, digitization was a crucial step for preserving and better managing the data. Countries in post-conflict situations were in a particularly difficult position with regard to conducting population censuses. In 2006, the ministers of finance had asked that statisticians assist those countries with the conduct of their censuses.

69. Financing for the development of statistics was the most serious issue for the region. The proposed solutions that were being implemented by some member States included the establishment of national statistical funds and training centres. Countries needed to increase their funding of statistical institutions. All data users and beneficiaries, and not just statistical institutions, should be involved in mobilizing resources for statistical activities.

70. With regard to training, it was noted that the retention of graduate statisticians was a challenge for many countries. Pan-African institutions should provide funding for training schools and encourage Governments to recruit graduate statisticians systematically and make efforts to retain them. Experts discussed the work that had been done to operationalize the statistical training centre Côte d'Ivoire and the statistical institute in Tunisia and harness their potential for filling the gaps in training and in data harmonization in Africa. Training schools had a role to play in identifying new areas for data production, such as good governance, peace and security, urbanization and human settlements.

71. On the subject of statistics and poverty assessments, it was noted that statistics were important for poverty assessments. Africa needed to go beyond the numbers, and development planning and statistical data collection should be as participatory as possible. All data generated should be used in development planning by policymakers.

72. It was important to make use of technology and the data revolution to modernize statistics in Africa. The African Union should develop a legal framework to regulate statistics and support their harmonization in Africa as part of Agenda 2063. There was a serious risk of Africa being left behind if it did not embrace the data revolution, and it needed to identify and define the technology required.

73. With regard to ownership and sovereignty of data, preference should be given to national data rather than data produced by international institutions, which were often based on estimates. Countries needed to produce and own their national data. Where that was not possible, the estimates of international organizations could be useful.

74. Turning to economic statistics and national accounts, experts noted that there was no cooperation or adequate coordination between national statistical offices, government ministries and central banks. They also emphasized that an African statistical peer-review mechanism should be an important element of the African statistical institutional framework.

C. Recommendations

75. In the light of the discussion, the Joint Committee made the following recommendations:

(a) The African Union Commission, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and the African Capacity-Building Foundation, should support African statistical training institutions in their efforts to train a sufficient number of statisticians and information technology experts to work in the national statistical systems;

(b) African Governments are encouraged to allocate at least 0.015 per cent of the national budget to support the activities implemented by the national statistical offices;

(c) The African Union Commission should coordinate the setting up of an African statistical fund that will be sourced from resource mobilization efforts by the African Union Commission, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and the African Capacity-Building Foundation;

(d) The African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank should develop a comprehensive coordination mechanism that will be implemented by African countries and regional economic communities with a view to better managing the production and use of national statistics at all levels;

(e) African Governments should continue to take the necessary steps in creating a conducive work environment that attracts and retains statisticians within their national statistical system;

(f) The African Union Commission, in collaboration with the Governments of Tunisia and Côte d'Ivoire, should take the necessary steps to ensure that the Nelson Mandela pan-African statistics institute and the pan-African training centre for statistics are operational by June 2016, as agreed by the Committee of Directors General of National Statistical Offices in March 2016;

(g) The African Union Commission, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and the African Capacity-Building Foundation, should develop a strategy to promote innovation and the use of technology to improve the quality of statistics produced by the national statistical systems.

VIII. Statutory issues of the Economic Commission for Africa [agenda item 8]

A. Presentation

76. Representatives of the secretariat presented the following documents pertaining to the agenda item: the biennial report on the work of the Commission 2014-2015 (E/ECA/COE/35/9-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/9(II)) and the second annual survey of partners' opinions of the work of the Economic Commission for Africa; the Commission's strategic framework for 2018-2019 (E/ECA/COE/35/5-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/5(II)); the following reports of the Commission's subsidiary

bodies: the progress report on the work of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) (E/ECA/COE/35/7-AU/STC/FMEPI /EXP7(II)), the report of the first session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development (E/ECA/COE/35/16-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/16(II)), the report of the ninth session of the Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration (E/ECA/COE/35/17-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/17(II)), the report of the ninth session of the Committee on Sustainable Development (E/ECA/COE/35/10-AU/STC/ FMEPI /EXP/10(II)), and reports of the meetings of the intergovernmental committee of experts; and, lastly, the report on United Nations system-wide support to the African Union and its NEPAD programme (E/ECA/COE/35/6-AU/STC /FMEPI/EXP/6(II)).

77. In the presentation of the 2014-2015 biennial report, the representative of the secretariat emphasized the steps taken by the Commission over the past biennium to transform itself into a think-tank of reference, to enhance its ability to influence priorities and programmes of key partners working on African development policy issues; to empower Africa to narrate its own narrative; and to drive Africa's structural transformation based on its own priorities. Those efforts pivoted around four strategic priorities, namely: achieving policy influence in support of Africa's transformation agenda; earning greater trust and credibility through the production of high-quality, evidence-based and good-fit policy research and knowledge delivery services; enhancing accountability mechanisms and deepening learning culture across all streams of work; and strengthening operational effectiveness. Key achievements were outlined across the nine subprogrammes of the 2014-2015 programme budget, providing evidence of targets achieved in respect of policy influence, credibility of the Commission's knowledge generation and delivery interventions, accountability and learning, and operational effectiveness.

78. An account was provided on follow-up actions on all the decisions and resolutions of the Conference of Ministers at its eight joint meetings, in 2015, including the work done by the Economic Commission for Africa to support the African Union Commission in the integration of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; to support the consultations with 27 African countries in mainstreaming Agenda 2063 in national strategic and development plans; to develop harmonized monitoring and evaluation and reporting frameworks; and to assist member States in coordinating regional consultations prior to major global and regional forums on such issues as financing for development, climate change, sustainable development and the data revolution.

79. Concluding her presentation of the activities of the Economic Commission for Africa, she noted that the conclusions of the second annual survey of partners' opinions of the Commission's work had generally been positive, indicating that the Commission was a reliable partner with extensive knowledge and experience on Africa's developmental issues. The survey had also indicated that the Commission's business plan was well placed to address the transformative agenda of the continent; that it was effectively developing partnerships around substantive initiatives in research and knowledge delivery; that its knowledge delivery was highly sensitive to context, and relevant; and that its policy engagement was consistently of high quality. Survey respondents had also suggested some areas for improvement, including the need to improve communication and increase visibility; to deepen partnerships with civil society organizations and the private sector; to improve capacities through national partnerships, and to strengthen planning and reporting on extrabudgetary funds.

80. Turning to the Commission's strategic framework for 2018-2019, she stressed that it both built on the successes and lessons learned from the previous biennium and addressed new priorities, such as Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, financing for development, climate change and migration. Under the strategic framework, the Commission's work was arranged around nine interdependent and complementary subprogrammes.

81. Introducing the progress report on the work of IDEP, the representative of the secretariat stressed that, as the training arm of the Economic Commission for Africa, the IDEP programme was consistent with and underpinned by Africa's priorities, including sustainable development, financing for development, the green economy, intra-African trade, and migration for development. Also highlighted was the importance of capacity development, in the particular context of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063. Various activities were outlined including high-level policy dialogues, seminars, master's degree programmes and short courses offered by IDEP in English, French and Arabic, some of which had been tailor-made to address specific requests by countries while others were delivered in collaboration with various partners. The Institute's e-learning programme was scheduled to be launched in 2016. In 2015, IDEP had delivered 24 courses in various African countries which had benefited 589 African public officials, 33 per cent of whom were women. IDEP had also launched a master's degree programme in industrial policy in collaboration with the University of Johannesburg. The need to enhance both human capacity and financial resources in the light of increasing demand for the Institute's services by member States was highlighted, and member States were urged to pay their annual assessed contributions regularly and, where applicable, to settle their arrears.

82. Subsequently, during the presentations under the same item, the representative of the secretariat said that nominations for membership of the Institute's Governing Council had been sought from the five African subregions and revisions to the statute of IDEP had been proposed by the Governing Council at its fifty-third and fifty-fourth meetings. Those nominations, once finalized, and the draft revised statute would be submitted for endorsement by the Conference of Ministers at its current joint meetings.

83. Introducing the report of the first session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development, the representative of the secretariat noted that the Committee had been formed through a merger of the Committee on Women in Development under subprogramme 6 and the Committee on Human and Social Development under subprogramme 9. The mandate of the new committee was to provide expert guidance to the Economic Commission for Africa in its work on gender and social development, in such areas as gender equality and women's empowerment; population and youth; employment and social protection; and urbanization. It was also concerned in particular with the indices developed by the Commission, namely, the African gender and development index and the African social development index.

84. The report of the ninth session of the Committee on Regional Cooperation and Integration, on the theme "Enhancing productive integration for Africa's transformation", reviewed progress in the following areas: measuring and monitoring progress of integration; international and intra-African trade performance; status of food security in Africa; development and promotion of regional strategic food and agricultural commodity value chains; and infrastructure development in Africa. The Committee had adopted recommendations on such issues as the need for human capital development to optimize innovation; the slow integration process in Central Africa; the guiding principle of the African Union Commission on large-scale land-based investment, including the target of 30 per cent of documented land to be owned by women by 2025; and balance between improving agricultural productivity and the environment.

85. Regarding the report of the ninth session of the Committee on Sustainable Development, the representative of the secretariat reviewed the Committee's recommendations in such areas as small island developing States, new technology and innovation, green economy and natural resources, mineral resources development, climate change and development and the composition of its bureau. Those recommendations would be taken up by the African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development at its meeting in May 2016. Drawing attention to the programme on innovations technology and management of Africa's natural resources, she explained

that the programme was concerned with moving towards a low carbon trajectory and that work was under way on a new formula for the alignment of growth and development. She stressed also the importance of implementing the post-2015 strategy of the World Summit on the Information Society, which would contribute to achieving the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063.

86. Introducing the reports of the meetings of the intergovernmental committees of experts, the representative of the secretariat explained that the five subregional offices of the Economic Commission for Africa had held their respective annual sessions in February and March 2016 and had agreed on a range of recommendations under three categories, namely: recommendations relevant to Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals; recommendations related to the Commission's country profiles; and recommendations on the review of the intergovernmental committees of experts and other subsidiary organs of the Commission. During the meetings, experts had also deliberated on the macroeconomic environment in the various subregions, the country profiles and statutory issues pertaining to their work programmes. An important agenda item had been the reform of the architecture of the intergovernmental committees with regard to the periodicity of meetings, the agendas and their link to the Conference of Ministers. A majority of the member States agreed that the Economic Commission for Africa should proceed with the reform, with a view to ensuring better alignment and coherence with the Conference of Ministers and the other statutory organs.

87. Introducing the report on United Nations support for the African Union and its NEPAD programme, the representative of the secretariat highlighted several areas where the Economic Commission for Africa had provided such support, including the harmonization of policy, legal and regulatory frameworks to enhance private sector engagement in financing transboundary infrastructure projects in Africa; contribution to the articulation of Agenda 2063; the development of the United Nations-African Union partnership on Africa's integration and development agenda for 2017-2027; global advocacy to enhance domestic resource mobilization; and negotiations on the continental free trade area. Highlighting the role of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa in the provision of such United Nations support, she said that the Economic Commission for Africa had also provided technical support both to NEPAD and, together with the United Nations Development Programme, to the African Peer Review Mechanism. In that context, she observed that the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa was facing severe financial and human resource constraints, given its lack of a specific budget and the small size of its staff, and challenges relating to inadequate communication and the lack of regular intra-cluster and inter-cluster cooperation. Accordingly, the availability of sustainable resources was indispensable to the effective operation of the Mechanism.

B. Discussion

88. The ensuing discussion revolved around issues related to human capital development, financial infrastructure, the incorporation of global and continental development programmes at the national level, constraints to regional integration, and contract negotiations relating to Africa's natural resources.

89. Experts underscored the need for the Economic Commission for Africa to pay more attention to human and financial infrastructure in its 2018-2019 strategic framework, indicating that the Commission's work in those areas had not been insufficiently evidenced in its 2014-2015 biennial report. A stronger emphasis should be placed on human capital development and resource mobilization in the design of its reforms, policies and training. Noting the initiatives relating to human and financial infrastructure, experts confirmed that those issues had been well captured in the three pillars – economic, social and environmental – that formed the basis of the 2018-2019 framework, and reviewed examples of the Commission's work on human capital, including the African social development index, the African gender and development

index, and its work on skills and employment. They also noted that the primary mandate of IDEP was to support the development of human capacity on the continent through training in a broad range of priority areas.

90. Underlining the importance of integrating Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in their national development plans, experts stressed the need for support to that end. It was noted that the Economic Commission for Africa provided tailored capacity-building support to member States through the courses provided by IDEP in development planning and the structural transformation of African countries. The commission also provided tailored advisory services to member States upon request. In addition, the Commission was producing country profiles which provided a holistic picture of the social and economic development of member States; the various indices could also be used to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate national plans and policies.

91. The slow pace of regional integration in Central Africa was attributed to such factors as the similarities of the products of countries in the subregion, the concentration on primary commodities, and the lack of a regional policy on industrialization. Regional integration was also impeded by such factors as poor transport infrastructure, the lack of reliable data and the failure to underpin countries' trade policy with an analysis of trade patterns in the subregion. Accelerating the pace of regional integration in Central Africa would therefore require a comprehensive approach with macroeconomic, trade and infrastructure dimensions. It was also argued that, while important, a monitoring and evaluation framework should not be the only requirement for accelerating regional integration.

92. Regarding the management of Africa's natural resources, experts highlighted the problems of contract negotiations and illicit financial flows in the extractive industries, drew attention to the work in that regard of the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa and also noted the courses offered by IDEP in that domain. Noting the problems experienced by countries with mining industries, experts sought support from the African Union in the training of engineers and development of mining codes. The Economic Commission for Africa was working with African countries on the negotiation of contracts and had raised the awareness of countries on issues related to governance in the mining sector.

93. Following questions relating to the modalities of member States' participation in the IDEP Governing Council, various clarifications were provided, including that initial consultations had been held by the Bureau of the 2015 Conference of Ministers, which had been responsible for coordinating the nomination process with representatives of the five subregions; that membership of the council was voluntary for individual member States; and that only two countries for each subregion could serve on the council at any point in time. Experts were informed on the state of the nominations thus far: Central Africa had nominated Gabon and Equatorial Guinea; East Africa had nominated Kenya and Uganda; North Africa had nominated Morocco and the Sudan; Southern Africa had nominated Lesotho and Zambia; and West Africa had nominated Ghana, with one country still to be nominated.

94. The experts commended the Commission on the achievements of the 2014-2015 biennium and the elaboration of the 2018-2019 strategic framework, which they duly endorsed.

C. Recommendations

95. In the light of the discussion, the Joint Committee made the following recommendations:

(a) The Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, should develop and make available to member States a framework for the mainstreaming of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development into national development plans, taking into consideration the experiences and lessons learned in this area, and should provide technical assistance for implementation;

(b) The Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, should use the integrated results framework as the basis for producing an annual Sustainable Development Goals report to track progress on Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, which will be accompanied with information on the status of the data ecosystem;

(c) Member States and the regional economic communities should adopt a comprehensive approach to accelerating regional integration, with macroeconomic, trade and infrastructure dimensions, among others;

(d) The African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission and the relevant United Nations funds and programmes, should foster the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) and promote coordination and coherence, learning and sharing of best practice within the United Nations development system, and with other regional and subregional forums and organizations;

(e) The Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, should enhance the production of migration-related data and undertake studies using the latest data to determine the nature and patterns of international migration streams in Africa, assess the impact of skilled migration both for countries of origin and destination, the long-term implications of remittance flows for development, and assist member States to integrate and mainstream migration into national development plans and strategies;

(f) The Economic Commission for Africa should take all necessary steps to organize on an annual basis an African regional review of progress in the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063;

(g) The Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, should assist member States in managing their natural resources by supporting the training of engineers, the development of mining codes and the strengthening of contract negotiation capacities;

(h) The Conference of Ministers, at its ninth Joint Annual Meetings, should endorse the draft revised statute of IDEP;

(i) The Economic Commission for Africa should scale up its work on human development and resource mobilization for the implementation of development programmes.

IX. Statutory issues of the African Union [agenda item 9]

A. Presentations

96. Representatives of the secretariat presented the statutory issues of the African Union. The first presentation was on the joint African Union Commission-Association of African Central Banks strategy on the establishment of the African central bank, as set out in E/ECA/COE/35/13 AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/13(II). The representative of the secretariat explained that the strategy proposed an approach to establishing an African central bank based on meeting preconditions at the regional level in order to create a strong and sustainable continental economic and monetary union. He summarized the proposed road map and recommendations set out in the strategy.

97. Presenting the Accra Declaration of the Fourth Congress of African Economists, as set out in document E/ECA/COE/35/14-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/14(II), the representative of the secretariat stressed that the theme of the Congress, “Industrial policy and economic performance in Africa”, was in line with the aspirations of Agenda 2063. The Congress provided an invaluable platform for young African economists in the continent and the diaspora, enabling them to harness their potential and strengthen their capacity through discussions with African economists and policymakers. The main objective was to promote economic research among African economists in order to equip the continent with the needed research capacities for its structural transformation. Participants in the Congress had recommended that Africa should follow an industrial path that was environmentally sustainable by gradually transitioning to green growth.

98. Presenting the draft statute of the African Institute for Remittances, the representative of the secretariat explained that the statute defined the objectives, functions and activities, governance and management, and operations of the Institute. The Government of Kenya (the host country) and the European Commission, together with other development partners, were already providing financial assistance for the Institute.

99. Regarding the draft pan-African investment code, as set out in document E/ECA/COE/35/18-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/18(II), the representative of the secretariat recalled that, at its third meeting, held in Abidjan on 22 and 23 May 2008, the Conference of African Ministers of Integration had requested the African Union Commission to develop a comprehensive investment code for Africa with a view to promoting private sector participation. National, regional and continental dimensions had been taken into account in order to create a legal environment conducive to promoting the flow of investments in Africa, facilitating intra-African trade and promoting cross-border investment. Several consultative meetings had been held with experts from African Union member States, but a decision had not yet been reached on whether the code should supersede national investment laws.

100. Introducing the draft concept note on the creation of the African inclusive markets centre of excellence, as set out in document E/ECA/COE/35/19-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/19(II), the representative of the secretariat stressed the need for African countries to promote regional economic integration, in particular through transformative regional value chains, inclusive markets and business development, which would generate employment and income and reduce poverty in Africa. He noted that, in order to reconcile strong growth with poverty and inequality reduction, the markets in which the poor and vulnerable interact must be made more inclusive. Inclusive markets were defined as markets that resulted in expanded choice and opportunity for the poor and produced outcomes that benefited the poor. The expected outcome for the work of the centre was to enhance the capacity of the African Union and its relevant institutions to support economic transformation in Africa through inclusive markets.

101. Presenting the report of the annual meeting of the Directors General of National Statistical Offices of African countries, held in Libreville from 26 to 28 November 2015 on the theme of the data revolution, the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063, the representative of the secretariat explained that the main objectives of the meeting had been to examine the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063, to take stock of the specialized technical groups of the strategy for the harmonization of statistics in Africa, to exchange experiences and best practices and to discuss arrangements for the coordination of ongoing activities.

102. Presenting the report of the seventh meeting of the African Union Subcommittee of Directors General of Customs, held in Kinshasa on 24 and 25 September 2015, the representative of the secretariat recalled that the meeting had considered the implementation of the single window concept in Africa, coordinated border management, interconnected customs clearance systems and an African Union

customs trade facilitation forum, all of which could be used to facilitate legitimate trade, protect society and collect government revenues and statistics.

103. On the issue of financing social protection in Africa, the representative of the secretariat stressed the importance of State-financed social protection measures for vulnerable groups and as a means of addressing social inequalities in Africa. Those measures, such as cash transfers, access to health care and education, employment, public works programmes and feeding schemes, would help to achieve the social protection and social security targets of the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063.

104. On the issue of women's rights and economic empowerment, the representative of the secretariat described the role of capital markets in mobilizing domestic resources for Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals through women's leadership. Such markets should be simplified and could tap into local women's credit schemes. It was necessary to have gender-inclusive macroeconomic policy frameworks, gender-sensitive programmes, inclusive and equitable outcomes and gender-sensitive targets and indicators for monitoring and evaluation. To achieve Agenda 2063 and meet the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, small-scale income generation initiatives should evolve into the creation of opportunities for women.

105. The Secretary General of the Pan-African Postal Union presented, on behalf of the African Union Commission, the report on the elaboration of guidelines on addressing and postcode systems in Africa and the report of the project on the electrification and connectivity of post offices in rural areas of Africa, a joint project of the African Union Commission, the Pan-African Postal Union and the Universal Postal Union.

B. Discussion

106. In the ensuing discussion of the statutory issues presented by the African Union Commission, experts raised concerns about the slow ratification of the legal instruments establishing the pan-African financial institutions, namely, an African central bank, an African investment bank and an African monetary fund. Those institutions would catalyse the development potential of member States by providing domestic resources. In addition, flexibility within the macroeconomic convergence criteria would be necessary to help countries to move forward in monetary integration. Experts agreed that countries that were ready to move forward in the establishment of the African financial institutions should be allowed to do so.

107. Experts drew attention to the contribution of the agricultural sector in boosting Africa's economic and structural transformation. The priorities for reaching green growth included building resilience to climate shocks, providing sustainable infrastructure, creating ecosystem services and making efficient and sustainable use of natural resources (particularly water). Experts also discussed the communication strategy of the Congress with a view to ensuring greater involvement of young African economists through their respective research institutions.

108. Regarding the draft statute of the African Institute for Remittances, experts raised concerns that member States had not been given adequate time to study and review the draft statute and its legal and financial implications thoroughly and to provide meaningful inputs. On the issue of financial commitment, it was clarified that the Institute had already been established as a specialized technical office of the African Union Commission and would be treated as any other organ of the African Union. Experts requested additional time for further review of the draft statute.

109. Experts commended the African Union Commission on its efforts to promote investment in Africa through initiatives such as the draft pan-African investment code, which was designed to promote investment, create jobs and ensure poverty

eradication. Participants discussed the six options recommended by the legal experts at their meeting in Lusaka, from 30 November to 2 December 2015, and voiced the need for the Conference of Ministers to decide on the legal nature of the code.

110. Experts congratulated the African Union Commission on its initiative to create an African inclusive markets centre of excellence, which would support inclusive growth and contribute to poverty eradication in Africa. They noted the need to take into account the goals of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, in that context, to include aspects of the green economy and its potential for job creation. They also observed that it was important to rationalize the creation of new institutions and centres in order to avoid duplication of efforts.

111. Experts underscored the importance of accurate statistics for Africa's development and structural transformation and considered progress concerning the planned Nelson Mandela pan-African statistics institute and the pan-African training centre for statistics, the African charter on statistics, and other efforts to optimize the data revolution in such areas as national accounts, the labour market, statistics on governance for peace and security, education, science, technology and innovation and the 2020 censuses on population and housing.

112. Experts emphasized the need for a recommendation on adequate infrastructure and appropriate technology to support coordinated border management in Africa.

113. Experts stressed the importance of the development of guarantees to facilitate the access and reimbursement of credit for vulnerable groups, including women.

114. Experts discussed the advantages of comprehensive addressing and postcode systems for social and economic development, emphasizing that, in principle, each member State was capable of implementing its own systems.

C. Recommendations

115. In the light of the discussion, the Joint Committee made the following recommendations:

(a) The joint strategy on the establishment of the African central bank should be submitted for adoption by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union at its twenty-seventh ordinary session, to be held in Kigali in July 2016, taking into consideration the reservations expressed by the subregional committee for Southern Africa of the Association of African Central Banks;

(b) The African Union Commission, supported by the African Capacity-Building Foundation and African economic research centres, should work together to produce a publication on the dynamics of African economies, based on an African perception of African development challenges and opportunities;

(c) The African Union Commission, in collaboration with the regional economic communities and the African Capacity-Building Foundation, should establish an African forum for think tanks to address Africa's development;

(d) The African Union member States should review the draft statute of the African Institute for Remittances and submit their comments to the African Union Commission in writing within four months;

(e) The African Union Commission should submit the amended version of the statute to the legal experts of the African Union for their review before submitting it for consideration and adoption by the relevant organs of the African Union;

(f) The African Union Commission should proceed with deeper consultations with member States, with a view to finalizing the draft pan-African investment code;

(g) The African Union Commission should commission an independent consultant to carry out a feasibility study, to consider various options for making the African inclusive markets centre of excellence operational and financially sustainable, and the findings of that study should then be presented to member States for due consideration;

(h) National and regional stakeholders and international partners should develop policies and strategies incorporating the social protection and social security targets of the first 10-year implementation plan for Agenda 2063;

(i) The African Union Commission should conduct a study on women's cash flow and access to credit; best practices should be scaled up to improve women's access to credit; and disaggregated targeting should be used that includes, in particular, women at the grass-roots level;

(j) Member States are urged to prioritize the addressing and post code systems and to include them in their national development plans as part of the infrastructure needed to increase access to basic services.

X. Date and theme of the tenth Joint Annual Meetings [agenda item 10]

116. The representative of the secretariat introduced the note on the dates and theme for the tenth Joint Annual Meetings in 2017 (E/ECA/COE/35/21-AU/STC/FMEPI/EXP/21(II)). He said that the suggested themes had been formulated by the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa through a consultative process and were now being submitted to the Committee for its consideration.

117. In the ensuing discussion, some experts maintained that the theme of "Growth, inequality and unemployment" could, with certain modifications, be made to encompass the other two themes. Following further discussion of the themes suggested by the secretariat, the Joint Committee identified the following themes for further deliberation:

(a) Wealth creation, equitable growth and employment for sustainable development;

(b) African economies: from high growth to inclusive growth;

(c) Growth, inequality and unemployment;

(d) Export-led growth: challenges and opportunities.

118. Noting the convergence of the proposed themes, the Chair invited the experts to seek agreement on one of them. The Joint Committee agreed to request the secretariat to work closely with the Bureau with a view to finalizing, as appropriate, the wording of the proposed theme and to inform the Committee accordingly.

119. On the issue of possible dates for the tenth Joint Annual Meetings in 2017, the Joint Committee unanimously supported the proposed time frame of mid-March 2017.

XI. Other matters [agenda item 11]

120. No other matters were raised.

XII. Consideration and adoption of the draft report of the meeting of the Joint Committee of Experts and consideration and recommendation for adoption of the draft resolutions [agenda item 12]

121. Under this agenda item, the Committee considered the draft report of its meeting together with the 17 resolutions for consideration and adoption by the ninth Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, as contained in document E/ECA/COE/35/L, AU/STC/FMEPI /EXP/Draft/Rpt(I). Several experts made comments and proposed amendments to the report and to the draft resolutions. After extensive discussion, the Committee unanimously adopted the report. The resolutions, as amended by the Joint Committee, are attached to the present report for consideration and adoption by the Conference of Ministers.

XIII. Closing of the meeting [agenda item 13]

122. Closing remarks were made by Mr. Maruping, Mr. Hamdok and Mr. Risenga Maluleke, Chair of the Bureau. Mr. Maruping welcomed the consensus reached by the delegates on an integrated and coherent approach to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals and on a single periodic progress report on both agendas, and the guidance provided by the experts for future work by the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and partners. Mr. Hamdok said that the lessons learnt from implementing the Millennium Development Goals would be instrumental in guiding Africa into developing a single reporting framework for Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda. Mr. Maluleke strongly encouraged participants to seek a collective approach in resolving the challenges of Africa's development through the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

123. Following those statements and the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chair declared the meeting closed.