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Talking points for Commissioner of Economic Affairs Department

Africa Regional Consultative meeting on the Sustainable Development Goals 4-5 November 2013

**Excellences Ministers
Excellency's, Ambassadors**

Distinguished invitees

Ladies and gentlemen

- It is my pleasure to be with you today and open this conference on Sustainable Development Goals.
- My profound appreciation goes to all Ministers and stakeholders and that took time to attend this important event.
- Appreciation also goes to the organizers of the meeting.
- It is well known that, sustainable development is the “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” This concept rests on two pillars: firstly, equity both between and within generations and, secondly, the equal status of social, economic and environmental goals. The aim is to guide and contribute to transformative change as stipulated in the Rio+20 outcome document, in support of rights-based, equitable and inclusive processes that enhance sustainability at global, regional, national and local levels.

- Rio+20 requested the relevant bodies of the United Nations System, within their respective mandates, to support the Regional Commissions (RCs) in collecting and compiling national inputs to inform this global effort.
- It is our belief that the post 2015 development agenda should incorporate the Rio+20 outcomes and the outcomes of Africa-wide initiatives, national and regional consultations as well as United Nations forums, including 20 years since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD+20) among others.
- The process of formulating and articulating an African Common Position on the Post 2015 Development Agenda has been, and continues to be, progressing well, step by step so far.
- The African Union Commission in collaboration with partners (UNECA, AfDB, and UNDP) has conducted a series of consultations both at regional and continental levels with all relevant stakeholders to identify what Africa want for the future.
- As per the Decision of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Africa Union, a High Level Committee of Heads (HLC) of State and Government was established to coordinate activities on the post 2015 Development on the Continent, refine and finalize the African Common Position and ensure that the priorities identified in the African Common Position are integrated on the new Global Agenda.
- The HLC held its inaugural meeting in the sideline of the UN General Assembly, adopted the roadmap proposed by its Sherpa and agreed that AUC should serves as the secretariat of HLC.
- The set roadmap is clear and logical and it is our belief that it will be adhered to both in terms of direction and momentum.
- The **content** of the **draft** is based on the **inputs** of stakeholders (government officials, RECs, CSOs of which youth and women's organizations, parliamentarians, academia, the private sector) on the continent and thus should be respected.

- **There is need** to build upon the existing draft and to have a document that addresses what Africans want and bear in mind other global agenda such as Rio+20 outcome document and our own frameworks such as Africa Agenda 2063.
- The technical working group has been working on incorporating inputs received from different stakeholders and held its meeting on 25-26 October 2013 and the Sherpa Meeting on 28-29 reviewed and discussed the matrix of priorities and outline of the Draft African Common position.
- The HLC will make sure that the outcomes of this SDGs meeting will be incorporated into the draft African Common Position on the Post 2015 Development Agenda.
- Therefore I urge the organizers of this meeting to submit the outcome document of the SDGs meeting on time to the HLC secretariat at AUC.
- The next step is for the secretariat to do the final drafting of the document with guidance from the Chair of the HLC and members of the HLC and its Sherpa.
- And we would like to underline that it is only the HLC that is mandated by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government assigned to do the task of polishing, finalizing and popularizing the African Common Position on the post 2015 development agenda.
- The polished version of the Draft African Common Position will be presented to the January 2014 Assembly of Heads of State and Government for consideration and adoption.
- We would also like to emphasize that the report of the HLC will solely be the basis of the negotiations during the global post 2015 development agenda formulation and galvanize international support around Africa's priorities.

- We are all highly confident that the High Level Committee (HLC) will achieve its entire objective. I would also like to assure you that the AU Commission will continue to support their activities.
- This will be the route towards fulfilling the vision of building an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven and managed by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena.
- Allow me to thank you for taking time off your busy schedule to be here at this important event.
- Appreciation also goes to the partners of AUC namely UNECA, AfDB, UNDP, UNFPA and others in providing continuous support together to the AUC.
- Finally I wish you all the best and fruitful deliberations.