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Biennial report 2014-2015

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Message from the Executive Secretary

The present report provides a review of the progress made over the biennium 2014-2015 in implementing the work programme of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), with a focus on the results that have been achieved in support of Africa's transformation agenda.

Following its reorientation in 2013 to focus more on strengthening its policy influence, earning greater credibility and trust, becoming more accountable and learning-driven and promoting greater operational effectiveness in support of Africa's transformative agenda, ECA has played a crucial role towards advancing Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

The biennium under review was one in which African leaders collectively asserted their priorities and needs in the adoption of a number of key global and continental transformative frameworks for the continent's economic and social development. The year 2014 saw the adoption of Agenda 2063, which is a forward-looking continental framework founded on the African Union vision of "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena". Agenda 2063 guided the region's priorities and collective voice in the development of the three key global development frameworks in 2015: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the outcome of the third International Conference on Financing for Development (the Addis Ababa Action Agenda); and the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change. These intergovernmental processes were informed by the common African position on the post-2015 development agenda and the Marrakech Consensus, both of which were developed with ECA assistance.

Central to the success of ECA remains its emphasis on applying robust, evidence-based policy research produced in-house and with growing interdivisional collaboration and stakeholder engagement to its key strategic priority areas. In its flagship *Economic Report on Africa* series, ECA continues to deepen research on Africa's industrialization, which is imperative for its structural transformation. The 2014 report explored how to build innovative, effective and flexible industrial policy institutions, processes and mechanisms to enhance industrialization. Noting the centrality of trade for industrialization, the 2015 report assessed the bidirectional relationships between industrialization and trade. Similarly, its work and support to member States on trade negotiations contributed to the successful launch of the Tripartite Free Trade Area in June 2015, kicking off the continental free trade area negotiations and the African common position for the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference in September 2015. The ECA African Climate Policy Centre leveraged its growing body of data, including forecasted climate data, climate science and research on the continent, to deepen understanding of the needs and implications for building climate-resilient economies and to inform the region's position in the lead-up to the twenty-first session of the conference of the parties to the framework convention on climate change, held in Paris.

The commitment of ECA to high-quality research is demonstrated by the 2014 perception survey of ECA partners. The findings revealed a favourable perception of the contribution made by the Commission in terms of its influence on development policy in the region, with 85 per cent of respondents perceiving ECA knowledge outputs as being of high quality and effective in promoting discussion on Africa's transformative agenda, more than 70 per cent of respondents indicating that ECA knowledge delivery was highly sensitive to context, relevant and tailored, and close to 90 per cent of respondents agreeing that ECA generated reliable and relevant policy ideas.

A major driving force of ECA has been a focus on statistical development in Africa. The transformation of the five ECA subregional offices into data centres is contributing to supporting the statistical capacities of member States and informing the development of ECA country and subregional profiles. A total of 40 profiles have been developed as a result. ECA played a crucial role, providing technical 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. Currently, ECA is working with the African Union Commission to develop an integrated set of indicators to track performance on the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063. This will ensure a coherent and integrated approach to the implementation and follow-up of both agendas.

As member States increasingly assert their policy priorities and needs, they continue to see ECA as a trusted and credible partner in the provision of technical assistance and capacity development. This has led to an increasing demand for ECA support in the form of high-level policy engagement with member States in a number of areas, including industrialization and industrial policies, trade, energy efficiency, the blue economy and migration. This validation is contributing to the position of ECA as a partner of choice.

The credibility of ECA is further recognized in its continued successful engagement with non-traditional partners, including the private sector, universities, research institutions and think tanks, in efforts to broaden and strengthen the scope of its technical and policy footprint. Equally, the efforts of ECA ensured that the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa (RCM-Africa) endorsed the Framework for a Renewed United Nations-African Union Partnership on Africa's Integration and Development Agenda 2017-2027, adopted by African leaders in June 2015. The strategic partnership of ECA with the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank has yielded immense results in the areas of the Common African Position on the post-2015 development agenda, the African regional integration index and the *Assessing Regional Integration in Africa* series and financing for development, particularly illicit financial flows in Africa.

Internally, ECA has advanced its commitment to strengthening accountability and efficiency towards becoming fit for purpose. Specific measures have been taken to build a more transparent, accountable and results-based organization. ECA has adopted an annual business plan aimed at achieving more integrated planning and budgeting across all funding sources (that is, regular budget and extrabudgetary resources), in alignment with the Commission's development, and strategic results and gender responsiveness. The ECA executive performance management dashboard was developed in 2014 to provide a performance feedback loop and incentives to support sustained, integrated and coherent management of results, and to aid strategic decision-making in relation to policy research and knowledge delivery.

I am proud of the achievements of ECA, especially as its results have occurred in an increasingly vulnerable and volatile global economic and financial climate. They present growing evidence of its policy influence and credibility as a think tank of reference on Africa's development priorities. I trust that member States will highlight the results achieved and continue to support us in putting Africa first.

I.

I. Africa rising: megatrends in economic and social development

1. Africa's economic growth declined moderately following the slight contraction in the global economy, which was mainly due to subdued growth in emerging markets and developing economies, while a chequered recovery continued in developed economies. Looking forward, Africa's growth prospects remain positive as it continues to be driven by strong domestic demand and investment (particularly in infrastructure). The improving business environment, lower costs of doing business and better macroeconomic management continue to enhance investment. The buoyant services sector and a focus on non-oil sectors by oil-exporting economies to mitigate the continued decline in oil prices will contribute to the positive medium-term prospects. In addition, the increasing trade and investment ties both within Africa and between African and emerging economies, as well as the recovery of traditional export markets, particularly in the eurozone, will contribute positively to the medium-term prospects.

A. Developments in the global economy and implications for Africa

2. Global growth declined moderately from 2.6 per cent in 2014 to 2.4 per cent in 2015, reflecting subdued growth in investment and household final consumption. The economic slowdown and rebalancing of economic activity in China away from investment and manufacturing towards consumption and services; lower prices for energy and other commodities (affecting economic activity in countries such as Brazil and the Russian Federation, as well as in other commodity-exporting countries); and a gradual tightening of monetary policy in the United States of America, are some of the key factors that have weighed negatively on global growth.

3. The macroeconomic uncertainties that have persisted since the global financial crisis and the volatility of commodity prices will continue to shape the medium-term outlook. Exchange rate volatilities have become more pronounced against this backdrop of falling commodity prices, global growth patterns, declining trade flows, capital flows and diverging monetary policies. The continued decline in oil prices may generate a positive outlook for the African continent because of the number of oil importers, although oil exporters may see a deterioration of their current account balances and depreciation of their exchange rates. Tightening monetary policy in the United States will also enhance the movement of capital outflows from developing and emerging economies.

B. Africa's economic performance and prospects

4. Africa's growth rate (excluding Libya) declined slightly from 3.9 per cent in 2014 to 3.7 per cent in 2015 owing to the global economic slowdown. Yet, Africa's growth is the second fastest after East and South Asia. Growth in Africa continues to be driven by domestic demand, with private consumption influenced by increased consumer confidence and an expanding middle class, while investment is driven mainly by an improved business environment and lower costs of doing business. Continued government spending on infrastructure projects, in particular, has also contributed positively to growth.

The external balance, however, had a negative impact on growth in 2015, as a result of weak and volatile commodity prices.

1. Private consumption continues to be the main driver of Africa's growth

5. The growth rate of private consumption increased from 1.6 per cent in 2014 to 2.7 per cent in 2015. Despite the increase in African infrastructure development, gross fixed capital formation grew by only 1.0 per cent relative to gross domestic product (GDP) in 2015. This was mainly due to the reduction in capital inflows as a result of the slowdown in the global economy, especially among Africa's development partners in the eurozone and some emerging economies, such as Brazil, China and the Russian Federation. Net exports continued to weigh negatively on growth in 2015.

2. Varying growth performance across economic groups and subregions

6. Despite the low oil prices, oil-exporting countries grew at an estimated 3.9 per cent in the biennium. That performance, attributable to declining oil prices being partially cushioned by healthy dynamics in the non-oil sectors in some countries, is higher than both oil-importing and mineral-rich countries, which had an average growth of 3.5 per cent and 3.0 per cent, respectively. Growth in those two groups of countries was mainly driven by private consumption, which increased by 2.5 per cent and 3.2 per cent relative to total GDP, respectively.

7. At the subregional level, East Africa maintained the highest growth rate in the region with 6.2 per cent in 2015, despite experiencing a decline in growth relative to 2014 levels. It was followed by West Africa, with 4.4 per cent, Central Africa, with 3.4 per cent and North Africa (excluding Libya), with 3.6 per cent over the biennium 2014-2015, and Southern Africa, with 2.5 per cent in 2015.

3. African countries' growth still relies on a narrow base

8. While economic growth rates have been higher in Africa compared with most regions in the past decade, it is also clear that, in many African countries, growth has continued to rely on a narrow base. As a result, the number of Africans living in absolute poverty has risen and inequality remains a major concern. More importantly, Africa's economic growth has been associated with increased exploitation of non-renewable natural resources with minimal value addition and employment generation, and growth sustainability remains a major concern.

4. Mixed impact of low oil prices on the growth of African economies

9. Crude oil prices continued to decline at a monthly average of 4.1 per cent over the period from June 2014 to October 2015. Robust supplies and lower demand due to the global economic slowdown have generally explained the decline in commodity prices across the board. ECA analysis using monthly data from January 2000 to October 2015 reveals that oil prices have had a significant positive impact on oil-importing and mineral-rich countries, but a negative impact on oil-exporting countries, which have increasingly sought a diversified growth path. Thus, the overall effect of low oil prices on Africa's growth appears to be marginal. The marginal impact of oil price decline emphasizes the significance of the continued diversification initiatives being undertaken by African countries, especially into non-oil sectors, and the effects of improved macroeconomic management and associated fiscal policies.

5. Low commodity prices and large investment projects underpin the growing fiscal deficits

10. Africa's fiscal deficit increased from 5.1 per cent of GDP in 2014 to 5.6 per cent of GDP in 2015. The continued decline of oil and other commodity prices reduced fiscal revenues in many African countries, whereas high spending on infrastructure, fiscal loosening and higher spending in the lead-up to elections in a number of countries contributed to increased expenditure over the period. The fiscal deficit is expected to narrow in 2016 to 4.6 per cent of GDP as commodity prices and growth in emerging and developed economies are expected to pick up.

6. Tight monetary policy amid falling commodity prices and declining revenues

11. African countries exercised tight monetary policy as global headwinds weighed on the region. As has been the case with most developing countries, the inflation rate rose from 7.0 per cent in 2014 to 7.5 per cent in 2015. The strong United States dollar and high food prices exerted inflationary pressures in the region, despite weak global growth and low commodity prices partially offsetting the rise in inflation. Currency devaluations, especially in oil-rich countries, amid falling oil prices and declining revenues and exports also exacerbated the rise in inflation. Those inflationary pressures, together with high fiscal and current account deficits, led to the tightening of monetary conditions, including the hiking of monetary policy rates in countries such as Angola, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, South Africa and Uganda to curb inflation. However, a moderating trend is expected for the biennium 2016-2017 in view of lower food and energy prices, improved security situations and diminishing impacts from subsidy cuts.

7. Exchange rates continued to depreciate, although with minimal impact on exports

12. Most African currencies depreciated in 2015, a trend that started in 2014. This was driven partly by low oil prices, but also by the strong dollar and the expected tightening of the United States monetary policy. Currency depreciation is expected to be associated with increased exports and a decrease in imports. However, for African countries, the association between exchange rates and trade seems to be very weak and, in some countries, not in line with the theory. This could suggest that there are other factors behind Africa's lack of competitiveness, which undermine the benefits brought about by currency depreciation. While the cost of doing business in Africa has been decreasing, there are still considerable barriers to enhancing Africa's trade, suggesting a lack of product diversification and value addition.

8. Current account deficits recorded by all economic groupings and subregions

13. Current account deficits increased from -3.9 per cent of GDP in 2014 to -5.0 per cent of GDP in 2015, with all economic groupings and subregions reporting deficits. Declining commodity prices and global demand as a result of the global economic slowdown, especially in emerging economies, played a significant role in the current account trends, with oil-exporting African countries recording their first current account deficit since 2009 (2.1 per cent) in 2014, followed by a deficit of 5.1 per cent in 2015. For oil importers, the low oil prices led to a narrowing of the deficit. Of the subregions, the current account deficit was largest for Central Africa (8.1 per cent), followed by East Africa (7.4 per cent) and then Southern Africa (5.7 per cent).

9. Primary commodities continue to dominate Africa's exports

14. Agriculture dominates most African economies, accounting for up to 58 per cent of GDP in some countries, such as the Central African Republic. The continent's total exports of goods and services declined by 3.2 per cent in 2013 and 5.2 per cent in 2014, while its total imports grew by 3.0 per cent in 2013 and 1.7 per cent in 2014. The continent's imports are dominated by consumer goods, whereas its exports consist mainly of primary commodities, including fuels and bituminous minerals, and agricultural products, such as cocoa, fruits, fertilizers and vegetables. Fuel exports fell by 13.2 per cent and ore and metal exports by 8.2 per cent in 2014. On a positive note, whereas Africa's exports to most of its trading partners have stagnated or even declined since the global economic crisis, intra-African trade remains relatively strong by volume, and diversified in terms of manufactured products and services. Manufacturing goods as a proportion of total intra-African merchandise exports stood at 41 per cent in 2014, down from 44 per cent in 2013, while fuel exports stood at 31 per cent in 2014 compared with 29 per cent in 2013.

C. Medium-term growth prospects and risks

15. Africa's real GDP growth is expected to increase by about 4.3 per cent in 2016 and 4.4 per cent in 2017. Growth continues to be driven by strong domestic demand. The improving business environment, lower costs of doing business and better macroeconomic management continue to enhance investment. The buoyant services sector and a focus on non-oil sectors by oil-exporting economies in order to mitigate the continued decline in oil prices will greatly contribute to the good medium-term prospects. Furthermore, the increasing trade and investment ties within Africa and with emerging economies, as well as the recovery of traditional export markets, particularly in the eurozone, will contribute positively to the medium-term prospects.

16. However, African economies face significant risks, such as climate shocks and terrorism concerns, which require special attention by policymakers to maintain the requisite growth. The turbulence in the global economy has been underpinned by severe financial instability, widening sovereign-debt problems and high unemployment, especially in developed economies.

D. Recent social developments

17. Africa made considerable progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals despite challenging initial conditions. The baseline, generally 1990 for most of the Millennium Development Goals, was relatively low compared to other developing regions. There is an overall positive direction, with significant proportions of progress with variation across certain Goals, across and within countries.

1. Status of progress towards social outcomes in Africa

18. Africa has witnessed improved economic performance for nearly two decades, but its pace and character has not been sufficiently robust to sustain poverty reduction or create jobs. Between 1990 and 2010, poverty levels across Africa fell, albeit at a slow pace, from 56.5 to 48.4 per cent, while between 1990 and 2013 there was only a meagre decrease of 8 per cent in the proportion

of people facing hunger and malnutrition as conflict and adverse climate conditions drove food insecurity and malnutrition.

19. Nevertheless, Africa is close to achieving universal primary enrolment with 25 countries achieving a net enrolment rate of at least 75 per cent in 2013. The reported completion rates, however, lag behind enrolment, while challenges relating to quality issues persist. Gender parity in primary schooling improved from 0.86 before 2012 to 0.93 after 2012, but secondary and tertiary gender parity remain at 0.91 and 0.87, respectively. Under-five mortality fell from 146 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 65 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2012, an improvement of 55.5 percentage points, but below the target in Goal 4 of the Millennium Development Goals of a two-thirds reduction by 2015. The efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis have yielded noteworthy achievements in terms of incidence, prevalence and mortality.

20. Progress towards achieving environment-related goals has been slower, with only one quarter of Africa's population having access to an improved drinking water source. Similarly, the proportion of people with access to improved sanitation has increased from 24 per cent in 1990 to just 30 per cent in 2012, and remains skewed towards urban areas. Poor rural infrastructure combined with population growth leads to land degradation and decreasing agricultural productivity, resulting in lower incomes and reduced food security.

2. Good progress, but persistent inequities

21. The variation in progress across goals and within countries seems to follow a pattern across income, gender, ethnicity and location. For example, apart from North Africa, only 23 per cent of poor, rural African girls complete their primary education. In some countries, children in the poorest 20 per cent of the population are three times less likely to be enrolled in primary school than children from the wealthiest 20 per cent.

E. Human capital

22. Africa's human capital, though improving, is not linked tightly enough to industrialization, and certainly not to the green economy, as endorsed in the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and Agenda 2063. Those agendas aim to transform economies by tackling their structural vulnerabilities and by including all their citizens, achieving sustainability built on solid social, economic and environmental foundations.

23. Africa is plagued by the twin problems of unemployment and underemployment, which mutually reinforce and exacerbate the widespread informal sector in countries. The highest unemployment rates in countries with data in 2012 were Mauritania (31 per cent), Lesotho (26.5 per cent) and Gabon (20.3 per cent). Women had higher unemployment rates than men in Lesotho, Egypt and Gabon, in part reflecting the different access to labour markets for women. Employment

24. Unemployment rates for Africa (excluding North Africa), disaggregated by sex, were 6.9 per cent for males and 8.8 per cent for females in 2014, which represent marginal declines of 0.2 and 0.1 percentage points over the 2009 rates. Most jobs in Africa, particularly for young people and women, continue to be generated outside the formal economy, where the skills profile is predominantly poor. It is further observed that 9 out of 10 rural and urban

workers in Africa have informal jobs, and most employees are women and young people.

F. Working age population

25. The active working age population (25-64 years) is growing more rapidly than any other age group, more than tripling in size between 1980 and 2015, when it stood at 123.7 million (33.3 per cent) and 425.7 million (36.5 per cent), respectively. The active working group is largely composed of young people and its growth over time is a statistical feature of the demographic dividend that could lead to productivity gains and economic growth in Africa. The demographic dividend depends on the young population having the right skills profile to secure the positive effects.

G. Urbanization

26. Over the period 2015-2020, Africa will experience the highest rate of urban growth globally, with a rate of 3.42 per cent annually, compared with the world rate of 1.84 per cent over the same period.

27. Beyond the demographic shift, urban areas currently contribute more than 55 per cent of GDP to African economies. The economic role of cities, however, is largely driven by consumption rather than production. Unlike other parts of the world, urbanization in Africa is not linked to industrialization, which in turn has led to “consumption cities” that are populated primarily by workers in non-tradable services. Moreover, African cities remain largely informal. This is particularly problematic given the youth bulge in the region and the concomitant need to create decent jobs.

H. Conclusions

28. Economic growth rates have been higher in Africa compared with most of the regions in the past decade; however, in many African countries, growth has not been inclusive, the number of Africans in absolute poverty and those facing hunger has risen and inequality remains a major concern. More attention should be paid to inequality and social exclusion, for example, through proactive social protection programmes. This is mostly because Africa’s economic growth has been associated with increased exploitation of non-renewable natural resources with minimal value addition and employment generation, which undermines its growth sustainability. The growth of an unplanned urban Africa with a youthful population needs to be matched with a development process that provides the requisite skills and efficient and adequate public services delivery.

29. The informal sector has to be provided with policy packages of training, access to credit and social protection to increase productivity and contribute to improved welfare, particularly for young people and women. Africa must also improve its resilience to both environmental and socioeconomic shocks, manage its natural capital and minimize pollution, all of which can be achieved by greening its industrialization process. Given the erratic energy supply in most countries, the importance of reliable and sustainable energy sources for structural transformation cannot be overemphasized.

II. Achieving structural transformation in Africa: programme results achieved in 2014

A. Macroeconomic Policy Division

30. 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.

31. As part of the implementation of the ECA programme of work during the biennium, 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.

32. During the period under review, ECA produced the 2014 and 2015 editions of the Economic Report on Africa. The theme for the 2014 edition was “Dynamic Industrial Policy in Africa” and that for 2015 was “Industrializing through trade”. The 2015 edition built on previous editions that 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.

33. 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.

34. During the biennium, 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.

35. 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.

36. 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.

37. 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.

38. 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

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

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.

39. 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.

40. ECA, through its research and advocacy work, also influenced policy in 10 countries (of a biennium 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.

41. 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".

42. 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 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.

43. 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.

44. The subprogramme, together with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, produced the 2014 and 2015 editions 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 2014 edition was launched at a side event of the ninth African Development Forum, held in Marrakech, Morocco, while the 2015 edition was officially launched at the tenth African Economic Conference, held in Kinshasa. Both were widely disseminated at the launch events and other events organized by ECA and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development within and outside Africa. The 2014 edition was also disseminated within Africa by mail to most universities in the region.

45. 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.

46. In the area of economic governance, ECA fully met its target for the biennium 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 biennium of bringing the total number of countries to 22.

47. 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.

48. 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.

B. Regional Integration and Trade Division

49. 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.

50. 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.

51. 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).

52. 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.

53. 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.

54. 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.

55. 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.

56. 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.

57. 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.

58. 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.

59. 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

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

of industrialization and productive integration as the bedrock of Africa's 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.

60. 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.

61. 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.

62. 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

63. 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.

64. 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.

65. 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.

C. Special Initiatives Division

66. 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, in the biennium 2014- 2015, 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

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

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.

67. 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.

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

69. 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.

70. 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.

71. 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.

72. 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”.

73. 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.

74. 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.

75. 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.

76. 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.

77. 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.

78. 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.

79. In 2014, ECA analysed the impacts of climate change on African small island developing States, including the publication of two strategic regional framework documents to support science-informed policy processes in such States ("Climate change in the African small island developing States: from vulnerability to resilience – the paradox of the small" and "Unlocking the full potential of the blue economy: are African small island developing States ready to embrace the opportunities"). The African Climate Policy Centre held the fourth annual Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa, in Marrakech, Morocco. A salient outcome of that Conference was a dialogue between the climate research and user communities on the institutionalization of the climate research for development platform, of which the Centre is the secretariat.

80. In 2015, the main achievements related to the technical and advisory support provided to African countries before and during 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 Commission 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 toward the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris and beyond.

81. 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.

82. 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.

83. 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.

D. African Centre for Statistics

84. 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.

85. 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 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.

86. African Statistics Day, which is widely celebrated every year on 18 November, increased public awareness of the important role that statistics plays in all aspects of social and economic life in Africa. In 2015, during those celebrations, ECA also took part in the official launch of the Network of the African Statistical Community.

87. 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.

88. 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.

89. 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.

90. 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.

91. 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.

92. 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.

93. 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.

94. 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.

95. 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.

96. 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.

97. 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).

98. 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.

99. 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).

100. 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.

E. Capacity Development Division

101. 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.

102. In 2014, building on its successful work in support of the African Peer Review Mechanism, ECA continued to provide support to member States in various aspects of the process through country support missions. It also provided support to the secretariat of the Mechanism on facilitating the harmonization of the national action plans of Lesotho and Zambia with their existing medium-term expenditure frameworks. Both workshops provided an opportunity for civil servants, civil society and private representatives to learn from the experiences of their peers, address the key challenges and suggest concrete tools and actions, which will make their action plans a credible and

operational document for national socioeconomic development processes and mechanisms.

103. In December 2014, ECA participated in an African Peer Review Mechanism mission in support of the Government of Senegal. The country's Mechanism documents were reviewed, validated and signed, including: the memorandum of understanding on the Mechanism between the Government of Senegal and the African Peer Review panel member; and the Senegal road map and national action plan for the Mechanism (for the period December 2014 to December 2015).

104. Also in support of the African Peer Review Mechanism, and in order to ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed into the Review, ECA undertook a study entitled "The African Peer Review Mechanism and managing diversity: the gender dimension", which examined the extent to which gender issues are embedded in the Mechanism processes. Its key recommendations aimed to enhance the relevance and impact of the Mechanism on gender equality in Africa. In addition, an expert group meeting was organized in September 2014 to validate the report. Participants in the meeting agreed that there was a greater need now more than ever to increase the focus on gender-related cross-cutting issues within the African Union and NEPAD agendas; representatives from regions of Africa and NEPAD discussed the issues facing the implementation of gender initiatives at the national and regional levels and proposed several recommendations, which are expected to be delivered to the Governments of various countries.

105. In 2015, 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.

106. 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.

107. 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.

108. 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.

109. 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.

110. 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.

111. The year 2014 presented many opportunities for the United Nations to enhance its support to the African Union and its NEPAD programme, both collectively and individually. In that regard, United Nations entities continued to improve the alignment of their programmes with those of the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and the regional economic communities. A significant event in 2014 was the fifteenth session of RCM-Africa, which took place in Abuja from 28 to 30 March. Participants at the meeting agreed to carry out further consultations with the secretariat of the United Nations Development Group on developing linkages between RCM-Africa, the Subregional Coordination Mechanism, the United Nations Development Group Regional Directors Team and the United Nations country teams, so as to strengthen coherence and coordination with a view to ensuring better United Nations support to the African Union.

112. 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.

113. 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.

114. 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.

115. Financing for development is another area where ECA had a strong policy influence in the period under review. It played a leading role in the Dakar Financing Summit for Africa's Infrastructure, which was convened in June 2014 by President Macky Sall of Senegal and Chair of NEPAD. The Summit was anchored on a study on domestic resource mobilization undertaken by ECA and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency in collaboration with other partners. Its main outcome was the Dakar Action Agenda for leveraging public-private partnerships for infrastructure transformation. The study was also used as background material for the ninth African Development Forum, held in 2014, on the theme "Innovative financing for Africa's transformation". In addition to being part of the team that drafted the Dakar Action Agenda, ECA contributed to the Summit through a technical study on "Enhancing the policy, legal and regulatory environment for regional infrastructure financing in Africa". The study presented an overview of existing policy, legal and regulatory frameworks while also examining the applicable regimes in Africa against the backdrop of the objective of integrated regional infrastructure development. It also examined several trends and opportunities for investment and private sector participation in the regional infrastructure projects, while highlighting existing collaborative efforts.

116. 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.

117. 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. 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.

118. 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.

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

1. Regular programme of technical cooperation

119. 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.

120. 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.

121. 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.

122. 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.

123. 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.

124. 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.

125. 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.

126. 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.

127. 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”.

128. 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.

129. 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.

2. United Nations Development Account

130. 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 the other United Nations entities, drawing on the strengths and comparative advantages of each.

131. 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. During the biennium 2014-2015, ECA has implemented 13 projects – benefiting over 35 member States – intended to develop national policies

centred on the three dimensions of sustainable development (social, environmental and economic).

132. 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.

133. In 2014-2015, ECA also developed seven new Development Account projects in the areas of statistics and data, implemented by the above 10 United Nations entities; evidence-based policies; development planning; strengthening the capacity of African development planners to integrate the post-2015 development agenda into national development plans; and monitoring of social protection in member States.

G. Gender and women in development

134. 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.

135. 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.

136. Progress towards the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment 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, held in Addis Ababa from 17 to 19 November 2014. The conference attracted over 450 participants, including 20 at the minister level, who represented 219 national gender machineries, and by representatives of six regional economic communities, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, United Nations agencies, development partners and over 150 civil society organizations. The outcome document, "The Addis Ababa Declaration on Accelerating the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action: towards a transformational change for women and girls in Africa", adopted by 20 African ministers of gender and women's affairs, marked a critical milestone in the endeavour to incorporate Africa's priorities into the

global review process. The Africa regional report 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 then proposed sustainable development goals.

137. 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.

138. 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.

139. 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.

140. 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.

141. 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 as a policy information tool for its new National Assembly, which opened in November 2015.

142. 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. The toolkit was tested in Kenya and validated at an expert group meeting held in Lusaka from 19 to 21 August 2014 and attended by 40 experts from ECA, member States and the regional economic communities, and non-governmental organizations representing women in cross-border trade.

143. 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.

144. 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.

145. 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, two e-discussions were held, the first on legislation and good practices for the banning of female genital mutilation, held from 1 to 18 July 2014, the second on 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, held in two phases, from 9 to 18 December 2014 and 28 January to 13 February 2015. 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.

146. 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.

147. 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.

148. 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.

149. 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.

H. Subregional activities for development

150. 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.

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

1. Subregional Office for North Africa

152. 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 new 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.

153. 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.

154. 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.

155. 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.

156. 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.

157.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.

2. Subregional Office for West Africa

158.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.

159.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.

160.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.

161. 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.

162. 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.

163. 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, and 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.

164. 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.

165. 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.

166. 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. Other 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.

167. 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.

3. Subregional Office for Central Africa

168. 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.

169. 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.

170. 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.

171. 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.

172. 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 2014 and 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.

173. 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.

174. 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.

175. 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.

176. 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.

177. 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.

178. 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.

179. 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.

180. 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.

4. Subregional Office for Eastern Africa

181. 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.

182. 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.

183. 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.

184. 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.

185. 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 early 2016.

186. 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.

187. 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.

188. 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.

189. 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.

190. 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.

4. Subregional Office for Southern Africa

191. 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.

192. 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.

193. 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.

194. 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.

195. 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.

196. 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.

197. 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.

198. 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.

199. 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.

200. 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.

201. 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.

202. 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.

203. 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.

204. 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.

I. African Institute for Economic Development and Planning

205. 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.

206. At the end of the biennium, 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.

207. 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 early 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.

208. 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.

209. 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.

210. 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.

211. 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.

212. 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.

213. 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.

214. 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.

J. Social Development Division

215. 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.

216. 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.

217. 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.

218. 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 Institute and future collaboration. The inclusion of the Institute 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 Institute 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 Institute'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 Institute in explaining national and subnational trends in social outcomes and assist in identifying policy directions.

219. 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 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.

220.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.

221.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.

222.Furthermore, ECA fully met its biennium 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.

223.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.

224. 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.

225. 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.

III. Update from the subsidiary bodies of ECA, including the intergovernmental committees of experts of the subregional offices

226. 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

227. 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.

228. 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

229. 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

230. 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.

231. 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

232. 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.

233. 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.

234. 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.

235. 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.

236. 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.

237. 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.

238. 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.

239. 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.

240. 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.

241. 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.

242. 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.

243. 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

244. 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.

245. 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.

246. 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.

247. 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.

248. 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.

249. 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

250. 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

251. 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

252. 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

253. 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

254. 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

255. 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.

256. 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.

257. 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.

258. 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.

259. 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.

260. 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.

261. 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.

262. 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.

263. 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.

264. 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.

265. 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.

266. 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

267. 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".

268. 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

269. 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.

270. 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.

271. 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.

272. 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.

273. 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

274. 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.

275. 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.

276. 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.

277. 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

278. 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.

279. 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.

280. 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

281. 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".

282. 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

283. 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.

284. A 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.

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

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

286. 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

287. 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

288. 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.

289. 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.

290. 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

291. 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.

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

293. 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

294. 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

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

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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

296. 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.

297. 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.

298. 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.

299. 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.

300. 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.

301. 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.

302. 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.

303. 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.

304. 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.

305. 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.

306. 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

307. 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”.

308. 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.

309. 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

310. 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.

311. A 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 agri-business.

312. 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.

313. 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.

314. 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.

315. 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

316. 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

317. 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

318. 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

319. 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

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

321. 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.

322. 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.

323. 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.

324. 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.

325. 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

326. 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

327. 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.

328. 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.

329. 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.

330. 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.

331. In addition to the main theme, the general objective of the session was to enable member 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.

332. 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.

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

- 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
- 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
- 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

- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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. The way forward: strategic development issues to be tackled in the coming biennium

334. The overall objective of the ECA biennium programme plan is to promote inclusive and sustainable economic and social development with a view to accelerating Africa's structural transformation, in line with the priorities and vision articulated in Agenda 2063, the NEPAD programme and Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development.

335. The mandate for the programme is derived from Economic and Social Council resolution 671 A (XXV), by which the Council established ECA. Further mandates have emanated from the outcomes and decisions of major global conferences and summits, including the United Nation Conference on Sustainable Development, the International Conferences on Financing for Development, the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and the ordinary sessions of the Assembly of the African Union.

336. Many African economies have continued to see solid growth over the past decade, which also saw African Governments making progress in advancing economic and social development, including meeting some of the Millennium Development Goal targets by 2015. However, the current economic growth of Africa is not all positive. It is generally not accompanied by much-needed structural transformation and diversification and often does not translate into equitable human development and improved livelihoods for the majority of people. Countries across Africa are becoming richer, but whole sections of society are being left behind and wealth disparities are increasingly visible. The current pattern and quality of growth is unsustainable and could undermine the continent's chances of achieving transformation and sustainable development. Unequal access to health care, education, water, sanitation and other infrastructure is reinforcing inequality. Smallholder agriculture has not been part of the growth surge, leaving rural populations trapped in poverty and

vulnerability. The deep, persistent and enduring inequalities in evidence across Africa have economic, social and political consequences, which in the long run undermine economic growth, productivity and the development of markets, weaken confidence in Governments and institutions, and create conditions for open conflict and social unrest, as the recent experience of some African countries has shown.

337. The central message is that economic growth alone is not enough. It must be accompanied by deliberate and proactive policies to reduce inequality and promote inclusion. Sustaining positive trends and achieving inclusive growth and development is the overriding development policy challenge that African countries must tackle as an urgent priority. In order to realize this objective, several related challenges and constraints need to be addressed, including achieving higher, sustained and equitable growth; investing in human development, including education, health care, infrastructure and job creation; boosting agriculture and food security; speeding up the pace of regional integration; promoting trade, including intra-African trade; and enhancing State and institutional capacity for improved economic management. Ensuring gender equality and building national statistical capacity should also remain top priorities. Resource mobilization is a critical cross-cutting challenge that must be addressed if Africa is to make progress in those areas. Sustaining positive trends will also depend critically on a favourable international environment that supports the special needs of Africa, particularly with respect to climate change, international trade and enhancement of the continent's voice in key global decision-making forums and processes. These are the major issues and challenges that underpin the development of the Commission's programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017.

338. Consistent with its mandate, the overall strategy of ECA for achieving the objectives of the programme will continue to centre on the nine interdependent and complementary subprogrammes, which were approved by the General Assembly as part of the restructuring of ECA. The overall strategy of the subprogrammes will consist of developing economic and social analyses and preparing reports to monitor and track the progress of Africa on global and regional commitments; formulating policy recommendations, guidelines and standards to support policy dialogue; organizing 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. An important element of the strategy is strengthening and expanding existing networks in order to generate, update and disseminate relevant information and facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices among policymakers, civil society, academia and other stakeholders. Additionally, special efforts will be made to ensure that the gender mainstreaming strategy of ECA is reflected throughout the nine subprogrammes. The subprogrammes, which are outlined below, focus on thematic or sectoral priorities that are key to the transformation of Africa.

A. Macroeconomic policy

339. The main strategic focus of the subprogramme will be to contribute to accelerating the transformation of African countries from low 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 strong,

inclusive and environmentally sustainable growth, create jobs, foster gender equality and women's empowerment, and accelerate the process of economic development within a framework of good economic governance.

B. Regional integration and trade

340. The work of the subprogramme will focus on policy research, consensus-building and the provision of advisory services in support of the efforts of the African Union Commission, member States and regional economic communities towards achieving structural transformation in Africa through trade, investment, industry, agriculture and land management for inclusive and sustainable development. Policy research, case studies and capacity-building programmes will be undertaken to boost African cross-border investment, intra-African trade and Africa's negotiating capacity in multilateral trade negotiations in the context of fostering the continent's integration.

C. Innovation, technology and management of Africa's natural resources

341. The strategy will focus on research, policy development and analytical work to support member States in the following areas: promoting the use of social, economic and environmental innovations and technological systems; developing mineral resources in the context of the Africa Mining Vision; advocating policy-relevant research and analysis to inform the formulation and implementation of green economy policies in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication and to realize optimal benefits from Africa's natural resource endowments; and helping member States to address climate change challenges in key sectors and putting in place appropriate plans and mechanisms to reflect national development priorities, policies, strategies and programmes.

D. Statistics

342. The goal of the subprogramme is to increase the capacity of African countries to collect, compile and use high-quality, comparable and harmonized statistics, with a view to monitoring the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, and to support regional integration, including through the harmonization of methods for censuses, surveys, national accounts, economic classifications and Sustainable Development Goal indicators, in compliance with international methodologies such as the 1993 and 2008 systems of national accounts.

E. Capacity development

343. This subprogramme will play a vital role in ensuring that the key policy findings from ECA research are used to support policy implementation at the national, subregional and continental levels. It will do so by strengthening the capacity of member States, regional economic communities and the African Union and its organs to implement their development priorities in line with the priorities and vision articulated in Agenda 2063, the NEPAD programme and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

F. Gender and women in development

344. This subprogramme will help member States to develop and implement economic and social policies that address gender issues and women's empowerment concerns; enhance gender mainstreaming in national policies, programmes and strategies; monitor and report on the implementation of United Nations global and regional commitments on gender equality and women's rights; and promote the collection and use of data disaggregated by gender.

G. Subregional activities for development

345. The five ECA subregional offices, which are responsible for the implementation of the components of this subprogramme, are located in Rabat, for North Africa; Niamey, for West Africa; Yaoundé, for Central Africa; Kigali, for Eastern Africa; and Lusaka, for Southern Africa. The subprogramme will focus on producing regular country profiles and risk analyses. The country profiles will include research, analysis, forecasts, indicators and trends, in addition to statistics on issues such as output, trade, agriculture, macroeconomics, monetary and financial variables, and remittances. The aim of the profiles is to produce policy advice in support of the development agenda of the member States.

H. Development planning and administration

346. Responsibility for the implementation of the subprogramme lies with the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, which is the training arm of ECA and is a premier capacity development resource for African Governments. The Institute will work in close coordination with ECA divisions, subregional offices and centres. The Institute's strategy will take into account the emerging demands of member States and in particular the priorities of the African Union, as reflected in Agenda 2063. The activities to be implemented include comprehensive training and technical cooperation services for Governments and other relevant stakeholders, applied research and the development of knowledge networks among stakeholders, particularly those relating to public sector performance in the region. Strategically, the Institute aims to contribute to expanding the capacity of African countries to autonomously deploy development planning tools to achieve the core goal of structurally transforming their economies and societies. The Institute will expand its global partnerships, including through collaboration with African universities and think tanks, with a view to enhancing its capacity to deliver decentralized courses across Africa. Furthermore, e-learning opportunities will be provided to officials from member States in order to enhance programme scale, reach, presence and impact, and promote a culture of continuous learning and retooling. Opportunities for tailor-made capacity-renewal and enhancement interventions will be explored, and efforts will be made to build interfaces between public sector managers and leaders and relevant actors from the private sector and civil society.

I. Social development policy

347. The subprogramme will focus on the following thematic issues: measuring inclusive development and mapping policies to reduce exclusion; monitoring social investments; identifying policy options to guide public and private efforts to improve the opportunities available to young people, with a view to reducing the intergenerational transmission of poverty and inequality; developing frameworks to better harness the demographic dividend; formulating principles for creating inclusive cities and integrating them into public policies; and providing support for the development and implementation of national urban policies. The subprogramme will also follow up on international and regional agreements on social development, employment, young people, population and urbanization.

348. Strategic partnerships will continue to be central to the implementation of the biennium programme plan. In line with its new partnership strategy, ECA will leverage its comparative strengths to engage a wide range of partners from within and outside the United Nations system in order to maximize the impact of its work. To that end, ECA will continue to be involved in the work of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, which is the main vehicle for ensuring policy and operational coherence in United Nations development activities, and seek to enhance its collaboration with the United Nations Development Group. It will also continue to build on its existing partnerships with the African Union, the African Development Bank and other regional organizations, as well as with African civil society and private sector organizations. Inter-agency coordination and collaboration among United Nations agencies working in Africa will continue to be strengthened through the regional coordination mechanism of the agencies convened by ECA in support of the African Union and its NEPAD programme at the regional and subregional levels. In addition, ECA will work closely with the other regional commissions to develop joint initiatives and inputs with a view to strengthening the regional dimension of global development. At the national level, ECA will work closely with the United Nations resident coordinator system to exploit the inherent strengths of the funds and programmes. Lastly, partnerships with other stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society, universities and research institutions, will be developed and enhanced.

Conclusion: targets and achievements

349. ECA aims to strengthen its policy influence in support of Africa's transformation agenda through the production of high-quality, evidence-based and good-fit policy research and knowledge delivery services. A defining feature of the biennium was the adoption by African leaders of Agenda 2063 and the common African position on the post-2015 development agenda. The collaboration of ECA with leading pan-African institutions, notably the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank, resulted in, among other things, the adoption of the common African position and the endorsement of the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa. At the African Development Forum, held in 2014 in Marrakech, Morocco, over 900 stakeholders from across the region adopted the Marrakech consensus on innovative financing for Africa's transformation.

350. The credibility of ECA rests on policy research that highlights that accelerated industrialization is the key to the structural transformation of

African economies. This was reflected in its 147 publications and dozens of research papers on strategic subjects such as industrial policy, macroeconomic forecasting, progress on achieving the Millennium Development Goals, climate change and the socioeconomic impact of the Ebola virus disease outbreak, which were widely distributed and debated among policymakers. Additionally, up to 50 countries and over 1,120 public officials (about 30 per cent of whom were women) have benefited from training courses and other key events in the areas of economic management and development planning during the biennium.

351. During the period under review, 98 per cent of the 428 outputs mandated were delivered, up from 97 per cent in the previous biennium. The budget utilization rate was 95 per cent, against a target of 100 per cent. One hundred per cent of ECA publications produced in 2014 and 2015 were externally reviewed, meeting the biennium target. ECA adopted an evaluation policy that is intended to increase organizational learning, support accountability and transparency, and improve coherence and efficiency in generating and using evaluative knowledge for effective management for results. In a survey of its partners carried out by ECA in 2014, 84 per cent of respondents agreed that ECA research papers applied cutting-edge understanding to African development policy issues.

352. ECA aligns corporate incentives through an effective and credible accountability, quality and results management system. In 2014, ECA developed a performance management dashboard that is intended to measure progress towards the corporate objectives of policy influence, trust and credibility, accountability and learning, and operational effectiveness. The dashboard – along with annual partner and staff surveys – has become an important tool for measuring corporate performance.

353. The activities of ECA are receiving increasing media coverage (radio, television and online media, including social media), as evidenced by 8,887 in-house media articles (against the biennium target of 2,000); 36.7 million hits on the ECA website and downloads of the Commission's public information products (against a target of 22.5 million); over 17,000 followers on Twitter and over 6,000 on Facebook; 31 blog posts; more than 120 radio and television interviews with media outlets including BBC, Al Jazeera, SABC, CNBC, Le Monde and Radio France Internationale; and over 1,700 articles in newspapers and magazines including The Financial Times.

354. As of December 2015, 80 per cent of all information and communications technology projects had been implemented, meeting the target for the biennium. ECA has deployed the Inventory+ Application, which has automated and simplified the request and tracking of inventory items; begun testing XenDesktop (a virtual desktop application) and deploying a new storage area network; rolled out the call centre system and deployed new servers for the corporate website, the blog of the Executive Secretary and library services; completed the coordination of Internet bandwidth upgrades for all the subregional offices; delivered the new multiprotocol label switching link to Valencia and Brindisi; finalized the information and communications technology infrastructure project for the new office facility; continued to provide support for the operation of the data centre, servers, internal and external network and information security infrastructure; and deployed the new radio network by installing four digital radio repeaters.

355. During the reporting period, ECA entered into and managed a total of 222 partnerships (64 new and 158 existing). Over the same period, it mobilized a

total of \$49,639,000 in extra budgetary resources (against a target of \$73,000,000) to support its normative and operational activities. The joint financing arrangement, comprising Denmark, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom, contributed a total of \$12.2 million, while Canada provided \$7.48 million. Other significant contributions came from the European Union, with \$6.54 million in support of the Land Policy Initiative. The Australian Agency for International Development contributed \$1.87 million to the African Minerals Development Centre. In addition, ECA continued to receive funding from other international partners. In order to support the Commission's vision of becoming the premier think tank on African development matters, significant efforts are being made to partner with key research institutions on the continent and beyond.

Annex

Follow-up to the resolutions of 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

The following table sets out the major activities undertaken by the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in response to the relevant provisions of the decisions and resolutions adopted 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, held in Addis Ababa from 25 to 31 March 2015. Some of the activities and measures listed in the table were carried out jointly with the African Union Commission.

The table also highlights a number of important achievements in support of the development of member States, and sets out recommendations on how such actions can be further enhanced.

Resolutions	Ministerial statement	Actions taken/responsible divisions and subregional offices
928 (XLVIII) – Implementing Agenda 2063: planning, mobilizing and financing for development		
<p>5. <i>Calls upon</i> the African Union Commission, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, the regional economic communities and other stakeholders, to support member States in incorporating Agenda 2063 into their national plans;</p>	<p>We also call upon our countries and pan-African institutions to popularize Agenda 2063, especially among young Africans, through advocacy, education and communication strategies, and the provision of appropriate skills to underpin structural transformation.</p>	<p>ECA has helped to popularize Agenda 2063 by presenting it at the first session of the Committee on Gender and Social Development. The Committee urged ECA, through its Social Development Policy Division, to support member States in domesticating Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the outcomes of the 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, for effective implementation and monitoring of gender and social development commitments. Furthermore, the committee requested the Social Development Policy Division to continue to strengthen its collaboration with the African Union Commission in supporting member States with regard to gender and social development.</p> <p>ECA has also been working closely with the Strategic Planning Division of the African Union Commission on Agenda 2063, by bringing together the various United Nations entities working in region in support of the implementation of the Agenda at the national level. In that regard, the Capacity Development Division supported the African Union Commission in their consultations with 27 African countries on mainstreaming the Agenda into national strategic and development plans.</p> <p>Through the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning and the Macroeconomic Policy Division, ECA is planning to launch in 2016 a short training course for African development planners on integrating the objectives of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into national development plans. The course will include an element on policymaking through integrated modelling, incorporating the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The institute organized a seminar on the same topic in January 2016. More generally, it has taken into account both agendas in its capacity-building programme by readjusting the content of its training sessions targeted at development planners.</p>
<p>6. <i>Urges</i> member States, regional economic communities and the African Union Commission, in partnership with the Economic Commission for Africa, the</p>	<p>We urge African central banks and pan-African institutions to increase their support for efforts to boost the continent's socioeconomic transformation and its financing.</p>	<p>The Macroeconomic Policy Division of ECA is holding the third caucus of governors of African central banks on the margins 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. The division has also initiated contact with the</p>

Resolutions	Ministerial statement	Actions taken/responsible divisions and subregional offices
<p>African Development Bank and all regional and external stakeholders:</p> <p>(a) To consider the financing of Agenda 2063 in a manner that takes into account, first, domestic resource mobilization; second, the leveraging of existing and new financial intermediation vehicles to be created; and, third, access to finance facilitation resources such as project development funds and guarantee and risk-sharing facilities;</p> <p>(b) To address the issues of illicit financial flows, natural resource rent maximization and regional capital market development;</p> <p>(c) To deepen the examination of the strategy for the domestic and external financing of Agenda 2063;</p>		<p>Association of African Central Banks with a view to establishing a formal partnership and organizing the annual caucus jointly. That will allow for better monitoring of the role of central banks in the continent’s socioeconomic transformation and financing.</p> <p>The African Institute for Economic Development and Planning is considering launching a short course on domestic resource mobilization and investment aimed at strengthening the capacities of policymakers to address the constraints to effective resource mobilization at the national level. Topics covered would include strategies to improve the efficiency of tax systems, tackling illicit financial flows, institutional arrangements and public-private partnerships. The course would build on a curriculum development workshop and a high-level dialogue on domestic resource mobilization and investment organized by the institute and the Capacity Development Division in 2015.</p> <p>The institute has historically formed partnerships with African banks to strengthen its capacity-building programme. In cooperation with the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa and other partners, in 2015 the institute organized a course on transport infrastructure development in Africa.</p>
<p>8. <i>Calls upon</i> the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank to organize a multi-stakeholder consultation on the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 by 30 September 2015</p>		<p>On the margins of 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, ECA, as the secretariat of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa (RCM-Africa), and in collaboration with the African Union, hosted the sixteenth session of RCM-Africa on the theme “United Nations system support for the African Union Year of Women’s Empowerment and Development towards Agenda 2063”.</p> <p>At the meeting, the United Nations system agreed to assist the African Union with the implementation of its 10-year implementation plan through joint programming. It was also agreed that the clusters of RCM-Africa would be enhanced in support of the work of the</p>

Resolutions	Ministerial statement	Actions taken/responsible divisions and subregional offices
		<p>African Union on initiatives and programmes that ensure the protection of women's rights and the provision of appropriate services for women and girls. The session also endorsed a new framework, the United Nations-African Union partnership for Africa's integration and development agenda for 2017-2027, which will replace the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme, which expires at the end of 2016. The United Nations-African Union partnership was adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union at its twenty-fifth ordinary session, in June 2015, and has been submitted to the United Nations for its consideration at its seventy-first session.</p>
<p>9. <i>Also calls upon</i> the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank to employ South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation in support of the implementation of Agenda 2063</p>		<p>In 2015, ECA provided technical assistance to the Government of Guinea, which was tasked with implementing decision 465 (XX) of the African Union on the creation of a South-South and triangular coalition in support of the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. ECA reviewed and provided key inputs into the draft documents on the establishment of a secretariat for the South-South and triangular coalition as well as the terms of references.</p>
<p>10. <i>Requests</i> the African Union Commission and the Economic Commission for Africa to establish by 31 March 2016 an economic development observatory, mandated with setting in place an early warning system for risks to African economies and proposing measures to mitigate their possible consequences.</p>		<p>ECA has started to establish a continental early warning and numerical weather and climate prediction system. During the pilot phase, a high-resolution early warning system was deployed in African small island developing States, including Cabo Verde and Seychelles.</p>
	<p>We urge the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and the Economic Commission for Africa to accelerate the development of the planned Africa regional integration index, which can</p>	<p>The Regional Integration and Trade Division will launch the first edition of the Africa regional integration index at 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 dedicated website to facilitate global access to the index will</p>

Resolutions	Ministerial statement	Actions taken/responsible divisions and subregional offices
	be used as a tool to assist in the continental free trade area negotiations.	be launched at the same time.
929 (XLVIII) – Third International Conference on Financing for Development		
<p><i>Stressing</i> that the outcome document of the third International Conference on Financing for Development should take into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the right to development, while at the same time respecting the development policy space of African countries for the implementation of their poverty eradication and sustainable development programmes,</p>		<p>The Macroeconomic Policy Division of ECA and the Economic Affairs Department of the African Union Commission organized a regional consultation on the third International Conference on Financing for Development. The consultation was held prior to 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. The main objectives of the consultation were to discuss Africa’s priorities with regard to financing for development and agree on an outcome document to inform Africa’s participation in the negotiations at the third International Conference on Financing for Development.</p> <p>The Macroeconomic Policy Division, the Government of Ethiopia and McKinsey & Company co-hosted a side event on increasing Africa’s fiscal space on 14 July 2015, on the margins of the third International Conference on Financing for Development. The event attracted 130 participants, including representatives of African Governments, researchers, the private sector and civil society. The main objective was to examine the role of fiscal space in Africa’s structural transformation agenda and to identify the mechanisms through which fiscal space could be expanded to address the extensive and evolving financing needs of sustainable and inclusive development in Africa.</p>
<p>2. <i>Requests</i> the African groups of negotiators in New York to use the draft document entitled “Financing for development: Africa’s perspectives” as an input in negotiating the outcome document of the third International Conference on Financing for Development and urges Africa to speak with one</p>		<p>During the regional consultation on the third International Conference of Financing for Development, the Macroeconomic Policy Division organized a side event for the African groups of negotiators to discuss and incorporate inputs from Africa’s regional consultation into the draft document entitled “Financing for development: Africa’s perspectives”. The side event resulted in a substantial improvement of the draft document.</p>

Resolutions	Ministerial statement	Actions taken/responsible divisions and subregional offices
<p>voice throughout the International Conference on Financing for Development process.</p>		
<p>930 (XLVIII) – African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development</p>		
<p>1. <i>Calls upon</i> the Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the African Union Commission and other partners, to take all necessary steps to convene on a biennial basis the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development;</p>		<p>As a follow-up to resolution 930 (XLVIII), ECA, the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank, in collaboration with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme, convened the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development on 17 and 18 June 2015. The forum brought together high-level representatives of African member States and all relevant stakeholders. The main objective of the forum was to deliberate and agree on Africa’s collective input to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. The key messages adopted focused on sustainable development bodies and their role in strengthening integration, implementation and review beyond 2015; regional and national interventions; new and emerging issues and the science-policy interface; land-locked developing countries; and a global partnership for development. The key messages were presented during the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development on 26 June 2015 by the Chair of the ECA Committee on Sustainable Development.</p> <p>In line with the requirement to report annually to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, in 2016 ECA will hold the second edition of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, on the theme “Global follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.</p>
<p>2. <i>Undertakes</i> to work in close collaboration with national Governments to support the convening of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development;</p>		<p>In February 2016, ECA, the United Nations Development Programme, the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank held a technical meeting to discuss and harmonize their respective roll-out strategies for the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063. The participants also discussed ways of integrating Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals with a view to rationalizing their implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting mechanisms, and avoiding overburdening countries with two</p>

Resolutions	Ministerial statement	Actions taken/responsible divisions and subregional offices
		<p>completely separate development agendas.</p> <p>ECA and the African Union Commission are also in talks on the modalities for reviewing and validating the Sustainable Development Goals reports for Africa (the publication which will replace the Millennium Development Goals reports for Africa published by ECA in collaboration with the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and the United Nations Development Programme). The Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development is expected to be the main architecture for reviewing progress made. It is envisaged that a joint review will be conducted for both the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063 (first 10-year implementation plan).</p>
<p>931 (XLVIII) Data revolution and statistical development</p>		
<p>6. <i>Requests</i> the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, the Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the relevant agencies of the United Nations to create a working group for the development of indicators for the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 (2014-2023);</p>		<p>In December 2015, under the leadership of the Macroeconomic Policy Division, ECA provided technical support to a workshop of the African Union Commission on the measurement framework for the 10-year implementation plans of Agenda 2063. The workshop was aimed at fine-tuning the indicators for the plans.</p> <p>Several ECA divisions also conducted reflection and mapping exercises aimed at identifying the commonalities between Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a view to alleviating the burden on all stakeholders involved in their implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting.</p> <p>ECA also provided support to the African Union Commission and African member States in refining the global indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals. While not directly related to Agenda 2063, this work will help to integrate the measurement frameworks (indicators, targets and goals) of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063.</p> <p>ECA, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and South Africa (through the secretariat of Africa Symposium on Statistical Development) provided support to experts from member States in estimating the cost of implementing a revised strategy for the harmonization of statistics in Africa in support of Agenda 2063.</p>

Resolutions	Ministerial statement	Actions taken/responsible divisions and subregional offices
<p>12. <i>Calls upon</i> the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank to fast-track the implementation of the Yamoussoukro Declaration on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics;</p>		<p>As a follow-up to the Yamoussoukro Declaration on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics, a publication entitled “Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Digitization Guidebook: A Step-by-Step Guide to Digitizing Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Processes in Low-Resource Settings” was launched in November 2015 at the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development. The guidebook, which was developed in collaboration with the African Development Bank and Plan International, responds to the need to develop effective, scalable and sustainable civil registration and vital statistics systems and maximize the impact of investments in information and communications technology.</p> <p>In addition, an African mortality statistics strategy was developed in collaboration with the World Health Organization and the Africa Symposium on Statistical Development to help member states to implement a robust mortality statistics system that meets the monitoring demands of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030.</p> <p>A five-year regional strategy (2016-2020) for the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics in Africa was developed. All 11 members of the regional civil registration and vital statistics core group will support the implementation of the strategy.</p> <p>Some countries have completed their civil registration and vital statistics assessments and developed strategic action plans, and many others have begun the process.</p> <p>Lastly, special efforts have been made to strengthen the implementation of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems in French-speaking countries. A regional support group has been established, based out of the ECA Subregional Office for West Africa, which has helped to provide much needed impetus to the programme. The regional support group has conducted two training programmes and visited several organizations including the International Organization of la Francophonie and the International Association of Francophone Mayors.</p>
<p>13. <i>Requests</i> the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank to develop an index measuring the emerging economy status of African countries, in line, among other things, with the guidance in</p>		<p>Preliminary work has been carried out as part of global efforts to define better measures of well-being and development in Africa beyond gross domestic product. ECA has reviewed data and the gender issues involved in developing such measures in preparation for further work on defining better indexes.</p>

Resolutions	Ministerial statement	Actions taken/responsible divisions and subregional offices
<p>Agenda 2063 and the common African position on the post-2015 development agenda.</p>		
<p>932 (XLVIII) – African social development index</p>		
<p>3. <i>Recommends</i> that the African Social Development Index become a standard reference point for assessing progress in social development on the continent;</p>		<p>In response to the resolution, the Social Development Policy Division promoted the African Social Development Index at a number of high-level policy forums, including the African Prosperity Summit, the annual session of the Pan-African Parliament and the first session of the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment.</p> <p>African policymakers and regional experts have commended the Index for being strongly anchored to the current development priorities of Africa and relevant for assessing progress and promoting inclusive and equitable growth within and across countries.</p> <p>The Index has also generated interest among civil society organizations, regional think tanks and research institutions. A grant agreement was signed with the Rockefeller Foundation in October 2015 for the implementation and roll-out of the Index, and the Society for International Development has published research products on the Index. Both institutions have recognized the Index as a key monitoring and policy instrument for promoting inclusive societies in Africa.</p> <p>In response to requests for further capacity development assistance from Governments and intergovernmental bodies, ECA, through the Social Development Policy Division and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, is planning to hold training workshops on how to use the Index. As the findings from the Index are intended to serve as a key tool for guiding development planning processes and improving policy targeting, the institute is also working to ensure that the Index is meaningfully integrated into its training programmes, in particular the courses on social policy for development planners and the fundamentals of development planning.</p>
<p>5. <i>Requests</i> the Economic Commission for Africa to report to the Conference of Ministers at its March 2016 session on the</p>		<p>In 2015, the Social Development Policy Division organized four subregional workshops to train senior statisticians and policymakers from 45 countries and 9 regional economic communities on the application and use of the Index for informing and guiding social policies. The results were presented by the participants (country and regional representatives) and were</p>

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<p>implementation of the present resolution.</p>		<p>instrumental in identifying the key drivers and groups affected by exclusion in each country.</p> <p>Several Governments and regional institutions subsequently asked ECA to provide specific technical capacity-building assistance for adopting and mainstreaming the Index into policy formulation and planning. A training programme started in October 2015, with a capacity-building workshop for senior statisticians and policy departments from West African Economic and Monetary Union member States. Following further requests, additional workshops are planned for 2016 for organizations including the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the Pan-African Parliament Permanent Committee on Education, Culture, Tourism and Human Resources, as well as the Governments of Botswana, Burkina Faso and Mauritius.</p> <p>To ensure the sustainability and national ownership of the Index, an Index focal point (or national implementation team) is being put in place to lead the process of data collection, analysis and computation of the Index and facilitate knowledge-sharing among national institutions, with support from ECA. This will assist in mainstreaming the Index in national development planning.</p>
<p>933 (XLVIII) – Framework for a renewed United Nations-African Union partnership on Africa’s integration and development agenda for 2017-2027</p>		
		<p>No action required by ECA</p>
<p>934 (XLVIII) – Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024</p>		

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<p>4. <i>Requests</i> the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa to mainstream the Vienna Programme of Action into the programme of work of the Commission, as appropriate and within its mandate, and to submit analytical reports on the implementation of the Programme of Action, as called for in its paragraph 75;</p>	<p>We endorse the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014-2024 and call for its full and effective implementation.</p> <p>In this connection, we urge African landlocked countries to mainstream the Vienna Programme of Action into their national and sectoral development strategies, in order to ensure its effective implementation. We also call upon the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, regional economic communities and all other regional and subregional organizations to provide the necessary support to African landlocked countries through their respective work programmes and in accordance with their respective mandates.</p>	<p>In its proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017, ECA included a project to provide support for the Vienna Programme of Action that will be implemented by the Regional Integration and Trade Division.</p> <p>In addition, the first analytical report on the implementation status of the Vienna Programme of Action was prepared and submitted to the General Assembly. The report covered achievements and challenges in the implementation of the six priority areas of the Vienna Programme of Action, namely: fundamental transit policy issues; infrastructure development and maintenance; international trade; regional integration and cooperation; economic transformation; and means of implementation.</p> <p>ECA also took part in the high-level meeting on the follow-up to the second United Nations conference on landlocked developing countries, held in Zambia in June 2015, which was intended to take stock of achievements and challenges and establish a consensus on indicators and monitoring and evaluation processes for the Vienna Programme of Action.</p> <p>Regarding the trade component of the Vienna Programme of Action, the current trade facilitation work programme of the ECA African Trade Policy Centre includes providing support for the adoption by member States of paperless trade through the electronic single-window concept and establishing an African corridor management alliance as a coordinating and policy development forum for African corridor management institutions.</p>
<p>935 (XLVIII) – Least developed countries in Africa</p>		
<p>5. <i>Requests</i> the Economic Commission for Africa, the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, the African Union Commission and other partner institutions to continue to address the concerns and requests from African least</p>	<p>We request ECA, in collaboration with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States and other partners, to organize an African regional meeting in preparation for the proposed ministerial meeting in Italy</p>	<p>ECA, in collaboration with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, organized an expert group meeting in May 2015 in Algiers to review the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 in Africa. The meeting provided a platform for frank discussions on how to improve the implementation of the programme. The participants acknowledged that there had been limited progress in achieving the programme in Africa and urged Governments and development partners to step up its mainstreaming and implementation. They stressed that development partners must prioritize least developed countries and meet their commitments with respect to official development assistance, market access, investment promotion and access to technology. As regards access to technology, the proposal to create a technology bank for least</p>

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<p>developed countries, with a view to ensuring that those countries are able to satisfy the necessary graduation criteria;</p>		<p>developed countries was discussed and welcomed. The participants highlighted that improved education systems were a precondition for the use of technology and that the adaptation of existing technology to national contexts was equally important. The participants recommended that issues related to least developed countries be analysed further, with a view to achieving an in-depth understanding of the drivers of progress and the underlying reasons behind the slow progress made in implementing the programme of action, and coming up with proposals for effectively addressing the bottlenecks identified. The participants also noted that information related to the implementation of the programme of action often remained at the level of foreign ministries. They underscored that in order for the programme to be operationalized effectively, that information had to reach development planning units. In that regard, it was suggested that networking be improved. In particular, the network of national focal points for least developed countries should be expanded, including through a dedicated on-line platform.</p>
<p>6. <i>Also requests</i> the Economic Commission for Africa, in collaboration with the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, to hold the next biennial regional review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020 during the tenth 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.</p>		<p>Although this request is to be implemented in 2017, ECA held a technical meeting in May 2015 with African least developed country focal points and African development planning experts to discuss bottlenecks, opportunities and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011-2020. In addition, in June 2015 the Macroeconomic Policy Division of ECA took part in a meeting in Milan, Italy, hosted by the Government of Italy to discuss the fostering of structural transformation in African least developed countries. The participants deliberated on the challenges facing least developed countries in the context of their graduation strategies and how Italy and other development partners could help them to address those challenges.</p>

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936 (XLVIII) – Progress and further development of the African Risk Capacity Agency		
		No action required by ECA