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

I. Introduction

1. The present report provides an overview of the results achieved by the United Nations system in support of the African Union and its New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) programme since April 2015. It considers the support from three perspectives: support pertaining to the decisions of African Heads of State and Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development; direct technical assistance to the African Union and its NEPAD programme; and support coordinated through the nine clusters of the Regional Coordination Mechanism of United Nations agencies working in Africa (RCM-Africa), convened by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). It ends with the main recommendations of the sixteenth session of RCM-Africa, which took place in Addis Ababa in March 2015. The report responds to the request made by African Union member States for regular and systematic reporting on United Nations activities in support of the sectoral priorities of NEPAD at the regional and subregional levels.

II. Implementing the decisions and recommendations of African Heads of State and Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development

2. African Heads of State and Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development routinely call upon the United Nations system to provide direct technical support for the implementation of their decisions and

declarations. The present section contains information on the implementation of such decisions and declarations.

A. Framework to harmonize laws, policies and regulations on private sector investment in transboundary infrastructure

3. In a bid to facilitate private sector investment in transboundary infrastructure in Africa and implement the 16 projects adopted at the Dakar Financing Summit for Africa's Infrastructure, the Assembly of Heads of State of the African Union directed ECA, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency and regional economic communities to develop a framework to harmonize applicable policies, laws and regulations. A joint technical mission by ECA and the NEPAD Agency was undertaken to the Economic Community of West African States (Abuja), the Southern African Development Community (Gaborone) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (Lusaka), and to Côte Ivoire (Abidjan-Lagos corridor). Similar missions are planned to the East African Community (Arusha) and the Arab Maghreb Union in Algeria to assess the Algeria-Nigeria pipeline project.

4. Various factors, including history, language, geopolitics, ethnic composition, local government and colonial heritage, are to be taken into consideration in the development of the framework. A regional model law will also be proposed, to simplify the process for private sector participation in transboundary infrastructure.

5. A preliminary assessment shows that while some projects are beset by technical challenges, others face serious political obstacles. Both kinds of impediments need to be addressed at the appropriate level.

B. Repackaging of study on domestic resource mobilization for transboundary infrastructure projects

6. At the request of the President of Senegal, Macky Sall, a landmark study by ECA and the NEPAD Agency on domestic resource mobilization is being repackaged into a global advocacy tool that will respond to all legitimate questions posed and concerns raised by potential investors on the 16 infrastructure projects adopted at the Dakar Financing Summit. The new publication contains profiles of all 16 projects, underlining risks, ownership, funding gaps etc. The publication also contains suggestions on nine ways in which African countries could mobilize domestic resources, including the securitization of remittances, stock capitalization and innovative public-private partnership strategies. It is expected that the publication will be formally presented to the African Group of Ambassadors in May 2016, ahead of the Summit of the African Union to be held in June and July.

C. Technical study on the socioeconomic costs of the Ebola virus in West Africa

7. ECA conducted a study on the actual socioeconomic costs of Ebola and their effects on growth and development prospects. The study was based on primary data from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. The aim of the study was to present an evidence base from which to devise policy options for a response. The study revealed that, although Ebola causes many deaths and immense suffering among its victims, it is not the biggest killer among current or past diseases. From an economic perspective, the study looked at the effectiveness of the current responses and the minimal impact that Ebola has had on West Africa and the continent owing to the small size of the three

economies, as well as at the actual Ebola prevalence and the encouraging national and international response.

D. Support to the implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa

8. Since the release of the study and its endorsement by African Heads of State, ECA has spearheaded global advocacy for the implementation of its recommendations through various activities, including the Pan-African civil society organizations consultative and strategy forum on illicit financial flows in Africa held in Nairobi in February 2015, the subregional awareness-raising workshops in Kenya (East and Southern Africa), Ghana (West Africa) and Tunisia (North Africa). In addition, the study will be presented at high-level forums in Belgium, France and the United States of America.

9. An implementation plan was developed and presented to a multi-stakeholder workshop attended by representatives of the African Union, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the African Capacity-building Foundation and civil society organizations, as well as development partners and other stakeholders, and held in Addis Ababa in June 2015. The workshop participants reached an agreement outlining the desired outcomes, expected activities and responsible institutions, under four work streams: (a) advocacy for commitment, collaboration and reform; (b) generation and dissemination of knowledge; (c) strengthening of institutional and regulatory capacity; and (d) resource mobilization and monitoring of implementation.

E. Global advocacy to "stop the bleeding": citizen response to illicit financial flows from Africa

10. The African Union Commission and ECA collaborated with the Africa civil society interim working group, led by Tax Justice Network-Africa and Third World Network Africa, to host a side event at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, held on 15 July 2015 in Addis Ababa. The aim of the side event was to galvanize support from a broad coalition of partners and all stakeholders at the national, regional and global levels to implement the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa. It also launched a campaign entitled "Stop the bleeding", to involve African citizens in the fight against illicit financial flows.

F. Supporting the implementation of the decision of the Assembly of the African Union on alternative sources of financing

11. At its twenty-fourth ordinary session, held in Addis Ababa in January 2015, the Assembly of the African Union took a landmark decision on alternative sources of financing for funding the African Union, having endorsed the report of the ministerial working group of the Conference of African Ministers of Economy and Finance. It also requested the ad hoc ministerial committee on the scale of assessments to engage, in an open manner, in consultations with a view to proposing modalities for the implementation of the decision on alternative sources of financing. The ad hoc ministerial committee submitted its report at the June 2015 Summit. ECA is working with the office of the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union on the implementation of the decision.

G. Implementing Agenda 2063: planning, mobilizing and financing for development

12. In December 2015, ECA led United Nations system efforts to provide technical support to the African Union Commission on a framework for monitoring the 10-year plan for the implementation of Agenda 2063. At a workshop, the indicators for the 10-year plan were fine-tuned. Commonalities between Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063 were identified with a view to enabling at least a partial integration of the two agendas, thereby alleviating the burden on the stakeholders that will be involved in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the agendas, and in reporting. The framework will facilitate the pursuit of the development goals and objectives that African leaders have committed to at both the regional and global levels. Support was also provided to the African Union Commission and to African Union member States in refining the global indicators for the sustainable development goals prior to the meeting of the Statistical Commission held in Bangkok in November 2015.

H. Renewed United Nations-African Union partnership on Africa's integration and development agenda for 2017-2027

13. The framework for a renewed United Nations-African Union partnership on Africa's integration and development agenda for 2017-2027 was presented at the sixteenth session of RCM-Africa, held in Addis Ababa on 28 and 29 March 2015, in conjunction with 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 framework is expected to further strengthen the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union, and to be in line with other existing and emerging continental frameworks of the African Union. At the sixteenth session, it was recommended that the African Union Commission finalize the report on the partnership and submit to the Assembly of the African Union Heads of State and Government, in June 2015 in South Africa, for consideration and adoption. It was also recommended that the report then be transmitted to the General Assembly at its seventieth session, in September 2015, for adoption as the new United Nations programme of support to the African Union.

I. Data revolution and statistical development

14. Following the submission of the report of pan-African organizations on statistical activities at the seventh Joint Annual Meetings of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and the Economic Commission for Africa Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, held in Abuja from 25 to 30 March 2014, the African Union Commission, Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, United Nations Development Programme and other partners were asked to organize a high-level conference on the data revolution in Africa. The request was reiterated at the twenty-third ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in Malabo from 20 to 27 June 2014. The high-level conference, which was organized by Economic Commission for Africa, was held in March 2015 as a side event at the eighth Joint Annual Meetings.

15. At the high-level conference, a document entitled "The African Data Consensus" was presented, laying out a vision, as well as the challenges,

principles and key actions, for the data revolution. That document has yet to be endorsed, however, by the heads of national statistical offices in Africa. It was presented to the African Union Commission committee of directors general of national statistical offices, which met in Libreville from 26 to 28 November 2015, for consideration. At the meeting, the committee welcomed the report and recommended that it be further reviewed by the directors general of national statistical offices before being submitted at the African Union Summit for endorsement.

16. In that regard, an expert group meeting organized by Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank as a forum for directors general of national statistical offices to review “The African Data Consensus” and the road map for its implementation was held in Addis Ababa from 20 to 22 November 2015. Meeting participants reached common position on the concept for the African data revolution and agreed on an action plan for implementing the data revolution in Africa based on the principles set out in the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa and the African Charter on Statistics.

J. Supporting negotiations on a continental free trade area

17. In support of African Union member States and regional economic communities, ECA coordinated United Nations system efforts, through the African Trade Policy Centre, to promote active engagement in negotiations on a continental free trade area, including in the preparation of draft negotiation texts. Specific activities included participation in the task force on a continental free trade area and continued technical support to the African Union Commission, especially to the High-level African Trade Committee and the meeting of African Union Ministers of Trade held in May 2015. In particular, the African Trade Policy Centre prepared and presented four reports at the expert segment of the meeting of African Union Ministers of Trade. Those reports were on: (a) progress made towards the conclusion of regional free trade agreements at the regional economic community level; (b) industrial development in the context of the continental free trade area; (c) implications of economic partnership agreements on African countries; and (d) implications of mega regional trade agreements for African economies. Moreover, the African Trade Policy Centre organized a side event on negotiations on a continental free trade area during the 2015 Conference of Ministers. Furthermore, the Centre has vigorously advocated for the inclusion of services in the negotiations and even prepared a draft framework agreement that includes an agenda.

18. In addition, and in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, the African Trade Policy Centre organized a multi-stakeholder expert workshop on a potential assessment of the impact on human rights of a continental free trade area in Africa. Finally, the Centre formulated evidence-based recommendations while preparing the thematic part of the publication *Economic Report on Africa 2015: Industrializing through Trade* and utilized key findings and recommendations in the trade-related session of the Regional Course on Key Issues on the International Economic Agenda for Africa, organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. A study on regional integration, trade facilitation and industrialization was also undertaken by the Centre, jointly with ECA, the ECA Subregional Office for North Africa and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), which was published as a UNIDO research paper.

K. Implementation of the African social development index

19. High-level government officials from 45 African countries and eight regional economic communities were trained on the computation and application of the African social development index, through a series of capacity-building workshops, using national data.¹ Results were presented by the national experts, who were instrumental in identifying the key drivers and the main groups affected by exclusion in each country. In 2015, the African social development index was presented and disseminated at high-level conferences and forums in Africa, including at the first Africa Prosperity Summit, the meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee of the African Union on Social Development, Labour and Employment, and the annual session of the Pan-African Parliament. The African Union, the regional economic communities and other intergovernmental bodies have acknowledged that the index is an instrument of reference for assisting national development planning and advancing inclusive development in Africa, in line with Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030.

L. Joint technical assistance to the Government of Benin

20. In response to a direct request from the Government of Benin, and given that infrastructure has been prioritized as an enabler of African integration, Economic Commission for Africa, the African Capacity-building Foundation and the Institute for Economic Development and Planning held, in November 2015, a capacity-building training session for 39 public officials from the Benin Infrastructural Projects Coordinating Agency and other ministerial departments and agencies involved in infrastructure development. The course covered key aspects relating to: (a) institutional and administrative capacity-building; and (b) the role of infrastructure in development planning, infrastructure project cycles, budgeting and sources of finance, preparing cost estimates of infrastructure projects, programming, and the monitoring and evaluation of infrastructure projects. Emphasis was placed on creating an enabling environment for that public-private partnership and on developing proposals for infrastructure projects using the public-private partnership model.

III. Direct technical support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development

21. To strengthen the capacity of the NEPAD Agency in key priority areas and to enhance the NEPAD process, ECA continued to second two senior advisers to the African Peer Review Mechanism secretariat and the NEPAD Agency to provide direct technical support and advisory services. In its continuous effort to support the elaboration of Agenda 2063, ECA held two high-level dialogues (in Rwanda and South Africa) to raise the awareness of African planners at the highest level of issues pertaining to the Agenda. The dialogues were facilitated by the Institute for Economic Development and Planning and involved capacity-building sessions for national planning directors from all 54 African countries on how to incorporate elements of Agenda 2063 into their respective national strategies, in order to ensure coherence and better coordination in the implementation of NEPAD priorities. Also through the Institute for Economic Development and Planning and in

¹ Governmental officials included senior experts from ministries for development, planning, finance and social affairs, and national statistical offices.

response to a specific request from the directors who attended the first dialogue, a follow-up session was held, which afforded the planners the opportunity to contribute to the debate on Agenda 2063 prior to its finalization.

22. The United Nations system, represented by ECA and UNDP, has continued to provide direct support to the African Peer Review Mechanism secretariat, particularly with respect to its restructuring. The United Nations system has continued to support activities carried out under the Mechanism, including country reviews and awareness-raising workshops, and has provided substantive support to the Power Africa initiative. ECA hosted the African Peer Review Panel of Eminent Persons retreat with strategic partners, held in Addis Ababa on 24 January 2015. The retreat was attended by members of the Panel, the African Peer Review Mechanism secretariat, senior representatives of strategic partners, the African Development Bank, UNDP and the African Union Commission. Participants in the retreat recommended strengthening the capacity of the African Peer Review Mechanism secretariat; integrating the Mechanism into the African Union, enhancing the effectiveness of the Mechanism, making the Mechanism the monitoring and accountability tool for Agenda 2063 and the post-2015 development agenda, conducting an assessment of the Mechanism's impact in reviewed countries, signing a memorandum of understanding with partners; and holding a strategic partners retreat twice a year, on the margins of the Summits of the African Union.

A. African Peer Review Mechanism awareness-raising workshop for East African countries

23. In collaboration with the joint NEPAD-African Peer Review Panel Kenya secretariat and the Ministry of Devolution and Planning of Kenya, ECA organized a two-day awareness-raising workshop for East African countries, held in Mombasa, Kenya, in December 2015, to strengthen the Mechanism so as to make it an effective tool for promoting good governance in East Africa; to enhance performance by harnessing existing capabilities at the individual and institutional levels; and to forge stronger partnerships through the sharing of experiences and the transfer of skills. The workshop also aimed to enhance the capacity of member States that had recently acceded to the Mechanism and were expected to carry out their first reviews in the following months, and to urge States that had not yet acceded to the Mechanism to do so.

24. To achieve those goals, representatives of 10 Mechanism country offices in East Africa were trained to undertake deeper analyses so as to enable them to understand, identify and recommend appropriate measures to address capacity-related problems in the implementation of the Mechanism, thereby spurring development and promoting good governance. Participants acquired additional knowledge on how to implement the Mechanism at the national and subregional levels, and on the harmonization of the Mechanism's national plans of action with existing national development plans. The workshop also created the opportunity for interaction between the Mechanism oversight units, local authorities and local civil society and enhanced dialogue among national offices of Mechanism member States in the region.

B. Strengthening the Regional Coordination Mechanism and the Subregional Coordination Mechanism to meet Africa's priorities

25. The RCM-Africa secretariat organized two workshops to improve the operations and delivery of the Mechanism at the regional and subregional

levels. The aim of the first workshop, which was held in Nazareth, Ethiopia, on 30 September and 1 October 2015, was to determine how joint programming tools could be used to develop a framework for strengthening coordination at the regional and subregional levels. The tools that were presented were part of the guidelines on strengthening the Subregional Coordination Mechanism. A handbook that could be used to build the capacity of participants and enhance coordination among partners (including the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Agency, regional economic communities, intergovernmental organizations and United Nations organizations and agencies), in support of the African Union and its NEPAD Programme was also developed.

26. Another workshop, on enhancing monitoring and evaluation in RCM-Africa, was held in Nazareth, Ethiopia, on 1 and 2 October 2015. At the workshop, experts from the African Union Commission, regional economic communities and United Nations agencies and organizations reviewed and assessed a draft report and provided comments with a view to improving it before it was finalized. The workshop participants made the recommendations set out below.

Report on monitoring and evaluation in the context of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa

27. It was recommended that:

(a) The RCM-Africa secretariat, in collaboration with regional economic communities and intergovernmental organizations, should prepare a harmonized monitoring and evaluation framework that could be used by RCM-Africa to assess the progress and achievements of the secretariat, the clusters and the subregional coordination mechanisms in building the capacity of the African Union, the regional economic communities and member States in achieving Agenda 2063 through the 10-year plan for the implementation of the Agenda;

(b) The secretariats of RCM-Africa and of the Subregional Coordination Mechanism should hold regular consultations with the regional offices of the United Nations Development Group with a view to creating strong synergies and linkages and enhancing coordination of United Nations support to the African Union and its organs;

(c) The African Union Commission, in collaboration with the secretariats of RCM-Africa and of the Subregional Coordination Mechanism and the regional offices of the United Nations Development Group, should ensure that the agreed targets and indicators set out in the 10-year plan for the implementation of Agenda 2063 are adapted to the subregional and country levels, and that, in adapting the 10-year plan to the local level, the targets and indicators of the Sustainable Development Goals are integrated;

(d) The African Union Commission will support the RCM-Africa secretariat in applying the monitoring and evaluation framework, which aims to assess the progress made by RCM-Africa in building the capacity of the African Union, regional economic communities and member States, by contributing data on the effects of the assistance provided, including indirectly, through the Subregional Coordination Mechanism, which allows regional economic communities to provide input at the subregional level.

First 10-year plan for the implementation of Agenda 2063

28. It was recommended that:

(a) The African Union Commission should urge the secretariats of the regional economic communities and intergovernmental organizations to align their strategic frameworks with the tenets of Agenda 2063;

(b) The African Union Commission should monitor the strategic frameworks of the regional economic communities so measure progress in the first 10-year plan for the implementation of Agenda 2063 at the subregional and country levels;

(c) The African Union Commission should strengthen its communications strategy on aligning the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals with the targets of Agenda 2063, with a view to reassuring African Union member States and development partners that Agenda 2063 is consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals;

(d) The African Union Commission should actively involve civil society organizations in the dissemination and implementation of its communications strategy and in the monitoring of the first 10-year plan for the implementation of Agenda 2063. RCM-Africa and relevant United Nations agencies could support this process (e.g., the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) could support the environment, population and urbanization cluster by facilitating stakeholder involvement in the preparation of national reports to be submitted for consideration at the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat-III));

(e) The African Union Commission and the secretariats of regional economic communities should urge their member States to integrate Agenda 2063 and the first 10-year plan for the implementation of the Agenda into their national development plans;

(f) Given the decision taken at the sixteenth session of RCM-Africa, the clusters should operate in line with the first 10-year plan for the implementation of Agenda 2063 so as to enhance the role of the United Nations in the implementation of the plan;

(g) The RCM-Africa secretariat, in collaboration with the African Union Commission, should support efforts to collect statistics on progress made in the implementation of the first 10-year plan by involving national planning and statistical offices.

Framework for monitoring and evaluating the joint programme of support to the African Union and its organs

29. It was recommended that:

(a) The RCM-Africa secretariat should develop a practical and realistic monitoring and evaluation framework that: takes into account existing monitoring and evaluation frameworks used by the African Union and regional economic communities; has clear objectives; clarifies the purpose and the role of RCM-Africa (including its clusters and subregional coordination mechanisms); enables the African Union, regional economic communities and member States to achieve Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals; and is in alignment with the first 10-year plan for the implementation of Agenda 2063;

(b) The RCM-Africa secretariat should circulate the draft report on enhancing monitoring and evaluation to all members of RCM-Africa and its Subregional Coordination Mechanism, so that they may provide comments and contribute to the report; the secretariat should include the templates for the implementation of the framework;

(c) The RCM-Africa secretariat should continue to assist the clusters, subclusters and subregional coordination mechanisms in the preparation of their implementation and business plans, including logframes and data collection plans for monitoring and evaluation, by leveraging the work already done by subregional coordination mechanisms.

IV. Main observations from the sixteenth session of the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa

30. The United Nations system in Africa has made significant contributions to the capacity-building needs of the region. The active participation of the African Union Commission as co-Chair of RCM-Africa has continued to make a significant difference to the effectiveness of operations. While waiting for more tangible results, solid foundations have been laid for fruitful cooperation in terms of the enthusiasm displayed by many senior officials of the African Union Commission. Disparities between the roles and levels of participation of the various departments within the Commission, however, have somewhat affected cluster performance.

31. Moreover, the roles of the regional economic communities need to be more clearly defined. In order to maintain effectiveness and coherence and to create synergy in the work of RCM-Africa, there is a need to improve cooperation and coordination between United Nations agencies, the African Union Commission and the NEPAD Agency on one hand and the regional economic communities on the other hand. The lack of tangible progress in the representation of the regional economic communities remains a major hindrance to the effective mainstreaming of subregional issues into RCM-Africa and its cluster system.

32. It is essential that the principal stakeholders in the work of RCM-Africa feel ownership and demonstrate leadership. Increased ownership and guidance by African Union organs related to the activities of RCM-Africa would result in better performance. At the same time, efforts must be made to remedy the lack of human and financial resources available to the co-Chairs (the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Agency and the regional economic communities), to enable them to coordinate and motivate members more effectively.

A. Resource constraints

33. The lack of resources to support the implementation of the programmes of RCM-Africa and its clusters remains a major constraint, as no specific budget is allocated to support the implementation of planned programmes and activities.

34. Financial and capacity constraints are limiting many agencies from contributing to the work of the clusters, a problem that must be remedied urgently. The absence of dedicated resources means that many clusters and subclusters are unable to function effectively. It is therefore difficult to encourage joint programming within RCM-Africa and for members to learn from one another's experiences.

35. The joint RCM-Africa secretariat is expected to effectively coordinate the work of clusters and subclusters and to ensure that they carry out their respective activities, including the monitoring of implementation. Although the functions of the secretariat have been strengthened with the establishment of the Capacity Development Division at ECA, the small number of staff dedicated to the work of the secretariat on the African Union Commission side continues to represent an obstacle, including for the organization of the annual RCM-Africa sessions and the implementation of decisions.

B. Communication constraints

36. Communication needs to be improved. Despite progress in several areas, one of the main challenges is the low level of cooperation between the advocacy and communications cluster and other clusters.

37. Awareness of RCM-Africa and its achievements continues to be extremely poor, particularly at the senior management levels of the African Union and its organs. An appropriate mechanism is needed to facilitate the sharing of experiences and good practices among clusters. Communications focal points for each cluster need to be appointed, to interact with the advocacy and communications cluster.

C. Planning constraints

38. In terms of planning, a number of challenges have been observed. First, meetings are not organized regularly, either by the clusters or the subclusters, on the issue of support for the African Union and the regional economic communities, so as to maximize the impact of RCM-Africa and its subregional coordination mechanisms. The lack of regular intracenter and intercenter interaction and cooperation is making it difficult for RCM-Africa to function effectively and in a cross-cutting manner.

39. Second, many clusters have encountered difficulties in elaborating joint programmes and in drawing on a common funding pool for their activities, possibly owing to the fact that their governing bodies have different programming and budget cycles. For the most part, key indicators of success and targets for each area of activity have not been identified.

40. Third, clusters tend to be managed by just one staff member in each institution, which carries the risk of losing institutional memory when that person relinquishes his or her functions and negatively affects continuity.

V. Recommendations and the way forward

41. There is general agreement by the United Nations system and African regional and subregional institutions that more needs to be done to enhance RCM-Africa so that it can better support implementation of the agenda of the African Union and its organs. An enhanced Mechanism would lead to better coordination of United Nations actions, improve coherence and increase cost effectiveness and impact through the activities of the clusters. Looking ahead and with a view to improving the Mechanism, the recommendations set out below have been identified.

A. Sustainable resources

42. To ensure that it effectively plays its role in supporting of the priorities of the African Union at the regional and subregional levels, RCM-Africa in general and its secretariat in particular need to receive sufficient resources on a sustainable basis.

43. In the short term, as requested by the General Assembly and in accordance with the “Delivering as one” initiative of the Secretary-General, all United Nations system entities are urged to work together, including by pooling their resources, in pursuit of key objectives. The resources required for the implementation of cluster activities should be mobilized by cluster agencies, primarily from their respective programme budgets, which would mean integrating cluster activities into the programme budget of each

participating agency. This would require participating United Nations cluster agencies to ensure that their work related to RCM-Africa is made part of their regular work programmes and budgets. Their performance within RCM-Africa should also be taken into account in performance reviews. Furthermore, the programming and planning cycles of cluster work need to be harmonized with those of the African Union; only then will it be possible for United Nations entities to identify, incorporate and implement activities in line with their yearly programme implementation plans.

44. In the medium-to-long term, the proposed United Nations-African Union partnership framework should receive full budgetary support, with a view to strengthening efforts by the United Nations system and African Union organs to work together, in line with the “Delivering as one” initiative, on the priorities of the African Union.

B. Communications strategy

45. In order to increase awareness, involvement, ownership and leadership at all levels, regular briefings on RCM-Africa and its activities should be organized for the commissioners and department directors of the African Union Commission, the leadership of the NEPAD Agency and those in charge of the regional economic communities.

46. Newsletters and other means of communication should be developed to promote RCM-Africa. With minimum funding, the advocacy and communications cluster could create a newsletter or web-based platform on which ideas could be exchanged in real time, using contributions from the other clusters, and thereby achieve the goal of mainstreaming communication in RCM-Africa. Communication-related activities should be factored into cluster business plans and provided for in the relevant budgets. Clusters should also designate a member to work with the advocacy and communications cluster.

C. Planning

47. All clusters should prioritize intracluster and intercluster collaboration, cooperation, partnerships and communication, in line with previous decisions of RCM-Africa, in order to create coherence and synergy in their work and ensure maximum effectiveness. To that end, all participating members of clusters and subclusters are encouraged to continue:

(a) Improving the coordination and implementation of joint activities;

(b) Drawing up calendars of events and meetings for each cluster and subcluster at the beginning of the reporting cycle. For ease of planning, the RCM-Africa secretariat will maintain and circulate to all stakeholders a consolidated calendar of events and meetings for all clusters and subclusters and enhance intercluster collaboration and partnerships;

(c) Ensuring that activities by RCM-Africa and its clusters and subclusters are adequately planned and reflected in the regular work programmes and programme budgets of each member agency and organization;

(d) Preparing business plans that are realistic, well planned and well budgeted, to ensure meaningful impact and to contribute to the overall effectiveness of RCM-Africa. Key indicators of success and targets for each area of activity need to be clearly indicated in the business plans;

(e) Holding more frequent regular meetings among coordinators and members. Clusters should meet at least every quarter and subclusters should meet in between the regular meetings of the clusters.

48. Clusters should be managed so as to preserve institutional memory and continuity. The performance in RCM-Africa of the members of the clusters and subclusters should be taken into account in performance reviews carried out by their respective organizations.

49. Looking forward, it is recommended that the commitment and good leadership that has existed thus far be maintained. African Union co-Chairs should show more dynamic leadership, ensuring that African Union-desired outcomes are clearly articulated and enabling clusters to identify areas for collaboration and support. In addition, the co-Chairs should play an important role in facilitating the engagement of other relevant departments of the African Union Commission, to ensure that the Commission too delivers as one. The United Nations co-Chairs must demonstrate a higher level of commitment and provide complementary leadership to the African Union Commission. Doing so would involve the allocation of both the time and the human and financial resources necessary to organize regular meetings, implement decisions and report on implementation in a timely manner.

50. RCM-Africa has proved to be an effective instrument, one that can contribute to efforts to rebrand Africa as a continent on the rise. The strategic partnership between the United Nations and the African Union should be strengthened further so as to enable the two organizations to better support Africa's peace and development agenda.