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Progress Report on the Implementation of Regional and International Agendas and other Special Initiatives in the Sub-region

The Post-2015 Development Agenda, Agenda 2063, the SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan and the COMESA Medium Term Strategic Plan: Assessing Convergence

Summary

This report discusses the rationale, evolution and focus of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and its alignment with African continental, sub regional and national development priorities. It observes that the Post-2015 Development Agenda is consensus-based, holistic and universal and provides a unique opportunity for convergence of purpose among stakeholders on priority development challenges and aspirations. The Agenda provides Africa with the opportunity to ensure that pertinent and specific challenges and aspirations are elevated for global consideration and action. The assessment of the various regional and sub regional strategies shows convergence and harmony with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the post-2015 Development Agenda. The convergence of the Agenda with national visions, development plans and aspirations is also evident. In conclusion, the report emphasizes the need for the strict implementation of the indicated priority programmes and the adherence to the agreed milestones. Furthermore, it recommends that the framework for the implementation of the development goals should address financial resource constraints at member State level.

The delegates and participants attending the 21st ICE are requested to take note of the consultative process towards the adoption of the post-2015 Development Agenda and the alignment of the same to continental, sub regional and national aspirations.

Section 1: Introduction

1.   The world is currently seized with crafting a holistic development agenda which replaces the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) whose life ends in 2015. Since 2000, the MDGs have provided the vision for development for the world underpinned by the principles of human dignity, equality and equity and to free the world from extreme poverty. During their tenure, the MDGs provided an invaluable political impetus and realigned resource commitment to addressing development challenges with varying degrees of success across the world. For example, the attainment of MDG targets by 2015 in many countries in Africa in the areas of education, health and employment contiunes to be hampered by challenges such as low participation in secondary and tertiary education, high prevalence of communicable diseases and high levels of unemployment. The Post-2015 Development Agenda will provide the impetus to continue on the path of MDGs and to examine and devise strategies to address emerging development challenges by addressing the shortcomings of the former. The process of crafting the Agenda provides African countries with the opportunity to elevate development challenges for global recognition, consideration and action. The Post-2015 Development Agenda will be underpinned by SDGs which will replace the 8 goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators of the MDGs. It will provide a new consensus-based framework with aspirations, targets and goals reflective of the priorities of all stakeholders. The idea is to agree on a watertight development framework which will encompass the aspirations of all stakeholders through strengthening the achievements of the Millennium Declaration and addressing the shortcomings of the MDGs.

Section2: The Millennium Declaration

2.   World leaders meeting at the United Nations (Millennium Summit)[1] in 2000 agreed on a bold vision for the future through the Millennium Declaration. The Millennium Summit set measurable and time bound global development targets - with a deadline of 2015. These have become known as the MDGs which are a pledge committing nations to a new global partnership to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity and to free the world from extreme poverty. The MDGs were culminations of several international efforts and initiatives to mobilize resources for development that had taken place since the 60.[2]

3.   The MDGs consist of 8 goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators in such areas as, poverty reduction, access to education, improving maternal health, gender equality, reducing child mortality and tackling AIDS and other diseases, development assistance, and environmental sustainability. Since inception, the MDGs have been embedded in several international and regional initiatives and have had an increasing influence on policy discourse throughout the world. They have provided an invaluable political impetus and realigned resource commitments to addressing development challenges during the last fifteen years. A United Nations Summit on the MDGs[3] held in 2010 adopted a global action plan to achieve the eight anti-poverty goals by their 2015 target date and announced major new commitments for women's and children's health and other initiatives against poverty, hunger and disease. The outcome document of the Summit – Keeping the Promise: United to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals – reaffirmed world leaders' commitment to the MDGs and sets out a concrete action agenda for achieving the Goals by 2015. In a major push to accelerate progress on women's and children's health, a number of Heads of State and Government

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[1] http://www.un.org/en/development/devagenda/millennium.shtml
[2] The most notable are: The Launching of the UN Development Decade, UN 1961, 25th Session of the General Assembly, 1970, Copenhagen UN World Summit for Social Development, 1995; Fourth UN Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995, UN International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 1994, UN Conference on Environment and Development, Rio, 1992.
[3] http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/

from developed and developing countries, along with the private sector, foundations, international organizations, civil society and research organizations, pledged over $40 billion in resources over five years. A lot of work has been done into accelerating progress towards the MDGs during the last fifteen years with varying degrees of success.

4.   The 2015 deadline is now with us and there is still impetus to not only accelerate MDG achievement, but to also assess and take stock of the successes and failures in an attempt to shape and develop an inclusive and holistic post-2015 agenda. One of the key findings of the analysis has been that progress on the MDGs is also not uniform across goals, targets and among countries and groups. For example, some African member States have made remarkable progress on a few indicators despite unfavourable initial conditions being the region with the lowest starting point - thirty-four out of 54 countries that are classified as Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are on the continent. A study[4] of countries accelerating the most rapidly towards the MDGs however found that eight of the world's top ten best performers were in Africa. Progress was more rapid in LDCs (than in non-LDCs despite the significant investments in infrastructure and human capital that countries at very low levels of development require to achieve the MDGs. Africa's steady progress towards achieving the MDGs was gaining momentum as witnessed in the following goals, net primary school enrolment, gender parity in primary education, representation of women in decision making, immunization coverage and reversing HIV/AIDS prevalence, incidence and death rates. Notwithstanding these achievements, the continent is considered off-track on most of the MDG targets. Many challenges remain, especially in translating economic growth into decent job opportunities and eradication of poverty, increasing access to basic services, empowering Africa's women and young people and addressing income, gender and spatial inequalities. Box 1 summarises some of the key messages from the review.

Box 1: MDG Key Messages

1. Accelerated progress in Africa towards the Millennium Development Goals despite daunting initial conditions.
2. Poverty rates declining at an accelerated rate, especially since 2005. But pace is still too slow to meet the poverty reduction target.
3. Income inequality declining but unacceptably high, and gender and spatial disparities persist.
4. Most countries on track to meet the primary enrolment target but low completion rates, weak quality of education and insufficient levels of funding remain a challenge.
5. Significant progress in representation of women in parliament and gender parity in primary education, but large disparities remain in the transition to secondary and tertiary education.
6. Good progress in reducing malaria, and child and maternal deaths, but not sufficient to meet the targets.
7. Significant decline in HIV/AIDS prevalence and incidence among adults, but Tuberculosis (TB) interventions hampered by HIV/AIDS.
8. Remarkable progress in environmental targets with the use of Ozone Depleting Substances declining since 2000 and the proportion of terrestrial and marine areas protected increasing.
9. Access to safe drinking water improving, but sanitation still a challenge particularly in rural areas.
10. Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments from Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members still unmet and disbursements to Africa decline in recent years.
11. Innovations in mobile telephone applications have improved financial inclusion and economic opportunities in Africa.

Source: MDG 2014 Report – Assessing progress in Africa towards the Millennium Development Goals

5.   Across the board, the MDG positive contributions were in that some of them focused attention on the poor, were associated with increased funding and ensured greater focus on results. The need for reliable and robust data critical for devising appropriate policies and interventions for achievement of the MDG's has resulted in the strengthening of statistical systems at both national and international levels to enable the production of quality data for monitoring progress towards the set of concrete, time-bound goals. On the downside, Table 1 provides some of the shortfalls associated with the MDG framework.

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[4] MDG Report 2014: Assessing Progress in Africa toward the Millennium Development Goals

Table 1: Lessons from MDG Implementation

Assessment methodology - misinterpretation of MDGs	MDGs conceived as global aspirations but now viewed as actual country targets. Methodology also overlooking differences in initial conditions and country capacities and instead utilising a uniform set of targets[5]
Focus on outcomes as opposed to process	Human development indicators such as education and health as opposed to enhancing economies including through transformation
Lack of ownership and leadership	At both the national and international levels, as well as not assigning accountability to any one institution, party or country
Limited in scope	Issues for the enhancement of human development not covered e.g. the protection of human rights, gender equality, peace, security and disarmament, environmental sustainability and climate change[6]
Disproportionate focus on the social sector	More focused on social indicators as opposed to the productive sectors
Silent on inter-sectoral synergies	Sector-specificity thereby not taking into account synergies among sectors
Silent on equality issues	Silent on disparities in access to social services
Failure to account for structural causes of poverty and inequality	Spanning economic, social, environmental and political domains
Weak on quality issues	focused on quantity as opposed to quality e.g. emphasis on increasing primary enrolment rates, when the overall quality of education remained a challenge
Lack of timely and reliable high-quality data	A major obstacle in Africa negatively impacting MDG performance monitoring and evaluation systems

6.   Despite the foregoing shortcomings, MDGs provided a basis for the pursuit of socio-economic development around the world. The annual national comparisons energised stakeholders to invest in addressing the socio-economic challenges and thus achieving the goals. Holistically and over time, efforts towards the MDGs have become a critical building block towards establishing a stable foundation for development efforts during the last 15 years and beyond. As noted earlier, the MDGs have scored considerable successes in some member States to warrant a continuation. The question is not whether there should be a set of international development goals post-2015, but rather, what the proposed post-MDGs framework would encompass. Critically, any post-2015 development agenda should address the new complex challenges that have come to the fore since the beginning of the new millennium and also address the challenges not adequately catered for through efforts towards MDGs. The new set of development goals should be holistic and specifically target the structural transformation of economies, especially those in the developing world.

Section 3: The Post-2015 Development Agenda Processes

7.   The United Nations Development Group launched global and national thematic consultations on a Post-2015 Development Agenda in 88 countries at the end of 2012. The UN Secretary General formed a high level panel of eminent persons to guide and review the results of the consultation and to develop a global agenda for development post-2015. The Post-2015 Development Agenda consultations involved discussions with all stakeholders including people affected by development challenges and decision-makers. It also infused lessons learnt from the MDGs and focused more on a development trajectory that also embedded the core principles of human rights, equality, inclusiveness and sustainability to address current deficiencies in growth outcomes.

8.   The outcome document of the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development, or Rio+20, titled *"The future we want"*,[7] inter alia, set out a mandate to establish an Open

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[5] Methodologies that measure distance away from the starting point yield strikingly different results than the current method of measuring progress, which is based exclusively on distance from the target.

[6] Report of the Secretary General on the Progress of the MDGs, 2011

[7] http://www.uncsd2012.org/thefuturewewant.html

Working Group to develop a set of SDGs (Box 2) for consideration and appropriate action by the General Assembly at its 68th session. An outcome of the Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012[8] was to adopt a new series of universal SDG's that addressed to the challenges and shortcomings of the MDG's. The Rio outcome recommended that the SDGs be coherent with and integrated into the UN development agenda beyond 2015. Rio+20 recognized that each country faced specific challenges to achieve sustainable development and underscored the special challenges facing the most vulnerable countries in particular, African countries, LDC's and small island developing States, as well as the specific challenges facing the middle-income countries. Conflict and post-conflict countries also needed special attention. Rio+20 reaffirmed the commitment to strengthen international cooperation to address the persistent challenges related to sustainable development for all, in particular in developing countries. In this regard, it reaffirmed the need to achieve economic stability, sustained economic growth, the promotion of social equity and the protection of the environment, while enhancing gender equality, women's empowerment and equal employment for all and the protection, survival and development of children to their full potential, including through education. The outcome document also set out the mandates for agreeing on the SDGs, for a report on sustainable development financing and for a discussion of technology facilitation.

9.   In the current format, the SDGs are accompanied by targets and will be further elaborated through indicators focused on measurable outcomes. The SDGs consist of 17 proposed goals and 169 associated indicators. Overall, the SDGs are action oriented, global in nature and universally applicable and take into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respect national policies and priorities. The goals constitute an integrated, indivisible set of global priorities for sustainable development. Building on the foundation laid by the MDGs, the SDGs seek to complete the unfinished business as well as respond to new challenges. Targets are defined as aspirational global targets, with each government setting its own national targets guided by the global level of ambition but taking into account national circumstances. The goals and targets integrate economic, social and environmental aspects and recognize their inter-linkages in achieving sustainable development in all its dimensions. The implementation of SDGs will depend on a global partnership for sustainable development with the active engagement of governments, civil society, the private sector, and the United Nations system. The plan is to develop a robust implementation mechanism and a tracking mechanism.

Box 2: Sustainable Development Goals

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[8] www.uncsd2012.org

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
Goal 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
Goal 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective and accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Source: www.uncsd2012.org

10.   The discussions on the SDGs are still ongoing with the overall objective of coming up with "focused and concise SDGs" to boost global awareness and country-level implementation, communicating clearly member States' ambitions and visions. As agreement on the final parameters of the post-2015 agenda is reached together with the financing and implementation mechanisms, the third International Financing for Development Conference to be held in Addis Ababa 13-16 July 2015 will play a major role in outlining the means for implementation. Financing for Development commitments will become an input into the post-2015 Development Agenda. Governments would play a key role in raising domestic revenue to benefit the poorest and most vulnerable members of society. Although not yet concretized and signed-off, the SDGs provide an overarching and inclusive framework which captures the aspirations of all stakeholders. They provide entry points for official development assistance as well as international public funds and private investment would to contribute to projects related to the transition to low-carbon economies, improving access to water, renewable energy, agriculture, industry, infrastructure and transport.

11.   The Post-2015 Summit will be convened in September 2015 and it is hoped that the final outcome will be goals that are focused and concise whilst communicating member States' aspirations and visions clearly thus enhancing country-level implementation. The outcome document for adoption at the September 2015 summit will contain four main components: an introductory declaration; SDGs, targets and indicators; means of implementation and a new Global Partnership; and a framework for monitoring and review of implementation. The roadmap shown in Box 3 shows that more work remains before the SDGs are concluded.

Box 3: SDGs Road Map

- January 2015 - intergovernmental negotiations commence;
- February 2015 high-level thematic event on Means of Implementation of the 2015 Development Agenda;
- March 2015 - high-level thematic event on gender and women empowerment in the post- 2015 Development Agenda;
- June 2015 - high-level thematic event on combating climate change;
- July 2015 - International Financing for Development Conference; and
- September 2015 – Post-2015 Summit.

12.   As noted earlier, the evolution of the post-2015 Development Agenda has been consultative with regions and stakeholders being provided with the opportunity to shape the ultimate agenda. It is instructive to review the Common African Position on the post-2015 Development Agenda.

3.1   The Common African Position on SDGs

13.   The African regional process for consensus on the post-2015 Development Agenda has included multiple regional and sub regional consultations and technical meetings to reach a Common African Position (CAP).

14.   The first regional consultation in Ghana in November 2011 concluded that the new Development Agenda needed to focus on economic growth and transformation, and must be locally owned and that there should be a shift from aid and externally-driven goals and targets towards domestically-funded development initiatives that are driven by developing countries. There was concurrence that the performance of MDGs needed to be measured in terms of both levels and effort. Furthermore, there was consensus that the MDGs currently focused too much on outcomes without considering the enablers or means to achieving such outcomes and hence the post-2015 Development Agenda needed to depart from this and include measurable and achievable development enablers.

15.   Other regional consultations were held in Kenya in October 2012 for East and Southern African regions and in Senegal in December 2012 for West, Central and North African regions. These emphasized the need for measurable and achievable development enablers. The continental consultations which took place in Tunisia in March 2013 culminated in an outcome document that served as the basis for the draft CAP which was presented to African Heads of State during the May 2013 AU Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for consideration.

16.   The CAP which was adopted in January 2014 by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union focused on six pillars which underline the African development priorities that should underpin the global Development Agenda. These were: (i) structural economic transformation and inclusive growth; (ii) science, technology and innovation; (iii) people-centred development; (iv) environmental sustainability, natural resources management and disaster risk management; (v) peace and security; and (vi) finance and partnerships. These priorities aim to ensure that the new global development agenda or the SDG's adequately reflect Africa's development priorities. The CAP also stressed on the need for the post-2015 development agenda to reflect an appropriate balance of development outcomes and enablers, echoing the positions from regional consultations. The enablers include: institutional capacity development; domestic resource mobilization; participation and ownership at the community, local and global levels; social inclusiveness and equality; governance and leadership; peace and security; regional integration and trade; infrastructure development; and global cooperation and partnerships. In addition to the enablers, the post-2015 Development Agenda should focus on key development outcomes, including: i) economic transformation, ii) education and technology and iii) human development. The 21st Ordinary Session of the Assembly of African Heads of State decided to establish a high level committee (HLC) of 10 Heads of State and Government, chaired by H.E. Mrs. Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson[9] to further refine the CAP and build intercontinental alliances on the priorities identified. The Assembly also requested the African Union Commission (AUC) in consultation with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and relevant stakeholders to

[9]Members of the HLC are Heads of State and Government of Liberia (Chair), Algeria, Chad, Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Mauritania, Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa.

continue to engage member States including the Permanent Representatives Committee in Addis Ababa and the Africa Group in New York, with a view to further refine the CAP on the Post-2015 Development Agenda together with partner institutions.

17.   The remaining work on the post-2015 Development Agenda will centre on negotiations and building alliances on the priorities of the CAP. Work is already underway to determine the continent's negotiations strategy and in general to prepare for the negotiation process. Nevertheless, the post-2015 Agenda should reflect as concretely as possible the medium to long-term aspirations of the African continent as espoused in Agenda 2063 and reflected in sub regional and national development aspirations.

Section 4: The African Union Agenda 2063

18.   In 2013, the African Union (AU) commemorated 50 years of its establishment, first as the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and then after is transformation into its current form through the Constitutive Act. The AU embarked on a consultative process to develop a vision for the next 50 years, Agenda 2063 as a long term roadmap towards a continent that is peaceful, integrated, people-centered and prosperous, with milestones and strategies to achieve this vision in the shortest possible time. In this context, the AU Heads of State and Government adopted a Solemn Declaration, which rededicated the member States to the continent's development. The African leaders pledged commitment to progress, focusing on eight key areas:[10]

1. African Identity and Renaissance;
2. Continue the Struggle against Colonialism and the Right to Self-determination of People still under colonial rule;
3. The Integration Agenda: Implement the Continental Free Trade Area to ultimately establish a united and integrated Africa;
4. Agenda for Social and Economic Development;
5. Peace and Security Agenda;
6. Democratic Governance;
7. Determining Africa's Destiny; and
8. Africa's Place in the World.

19.   Agenda 2063 is defined and embodied and elaborated in the eight aspirations in Box 4. Each aspiration provides specific actions and goals.

Box 4: Our Aspirations for the Africa We Want

✓ A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development;
✓ An integrated continent, politically united and based on the ideals of Pan;
✓ Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance;
✓ An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law;
✓ A peaceful and secure Africa;
✓ An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics;
✓ An Africa where development is people-driven, unleashing the potential of its women and youth, and
✓ Africa as a strong, united and influential global player and partner.

Source: Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want (2014)

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[10] AUC, 2013 - African Union Agenda 2013 -The future we want for Africa. Revised Framework Document.

20.   The Heads of State[11] recognized that the Agenda 2063 built on the pledges made through the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration and adopted it as a collective vision and roadmap for the next fifty years and committed to speed-up actions in the following areas and specific milestones:

1. Eradicate poverty in a generation by 2025;
2. Catalyse an Education and Skills revolution and actively promote science, technology, research and innovation, to build knowledge, human resources, capabilities and skills;
3. Transform, grow and industrialise our economies through beneficiation and value addition of natural resources;
4. Consolidate the modernisation of African agriculture and agro-businesses, through scaled up value addition and productivity by 2025;
5. Address Climate change and Preserve the Environment;
6. Connect Africa through world-class Infrastructure;
7. Fast-track the establishment of a Continental Free Trade Area by 2017;
8. Support Young people as drivers of Africa's renaissance;
9. Silence the guns by 2020;
10. Introduce an African Passport;
11. Consolidate a democratic and people-centered Africa; and
12. Enhance Africa's united voice in global negotiations.

21.   These commitments are underpinned by specific actions and aspirations. For example, the commitment to strengthen domestic resource mobilization will endeavour to build continental capital markets and financial institutions and reverse illicit capital flows from the continent by 2025 with the view of:

1. Reducing aid dependency by 50 percent;
2. Eliminating all forms of illicit flows;
3. Doubling the contribution of African capital markets in development
4. financing;
5. Rendering fully operational the African Remittances Institute;
6. Reducing unsustainable levels of debt; and
7. Building effective, transparent and harmonised tax and revenue collection systems and public expenditure.

22.   On the commitment to transform, grow and industrialise our economies through beneficiation and value addition of natural resources, Agenda 2063 envisages the following specific actions:

1. Implementation of the African Industrial Development Action Plan, the African Mining Vision at country and continental level, in particular fast tracking the establishment of the Centre for African Mineral Development;
2. Promotion of social dialogue, sectoral and productivity plans and regional and commodity value chains to support the implementation of industrial policies at all levels, with a focus on SMMEs and Agribusinesses;
3. Establishment of Commodity exchanges for strategic African products;
4. Growing the African Blue and Green economies;
5. Development of the African Private sector through engagement and a conducive climate, fostering Pan African businesses through the growth of regional manufacturing hubs and scaled up intra-Africa trade;

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[11] Heads of State and Government of the African Union assembled in , Addis Ababa, Ethiopia during the 24th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union in January 2015

6. Enhancing the Productivity Agenda for Africa, as an essential engine for industrialization, progressively enhancing the competitiveness of the continent in the global economy; and

7. Implementation of macro-economic policies that facilitate growth, employment creation, investments and industrialisation.

23. The critical enablers towards this agenda 2063 include; (i) people's ownership and mobilisation (ii) African resources to finance its development (iii) accountable leadership and responsive institutions (iv) capable and democratic developmental states and institutions (v) changed attitudes and mindsets, (vi) a Pan African perspective, through solidarity, integration, implementation of our programmes and pooled sovereignty on critical issues of continental and global dimensions (viii) ownership of the African narrative and brand and (ix) African approach to development and transformation.

24. The leaders pledged to integrate these ideals and goals into regional and national development plans. Continental integration will be based on the RECs as building blocks. In this regard, the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite FTA (TFTA) and other equivalent arrangements in Western, Central and Northern African regions are steps towards achieving this goal. The COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite was established in 2005 with the main objective of strengthening and deepening economic integration of the southern and eastern Africa region. This is being achieved through various initiatives aimed at harmonising policies and programmes of the three RECs in the areas of trade, customs, industrial development and infrastructure development and implementing these in a coordinated manner and jointly wherever possible. The TFTA, launched in 2011 is anchored on three pillars: market integration, industrial development and infrastructure development. It forms part of the AU overall objective to establish an African Common Market. The AUC is working closely with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Coordinating Agency, supported by the African Development Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) to accelerate the continental integration agenda and the achievement of the continental Free Trade Area in 2017. Therefore, at a minimum, a post-2015 Development Agenda that addresses Africa's aspirations should incorporate the Agenda 2063 position as well as the positions articulated at sub regional level through RECs and national visions and development plans. As noted above, the document, "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want (2014)" provides a detailed menu of Africa's aspirations and its directions should inform SDGs.

25. It is important to review the sub regional development programmes for alignment with Agenda 2063 and how this alignment could inform the post-2015 Development Agenda.

Section 5: The SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP)

26. The SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) was developed and approved by the SADC Summit in 2003 for a 15-year period, but was effectively implemented from 2005, thus giving an implementation time-frame of 2005-2020. The Plan is built on the premise that good political, economic and corporate governance are prerequisites for sustainable socio-economic development, and that SADC's objectives for poverty eradication and deeper levels of integration will not be realised if these are not in place. RISDP is anchored on the SADC Common Agenda, SADC Vision and the regional development milestones and targets including the creation of an integrated region. The mission of SADC is to promote sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development underpins RISDP. Furthermore, the principles enshrined in Article 4 of the SADC Treaty on sovereignty and equality of members, solidarity, peace and security, human rights, democracy and the rule of law and peaceful settlement of disputes guide the implementation of the Plan.

27.   While alluding to some progress, the respective reviews of the implementation of RISDP undertaken in 2011 and 2012/13 identified challenges, bemoaned the slow pace of progress and recommended some changes to the original plan. The review observed that SADC's role as a facilitator of development in the region has been successful at many levels and across a wide range of areas relating to regional integration and cooperation. The outcome of the review was a revised RISDP to guide the last phase of implementation, i.e. 2015-2020. Fundamentally, the scope and purpose of the RISDP remain unchanged from those of the original document. However, emphasis has been placed on re-aligning existing priorities with resource allocation in terms of their relative importance, the reprioritization of regional priorities by the SADC the Council of Ministers in 2007 and greater impact on regional integration. The rationale for the reprioritization at the time was to sharpen the focus of the RISDP implementation and to establish a framework so as to allocate resources for greater impact.

28.   The new priorities for 2015-2020 under RISDP are in; Priority A - industrial development and market integration; Priority B - infrastructure in support of regional integration; Priority C - peace and security cooperation and Priority D - special programmes under Education and Human Resource Development, Health, HIV and AIDS and other diseases of public health importance, Food Security and Trans-boundary Natural Resources, Environment, Statistics, Private Sector, Gender Equality, and Science, Technology and Innovation and Research and Development. Each of these priority areas has a strategic objective and specific objectives and will be pursued in a synergistic manner. The priority intervention areas emphasised in the implementation of RISDP are poverty reduction, HIV and AIDS, gender equality and development, science innovation and technology, environment and sustainable development, private sector, food security and agriculture and infrastructure support for regional integration.

29.   In June 2012, the Extraordinary Meeting of Heads of State and Government of SADC approved the development of a long-term regional vision, SADC Vision 2050. The Summit also asserted that the proposed regional vision should be based on the SADC Vision Statement as stipulated in the Treaty and in the RISDP and that it should be informed by the review of the RISDP. The objectives of the Vision is to realign the priorities of regional cooperation and integration and to set long-term indicative targets, taking into account existing and emerging dynamics in the regional, continental and global environment including, the AU Agenda 2063, NEPAD and the post-2015 Development Agenda. Furthermore, the SADC Vision 2050 will provide direction and context to the new RISDP. The SADC Industrial Policy Framework, the SADC Framework for the harmonization of Mining Policies and the Industrial Upgrading and Modernisation Programme are key components of regional industrialization and socio-economic development strategy. They each contain milestones and strategies towards transformation and development.

Section 6: The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) 2011-2015 Medium Term Strategic Plan (MTSP)

30.   The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa is a regional economic grouping made up of 19 member States[12] with an estimated population of 400 million people. COMESA's work is guided by plans that have three (3) time horizons: the long-term vision expressed in the founding Treaty, a medium-term horizon - usually 5 years - and an annual

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[12] COMESA member States are: Burundi, Comoros, DRC, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Libya, Malawi, Madagascar, Mauritius, Rwanda, Swaziland, Seychelles, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

planning cycle. Medium-term strategic plans provide a framework within which detailed annual work programmes and budget are developed. They also form the basis for in-depth multi-year plans for specific sectors. COMESA's current MTSP for the period 2011-2015 under the theme, "Towards an Integrated and Competitive Common Market," was approved by Council of Ministers in 2011. It provides the current operating priorities from which specific work activities are carved.

31. Besides the COMESA Treaty, other development blue-prints and documents that guide COMESA's work includes the following: the Abuja Treaty (1991) and the Constitutive Act of the African Union (2000), the MDGs, long-term development plans of individual member States and the decisions of the COMESA Authority and Council. The MTSP focuses on addressing issues affecting the ordinary people such as poverty, public health, education, gender, children's welfare, equal opportunities, and international solidarity. The six strategic (priority) areas which resonate with the post-2015 Development Agenda and the SDG's are as in Box 5.

Box 5: COMESA Strategic Areas

- Removing barriers to trade;
- Building productive capacity for global competitiveness;
- Addressing supply side constraints related to infrastructure;
- Peace and Security
- Gender and Social Affairs, Climate Change, Statistical Development, Knowledge Based Society and Human Capital, Cooperation and Partnerships and Aid for Trade

32. The development of a successor strategy for COMESA for the period 2016-2020 is currently underway and this presents a timely opportunity to craft strategies which converge with the post-2015 development agenda.

33. The Sub Regional Coordination Mechanism (SRCM)[13] established after the 61st Session of the UN General Assembly held in 2006 and designed to reduce fragmentation in the operations of the UN and increase coherence in supporting the programmes and priorities of RECs and Intergovernmental Organisations, provides a platform for synchronization of priorities. The flagship programmes for joint implementation of the SRCM in Southern and East Africa as prioritised in the Business Plan and reconfirmed at the recent review meeting in November 2014, are all in conformity with the 17 proposed SDG's. In a way, the SRCM can therefore be regarded as already providing a route towards addressing the development challenges in the region through programmes in food security, sustainable tourism, energy security and value addition in agriculture.

Section 7: Assessing the Synergies and Convergence of International, continental and regional Development Agendas

34. An understanding of regional perspectives, hindrances and solutions to attain sustainable development and also the commonalities and priorities among various sub regional strategies, implementation and how the SDGs and the post-2015 Development Agenda will impact policies and programmes is essential. From the summary in Table 3 it is evident that the continental and the sub regional priorities and member State aspirations resonate with the SDG's and post 2015 development agenda. Despite differences in nomenclature at the various levels, the 17 SDGs generally reflect severally the CAP and the

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[13] http://www.un.org/africa/osaa/2010_un_system/ECA2010.pdf

REC priorities. For example, SDG's 1 to 5 which place people at the centre of development directly converge with priority areas of CAP as well as regional aspirations. It is important to note that there are still some areas of divergence among negotiating groups on issues such as sexual orientation, peace and security, comprehensive sexual education, colonial domination and foreign occupation.

Table 3: Convergence of International, continental and regional development agendas

International	Continental	SADC Region	COMESA Region
SDGs	CAP Pillars	RISDP Priority Areas	MTSP Priority Areas
Goal 8, 9, 10	Structural economic transformation and inclusive growth	Poverty reduction, industrial development and market integration, infrastructure support for regional integration	Addressing supply side constraints related to infrastructure; building productive capacity for global competitiveness; removing barriers to trade
Goal 7	Science, technology and innovation	Science, technology and innovation	Knowledge-based society and human capital
Goal 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	People-centred development	Social and human development, gender equality and development, combating of the HIV and AIDs pandemic	Gender and social affairs, Knowledge- based society and human capital, Institutional development
Goals 13, 14, 15	Environmental sustainability	Environment and Sustainable Development	Climate change
Goals 2, 3, 6, 11, 12, 14	Natural resources management and disaster risk management	Agriculture, food security and natural resources	Regional Food Security and Risk Management/Cross Border Trade
Goal 11, 16	Peace and security	Politics, defence and security cooperation	Peace and security
Goal 17	Finance and partnerships	Private sector	Cooperation and partnerships and aid for trade

Source: Derived from SDGs, CAP, RISDP and MTSP

35.   Furthermore, as can be seen in Table 4, the national aspirations of the selected member States as provided in National Visions and Development Plans also reflect similar developmental focus. The developmental goals of health, poverty reduction, infrastructure, natural resources management, environmental sustainability, science and technology, inclusive growth and people centred development in these documents echo the SDGs. At face value, the SDGs are comprehensive and reflect the priorities of all stakeholders.

Table 4: Components of Selected National Development Plans

Namibia NDP4 (Vision 2020)	Malawi MGDS II (Vision 2020)	Botswana NDP 10 (Vision 2016)	South Africa NDP (Vision 2030)
Health	Health, Sanitation, Malaria and HIV/AIDS management	Affordable and quality Healthcare	Providing quality health care
Institutional environment	Climate change, natural Resources/environmental management	Sustainable management of natural resources	Fighting corruption and enhancing accountability
Public infrastructure	Infrastructure development	Developed and reliable infrastructure	Expanding infrastructure
Reduction of extreme poverty	Agriculture and food security	Absolute poverty eradication	Creating jobs and livelihoods
Education and skills	Child, youth development and empowerment	Competitive and productive human resources	Improving education and training

Source: National Visions for Namibia, Malawi, Botswana and South Africa

36.   The convergence of developmental priorities evident in Table 3 and 4 can partially be explained by the open, inclusive and transparent process of crafting the SDG's. By and large,

the consultation has allowed member States and other stakeholders to express aspirations individually or as regional and sub regional groups. Process-wise, the flexible working arrangements of the Open Working Group on SDGs also provided for regular, structured interaction with all major groups and stakeholders. As can be seen in Table 3, the strategies address the urgent challenges of poverty and inequality and build on the successes and shortcomings of the MDG's, with measurable targets and scaled-up investments in areas such as education, health, gender equality and youth employment. Convergence is a key first step to ensuring optimal use of energies in the pursuit of continental development. As discussed earlier, there is still work being done to refine the Post-2015 Development Agenda and African member States should continue to play pro-active roles in shaping the Agenda and ensure that national priorities are accommodated. The focus should be on ensuring that the CAP on the goals as well as the seven aspirations in Agenda 2063 is not diluted in the final form of the SDGs. It is important that African member States strive towards a unified framework with universal goals applicable to all countries underpinned by the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The framework should clearly differentiate between development outcomes and enablers in the sub regional pronouncements. Such a unified framework will be a starting point for holistically addressing the continent's challenges with the collaboration of regional and international partners. However, the continued refinement of the goals should not lose the important developmental issues for the continent as outlined in Agenda 2063. Further work on the goals, should, among others, address operational constraints at all levels.

37.   Among many other important considerations, the finalization of the SDGs should:

1. Produce indicators that are realistic and applicable to all countries, but with inbuilt mechanisms to accommodate peculiar conditions of countries, and for specific demographic groups in a country (vulnerable groups, for example);
2. Emphasize processes towards the goals rather than indicators as this will help countries more – focus on addressing development challenges;
3. Develop explicit tracking mechanisms for the goals and M&E frameworks complimented by a platform for the annual evaluation and sharing of experiences and lessons learned;
4. The M&E framework should be underpinned by a phased approach to the attainment of goals;
5. Develop mechanisms to mainstream the processes towards SDGs into national, regional and continental strategies i.e. the pursuit of the SDGs should permeate through all national processes and mechanisms. An intimate link of the pursuit of SDGs is a necessity;
6. Develop a resource mobilization strategy or a pool of resources to which partners can contribute and from which countries could apply for access for financing activities;
7. Develop concrete strategies at continental, regional and country level for industrialization and economic transformation since this is at the centre of economic growth and jobs and addressing development challenges, especially in the developing world; and
8. Ensure that climate change issues are tackled substantively given their link with agriculture which is important for Africa.

38.   A reformulated, multileveled post-2015 framework has to be sensitive to sub-national disparities, regional specificities and development enablers and where inequality, human rights and sustainability are more clearly expressed through development objectives and targets that will need to be achieved and properly financed and monitored by governments. For SADC member States, the alignment of the agreed international SDG's with the Agenda 2063, the CAP, RISDP as well as with national development aspirations is highly desirable for a holistic approach to addressing development challenges.