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**SECOND AU-CSO CONSULTATION ON  
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICA-EUROPE PARTNERSHIP  
3-5 MARCH 2009,  
NAIROBI KENYA**

**Original: English**

**REPORT**

## **Introduction**

1. The second AU-Civil Society consultation on the implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 3-5 March 2009. The purpose of the consultation was four-fold. First was to assess the progress of the partnership project after one year of its inception. Second was to review the initial and current phase of the implementation plan with emphasis on the activities of the Joint Experts and Working Groups. Third was to review the role of civil society in this context. Fourth, and most significant, was to define and further refine the organisational processes of African civil society participation. In this regard, particular emphasis was placed on the reconstitution and mandate of the civil society Steering Committee under the leadership of the Economic Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), which has been established as the principal channel of civil society interface for the African Union.

## **Attendance**

2. In attendance were representatives of ECOSOCC and other African Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) from the five geopolitical regions of Africa. They were drawn from research institutes, social and professional groups as well as youth, women and the media. Officials of the African Union Commission including the Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO), Political Affairs and Economic Affairs Departments were also in attendance.
3. The agenda and work programme for the meeting is attached as Annex A.

## **Opening Session**

4. The opening session was chaired by the President of the ECOSOCC General Assembly and received two main addresses.
5. In the first of the two addresses delivered during the opening session, the Director of the Citizens and Diaspora Directorate (CIDO), Dr Jinmi Adisa welcomed participants to the meeting on behalf of the Chairperson of the AU Commission, H.E. Mr Jean Ping. He began by reviewing the history of the AU Civil society consultation on the Africa-EU partnership from the preparatory to the implementation phase and outlined the precise objectives of this particular consultation as outlined above. He placed particular emphasis on the need for this meeting to focus on organizational aspects of African civil society participation in the Partnership. He noted that this has been a subject of recent communication between the African Union and the European Commission and that the African Union has underlined certain important conditions in this regard. First is that the premise of equality entrenched in the partnership declaration must be fully respected by both parties in this context. Thus, it was the

responsibility of African civil society in collaboration with the Union to define and organize the processes of its own participation. Second, the AU created the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) as elected civil society parliament to integrate civil society in its policy making process and thus ECOSOCC must lead the process of active civil society participation in the Africa-EU partnership on the African side. Third, and following from this, the Civil Society Steering Committee that was created in Accra in the preparatory phase of the partnership in 2007 and reactivated in Bamako, Mali for the implementation phase in March 2008 would be reconstituted under ECOSOCC leadership. The primary objective of this meeting was to facilitate this process. The task has additional urgency because the European side was proposing an inter-continental civil society dialogue ahead of the Africa-EU Troika meetings in April 2009 and it would be necessary to evaluate the utility of this proposal and if accepted, to refine the organizational process on the African side to facilitate effective representation. He further observed that the ECOSOCC President had held consultations with both African Union and EC officials on the margins of the AU Summit on this subject and it would be useful to have his template on this model as a basis for moving forward.

6. In his own address, the President of the ECOSOCC General Assembly, H.E, Mr Akere Muna, outlined the important elements and parameters that should guide the process. First and foremost was that the process of African civil society involvement in the Africa-EU partnership would be the responsibility of Africa and would be led by Africans in accordance with the fundamental principle of the Lisbon Declaration that this would be a partnership of equals. Second, is that within this framework, ECOSOCC as the main organ for African civil society interface with the policy process, would lead this process. Accordingly, the Steering Committee that was formed in Bamako in 2008 would be reconstituted under ECOSOCC leadership. The size, character and composition of the Steering Committee would be determined in the course of this consultation but would include eight Chairs or representatives of ECOSOCC Cluster Committees that approximate the eight partnership areas. The Cluster Committees would be the framework for specific area interaction in the partnerships. These Cluster Committees would be formed during the meeting of the ECOSOCC General Assembly scheduled to take place in April 2009. He emphasised that the character of the Clusters which are comprehensive and all inclusive afford an opportunity for participation of all African civil society in order to harness the expertise required to support this process.
7. He added that this process would be opened to trans-regional dialogue with CSO counterparts in other regions. This will be useful because African CSOs share some common interest with their European counterparts, particularly on the requirement of ensuring that the partnership agreement live up to its promise of a people-centred strategy that integrates the effective participation of CSOs as important stakeholders on both sides. However, African CSOs also share some identity of interests with Member States of the African Union in order to promote Africa's development, which is the cornerstone of the Partnership enterprise.
8. He further underlined the need for CIDO as the Secretariat of ECOSOCC and the arm of the Commission that deals with civil society to have a well defined and

coordinated role in this regard and added that the pivotal role of CIDO explains why the Audit Panel of the Union, of which he was a member, decided to maintain CIDO as the Secretariat of ECOSOCC. CIDO's participation in the evolution of the Partnership process played an important role in defining its people-centred orientation. It is important therefore that CIDO continues to serve as ECOSOCC arm of the Commission that participates across the range in the work of the AU-EU Task Force and feeds the outcomes and deliberations into the CSO intervention process. In order to promote necessary congruence in the work of the Commission and African civil society in this context. CIDO should therefore, have a representative on the Steering Committee.

9. In a related fashion, ECOSOCC will be feeding actions, processes and outcomes into the mainstream of the work of the ECOSOCC Standing Committee and Assembly. To complement this, it would also require CIDO as its Secretariat to continue the tradition of annual AU-CSO consultation to bring ECOSOCC and its electorate in the larger civil society together to deliberate on progress and review the state of play of implementation and implementation arrangements.
10. Finally, on funding, the ECOSOCC President committed ECOSOCC under his leadership to support the process and obliged CIDO to do the same as Secretariat of ECOSOCC and to seek to mobilize extra-budgetary funds for this purpose. He stressed that ECOSOCC and CIDO would include provision for this support in the programme budget for 2010 and that it would be essential that a substantial part of the EU 55 million support grant to the AU Commission be allocated for this process through CIDO. In addition, the need for a special allocation in the current budget circle through CIDO to support African civil society participation in the current budget circle should be considered as a matter of priority.

## **Session II Africa-EU Dialogue: State of Play and Implementation Arrangements**

11. Mr. Boubacar Koma of the Economic Affairs Department of the African Union Commission provided an update on the Africa-EU Partnership Arrangements since its inception in Lisbon in December 2007. He provided the background to the Joint Strategy and First Action Plan and the reasons why both Africa and Europe thought it was in their interests to jointly develop a Strategy for Africa's development. These ranged from their perceived need of each other in an increasingly interdependent and globalized world and the need for a long-term strategy and new approach to their relationship. The approach would complement existing bilateral relationships and develop some commonly shared values such as respect for human rights, freedom equality, justice, democracy etc.
12. The Joint strategy is divided into four clusters namely: Peace and Security, Governance and Human Rights, Trade and Regional Integration and key development issues. These four cluster areas are broken into eight Partnerships

in the First Action Plan, which will run from 2008-2010. The eight Partnerships are: Peace and Security, Democratic Governance and Human Rights, Trade and Regional Integration, Millennium Development Goals, Energy, Climate Change, Migration, Mobility and Employment and Science, information society and space.

13. According to Mr Koma, following the adoption of the Joint Strategy and the First action Plan, the Joint Strategy entered the implementation phase. To kick start the process, the AU consulted with key stakeholders identified in the Action Plan. These included Member States, RECs, Pan African Parliament and Civil Society. He described the implementation architecture approved by the Ministerial Troika in September 2008 as including the two commissions (AUC and EC), Members States, PAP and European Parliament, civil society, ECOSOCC, EESC, research institutes and think tanks,, RECs and the Private Sector.
14. Since the implementation phase began, the progress that has been made in the last one year included the endorsement of the implementation architecture, the setting up of the Joint Experts Groups, technical discussions including identification of key action areas. The Partnership has now received the first progress report on implementation and preparation and adoption of guidelines for the Joint Experts Group. There have also been consultations on the issue of financing the First Action Plan. The joint website for Joint Strategy was also launched ([www.africa-eu-partnership.org](http://www.africa-eu-partnership.org))
15. On the involvement of civil society in the implementation programme, Mr Koma said there have been challenges in this regard as modalities for their involvement are still being discussed. While the First Action Plan specifically highlighted areas in which civil society would be involved in the implementation phase. There is still a need to work out how this involvement would be given practical meaning. The lack of practical modalities has delayed the process of effective implementation. In particular, civil society has not been made part of the Expert Group framework as anticipated in the Lisbon process. There are plans however, for CSOs to meet before major meetings of Africa and EU to discuss the agenda. The decisions of such meetings will then be passed on to the main meeting.
16. He highlighted a number of challenges that have limited the success of the Action Plan in its first year to include: the need to respect the principles agreed in the Joint strategy on full involvement of all the stakeholders including civil society, need for adequate financial resources to support the implementation architecture and the issue of ownership. On the way forward, he highlighted the need to strengthen the JEGs, in particular African States should send real experts from their capitals rather than just send officers from their embassies in Addis Ababa who may not necessarily be experts in the specific partnership area in which they are members. He advised that the Steering Committee of CSOs should be revitalised to work closely with CIDO and that CSOs should form technical working groups for all partnerships under ECOSOCC leadership. He also opined that there is need for both African and European CSOs to present a strong position regarding their involvement in implementation activities.

## Discussion, Recommendations and Decisions

17. In the ensuing discussions, participants stressed that equality means responsibility. They were unhappy with a situation that allows for imbalance between European and African representatives at the technical and operational level. They stressed that if Africa wanted to ensure that this is a partnership of equals it must endeavour to send technical personnel in specific areas to each of the Experts and Working Group meetings. The bulk of such Experts can only be obtained from country capitals or within countries rather than Embassies in Addis Ababa. Participants also saw a definite role for the African civil society in this regard. Much of this expertise resides in the African civil society community and it would be useful to harness this to the process. Hence, the Steering Committee of CSOs that is envisaged should be in a position to facilitate this technical support to support the African side by tapping the wider resources of the African civil society community.
18. There was also concern that only one out of the eight recognized Regional Economic Communities (RECs), East African Community, has been actively associated with this process. Participants underlined the communication difficulties associated with this process and resolved that civil society organisations would mobilize their constituencies within each of these regional blocs to sensitize them to the need for participation and mobilize their support for the process. The various CSOs in the various regions committed themselves to this responsibility.
19. Issues of parallel arrangements run by Europe with Africa such as the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) the Mediterranean Union Project, the separate Cooperation and Development Agreement and, in particular, the Economic Partnership Agreements were also raised. There was concern that this would undermine the overarching context of the Africa-EU Partnership Strategy and stretch the capacity of African states to deal with multiple issues and actors. Some even argued that this accounts for the low level of technical participation in the Africa-EU process since they involved large flow of resources and had immediate livelihood implications that African States were reluctant to concede. Hence, the multiple arrangements were a product of expediency and material necessity. It would be necessary therefore to work towards achieving synergies and complementarities within the framework of the larger Africa-EU process but this takes time. It may be necessary in this regard to have a workshop that would inform efforts to streamline the multiple arrangements in order to encourage Europe to treat African as one. Finally the applicability of the “treat Africa as one principle” will rest ultimately on the extent to which African States themselves are willing to forgo unilateral advantages in the long term for the sake of African integration.
20. The major emphasis of the decision was on civil society participation in this process. Participants stressed that there was the need for the partners in the process to ensure that the Lisbon Declaration lives up to its promise and commitment to have a people-centred strategy that will integrate civil society in its formal and informal structures. In this context, it is imperative that civil society

should obtain immediate access to the Joint Experts Groups. They welcomed moves to initiate a meeting in order to feed in their inputs but observed that this is not the spirit and intent of the Lisbon Declaration whose emphasis was on participation and not mere association. In addition, they supported the position of the President of ECOSOCC that while issues of participation created a solidarity purpose with European CSOs, this was not necessarily the case on content issues. As Africans also, the issue of Africa's development must assume priority. Hence, CSO participation in the AU-EU dialogue and mechanisms must be in a context that is both vertical and horizontal- within and across continents. Civil Society must join the Expert and Working Groups because the task of development is a people-centred one that is too serious to be left to governments alone.

21. On the organization of African civil society participation in this process, the Consultation adopted and endorsed the template provided by the ECOSOCC President as the framework of action. Particular emphasis was placed on the requirement on the responsibility of Africans to organize their own participation, the leadership of ECOSOCC, the role of CIDO, funding processes and finally, the nature and character of the Steering Committee. It was agreed however, that the template would need to be elaborated to give precise form to the size and composition of the Steering Committee and its mandate as well as the work of the cluster Committees of ECOSOCC that would work in tandem in the eight partnership areas.

### **Session III EU Governance Initiative and Human Rights Issues in the Africa-EU Partnership: An Overview**

22. Mr Sallah Hammad of the Political Affairs Department of the African Union Commission made the presentation on the state of play regarding the Governance and Human Rights dimension of the Partnership. He noted that that this was the most advanced sector of the eight partnerships in the first Action Plan. Democratic Governance and Human Rights were perceived as key for sustainable development and for cooperation between partners as well as an integral part of EU's and AU's core value. The rationale for this partnership therefore, is that it will enable a comprehensive continent-to-continent dialogue and cooperation on numerous aspects and concepts. It will support the strengthening of local capacity, the protection of human right and fundamental freedoms for all and entrench democratic principles, the rule of law and equitable access to legal systems, managements of natural resources, the fight against corruption and fraud, accountable management of public funds institutional development and reform, global governance and security sector reform.
23. He identified the priorities of the partnership as two-fold. First, is to enhance dialogue at the global level and international fora and second is to support the African Charter on Democracy, Governance and Elections. In the same vein, the guiding principles of the work of the Implementation Team (IT) are also two fold. First is that the implementation of the partnership is and will remain an Africa-EU shared responsibility both in the delivery of expected outcomes and the provision of policy inputs and material resources including financing. Secondly, the

partnership on Governance and Human Rights should be conceptualized and implemented in consistency with the overall Joint Strategy and Action Plan and go “beyond development”, “beyond Africa” and beyond institutions” Both Africa and Europe will not reduce this partnership to the traditional development-centred donor/recipient relationship. Existing structures will be used to achieve the principles.

24. Furthermore, the African side stressed a number of guiding principles that must guide the operations of the partnership in the area of democratic governance as follows: that the implementation and management of the Partnership shall be guided by principle of mutual respect and understanding, the respect of countries’ identities and their national priorities. The African side further emphasised that the partnership on DGHR will provide a unique forum for the economic, political and cultural contexts surrounding the two continents and will contribute to sensitizing both sides while bearing in mind the different social, economic, political and cultural contexts surrounding the two continents and will contribute to sensitizing both sides to their multiple challenges, obstacles, priorities and needs. Finally, the African side underscored the importance of having a balanced approach in the projects to be agreed upon between both sides so that they would be reflective of the priority actions within the partnership on DGHR.
25. On the role of CSOs, the two Partners recognise that the Joint Strategy should be co-owned by European and African non-institutional actors and that these actors can play an important role in taking forward the objectives of the partnership Partnership on Democratic Governance and Human Rights. Also that, with a view to a people-centred partnership, an appropriate and prominent place needs to be defined in the institutional partnership for civil society and other non-state actors. Africa and the EU will therefore further promote the development of a vibrant and independent civil society and of a systematic dialogue between it and public authorities at all levels to play a role in the implementation of EU-Africa Strategic Plan. It was also agreed that participation of women in democratic processes and governance and the fight against corruption shall be streamlined through all the activities under this priority action.
26. Accordingly, the 1<sup>st</sup> JEG meeting took place in Addis on the 18 of November, co-chaired by Egypt for the African side, and Germany and Portugal for the EU side. The African Implementation team (IT) on Democratic Governance and Human Rights (DGHR) chaired by Egypt, with the involvement of up to 11 African countries (of which 10 attended this 1<sup>st</sup> JEG) and the African Union Commission convened in Addis Ababa on the 5<sup>th</sup> November and 17 of November. The African IT worked on formulating an African position paper on the Partnership on DGHR, it also discussed a number of initial ideas for prospective projects in the areas of democratic governance and human rights as well as a number of projects in the area of strengthening cooperation in the area of cultural goods for the implementation of the 1<sup>st</sup> Action Plan 2008-2010. Modalities for the participation of the CSOs are yet to be finalized.

27. Nonetheless, modalities for the participation of Africa and European CSOs in future meetings have been agreed upon and the first participation of the CSOs will take place in mid-April 2009 prior to the Human Rights Dialogue in Brussels. 25 CSO representatives from each continent will participate in the dialogue and African CSOs will be selected by ECOSOC in collaboration with CIDO. Such representatives will then participate in the human rights dialogue.
28. In terms of the Governance Process Architecture, there was a realization that the fundamental value of the African Charter on Democracy, Election and Governance resides in its contribution to fulfil the obligation to create a developed and prosperous Africa whose citizens are empowered with the ability to pursue lives of quality and meaning. In finding expression in the daily lives of people, the Charter as well as the APRM can serve as instruments for creating space for African people to truly exercise their rights as citizen. Significantly also, The Governance Process Architecture will enable the AUC to achieve these goals highlighted in the Charter as well as to implement the outcomes of the APRM. The African CSOs will actively participate in this Architecture through the Governance Process Facility that will be established.

### **Discussions, Recommendations and Decisions**

29. The ensuing discussion focused largely on the APRM, the impending Human Rights Dialogue in Brussels in April 2009 and the ratification of the Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. The Charter required 15 countries to come into force but has been ratified by only two countries.
30. On the APRM, participants wanted to know the extent to which the AU Commission was working with the APRM Secretariat to promote synergies in their work and effective association of Experts with their work. They were informed that there were problems at the initial phase but that an effective working relationship had now been established to ensure coherence in the Governance Architecture of the AU. The AU representative also stressed that as part of this process, the requirement that the APRM Review Process be submitted to PAP and ECOSOC would be fulfilled. The APRM Secretariat noted that it was waiting for the institutionalization of ECOSOC and the inception of the appropriate Cluster Committee.
31. On ratification, participants stressed the need to ensure that the Charter on Democracy, Governance and Elections is ratified in the shortest possible period. It was stressed that the experience of the Great Lakes Region where 10 important Protocols were ratified by record number of states in the region within a short time has established a model that the AU should adopt. Heads of States and Governments should be involved in the ratification process. Also the civil society community should be mobilized to assist the ratification process in the various countries so that its instrument can come into force. Participants also noted that civil society was involved in the process of developing the Charter and the model of effective cooperation between CIDO and the Political Affairs Department of the AU has set a model for AU engagement framework in this regard.

32. Participants also welcomed the arrangement to invite 25 CSO representatives to the meeting in Brussels and observed that the proceedings of this meeting will increase the scope and contribution of CSO participation in this context.

**Session IV The Role of CSOs and Modalities for Participation in the Joint Experts Group and Working Group: Options and Challenges (Panel Discussion)**

33. The panel consisted of Dr Jinmi Adisa, Mr Sllah Hamad and Mr Boubacar Koma of the African Union Commission and Mr Joseph Chilengi, Ms Chantal Uwimana and Mr Michael Sudarkasa from among the civil society organisations. Mr Hassan Sunmonu, the Deputy Presiding Officer of ECOSOCC, was the chair. The panellists were requested to reflect generally on the process to date and to turn the reflection into specific recommendations that will facilitate the attainment of the objective of this meeting. They were also to pay attention to the organisational aspects, in particular how CSOs should be involved. After intensive discussions the Consultation agreed on the following reflections and recommendations:

- That the joint Strategy in its first phase of implementation plan has not lived up to its promise of a people centred strategy. There were some efforts to promote participation of civil society but they are not formally integrated in the formal and institutional structures on both sides. Elements of distrust between government and civil society remain and have to be overcome. As part of this process, involvement of African civil society in the work of the Joint Expert Groups should be mandatory
- The African side should take the lead in facilitating this process as a mark of its faithfulness to the ideals of the Constitutive Act of the Union which designed as a partnership between governments and civil society
- The idea of civil society participating in the Pre-Troika meetings that will feed into the latter is welcome but should not be a substitute for full involvement of civil society vertically and horizontally—within and across continents—as anticipated by the Lisbon Declaration
- On the African side, ECOSOCC through its Cluster Committee should be represented in the Joint Experts Groups and Working Groups. ECOSOCC is already represented at the highest levels of the Organisational decision-making process of the Council and Assembly. Hence, this will be consistent with the principles, practices and procedure of the Organization.
- As the ECOSOCC President stressed, CIDO should participate actively in the Task Force and other Commission activities across the range,

associate civil society, where possible, with this process, and feed the outcomes into the civil society intervention process, particularly through the annual AU-CSO Consultation process on the Africa-EU Partnership which it should continue to organise

- There is need to align ECOSOCC Cluster Committee with the 8 partnership areas and Action Plan with the activities of Joint Experts Group
- Expertise available within the civil society should be harnessed to the work of Joint Experts Groups and Working Groups with a view to correcting imbalances that are so far evident at the technical level. CSO Experts can be used to assist State Parties in preparation and conduct of Experts Groups and Troika meetings. CSOs should also play strong advocacy role by lobbying their governments to send experts at technical level to close the gap with the Europeans. These experts are available within government bureaucracies, the private sector and civil society at capitals and within countries.
- CSOs must also organize themselves effectively through ECOSOCC, the Steering Committee and Cluster Groups to participate effectively in this process. There is need for research and policy analysis support for the process. Emphasis must also be placed on skill and expertise in selection of CSO representatives that will participate at various levels.
- The APRM is also an important tool. There will be need to establish congruence of indicators between it and the EU Governance Initiative which should not be construed as a replacement of the APRM. African civil society also needs to understand the initiative much more and the AU Commission (CIDO and Political Affairs) should convene a workshop for this purpose.
- CSOs should assist the APRM by partaking effectively in the self-assessment process and outcomes of country reviews should be submitted to ECOSOCC as originally envisaged.

#### **Session V. The Reconstitution of the African civil society Steering Committee for the Implementation of the Africa-EU Partnership**

34. As decided by the African Union, the Steering Committee will be led by ECOSOCC and will operate under the overall guidance of the Presiding Officer of ECOSOCC. In terms of size, the composition should be large enough to accommodate the required competence but small enough to be manageable. The Steering Committee should comprise of 21 members as follows:
- a. 6 Members selected by ECOSOCC

- b. 6 Members selected by other CSO's in the consultation without the participation of the ECOSOCC Members – this should include one member of the previous steering committee to allow for continuity.
  - c. 8 Chairpersons of ECOSOCC cluster committees that would approximate the eight strategic areas of the partnership and work in tandem with them.
  - d. One representative of CIDO to provide effective linkage and interface with AU Commission activities particularly those of its task force and feed these into civil society intervention process.
35. The Presiding Officer of ECOSOCC will designate the Chairperson of the Steering Committee. Each cluster committee of ECOSOCC when they are inaugurated in April 2009 will form specific ad hoc working groups of 10 members in each partnership area to ensure effective follow-up of the process on day-to-day basis. The composition of the working groups would be based on specific area expertise and ability to contribute and would be drawn from the entire arm of African Civil Society Community. This is in accordance with the rules of procedure of operation of ECOSOCC Clusters which are open-ended and allow for participation of non-ECOSOCC Members in the wider civil society community.
36. It would be important for ECOSOCC to use its current budget and seek extra-budgetary funds to finance the initial operations of these working groups. ECOSOCC would also need to dialogue with the African Union and the EU on the possibility of allocating support funds from the EU 55 Million through CIDO to enable the operations. It would be important for ECOSOCC also to seek budgetary support for the effective operations of both the Steering Committee and Working Committees in its program budget for 2010 and after. We envisage support of both the AU Commission and the European Commission for this purpose.
37. The expectation of the African Civil Society community is that the Lisbon Declaration will live up to its promise to be a “people centered” strategy. This implies effective participation of the Civil Society in the formal and informal structures, particularly the Joint Expert and Working Groups. As part of this process, it is anticipated that ECOSOCC Cluster Representatives will be able to participate in the JPEG and Working Groups.
38. However, ECOSOCC would also initiate through CIDO an informal Meeting with the African Troika and/or AU Task Force ahead of the transcontinental dialogue. Similarly, there could be parallel AU-EU Civil Society meetings to consider joint interest within the dialogue framework. The funding for participation in this process should also be part of the ECOSOCC Programme budget for 2010 and after.
39. Within the framework of seeking to correct technical imbalances that have become evident in the operations of Expert Groups, the Cluster Working Groups should also be ready to provide and fund the participation of CSO Technical Expert in various areas that can assist State parties and other stakeholders in the process.

40. The determination of the overall composition of the Steering Committee would reflect the following key considerations: expertise, gender, youths, regional and linguistic representation and inclusion of special interest groups such as people with disabilities and those afflicted with HIV-AIDS.

**The Steering Committee will have the following responsibilities:**

1. To support ECOSOCC in promoting and facilitating effective dialogue and mechanisms for Civil Society participation in the Africa EU Partnership Project.
2. To generate broader Civil Society interest in the AU-EU Partnership agenda and receive and consider feedbacks from its various constituencies and ensure dissemination of information on decisions, recommendations and follow up on consultative meetings.
3. To offer appropriate technical support for Africa's interaction with its European Partners.
4. To interface with the Cluster Committees and Working Groups of ECOSOCC to enable effective Civil Society Contribution to this process.
5. To provide specific area reports annually through ECOSOCC as anticipated in the Lisbon Declaration.
6. To provide necessary inputs for deliberation of the ECOSOCC Standing Committee and Assembly in this regard and towards its bi-annual presentation to the Assembly.
7. To co-ordinate African Civil Society inputs and promote the strengthening of the Africa-EU Partnership through support for the implementation plan.
8. To monitor the progress of the Africa-EU Partnership and provide appropriate recommendations.

**Session VI. Election of Steering Committee Members and Adoption of Consultation Report**

41. Both ECOSOCC and non-ECOSOCC members at the Consultation elected their representatives on the Steering Committee. Mr. Michael Sudarkasa of the African Business Group (ABG) spoke on behalf of his non-ECOSOCC colleagues. He thanked the AU for successfully convening the Consultation and allowing non-ECOSOCC CSOs to elect their own representatives on the Steering Committee. He explained that he and his colleagues had democratically elected their six representatives to the steering committee as follows:

- i) Mr. Michael Sudarkasa, African Business Group, South Africa
- ii) Ms. Yazini April, Africa Institute of South Africa
- iii) Ms. Chantal Uwimana, Independent Researcher and member of the former Steering Committee, Dakar Senegal
- iv) Mr. Yohannes Mezgebu, Youth Corps, Ethiopia

v) Mr. Ayokunle Fagbemi, CePSERD, Abuja, Nigeria

vi) Mr. Kofi Awity, ARIANE, Bamako, Mali.

42. The report of the meeting and the names of those elected to serve on the Steering Committee were read out by Mr Ismael Noo and unanimously adopted by all present.

## Closing

43. Ms. Suaad of the Tunisian Mothers Association (TMA) moved the votes of thanks on behalf civil society organizations present at the meeting. She expressed the appreciation of all present to the organizers and in particular to Dr. Jinmi Adisa for his continuous support of the role African civil society in the activities of the African Union.

44. In his closing remarks, Dr. Jinmi Adisa expressed satisfaction with the rich and fruitful meeting and thanked all those who assisted in convening it. He thanked the participants for their active participation in the process that led to the outcomes that would enable both the AU and African CSOs further work together on the important issue of Africa-Europe Partnership. He expressed his appreciation to the members of AU Office in Nairobi for their assistance towards the successful hosting of the meeting. He also expressed thanks to his colleagues from AUC, Mr. Boubacar Koma of the Economic Affairs Department and Mr. Salah Hammad of the Political Affairs Department for their contributions.

45. He commended the manner in which the Steering Committee members were chosen especially the non-ECOSOCC members and expressed the hope that they would be able to live up to the tasks ahead of them and also work closely with ECOSOCC members of the Steering Committee to achieve the goal for which the Committee was set up. He reminded the Committee that the Africa-Europe Partnership has now entered the implementation stage where serious follow-up is needed on all the Agreements.

46. Finally, he wished all participants safe trips back to their different destinations.