The New African Initiative and the African Union

A Preliminary Assessment and Documentation

Henning Melber
During the year 2000 an initiative among the African states to transform the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU) gained momentum. It resulted in the ratification of the Constitutive Act and its adoption at the 36th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in July 2001 in Lusaka. Parallel to this process of reorganisation towards closer inter-state collaboration on the African continent in the spirit of Pan Africanism emerged the systematic effort to redefine developmental priorities and to claim a new common position of African states in the globalised world. The “African Renaissance” initiative of South Africa’s President Thabo Mbeki resulted in a “Millenium Africa Recovery Programme”, which was finally revised and presented as the “New Africa Initiative” (NAI). Adopted at the same OAU Summit in Lusaka in July 2001, the NAI serves as a blueprint for Africa’s development strategy at the beginning of the 21st century. It was presented to the G8 summit in Genoa, where the leaders of the world’s powerful countries decided on a follow up by appointing individual special advisers to explore support to the NAI and future collaboration on the basis of this document.

This paper offers a preliminary assessment of the New Africa Initiative within the context of the transformation of the OAU into the AU. It identifies and summarises essential new aspects advocated, critically examines the degree of realism and points at the possible limitations. The analysis also considers first reactions to the initiatives and reflects on the perspectives. The article is completed by a reproduction of the full texts of both, the New Africa Initiative and the Constitutive Act of the African Union as the presently most relevant documents illustrating the commitment of Africa’s policy makers to address the political and economic challenges.

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NAI and AU – A Preliminary Assessment

The following analysis and related observations concern recent efforts to strengthen Africa's profile and role in the international community by means of:

- a programmatic policy document aimed at defining a far-reaching common denominator for African states in their collective development aspirations, in the context of globalisation, by means of the New African initiative (NAI); and
- the transformation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU) as a new platform for closer inter-state collaboration on the continent.

The observations below and the conclusions drawn are necessarily tentative, given the continuously changing nature of the processes being described and assessed: final judgement would be premature. Instead, the aim is to acknowledge and critically reflect upon recent developments regarding the desire and political will within the continent to map out an agenda respecting the intended 21st century role of Africa in the world.

From the African Renaissance to the New African initiative

Current efforts to identify common aims and objectives among African countries by means of a policy document arise directly from the proactive role played by the South African President Thabo Mbeki. With the democratic transition in South Africa, the country has emerged during the second half of the 1990s as a relevant new political factor on the continent, either actively assuming or sometimes passively receiving a leadership role far beyond its borders. Largely through Thabo Mbeki's personal initiative, the catchword “African Renaissance” was coined and popularised during the late 1990s. This concept is to some extent rooted in different elements of the earlier philosophical discourses on Pan Africanism, Negritude, Ubuntu and Black Consciousness. While it has failed to materialise as a full-fledged and concise new paradigm, it has managed to rally policymakers, bureaucrats and intellectuals behind a not-so-new but still highly emotional and culturally, psychologically and politically relevant notion of African self-respect, dignity and pride based on previous achievements.

The African Renaissance project has in this important way contributed to the revitalisation of values considered and valued as both genuinely African and human (in the sense of being “civilised” as opposed to derogatory views of “primitiveness”). It failed (or maybe was never intended) to establish a political concept and instrumental strategy to be applied to policy matters. But it did manage to consolidate a philosophical foundation that dated back to the original attempts to achieve emancipation from the Eurocentric dominance of the industrialised and colonising West. In this sense, it provided a counter to the inferiority complex and dependency syndrome that had been internalised and is still so prevalent.

The translation of the African Renaissance into policy concepts and programmes has to some extent led to the gradual phasing out the term itself within mainly political public discourse. Its systematic introduction into the international arena can be dated to the briefing on the “Millennium Africa Renaissance Programme” (MAP) made by President Mbeki to the World Economic Forum Meeting in Davos on 28 January 2001. In his presentation, he described MAP as “a declaration of a firm commitment by African leaders to take ownership and responsibility for the sustainable economic development of the continent”.1 President Mbeki’s presentation was supported by President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria with the active assistance of presidents Ben Mkapa of Tanzania and Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal.

The MAP document had its origins in a process that began when the South African, Nigerian and Algerian presidents were mandated in 1999.

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by the Extraordinary OAU Summit in Sirte to engage Africa’s creditors for the total cancellation of Africa’s external debt. The presidents were tasked further (April 2000) by the South Summit in Havana to convey the concerns of the South to the G8 Summit in Okinawa (July 2000). The OAU Summit 2000 in Togo mandated the same presidents to prepare the draft Millennium African Recovery Programme.2

At the Conference of Ministers of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in Algiers (8–10 May 2001) the South African government presented the “Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme” (Pretoria, March 2001) as the updated and final version of the earlier joint efforts. On the same occasion, Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade presented an “Omega Plan for Africa”3 and the UNECA unveiled a “Compact for African Recovery”. It was decided that the documents should be merged and then tabled at the OAU Summit in July 2001 in Lusaka. The final Lusaka draft was adopted by the Heads of State at their Summit meeting as “A New African Initiative” (NAI).

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2 It is interesting to note that during these initial stages until mid-2001 there existed a certain degree of terminological confusion with regard to the use of Renaissance or Recovery, which seems to underline the particular impact of Thabo Mbeki’s modes of thought. For a comprehensive overview on the various stages of the process and the elements contributing to the formulation of MAP see the speech by the South African ambassador to Germany, Prof. Dr. Sibosiso Bengu, at the above cited event (ibid., pp. 5–8). It is noteworthy that this presentation was again made jointly with the diplomatic representative from Nigeria and was acknowledged by German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, who was present. In his speech, Fischer expressed appreciation for the MAP as a sign of “Africa’s desire to take its political and social fate into its own hands” (ibid., p. 14).

3 While the Omega Plan is largely a technocratic reduction of the challenges, the MAP is a comprehensive and multi-faceted attempt to bring the developmental challenges into an overall cultural, political and economic framework. The German junior minister in the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) provided a solid interpretation of both the MAP and the Omega Plan in an address delivered to an Africa seminar organised by the BMZ and the German Development Institute (GDI) in Bonn on 3 May 2001. See Uschi Eid, A Benchmark for German Policy on Africa. The Millennium African Renaissance Programme (MAP). In: Development and Cooperation, no. 5, September/October 2001, pp. 4–5.

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Essentials and Effects of the New African Initiative

The introduction of NAI, anchoring the Programme, emphasises the “common vision and a firm and shared conviction” by African leaders, “on the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalising world” (paragraph 1). It claims that “African peoples have begun to demonstrate their refusal to accept poor economic and political leadership” (paragraph 7). The lesson of the continent’s painful historical experience of impoverishment is that “Africans must not be wards of benevolent guardians; rather they must be the architects of their own sustained upliftment” (paragraph 27). This emphasis reflects the ownership claim previously articulated by Thabo Mbeki, a claim further defined in paragraph 47: “a new framework of interaction with the rest of the world … based on the agenda set by African peoples through their own initiatives and of their own volition, to shape their own destiny.”

To achieve these objectives, African leaders declare joint responsibility for the following catalogue of identified goals and tasks (ibid.):

- Strengthen mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution and ensure that they are used to restore and maintain peace;
- Promote and protect democracy and human rights by developing clear standards of accountability, transparency and participative governance;
- Restore and maintain macroeconomic stability by developing standards and targets for fiscal and monetary policies and appropriate institutional frameworks;
- Institute transparent legal and regulatory frameworks for financial markets and auditing of private companies and the public sector;
- Revitalise and extend the provision of education, technical training and health services (with priority to HIV/Aids, malaria and other communicable diseases);
- Promote the role of women in social and economic development;
- Build the capacity of the states in Africa to set and enforce the legal framework and maintain law and order;
- Promote the development of infrastructure, agriculture and its diversification.
The preconditions for development are threefold: 1) peace, security, democracy and good governance; 2) economic and corporate governance, with a focus on public finance management; and 3) regional cooperation and integration (paragraph 48). The long-term objectives single out poverty eradication and promotion of the role of women (paragraph 49). The goals list an annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate above 7 per cent for the next 15 years and fulfilment of the agreed International Development Goals (IDGs) (paragraph 50). While this sounds like an unrealistic shopping basket guided by “wishful thinking,” the NAI itself stresses “that unless something new and radical is done, Africa will not achieve the IDGs and the 7 per cent annual GDP growth rate” (paragraph 52). This does sound more down to earth, but the document fails to spell out clearly enough what it considers as the new and radical essentials in its approach.

Key themes specified in paragraph 53 are peace, security, democracy, good governance, human rights and sound economic management, which are seen as preconditions for sustainable development (53.1), as well as the need for regional cooperation and economic integration (53.2). Eight priority sectors include infrastructure, information and communication technology, health, education, culture, agriculture, diversification of production and exports and market access to industrialised countries. The Programme of Action defines as a provisional timeframe for the fulfilment of certain tasks the first six months after the institutionalisation of the leadership of the African Initiative. These tasks include detailed measures and costs required for a Peace and Security Initiative as well as the identification of recommendations “on appropriate diagnostic and assessment tools, in support of compliance with the shared goals of good governance” (paragraph 54.1). Considerable space is then devoted to the further specification of objectives and measures for the realisation of the targets within the priority sectors. The document concludes with a schedule for the first six months. It specifies an agenda for action, starting with a first meeting of the African Initiative Heads of State Implementation Committee in July 2001. A special session of the African Initiative in September 2001, followed by a summit of world leaders to deliberate on financing the African Initiative in Senegal in October 2001, are the final suggestions to broaden the campaign (paragraph 74).

The question remains, however, to what extent the African Initiative has the weight to convince the world outside Africa, in particular the industrialised OECD states, that their support for it is a necessary acknowledgement of the continent’s problems and a contribution to their solution. It is also questionable to what extent the political and economic weight of the African leaders (or lack thereof) can secure the intended responses and promote an international discourse on the NAI. The horrific terror attacks of 11 September have had a deep impact on international relations and policies, as the world’s more powerful states focus on other priorities.

Initial reactions from the industrialised countries suggested positive appreciation of the Initiative and the further “selling strategy” pursued by Thabo Mbeki and his MAP/NAI team at the G8 meeting. As a United States commentator remarked:

"It was inevitable that MAP would be well received by the G8 since it was spot on in terms of timing and political correctness. When you have rioters trashing Genoa in the name of kinder Third World treatment, no politician is going to say it is a bad idea ... Mbeki's characterisation of MAP as 'Afri-

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4 The IDGs are an ambitious catalogue of declared aims to be achieved by 2015, including reduction of extreme poverty by half, enrolment of all school-age children in primary schools, reduction of child and infant mortality by two-thirds, reduction of maternal mortality ratios by three-quarters, providing general access to reproductive health services, reversing the loss of environmental resources as well as eliminating gender disparities in school education by 2005.

5 Harsh criticism of this kind has already been expressed on the occasion of the launch of the MAP in Berlin (see footnotes 1 and 2) by a renowned German scholar, who lectures on African economic issues at the University of Leipzig. He made himself unpopular at this event by drastically criticising, among other things, the defined targets as totally unrealistic and non-achievable. See: Thesen von Prof. Robert Kappel, in: ‘A Millennium Africa Renaissance Program’, op. cit., pp. 44–49.

6 It is noteworthy that agriculture (53.9) contains at this stage no reference to the urgency of land (re)distribution, an especially critical challenge in countries in the Southern African region. Only the detailed Programme of Action identifies under objectives to “improve land tenure security under traditional and modern forms of tenure, and promote the necessary land reform” — a rather vague declaration of intent given the current urgency of the matter.

7 It is beyond the limits of this paper to list the essentials here. Suffice it to say that there is a wide range of proposals based on established grounds, and specifying objectives and actions.

8 It could be speculated, though, that Africa could benefit indirectly from this dramatic episode if it is able to exploit anti-terrorist sentiments and offer its support to efforts to minimise the future scope of such aggression.
cans taking their destiny in their own hands’ is perfectly pitched and he must never change his message. Translating that to Western voters means keeping the begging bowl out of sight.9

It might be too early to judge if and to what extent this perception has been damaged by the controversial and ideologically polarised exchanges at the World Conference Against Racism in Durban and the debate there on the issue of reparations.10

More recent events that are attracting the attention of the powerful stakeholders in world politics and the global economy have made it more difficult to secure additional attention for the challenges facing the already marginalised African continent.

Moreover, another new factor has emerged to confront the NAI. The drafting process came to an end with the adoption of the text as an official policy document by the African Heads of States at the OAU Summit in Lusaka from 9–11 July 2001. The simultaneous finalisation of the steps to transform the OAU into an AU created an additional dimension that will have a future impact on the NAI. It is one thing for a policy document to try to enter new territory and cross borders in a way not reflected by the institutional framework of the existing continental body (as parts of the NAI clearly envisage). It is a somewhat different matter if that governing body is simultaneously transformed and the document has to operate within newly defined organisational parameters and related policy changes. What is then required is clearly visible political will within such a restructured organisation. An assessment of the potential of the NAI therefore requires an exploration of the potential implications of the current transformation of the OAU into an AU.

The African Union: Scope and Perspectives

The Constitutive Act of the African Union had been adopted by the 36th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government on 11 July 2000 in Lome. It required ratification by two-thirds of the 53 members of the OAU. By the beginning of the Lusaka Summit in July 2001, a total of 50 member states had ratified the document and thereby created the AU.

Despite this unique expression of political will, enthusiasm was rather subdued, given the enormous tasks ahead. As a Cameroonian journalist commented: “As good and enticing as the African Union project may look on paper, even the most optimistic of Pan Africanists cannot help but be scared by the sheer magnitude of the hurdles to be overcome to make this a reality.”11

United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan himself offered a word of caution in his speech to the Summit. “This historic effort”, he said, “will require leadership, courage and a willingness to depart from the ways of the past”.12 The visibly proactive approach to the AU initiative by Libya’s Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi, widely regarded as its greatest champion, was also considered more a source of concern than of confidence building.

The ambitious plans of the AU try to realise the ideas advocated as early as the 1960s by Pan Africanists such as the late Kwame Nkrumah. They include the establishment of an African Parliament, a Court of Justice and an Economic, Social and Cultural Council – all institutions that, if they are taken seriously, would contribute to a stronger continental authority at the expenses of the unabated principles of national sovereignty. It is premature to conclude now to what extent such a paradigm shift will materialise. Given the track record of post-colonial policies on the continent, however, and the primacy of the autonomy of national governments to exercise their

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9 Tim Wood, Mbeki’s MAP must reach Western voters, Mail&Guardian, July 27 to August 2, 2001.
10 Needless to say, the position articulated prior to the Conference by Senegal’s President Wade met with far more approval from the Western countries than any other view. He explained his position to the Durban Conference in early August in an almost philosophical way consistent with the NAI concept of self-reliance: “I am opposed to demanding financial recompense. Slavery, the subjugation of a people for three centuries, cannot be evaluated in billions of dollars … We still suffer the effects of slavery and colonialism, and that cannot be evaluated in monetary terms. I find that not only absurd, but insulting.” (Quoted from a Reuters news agency report published in the Windhoek daily newspaper The Namibian, 13 August 2001.)
11 Emmanuel Wongibe, Africa at the Crossroads. In: Development and Cooperation, no. 5, September/October 2001, p. 28. He also adds, that “with an informally projected budget of US$ 100 million – three times the current OAU budget, many people are wondering how the funds will be raised. Unpaid dues by member states were a perennial problem of the OAU, and there is no sign that things will change with the Union.” (Ibid., p. 29)
12 Quoted from the article by Norimitsu Onishi, African Bloc Hoping to Do Better as the ‘African Union’, in The New York Times, 12 July, 2001. The article expressed the view that “skeptics across Africa point out that the new organization will face the same fundamental problems that hobbled its predecessor.”
rule, doubts remain about the political consensus and will to implement such far-reaching interventions into the internal affairs of member states. But such consensus and will is also relevant to the approach advocated in the NAI, where collective responsibility is emphasised as a necessary aspect of meeting development challenges.

Indications of the degree of commitment to a new NAI-type approach can be obtained by comparing the Preliminary Draft Treaty Establishing the African Union with the adopted Constitutive Act of the African Union (see Appendix II). The result of this comparison is rather revealing and sobering. The Objectives stated in Article 3 still include the promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent, but the obligation “to put an end to the scourge of conflicts and their devastating consequences” has been deleted. The Principles under Article 4 omit explicit references to “the respect of individual and collective freedoms, and the holding of free and fair elections,” “tolerance, mutual understanding and respect for the rights of persons belonging to minority groups,” as well as to “accountability and transparency in governance and combating of corruption.”

One might conclude that it is more important to look into the deletions from the original draft than into what survived scrutiny before being adopted. The result would be less encouraging in terms of degree of prevailing political will with regard to the assumption and execution of collective responsibility. The sense remains that the political representatives of the OAU member states find it difficult to pay even lip service to certain issues. Loopholes, instead of being closed, seem in some cases to have been left open intentionally. The deletion of explicit reference to corruption from the final AU Constitution is in sharp contrast to the NAI text demanding “effective measures to combat corruption and embezzlement” (paragraph 54.1). In article 4(g), the AU on the one hand confirms it adherence to the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states. On the other hand, article 4(h) concedes “the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly – in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity”. This is a far cry from the possible enhancement of the commitment to “good governance” postulated by the NAI and can hardly be viewed as a suitable enforcement strategy. It was therefore no surprise to see once again the reluctance of the OAU Summit to deal concretely with the challenges they are presently posed by a political regime such as the ZANU/PF government in Zimbabwe, to mention just one prominent example.

Seen in this light, the AU Constitution could well turn out to be an obstacle in the propagation and implementation of the NAI, which among other things affords great relevance to honouring the rule of law. Instead of strengthening the policy paper’s legitimacy and its credibility as an indicator of the assumption of greater responsibility, the AU might be the source of new discrepancies between the organ being established and the intended goals of the NAI development framework. Consequently, the relevance of this new blueprint could be more limited if its operational sphere is restricted and confined by the new demarcated structures of the AU. In other words, concerns about the limited scope of the AU to some extent give rise to the reservations about the meaningfulness of the NAI.

NAI and AU: Old Wine in New Bottles?

As stated above, it is unfair and premature to draw final conclusions at this early stage of the process of revising the paradigms and parameters of African policy and development strategy. There seem to be as many sceptical as supportive commentators on the issues at stake. Policymakers tend to be more prepared to offer the benefit of the doubt. The German Junior Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development welcomed the NAI and considered it as “ground-breaking for African leaders to propose that undemocratic governments and despots be isolated by means of the OAU and joint programmes such as the MAP.” It appeared to her that “the Millennium Programme could develop into a benchmark for Germany’s policy on Africa”. But she also pointed out that “this depends very much on the response to this ambitious and optimistic programme in Africa itself” and warned that “the programme also must not be watered down … in the sense that self-responsibility for good governance gets diluted and countries see

13 Both documents are reproduced in the Newsletter of the African Association of Political Science, vol. 6, no. 1, January to April 2001 and allow for such a comparison.
the solution for their problems mainly in external assistance.”

The shift of emphasis in the AU from mainly national towards increased collective continental responsibility seems to support the approach advocated by the NAI. The NAI, in its “A New Global Partnership” chapter, also identifies “the expansion of democratic frontiers and the deepening of the culture of human rights” (paragraph 64) as one of its foundations. But doubts sometimes remain about the degree of genuine commitment when African leaders still adopt rather undemocratic ways and means to maintain power and control.

A voice from the South has pointed out in a weekly column that

the Lusaka summit offered nothing new in terms of its organisation, procedure and inputs. Here was no contribution from civil society, for example, and the summit only served to perpetuate the image of a ‘leaders’ club.’ What conclusion can one come to other than that the African Union is just the old OAU wearing a new hat (old wine in a new bottle)? Meaningful change is underpinned by a philosophical shift. And change is effected through concrete programmes and actions. The resulting situation then becomes a reflection of the new philosophy. For the OAU or AU (or whatever will follow) talk of change will remain just talk unless there is a change of the leadership’s philosophy of politics and governance.”

The NAI might have some of the conceptual potential to facilitate the beginning of such a philosophical change, despite a series of unrealistic – even naïve – assumptions and goals. But the extent to which the NAI will become the relevant framework for African perspectives and emancipation depends on the political will first and foremost within the ranks of the AU. To that extent, one might indeed speculate what the reasons where to delete from the Preamble of the Draft Treaty of the AU a passage in which the signing Heads of State would have emphasised “the imperative need and high sense of urgency to rekindle the aspirations of our peoples for stronger unity, solidarity and cohesion in a larger community of peoples transcending cultural, ideological, ethnic, religious and national differences”. The NAI may be a relevant contribution to moving closer towards such a goal, even if it will almost certainly fail to achieve all the ambitious defined tasks.

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14 Uschi Eid, op. cit., pp. 4 and 5.
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I. Introduction

1. This new African initiative is a pledge by African leaders, based on a common vision and a firm and shared conviction, that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development, and at the same time to participate actively in the world economy and body politic.

The Programme is anchored on the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalising world.

2. The poverty and backwardness of Africa stand in stark contrast to the prosperity of the developed world. The continued marginalisation of Africa from the globalisation process and the social exclusion of the vast majority of its peoples constitute a serious threat to global stability.

3. Since the 1970s, and their accession to the institutions of the international community, the credit and aid binomial has underlined the logic of African development. Credit has led to the debt deadlock, which, from instalments to rescheduling, still exists and hinders the growth of African countries. The limits of this option have been reached. Concerning the other element of the binomial – aid – we can also note the reduction of private aid and the upper limit of public aid, which is contrary to the 1970s objectives.

4. In Africa, 340 million people, or half the population, live on less than US $1 per day. The mortality rate of children under 5 years of age is 140 per 1000, and life expectancy at birth is only 54 years. Only 58 per cent of the population have access to safe water. The rate of illiteracy for people over 15 is 41 per cent. There are only 18 mainline telephones per 1000 people in Africa, compared with 146 for the world as a whole and 567 for high-income countries.

5. The initiative calls for the reversal of this abnormal situation by changing the relationship that underpins it. Africans are appealing neither for the further encroachment of dependency through aid, nor for marginal concessions.

6. We are convinced that an historic opportunity presents itself to end the scourge of underdevelopment that afflicts Africa. The resources, including capital, technology and human skills, that are required to launch a global war on poverty and underdevelopment exist in abundance, and are within our grasp. What is required to mobilise these resources and to use them properly, is bold and imaginative leadership that is genuinely committed to a sustained effort of human upliftment and poverty eradication, as well as a new global partnership based on shared responsibility and mutual interest.

7. Across the continent, Africans declare that we will no longer allow ourselves to be conditioned by circumstance. We will determine our own destiny and call on the rest of the world to complement our efforts. There are already signs of progress and hope. Democratic regimes that are committed to the protection of human rights, people-centred development and market-oriented economies are on the increase. African peoples have begun to demonstrate their refusal to accept poor economic and political leadership. These developments are, however, uneven and inadequate and need to be further expedited.

8. The African initiative is about consolidating and accelerating these gains. It is a call for a new relationship of partnership between Africa and the international community, especially the highly industrialised countries, to overcome the development chasm that has widened over centuries of unequal relations.

II. Africa in today’s world: Between poverty and prosperity

9. Africa’s place in the global community is defined by the fact that the continent is an indispensable resource base that has served all humanity for so many centuries.

10. These resources can be broken down into the following components:

10.1 The rich complex of mineral, oil and gas deposits, its flora and fauna, and its wide unspoiled natural habitat, which provide the basis for mining, agriculture, tourism and industrial development (Component I);

10.2 The ecological lung provided by the continent’s rain forests, and the minimal presence of emissions and effluents that are harmful to the environment – a global public good that benefits all humankind (Component II);

10.3 The palaeontological and archaeological sites containing evidence of the evolution of the earth, life and the human species. The natural habitats containing a wide variety of flora and fauna, unique animal species and the open uninhabited spaces that are a feature of the continent (Component III);

10.4 The richness of Africa’s culture and its contribution to the variety of the cultures of the global community (Component IV).

11. The first of these, Component I, is the one with which the world is most familiar. The second, Component II, has only come to the fore recently, as humanity came to understand the critical importance of the issue of the environment. The third, Component III, is also now coming into its own, emerging as a matter of concern not only to a narrow field of science or of interest only to museums and their curators. The fourth of these, Component IV, represents the creativity of African people, which in many important ways remains underexploited and underdeveloped.

12. Africa has a very important role to play with regard to the critical issue of the protection of the environment. African resources include rain forests, the virtually carbon dioxide-free atmosphere above the continent and the minimal presence of toxic effluents in the rivers and soils that interact with the Atlantic and Indian Oceans and the Mediterranean and Red Seas. The African initiative will contain a strategy for...
nurturing these resources and using them for the development of and trade by the African peoples, while preserving them for all humanity.

13. It is obvious that, unless the communities in the vicinity of the tropical forests are given alternative means of earning a living, they will cooperate in the destruction of the forests. As the preservation of these environmental assets is in the interests of humanity, it is imperative that Africa be placed on a development path that does not put them in danger.

14. Modern science recognises Africa as the cradle of humankind. As part of the process of reconstructing the identity and self-confidence of the peoples of Africa, it is necessary that this contribution to human existence be understood and valued by Africans themselves. Africa’s status as the birthplace of humanity should be cherished by the whole world as the origin of all its peoples. Accordingly, the African initiative must preserve this common heritage and use it to build a universal understanding of the historic need to end the underdevelopment and marginalisation of the continent.

15. Africa also has a major role to play in maintaining the strong link between human beings and the natural world. Technological developments tend to emphasise the role of human beings as a factor of production, competing for their place in the production process with their contemporary or future tools. The open uninhabited spaces, the flora and fauna, and the diverse animal species that are unique to Africa offer a rare experience for humanity to maintain its link with nature. Africa is uniquely placed to offer this asset to humanity.

16. Africa has already made a significant contribution to world culture through literature, music, visual arts and other cultural forms, but her real potential remains untapped because of her limited integration into the global economy. The African initiative will enable Africa to increase her contribution to science, culture and technology.

17. In this new millennium, when humanity is searching for a new way to build a better world, it is critical that we bring to bear the combination of these attributes and the forces of human will to place the continent on a pedestal of equal partnership in advancing human civilisation.

The historical impoverishment of a continent

18. The impoverishment of the African continent was accentuated primarily by the legacy of colonialism, the Cold War, the workings of the international economic system and the inadequacies of and shortcomings in the policies pursued by many countries in the post-independence era.

19. For centuries, Africa has been integrated into the world economy mainly as a supplier of cheap labour and raw materials. Of necessity, this has meant the draining of Africa’s resources rather than their use for the continent’s development. The drive in that period to use the minerals and raw materials to develop manufacturing industries and a highly skilled human base to sustain growth and development was lost. Thus, Africa remains the poorest continent despite being one of the most richly endowed regions of the world.

20. In other countries and on other continents, the direct opposite happened. There was an infusion of wealth in the form of investments, which created larger volumes of wealth through the export of value-added products.

It is time that African resources are harnessed to expand wealth creation on the continent for the well-being of her peoples.

21. Colonialism subverted hitherto traditional structures, institutions and values or made them subservient to the economic and political needs of the imperial powers. It also retarded the development of an entrepreneurial class, as well as a middle class with skills and managerial capacity.

22. At independence, virtually all the new states were characterised by a shortage of skilled professionals and a weak capitalist class, resulting in a weakening of the accumulation process. Post-colonial Africa inherited weak states and dysfunctional economies that were further aggravated by poor leadership, corruption and bad governance in many countries. These two factors, together with the divisions caused by the Cold War, hampered the spread of accountable governments across the continent.

23. Many African governments did not empower their peoples to embark on development initiatives to realise their creative potential. Today, the weak state remains a major constraint to sustainable development in a number of countries. Indeed, one of Africa’s major challenges is to strengthen the capacity to govern and to develop long-term policies. At the same time, there is also the urgent need to implement far-reaching reforms and programmes in many African states.

24. The structural adjustment programmes provided only a partial solution. They promoted reforms that tended to remove serious price distortions, but gave inadequate attention to the provision of social services. As a consequence, only a few countries managed to achieve sustainable higher growth under these programmes.

25. Indeed, Africa’s experience shows that the rate of accumulation in the post-colonial period has not been sufficient to rebuild societies in the wake of colonial underdevelopment, or to sustain improvement in the standard of living. This has had further corrosive effects on the political process and has increased patronage and corruption.

26. The net effect of these processes has been the entrenchment of a vicious cycle, in which economic decline, reduced capacity and poor governance reinforce each other, thus confirming Africa’s peripheral and diminishing role in the world economy. Over the centuries, Africa has become defined as, of necessity, the marginalised continent.

27. The African initiative seeks to build on and celebrate the achievements of the past, as well as reflect
on the lessons learned through painful experience, so as to establish a partnership that is both credible and capable of implementation. In doing so, the injunction is for the peoples and governments of Africa to gain the conviction that development is a process of empowerment and self-reliance. Accordingly, Africans must not be wards of benevolent guardians; rather they must be the architects of their own sustained upliftment.

**Africa and the global revolution**

28. The world has entered the new millennium in the midst of an economic revolution. This revolution could provide both the context and the means for Africa’s rejuvenation. While globalisation has increased the cost of Africa’s ability to compete, we hold that the advantages of an effectively managed integration present the best prospects for future economic prosperity and poverty reduction.

29. The current economic revolution has, in part, been made possible by advances in information and communications technology (ICT), which have reduced the cost and increased the speed of communications across the globe, abolishing pre-existing barriers of time and space, and in consequence affecting all areas of social and economic life. It has made possible the integration of national systems of production and finance, and is reflected in incredible growth in the scale of cross-border flows of goods, services and capital.

30. The integration of national systems of production has made it possible to “slice up the value chain” in many manufacturing and service-sector production processes. At the same time, the greater mobility of finance means that borrowers, whether governments or private entities, must compete with each other for capital in global rather than national markets. Both these processes have increased the costs to those countries that are unable to compete effectively. To a large extent, these costs have been borne disproportionately by Africa.

31. While no corner of the world has escaped the effects of globalisation, the contributions of the various regions and nations have differed markedly. The locomotive for these major advances is the highly industrialised nations. Outside this domain, only a few countries in the developing world play a substantial role in the global economy. Many developing countries, especially in Africa, contribute passively, and mainly on the basis of their environmental and resource endowments.

32. It is in the distribution of benefits that the global imbalance is most glaring. On the one hand, opportunities have increased to expand wealth, acquire knowledge and skills, and improve access to goods and services — in brief, to improve the quality of life. In some parts of the world, the pursuit of greater openness to the global economy has created opportunities for lifting millions of people out of poverty. On the other hand, greater integration has also led to the further marginalisation of those countries that are unable to compete effectively.

In the absence of fair and just global rules, globalisation has increased the ability of the strong to advance their interests to the detriment of the weak, especially in the areas of trade, finance and technology. It has limited the space for developing countries to control their own development. The conditions of those marginalised in this process have worsened in real terms. A fissure between inclusion and exclusion has emerged within and among nations.

34. In part, Africa’s inability to harness the process of globalisation is a result of structural impediments to growth and development in the form of resource outflows and unfavourable terms of trade. At the same time, we recognise that failures of political and economic leadership in many African countries impede the coherent mobilisation of resources into productive areas of activity in order to attract and facilitate domestic and foreign investment.

35. The low level of economic activity means that the instruments necessary for the real injection of private funds and risk-taking are not available, and the result is a further decline. In this self-perpetuating cycle, Africa’s capacity to respond to globalisation is weakened, leading to further marginalisation. The increasing polarisation of wealth and poverty is one of a number of processes that have accompanied globalisation, and which threaten its sustainability.

36. The closing years of the last century saw a major financial collapse in much of the developing world, which not only threatened the stability of the global financial system, but also the global economy as a whole. One of the immediate effects of the financial crisis was the exacerbation of existing levels of deep, structural poverty in which about half of the world’s population lives on less than US $2 per day, and a fifth on less than US $1 per day.

37. There also exist slower dynamics that pose longer-term risks. These include the rapid increase in the numbers of the socially excluded in different zones of the globe, contributing to political instability, civil war and military conflict on the one hand, and a new pattern of mass migration on the other. The expansion of industrial production and the growth in poverty contribute to environmental degradation of our oceans, atmosphere and natural vegetation. If not addressed, these will set in motion processes that will increasingly slip beyond the control of governments, both in developed and developing countries.

38. The means to reverse this gloomy scenario are not yet beyond our reach. Improvements in the living standards of the marginalised offer massive potential for growth in the entire international economy, through the creation of new markets and by harnessing increased economic capacity. This will bring with it greater stability on a global scale, accompanied by the social well-being and cultural exuberance that thrive in conditions of certainty.

39. The imperative of development, therefore, not only poses a challenge to moral conscience; it is in fact fundamental to the sustainability of the globalisation process. We readily admit that globalisation is
a product of scientific and technological advances, many of which have been market-driven. Yet, governments – particularly those in the developed world – have, in partnership with the private sector, played an important role in shaping its form, content and course.

40. The case for the role of national authorities and private institutions in guiding the globalisation agenda along a sustainable path and, therefore, one in which its benefits are more equally spread, remains strong. Experience shows that, despite the unparalleled opportunities that globalisation has offered to some previously poor countries, there is nothing inherent in the process that automatically reduces poverty and inequality.

41. What is needed is a commitment on the part of governments, the private sector and other institutions of civil society, to the genuine integration of all nations into the global economy and body politic. This requires the recognition of global interdependence in respect of production and demand, the environmental base that sustains the planet, cross-border migration, a global financial architecture that rewards good socio-economic management, and global governance that recognises partnership among all peoples. We hold that it is within the capacity of the international community to create fair and just conditions in which Africa can participate effectively in the global economy and body politic.

III. The New Political will of African Leaders

42. The African initiative recognises that there have been attempts in the past to set out continent-wide development programmes. For a variety of reasons, both internal and external, including questionable leadership and ownership by Africans themselves, these have been less than successful. However, there is today a new set of circumstances, which lend themselves to integrated practical implementation.

43. The new phase of globalisation coincided with the reshaping of international relations in the aftermath of the Cold War. This is associated with the emergence of new concepts of security and self-interest, which encompass the right to development and the eradication of poverty. Democracy and state legitimacy have been redefined to include accountable government, a culture of human rights and popular participation as central elements.

44. Significantly, the numbers of democratically elected leaders are on the increase. Through their actions, they have declared that the hopes of Africa’s peoples for a better life can no longer rest on the magnanimity of others.

45. Across the continent, democracy is spreading, backed by the African Union (AU), which has shown a new resolve to deal with conflicts and censure deviation from the norm. These efforts are reinforced by voices in civil society, including associations of women, youth and the independent media.

In addition, African governments are much more resolute about regional and continental goals of economic cooperation and integration. This serves both to consolidate the economic turnaround and to reinforce the advantages of mutual interdependence.

46. The changed conditions in Africa have already been recognised by governments across the world. The United Nations Millennium Declaration, adopted in September 2000, confirms the global community’s readiness to support Africa’s efforts to address the continent’s underdevelopment and marginalisation. The Declaration emphasises support for the prevention of conflict and the establishment of conditions of stability and democracy on the continent, as well as for the key challenges of eradicating poverty and disease. The Declaration further points to the global community’s commitment to enhance resource flows to Africa, by improving aid, trade and debt relationships between Africa and the rest of the world, and by increasing private capital flows to the continent. It is now important to convert these commitments into reality.

47. The African initiative centres around African ownership and management. Through this programme, African leaders are setting an agenda for the renewal of the continent. The agenda is based on national and regional priorities and development plans that must be prepared through participative processes involving the people. We believe that while our African leaders derive their mandates from these plans, it is their role to articulate them as well as lead the processes of implementation on behalf of the people.

The programme is a new framework of interaction with the rest of the world, including the industrialised countries and multilateral organisations. It is based on the agenda set by African peoples through their own initiatives and of their own volition, to shape their own destiny.

To achieve these objectives, African leaders will take joint responsibility for the following:

- To strengthen mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution at the regional and continental levels, and to ensure that these mechanisms are used to restore and maintain peace;
- To promote and protect democracy and human rights in their respective countries and regions, by developing clear standards of accountability, transparency and participative governance at the national and subnational levels;
- To restore and maintain macroeconomic stability, especially by developing appropriate standards and targets for fiscal and monetary policies, and introducing appropriate institutional frameworks to achieve these standards;
- To institute transparent legal and regulatory frameworks for financial markets and auditing of private companies and the public sector;
- To revitalise and extend the provision of education, technical training and health services, with high
priority given to tackling HIV/AIDS, malaria and other communicable diseases;
• To promote the role of women in social and economic development by reinforcing their capacity in the domains of education and training; by the development of revenue-generating activities through facilitating access to credit; and by assuring their participation in the political and economic life of African countries;
• To build the capacity of the states in Africa to set and enforce the legal framework, as well as maintain law and order;
• To promote the development of infrastructure, agriculture and its diversification into agro-industries and manufacturing to serve both domestic and export markets.

IV. The African Strategy for achieving Sustainable Development in the 21st Century

48. The strategy embodies the following structure:

A. Preconditions for development:
1. Peace, security, democracy and political governance
2. Economic and corporate governance, with a focus on public finance management
3. Regional cooperation and integration

B. Priority sectors:
• Infrastructure
• Information and communications technology
• Human development, with a focus on health and education and skills development
• Agriculture
• Promoting diversification of production and exports, with a focus on market access for African exports to industrialised countries

C. Mobilising resources:
1. Increasing savings and capital inflows via further debt relief, increased ODA flows and private capital, as well as better management of public revenue and expenditure

49. Long-term Objectives
• To eradicate poverty in Africa and to place African countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development and thus halt the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process;
• To promote the role of women in all activities.

50. Goals
• To achieve and sustain an average gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of above 7 per cent per annum for the next 15 years;
• To ensure that the continent achieves the agreed International Development Goals (IDGs), which are:
  • To reduce the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by half between 1990 and 2015;
  • To enrol all children of school age in primary schools by 2015;
• To make progress towards gender equality and empowering women by eliminating gender disparities in the enrolment in primary and secondary education by 2005;
• To reduce infant and child mortality ratios by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015;
• To reduce maternal mortality ratios by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015;
• To provide access for all who need reproductive health services by 2015;
• To implement national strategies for sustainable development by 2005, so as to reverse the loss of environmental resources by 2015.

51. The strategy has the following expected outcomes:
• Economic growth and development and increased employment;
• Reduction in poverty and inequality;
• Diversification of productive activities, enhanced international competitiveness and increased exports;
• Increased African integration.

52. Realising that unless something new and radical is done, Africa will not achieve the IDGs and the 7 per cent annual GDP growth rate, the African Heads of State propose the programme described below. The programme is anchored on key themes and is supported by a detailed programme of action.

53. Key themes

A. Preconditions for Development

53.1 Promotion of peace, democracy, human rights and sound economic management

African leaders have learnt from their own experiences that peace, security, democracy, good governance, human rights and sound economic management are conditions for sustainable development. They are making a pledge to work, both individually and collectively, to promote these principles in their countries, regions and the continent.

Strengthening of the capacity of the state is a critical aspect of creating conditions for development. The state has a major role to play in promoting economic growth and development and in the implementation of poverty reduction programmes. However, the reality is that many governments lack the capacity to fulfil this role. As a consequence, many countries lack the necessary policy frameworks and regulatory structures that provide the rules of the game for the private sector. They also lack the capacity to implement programmes even when funding is available.

It is for this reason that targeted capacity building should be given a high priority. Programmes in every area must be preceded by an assessment of capacity, followed by the provision of appropriate support as needed.

53.2 Regional cooperation and economic integration

Most African countries are small, both in terms of population and per capita incomes. As a consequence of limited markets, they do not offer attractive returns
to potential investors, while progress in diversifying production and exports is retarded. This limits investment in essential infrastructure that depends on economies of scale for viability.

These economic conditions show the need for African countries to pool their resources and enhance regional cooperation and economic integration on the continent, in order to improve international competitiveness. The five regional economic groupings of the continent must be strengthened: West Africa, North Africa, Central Africa, East Africa and Southern Africa.

The African initiative focuses on the provision of essential regional public goods (such as transport, energy, water, ICT, disease eradication, environmental preservation, and provision of regional research capacity), as well as the promotion of intra-African trade and investments.

The focus will be on rationalising the institutional framework for economic integration, by identifying common projects compatible with integrated country and regional development programmes, and on the harmonisation of economic and investment policies and practices. There needs to be coordination of national sector policies and effective monitoring of regional decisions.

The African initiative will give priority to the building of capacity to enhance the effectiveness of existing regional structures and the rationalisation of existing regional organisations. The African Development Bank must play a leading role in financing regional studies, programmes and projects.

The special circumstances of Africa’s small island countries should be given recognition in integration efforts.

B. Priority Sectors

53.3 Bridging the gaps in infrastructure

Infrastructure is one of the major parameters of economic growth, and solutions should be found to permit Africa to rise to the level of developed countries in terms of the accumulation of material capital and human capital.

If Africa had the same basic infrastructure as developed countries, it would be in a more favourable position to focus on production and improving productivity for international competition. The structural gap in infrastructure constitutes a very serious handicap to economic growth and poverty reduction. Improved infrastructure, including the cost and reliability of services, would benefit both Africa and the international community, which would be able to obtain African goods and services more cheaply.

In many African countries, the colonisers built the infrastructure needed for exportation of African raw materials and importation into Africa of their industrial goods. If infrastructure is to improve in Africa, private foreign finance is essential to complement the two traditional funding methods, namely credit and aid.

53.4 Information and Communications Technology

In Africa, poor ICT infrastructure, combined with weak policy and regulatory frameworks and limited human resources, has resulted in inadequate access to affordable telephones, broadcasting, computers and the Internet. African teledensity remains below one line per 100 people. Service costs are also high: the connection cost in Africa averages 20 per cent of GDP per capita, compared with the world average of 9 per cent, and 1 per cent for high-income countries. Africa has been unable to capitalise on ICT as a tool in enhancing livelihoods and creating new business opportunities, and cross-border linkages within the continent and with global markets have been constrained. Though many countries in Africa have started ICT policy reforms, service penetration, quality or tariffs have not yet improved.

The strategic priority is improved access for households and firms, with a short-term objective of doubling teledensity to two lines per 100 people by 2005, with an adequate level of access. Affordability must also be addressed: lower cost and improved service reliability for firms will lower the costs of production and transactions throughout the economy, and enhance growth. Doubling teledensity by 2005 will require an estimated investment in excess of US $8 billion in core infrastructure alone. Africa’s telecommunications operators (public and private) do not have sufficient resources.

Attracting private sector investors requires a comprehensive, integrated and well-coordinated strategy involving policy and regulatory reform, the creation of a human resource base for the sector, including engineering and software skills, a focus on applications and content that add value to networks, and the development of effective financing mechanisms, including public-private partnerships (PPPs).

53.5 Human development: health and education

Human development is about expanding people’s choices and enabling them to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives. The programme endorses the multi-pronged poverty reduction programmes that are championed by a number of multilateral development agencies and donors. It calls for increased investment by both African governments and development partners in education, health, the provision of clean water and energy, and the expansion of income-earning opportunities for the poor.

53.6 Health

Africa is the realm of major endemic diseases. Bacteria and parasites carried by insects, the movement of people and other carriers thrive, favoured as they are by weak environment policy and mediocre living conditions. One of the major impediments facing African development efforts is the widespread incidence of communicable diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. Unless these epidemics are slowed down and eventually stopped, real gains in human development will remain an impossibility.

In the health sector, Africa compares very poorly with the rest of the international community. In 1997, child and juvenile death rates were 105 and 169 per
1000, as against 6 and 7 per 1000 respectively in developed countries. Life expectancy is 48.9 years, as against 77.7 years in developed countries. Only 16 doctors are available per 100 000 inhabitants against 253 in industrialised countries. Poverty, reflected in very low per capita incomes, is one of the major factors limiting the populations’ capacity to address their health problems.

Nutrition is also an input into health status. The average daily intake of calories varies from 2384 in low-income countries to 2846 in middle-income countries to 3390 in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries.

Health (defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a state of complete physical and mental well-being) contributes to the increase of productivity and consequently to economic growth. The most obvious effects of health improvement on the working population are the reduction in lost working days due to sick leave, the increase of productivity, and the chance to get better paid jobs. Eventually, improvement in health and nutrition directly contributes to higher well-being as the spread of diseases is controlled, child death rates are reduced, life expectancy is lengthened, and students’ learning capacity is strengthened. The link to the fight against poverty is clearly established.

53.7 Education

The key problems in education in Africa are the poor facilities and inadequate systems under which the vast majority of Africans receive their training. Africans who have had the opportunity of obtaining training elsewhere in the world have demonstrated their ability to compete successfully.

The plan supports the immediate strengthening of the university system across Africa, including the creation of specialised universities where needed, building on available African teaching staff. The need to enhance the presence of institutes of technology is especially emphasised.

The second significant component of education is the building of primary schools in all villages, and secondary schools in all regions.

53.8 Culture

Culture is an integral part of development efforts on the continent. Consequently, it is essential to protect and effectively utilise indigenous knowledge that represents a major dimension of the continent’s culture, and to use this knowledge in a shared manner for the benefit of humankind. The African initiative will give special attention to the protection and nurturing of indigenous knowledge, which refers to tradition-based literacy, artistic and scientific works, performances, inventions, scientific discoveries, designs, marks, names and symbols, undisclosed information and all other tradition-based innovations and creations resulting from intellectual activity in the industrial, scientific, literary or artistic fields. The term also includes genetic resources and associated medicinal knowledge.

The African initiative leaders will take urgent steps to ensure that indigenous knowledge in Africa is protected through appropriate legislation. They will also promote its protection at the international level, by working closely with the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO).

53.9 Agriculture

The majority of Africa’s people live in rural areas. However, the agrarian systems are generally weak and unproductive. Coupled with external setbacks such as climatic uncertainty, biases in economic policy and changes in world prices, these systems have held back agricultural supply and incomes in the rural areas, leading to poverty.

The urgent need to achieve food security in African countries requires that the inadequate agricultural systems be addressed, so that food production can be increased and nutritional standards raised.

Improvement in agricultural performance is a prerequisite of economic development on the continent. The resulting increase in rural peoples’ purchasing power will also lead to higher effective demand for African industrial goods. The induced dynamics would constitute a significant source of economic growth.

Productivity improvement in agriculture rests on the removal of a number of structural constraints affecting the sector. A key constraint is climatic uncertainty, which raises the risk factor facing intensive agriculture based on the significant inflow of private investment.

Consequently, governments must support the provision of irrigation and develop irrigable land when private agents are unwilling to do so. The improvement of other rural infrastructure (roads, rural electrification, etc.) is also essential.

The institutional environment for agriculture also significantly affects the sector’s productivity and supply performance. Institutional support in the form of research centres and institutes, the provision of extension and support services, and agricultural trade fairs will further boost the production of marketable surpluses. The regulatory framework for agriculture must also be taken into account, including the encouragement of local community leadership in rural areas, and the involvement of these communities in policy and the provision of services.

Too little attention has been paid recently by bilateral donors and multilateral institutions to the agriculture sector and rural areas, which contain 70 per cent of the poor people in Africa. For example, in the World Bank portfolio, credit to agriculture amounted to 39 per cent in 1978, but dropped to 12 per cent in 1996 and even further to 7 per cent in 2000. The entire donor community must reverse such negative trends.

53.10 Diversification of Production and Exports

African economies are vulnerable because of their dependence on primary production and resource-based sectors, and their narrow export baskets. There is an urgent need to diversify production and the logical starting point is to harness the existing basis of
African production, namely its natural resource base. Value added in agro-processing and mineral beneficiation must be increased and a broader capital goods sector developed, through a strategy of economic diversification based on intersectoral linkages. Private enterprise must be supported, both micro-enterprises in the informal sector and small and medium enterprises in the manufacturing sector, which is a principal engine of growth and employment. Governments should remove constraints to business activity and encourage the creative talents of African entrepreneurs.

53.11 Market access
African leaders believe that improved access to the markets of industrialised countries for products in which Africa is competitive is crucial. Although there have been significant improvements in terms of lowered tariffs in recent years, there remain significant exceptions on tariffs while non-tariff barriers also constitute major barriers. Progress on this issue would greatly enhance economic growth and diversification of African production and exports. Dependence on ODA would decline and infrastructure projects would become more viable as a result of increased economic activity.

C. Mobilising Resources
53.12 Increasing savings
To achieve higher levels of growth and more effective poverty reduction, Africa needs to mobilise additional resources, both domestic and foreign. Domestic resources include national savings by firms and households, which need to be substantially increased. In addition, more effective tax collection is needed to increase public resources, as well as the rationalising of government expenditures. A significant proportion of their domestic savings is lost to African countries as a result of capital flight. This can only be reversed if African economies become attractive locations for residents to hold their wealth. Therefore, there is also an urgent need to create conditions that promote private sector investments by both domestic and foreign investors.

53.13 Increasing capital flows
Equally important, however, especially in the short to medium term, are additional ODA and debt reduction. Additional ODA is required to enable least developed countries to achieve the international development goals, especially in the areas of primary education, health and poverty eradication. Further debt reduction is also crucial. The enhanced Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) debt relief initiative still leaves many countries within its scope with very high debt burdens, given the need to direct more resources towards poverty reduction. In addition, there are countries not included in the HIPC that also require debt relief to release resources for poverty reduction.

V. Programme of Action
54. The action plan is presented under eight themes, structured in the same way as the strategy outlined. It covers what needs to be done immediately and what has to be done to initiate medium- and long-term interventions.

A. Preconditions for Development
54.1 The peace, security and political governance issues
(i) Peace and Security Initiative
The Peace and Security Initiative consists of three elements:
- Promoting long-term conditions for development and security;
- Building the capacity of African institutions for early warning, as well as enhancing African institutions’ capacity to prevent, manage and resolve conflict;
- Institutionalising commitment to the core values of the African initiative through the leadership.

Long-term conditions for ensuring peace and security in Africa require policy measures to address the political and social vulnerabilities on which conflict is premised. These are dealt with by the Political and Economic Governance Initiatives, the Capital Flows and Market Access Initiatives and the Human Development Initiative.

Efforts to build Africa’s capacity to manage all aspects of conflict focus on the means necessary to strengthen existing continental and regional institutions, especially in four key areas:
- Prevention, management and resolution of conflict;
- Peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace enforcement;
- Post-conflict reconciliation, rehabilitation and reconstruction;
- Combating the illicit proliferation of small arms, light weapons and landmines.

The African initiative leadership will consider, within six months of its establishment, setting out detailed and costed measures required in each of the four areas above. The exercise will also include actions required of partners, and the nature and sources of financing such activities.

The envisaged Heads of State Forum will serve as a platform for the African initiative leadership to seek to enhance the capacity of African mechanisms to promote peace and security on the continent, to share experience and to mobilise collective action.

The Forum will ensure that the principles and commitments implicit in the initiative are abided by.

(ii) Democracy and Governance Initiative
The purpose of the Democracy and Governance Initiative is to contribute to strengthening the political and administrative framework of participating countries, in line with the principles of democracy, transparency, accountability, integrity, respect for human rights and promotion of the rule of law. It is strengthened by and supports the Economic Governance Initiative, with which it shares key features, and taken together will contribute to harnessing the energies of
the continent towards development and poverty eradication.
The Initiative consists of the following elements:
• A series of commitments by participating countries to create or consolidate basic governance processes and practices;
• An undertaking by participating countries to take the lead in supporting initiatives that foster good governance;
• The institutionalisation of commitments through the African initiative leadership to ensure that the core values of the initiative are abided by.
African initiative states will also undertake a series of commitments towards meeting basic standards of good governance and democratic behaviour while, at the same time, giving support to each other. Participating states will be supported in undertaking such desired institutional reforms where required. Within six months of its institutionalisation, the African initiative leadership will identify recommendations on appropriate diagnostic and assessment tools, in support of compliance with the shared goals of good governance, as well as to identify institutional weaknesses and to seek resources and expertise for addressing these weaknesses. In order to strengthen political governance and build capacity to meet these commitments, the African initiative leadership will undertake a process of targeted capacity-building initiatives.
These institutional reforms will focus on:
• Administrative and civil service reform;
• Strengthening parliamentary oversight;
• Promoting participatory decision-making;
• Effective measures to combat corruption and embezzlement;
• Judicial reform.
Countries participating in the initiative will take the lead in supporting and building institutions and initiatives that protect these commitments. They will dedicate their efforts towards creating and strengthening national, regional and continental structures that support good governance.
The African initiative Heads of State Forum will serve as a mechanism through which the African initiative leadership will consider a range of common good governance commitments and goals, including progress in assessing weaknesses in governance and progress in implementing reforms. The Forum will provide a platform for countries to share experiences with a view to fostering good governance and democratic practices.

54.2 The Economic and Corporate Governance Initiative

Objective
• To promote throughout the participating countries a set of concrete and timebound programmes aimed at enhancing the quality of economic and public financial management as well as corporate governance.

Actions
• A Task Team from Ministries of Finance and Central Banks will be commissioned to review economic and corporate governance practices in the various countries and regions, and make recommendations on appropriate standards and codes of good practice for consideration by the Heads of State Implementation Committee within six months.
• The Implementation Committee will refer its recommendations to African states for implementation.
• The Implementation Committee will give high priority to public financial management. Countries will develop a programme for improving public financial management and targets, and assessment mechanisms will also be set.
• The Heads of State Implementation Committee will mobilise resources for capacity-building to enable all countries to comply with the mutually agreed minimum standards and codes of good practice.

B. Sectoral Priorities

54.3 The Human Resource Development Initiative

(i) Poverty Reduction

Objectives
• To meet the IDG of halving the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015;
• To provide focused leadership by prioritising poverty reduction in all African initiative initiatives and national governments’ macroeconomic and sectoral policies;
• To develop a special focus on the reduction of poverty among women;
• To ensure empowerment of the poor in poverty reduction strategies;
• To support existing poverty initiatives at the multilateral level, such as the Comprehensive Development Framework of the World Bank and the Poverty Reduction Strategy approach linked to the HIPC debt relief initiative.

Actions
• Require that country plans prepared for initiatives in this programme of action assess their poverty reduction impact, both before and after implementation;
• Work with the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United Nations (UN) agencies to accelerate implementation and adoption of the Comprehensive Development Framework, the Poverty Reduction Strategy and related approaches;
• Establish a gender task team to ensure that the specific issues faced by poor women are addressed in African initiative poverty reduction strategies;
• Establish a task team to accelerate the adoption of participatory and decentralised processes for the provision of infrastructural and social services.

(ii) Health

Objectives
• To strengthen anti-communicable disease programmes so that they do not fall short of the scale required in order to reduce the burden of disease;
• To have a secure health system that meets needs and supports disease control effectively;
• To ensure the necessary support capacity for the sustainable development of an effective health system;
• To empower the people of Africa to act to improve their own health and to achieve health literacy;
• To impact successfully on the disease burden of the poorest people in Africa.

**Actions**

• Strengthen Africa’s participation in processes aiming at affordable drugs, including those involving the international pharmaceutical companies and the international civil society, and explore the use of alternative delivery systems for essential drugs and supplies;
• Mobilise the resources required to build effective disease interventions and secure health systems;
• Lead the campaign for increased international financial support for the struggle against HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases;
• Join forces with other international agencies such as the WHO and donors to ensure support for the continent is increased by at least US $10 billion per annum;
• Encourage African countries to give higher priority to health in their own budgets and to phase such increases in expenditure to a level to be mutually determined;
• Jointly mobilise resources for capacity-building in order to enable all African countries to improve upon their health infrastructures and management.

(iii) **Education**

**Objectives**

• To work with donors and multilateral institutions to ensure that the IDG of achieving universal primary education by 2015 is realised;
• To work for improvements in curriculum development, quality improvements and access to ICT;
• To expand access to secondary education and improve its relevance to the world of work;
• Promote networks of specialised research and higher education institutions.

**Actions**

• Review current initiatives jointly with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and other major international donors;
• Review levels of expenditure on education by African countries, and lead the process of developing norms and standards for government expenditure on education;
• Establish a task team to accelerate the introduction of ICT in primary schools;
• Establish a task team to review and put forward proposals for the research capacity needed in each region of the continent.

54.4 **The Infrastructure Initiative**

The Infrastructure Initiative comprises elements that are common to all the infrastructure sectors; it also includes elements that are sector-specific.

(i) **All Infrastructure Sectors**

**Objectives**

• To improve access to and affordability and reliability of infrastructure services for both firms and households;
• To enhance regional cooperation and trade through expanded cross-border connectivity in infrastructure;
• To increase financial investments in infrastructure by lowering risks facing private investors, especially in the area of policy and regulatory frameworks;
• To build adequate knowledge and skills in technology and engineering with a view to install, operate and maintain “hard” infrastructure networks in Africa.

**Actions**

• With the assistance of sector-specialised agencies, put in place policy and legislative frameworks to encourage competition. At the same time, introduce new regulatory frameworks as well as build capacity for regulators, so as to promote policy and regulatory harmonisation in order to facilitate cross-border connectivity and market enlargement;
• Increase investment in infrastructure, especially refurbishment, and improve system maintenance practices that will sustain infrastructure;
• Initiate the development of training institutions and networks which can develop and produce high-skill technicians and engineers in all infrastructure sectors;
• Promote community and user involvement in infrastructure construction, maintenance and management, especially in poor urban and rural areas, in collaboration with the African Initiative Governance Initiatives;
• Work with the African Development Bank and other development finance institutions on the continent to mobilise sustainable financing especially through multilateral processes, institutions and donor governments, with a view to securing grant and concessional finance to mitigate medium term risks;
• Promote PPPs as a promising vehicle for attracting private investors, and focus public funding on the pressing needs of the poor, by building capacity to implement and monitor such agreements.

In addition to these common issues, the following are sector-specific strategies for the different types of infrastructure.

(ii) **Information and Communications Technology**

**Objectives**

• To double teledensity to two lines per 100 people by 2005, with an adequate level of access for households;
• To lower the cost of and improve reliability of service;
• To achieve e-readiness for all countries in Africa;
• To develop and production of a pool of ICT-proficient youth and students, from which Africa can draw trainee ICT engineers, programmers and software developers;
• To develop local content software, based especially on Africa’s cultural legacy.

**Actions**

• Work with regional agencies such as the African Telecommunications Union and Africa Connection to design model policy and legislation for telecommunications reform, and protocols and templates for e-readiness assessments;
• Work with the regional agencies to build regulatory capacity;
• Establish a network of training and research institutions to build high-level man power;
• Promote and accelerate existing projects to connect schools and youth centres;
• Work with development finance institutions in Africa, multilateral initiatives (G-8 DotForce, UN Task Force) and bilateral donors to establish financial mechanisms to mitigate and reduce sector risks.

(iii) **Energy**

**Objectives**

• To increase from 10 per cent to 35 per cent access to reliable and affordable commercial energy supply by Africa’s population in 20 years;
• To improve the reliability as well as lower the cost of energy supply to productive activities in order to enable economic growth of 6 per cent per annum;
• To reverse environmental degradation that are associated with the use of traditional fuels in rural areas;
• To exploit and develop the hydropower potential of river basins of Africa;
• To integrate transmission grids and gas pipelines so as to facilitate cross-border energy flows;
• To reform and harmonise petroleum regulations and legislations in the continent.

**Actions**

• Establish an African Forum for Utility Regulation and establish regional regulatory associations;
• Establish a task team to recommend priorities and implementation strategies for regional projects, including hydropower generation, transmission grids and gas pipelines;
• Establish a task team to accelerate the development of energy supply to low-income housing;
• Broaden the scope of the programme for biomass energy conservation from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to the rest of the continent.

(iv) **Transport**

**Objectives**

• To reduce delays in the transborder movement of people, goods and services;
• To reduce waiting-time in ports;
• To promote economic activity and cross-border trade through improved land transport linkages;
• To increase air passenger and freight linkages across African subregions.

**Actions**

• Establish customs and immigration task teams to harmonise border crossing and visa procedures;
• Establish and nurture PPPs as well as grant concessions towards the construction, development and maintenance of ports, roads, railways and maritime transportation;
• Promote harmonisation of transport modal standards and regulations, and the increased use of multimodal transport facilities;
• Work with the regional organisations to develop transportation development corridors;
• Promote PPPs in and the rationalisation of the airline industry and build capacity for air traffic control.

(v) **Water and Sanitation**

**Objectives**

• To ensure sustainable access to safe and adequate clean water supply and sanitation, especially for the poor;
• To plan and manage water resources to become a basis for national and regional cooperation and development;
• To systematically address and sustain ecosystems, biodiversity and wildlife;
• To cooperate on shared rivers among member states;
• To address effectively the threat of climate change;
• To ensure enhanced irrigation and rain-fed agriculture to improve production and food security.

**Actions**

• Accelerate work on multipurpose water resource projects; for example, the SADC Water Secretariat’s investigation of the utilisation of the Congo River, and the Nile Basin Initiative;
• Establish a task team to make plans for the negative impact of climate change on Africa;
• Partner with the Global Environmental Sanitation Initiative (GESI) in promoting sanitary waste disposal methods and projects;
• Support the UN Habitat programme on Water Conservation in African Cities.

(vi) **Science and Technology Platforms**

**Objectives**

• To promote cross-border cooperation and connectivity by utilising knowledge currently available in existing centres of excellence in the continent;
• To develop and adapt information collection and analysis capacity to support productive activities as well as for exports outside Africa;
• To generate a critical mass of technology expertise in targeted areas that offer high growth potential, especially in biotechnology and geoscience;
• To assimilate and adapt existing technologies in order to diversify manufacturing production.

**Actions**

- Establish regional cooperation on product standards development and dissemination, and on geographic information systems (GISs);
- Develop networks among existing centres of excellence, especially through the Internet, for cross-border staff exchanges and training programmes, and develop schemes to assist displaced African scientists and researchers;
- Work with UNESCO, the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), and other international organisations to harness biotechnology in order to develop the commercial potential of Africa’s rich biodiversity and indigenous knowledge base by improving agricultural productivity and developing pharmaceutical production;
- Expand geoscience research to enhance the exploitation of the mineral riches of Africa;
- Establish and develop a skills-base product engineering and quality control to support diversification in manufacturing.

54.5 **Diversification of Production and Exports**

(i) **Agriculture**

**Objectives**

- To improve the productivity of agriculture, with particular attention to small-scale and women farmers;
- To ensure food security for all people and increase the access of the poor to adequate food and nutrition;
- To promote measures against natural resource degradation and encourage production methods that are environmentally sustainable;
- To integrate the rural poor into the market economy and provide them with better access to export markets;
- To develop Africa into a net exporter of agricultural products;
- To become a strategic player in agricultural science and technology development.

**Actions**

- Increase the security of water supply for agriculture by establishing small-scale irrigation facilities, improving local water management, and increasing the exchange of information and technical know-how with the international community;
- Improve land tenure security under traditional and modern forms of tenure, and promote the necessary land reform;
- Foster regional, subregional, national and household food security through the development and management of increased production, transport, storage and marketing of food crops, as well as livestock and fisheries. Particular attention must also be given to the needs of the poor, as well as the establishment of early warning systems to monitor droughts and crop production;
- Enhance agricultural credit and finance schemes, and improve access to credit by small-scale and women farmers;
- Reduce the heavy urban bias of public spending in Africa by transferring resources from urban to rural activities.

(ii) **Mining**

**Objectives**

- To improve the quality of mineral resource information;
- To create a regulatory framework conducive to the development of the mining sector;
- To establish best practices that will ensure efficient extraction of natural resources and minerals at high quality.

**Actions**

- Harmonise policies and regulations to provide basic agreed minimum levels of operational practices and information provision;
- Harmonise commitments to the continuous reduction of the perceived investment risk in Africa;
- Harmonise business investment incentives and resource information;
- Increase collaboration on knowledge and value addition to natural resources;
- Apply conditional principles of value-added investment (beneficiation) for African mining investments;
- Establish an African School of Mines System (for the development and production of education, skills and training at all levels). This could be in the form of collaboration among existing schools.
(iii) **Manufacturing**

**Objectives**
- To increase the production, competitiveness and diversification of the domestic private sector, especially in the agro-industrial, mining and manufacturing subsectors, with potential for exports and employment creation;
- To establish national standards associations in African countries;
- To harmonise the technical regulation frameworks of African countries.

**Actions**

**On the African level:**
- Develop new industries, or upgrade existing ones, where African countries have comparative advantages, including agro-based industries, energy and mineral resource-based industries;
- Acquire membership of the relevant international standards organisations. Active membership would give Africa a stronger voice in these bodies, and would enable African industry to participate meaningfully in the development of international standards. Membership would also transfer copyright of international standards to the national associations;
- Establish national measurement institutions to ensure links with the international metrology system. Such activities will always remain the responsibility of government;
- Ensure that testing laboratories and certification organisations are set up to support the relevant national technical regulations. Such organisations should be established, as soon as possible, wherever they do not exist;
- Establish an accreditation infrastructure, such as the International Standards Organisation (ISO) system, which is accepted by the international community. Such an accreditation infrastructure can be nationally based where the industry is strong enough to maintain it, otherwise regional structures should be contemplated. Appropriate funding to ensure membership of international structures such as the International Accreditation Forum (IAF) and the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) should be made available;
- Pursue mutual recognition of test and certification results with Africa’s major trading partners. Generally, this will only be possible if the framework for standards, technical regulations, measurement tractability and accreditation are in place and can be shown to meet international requirements.

**On the international level:**
- Facilitate partnership through the development of mechanisms, such as joint business councils, for information-sharing between non-African and African firms, and for working towards the establishment of joint ventures and subcontracting arrangements;
- Assist in strengthening African training institutions for industrial development, particularly through the promotion of networking with international partners;
- Promote the transfer of technologies to African countries;
- Develop and accept a best-practice framework for technical regulations that meets both the requirements of the World Trade Organisation’s Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (WTO/TBT) and the needs of Africa. The technical regulation frameworks of the developed countries are not only steeped in history but also unnecessarily complex for many countries in Africa;
- Establish standards information centres, which would provide the industry and government with the necessary information on international, regional and national standards, thereby facilitating market access. These centres should be linked to the relevant international, regional and national standards information centres so that the latter can act as the national WTO/TBT Enquiry Points;
- Ensure the development of appropriate regional and national standards through the establishment of appropriate technical committee structures representing the stakeholders of the country, as well as managing such committees in line with ISO/IEC Directives and WTO/TBT Agreement requirements.

(iv) **Tourism**

**Objectives**
- To identify key “anchor” projects at the national and subregional levels, which will generate significant spin-offs and assist in interregional economic integration;
- To develop a regional marketing strategy;
- To create a research capacity in tourism;
- To extend partnerships such as those formed via subregional bodies, such as the Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa (RETOSA), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the SADC.

**Actions**

**On the African level:**
- Forge cooperative partnerships so as to capture the benefits of shared knowledge, as well as provide a base for other countries for entering into tourist-related activities;
- Provide the African people with the capacity to be actively involved in sustainable tourism projects at the community level;
- Prioritise consumer safety and security issues;
- Market African tourism products, especially in adventure tourism, ecotourism and cultural tourism;
- Increase regional coordination of tourism initiatives in Africa for the expansion and increased diversity of products;
- Maximise our benefits from the strong interregional demand for tourism activities, by developing specialised consumer-targeted marketing campaigns.
(v) Promoting the Private Sector

Objectives
- To ensure a sound and conducive environment for the activity of the private sector, with a particular emphasis on domestic entrepreneurs;
- To promote foreign direct investment and trade, with a particular emphasis on exports;
- To develop micro-, small and medium enterprises, including the informal sector.

Actions

On the African level:
- Undertake measures to enhance the entrepreneurial, managerial and technical capacities of the private sector by supporting technology acquisition, production improvements, and training and skills development;
- Strengthen chambers of commerce, trade and professional associations, and their regional networks;
- Organise dialogue between the government and the private sector to develop a shared vision of economic development strategy and remove constraints to private sector development;
- Strengthen and encourage the growth of micro-, small and medium-scale industries through appropriate technical support from service institutions and civil society, and improve access to capital by strengthening micro-financing schemes, with particular attention to women entrepreneurs.

On the international level:
- Promote entrepreneurial development programmes for mentoring African firms;
- Provide technical assistance in relation to the development of an appropriate regulatory environment, promotion of small, medium and micro-enterprises and micro-financing schemes for the African private sector.

(vi) Diversification of African Exports

Objectives
- To improve procedures for customs and drawback/rebate schemes;
- To tackle trade barriers in multilateral organisations and through the improvement of standards;
- To increase intraregional trade via promoting cross-border contact among African firms;
- To improve Africa’s negative image through conflict resolution and marketing;
- To deal with short-term skill shortages through appropriate firm-level incentives.

Actions

On the African level:
- Promote intra-African trade with the aim of sourcing within Africa imports formerly sourced from the rest of the world;
- Create marketing mechanisms and institutions to develop marketing strategies for African products;
- Publicise African exporting and importing companies and their products, inter alia through trade fairs;
- Reduce the costs of transactions and operations;
- Promote and improve regional trade agreements, further interregional trade liberalisation, and harmonise of rules of origin, tariffs and product standards;
- Reduce export taxes.

On the international level:
- Negotiate facilitating measures and agreements for increased market access for African products to the world market;
- Encourage foreign direct investment;
- Assist in capacity-building in the private sector, as well as strengthening country and subregional capacity in trade negotiations, implementing the rules and regulations of the WTO, and identifying and exploiting new trading opportunities that emerge from the evolving multilateral trading system.

54.6 The Market Access Initiative

- The African heads of state must ensure active participation in the world trading system, which has been managed under the auspices of the WTO since 1995. If a new round of multilateral trade negotiations is started, it must recognise and provide for the African continent’s special concerns, needs and interests in future WTO rules.

Participation in the world trading system must enhance:
- Open, predictable and geographically diversified market access for exports from Africa;
- The provision of a forum in which developing countries could collectively call for structural adjustment by developed countries in those industries in which the natural competitive advantage now lies with the developing world;
- Transparency and predictability as preconditions for increased investment that, in turn, would boost supply capacity and amplify the gains from existing market access.
- Concrete steps must be taken to enhance African states’ institutional capacity by way of technical assistance from developed countries to use the WTO and to engage in multilateral trade negotiations.
- In addition to broad-based support for the WTO, heads of state must identify strategic areas of intervention and, together with the international community, strengthen the contribution of trade to the continent’s recovery. These strategic areas include:
  - The identification of key areas in export production in which serious supply-side impediments exist;
  - The diversification of production and exports especially in existing and potential areas of competitive advantage, and bearing in mind the need to move towards higher value-added production;
  - An assessment of the scope for further liberalisation in manufacturing, given the concentration of access in low value-added sectors, and its restrictiveness in high value-added activities with the greatest economic and growth potential;
• Renewed political action by African countries to intensify and deepen the various integration initiatives on the continent. To this end, consideration needs to be given to:
  1. a discretionary preferential trade system for intra-African trade;
  2. the alignment of domestic and regional trade and industrial policy objectives, thereby increasing the potential for intra-industry trade critical to the sustainability of regional economic arrangements.
• Heads of state must act to:
  1. secure and stabilise preferential treatment by key developed country partners, e.g. the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP), the Cotonou Agreement, the “Everything But Arms” (EBA) initiative, and the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA);
  2. ensure that further multilateral liberalisation does not erode the preferential margins of these arrangements;
  3. identify and address deficiencies in their design and application.

C. Mobilising Resources

54.7 The Capital Flows Initiative

To achieve the estimated 7 per cent per annum growth rate needed to meet the IDGs – most importantly, to halve poverty incidence by the year 2015 – Africa needs to fill an annual resource gap of 12 per cent of its GDP, or US $64 billion. This will require increased domestic savings, as well as improvements to the public revenue collection systems. However, the majority of the needed resources will have to be obtained from outside the continent. The African initiative focuses on debt reduction and ODA as complementary external resources required in the short to medium term, and addresses private capital flows as a longer-term concern. A basic principle of the Capital Flows Initiative is that improved governance is a necessary accompaniment to increased capital flows, so that participation in the Economic and Political Governance Initiatives is a prerequisite for participation in the Capital Flows Initiative.

(i) The Debt Initiative

The African initiative seeks to extend debt relief beyond its current levels (based on debt “sustainability”), which still require debt service payments amounting to a significant portion of the resource gap. The African initiative’s long-term objective is to link debt relief with costed poverty reduction outcomes. In the interim, debt service ceilings should be fixed as a proportion of fiscal revenue, with different ceilings for IDA and non-IDA countries. To secure the full commitment of concessional resources – debt relief plus ODA – that Africa requires, the African initiative leadership will negotiate these arrangements with creditor governments. Countries would engage with existing debt relief mechanisms – the HIPC and the Paris Club – before seeking recourse through the African initiative. The Debt Initiative will require agreed poverty reduction strategies, debt strategies and participation in the Economic Governance Initiative to ensure that countries are able to absorb the extra resources. In addition to seeking further debt relief through the interim debt strategy set out above, the African initiative leadership will establish a forum in which African countries will exchange experiences and mobilise for the improvement of debt relief strategies.

Actions

• The African initiative heads of state will seek to secure an agreement, negotiated with the international community, to provide further debt relief for countries participating in the African initiative, based on the principles outlined above.
• The African initiative leadership will establish a forum in which African countries may share experiences and mobilise for the improvement of debt relief strategies. They will exchange ideas that may end the process of reform and qualification in the HIPC process.

(ii) The ODA Reform Initiative

The African initiative seeks increased ODA flows in the medium term, as well as reform of the ODA delivery system, to ensure that flows are more effectively utilised by recipient African countries. The African initiative will establish an ODA forum of African countries so as to develop a common African position on ODA reform, and to engage with the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD and other donors in developing a charter underpinning the development partnership. This charter will identify the Economic Governance Initiative as a prerequisite for enhancing African countries’ capacity to utilise increased ODA flows, and will propose a complementary, independent assessment mechanism for monitoring donor performance. The African initiative will support a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) Learning Group to engage in the PRSP process together with the IMF and the World Bank.

Actions

• Constitute an ODA forum for developing a common African position on ODA reform, as a counterpart to the OECD DAC structure;
• Engage, through the ODA forum, with donor agencies to establish a charter for the development partnership, which would embody the principles outlined above;
• Support the ECA’s efforts to establish a PRSP Learning Group;
• Establish an independent mechanism for assessing donor and recipient country performance.

(iii) The Private Capital Flows Initiative

The African initiative seeks to increase private capital inflows from outside Africa, as an essential component of a sustainable long-term approach to filling the resource gap. The first priority is to address investors’ perception of Africa as a “high risk” continent, especially with regard to insecurity of property rights, regulatory weakness and markets. Several elements of the African initiative will help to lower these risks gradually, and include initiatives relating to peace and security,
political and economic governance, infrastructure and poverty reduction. Interim risk mitigation and reduction measures will be put in place, including credit guarantee schemes and the strengthened investment-related regulatory and legislative frameworks. The next priority is the implementation of a PPP capacity-building programme through the African Development Bank and regional development banks, to assist national and subnational governments in structuring and regulating transactions in the provision of infrastructural and social services. The third priority is to promote the deepening of financial markets within countries, as well as cross-border harmonisation and integration, via a Financial Market Integration Task Force. Initially, this will focus on the legislative and regulatory environment for the financial system.

**Actions**

- Establish a task team to carry out audits of investment-related legislation and regulation, with a view to risk reduction and harmonisation within Africa;
- Carry out a needs assessment of and feasibility study on financial instruments to mitigate risks associated with doing business in Africa;
- Establish an initiative to enhance the capacity of countries to establish PPPs;
- Establish a Financial Market Integration Task Force that will serve to fast-track financial market integration through the establishment of an internationally competitive legislative and regulatory framework and the creation of a single African trading platform.

54.8 The Environment Initiative

It has been recognised that a healthy and productive environment is a prerequisite for the African initiative. It is further recognised that the range of issues necessary to nurture this environmental base is vast and complex, and that a systematic combination of initiatives is necessary in order to develop a coherent environmental programme. This will necessitate that choices be made, and particular issues be prioritised for initial interventions.

It is also recognised that a core objective of the Environment Initiative must be to combat poverty and contribute to socio-economic development in Africa. It has been shown that many of the steps taken to achieve a healthy environmental base can contribute greatly to employment, empowerment, social cohesion, dignity and the reduction of poverty.

It should be mentioned, too, that Africa is to host the World Summit on Sustainable Development in September 2002. Environmental management forms the basis of the range of issues to be debated at the Summit, and we submit that the event gives particular focus and status to the deliberations on this theme in the African initiative.

The Environment Initiative has targeted eight sub-themes for priority interventions:

- **Combating Desertification**
  - Role model interventions are envisaged to rehabilitate degraded land and to address the factors that led to such degradation. Many of these steps will need to be labour intensive, along the lines of “public works programmes”, thereby contributing to the social development needs of the continent.

- **Wetland Conservation**
  - This involves a rolling out of African role model interventions on wetland conservation, where social and ecological benefits give very good returns on investment.

- **Invasive Alien Species**
  - Partnerships are also sought to prevent and control invasive alien species. These partnerships are critical for both the integrity of natural systems and economic well-being. Major labour-intensive initiatives are possible.

- **Coastal Management**
  - In protecting and utilising coastal resources to optimal effect, role models are again suggested from which a broader programme can be introduced.

- **Global Warming**
  - The initial focus is on monitoring and regulating the impact of climate change. Labour-intensive work is essential and critical to integrated fire management projects.

- **Transfrontier Conservation Areas**
  - This subtheme seeks to build on the emerging initiatives to seek partnerships across countries that boost conservation and tourism, and therefore create or protect jobs.

- **Environmental Governance**
  - This relates to the securing of the institutional, legal, planning, training and capacity-building requirements that underpin all of the above.

- **Financing**
  - A carefully structured and fair system for financing work is needed.

The Environment Initiative has a distinct advantage in that many of the initiatives can start within relatively short time frames, and they also offer exceptional good returns on investment in terms of creating the social and ecological base upon which the African initiative can prosper.

VI. A New Global Partnership

55. Africa recognises the centuries-old historical injustice and the need to correct it. The central injunction of the new partnership is, however, for combined efforts to improve the quality of life of Africa’s people as rapidly as possible. In this, there are shared responsibilities and mutual benefits between Africa and her partners.

56. The global technological revolution needs an expanding base of resources, a widening sphere of markets, new frontiers of scientific endeavour, the collective capacity of human wisdom, and a well-managed ecological system. We are aware that much of Africa’s mineral and other material resources are critical inputs into production processes in developed countries.

57. In addition to its indispensable resource base, Africa offers a vast and growing market for producers across the world. A developing Africa, with increased numbers of employed and skilled workers and a bur-
geoning middle class, would constitute an expanding market for world manufactured products, intermediate goods and services.

58. At the same time, Africa provides a great opportunity for investment. The African initiative creates opportunities for joint international efforts in the development of infrastructure, especially in ICT and transportation.

59. Africa also provides prospects for creative partnerships between the public and private sectors in beneficiation, agro-industries, tourism, human resource development and in tackling the challenges of urban renewal and rural development.

60. Furthermore, Africa’s biodiversity – including its rich flora and fauna and the rain forests – is an important global resource in combating the environmental degradation posed by the depletion of the ozone layer and climate change, as well as the pollution of air and water by industrial emissions and toxic effluents.

61. The expansion of educational and other opportunities in Africa would enhance the continent’s contribution to world science, technology and culture, to the benefit of all humankind. After all, modern science recognises Africa as the cradle of humanity. Fossils, artefacts, artistic works and the remains of ancient human settlements are to be found throughout Africa, providing material evidence of the emergence of Homo sapiens and the progression of humanity.

62. As part of the process of the reconstruction of the identity and self-confidence of the peoples of Africa, it is necessary that this be understood and valued by Africans themselves. In the same vein, Africa’s status as the birthplace of humanity should be cherished by the whole world as the origin of all its peoples.

63. Africa’s rich cultural legacy is reflected in its artefacts of the past, its literature, philosophies, art and music. These should serve both as a means of consolidating Africans’ pride in their own humanity and of confirming the common humanity of the peoples of the world.

64. The African initiative has, as one of its foundations, the expansion of democratic frontiers and the deepening of the culture of human rights. A democratic Africa will become one of the pillars of world democracy, human rights and tolerance. The resources of the world currently dedicated to resolving civil and interstate conflict could therefore be freed for more rewarding endeavours.

65. The converse of such an initiative, the collapse of more African states, poses a threat not only to Africans, but also to global peace and security. For industrialised countries, development in Africa will reduce the levels of global social exclusion and mitigate a major potential source of global social instability.

66. Africa is committed to the development and strengthening of South-South partnerships. Establishing a new relationship with industrialised countries and multilateral organisations

67. A critical dimension of Africans taking responsibility for the continent’s destiny is the need to negotiate a new relationship with the development partners. The manner in which development assistance is delivered in itself creates serious problems for developing countries. The need to negotiate and account separately to donors supporting the same sector or programme is both cumbersome and inefficient. Also, the tying of development assistance generates further inefficiencies. The appeal is for a new relationship that takes the country programmes as a point of departure.

68. The various partnerships between Africa and the industrialised countries on the one hand, and multilateral institutions on the other, will be maintained. The partnerships in question include, among others: the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s; the Africa-Europe Summit’s Cairo Plan of Action; the World Bank-led Strategic Partnership with Africa; the International Monetary Fund-led Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers; the Japan-led Tokyo Agenda for Action; the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act of the United States; and the Economic Commission on Africa-led Global Compact with Africa. The objective will be to rationalise these partnerships and to ensure that real benefits to Africa flow from them.

69. The African leaders envisage the following responsibilities and obligations of the developed countries and multilateral institutions:

• To support materially mechanisms for and processes of conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa, as well as peacekeeping initiatives;
• To accelerate debt reduction for heavily indebted African countries, in conjunction with more effective poverty reduction programmes, of which the Strategic Partnership with Africa and the PRSP initiatives are an important starting point;
• To improve debt relief strategies for middle-income countries;
• To reverse the decline in ODA flows to Africa and to meet the target level of ODA flows equivalent to 0.7 per cent of each developed country’s gross national product (GNP) within an agreed short-term period. Increased aid flows will be used to complement funds released by debt reduction for accelerating the fight against poverty;
• To translate into concrete commitments the international strategies adopted in the fields of education and health;
• To facilitate the development of a partnership between countries, international pharmaceutical corporations and civil society organisations to urgently secure access to existing drugs for Africans suffering from infectious diseases;
• To admit goods into markets of the developed countries through bilateral initiatives, and to negotiate
more equitable terms for African countries in the WTO multilateral framework;
- To work with African leaders to encourage investment in Africa by the private sector in developed countries, including the establishment of insurance mechanisms and financial instruments that will help lower risk premia in Africa;
- To raise consumer protection standards for exports from developed countries to developing countries to the same levels applied in developed countries’ domestic markets;
- To ensure that the World Bank and other multilateral development finance institutions participate as investors in the key economic infrastructure projects, in order to facilitate and support the securing of private sector participation;
- To provide technical support to accelerate the implementation of the programme of action, including strengthening Africa’s capacity in planning and development management, financial and infrastructure regulation, accounting and auditing, and development, construction and management of infrastructure;
- To support governance reforms of multilateral financial institutions to better cater for the needs and concerns of countries in Africa;
- To set up coordinated mechanisms to combat corruption effectively, as well as commit themselves to the return of monies (proceeds) of such practices to Africa.

**VII. Implementation of the African initiative**

**70. Immediate priorities**
Recognising the need to sequence and prioritise, the initiating Presidents propose that the following programmes be fast-tracked, in collaboration with development partners.

**70.1 Programmes**

a. Communicable diseases – HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis;
b. Information and Communications Technology;
c. Debt reduction;
d. Market access.

Work has already been done on all these programmes by a variety of international partnerships and institutions; however, Africa’s participation and leadership need to be strengthened for better delivery. We hold that addressing these issues could fast-track the renewal of the continent. (Detailed proposals on each programme are available as annexures.)

**70.2 Projects**

Much as the promoters of the African initiative appreciate the dangers of a project approach to development, they are proposing a number of projects that are crucial to an integrated regional development, as conceived by the African initiative. These projects not only strengthen country and regional development programmes, but will also go a long way in kick-starting the regeneration of the continent.

The projects presented below are for illustrative purposes only. A detailed list of projects can be found on the initiative website [http://www.mapstrategy.com](http://www.mapstrategy.com)

(i) **Agriculture**

- Expand the ambit and operation of the integrated land and water management action plan for Africa
- The project addresses the maintenance and upgrading of Africa’s fragile agricultural natural resources base. Many African governments are already implementing these initiatives as part of this programme. Partners include the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the World Bank, the FAO and other bilateral donor agencies.
- Strengthen and refocus the capacity of Africa’s Agricultural Research and Extension systems
- The project addresses upgrading of the physical and institutional infrastructure that supports Africa’s agriculture. Technological innovation and technology diffusion hold enormous potential for accelerating agricultural output and productivity, but the continent lacks the research capacity that is necessary for major breakthroughs. Major players include the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), the World Bank, the FAO and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

(ii) **Promotion of the Private Sector**

- National Business Incubators (NBI)
- International experience suggests that one of the best practices in promoting enterprises in highly innovative areas is through the establishment of business incubators. This project will formulate required guidelines and policies for the establishment of such incubators at the national level, drawing on international experience and established best practice, tailored to African needs and conditions.

(iii) **Infrastructure and Regional Integration**

The African initiative process has identified many energy, transport, telecommunications and water projects that are crucial to Africa’s integrated development. The projects are at various stages of development and require funding.

The next step is to accelerate their further development in collaboration with the African Development Bank, the World Bank and other multilateral institutions.

The view of the initiating Presidents is that, unless infrastructure is addressed on a planned basis – that is, linked to regional integrated development – the renewal process of the continent will not take off. Therefore, the international community is urged to partner Africa in accelerating the provision of infrastructure. Detailed infrastructure projects can be found on the initiative website [www.mapstrategy.com](http://www.mapstrategy.com)

**70.3 Needs assessment**

As part of assessing the required action in the priority sectors, a needs assessment will be undertaken, progressing from the national level, to the subregional level, to the continental level. The point is to assess
the needs in the five priority sectors in terms of structures and staff.
The assessment of subregional sectoral needs will start from the national needs assessment. The proposal is that the experts and ministers in each subsector meet in one of the subregional capitals. For each sector, national data will have been aggregated and used to elaborate on a subregional sectoral plan. Once subregional sectoral needs are assessed in the five sectors, they can be aggregated to formulate subregional global needs.

It should be stressed that subregional sectoral needs are not to be simply added up – the starting point is a subregional perspective leading to at least two new elements:

- Specific needs of the subregion perceived as a single space for all states in the region, for instance, roads and railroads will not be conceived from a national perspective but from a subregional one.
- Needs that should be rationalised on a subregional basis; for example, the universities should be distributed according to a subregional territorial rationale.

Finally, the continent’s needs will be assessed in the five sectors considered as priority sectors in the light of the global subregional plans. The details can be found on the initiative website www.mapstrategy.com

71. Directing mechanism of the African initiative
The initiating heads of state will advise the OAU on an appropriate mechanism for the implementation of the African initiative. There will be a need for core technical support for the implementing mechanism in the areas of research and policy formulation.

72. The functions of the Heads of State Implementation Committee will be:

- Identification of strategic issues that need to be researched, planned and led at the continental level;
- Setting of mechanisms for reviewing progress in the achievement of mutually agreed targets and compliance with mutually agreed standards;
- Reviewing of progress with the implementation of past decisions and taking appropriate steps to address problems and delays.

VIII. CONCLUSION

73. The African initiative’s objective is to consolidate democracy and sound economic management on the continent. Through the programme, African leaders are making a commitment to the African people and the world to work together in rebuilding the continent. It is a pledge to promote peace and stability, democracy, sound economic management and people-centred development and to hold each other accountable in terms of the agreements outlined in the programme.

In proposing the partnership, Africa recognises that it holds the key to its own development. We affirm that the African initiative offers an historical opportunity for the developed countries of the world to enter into a genuine partnership with Africa, based on mutual interest, shared commitments and binding agreements. The adoption of a development strategy as set out in the broad approach outlined above, together with a detailed programme of action, will mark the beginning of a new phase in the partnership and cooperation between Africa and the developed world. In fulfilling its promise, this agenda must give hope to the emaciated African child that the 21st century is indeed the century of Africa’s renewal.

74. Schedule For the First Six Months

- First meeting of the African initiative Heads of State Implementation Committee – July 2001;
- Commissioning of a Committee of Ministries of Finance and Central Banks to conduct reviews of current economic and corporate governance practices in the various regions. The Committee will report within six months and make recommendations on minimum standards and codes of good practice for fiscal policies, public financial management and corporate governance;
- Commissioning of a Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs to review capacity-building needed for peacekeeping structures at both the regional and continental levels;
- Establishment of a task team to undertake sectoral needs assessments at national, regional and continental levels;
- Establishment of special task teams to lead the high-priority programmes, i.e. the eradication of infectious diseases, infrastructure and ICT;
- Commissioning of the UN ECA to prepare special reports on each of the prioritised areas for consideration by the Steering Committee appointed by the Heads of State Implementation Committee. Engagements with the world community:
  - Meeting with the leaders of the G-8 to discuss support of the programme in Genoa – July 2001;
  - Holding of a special session of the UN General Assembly on the African initiative – September 2001;
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviations and acronyms</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGOA</td>
<td>Africa Growth and Opportunity Act</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>CGIAR</td>
<td>Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research</td>
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<td>DAC</td>
<td>Development Assistance Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>EBA</td>
<td>“Everything But Arms”</td>
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<td>ECA</td>
<td>Economic Commission on Africa</td>
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<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<td>FAO</td>
<td>Food and Agriculture Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>FARA</td>
<td>Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross Domestic Product</td>
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<td>GEF</td>
<td>Global Environment Facility</td>
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<td>GESI</td>
<td>Global Environmental Sanitation Initiative</td>
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<td>GIS</td>
<td>Geographic Information System</td>
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<td>GNP</td>
<td>Gross National Product</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSP</td>
<td>Generalised System of Preferences</td>
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<td>HIPC</td>
<td>Highly Indebted Poor Country</td>
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<td>IAF</td>
<td>International Accreditation Forum</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communications Technology</td>
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<td>IDA</td>
<td>International Development Assistance</td>
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<td>IDG</td>
<td>International Development Goal</td>
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<td>IEC</td>
<td>International Electrotechnical Commission</td>
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<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
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<td>ISO</td>
<td>International Standards Organisation</td>
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<td>NBI</td>
<td>National Business Incubator</td>
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<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organisation of African Unity</td>
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<tr>
<td>ODA</td>
<td>Overseas Development Assistance</td>
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<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>PPP</td>
<td>Public-Private Partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>PRSP</td>
<td>Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>RETOSA</td>
<td>Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa</td>
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<td>SADC</td>
<td>Southern African Development Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBT</td>
<td>Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIPO</td>
<td>World Intellectual Property Organisation</td>
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<td>WTO</td>
<td>World Trade Organisation</td>
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CONSTITUTIVE ACT OF THE AFRICAN UNION

We, Heads of State and Government of the Member States of the Organization of African Unity (OAU):

1. The President of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria
2. The President of the Republic of Angola
3. The President of the Republic of Benin
4. The President of the Republic of Botswana
5. The President of Burkina Faso
6. The President of the Republic of Burundi
7. The President of the Republic of Cameroon
8. The President of the Republic of Cape Verde
9. The President of the Central African Republic
10. The President of the Republic of Chad
11. The President of the Islamic Federal Republic of the Comoros
12. The President of the Republic of the Congo
13. The President of the Republic of Côte d’Ivoire
14. The President of the Democratic Republic of Congo
15. The President of the Republic of Djibouti
16. The President of the Arab Republic of Egypt
17. The President of the State of Eritrea
18. The Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
19. The President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea
20. The President of the Gabonese Republic
21. The President of the Republic of The Gambia
22. The President of the Republic of Ghana
23. The President of the Republic of Guinea
24. The President of the Republic of Guinea Bissau
25. The President of the Republic of Kenya
26. The Prime Minister of Lesotho
27. The President of the Republic of Liberia
28. The Leader of the 1st of September Revolution of the Great Socialist People’s Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
29. The President of the Republic of Madagascar
30. The President of the Republic of Malawi
31. The President of the Republic of Mali
32. The President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania
33. The Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius
34. The President of the Republic of Mozambique
35. The President of the Republic of Namibia
36. The President of the Republic of Niger
37. The President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria
38. The President of the Republic of Rwanda
39. The President of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic
40. The President of the Republic of Sao Tome and Principe
41. The President of the Republic of Senegal
42. The President of the Republic of Seychelles
43. The President of the Republic of Sierra Leone
44. The President of the Republic of Somalia
45. The President of the Republic of South Africa
46. The President of the Republic of Sudan
47. The King of Swaziland
48. The President of the United Republic of Tanzania
49. The President of the Togolese Republic
50. The President of the Republic of Tunisia
51. The President of the Republic of Uganda
52. The President of the Republic of Zambia
53. The President of the Republic of Zimbabwe

INSPIRED by the noble ideals, which guided the founding fathers of our Continental Organization and generations of Pan-Africanists in their determination to promote unity, solidarity, cohesion and cooperation among the peoples of Africa and African States;

CONSIDERING the principles and objectives stated in the Charter of the Organization of African Unity and the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community;

RECALLING the heroic struggles waged by our peoples and our countries for political independence, human dignity and economic emancipation;

CONSIDERING that since its inception, the Organization of African Unity has played a determining and invaluable role in the liberation of the continent, the affirmation of a common identity and the process of attainment of the unity of our continent and has provided a unique framework for our collective action in Africa and in our relations with the rest of the world.

DETERMINED to take up the multifaceted challenges that confront our continent and peoples in the light of the social, economic and political changes taking place in the world;

CONVINCED of the need to accelerate the process of implementing the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community in order to promote the socio-economic development of Africa and to face more effectively the challenges posed by globalization;

GUIDED by our common vision of a united and strong Africa and by the need to build a partnership between governments and all segments of civil society, in particular women, youth and the private sector, in order to strengthen solidarity and cohesion among our peoples;

CONSCIOUS of the fact that the scourge of conflicts in Africa constitutes a major impediment to the socio-economic development of the continent and of the need to promote peace, security and stability as a prerequisite for the implementation of our development and integration agenda;

DETERMINED to promote and protect human and peoples’ rights, consolidate democratic institutions and culture, and to ensure good governance and the rule of law;

FURTHER DETERMINED to take all necessary measures to strengthen our common institutions and
provide them with the necessary powers and resources to enable them discharge their respective mandates effectively;

RECALLING the Declaration which we adopted at the Fourth Extraordinary Session of our Assembly in Sirte, the Great Socialist People’s Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on 9.9.99, in which we decided to establish an African Union, in conformity with the ultimate objectives of the Charter of our Continental Organization and the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community;

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1
Definitions
In this Constitutive Act:
“Act” means the present Constitutive Act;
“AEC” means the African Economic Community;
“Assembly” means the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Union;
“Charter” means the Charter of the OAU;
“Commission” means the Secretariat of the Union;
“Committee” means a Specialized Technical Committee of the Union;
“Council” means the Economic, Social and Cultural Council of the Union;
“Court” means the Court of Justice of the Union;
“Executive Council” means the Executive Council of Ministers of the Union;
“Member State” means a Member State of the Union;
“OAU” means the Organization of African Unity;
“Parliament” means the Pan-African Parliament of the Union;
“Union” means the African Union established by the present Constitutive Act.

Article 2
Establishment
The African Union is hereby established in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

Article 3
Objectives
The objectives of the Union shall be to:
(a) achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa;
(b) defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States;
(c) accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent;
(d) promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples;
(e) encourage international cooperation, taking due account of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
(f) promote peace, security, and stability on the continent;
(g) promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance;
(h) promote and protect human and peoples’ rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and other relevant human rights instruments;
(i) establish the necessary conditions which enable the continent to play its rightful role in the global economy and in international negotiations;
(j) promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies;
(k) promote co-operation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of African peoples;
(l) coordinate and harmonize the policies between the existing and future Regional Economic Communities for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the Union;
(m) advance the development of the continent by promoting research in all fields, in particular in science and technology;
(n) work with relevant international partners in the eradication of preventable diseases and the promotion of good health on the continent.

Article 4
Principles
The Union shall function in accordance with the following principles:
(a) sovereign equality and interdependence among Member States of the Union;
(b) respect of borders existing on achievement of independence;
(c) participation of the African peoples in the activities of the Union;
(d) establishment of a common defence policy for the African Continent;
(e) peaceful resolution of conflicts among Member States of the Union through such appropriate means as may be decided upon by the Assembly;
(f) prohibition of the use of force or threat to use force among Member States of the Union;
(g) non-interference by any Member State in the internal affairs of another;
(h) the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity;
(i) peaceful co-existence of Member States and their right to live in peace and security;
(j) the right of Member States to request intervention from the Union in order to restore peace and security;
(k) promotion of self-reliance within the framework of the Union;
(l) promotion of gender equality;
(m) respect for democratic principles, human rights, the rule of law and good governance;
(n) promotion of social justice to ensure balanced economic development;
(o) respect for the sanctity of human life, condemnation and rejection of impunity and political assassination, acts of terrorism and subversive activities;
(p) condemnation and rejection of unconstitutional changes of governments.

Article 5
Organs of the Union
1. The organs of the Union shall be:
(a) The Assembly of the Union;
(b) The Executive Council;
(c) The Pan-African Parliament;
(d) The Court of Justice;
(e) The Commission;
(f) The Permanent Representatives Committee;
(g) The Specialized Technical Committees;
(h) The Economic, Social and Cultural Council;
(i) The Financial Institutions;
2. Other organs that the Assembly may decide to establish.

Article 6
The Assembly
1. The Assembly shall be composed of Heads of States and Government or their duly accredited representatives.
2. The Assembly shall be the supreme organ of the Union.
3. The Assembly shall meet at least once a year in ordinary session. At the request of any Member State and on approval by a two-thirds majority of the Member States, the Assembly shall meet in extraordinary session.
4. The Office of the Chairman of the Assembly shall be held for a period of one year by a Head of State or Government elected after consultations among the Member States.

Article 7
Decisions of the Assembly
1. The Assembly shall take its decisions by consensus or, failing which, by a two-thirds majority of the Member States of the Union. However, procedural matters, including the question of whether a matter is one of procedure or not, shall be decided by a simple majority.
2. Two-thirds of the total membership of the Union shall form a quorum at any meeting of the Assembly.

Article 8
Rules of Procedure of the Assembly
The Assembly shall adopt its own Rules of Procedure.

Article 9
Powers and Functions of the Assembly
1. The functions of the Assembly shall be to:
(a) determine the common policies of the Union;
(b) receive, consider and take decisions on reports and recommendations from the other organs of the Union;
(c) consider requests for Membership of the Union;
(d) establish any organ of the Union;
(e) monitor the implementation of policies and decisions of the Union as well ensure compliance by all Member States;
(f) adopt the budget of the Union;
(g) give directives to the Executive Council on the management of conflicts, war and other emergency situations and the restoration of peace;
(h) appoint and terminate the appointment of the judges of the Court of Justice;
(i) appoint the Chairman of the Commission and his or her deputy or deputies and Commissioners of the Commission and determine their functions and terms of office.
2. The Assembly may delegate any of its powers and functions to any organ of the Union.

Article 10
The Executive Council
1. The Executive Council shall be composed of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs or such other Ministers or Authorities as are designated by the Governments of Member States.
2. The Executive Council shall meet at least twice a year in ordinary session. It shall also meet in an extra-ordinary session at the request of any Member State and upon approval by two-thirds of all Member States.

Article 11
Decisions of the Executive Council
1. The Executive Council shall take its decisions by consensus or, failing which, by a two-thirds majority of the Member States. However, procedural matters, including the question of whether a matter is one of procedure or not, shall be decided by a simple majority.
2. Two-thirds of the total membership of the Union shall form a quorum at any meeting of the Executive Council.

Article 12
Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council
The Executive Council shall adopt its own Rules of Procedure.

Article 13
Functions of the Executive Council
1. The Executive Council shall coordinate and take decisions on policies in areas of common interest to
the Member States, including the following:
(a) foreign trade;
(b) energy, industry and mineral resources;
(c) food, agricultural and animal resources, livestock production and forestry;
(d) water resources and irrigation;
(e) environmental protection, humanitarian action and disaster response and relief;
(f) transport and communications;
(g) insurance;
(h) education, culture, health and human resources development;
(i) science and technology;
(j) nationality, residency and immigration matters;
(k) social security, including the formulation of mother and child care policies, as well as policies relating to the disabled and the handicapped;
(l) establishment of a system of African awards, medals and prizes.

2. The Executive Council shall be responsible to the Assembly. It shall consider issues referred to it and monitor the implementation of policies formulated by the Assembly.

3. The Executive Council may delegate any of its powers and functions mentioned in paragraph 1 of this Article to the Specialized Technical Committees established under Article 14 of this Act.

Article 14
The Specialized Technical Committees

Establishment and Composition
1. There is hereby established the following Specialized Technical Committees, which shall be responsible to the Executive Council:
(a) The Committee on Rural Economy and Agricultural Matters;
(b) The Committee on Monetary and Financial Affairs;
(c) The Committee on Trade, Customs and Immigration Matters;
(d) The Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, Energy, Natural Resources and Environment;
(e) The Committee on Transport, Communications and Tourism;
(f) The Committee on Health, Labour and Social Affairs; and
(g) The Committee on Education, Culture and Human Resources.

2. The Assembly shall, whenever it deems appropriate, restructure the existing Committees or establish other Committees.

3. The Specialized Technical Committees shall be composed of Ministers or senior officials responsible for sectors falling within their respective areas of competence.

Article 15
Functions of the Specialized Technical Committees
Each Committee shall within its field of competence:
(a) prepare projects and programmes of the Union and submit it to the Executive Council;
(b) ensure the supervision, follow-up and the evaluation of the implementation of decisions taken by the organs of the Union;
(c) ensure the coordination and harmonization of projects and programmes of the Union;
(d) submit to the Executive Council either on its own initiative or at the request of the Executive Council, reports and recommendations on the implementation of the provisions of this Act; and
(e) carry out any other functions assigned to it for the purpose of ensuring the implementation of the provisions of this Act.

Article 16
Meetings
Subject to any directives given by the Executive Council, each Committee shall meet as often as necessary and shall prepare its Rules of Procedure and submit them to the Executive Council for approval.

Article 17
The Pan-African Parliament
1. In order to ensure the full participation of African peoples in the development and economic integration of the continent, a Pan-African Parliament shall be established.

2. The composition, powers, functions and organization of the Pan-African Parliament shall be defined in a protocol relating thereto.

3.
Union, which shall be the Secretariat of the Union.
2. The Commission shall be composed of the Chairman, his or her deputy or deputies and the Commissioners. They shall be assisted by the necessary staff for the smooth functioning of the Commission.
3. The structure, functions and regulations of the Commission shall be determined by the Assembly.

Article 21
The Permanent Representatives Committee
1. There shall be established a Permanent Representatives Committee. It shall be composed of Permanent Representatives to the Union and other Plenipotentiaries of Member States.
2. The Permanent Representatives Committee shall be charged with the responsibility of preparing the work of the Executive Council and acting on the Executive Council’s instructions. It may set up such sub-committees or working groups as it may deem necessary.

Article 22
The Economic, Social and Cultural Council
1. The Economic, Social and Cultural Council shall be an advisory organ composed of different social and professional groups of the Member States of the Union.
2. The functions, powers, composition and organization of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council shall be determined by the Assembly.

Article 23
Imposition of Sanctions
1. The Assembly shall determine the appropriate sanctions to be imposed on any Member State that defaults in the payment of its contributions to the budget of the Union in the following manner: denial of the right to speak at meetings, to vote, to present candidates for any position or post within the Union or to benefit from any activity or commitments, therefrom;
2. Furthermore, any Member State that fails to comply with the decisions and policies of the Union may be subjected to other sanctions, such as the denial of transport and communications links with other Member States, and other measures of a political and economic nature to be determined by the Assembly.

Article 24
The Headquarters of the Union
1. The Headquarters of the Union shall be in Addis Ababa in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia.
2. There may be established such other offices of the Union as the Assembly may, on the recommendation of the Executive Council, determine.

Article 25
Working Languages
The working languages of the Union and all its institutions shall be, if possible, African languages, Arabic, English, French and Portuguese.

Article 26
Interpretation
The Court shall be seized with matters of interpretation arising from the application or implementation of this Act. Pending its establishment, such matters shall be submitted to the Assembly of the Union, which shall decide by a two-thirds majority.

Article 27
Signature, Ratification and Accession
1. This Act shall be open to signature, ratification and accession by the Member States of the OAU in accordance with their respective constitutional procedures.
2. The instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the OAU.
3. Any Member State of the OAU acceding to this Act after its entry into force shall deposit the instrument of accession with the Chairman of the Commission.

Article 28
Entry into Force
This Act shall enter into force thirty (30) days after the deposit of the instruments of ratification by two-thirds of the Member States of the OAU.

Article 29
Admission to Membership
1. Any African State may, at any time after the entry into force of this Act, notify the Chairman of the Commission of its intention to accede to this Act and to be admitted as a member of the Union.
2. The Chairman of the Commission shall, upon receipt of such notification, transmit copies thereof to all Member States. Admission shall be decided by a simple majority of the Member States. The decision of each Member State shall be transmitted to the Chairman of the Commission who shall, upon receipt of the required number of votes, communicate the decision to the State concerned.

Article 30
Suspension
Governments which shall come to power through unconstitutional means shall not be allowed to participate in the activities of the Union.

Article 31
Cessation of Membership
1. Any State which desires to renounce its membership shall forward a written notification to the
Chairman of the Commission, who shall inform Member States thereof. At the end of one year from the date of such notification, if not withdrawn, the Act shall cease to apply with respect to the renouncing State, which shall thereby cease to belong to the Union.

2. During the period of one year referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article, any Member State wishing to withdraw from the Union shall comply with the provisions of this Act and shall be bound to discharge its obligations under this Act up to the date of its withdrawal.

Article 32
Amendment and Revision
1. Any Member State may submit proposals for the amendment or revision of this Act.
2. Proposals for amendment or revision shall be submitted to the Chairman of the Commission who shall transmit same to Member States within thirty (30) days of receipt thereof.
3. The Assembly, upon the advice of the Executive Council, shall examine these proposals within a period of one year following notification of Member States, in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 2 of this Article;
4. Amendments or revisions shall be adopted by the Assembly by consensus or, failing which, by a two-thirds majority and submitted for ratification by all Member States in accordance with their respective constitutional procedures. They shall enter into force thirty (30) days after the deposit of the instruments of ratification with the Chairman of the Commission by a two-thirds majority of the Member States.

Article 33
Transitional Arrangements and Final Provisions
1. This Act shall replace the Charter of the Organization of African Unity. However, the Charter shall remain operative for a transitional period of one year or such further period as may be determined by the Assembly, following the entry into force of the Act, for the purpose of enabling the OAU/AEC to undertake the necessary measures regarding the devolution of its assets and liabilities to the Union and all matters relating thereto.
2. The provisions of this Act shall take precedence over and supersede any inconsistent or contrary provisions of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community.
3. Upon the entry into force of this Act, all necessary measures shall be undertaken to implement its provisions and to ensure the establishment of the organs provided for under the Act in accordance with any directives or decisions which may be adopted in this regard by the Parties thereto within the transitional period stipulated above.
4. Pending the establishment of the Commission, the OAU General Secretariat shall be the interim Secretariat of the Union.
5. This Act, drawn up in four (4) original texts in the Arabic, English, French and Portuguese languages, all four (4) being equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the OAU and, after its entry into force, with the Chairman of the Commission who shall transmit a certified true copy of the Act to the Government of each signatory State. The Secretary-General of the OAU and the Chairman of the Commission shall notify all signatory States of the dates of the deposit of the instruments of ratification or accession and shall upon entry into force of this Act register the same with the Secretariat of the United Nations.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, WE have adopted this Act.
Done at Lome, Togo, this 11th day of July, 2000.
CONSTITUTIVE ACT OF THE AFRICAN UNION
ADOPTED BY THE THIRTY-SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE ASSEMBLY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT
11 JULY, 2000 – LOME, TOGO