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Statutory issues

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

I. Introduction

1. The present report contains a summary of the support extended during the period April 2022–March 2023 by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and other entities of the United Nations development system working in Africa to the African Union and the African Union Development Agency, which administers the New Partnership for Africa's Development programme. It covers the implementation of African Union priorities at the regional and subregional levels, including those set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union.

2. The present report is set out in five sections. Following the introduction in section I, section II contains an overview of the assistance provided through the Regional Collaborative Platform for Africa, as part of the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in the context of the meeting of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission that was held on 1 December 2022. Section III contains highlights of the major activities conducted under programme 9 of the proposed programme budget for 2022 (A/76/6 (Sect. 11)), together with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the Department of Global Communications, in the work undertaken to deliver on the African development agenda. Section IV contains details from a report on the ongoing efforts made by ECA and the African Union Development Agency to operationalize the 2021 revised memorandum of understanding signed by the two organizations on advancing an integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. To conclude, challenges and lessons learned during the reporting period are addressed in section V.

* E/ECA/COE/41/1.



II. Regional Collaborative Platform for Africa and the United Nations-African Union development framework

3. During the reporting period, the Regional Collaborative Platform for Africa and its opportunity and issues-based coalitions continued to support the continent's development and transformation process in the context of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. The Platform also worked towards implementing a number of recommendations outlined in the report of the Secretary-General on repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda (A/72/684-E/2018/7), in particular through its work to develop the Africa regional knowledge management hub, to enhance transparency and results-based management at the regional level and to make the United Nations development system more efficient through streamlined operating practices and the consolidation of back offices, which resulted in both efficiency gains and higher quality services.

4. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Development Coordination Office, and ECA, serving as the joint secretariat of the Platform, have continued to ensure the provision of administrative, logistical and organizational support to the Platform and to its Chair and Vice-Chairs.

5. The following work and key achievements of the Platform during the reporting period were noted:

(a) During the annual meeting of the Platform, which was held in Nairobi on 28 February 2022, a survey of the needs of the resident coordinators was presented and priority areas for the Platform for 2022 – data and statistics, digitalization, climate action, macroeconomic policies, including debt management, recovery from coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and regional trade, in particular in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area – were decided upon;

(b) The African Union-United Nations Regional Collaborative Platform held its inaugural meeting on 23 June 2022 with the aim of engaging in strategic reflection on the United Nations-African Union Commission partnership to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In addition to the establishment of working modalities to improve collaboration and efficiency, other outcomes of the meeting included the identification of the following six priority areas, which were adopted and formed the basis of a joint workplan:

- (i) Climate change;
- (ii) Trade, macroeconomic frameworks, debt and economic diversification, including through the African Continental Free Trade Area ;
- (iii) Digital transformation, data and statistics;
- (iv) Food sustainability;
- (v) Humanitarian issues;
- (vi) COVID-19 and transboundary issues;

(c) Initially, the Platform consisted of seven opportunity and issues-based coalitions and three task forces. An eighth coalition, “subregional initiatives”, was formally established at the beginning of 2022 to focus on initiatives of a cross-border nature. A decision was taken by the Platform at a retreat in Dakar in November 2022 to streamline the number of coalitions from eight to six. Coalitions 3 and 4 will be merged to consolidate work on education, innovation and digitalization, with a specific focus on young people, and coalitions 6 and 7 will form one coalition focused on peace, security, human rights and forced displacement. The coalitions formed from the mergers (i.e. coalitions 3 and 5, respectively) will start operating in 2023 following the preparation of workplans that reflect the consolidated areas of focus.

6. The following subsections highlight selected activities undertaken by the coalitions during the period under review.

A. Opportunity and issues-based coalition 1: strengthened integrated data and statistical systems for sustainable development

7. Coalition 1, which is convened jointly by ECA and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), has been working with the Statistics Division of the African Union Commission to strengthen civil registration and vital statistics under the umbrella of the Strategy for the Harmonization of Statistics in Africa. Technical assistance on digital census services was provided to nine countries (Liberia, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, Togo, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe), along with an opportunity to select an African Union data champion at the level of Head of State or Government to promote the development of a data-centred culture and strengthen data capacity in member States. The coalition also supported the African Union Institute for Statistics in organizing the sixth session of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration, held in Addis Ababa in October 2022.

8. Country-level support by the coalition included the development of an inter-agency data platform in the Niger. It also included the provision of support by United Nations country teams to the Governments of Botswana and Eritrea in preparing their 2022 voluntary national review reports, using both national and United Nations data to strengthen the evidence base in the overall analysis.

B. Opportunity and issues-based coalition 2: ensuring effective and efficient macroeconomic management and accelerated inclusive economic transformation and diversification

9. Coalition 2 is co-convened by ECA, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and UNDP. The coalition focused heavily on the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, which presents a great opportunity for African countries to deepen regional integration and foster intra-African trade to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 17, to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, and especially targets 17.10 (to promote a universal trading system), 17.11 (to increase the exports of developing countries) and 17.12. (to realize the timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access for all least developed countries).

10. At present, ECA is carrying out an assessment of the continent's readiness for a single digital market, focusing on the capacity of countries to work together towards the harmonization of the laws that would further the realization of such a market. A framework for the single digital market will be submitted for endorsement by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in 2023. ECA has continued to support the African Union on trade and regional integration. A total of 28 national strategies for the African Continental Free Trade Area strategies were developed to support countries in their efforts to properly position themselves to make the most of regional trade integration.

11. The African Continental Free Trade Area country business index, led by ECA, was finalized as one of the tools to capture private sector opinions on the implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area and was rolled out in 13 countries.

12. ECA and the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank), in collaboration with the African Union and the secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Area, have developed a digital business-to-business and business-to-government exchange platform known as the African trade exchange platform. Launched on 16 May 2022, the exchange platform is connected to the digital system supporting the implementation of the Agreement, including the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System.

13. Through the Partnerships for African Vaccine Manufacturing initiative, in which ECA led the market design and demand intelligence workstream, there are continued efforts to develop and manufacture vaccines in Africa. A framework for action in respect of the initiative was published in March 2022.

14. COVID-19 response strategies have been incorporated through a trade lens as part of the national and subregional strategies for the African Continental Free Trade Area that were developed with support from coalition 2 by the Governments of Botswana, the Central African Republic, the Comoros, Djibouti, Sao Tome and Principe and South Sudan and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

15. In March 2022, in-person training workshops were held in Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ghana and Zambia to assist national experts in estimating illicit financial flows. Hybrid national training workshops were conducted jointly with ECA in Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa.

16. ECA, working with the African Union and other key partners (such as the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)), supported initiatives to establish a common agro-industrial park between Zambia and Zimbabwe.

C. Opportunity and issues-based coalition 3: harnessing demographic dividends through investments in youth and women's empowerment (health, education and employment) for sustainable development

17. Coalition 3 is co-convened by the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNFPA and the World Health Organization (WHO). UNESCO, the World Food Programme and the European Union, in partnership with the African Union, co-convened a high-level side event in New York on 20 September 2022 on the margins of the Transforming Education Summit and the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly. The event featured a declaration on an African vision and priorities for transforming education in Africa.

18. ECA collaborated with the Women, Gender and Youth Directorate of the African Union Commission, the Office of the Special Envoy of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Women, Peace and Security, and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to support the President of Ghana, Nana Akufo-Addo, in his capacity as the African Union champion for gender equality in Africa. A road map for the period 2022–2025 was prepared under the initiative of the African Union to enhance the financial and economic inclusion of women and youth on the continent. ECA, UN-Women and UNDP provided technical and financial support to the African Union Commission Specialized Technical Committee on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in convening African ministerial consultations in the fourth quarter of 2022 in preparation for the sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

19. The Spotlight Initiative Africa Regional Programme is being implemented in collaboration with the African Union Commission, UNFPA, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN-Women and UNDP, with funding from the

European Union. The initiative provides a regional response to addressing sexual and gender-based violence, harmful practices and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Collaboration with the eight Spotlight countries¹ has continued. At the continental level, an accountability framework on harmful practices was developed and endorsed at the fourth ordinary session of the African Union Commission Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment, held from 4 to 8 April 2022.

20. In Rwanda, through United Nations technical support and in collaboration with the National Institute of Statistics and the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources, the 2021 comprehensive food security and vulnerability analysis report was produced, highlighting the decrease in food security since 2018 and the impact of shocks, including COVID-19, on household food security.

21. The United Nations country team, with technical assistance from coalition 3, has continued to support the Government of South Sudan in enhancing its productive sectors and in following up on the commitments it made during the United Nations Food Systems Summit, which was held in a virtual format on 23 September 2021.

D. Opportunity and issues-based coalition 4: leveraging new technologies and enabling digital transitions for inclusive growth and development

22. Coalition 4 is co-convened by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and WHO. In 2022, it focused on leveraging the assets of the United Nations system to support countries in their efforts to harness, adopt and sustainably scale technological and digital innovations for inclusive growth, skills development, job creation and overall socioeconomic development.

23. During the period under review, the coalition engaged with United Nations country teams in 17 African countries.² The country teams provided a wide range of support, including technical assistance in designing digital strategies and in assessing policies on technological solutions; analytical support in addressing gaps in data on the Sustainable Development Goals; building capacity to use digital tools and big data; and assistance in carrying out data analysis for socioeconomic recovery.

24. Following the World Telecommunication Development Conference, held in Kigali in June 2022, there was an emergence of digital transformation projects, such as the Giga initiative, created by ITU and UNICEF with the aim of connecting all schools to the Internet.

25. ECA is part of a task force of the African Union Commission on artificial intelligence and contributes to the ongoing process for coming up with a governance framework on artificial intelligence. The emergence of the concept of “artificial intelligence for health” has generated recommendations for the use of artificial intelligence in the health domain in Africa.

E. Opportunity and issues-based coalition 5: fostering climate action and resilience

26. Coalition 5 is co-convened by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UNESCO. It was established in order to drive the work of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Africa on fostering action on climate change, strengthening natural

¹ Liberia, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

² Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Cabo Verde, Egypt, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Togo, United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe.

resources governance, strengthening resilience and enabling energy transitions for sustainable development.

27. Working closely with the African Union Commission, the coalition assessed a report on progress made at the regional and country levels, including in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Nigeria and Senegal, in the African Union Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 in Africa.

28. The Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa is a flagship event of the Climate for Development in Africa initiative, a partnership of the African Union Commission, ECA and the African Development Bank. It has given impetus to Africa to redouble its efforts in confronting the challenges caused by climate change in most development sectors. The outcome document of the tenth Conference, held in Windhoek from 24 to 28 October 2022, was disseminated widely to Governments for uptake and implementation in readiness for the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in November 2022.

29. ECA has played a major role as a member of coalition 5. The Commission is one of the co-authors of the African common position on energy access and transition, which was adopted by the African Union Commission Specialized Technical Committee on Transport, Transcontinental and Interregional Infrastructure, and Energy in June 2022 and endorsed by the Executive Council of the African Union at its forty-first ordinary session, held in July 2022 (see EX.CL/Dec.1169(XLI)). The African Union Commission and the African Energy Commission, together with ECA and the African Development Bank, have continued to assist countries in their efforts to develop national energy transition master plans and resource mobilization strategies to accelerate implementation towards a low-carbon, climate-resilient trajectory.

30. The coalition, under the leadership of ECA, facilitated consultations among the African Group of Negotiators, the African Union Commission and diplomats based in Addis Ababa, to enhance cohesion on the common position at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties. This engagement provided an opportunity for participants to increase their understanding of the nuances of a just energy transition and the need for country-specific transition plans based around the imperative of achieving universal energy access.

31. The African Union Commission, the African Union Development Agency, ECA and the African Development Bank have been mandated to organize an Africa Pavilion at the sessions of the Conference of the Parties, following a decision made by the Heads of State and Government at the sixteenth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in 2011 (see Assembly/AU/Dec.342(XVI)). The Pavilion functions as a venue for African countries, regional institutions and partners to converge for events on regional priorities. ECA played a leading role in organizing the Pavilion at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties.

32. In August 2022, ECA organized a round table on climate finance in Addis Ababa, in partnership with the Presidency of the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties, the United Nations high-level champions for climate change, the African Union Commission, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources and the Boston Consulting Group. Deliberations on catalytic mechanisms to mobilize climate finance investment and involve the private sector in building climate resilience and advancing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 led to a pipeline of more than 200 high-potential investment projects (including 30 prioritized projects) with the potential to bolster climate investment in Africa and to help catalyse additional investment.

33. ECA will continue to support the three African climate commissions (for the Congo basin, small island developing States and the Sahel) established during the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties. The work of the commissions

was highlighted at the meeting of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change held on 6 February 2022.

34. The African Union Commission, UNEP, ECA and other members of the African Union Commission-led regional expert working group on the circular economy have developed regional guidelines, including on plastics management in Africa. These guidelines, due to be launched at the 2023 World Circular Economy Forum, will drive actions for climate resilience and green growth, foster resource efficiency and stem waste generation.

35. On conserving biodiversity in Africa, ECA has been collaborating with the African Union Commission through the latter's Directorate of Sustainable Environment and Blue Economy and with the support of the African Group of Negotiators to strengthen the continent's commitment to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, and to advancing its biodiversity agenda and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

F. Opportunity and issues-based coalition 6: peace, security and respect for human rights

36. Coalition 6 is co-convened by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and UNDP. It provides targeted support to the African Union, regional economic communities, regional mechanisms and member States in building their capacity to prevent conflict, address its root causes and sustain peace.

37. In this context, OHCHR worked with the Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department of the African Union to develop an infographic on women's participation in peace processes in Africa. The infographic showed the progress made in implementing the women and peace and security agenda at the national, subregional and continental levels, and laid out State obligations to increase women's participation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. UNDP developed a plan for initiating a conflict prevention project with the Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department.

38. In addition, under the framework of a joint project between UNODC and UNESCO on women leadership in the prevention and fight against violent extremism, a photo exhibition was organized in Mauritania to highlight the work of Mauritanian and Sahelian women in the defence, security and justice sectors. UNODC established a network of 1,800 young "weavers of peace" as part of the implementation of a joint programme for peace and justice through the Peacebuilding Fund in cross-border areas of Cameroon, Chad and Gabon to make them agents for consolidating peace in those areas and preventing instability linked to illicit trafficking.

39. The coalition provided support to the African Union Commission and regional economic communities in integrating human rights into early warning systems with a view to ensuring compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law and enhancing the protection of civilians. OHCHR, in partnership with the World Bank, reinforced operational linkages between the African Union Commission's conflict prevention and conflict response instruments and those of regional economic communities, national policymakers and national civil society networks, while integrating human rights-based approaches into data-handling.

40. UNDP worked with the African Union, ECOWAS, the East African Community and the Southern African Development Community, along with Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal and Tunisia, to implement interventions to address the challenges and bottlenecks associated with the ratification, national adaptation and implementation of African Union treaties, and to

help enhance the capacity of the African Union and member States to implement ratified treaties.

G. Opportunity and issues-based coalition 7: forced displacement and migration

41. Coalition 7 is co-convened by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). It serves as a forum to mobilize rights-based advocacy to redress discriminatory practices directed at the forcibly displaced and migrant populations, including in detention and in conflict, non-conflict and natural disaster settings.

42. United Nations system-wide regional support was provided for the further ratification of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, which was adopted in Kampala in 2009 and currently has 40 signatures and 31 ratifications.

43. An inter-agency, interpillar predictive analytics project was initiated to enhance coordination on data and strengthen preparedness in the wake of the growing and interconnected risks in the Sahel. The project galvanized a consortium of 18 world-leading research partners, working on the key drivers of vulnerability and ways to strengthen climate resilience, with a focus on the nexus between humanitarian needs, sustainable development and peacebuilding, and its impact on affected populations. The project is intended to support the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel and the work of the Special Coordinator for Development in the Sahel.

44. Coalition 7 also coordinated the launch of a regional migration-response plan, aimed at addressing the humanitarian, development and protection needs of migrants, including transiting migrants, stranded migrants, settled migrants and returnees, along the eastern migratory route between the Horn of Africa and Yemen, through a multi-partner, multi-year response plan.

45. Through coalition 7, IOM and UNHCR brought together government officials from Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania and Togo, along with regional bodies to devise comprehensive solutions for the situation of refugees from Côte d'Ivoire. The participating Governments committed in a joint declaration in Abidjan to take specific measures to facilitate the implementation of a durable solution for such refugees in the subregion.

H. Opportunity and issues-based coalition: subregional initiatives

46. The coalition on subregional initiatives was established to harmonize the political workstreams of the regional development entities under the leadership of the special representatives and the special envoys of the Secretary-General operating on the continent. The work of the coalition will be light and based on an on-demand framework that will strengthen cross-pillar collaboration between the special envoys and special representatives working on critical political and related strategies on the one hand, and regional directors of the United Nations development system through the Regional Collaborative Platform for Africa on the other hand.

47. Members of the coalition will work together through regular high-level engagements, conducting joint assessment missions and providing analytical guidance to other coalitions on emerging issues. Membership will be inclusive, rotational, multidimensional, multisectoral, service-oriented and country-focused. The special representatives and special envoys have insisted on the need to focus on the added value of the coalition, while avoiding procedural redundancy and overlaps.

I. Task force 2: regional knowledge management hub

48. In addition to the achievements of the eight coalitions, taskforce 2 reported that the United Nations Africa Knowledge Hub Expertise Repository was ready for service.³ The repository enables the United Nations development system to maintain a dynamic list of experts working for the United Nations across Africa. Once it is fully populated, it will provide a view of existing experts and expertise in the United Nations development system. The list of communities of practice for the opportunity and issues-based coalitions is also ready and provides a platform for online collaboration.⁴

49. The United Nations Africa Regional Knowledge Hub on COVID-19 won the World Summit on Information Society 2022 prize as one of the champion projects in the category for international and regional cooperation. The platform was developed by the Regional Collaborative Platform for Africa, with opportunity and issues-based coalition 1 serving as the anchor and ECA and UNFPA playing lead roles in its operation.

J. African Union-United Nations annual conference

50. ECA and other United Nations agencies collaborated in preparing the sixth African Union-United Nations annual conference, held in Addis Ababa on 1 December 2022. The teams prepared the background notes and provided substantive reports on joint progress made during the reporting year. The Chairperson of the African Union Commission and the Secretary-General of the United Nations reviewed the progress made towards implementing the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security and the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The two principals hailed the achievements and acknowledged the recent global developments that had set back peace, security and development efforts.

51. The Chairperson and the Secretary-General welcomed the recent peace negotiation developments in Ethiopia and reviewed current crises in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region, including the transitions in Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Mali and the Sudan. They also discussed the effects of droughts and conflicts on the various internally displaced populations throughout the continent.

52. The Chairperson and the Secretary-General renewed their commitment to predictable and flexible financing solutions for the African Union-led peace support operations authorized by the Security Council, including through access to United Nations-assessed contributions.

53. Notwithstanding the current challenges faced in Africa, the Chairperson and the Secretary-General both agreed that the circumstances provided opportunities for ongoing development and future economic recovery.

³ The repository is available at <https://expertise.africakm.un.org/>.

⁴ See <https://expertise.africakm.un.org/OIBC>.

III. Working together to deliver for Africa: highlights of major joint activities involving United Nations support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development programme

A. Joint delivery of the Africa Dialogue Series

54. In 2022, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa joined forces with UNESCO, the Department of Global Communications, ECA and the African Union Commission as members of the preparatory working group for the organization of the fifth edition of the Africa Dialogue Series – a signature event of the Office of the Special Adviser.

55. The flagship event was held from 3 to 27 May 2022 under the theme “Building resilience in nutrition: accelerating Africa’s human capital and socioeconomic development”. The theme was in line with the African Union’s theme of the year “Strengthening resilience in nutrition and food security on the African continent: strengthening agrifood systems, health and social protection systems for the acceleration of human, social and economic capital development”.

56. On 24 May 2022, ECA jointly organized an international webinar with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, the Department of Global Communications, the African Union Development Agency and the African Union as an integral part of the annual Africa Dialogue Series. The theme of the webinar was “Human capital development, climate, energy and food systems”.

B. Promoting the linkages among the development, peace and security, human rights and humanitarian pillars to deliver on the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 in Africa

57. Building on the initiative by ECA and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa to conduct regional studies on the linkages among the development, peace and security, human rights, humanitarian pillars, and the virtual subregional workshops organized in 2021 to review the reports on those studies, the African Union Commission organized a regional policy conference on promoting the peace, security and development nexus, held in Tangier, Morocco, from 25 to 27 October 2022. ECA and UNDP, together with the African Development Bank and Afreximbank, collaborated with the African Union in organizing the conference. The conference provided an opportunity to deliberate and make policy decisions on addressing the root causes of conflict and insecurity, and to establish a clear road map for the implementation of a pact for collective action towards building peace in Africa through the nexus of peace, security, governance and development.

58. As part of its contribution to the conference, ECA organized a pre-event policy dialogue entitled “Realizing the triple nexus and trade: towards a new agenda for Africa”, which brought together key stakeholders to discuss a background report on the role of trade in promoting peace, security and development in Africa, with a focus on the African Continental Free Trade Area. In addition, ECA organized a panel session entitled “Interlinking intra-African trade, industrialization and infrastructure development where the guns are silent” during the conference. A declaration was produced as a result of the conference, which will be presented to the Assembly of the African Union in February 2023. In the declaration, it was noted that development was central to attenuating conflicts and promoting peace in Africa and that the region’s accelerated growth should be promoted, and such partners as ECA, UNDP and the African Development Bank were called upon to continue to support the initiative.

IV. Work of the African Union Development Agency and the Economic Commission for Africa to advance the integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063

A. Memorandum of understanding

59. The African Union Development Agency and ECA signed a revised three-year memorandum of understanding at the African Union Office in New York on 26 September 2021, on the margins of the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly. The respective teams had met to establish the modalities of collaboration and the way forward in the six priority areas highlighted in the memorandum, the nine thematic clusters and the three focus groups.

60. During the reporting period, several joint initiatives were conducted by the heads of division of ECA and the African Union Development Agency. Some of the initiatives included the following:

(a) The African Climate Policy Centre, in collaboration with the Department of Infrastructure and Energy of the African Union Commission, worked with the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa to raise awareness and develop capacity to integrate climate resilience into the second phase of the Programme. Those who benefited from training included the African Union Development Agency staff working on the Programme and focal points of the Programme at the national level and in the regional economic communities;

(b) The Subregional Office for West Africa of ECA, in partnership with the African Union Development Agency, supported Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, the Niger, Senegal and ECOWAS in developing their national strategies for the African Continental Free Trade Area;

(c) ECA conducted projects with the African Union Development Agency on enhancing electricity market regulation in Africa to accelerate the participation of the private sector in infrastructure investment. The projects covered such areas as sustainable energy, the nexus among energy, water and food, the empowerment of rural communities, and energy and transport;

(d) ECA worked with the African Union Development Agency on the development and implementation of a continental framework for road safety. The entities worked to develop the post-2020 strategic directions for road safety and the African road safety action plan for the decade 2021–2030. In addition, the African Road Safety Observatory, a flagship project, has been launched and is in the process of collecting data from national data coordinators. A legal and institutional framework has been defined for the Observatory, along with a 10-year business plan;

(e) ECA also worked on a monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the assessments to identify gaps in implementing the Yamoussoukro Decision to liberalize African air transport through the establishment of the Single African Air Transport Market. Key performance indicators were developed by ECA and used to undertake assessments in Cabo Verde, Cameroon and Rwanda. The three countries have subsequently developed action plans to close gaps in implementing the Air Transport Market.

B. Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa Week

61. Since the first African Union Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa Week was held in Abidjan in 2015, it has not only grown into a key forum for accelerating infrastructure implementation in Africa, but has also become a means to

link infrastructure to the key themes of development, namely, regional integration, transformative economic growth and job creation.

62. In 2022, ECA and other United Nations entities supported the African Union Development Agency and the African Union Commission in organizing the seventh Week in a hybrid format, held in Nairobi from 28 February to 3 March under the theme “Putting Africa on a firm footing for recovery, growth and resilience through infrastructure”. The event brought together project partners, enabling stakeholders and project owners to discuss practical approaches to the realization of the Programme’s projects and financing strategies for the 69 projects under the second phase of the Programme’s priority action plan.

63. ECA contributed to deliberations in the following areas: (a) the Single African Air Transport Market and accelerating its implementation; (b) the investment potential of an extension of the Lamu Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia transport corridor to Central Africa and beyond; (c) the African Continental Free Trade Area and the demand for transport infrastructure and services; (d) enhancing climate resilience as part of projects under the second phase of the priority action plan through the Africa Climate Resilient Investment Facility; and (e) a working session on public-private partnerships for infrastructure projects based on initial findings from assessments in six countries (Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia).

64. In a communiqué, adopted at the conclusion of the seventh Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa Week, participants applauded ECA for its support and asked for the partnership to continue to provide technical support to flagship continental initiatives, in particular for the implementation of projects under the second phase of the priority action plan and flagship projects under Agenda 2063.

C. Promoting industrialization in Africa

65. ECA and UNIDO supported the African Union in organizing the Industrialization Week programme and the Summit on Industrialization and Economic Diversification, which were held in Niamey, from 20 to 25 November 2022. On the final day of the Summit, the participating Heads of State and Government made far-reaching decisions, including on accelerating commodity-based industrialization as an engine of growth and to promote economic diversification through regional value chains, investing massively in infrastructure and energy, ensuring sustainable financing for African industrialization, and urging member States to engage in regular dialogue with the private sector to promote strong public-private partnerships.

V. Conclusion: challenges and lessons learned

66. The African Union theme of the year for 2022 was “Strengthening resilience in nutrition and food security on the African continent: strengthening agrifood systems, health and social protection systems for the acceleration of human, social and economic capital development”. This has been a focus area for the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa as it continues to work closely with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the Africa Office of the Department of Global Communications.

67. In 2022, the Regional Collaborative Platform for Africa entered a new phase, characterized by efforts to rationalize its modus operandi in order to increase its effectiveness and efficiency. Following successive strategic meetings throughout the year, the consensus emerged that the opportunity and issues-based coalitions needed to be more responsive, issues-driven and time-bound. As a result, the coalitions have been consolidated from eight to six to respond more effectively to the pressing needs of the continent.

68. Collaboration with the African Union has been strengthened with the inauguration of the African Union-United Nations Regional Collaborative Platform meeting held in June 2022 and follow-up actions to implement the key recommendations of that meeting. Developing partnerships beyond the United Nations may be useful to ensure a system-wide and coherent approach in the delivery of the joint agendas – for example, engaging with such regional development banks as the African Development Bank and Afreximbank.

69. Ultimately, it will be important to ensure that support from the Regional Collaborative Platform for Africa reaches the country level. Hence, support from the Platform provided through peer support groups and the coalitions in developing common country assessments, along with the ability of the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework to respond to the needs of member States, will be critical in maximizing the value and relevance of the Platform.

70. During the coming reporting period, African countries need to keep track of their progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, as numerous global events (the war in Ukraine, the lingering financial effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, high inflation, unconstitutional changes in Governments and climate emergencies) continue to affect growth and development in the region.
