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Thirty-first session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts

Rabat (Morocco)  
1 - 4 March 2016

## **Report**



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## **I. ORGANIZATION OF WORK AND ATTENDANCE**

1. The thirty-first session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the Subregional Office for North Africa of the Economic Commission for Africa was held in Rabat from 1 to 4 March 2016. The opening ceremony was presided over by Ms. Hakima El Haïté, Minister Delegate to the Minister for Energy, Mining, Water and the Environment of Morocco; Mr. Habib Ben Yahya, Secretary-General of the Arab Maghreb Union; and Ms. Zakia El Midaoui, Director of Multilateral Cooperation and International Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco. Mr. Mohamed Benayad, Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Trade, also graced the opening session of the expert group meeting on industrialization through trade with his presence.

2. Delegates from the seven member States (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, the Sudan and Tunisia) attended the session.

3. The following organizations were also represented at the session:

- United Nations system
  - United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
  - United Nations Industrial Development Organization
  - World Trade Organization
  - Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
  - Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
  - Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
  - Economic Commission for Africa
    - ✓ African Climate Policy Centre
    - ✓ Social Development Policy Division
    - ✓ Strategic Planning and Operational Quality Division
    - ✓ Macroeconomic Policy Division
    - ✓ Regional Integration and Trade Division
    - ✓ Capacity Development Division
    - ✓ African Institute for Economic Development and Planning
- Regional economic community
  - Secretariat of the Arab Maghreb Union
- International and regional organizations
  - Delegation of the European Union to Morocco
  - Japan International Cooperation Agency
  - Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
  - Islamic Centre for the Development of Trade
  - African Training and Research Centre in Administration for Development
  - Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations

- Diplomatic corps
    - Embassy of Algeria
    - Embassy of Tunisia
    - Embassy of the Sudan
    - Embassy of Benin
    - Embassy of Burundi
    - Embassy of Canada
    - Embassy of the Republic of the Congo
    - Embassy of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
    - Embassy of Djibouti
    - Embassy of France
    - Embassy of Gabon
    - Embassy of Ghana
    - Embassy of the Holy See
    - Embassy of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam
  - Public bodies
    - Royal Institute of Strategic Studies of Morocco
    - High Commission for Planning of Morocco
    - High Commission for Water, Forests and Combating Desertification of Morocco
    - Bank Al-Maghrib
    - African Centre for Trade, Integration and Development of Senegal
    - Technical Centre for Mechanical and Electrical Industry of Tunisia
    - Summit Alliances International
    - National Agency for Energy Efficiency and the Development of Renewable Energy
    - Maroc Export
  - Universities
    - University of Lille (France)
    - Tangiers International Higher Institute of Tourism(Morocco)
    - Institute of African Studies(Morocco)
    - Mohammed V University (Morocco)
    - University of Oran (Algeria)
    - Tunis Business School, University of Tunis (Tunisia)
    - University of Abomey (Benin)
  - Civil society organizations
    - Union Tunisienne de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de l'Artisanat
4. The full list of participants is annexed to the present report.

## II. OPENING OF THE SESSION (*agenda item 1*)

5. In his opening statement, the Acting Director of the Subregional Office for North Africa, Mr. Nassim Oulmane, welcomed the participants to the thirty-first session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts. On behalf of the Subregional Office, he took the opportunity to thank His Majesty King Mohammed VI, the Government and the people of Morocco for their continued support for the efforts of the Economic Commission for Africa to promote African development, and for the hospitality and welcome shown to the participants.

6. He noted that despite the unfavourable global context – with global economic growth falling from 2.6 per cent in 2014 to 2.4 per cent in 2015, owing to a slowdown in growth in the BRICS countries – Africa had proved relatively resilient, with just a slight drop in growth from 3.9 per cent in 2014 to 3.7 per cent in 2015. The continent had benefited from lower production costs, rising domestic consumption – Africa had a growing middle class of over 370 million people in 2014 – and increased investment. If commodity prices recovered a little in 2016, Africa could achieve growth of 4.3 per cent.

7. At the subregional level, average growth had stalled at around 2.5 per cent between 2011 and 2014 in North Africa owing to falling commodity prices, which were hurting countries heavily dependent on extractive industries such as Algeria and Mauritania, and a drop in revenue from the tourism industry as result of the security situation in Egypt and Tunisia. However, on a positive note, with the exception of Libya, the subregion had achieved growth of 3.9 per cent in 2015, which was back to pre-2011 levels.

8. The theme and objectives of the thirty-first session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts tied in with the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, at a time when the effects of climate change in Morocco and rising sea levels in rural Egypt were highlighting the urgency of the situation and the need to take action to protect future generations. Moreover, the challenges facing North Africa were not just economic, political or security-related: currently, North Africa was using over 80 per cent of its water resources, compared to the African average of just 3 per cent and the global average of 8.8 per cent.

9. The Paris Agreement, which was expected to be signed on 22 April 2016, would officialize Member States' commitment to a low-carbon future. In a few months, the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties, which would be taking place in Marrakech, Morocco, from 7 to 18 November 2016, would focus on the implementation of the agreement, in particular with regard to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving resilience to the effects of climate change. Indeed, the agreement recognized the need to take into consideration countries' adaptation needs.

10. He said that he was very pleased to welcome to the session the special envoy on climate change for the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties, Ms. Hakima El Haïté, Minister Delegate to the Minister for Energy, Mining, Water and the Environment of Morocco, in order to discuss and analyse the issues at stake at the upcoming session, which would be a key global gathering. He underlined the importance of industrialization for North Africa's development, while also stressing the need to look after the subregion's resources and safeguard the rights of future generations.

11. He called upon the participants to consider how to create sustainable jobs, particularly for women and young people, who were most heavily affected by unemployment; reduce poverty and social inequality; and improve human well-being. In order to achieve those goals,

strong synergies would have to be established between policies and national schemes, particularly with regard to training, employment, innovation, trade and public-private partnerships.

12. The forthcoming edition of the Economic Report on Africa, one of the Economic Commission for Africa's flagship publications, would focus on how to achieve "green" industrialization in Africa. The report, which was due to be launched in April, would evaluate current industrial models and, based on the continent's comparative advantages, analyse the policy options and means of implementation for making industry an engine of structural transformation and inclusive green growth. Not only would that have a positive impact on growth, but it would also respond to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals adopted by Member States as part of Agenda 2030 at the end of 2015, with a view to ending poverty, reducing inequality and combating climate change.

13. At the intergovernmental level, at the forty-seventh session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, Member States would be asked to agree on indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals and to start aligning national policies with Agenda 2030, in preparation for the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, due to take place in July 2016 in New York.

14. He then gave a brief overview of the organization of work of the thirty-first session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts and went over the reports that would be presented for review and approval, which would form the basis of the report that would be transmitted to the Conference of Ministers, the statutory body of the Economic Commission for Africa.

15. He also introduced the work of the ad hoc expert group meeting on "Industrialization through trade in North Africa in the context of the continental free trade area and the major free trade agreements", which had been tasked with identifying the conditions needed to make trade liberalization an enabler of industrialization and structural transformation in the subregion.

16. The Acting Director then reiterated, on behalf of all the participants and the Subregional Office for North Africa, his sincere gratitude to His Majesty King Mohammed VI, the Government and the people of Morocco for their interest in the activities of the Economic Commission for Africa and the warm welcome given to the participants.

17. Lastly, he once again thanked the participants for attending and expressed the hope that it would be a successful and fruitful meeting.

18. The Secretary-General of the Arab Maghreb Union, Mr. Habib Ben Yahya, then took the floor. He thanked the Economic Commission for Africa for holding the meeting and bringing together high-level international experts. Over time, the sessions of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts had become an important forum for reflecting on key issues relating to the development of North Africa. Recalling the excellent relationship between the Secretariat of the Arab Maghreb Union and the Economic Commission for Africa, in particular the Subregional Office for North Africa, he said that since as far back as 1994, the Commission had consistently supported the Arab Maghreb Union in its efforts to strengthen and improve regional integration mechanisms.

19. The Subregional Office for North Africa and the Secretariat of the Arab Maghreb Union had developed a strong and mutually beneficial relationship thanks to inter-institutional cooperation and collaboration in the areas of development and regional integration. He noted the significance of the theme of the current meeting, which was highly relevant given that in



an increasingly globalized world, trade was intrinsically linked to general economic policy because of the effects on competitiveness, industrial policy, infrastructure, the business climate and so forth.

20. He said that the Maghreb Bank for Foreign Trade and Investment had begun operations following its official inauguration on 22 December 2015 in Tunis, after the meeting of its General Assembly, during which the Director, the Deputy Director and the members of the Board were elected. He expressed the hope that the bank would boost trade within the Maghreb and foster productive investment in the subregion.

21. In order to achieve steady and inclusive development, there was a need to develop infrastructure and deepen the integration progress, which would enable Africa and the Maghreb to come to the fore and reduce their exposure to fluctuating export earnings for commodities and other goods.

22. Negotiations were already underway on the establishment of an African continental free trade area. The General Secretariat of the Arab Maghreb Union had participated actively in the negotiations and with the support and technical assistance of the Economic Commission for Africa it was expected that a comprehensive continental free trade agreement would be signed in the course of 2017.

23. Lastly, he once again thanked the Subregional Office and the participants and wished them a successful meeting.

24. Taking the floor, Ms. Hakima El Haité, Minister Delegate to the Minister for Energy, Mining, Water and the Environment of Morocco, thanked the Director of the Subregional Office for inviting her to the meeting and the Chair of the outgoing Bureau for his commitment to subregional integration. She welcomed the Secretary-General of the Arab Maghreb Union and all the participants.

25. She congratulated the Office on theme of the special session, “Green economy, a pathway for accelerating industrialization in North Africa”, as green growth was the only viable option given the current effects of climate change, such as loss of land, land degradation, natural disasters and floods. Africa as a whole was committed to moving gradually towards carbon-free green growth, as agreed upon at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties in Paris, with the hope of ensuring real structural transformation of Africa’s economies.

26. She then gave a general overview of Morocco’s policy outlook following the new constitution of 2011 that established national institutions responsible for the implementation of environmental policies, such as the national strategy for sustainable development, which highlighted the close relationship between the green economy and industrial acceleration.

27. Talking about Morocco’s experience of implementing policies in areas such as water, tourism and energy, including the recent inauguration of the Noor solar plant in Ouarzazate, she noted that such efforts had boosted the GDP of Morocco by about 2 per cent and created 250,000 jobs in 2014.

28. Before concluding, she reminded the participants that Morocco would be hosting in November 2016 the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties, with support from the highest levels of Government for achieving clean and sustainable development. She expressed the hope that the experts gathered at the current meeting would share their experiences in order to join forces and promote solutions at the regional and subregional level.

29. Lastly, she declared open the thirty-first session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts.

### **III. ELECTION OF THE BUREAU (*agenda item 2*)**

30. Following consultations between the heads of delegations, the Committee elected the following officers to the Bureau:

Chair:	Sudan
Vice-Chair:	Morocco
Rapporteur:	Tunisia

### **IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND THE PROGRAMME OF WORK (*agenda item 3*)**

31. The new Chair of the Bureau thanked the members of the Committee for the trust placed in his country and welcomed the participants. He congratulated the outgoing Bureau and the Subregional Office for North Africa for the important work carried out over the past year.

32. The agenda (ECA/SRO-NA/ICE/31/1) and the programme of work (ECA/SRO-NA/ICE/31/1/Add.2) were then adopted.

### **V. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN NORTH AFRICA (*agenda item 4*)**

33. The representative of the secretariat then outlined the main conclusions of the report entitled “North Africa Profile 2015” (ECA/SRO-NA/ICE/31/2). The profile provided an overview of recent macroeconomic and social developments and set out the challenges facing the subregion.

34. The representative of the secretariat took the opportunity to thank the member States that had responded to the Subregional Office’s questionnaire, which had been used in the preparation of the report, and called for the introduction of more effective mechanisms for data collection.

35. The presentation of the report focused on the following points:

- International and regional climate
- Economic performance of North Africa
- Human and social development
- Gender issues in North Africa

36. According to the regional profile, global gross domestic product (GDP) growth had declined slightly, from 2.6 per cent in 2014 to 2.4 per cent in 2015. That decrease had been offset, however, by the good performance of gross fixed capital formation and household expenditure.

37. In North Africa, political and security factors continued to hamper growth, particularly in Tunisia and Libya. However, after several years of sluggish growth, growth had picked up again in 2015, reaching 3.8 per cent (against 2.6 per cent in 2014). There were several reasons behind the rebound: the return of political stability to Egypt, which had achieved growth of 4.2 per cent in 2015; the resilience of the Algerian economy, with growth of 3.8 per cent; and strong GDP growth in Morocco (4.4 per cent).

38. The subregion's consolidated trade deficit had widened from -4.9 per cent of GDP in 2014 to -6.2 per cent of GDP in 2015, due to the deterioration of the external situation of Algeria as a result of falling oil prices (the country's current account deficit had risen to -7.7 per cent of GDP in 2015); the high current account deficit in Mauritania (-25.8 per cent of GDP in 2015); and the growing current account deficit in Egypt (from -0.8 per cent in 2014 to -3.4 per cent in 2015). Morocco had reduced its deficit from -5.8 per cent of GDP in 2014 to -5.3 per cent in 2015, Tunisia from -8.9 per cent to -6 per cent, and Sudan from -8.4 per cent to -6.8 per cent.

39. The subregion remained highly dependent on the export of commodities, including crude oil, phosphates, iron, gold, copper and agricultural produce. The drop in commodity prices during the period under review had therefore further weakened the external position of most North African countries. Some countries, including Algeria, Libya and Mauritania, depended almost exclusively on cash crops for export earnings. In addition, some countries were reliant on a narrow range of goods: in Algeria, Mauritania and the Sudan, the main exported products accounted for over 77 per cent of total exports.

40. As a result, there was a real need to implement industrial policies, including strategies for adding value to commodities, in order to create jobs, boost incomes and enhance wealth creation. The activities and goods with the highest potential for adding value should be targeted, with a view to enabling the industrial sector to take up lasting and competitive positions. Such industrial policies should also be aligned with regional value chains in order to reap the benefits of stronger regional industrial integration.

41. The high exposure of public finances to external shocks had resulted in greater uncertainty over investing in development. Such vulnerability could be reduced by reforming tax systems to decouple regular spending from export earnings from raw materials in national budgets. The national budgets of most North African countries were dependent on just a few sectors and volatile sources of income. Progress had been made with regard to improving public financial management and diversifying income streams, including taxation, but much remained to be done. Tax revenue as a proportion of GDP was just 7.3 per cent in Sudan and 19 per cent in the rest of the subregion.

42. The share of private funding as a proportion of investment should be increased, savings mobilized and financial services developed in order to direct those savings towards productive investments. The process would undoubtedly be given a considerable boost if the business climate were improved.

43. The year 2015 had been a turning point in the global development agenda, with the culmination of the Millennium Development Goals and the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, an ambitious, long-term framework intended to improve human well-being and combat climate change.

44. The assessment of social aggregates highlighted the considerable progress made by North African countries towards the Millennium Development Goals, particularly with regard to poverty reduction, health and education.

45. However, many challenges remained because of the model and framework used for measuring development. One of the targets of Goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals, "Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people", had not been achieved by any of the countries of the subregion. Even the sustained growth seen prior to the economic and political crises would not have been enough to significantly improve employment rates.

46. Unemployment remained structurally high in the subregion, with an average unemployment rate of 11.5 per cent in 2014. The subregion also had the lowest labour force participation rate in the world, at 43.1 per cent, compared to the global average of 54.8 per cent, the OECD average of 60 per cent and the Sub-Saharan African average of 65.4 per cent. Unemployment rates among women and young people were of particular concern. The full economic and political participation of women and young people was essential for building a more dynamic, inclusive and sustainable development model.

47. Social progress at the national level masked inequalities between different regions of a country, with the equitable distribution of the benefits of growth a particular problem. The differences in development between rich regions – which tended to be urban and central, and the hub of economic activities – and poor areas – usually peripheral and rural – were such that they were constraining the development model.

48. In the presentation on the country profiles, the representative of the secretariat explained that the profiles were a new tool intended to facilitate dynamic dialogue with member States. They had been produced in response to a resolution adopted at the Conference of Ministers in Abuja, Nigeria, in March 2014, and reflected the strategic reorientation of the Economic Commission for Africa, whose revised mandate was to support member States in their efforts to achieve structural economic transformation.

49. The representative described the contents and format of the country profiles produced in 2014 and 2015, including the issues examined, the structure, the challenges encountered (especially in terms of availability and access to information) and the data required to improve the country profiles.

50. The country profiles were designed to be a new and interactive tool for facilitating dialogue with member States in support of their structural transformation efforts. The country profiles produced in 2014 and 2015 addressed various topics including the green economy, the costs of combating poverty, social policy reform, human exclusion and the sustainability of public finances. The structure and format of the country profiles had been improved since they were first presented at the twenty-ninth session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts, as had the data collection process.

51. The representative of the secretariat stressed the need to build partnerships with national statistics agencies in the form of formal cooperation agreements and data sharing, in accordance with the recommendation adopted at the Conference of Ministers in Abuja. While the Economic Commission for Africa was already working in partnership with the regional economic communities and other United Nations agencies to collect data and produce the country profiles, a number of challenges remained, including :

- Lack of disaggregated data (which the data model of the country profiles called for), particularly for the social sector;
- Data were not updated regularly by the various institutions or national bodies;
- Need for quarterly data for the economic performance indicators;
- Need for greater involvement of member States in identifying the issues to be addressed in the 2016 country profiles based on their challenges and priorities, as well as effective cooperation, including access to the necessary information and data.

52. The representative of the Sudan and Chair of the Bureau then shared the results of a study entitled “Trade, industrialization and economic growth in North Africa”. He said that the study examined the role of trade as an engine of economic growth and analysed various

industrial strategies. In particular, the study examined the impact of alternative import and export strategies on growth and the link between trade and industrialization by looking at North Africa's experiences. He ended by recommending the establishment of a North African economic community to improve trade and economic growth.

53. After congratulating the secretariat on the quality of the presentations, the members of the Committee discussed the relevance and reliability of the statistical data and the need to work more closely with member States to update the available statistical data.

54. They noted with satisfaction the progress made by North Africa in terms of economic performance and intra-regional trade. There was a need for further analysis of tax systems and issues relating to financing for development.

55. The socioeconomic indicators suggested that structural change was underway in North Africa, but at a slower pace than in other parts of the continent. The subregional profile should include comparisons of North Africa with other subregions for a better understanding of the socioeconomic indicators.

56. Lastly, they noted that the recommendations of the report of the secretariat and the study presented by the representative of the Sudan did not necessarily take into account the specificities of each country, particularly in relation to the degree of diversification of their economies.

57. Concerning the country profiles, the Committee strongly agreed with the request of the Bureau to set up, in partnership with the member States, a sustainable data collection system to ensure the production of high-quality country profiles and harmonized data.

58. Following the discussion, the Committee endorsed the recommendations of the secretariat, which are annexed to the present report.

## **VI. SPECIAL SESSION: "GREEN ECONOMY, A PATHWAY FOR ACCELERATING INDUSTRIALIZATION IN NORTH AFRICA" (*agenda item 5*)**

59. The main objective of the session was to share knowledge and experiences on the green economy and its relationship with industrial processing, foster better understanding of the role of businesses in the transition to a green economy in North Africa, and come up with recommendations for revising industrial policies and promoting the development of green businesses, in particular small and medium-sized enterprises.

60. Specifically, the session was intended to answer the following questions:

- How can a favourable environment be created that would enable the industrial sector and small and medium-sized enterprises to take full advantage of the potential offered by the green economy?
- What are the obstacles to the development of human capital, technology and innovation – all of which are essential to achieving industrial transformation – in North Africa?
- How should policymakers formulate industrial policies so that they address environmental challenges and commitments, given the fight against climate change and the implementation of the new Sustainable Development Goals?
- Which policy instruments can be used to increase the mobilization of domestic public and private financial resources, including from the financial sector, with a view to financing green industrialization?
- How can the countries of the subregion make use of South-South cooperation to promote the development of green industry?

**- Industry and green economy in North Africa: the point of view of businesses**

61. A representative of the secretariat presented the main findings of the publication entitled “Industry and the green economy in North Africa: Challenges, practices and lessons learned”. The representative said that the report looked at the issue of the green economy from the point of view of businesses, including their understanding of the challenges and opportunities, and the mechanisms being used to integrate environmental and social issues into their strategies and operations. The report also highlighted the constraints and expectations of businesses in terms of public policy reforms.

62. The report was based on the results of a survey carried out by the Subregional Office for North Africa of 200 companies operating in different sectors in four North African countries (Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia). The data from the survey were complemented by research work, interviews with employers’ organizations and the outcome of the expert group meeting held in 2015 in Rabat. The survey revealed real awareness among companies operating in the industrial sector of the potential of the green economy, as well growing commitment among large firms to social responsibility. Examples of best practices adopted by the companies surveyed included the implementation of environmental management systems, reduced energy consumption, waste water treatment, recycling, the creation of research units, the establishment of partnerships with universities and research centres, the introduction of training programmes and the publication of reports on sustainable development.

63. Small and medium-sized enterprises, which accounted for the majority of industrial firms, were hampered by significant internal bottlenecks such as weak financial capacity, poor access to technology, limited expertise, small domestic markets and insufficient regulation. Public support schemes for small and medium-sized enterprises needed to be reviewed, adapted and expanded to create win-win partnerships that encouraged such firms to comply with environmental rules and regulations and to invest in clean technology. At present, awareness-raising and support for companies in the area of corporate social responsibility was inadequate and unstructured. When asked about the major environmental challenges they faced, the small and medium-sized enterprises surveyed cited sustainable energy use, waste reduction and recycling, treatment and recycling of waste water, and combating pollution. Sustainable water use and the adoption of renewable forms of energy were cited as medium-level priorities, owing to the low cost of water, which meant that companies had little incentive to reduce consumption, and the lack of access to renewable energy alternatives. Reducing carbon dioxide emissions did not seem to be a priority for the companies surveyed, indicating that understanding of the risks posed by climate change was limited.

64. It was found that companies’ environmental policy was primarily guided by the need to comply with international and domestic regulations, reduce energy bills and production costs, strengthen brand image, and keep up with the competition in a globalized world (in particular with regard to complying with the requirements of European markets).

65. In addition to the need to comply with regulations, it was found that the business climate, market growth and public technical and financial support systems also played an important role in promoting the green economy and creating a wave of new eco-innovative small and medium-sized enterprises. Most companies surveyed were of the opinion that the green economy would grow in the coming years because of the way the global market for green technologies and products was evolving. However, they stressed that the evolution of domestic markets remained relatively uncertain, given their relative immaturity and the lack

of public incentive schemes to cover the costs of moving towards a green economy. Domestic demand from consumers and clients was not yet sufficient to warrant consideration. Barriers to the green economy cited included poor financing capacity, insufficient expertise, limited access to technology, inefficient innovation systems and small domestic markets. Although the survey had not specifically asked companies about their spending, it nevertheless highlighted the lack of corporate financing in the areas of research and development and training.

66. Lastly, the social dimension of the green economy was not well understood by small and medium-sized enterprises. The social dimension covered not only employment but also other challenges such as reducing poverty and inequality by focusing more on women, young people and people living in rural areas, many of whom depended on natural resources for their livelihoods. In general, only large firms invested in local development and community support.

**- Greening African industry**

67. The strong economic growth seen in recent years in Africa had not translated into economic and social transformation, with the continent remaining for the most part highly dependent on commodities, with persistent poverty, high inequality and a large informal sector. The volatility of the prices of natural resources and agricultural commodities continued to affect the economies and budgets of member States, many of which were heavily dependent on earnings from such goods.

68. The global economic slowdown of 2015, the drought in some parts of Africa and security issues related to political instability in a number of countries had contributed to slowing the economic growth of the continent, which achieved modest growth in 2015.

69. African countries were facing threats that called for special attention from policymakers and an overhaul of the continent's development strategy. Despite a decade of steady economic growth, the number of Africans living in absolute poverty had increased, inequality remained a major challenge and progress in the area of employment was limited. Africa's growth was mainly driven by the exploitation of non-renewable natural resources, with little value addition.

70. The continent's macroeconomic vulnerability, social inequality and economic dependence on natural resources were evidence that industrialization was essential for the structural transformation, job creation and higher salaries. In order to be effective in the long term, industrialization and structural transformation efforts and sustainable energy solutions should be integrated into a green growth strategy.

71. The green economy offered prospects for improved well-being and social equality, while significantly reducing the risk of environmental disasters. The green economy encompassed economic, social and environmental policy and focused on finding new opportunities for economic growth that reduced pressure on the environment. Opting for green growth would help to put Africa's development on a more solid and sustainable basis.

72. The discussions had enabled certain issues to be clarified, such as key aspects related to the concepts of green economy and green industry, and the relationship between such concept and the structural transformation of economies.

73. Some speakers were in favour of prioritizing economic growth and integrating environmental requirements more gradually – as these were often seen as a constraint to business competitiveness, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises – which showed that there was still a need to communicate more and popularize the concept of the green economy, best practices developed by member States and national targets in this area.

74. The transition to the green economy must take into account the specificities of countries. Moving to a green economy required a holistic approach, with the alignment of macroeconomic, industrial and commercial policies, and public initiatives that encouraged supply and demand, such as incentives and strategies for changing behaviours.

75. Speakers also highlighted the need for the State to lead and play a pioneering role in encouraging green investment, and stressed the importance of capacity building, funding and developing public-private partnerships. Strengthening regional cooperation was also recognized as essential in order to share experiences and exploit the opportunities offered by the green economy.

76. The green industry should be developed in the context of inclusive growth, with a particular focus on the impact of industrial policies on the environment, employment, growth and trade.

## **VII. EXPERT GROUP MEETING: “INDUSTRIALIZATION THROUGH TRADE IN NORTH AFRICA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA AND THE MAJOR TRADE AGREEMENTS” (*agenda item 6*)**

77. The Chair said that the theme of the expert group meeting, “Industrialization through trade in North Africa in the context of the continental free trade area and the major trade agreements”, reflected the desire to continue discussing in more depth issues relating to diversification for the structural transformation of the subregion. After a theoretical and empirical analysis of recent developments in the industrialization process in the subregion, it was hoped that the participants at the expert group meeting would develop a solid argument for promoting trade among member States as an appropriate framework for structural change.

78. With regard to the organization of work, the experts met in five plenary sessions on the major trade agreements and continental dynamics; lessons learned from international experiences; trade policy for the promotion of industrialization; industrial policy; and the role of regional integration. The discussions that followed the sessions highlighted the quality of the presentations and the policy proposals made both by the experts and the government officials.

79. Following the discussion, the Committee endorsed the recommendations proposed by the secretariat and made additional recommendations, which are annexed to the present report.

## **VIII. REPORT ON THE REGIONAL AND GLOBAL AGENDAS AND OTHER SPECIAL initiatives IN NORTH AFRICA (*agenda item 7*)**

80. The representative of the secretariat said that the report on the implementation of continental and global development agendas and special initiatives in North Africa was intended to help States to monitor progress made towards achieving global and regional commitments and to ensure that the subregion’s priorities were taken into consideration during regional and international negotiations. The report took stock of the changes that had taken place in 2015 in key areas such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the



Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the outcome of the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the 2015 ICT 4 All Forum and the review of the implementation of the World Summit on the Information Society, and the tenth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization.

**a) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: “Transforming our world”**

81. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development had been adopted by 193 States on 25 September 2015 at the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, following three years of discussions. Consultations had been held in over 100 countries and more than 8 million people had taken part in a survey on their needs and priorities. Agenda 2030 consisted of a declaration; an ambitious set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals, subdivided into 169 targets; a section on the means of implementation and the global partnership; and a framework for follow-up and review.

82. The Economic Commission for Africa, together with other development partners, had committed itself to providing support to its member States for the adaptation and modernization of their existing national information systems, in order to help them implement the 2030 Agenda.

**b) Addis Ababa Action Agenda**

83. The Third International Conference on Financing for Development had been held from 13 to 16 July 2015, in Addis Ababa. At the Conference, Member States had agreed on a series of measures for reforming global financial practices and generating the investments needed to meet economic, social and environmental challenges.

84. The outcome document of the Conference, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, had provided the foundation for financing the implementation of the global sustainable development agenda. All 193 Member States of the United Nations had attended the Conference and reached an agreement on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda after months of negotiations. The global partnership, which was intended to promote inclusive and universal economic prosperity and human well-being all whilst protecting the environment, had been reinforced thanks to the agreement. The outcome document of the Conference was a solid basis for countries to build on to finance the new sustainable development agenda adopted in New York in September 2015.

**c) Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

85. The twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which had taken place in Paris from 30 November to 12 December 2015, had resulted in the adoption of a universal and legally binding climate agreement by 195 countries. The agreement was expected to be ratified by a group of 55 countries which together accounted for at least 55 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, and would enter into effect in 2020. The aim was to achieve net zero emissions at some point between 2050 and 2100. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had been mandated to provide a special report in 2018 on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

86. Although Africa produced just 4 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions, the continent would nevertheless be one of the regions most severely hit by the effects of climate change, which was already affecting Africa's GDP to the tune of 1.4 per cent. It was estimated that the costs of adapting to climate change would be equivalent to 3 per cent of GDP by 2030 and 7 per cent by 2100 if global temperatures rose by 4°C.

87. While there was plenty of potential in Africa for renewable energy technology, the continent's current electric production capacity was just 150 gigawatts, and it was estimated that more than 600 million people did not have access to electricity. Nevertheless, over the past few years a number of significant renewable energy programmes had been developed. The twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change was expected to be held from 7 to 18 November 2016 in Marrakech, Morocco.

#### **d) Fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women**

88. The Economic Commission for Africa had helped its member States to prepare for the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which had coincided with the twentieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Thanks to the Commission's support, North African countries had been able to optimize their participation in the session, which was intended to raise awareness and encourage all stakeholders to commit themselves to promoting the rights of women and gender equality.

89. In his report on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the publication of which had been timed to coincide with the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Secretary-General noted that progress had been made in areas such as girls' education, the revision of discriminatory laws, and the adoption of legislation aimed at putting an end to violence against women and girls. In addition, the participation of women in the labour force had increased, and maternal mortality had decreased by 45 per cent since 1990. However, despite the significant progress that had been made with regard to women's education, women continued to occupy unpopular jobs. Gender equality was still a long way off in top positions at both public and private institutions, and the wage gap between men and women remained significant. Moreover, violence against women and girls remained a significant problem in all countries.

#### **e) ICT4All and the World Summit on the Information Society**

90. Over a decade after the World Summit on the Information Society, the review of the implementation of the Summit outcomes had taken place during a number of international meetings, the most important of which were the annual World Summit on the Information Society Forum in Geneva, held from 25 to 29 May 2015; the ICT 4 All forum in Hammamet, Tunisia; and the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the overall review of the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, which had taken place in New York on 15 and 16 December 2015.

91. The above-mentioned high-level meetings had helped to identify the main challenges of implementing the World Summit on the Information Society with regard to the Sustainable Development Goals, in which information and communications technologies must be properly recognized as catalysts for sustainable development. During the meetings, experts from across the world and a variety of backgrounds had made clear and direct links between

the World Summit on the Information Society Plan of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals.

**f) Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization**

92. The tenth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization had been held in Nairobi from 15 to 19 December 2015. It had been the first Ministerial Conference organized by an African country since the World Trade Organization had been established in Marrakech in 1994.

93. The Conference had resulted in a number of ministerial decisions on agriculture, cotton and issues related to least developed countries, known as the Nairobi package. The package included a commitment to eliminating agricultural export subsidies, which was deemed the most significant step forward achieved by the World Trade Organization in the agricultural sector in 20 years.

94. The other agricultural decision related to a special safeguard mechanism for developing countries. Other decisions concerned preferential treatment for least developed countries in the areas of services and rules of origin.

**g) Importance of data for implementing and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals**

95. The representative of the secretariat stressed the importance of data for achieving the new Sustainable Development Goals and formulating relevant policies. In a presentation entitled “Sustainable Development Goals, macroeconomic framework and the role of big data”, the representative recalled the 17 goals that had been agreed upon globally and emphasized how important it was for member States to take those objectives and continental priorities into consideration in their national policies and strategies. There was also a need to provide member States with the appropriate tools for achieving the Goals and have a sound macroeconomic framework, capable of supporting the continent’s development programme, in order to assure Africa’s continued growth.

96. Such a framework should be based on three pillars: monetary policy; financial stability; and fiscal policy. In addition, African Governments must commit to the framework, in order to ensure that the framework is durable, stable and transparent, and has enough flexibility to respond to unforeseen events.

97. The presenter also emphasized the importance of creating links between the three pillars of the macroeconomic framework to prevent coordination failures and to find solutions to economic challenges. Strengthened coordination was of cardinal importance as fiscal policy affected monetary policy, which in turn affected national central banks. In order for a functional framework to be implemented, timely, reliable and accurate data on key economic indicators were essential. Better real-time data on the economic situation would help to improve the evaluation of economic growth forecasts and other key economic indicators. Digitization and the Internet had considerably increased the amount of data available (so-called “big data”) and had created new and viable sources of information. Despite the challenges, there was no doubt that big data would strengthen and improve macroeconomic policy decision-making.

### **g. African Social Development Index**

98. In line with Africa's priorities for more inclusive and equitable development, the Economic Commission for Africa had developed the African Social Development Index, which was designed to measure human exclusion in Africa and help countries to implement more inclusive and fair policies. Five North African countries had been trained in how to use the index during two subregional workshops held in June 2015 in Cotonou and Cairo.

99. The initial results for North Africa suggested that exclusion was relatively low in the countries for which data were available and that considerable progress had been made, particularly in Morocco. However, disaggregated by gender and place of residence, the index revealed significant gaps and varying factors of exclusion, both between men and women and between subregions. Thanks to the initial results, it had been possible to identify the causes of exclusion for each population group and to come up with targeted and effective policies for inclusive development.

100. In the ensuing discussion, participants recognized the importance, effectiveness and relevance of the Economic Commission for Africa's work, support services and technical assistance for member States.

101. Among other important issues, the participants stressed the need to generate data on a regular basis in order to monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals and inform micro and macroeconomic policy, although such an exercise was costly and not always feasible for member States. The participants also discussed the African Social Development Index, which they felt was extremely relevant and useful. It had the advantage of being disaggregated by gender and other factors, which was very helpful because it meant that targeted social adjustment policies and strategies could be developed, not only in terms of the population groups but also the programmes and actions to be implemented.

102. Youth employment and governance and the Commission's work in those areas were also discussed. The secretariat informed the participants that its programme of work for 2016-2017 included two expert group meetings, one on inclusive development and youth employment, and another on local governance.

103. Following the discussion, the Committee endorsed the secretariat's recommendations and annexed them to the present report.

## **IX. STATUTORY MATTERS: REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR 2015 OF THE SUBREGIONAL OFFICE FOR NORTH AFRICA** *(agenda item 8)*

104. The representative of the secretariat presented the report on the activities of the Subregional Office for North Africa over the period from March 2015 to February 2016. She talked about the work carried out by the Office, including studies, publications, expert group meetings, advisory services, workshops and seminars throughout the period under review.

105. The Office's activities and future programme of work were aligned with the Economic Commission for Africa's subprogramme 7 on support for subregional development activities and the strategic framework for technical support to member States and regional economic communities, with a view to strengthening the regional integration capacity of member States, in particular in the priority areas for North Africa. The Office had continued to assist the Arab Maghreb Union by formulating and implementing a new multi-year cooperation programme, as well as the agendas adopted at the global level, such as the Millennium Development Goals. In particular, the Office had sought to mobilize regional actors to ensure coordinated

support for regional integration in North Africa through the subregional coordination mechanism.

106. The implementation strategy included capacity-building efforts such as technical assistance, training workshops and studies on the policies implemented to tackle development challenges specific to North Africa, with a particular emphasis on regional integration. The main topics addressed by the Office over the period under review included the role of industry in the development of the green economy, the continental free trade agreements, the protocol on rules of origin, the harmonization of customs procedures, and information sharing between customs authorities. In addition, the Subregional Office had helped the secretariat of the Arab Maghreb Union to draft a gender strategy, which was intended to improve gender mainstreaming in its processes, activities and programmes. The Office had also responded to a number of requests from its member States and had facilitated their participation and that of the Arab Maghreb Union in preparation processes for international meetings. The Office had also strengthened its partnerships to ensure better synergy with other actors working in the subregion.

107. A representative of the secretariat then presented the draft strategic framework of the Subregional Office for North Africa for the period 2018-2019 (ECA/SRO-NA/ICE/31/5/Rev), in the context of the overall strategic framework of the Economic Commission for Africa. He said that the strategic framework responded to the need for the Commission to centre its management on results rather than activities. He presented the Commission's predictions for the global context, as well as the implementation strategy for the programme of work, which would be developed later from the strategic framework and presented to member States at the thirty-second session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts.

108. The Intergovernmental Committee of Experts took note of the draft strategic framework. The Committee noted with interest the Subregional Office's commitment to supporting member States' regional integration efforts in North Africa and providing technical assistance to help them to tackle emerging challenges.

109. The secretariat then set out the progress made during the 2014-2015 biennium with regard to the business plan and the goal of becoming a think tank of reference on African development. The Economic Commission for Africa had come up with four strategies in that regard: win political support for Africa's transformation agenda; inspire greater confidence and credibility by providing high-quality services; carry out research on development policy based on reliable data; and improve mechanisms for accountability and continuous learning in all areas of work. The above would be achieved thanks to two interconnected and interdependent areas: research on development policy and knowledge sharing.

110. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the common African position on the post-2015 development agenda, and the African group of negotiators, which helped to ensure that Africa's priorities were taken into consideration when coming up with Sustainable Development Goals and related targets, were all evidence of the Economic Commission for Africa's influence on policy at the global level.

111. At the regional level and the level of the regional economic communities, notable activities included the implementation of the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme, the introduction of the Africa Regional Integration Index, the adoption of the declaration on illicit financial flows, support for the African group of negotiators at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties, and the framework policy on sustainable and urban development. The African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, meanwhile, had seen a 21 per

cent increase compared to its stated targets in terms of the number of countries adopting new approaches to policymaking and policy analysis.

112. Social media had played an important advocacy role: over 120 radio and television interviews were given (BBC, Al Jazeera, SABC, CNBC, Le Monde, Radio France Internationale); website hits and downloads exceeded 36 million (the initial target was 22.5 million); the Office reached 17,341 followers on Twitter and 7,435 on Facebook; and 8,887 articles were published in various media outlets.

113. With regard to credibility and trust, the Economic Commission for Africa had carried out a survey of its clients and partners, and 84 per cent of respondents agreed that the Commission's research documents provided an accurate and detailed analysis of development policy issues in Africa. All publications produced by the Commission in 2014 and 2015 had been peer reviewed by external experts. In addition, the Commission was becoming a popular development partner, with 222 partnerships over the period under review (64 new and 158 existing ones).

114. The representative of the secretariat thanked the member States for their cooperation regarding the data collection surveys and stressed the importance of the data that had been collected, which had helped to improve the quality of the North Africa profile. The representative encouraged the member States to continue helping the Subregional Office by providing relevant information, particularly at the sectoral level, to help it to carry out the programme of work for 2016-2017 and future bienniums. He called upon the member States to support the Economic Commission for Africa, in particular the African Centre for Statistics, with a view to strengthening its partnerships with national statistics agencies, central banks and research centres.

115. The members of the Committee then took note of the 2015 report, the work plan for 2016 and the strategic framework for 2018-2019 (ECA/SRO-NA/ICE/31/5/Rev). They congratulated the secretariat on the quality and relevance of the work carried out and the efforts made to respond to the needs of member States.

116. Following the discussion, the Committee endorsed the recommendations proposed by the secretariat and annexed them to the present report.

## **X. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERT GROUP MEETING (*agenda item 9*)**

117. The recommendations of the expert group meeting on "Industrialization through trade in North Africa in the context of the continental free trade area and the major trade agreements" were submitted to the Committee for consideration. After making some amendments, the Committee adopted the recommendations, which are annexed to the present report.

## **XI. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE THIRTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS (*agenda item 10*)**

118. The Committee considered and adopted the recommendations of the thirty-first session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts, which are annexed to the present report.

119. The Committee then adopted the present report, which includes the recommendations as amended, and requested the secretariat to transmit it to the Conference of Ministers.

## **XII. DATE AND VENUE OF THE THIRTY-SECOND SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS (*agenda item 11*)**

120. The secretariat informed the participants of the Economic Commission for Africa's wish to move the date of future sessions of the Committee to the start of the last quarter of each year so as to have six months before the following year's Conference of Ministers, with a view to improving the preparation of documents for the Conference and enabling the subregional offices to contribute more effectively to regional debates.

121. The participants said that implementing such a move in 2017 would extend the review period between the thirty-first and the thirty-second session. It was therefore agreed that the Office would discuss the possibility of holding an intermediate session with the heads of delegations of Member States and the Bureau.

122. As no delegation expressed a desire to host the following session, it was agreed that the thirty-second session of the Committee would be held in Rabat.

## **XIII. OTHER BUSINESS (*agenda item 12*)**

123. The Committee listened to the statements made by the delegations of Algeria, Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia. The various delegations welcomed the quality of the work and the spirit of consensus that had prevailed during the discussions. They commended the Subregional Office for North Africa on the quality of the pre-session and in-session documents. The Tunisian delegation said, however, that some statements were very long and called upon the secretariat to ensure better time management at future sessions.

124. The Committee took note of the comments made.

## **XIV. CLOSING OF THE SESSION (*agenda item 13*)**

125. The Committee addressed a motion of thanks to his Majesty King Mohammed VI and the Government of Morocco, which is annexed to the present report.

126. Four people delivered closing statements: the Chair of the Bureau, the Acting Director of the Subregional Office for North Africa, the Secretary-General of the Arab Maghreb Union and the Director for Multilateral Cooperation and International Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco.

127. The Chair of the Bureau congratulated the Subregional Office for North Africa, in particular its Director, on the quality of the pre-session and in-session documents and the report of the meeting. He stressed the need for proper monitoring of the recommendations of the Committee, both by member States and by the Economic Commission for Africa.

128. The Acting Director of the Subregional Office for North Africa welcomed the rich discussions that had taken place, which had allowed the theme of the session to be discussed in detail from various angles. The session had taken place in a context of profound global change, of which the region was only just beginning to feel the effects and which had prompted the Economic Commission for Africa to focus on the green economy.

129. He thanked the participants for their serious consideration of the statutory issues. The recommendations and the report of the session would be forwarded to the Conference of Ministers, as instructed by the Committee. He thanked the delegates for allowing the other participants to contribute to the discussions and reiterated the Office's commitment to involving all stakeholders in discussions on North Africa's development and integration.

130. He encouraged the member States to play an active role at the upcoming Conference of Ministers, which would be taking place from 31 March to 5 April 2016 in Addis Ababa. The ministerial segment would be an opportunity to discuss further certain topics tabled at the thirty-second session from a regional perspective. A number of side events would also be held on the margins of the Conference, which would look at certain topics in more depth and showcase the tools and initiatives developed by the Economic Commission for Africa to support regional integration and development processes.

131. Lastly, he thanked all the participants for contributing to the success of the meeting, including the member State delegations; the representatives of civil society, the private sector and other organizations; the Bureau; colleagues from the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa and the Subregional Office for North Africa; the interpreters; the stewards; and all the logistics and support staff.

132. The Secretary-General of the Arab Maghreb Union and the Director for Multilateral Cooperation and International Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco joined the Chair of the Bureau and the Director in thanking all the participants.

133. The Secretary-General of the Arab Maghreb Union then urged the delegates to remember that nothing great could be done at the subregional level without a strong and well-resourced regional economic community. He said that the Union was committed to continuing its integration efforts, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa, and called on the member States to support the Union's efforts.

134. The Director for Multilateral Cooperation and International Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco then declared closed the thirty-first session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts.



## ANNEX I

### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE THIRTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

Following the deliberations, the Committee made the following recommendations and asked the Bureau to transmit them to the Conference of Ministers.

#### **Recommendations on industrialization through trade**

##### ***For countries***

1. Promote industrial production by improving economic financing (through better budgetary allocation, access to financing from banks and access to international funding);
2. Coordinate trade policy and industrialization policy with a view to making regional integration a real enabler of industrial development in North Africa.
3. Accelerate regional economic integration by facilitating trade and investment, in particular by leveraging the launch of the negotiations on the continental free trade area. The continental free trade area should help to improve the coordination of public policies in North Africa, with a view to creating an enabling regulatory environment for investment at the regional level.

##### ***For the Economic Commission for Africa***

5. Continue efforts to strengthen the capacity of member States and economic actors to access regional markets, with a view to enabling them to take full advantage in the future of the continental free trade area to diversify their economies.
6. Help member States to raise awareness among public and private sector actors about the importance of the continental free trade area.

#### **Recommendations on the country profiles**

##### ***For the Economic Commission for Africa***

7. Continue to integrate as far as possible indicators on cross-cutting issues such as governance, sustainable development, gender and climate change into the country profiles.
8. Address the efficiency of tax systems and the sustainable financing of State budgets (including transforming the funding model in countries that are dependent on natural resources) in the country profiles and the subregional profile.

#### **Recommendations on regional agendas and special initiatives in North Africa**

##### ***For the Economic Commission for Africa***

9. Reflect on the best tools for formulating and following up on development policies, including the Sustainable Development Goals;
10. Boost the sharing of experiences and expertise of member States in terms of economic models in order to benefit from previous experiences and expertise.

11. Put at the disposal of the member States adequate tools for tracking development indicators (in particular the Sustainable Development Goals), so that they can integrate them into their own monitoring mechanisms for following up the implementation of development policies, particularly sustainable development policies.

### **Recommendations on green industry**

#### ***For the Economic Commission for Africa***

12. Set up a database to showcase good practices in the area of green economy and blue economy in the region;

13. Strengthen regional cooperation, notably with regard to negotiations on climate change and renewable sources of energy;

14. Provide assistance to member States with regard to reporting on their achievements in the area of corporate social responsibility, with a view to generating macroeconomic data for follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of public policies promoting the green economy;

15. Hold a regional workshop for businesses and organizations to raise awareness of integrated reporting methodologies and tools based on corporate social responsibility.

## ANNEX II

### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EXPERT GROUP MEETING ON “INDUSTRIALIZATION THROUGH TRADE IN NORTH AFRICA IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA AND THE MAJOR TRADE AGREEMENTS”

#### **Recommendations relating to the global context and regional dynamics**

##### ***For member States***

1. Implement specific regulations and incentives to promote the industrialization of dynamic sectors that generate employment;
2. Introduce incentives to enhance intra-regional trade, especially where there are strategic complementarities between countries of the subregion;
3. Accelerate the implementation of policies aimed at diversifying and adding value to exports with a view to strengthening regional integration;
4. Draw up national strategies for identifying the factors that encourage companies to establish a presence in the subregion and invest in sectors that have knock-on effects on the process of industrialization;
5. Come up with strategies that have an impact on all industrial sectors and that strengthen trade policy in industrial development strategies.

##### ***For the Economic Commission for Africa***

6. Provide support to member States in understanding the mechanisms for adapting to the technological changes that form part of the industrialization process.

#### **Recommendations based on international industrial policy experiences**

##### ***For member States***

7. Identify an approach to integration that is compatible with new information and communications technology developments to take advantage of the resulting economic opportunities;
8. Learn from major trade agreements such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership;
9. Address restrictive practices regarding non-tariff barriers and come up with trade regulation solutions that are compatible with World Trade Organization rules;
10. Strengthen industrial policy coordination mechanisms at the regional level with a view to developing strategic complementarities between member States and supporting the development of regional value chains;
11. Boost regional trade, in particular with regard to services, in order to boost economic growth at a time of slowing global growth.

***For the Economic Commission for Africa***

12. Help member States to come up with an action plan on regional value chains and the industrial policies needed to promote them;
13. Assess how to develop a coordinated industrial policy in the subregion that would complement trade policy;
14. Develop a platform for sharing existing information and expertise with national and subregional partners, including standards, intellectual property rules and other regulations that affect the integration of the subregion's member States into global value chains;
15. Support member States in identifying and understanding rules of origin insofar as these may have an impact on industrial development.

**Recommendations on pro-industrialization trade policies**

***For member States***

16. Open up investment opportunities and develop larger intra-regional partnerships to boost inclusive economic growth and employment in member States;
17. Identify which goods the country has a dynamic competitive advantage in and for which investment should be significantly increased.

***For the Economic Commission for Africa***

18. Identify the goods on which the countries of the subregion could develop a dynamic comparative advantage and which should receive significantly increased investment.
19. Study the specific needs of countries in terms of investment needed to develop productive sectors with high potential and come up with supporting strategies.

**Recommendations for the implementation of industrial policies**

***For Member States***

20. Promote the coordination of budgetary and fiscal policies at the regional level, taking into account the specific needs of the region with regard to industrial development;
21. Ensure the relevance of industrial development policies at national and regional level, particularly in the areas of technical and vocational training, science, technology and innovation, and support for the private sector;
22. Promote industrial zones and specialized industrial clusters.

***For the Economic Commission for Africa***

23. Help member States to formulate budgetary and fiscal policies that are conducive to industrialization, in collaboration with the relevant subregional institutions;
24. Support member States in identifying the industrial sectors with the greatest potential in terms of increased productivity and in selecting appropriate tools for the target countries.
25. Support member States in the creation of regional centres of excellence in which policymakers, the private sector and financial institutions can come together to identify measures for supporting the private sector, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, with a view to developing regional business networks.

**Recommendations on the role of regional integration in strengthening industrialization*****For member States***

26. Develop strategies for upgrading and encouraging international production to relocate to the subregion;
27. Coordinate the development of an impact study on the sustainability of trade in order to identify more precisely the cumulative economic, social and environmental impacts on various sectors and areas;
28. Identify additional trade facilitation measures that would help put the subregion's member States on a stronger footing for regional trade agreements.
29. Promote products that could either create their own regional value chains or enter into international value chains;
30. Strengthen technical cooperation among the countries of the region in the formulation of industrialization policies, either in a specific field or in all areas;
31. Allow one other to benefit from the investment facilities in a given country, if another country wanted to launch a project there.

***For the Economic Commission for Africa***

32. Carry out more in-depth studies on areas of interest identified in various industrial strategies with a view to better understanding opportunities for integration and the creation of regional value chains;
33. Define a regional approach vis-à-vis regional trade agreements, including the identification of a complementary mechanism between the Arab customs union and the continental free trade area for the countries of the region.

## ANNEX III

### AGENDA

1. Opening of the session
2. Election of the Bureau
3. Adoption of the agenda and the programme of work
4. Regional profile 2015-2016
5. Special session: “Green Economy, a pathway for accelerating industrialization in North Africa”
  - Economic Report on Africa: Green Industrialization in Africa
  - Industry and the green economy in North Africa
6. Expert group meeting: “Industrialization through trade in North Africa in the context of the continental free trade area and the major free trade agreements”
7. Regional and global agendas and other special initiatives
8. Statutory matters
  - Report on the activities of the Office (March 2015 – February 2016)
  - Report on the activities of the Economic Commission for Africa
  - Presentation of the 2018-2019 strategic framework
9. Consideration and adoption of the recommendations of the expert group meeting
10. Review and adoption of the report and the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts
11. Date and venue of the next session of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts
12. Other business
13. Closing of the session



## ANNEX IV

### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

#### ALGERIE/ ALGERIA

1. M. Mohamed Abbas Maherzi  
Directeur de la politique Fiscale Direction  
Générale de la Prévision et des Politiques  
Ministère des Finance  
Alger, Algérie  
Email : mamaherzi@gmail.com/  
mohamedabbas.maherzi@mf.gov.dz

#### EGYPTE/ EGYPT

2. Amb. Achraf Ibrahim  
Assistant Minister for International  
Economic Affairs - Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Cairo, Egypt  
Tel : 201141960245  
Email : achrafibrah@hotmail.com  
achraf.ibrahim@mfa.gov.eg
3. Mrs. Shadya Qadry  
General Manager of International Agreements  
Ministry of Trade and Industry  
Cairo, Egypt  
Tél : +(202)25370307  
Email : shadya\_qadry@yahoo.com
4. Ms. Khalafallah Abeer  
Head of Bilateral trade agreement Division  
and African Union Unit  
Ministry of Trade and Industry  
Cairo, Egypt  
Tél : +20223422347  
Email : a.ahmed@tas.gov.eg/  
abeer\_k70@yahoo.com
5. Mrs. Hanaa Gomaa Khalil Ali  
Pollution Abatement projects PMU  
Manager  
Ministry of Environment  
Cairo, Egypt  
Tél : +225261421  
Email : hanagomaa23@yahoo.com
6. Mr. Gad Ihab Mahmoud Mohamed  
General Director of Technical Affairs  
CAPMAS - Cairo, Egypt  
Tel: +01116133197  
Email : pres\_capmas@capmas.gov.eg  
ihabgad2006@yahoo.com

#### LIBYE/ LIBYA

7. Ms Ghada Faiyad  
First Secretary  
Ministry of Foreign affairs and international  
cooperation  
Tripoli, Libya  
Email : ghadafz@yahoo.fr
8. Mr. Bin Magayer Ahmed  
Tripoli, Libya  
Tel: +218928766471  
Email : ali\_ahme\_876@yahoo.com
9. Mr. Isa Nagi Isa  
Ministry of Foreign affairs and international  
cooperation  
Tripoli, Libya  
Tel : +218926042807

#### MAURITANIE/ MAURITANIA

10. M. Dahmed Khalihene  
Conseiller Administratif du Directeur Général  
Office National de la Statistique (ONS)  
Nouakchott, Mauritanie  
Tél : + (222) 45 25 30 70  
Email : iodes@outlook.fr
11. M. El Moutar Mohamed Yahia  
Chargé de Mission au cabinet du Ministre  
Ministère des Affaires Economiques et du  
Développement  
Nouakchott  
Email : mohamedYahia.moutar@gmail.com
12. M. Mohamed Oulid Hanine  
Conseiller technique  
Ministère du Commerce, de l'Industrie et du  
Tourisme  
Nouakchott



## MAROC/ MOROCCO

13. SE Mme Hakima El Haite  
Ministre déléguée auprès du Ministre de  
l'Energie, des Mines, de l'Eau et de  
l'Environnement chargée de l'Environnement  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Tél. : (+212) 537 570 470/ Fax : 0537 570 472  
Email :  
secretariatministre@environnement.gov.ma
14. M. Benayad Mohamed  
Secrétaire Général  
Ministère délégué Chargé du Commerce  
Extérieur  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Tél : 0537 73 56 37  
Email : attakmce@gmail.com
15. Mme Zakia El Midaoui  
Directrice de la Coopération multilatérale et  
des Affaires économiques internationales  
Ministère des Affaires étrangères et de la  
Coopération  
Rabat (Maroc)
16. M. Abdellah Ben Mellouk  
Chef de la Division des questions économiques  
et financières  
Direction de la Coopération multilatérale et des  
Affaires économiques internationales  
Ministère des Affaires étrangères et de la  
coopération  
Rabat (Maroc)
17. M. Aymen Cherkaoui  
Conseiller  
Ministère déléguée auprès du Ministre de  
l'Energie, des Mines, de l'Eau et de  
l'Environnement chargée de l'Environnement  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : acherkaoui@acisd.org
18. Ms Nadia Zine  
Ingénieur en Chef/Conseillère  
Ministère Déléguée chargé de l'Environnement  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : zinenadia08@yahoo.fr
19. M. Adil Diani  
Conseiller du Ministre  
Ministère de l'Energie et des mines  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Tél : +212 537688853/62  
Email:dianiadil@gmail.com /  
a.diani@mem.gov.ma
20. Ms. Nassira Rheyati  
Chargée de programme  
Ministère de l'Environnement  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : r\_nassira@yahoo.fr
21. Ms. Hajar Ezzaher  
Conseiller des Affaires étrangères  
Ministère des Affaires étrangères et de la Coopération  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : h.ezzaher@maec.gov.ma
22. Mme Sara Cherki  
Conseiller au Service des Institutions Financières,  
Direction de la Coopération Multilatérale et des  
Affaires économiques internationales  
Ministère des Affaires étrangères et de la Coopération  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : saracherki@gmail.com
23. Mme Meriem Eddaou  
Cadre au service des institutions financières, Direction  
de la Coopération multilatérale et des Affaires  
économiques internationales  
Ministère des Affaires étrangères et de la Coopération  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : m.eddaou@maec.gov.ma
24. Mme IbtissamKaifouf  
Chef de la Division de la Coopération et des Partenariat,  
Direction de la Coopération et de la Communication  
Ministère du l'industrie, du commerce, de  
l'investissement et de l'économie numérique  
Rabat (Maroc)
25. M. Badr Elfadili  
Ingénieur d'Etat à la Division des Industries Chimiques  
Pharmaceutiques et Matériaux de Construction,  
Direction de l'Industrie  
Ministère du l'Industrie, du Commerce, de  
l'Investissement et du l'Economie numérique  
Rabat (Maroc)
26. Mme Loubna M'hamdi Alaoui  
Chef du Service des Relations avec les Institutions  
Internationales à la Direction du Trésor et des Finances  
Extérieures  
Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Tél: +212 537 67 73 69  
Email :l.alaoui@tresor.finances.gov.ma
27. M. Jamal Goujil  
Chargé d'études  
Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : goujil@depf.finances.gov.ma

28. M. Mohamed Reda Rouijer  
Cadre  
Ministère du Commerce extérieur  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : m.reda.rouijel@gmail.com
29. M. Abdelali Eddebbagh  
Chef de Division (DTFE)  
Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : a.eddabbagh@tresor.finances.gov.ma
30. M. Taoufik Oukessou  
Chef de Division  
Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : oukessou@depf.finances.gov.ma
31. M. Adil Hidane  
Directeur adjoint  
Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Tél : 0537 67 74 17  
Email : hidane@depf.finances.gov.ma
32. Mme Nezha Ait Elourrat  
Cadre à la Direction du Trésor et des Finances  
Extérieures  
Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : n.aitelourrat@tresor.finances.gov.ma
33. M. Abdelhamid Tebba  
Cadre à la Direction du Trésor et des Finances  
Extérieures  
Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : a.tebba@tresor.finances.gov.ma
34. Mme Siham Souihel  
Cadre  
Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : s.souihel@tresor.finances.gov.ma
35. M. Ayache Khellaf  
Directeur de la Prévision et de la Prospective  
Haut Commissariat au Plan  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : [khellafay@yahoo.fr](mailto:khellafay@yahoo.fr)
36. Mme Bouchra Bouziani  
Chef de Service  
Direction de la Statistique  
Haut Commissariat au Plan  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : b.bouziani@hcp.ma
37. M. NassiraRhazi  
Chef de Service «Commerce et Compétitivité»  
Haut Commissariat au Plan  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : rhazi2@hotmail.com
38. M. Abdelkader Teto  
Directeur  
Haut Commissariat au Plan  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : ateto\_kader@yahoo.fr
39. Mme Hasna El Alaoui  
Chef de Service de l'Industrie et de l'Artisanat  
Direction de Planification  
Haut Commissariat au Plan  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : h.elalaoui@hcp.ma
40. Mme Ahlame Sghir  
Ingénieur d'Etat au Service de la Coopération  
Haut-Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts à la Lutte  
contre la Désertification  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : ahlam.sghir@gmail.com
41. Mme Sanae Guesmi  
Chargée de la Coopération multilatérale  
Haut-Commissariat aux Eaux et Forêts à la Lutte  
contre la Désertification  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : guesmi.sane@gmail.com
42. Mme Mariam Eljoubari  
Chef de division à de la Modélisation  
Direction de la Prévision et de la Prospective  
Haut Commissariat au Plan  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : mariam.eljoubari@gmail.com
43. M. Mohamed Assouli  
Chef de division à la Direction de la Prévision et de la  
Prospective  
Haut Commissariat au Plan  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : med\_assouli@hotmail.com
44. Mlle Oumayma Belfaqir  
Conseillère à l'Export à la Direction Marketing  
Centre Marocain de Promotion des Exportations  
Casablanca (Maroc)  
Email: belfaqir@marocexport.gov.ma/  
d.abid@mem.gov.ma
45. M. Driss Abid  
Chargé d'études, Ministère de l'Energie, des Mines,  
de l'Eau et de l'Environnement (MEMEE)  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email :d.abid@mem.gov.ma

46. M. Mohammed Tamdi  
Chef de Service de la coopération Africaine  
Département Energie et Mines  
Ministère de l'Energie, des Mines, de l'Eau et de l'Environnement (MEMEE)  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Tél : 0537 68 88 24  
Email : m.tamdi@mem.gov.ma
47. M. Abdelmjid Hatimi  
Ingénieur Général  
Département Energie et Mines  
Ministère de l'Energie, des Mines, de l'Eau et de l'Environnement (MEMEE)  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : a.hatimi@mem.gov.ma
48. M. Mohamed Benyahia  
Directeur  
Ministère de l'Energie, des Mines, de l'Eau et de l'Environnement (MEMEE)  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : benyahia@environnement.gov.ma
49. M. Moulay Ismail Taqui  
Responsable du Département « Afrique »  
Ministère du Commerce Extérieur  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : taquim80@gmail.com /  
taqui@mce.gov.ma
50. Ms Maïssaa Zebakh  
Cadre chargée des relations commerciales  
Maroc-Afrique  
Ministère du Commerce Extérieur  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : maissa.zebakh@gmail.com
51. Ms Siham Houari  
Cadre, chargée des relations commerciales  
Maroc-Afrique  
Ministère du Commerce Extérieur  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : sihamhouari8@gmail.com
52. Ms. Dounia Mohati  
Cadre – Division de la coopération internationale  
Ministère de la Solidarité, de la Femme, de la Famille et du Développement Social  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : dounia.mohati@gmail.com
53. M. Boubker Elbergui  
Secrétaire Général  
Ministère de la Solidarité, de la Femme, de la Famille et du Développement Social  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : b.elbergui@gmail.com
54. Ms. Widad Sebbahi  
Ingénieur en Chef  
Direction Générale des collectivités locales  
Ministère de l'Intérieur  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : wsebbahi@interieur.gov.ma
55. Mme Mouna Zaoui  
OCI  
Ministère des Affaires Générales et de la Gouvernance  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Tél : 0537 687316 / Email : zaoui@mag.gov.ma
56. Ms Hanane Touzani  
Chargée d'études auprès du Chef du Gouvernement  
Ministère des Affaires Générales et de la Gouvernance  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Tél : 0537 687316/Email : touzani@mag.gov.ma
57. Mlle Ichrak Benbrahim  
Administrateur principal  
Ministère des Affaires Générales et de la Gouvernance  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : ichben3@gmail.com
58. M. Hassan Agouzoul  
Expert  
Conseil économique social et environnemental  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Fax : + 212 538 01 04 00  
Email : h1.agouzoul@gmail.com
59. M. Saïd Mouline  
Président, Commission Economie Verte (CGEM)  
Directeur général, Agence nationale pour le développement des énergies renouvelables et de l'efficacité énergétique (ADEREE)  
Casablanca (Maroc)  
Tél : 0522 99 7023  
Email : cder@menara.ma
60. Mme Karima Rghoni  
Chef du Service du Suivi des Accords Commerciaux,  
Direction de la Coopération et de la Communication  
Ministère du l'Industrie, du Commerce, de l'Investissement et du l'Economie numérique  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : karimarghoni@mcinet.gov.ma
- SOUDAN/ SUDAN**
61. Mr. Mohamed AbdelkarimElhag Toto  
Director of Foreign Trade Statistics Directorate  
Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS)  
Khartoum, Sudan  
Tél : +249907686669/  
Email : elhagg2003@yahoo.com

62. M. Ali Amna  
Assistant Director  
Central Bureau of Statistics  
Khartoum, Sudan
63. Mr. Mustafa Mohamed Abdalla  
Senior Researcher – Managing Director  
Central Bank of Sudan  
Sudan – Khartoum  
Tel : +2491870656644  
Email :Mustafa.abdalla@cbos.gov.sd  
/zoul177@yahoo.com
64. Mr. Mirgani Abdella Glood Indila  
Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning  
Khartoum, Sudan  
Email : mglood99@gmail.com
65. Ms. Batul Abbas Awad  
Ministry of Industry  
Khartoum, Sudan
66. Mr. Ali Mohamed  
Ministry of Environment  
Khartoum, Sudan

#### TUNISIE/ TUNISIA

67. M. Chokri Mezghani  
Sous-Directeur des études et analyses  
économiques et environnementales / Direction  
Générale du Développement Durable  
Ministère de l'Environnement et du  
Développement Durable  
Tunis, Tunisie  
Tél : + 216 70 72 86 44 (Poste 307)  
Email : chokri.mezghani@yahoo.fr  
/chokri.mezghani@mineat.gov.tn
68. M. Tarek Bouhlel  
Conseiller des Services Publics  
Chef service chargé de la coopération financière avec  
la Banque Africaine de Développement et les  
Organisations Régionales  
Ministère du Développement, de l'Investissement et  
de la Coopération Internationale  
Tunis, Tunisie  
Email: tarek.bouhlel@mdci.gov.tn
69. M. Chawki Jaballi  
Sous-Directeur chargé de la coopération avec  
l'Union Africaine et les pays africains  
Ministère du Commerce, Conseiller des services  
publics, sous-directeur chargé de la coopération  
avec les pays Africains et l'Union Africaine  
Tunis, Tunisie  
Tél : +216 71 354 434  
Email : Chaouki.jaballi@gmail.com
70. Mme. Douja Elgharbi  
Premier vice-président  
Confédération des Entreprises Citoyennes de Tunisie  
Ministère de l'Environnement et du Développement  
Durable  
Tunis, Tunisie
71. M. Youssef Zidi  
Directeur adjoint  
Direction Général de l'Environnement de vie  
Tunis, Tunisie
72. M. Okba Elkolmani  
Directeur  
Ministère des Finances  
Tunis, Tunisie

#### EXPERTS

73. Mr. Mario Cimoli  
Director  
Division of Production, Productivity and Management  
(UNECLAC)  
Santiago, Chile  
Email: mario.cimoli@cepal.org  
helenacarinena@cepal.org
74. Professeur Rafik Bouklia-Hassane  
Université d'Oran / Professeur  
Faculté des sciences économiques d'Oran  
Ministère de l'Industrie et des Mines  
Alger  
Tél : (213) 770 88 21 90  
Email : rbouklia\_hassane@yahoo.fr
75. M. Ali Harbi  
Consultant  
Alger  
Tel : +213 770 955 720  
Email : aliharbiconsulting@gmail.com
76. M. Abdelkrim Boudra  
Chef d'entreprise, IICOM, Membre du Board de CARE Alger,  
Algérie  
Tél : +213 23 30 81 12  
Email : abdelkrimboudra1@gmail.com  
boudra.iicomdz@yahoo.fr
77. M. Haraguchin Obuya  
Industrial Research Officer  
United Nations Industrial Development  
Organization  
Vienna, Austria  
Tél : +43-1-26026-3704  
Email : n.haraguchi@unido.org

78. M. Charlemagne Babatounde Igue  
Doyen de la FASEG – Université d'Abomey-  
Calavi  
Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur  
Cotonou, Bénin  
Tél : +229 95667870  
Email : charlyigue@yahoo.fr
79. M. Khalid El Bernoussi  
Consultant Trade and Development  
WTO Issues  
Geneva  
Email :Khalid.elbernoussi@yahoo.com
80. Ms. Greenidge Alicia Dominica  
President/Chief Executive  
Summit Alliances International, sarl  
Geneva  
Tel : +41-79-508-5394/Email :  
greenidge.a@gmail.com
81. Prof. Leila Baghdadi  
Associate Professor  
Titulaire de la Chaire OMC  
Tunis Business School, University of Tunis  
Tunis, Tunisie  
Email : Leila.baghdadi@tbs.rnu.tn  
/leilabaghdadi@gmail.com
82. M. Nour Makhloufi  
Directeur Recherche & Développement  
Innovation  
Centre Technique des Industries Mécaniques et  
Electriques- Le CETIME  
Tunis/ Tunisie  
Tel : 216 70 146 000- 216 70 146 050  
Email : n.makhlouf@cetime.com.tn
83. M. Saidane Dhafer  
Professeur, Université Lille 3  
Lille (France)  
Email :dhafer.saidane@skema.edu  
/dhafer.saidane@gmail.com
84. Dr. Chamel Al Azmeh  
London School of Economic and Political  
Science  
Londres, Royaume Uni  
Email :c.Azmeh@les.ac.uk
85. M. Dieye Cheikh Tidiane  
Docteur en Etudes du Développement / Directeur  
Exécutif - Centre Africain pour le Commerce,  
l'Intégration et le Développement (CACID)/Réseau  
Enda Tiers Monde  
Dakar/Sénégal  
Tél : +221 33 821 70 37/ +221338235754  
Email :cdieye@endatiersmonde.org /  
dieye3@hotmail.com

86. M. Lahoual Kouider  
Consultant / Expert en Intégration Régionale  
Rabat (Royaume du Maroc)  
Email : kouidera12@gmail.com

#### **COPRS DIPLOMATRIQUE/ DIPLOMATIC CORPS**

##### **Ambassade d'Algérie**

87. Mme Amal Medjber  
Conseiller diplomatique  
Rabat  
Email : medjber.amal@gmail.com

##### **Ambassade de la République du Soudan**

88. M. Abdalla Eltayib  
First Secretary  
Rabat (Royaume du Maroc)

##### **Ambassade de Djibouti**

89. SE M Ibrahim Bileh Doualem  
Ambassadeur Extraordinaire et Plénipotentiaire  
Rabat (Royaume du Maroc)  
Fax : 05 37 75 74 79  
Email : amb.dj.ma@gmail.com

##### **Ambassade de France**

90. M. Jules Porte  
Economiste  
Rabat (Maroc)

##### **Ambassade de la République de Gabon**

91. Ms Cynthia Ioala  
Conseillère Economique  
Rabat (Royaume du Maroc)  
Email : mayseioala@yahoo.fr  
Fax : 0537 75 29 08

##### **Ambassade du Vatican**

92. SE Monseigneur Ambassadeur  
de la Nonce apostolique  
Saint-siège Nonciature apostolique  
Rabat (Royaume du Maroc)

##### **Ambassade de la République Socialiste du Vietnam**

93. M. Bui Viet Hai  
3ème Secrétaire de l'Ambassade  
Rabat (Royaume du Maroc)

##### **Ambassade du Ghana**

94. SE Prof. Samuel Mbrayeh Quartey  
Rabat (Royaume du Maroc)

##### **Ambassade du Bénin**

95. Ms Sarah Prado  
Rabat (Royaume du Maroc)  
Tél : +212 537 75 41 58  
Fax : + 212 537 75 41 56

##### **Ambassade du Congo**

96. M. Urbain Otsala Se  
Chargé d'Affaire  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Tél : 0537 659966 – Fax : 0537 659959

**Ambassade de la République Démocratique du Congo**

97. M. Celestin Mukumpuri Mabusa  
Ministre Conseiller  
Rabat (Maroc)

**COMMUNAUTES ECONOMIQUES  
REGIONALES/ REGIONAL ECONOMIC  
COMMUNITY**

**Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA)**

98. M. Habib Ben Yahia  
Secrétaire Général  
Union du Maghreb Arabe  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Tél : +212 537 6813 71  
Fax : +212 537 681 377
99. M. Réda El Merini  
Directeur des Affaires Economiques  
Rabat (Maroc)
100. Mlle. Faouzia Chakiri  
Chef de Division
101. M. Mohamed Ben Hadj Hamouda  
Chef de Division  
Direction des Affaires Economiques
102. M. Belbachir Zahreddine  
Expert

**ORGANISATIONS INTERNATIONALES ET  
REGIONALES/ INTERNATIONAL AND  
REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

**AOAPC**

103. Prof. Adeyinka Orimalade  
Secrétaire Général  
Association des Organisations Africaines de  
Promotion Commerciale  
Tanger, Maroc  
Tel : 0539943730 / Fax : 0539 325275
104. Mme Badaoui Liliane  
Chargée de l'Administration et des Finances  
Association des Organisations Africaines de  
Promotion Commerciale  
Tél : +212 539 94 37 30/Fax 539 32 52 75

**CIDC**

105. M. Mamadou Bocar Salt  
Chef du Département des Etudes et de la  
Formation  
Rabat (Royaume du Maroc)

**ISESCO**

106. Dr. Abdelmajid Tribak  
Expert en charge de la Division Environnement  
Direction des Sciences et de la Technologie  
Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural  
Organization  
Rabat, Maroc  
Tel : 0537566052/53  
Fax: +212 5 37 56 60 12/13  
E-mail :atribak@unesco.org.ma

**CAFRAD**

107. M. Ifeanyi Emmanuel Odogwu  
Expert in Strategic Management and Reform of  
State Institutions  
Centre Africain de Formation et de Recherche  
Administratives pour le Développement  
Tanger / Maroc  
Tél : (+212) 5393-22707 (+212) 6355-10340  
okeosisi2011@yahoo.com

**Délégation de l'Union européenne au Maroc**

108. Mme Sandrine Beauchamp  
Section Appui aux Réformes économiques  
Délégation de l'Union européenne au Maroc  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : sandrine.beauchamp@eeas.europa.eu  
Tél. +212.5.37.57.98.00/33  
Fax +212.5.37.57.98.10
109. M. Fortunato Piergiuseppe  
Economic Affairs Officer  
UNCTAD, Genève  
TEL : +41 (0)22 9175647  
Email :Piergiuseppe.Fortunato@unctad.org
110. Dr Mustafa Sadni Jallab  
Chef d'Unité OMC  
Genève  
Email :Mustapha.Sadnijallab@wto.org

**UNIVERSITES/ UNIVERSITIES**

111. Université Mohammed V -Souissi  
Prof. Ghoufrane Azzedine  
Doyen - Faculté des Sciences Juridiques,  
Économiques et Sociales  
Rabat, Maroc  
Tel : +2125371719  
Email : ghoufraneaz99@hotmail.com  
Institut des Etudes Africaines
112. M. YahiaAbou El Farah  
Directeur  
Email : abouelfarah@yahoo.fr

113. Ms. Khadija Boutkhili  
Enseignante Chercheur, IEA  
Rabat (Royaume du Maroc)  
Email : k\_boutkhili@hotmail.com

114. Ms. Fatima Zohra Azizi  
Professeur Chercheur, IEA  
Email : fatimaz.aziziz@gmail.com

#### **Institut Supérieur International de Tourisme de Tanger**

115. Ms Khadija Askour  
Enseignante Chercheur  
Tanger  
Email : diaskour@gmail.com

#### **EMPLOYERS' ORGANIZATIONS UTICA**

116. Mme Shéhérazade Belaïba Berrhouma  
Directrice Coopération Multilatérale  
Tél : +216 71 142 050  
Tunis (Tunisie)  
Email : s.belaiba@utica.org.tn

#### **AGENCES DE COOPERATION/ COOPERATION AGENCIES**

##### **Agence Japonaise de la coopération internationale**

117. Mme Khadija El Baakili  
Chargée de programmes  
Rabat (Royaume du Maroc)  
Tél : 0537 27 65 95 / Fax : 0537 77 9592  
Email : AhabouneHouria.MO@jica.go.jp

##### **Affaires mondiales Canada**

118. Mr. Houssam Jedda  
Agent de développement  
Ambassade du Canada au Maroc  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Tél : +212 5 37 54 48 65  
Email : Houssam.Jedda@international.gc.ca

#### **INSTITUTIONS PUBLIQUES/ PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS BANK AL-MAGHRIB**

119. M. Zhani Ahmed  
Economiste Spécialiste  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Fax : 0537 574111  
Email : a.zhani@bkam.ma

120. M. Said El Hamine  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Tél : 0537 574119  
Email : s.elhamine@bkam.ma

#### **IRES**

121. M. Tawfik Mouline  
Directeur Général  
Institut royal des études stratégiques (IRES)  
Rabat (Royaume du Maroc)  
Fax: 05 37 71 37 91 / Email: contact@ires.ma

#### **SECTEUR PRIVE/ PRIVATE SECTOR**

##### **Schneider Electric**

122. M. Tahar Jebli  
Directeur Commercial Distribution  
Casablanca, Maroc  
Tél : +212 05 22 97 79 00  
Email : tahar.jebli@schneider-electric.com

#### **MEDIA**

123. M. Yazid Ferhat  
Journaliste  
Maghreb Emergent - Algérie  
Tel : (+213) 21 78 24 45  
Email : y.ferhat@maghrebemergent.info

124. M. Ibrahima Dia  
Directeur Général - Mauritanie  
Financial Afrik  
Tel : +22245241094  
Email : Ibrahima.dia@financialafrik.com

125. Mr. Hussein Tarek  
Deputy Editor in Chief  
Head of the Diplomatic Dep.  
Al Ahrum Al Massai Newspaper  
Cairo, Egypt  
Fax : +2 02 257 86 833  
Email : telsonoty@yahoo.com

126. Mme Nadia Attia  
Journaliste  
Agence TAP - Tunis  
Tel : +216 71889 000  
Email : nadiattia@yahoo.fr

#### **CONSULTANTS**

127. M. El-Mokhtar Cheikh Ould Sghair  
Tanger (Maroc)  
Email : cheikhcmos@gmail.com

128. M. Abdoul Kane  
Nouakchott, Mauritanie  
Email : abdoul.dado@yahoo.fr

**SYSTEME DES NATIONAS UNIES/  
UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM**

**UNIDO**

129. M. Jaime Moll De Alba  
Représentant de l'ONUDI au Maroc  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Tél : + 212 5 37 75 59 66 / 537 65 67 66  
Fax : + 212 5 37 63 27 87  
Email : office.marocco@unido.org

**UNHCR Maroc**

130. M. Anthony Berginc  
Chargé des Relations extérieures  
Rabat (Maroc)  
Email : berginc@unhcr.org  
Tél : +212 5 37 54 54 11

**UN-ESCWA**

131. Mr. Mohamed Chemingui  
Chief of Regional Integration Section  
Economic Development and Globalization  
Division  
Beirut, Lebanon  
Email: Cheminguim@un.org

**SECRETETARIAT CEA – ADDIS ABEBA/  
ECA SECRETARIAT / ADDIS ABABA**

**African Climate Policy Center (ACPC)**

132. Mr. Johnson Nkem  
Senior Climate Adaptation Expert  
Email : jnkem@uneca.org
133. Mr. Ralid Ajabboune  
Expert on Energy and Climate change  
Email: RAjabboune@uneca.org

**Social Development Policy Division (SDPD):**

134. Ms. Iris Macculi  
Economic Affairs Officer  
Employment and Social Protection  
Social Development Policy Division (SDPD)  
Tel. +251-115445002  
Email : irism@uneca.org

**Strategic Planning and Operational Quality  
Division**

135. Ms. Josephine Marealle-Ulimwengu  
Chief, Programme Planning and Budgeting Section  
Phone: +251-11-544-3803  
Email: JMUlimwengu@uneca.org

136. M. Marlon Lezama  
Chief, Partnerships and Resource Mobilization Section  
Strategic Planning and Operational Quality Division  
Tel: +251 115443129  
Email: mlezama@uneca.org

**Macroeconomic Policy Division (MPD)**

137. M. Hopestone Kayiska Chavula, PhD  
Tel: +251 11 544 3455 (Dir)  
Fax: +251 111 551 1512 - Ext: 33455  
Email: HChavula@uneca.org

138. Ms. Megan Rees  
Translator  
UNECA, Addis Ababa  
Email : mrees.uneca.org

**Regional Integration and Trade Division (RITD)**

139. Mr. William Davis  
African Trade Policy Centre (ATPC), ECA  
Tel. +251- (0)11- 544 3253  
Email: wdavis@uneca.org, d.davis@un.org

**Capacity Development Division**

140. M. Joseph Atta-Mensah  
Capacity Development Division  
Tel : +251-11-5445379 - Fax : +251-11-5514461  
Email: jattamensah@uneca.org  
atta-mensahj@un.org

**Institut Africain de Développement Economique et de  
Planification (IDEP)**

141. Ms. Karima Bounemra Ben Soltane  
Directrice  
Dakar, Sénégal  
Tel: +221338231020  
Email: idep@unidep.org

142. Mrs. Catherine Lalyre Faye  
Training Division  
Dakar – Sénégal  
Tel : +221 33 823 10 20  
Email : c.lalyre@unidep.org

143. M. Mehdi Mehamha  
Consultant  
Dakar, Sénégal  
Tel : +221 33 829 55 05  
Email : m.mehamha@unidep.org



**SECRETARIAT CEA-RABAT/  
ECA SECRETARIAT / RABAT**

Bureau de la CEA pour l'Afrique du Nord

Tél : +212 537 71 78 29- 537 71 56 13

Fax : +212 537 71 27

Email : [srdc-na@uneca.org](mailto:srdc-na@uneca.org)

Site web: [www.uneca.org](http://www.uneca.org)

- 144. M. Nassim Oulmane, Directeur intérimaire
- 145. M. Gbaguidi Ochozias, Economiste
- 146. Mme Houda Mejri, Information Officer
- 147. M. Omar Ismael Abdourahman, Economiste
- 148. M. Zoubir Benhamouche, Economiste
- 149. M. Salem Sebbar, Knowledge Management Officer
- 150. Mme Marieme Bekaye, Economiste
- 151. M. Isidore Kahoui, Economiste
- 152. Mlle Houda Filali Ansary, Communication Officer

- 153. M. Aziz Jaid, Economiste
- 154. M. Ibrahim Ayoub, AAFO
- 155. M. Mohammed Mosseddek, Research Assistant
- 156. M. Lahcen Hmad, Admin Assistant
- 157. Mme Aouatif El Arroud, Finance Assistant
- 158. Mme Naima Sahraoui, Director Assistant
- 159. Mme Amal El Korchi, Procurement Assistant
- 160. M. Mamadou Diaw, IT Assistant
- 161. Mlle Samira Ezzine, Assistant
- 162. Mlle Fouzia Assou, Assistant
- 163. M. Driss Cherrabi, Service reproduction
- 164. M. Rachid Ramdane, Chauffeur
- 165. M. Mrani Alaoui Hassan, Chauffeur
- 166. M. Abdelfettah Lotfi, Chauffeur
- 167. Mlle Andrea Mathez, Etudiant visiteur

## ANNEX V - MOTION OF THANKS

## رسالة شكر وامتنان مرفوعة إلى حضرة صاحب الجلالة الملك محمد السادس

نحن المشاركون في أعمال الاجتماع الواحد والثلاثين للجنة الخبراء الحكومية الدولية لمكتب شمال أفريقيا التابع للجنة الأمم المتحدة الاقتصادية لأفريقيا، المنعقد بالرباط، في الفترة ما بين 1 و4 آذار/مارس 2016، وعلى إثر انتهاء أعمال هذا الاجتماع، نرفع إلى مقامكم العالي عبارات الشكر والامتنان على الحفاوة التي أحاطتنا بها المملكة المغربية بمناسبة هذا اللقاء المبارك.

ويشرفنا أن ننهي إلى علم جلالتم أن هذا الاجتماع ناقش الأحوال الاقتصادية والاجتماعية التي سادت في المنطقة خلال سنة 2015. وفي هذا الصدد، تطرق الاجتماع لتطورات البيئة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية كما تناول حصيلة إنجاز برنامج عمل المكتب سنة 2015 والأجندات الإقليمية والدولية وغيرها من المبادرات الخاصة والإطار الاستراتيجي المقترح لفترة السنتين 2018-2019.

وتحور الاجتماع حول موضوع: **"الاقتصاد الأخضر، السبيل نحو تسريع التنمية الصناعية في شمال أفريقيا"**. ويندرج هذا الموضوع في سلسلة الدراسات التي شرعت فيها اللجنة الاقتصادية لأفريقيا منذ سنة 2012 حول محددات تحقيق التصنيع الأكثر استدامة في القارة الأفريقية، وهي مرحلة حتمية نحو بلوغ التحول الهيكلي والتنمية المستدامة للقارة جمعاء.

كما تطرق الاجتماع هذه السنة من خلال اجتماع الخبراء المخصص في شكل مائدة مستديرة إلى مكانة ودور **"التصنيع عبر التجارة في شمال أفريقيا في سياق تعدد الاتفاقات"**. ويتعلق الأمر بتحديد الشروط اللازمة حتى يصبح تحرير التجارة عاملا جوهريا في تصنيع شمال أفريقيا وتحفيز التجارة البينية الأفريقية للمساعدة على بروز أقطاب نمو في القطاعات الصناعية الاستراتيجية. وناقش الاجتماع أيضا كيفية جعل الاتفاقات التفضيلية للجماعات الاقتصادية الإقليمية دعامة لتشجيع سلاسل القيمة الإقليمية.

وقد أصدر الاجتماع توصيات عملية هامة ترمي إلى التصدي إلى كافة التحديات داخل المنطقة وكذلك تشجيع نمو مدرّ للمزيد من فرص العمل والازدهار الاقتصادي والاجتماعي، والحد من جميع أشكال التفاوتات، والتقليص من وقع المصدمات الخارجية، والتكيف مع تغير المناخ، وتعزيز التكامل الإقليمي.

وإذ نعبر لجلالتكم عن شكرنا وامتناننا على العناية الفائقة التي أحاطتنا بها الحكومة المغربية والتي ما فتئت تشمل بها مكتب شمال أفريقيا التابع للجنة الأمم المتحدة الاقتصادية لأفريقيا، فإننا ندعو الله عز وجل أن يحفظكم ويرعاكم ويسدد خطاكم ويجعلكم ذخرا لبلدكم المضيفين بمزيد من التقدم والازدهار تحت رعاية جلالتم السامية.

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله تعالى وبركاته.

