



United Nations  
Economic Commission for Africa  
Office for North Africa

# Thirtieth Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts

*Under the theme*

Implementing Agenda 2063  
Planning, Mobilizing and Financing  
for Development

3-6 March  
2015

## Aide Memoire

## I. CONTEXT

The Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE) is the statutory policy organ of the Subregional Office for North Africa, of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA/SRO-NA) whose programme activities it oversees. The ICE meets annually to review the ECA/SRO-NA activity report, short and medium term action plans, and the ECA framework and strategic orientations for the sub-region of North Africa. As a reminder, the main mission of the Office is to "improve the capacities of member States ... to pursue their economic and social development, with particular focus on regional integration priorities, within the overall framework of NEPAD and the internationally agreed development goals...". Its territorial jurisdiction includes Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania, Sudan and Tunisia. The Arab Maghreb Union is the regional economic community (REC) in the sub-region.

The ICE provides a framework for high-level experts from national administrations, researchers, private sector and civil society stakeholders to analyze and share views on economic and social conditions in the sub-region with a view to formulating recommendations on national strategies for development and enhancing regional integration.

Like the two previous editions, the 30th session of the ICE, to be held from 3 to 6 March 2015 in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, falls into the framework of the ECA new strategic direction, focused on the agenda for the structural transformation of the continent's economies and the African Union Agenda 2063 for development and integration in Africa.

The meeting will be taking place against a regional backdrop of successful political transitions in two of three countries of the sub-region that had embarked on such a process, persistent security risks in large swathes of the Sahelo-Saharan zone, a steep decline in the price of oil and other commodities exported by several countries of the sub-region, continuing budget austerity in the euro zone and virtually zero growth (+0,8%)<sup>1</sup> in economies of the European Union – North Africa's main trading partner. The interplay of these various factors, impact, to varying degrees, the economic and social performance of countries in the sub-region, more particularly their economic growth, exports, foreign direct investments, tourism industry and employment.

The 30<sup>th</sup> ICE meeting agenda will have a special focus on:

- (i) The implementation of Agenda 2063: "*planning, mobilizing and financing for development*", which will also be on the agenda of the forthcoming Conference of African ministers in charge of economic development; and
- (ii) A specific theme on "*Trade, an engine for industrialization*", for North African countries in particular.

This theme falls within the context of the series of studies being conducted by ECA since 2012 to determine how industrialization in Africa could be more sustained, if structural transformation and social development of the continent is to be achieved. Moving on from the optimization of commodities and other natural resources in 2013, and choosing appropriate policies and institutional frameworks for industrialization in 2014, participants will focus in 2015 on leveraging trade as an instrument to speed up industrialization. The positive relationship between trade and growth has been extensively analyzed in the economic theories of preceding decades (Baldwin 2003 ; Grossman et Helpman 1994)<sup>2</sup> . It is now recognized that developing trade through national reforms carried out under regional agreements or multilateral negotiations, has huge leverage effects on the economy by such means as the expansion of market size, business competitiveness, enhanced integration in global value chains and the transfer of technological innovations, through FDIs or businesses being compelled to upgrade in order to compete.

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<sup>1</sup> ECB Outlook ; Les Echos, economic newspaper; 4 December 2014

<sup>2</sup> Baldwin, R., "Openness and Growth: What's the Empirical Relationship?"; National Bureau of Economic Research, WP9578, Mars (2003)  
Grossman et Helpman ; "Endogenous Innovation in the Theory of Growth", The Journal of Economic Perspectives, Vol. 8; 1994

Identifying the conditions that will make trade liberalization become a genuine factor for industrialization in Africa, boosting intra-African trade to stimulate the emergence of growth poles in strategic industrial sectors and making REC preferential agreements support the promotion of regional value chains, should be key areas of discussion on this theme.

For this purpose, a special session on "Regional integration" will be part of the ICE meeting. It will focus in particular on (i) the ECA perception on the "Trade and Industrialization" nexus, as outlined in the Economic Report on Africa (ERA 2015) and (ii) the outcomes of the reflection launched by the ECA-office for North Africa via expert group meetings held in September and November 2014, respectively dealing with "International transport and trade facilitation" and "Development of regional value chains".

The challenges of industrialization as a vector for structural transformation of the North African economies will also be analyzed within a round table/ ad hoc expert meeting, held in parallel with the ICE, on the **"Strategy for an inclusive green economy"**. It will be both an opportunity to take stock of the national visions and strategies in this regard, and increase the awareness of actors to the challenges and advantages of a green economy, analyze the relationship that should be instituted between industry and the objective of developing an inclusive green economy. Discussion will be structured on the review of country reports and the regional report "Industry and the green economy in North Africa", having a special focus on the role and expectations of businesses in this field.

The themes of the ICE and of the round table/ expert group meeting will enable member State officials and other experts to share ideas and suggestions on the means and methods for countries of the subregion to meet sustainably the development challenges they face.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING

The ICE Meeting specifically aims at analyzing the status and trends of major macro-economic and social aggregates in North Africa, formulating suitable recommendations on policies and strategies for sustainable development and greater integration and structural transformation of the sub-region's economies.

For this purpose, the meeting will review several reports, namely: (i) the Survey of Economic and Social conditions in North Africa and the country profiles prepared by the Office in 2014; (ii) the Report on regional and international agendas, including the special initiatives in North Africa; (iii) the annual report of ECA/SRO activities in North Africa and the draft work programme of the Office for the biennium 2016-2017.

The meeting will also make recommendations to be submitted to the Eighth Joint meeting of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Economy and Finance and the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

## III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

It is expected that this ICE Meeting will enrich and adopt the reports to be presented by the ECA/SRO-NA, and to formulate policy recommendations and strategies addressed to decision makers, for the establishment of national development programmes and for the acceleration of the regional integration process. A detailed report will summarize the presentations, discussions and enhancements to be made to the documents submitted the main conclusions and the recommendations of the meeting.

The final report of the meeting will also be transmitted to the Eighth Joint meeting of the African Union Conference of Ministers of economy and finance and the ECA Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development.

#### **IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING AND METHOD OF WORK**

The 30<sup>th</sup> ICE meeting will comprise plenary sessions and a round table at which reports prepared by the Office and eminent experts will be presented and discussed. These reports will be published on the web site of ECA/SRO-NA (<http://www.uneca.org/sro-an>).

#### **V. PARTICIPATION**

Participation in the ICE meeting is open to ministries, national administrations and institutions in charge of planning and economic and social development, regional integration, industry, agriculture, energy, environment, social development, to representatives of the Secretariat General of the AMU and other intergovernmental organizations operating in North Africa, to private sector and civil society stakeholders, to universities and research centres, to United Nations agencies and to other development partners in the sub-region.

#### **VI. DATE AND VENUE OF THE MEETING**

The meeting will be held from 3 to 6 March 2015 in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco.

#### **VII. LANGUAGES OF THE MEETING**

The meeting will be held in English, Arabic and French.

#### **VIII. CONTACTS**

Information on the organization of the meeting is available on the web site of the ECA Office for North Africa or from:

**Coordination:**

[akane@uneca.org](mailto:akane@uneca.org)

Mr. Abdoul Kane

**Questions administratives et logistique :**

Mrs Naima Sahraoui

[nsahraoui@uneca.org](mailto:nsahraoui@uneca.org)

**Documentation :**

Mr. Mohammed Mosseddek

[mmosseddek@uneca.org](mailto:mmosseddek@uneca.org)

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Economic Commission for Africa

Office for North Africa

Tel: 00-212-537- 71 56 13/00-212-537- 71 78 29

Fax : 00-212-537-71 27 02

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

Website: [www.uneca.org/sro-an](http://www.uneca.org/sro-an)