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**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA**

ECA Office for North Africa

Twenty-fifth Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE)

Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco

16-19 March 2010

**DRAFT REPORT OF THE XXVTH MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL
COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS**

I. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANISATION OF WORK

1. The twenty-fifth meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa Office for North Africa (ECA-NA) was held from 16 to 19 March 2010 in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco. Presiding over the opening ceremony was Mauritania, Chairperson of the Outgoing Bureau of the ICE

2. Representatives of the seven member States (Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia), together with their diplomatic missions accredited to the Kingdom of Morocco participated in the meeting.

3. Represented at the meeting were the following:

- United Nations bodies and specialized agencies :

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), International Labour Organization (ILO-Algiers), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP Regional Bureau for the Arab States), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP-Geneva) and UNDP Brazil.

- Regional Economic Communities :

- Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)

- International and regional organizations :

- Association of African Trade Promotion Organizations (AATPO)
- Arab Organization for the Development of Agriculture, Regional Office in Morocco)
- African Development Bank (ADB)
- African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development ACARTSOD
- CREDIF
- AAAID
- AIDMO
- CIDC
- ISESCO
- League of Arab States

- Cooperation agencies :

- Italian International Cooperation Agency,
- Spanish International Cooperation Agency,
- Japan International Cooperation Agency
- United States Agency for International Development

- Diplomatic missions :

- Arab Fraternity Bureau
- Embassy of Algeria
- Embassy of Angola
- Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain
- British High Commission
- Embassy of Burkina Faso
- Embassy of Cameroon
- Embassy of the People's Republic of China

- Embassy of Cote d'Ivoire
 - Embassy of Egypt
 - Embassy of Gambia
 - Embassy of Korea
 - Embassy of Kuwait
 - Embassy of Liberia
 - Embassy of Mauritania
 - Embassy of Qatar
 - Embassy of the Russian Federation
 - Embassy of South Africa
 - Embassy of Sudan
 - Embassy of Tunisia
 - Embassy of Turkey
 - Embassy of the United States of America
- Private sector and universities:
 - Centre for Young Business Directors (CJD)
 - Graduate School of Governance and Economics
 - National Institute for Statistics and Applied Economics
 - General Confederation of Moroccan Businesses (CGEM)
 - Federation of Moroccan Chambers of Commerce Industry and Services
 - National Consumer Protection League
 - Hassan II University
 - Hassan II Academy of Science and Technology
 - Faculty of Legal Economic and Social Sciences
 - Institute of African Studies
 - National Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics
 - Non-governmental organizations :
 - Tilkahia Association for Rural Development
 - Tunisian Mothers Association
4. The list of participants is annexed to this report.

II. OPENING OF THE MEETING

(agenda item 1)

5. The opening ceremony of the 25th Session of the ICE began with a statement from Mr Hamed Ould Sidi Mohamed of Mauritania, Chairperson of the outgoing Bureau of the ICE. He welcomed all participants and, on their behalf, thanked the authorities of the Kingdom of Morocco for the quality reception.
6. He also commended the Director of ECA-NA for organizing this important meeting and for the judicious choice of the current year's theme on Growth and Employment Creation in the critical aftermath of the global crisis.
7. As outgoing Chairperson, his appreciation went to other member States for trusting his country to oversee the work of the ICE for the past year. He was thankful for the welcome presence of representatives of regional and international organizations and of members of the diplomatic corps accredited to Rabat and wished the meeting every success.

8. Speaking on behalf of Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, United Nations Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary of ECA, Mrs. Karima Bounemra Ben Soltane, Director of ECA-NA, welcomed all participants and reaffirmed her gratitude to His Majesty King Mohammed VI, the Government and people of Morocco for the warm welcome accorded to participants and the constant care they provided for her Office.

9. Recalling the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), she stated that before the crises, countries of the sub-region had been on track to achieve them but could rightfully ask themselves, five years to the 2015 target date, what impact the crisis would have on the pace of their achievements.

10. She invited participants to discuss in depth the current year's theme of Growth and Employment as it related to the agenda of the forthcoming ECA Conference of Ministers. Notably, this theme followed logically from those of the immediate past two years and was all the more important to the sub-region as the relatively good growth rate achieved in North Africa had not necessarily translated into high job-creating growth and unemployment was particularly affecting women and young people who were the less privileged categories of society. The sub-region would have to address the challenge of enhancing growth by seeking potential niches and by improving the balance between productivity and competitiveness in order to generate growth having a more human face.

11. One thing the crisis had highlighted was the fact that countries of the subregion held genuine potential for growth sources other than their traditional export markets and that regional integration was one of the most important such sources to be tapped.

12. She underscored the pivotal role played by ECA's subregional offices in the interface between the RECs, member States and ECA headquarters, especially under the MYP agreements. In that respect, ECA-NA was working closely with AMU to promote regional integration by way of conducting subregional activities in a number of priority areas.

13. Of particular importance were the partnerships forged with the United Nations system, the private sector, academia and civil society. Also notable was the ICE's unrelenting effort to improve its effectiveness and functioning as attested by the wealth of recommendations submitted annually to the Conference of Ministers of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

14. After welcoming participants and thanking the Director of ECA-NA for the relevance of the theme for the current year, Mr. Nizar Baraka, Honorable Minister in charge of economic and general affairs from the office of the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Morocco, made a presentation on Morocco's growth strategy and the remedial measures taken in response to the crisis.

15. He started by describing the impediments to growth and employment in North African countries, namely, inadequate human development, the mismatch between training and employment, the small size of domestic markets, the lack of economic diversification and specialization as well as the low technology content of national exports.

16. He went on to describe the major thrusts of Morocco's growth which had three components: the development of endogenous growth, export diversification and the empowerment of transactors through the improvement of the business environment and the development of human resources.

17. To cope with the crisis, Morocco had initiated a number of measures having to do with raising public investment and concessional lending to private investors. Those measures had combined with a good bumper agricultural season and the decline of fuel prices to cushion the effects of the crisis.

18. Further measures had been taken to preserve jobs, maintain exports at the satisfactory level, support continuing education, and to facilitate credit access. A strategic crisis watch committee had been set up and an early-warning system for monitoring developments instituted. Those measures had begun yielding results by the second half of the year.

19. He concluded by advocating the strengthening of sub-regional integration in North Africa as key to weathering the global economic turbulence and boosting growth in countries of the sub-region. They all stood to gain from the advantages of regional integration in terms of achieving economies of scale, negotiating with more clout, vastly extending the domestic market and becoming more capable of attracting foreign direct investment.

III. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

(agenda item 2)

20. Following consultations among heads of delegation, the Committee elected the following officers:

Chairperson	:	Sudan
Vice Chairperson:		Morocco
Rapporteur	:	Tunisia

IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND PROGRAMME OF WORK

(agenda item 3)

21. At the start of proceedings, Mr. Ibrahim Ahmed Ibrahim (Sudan), Chairperson of the incoming ICE Bureau, welcomed all participants and congratulated the outgoing Bureau and ECA-NA for the substantive work done over the past year.

22. On behalf of other members of the Bureau, he also stated his preparedness to make appropriate arrangements for the smooth implementation during their term of office of the plan of action and recommendations coming out of the current meeting.

23. Following this statement, both the agenda (document ECA-NA/ICE/XXIV/1) and the programme of work (document ECA-NA/ICE/XXIV/1/Add.2) were adopted (See annex).

V. REPORT ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN NORTH AFRICA, 2009

(agenda item 4)

24. The secretariat presented the report on economic and social conditions (ECA/NA/ICE/XXV/2), focusing on two events which had marked 2009, namely: the global economic crisis and the issue of climate change. The presentation came in four parts:

- a. The international and regional context
- b. Economic performance in North Africa
- c. Climate change and
- d. The prospects for 2010.

25. The international and regional environment had been marked by the crisis which had spread from financial circles into other sectors and from developed countries to both emerging and developing economies. All macro economic indicators had deteriorated except for inflation which had declined everywhere. In Africa, the regional economy had been severely hit by the crisis with sub-regions being impacted to varying degrees. The volatility and fragility of the international environment had consequently posed a major risk for the subregion.

26. Economic performance in the North African subregion had been seriously affected by the crisis transmitted by the external sector which had suffered from declines in exports, fuel and other commodity prices, foreign direct investments (FDI), remittances and tourism revenue. To cope with this decline in economic activity, member States had all increased their spending in order to mitigate the effects of the crisis and to make good the loss of private sector activity.

27. The macroeconomic indicators had reflected this situation: economic activity had slightly declined showing positive growth rates falling below 2008 levels: investments had remained relatively stable but FDI had declined: while domestic and external balances had deteriorated. It was important to note that the crisis had resulted in a three percentage point loss of growth in 2009.

28. The issue of climate change had been unavoidable. Countries of the subregion were affected because North Africa had specific vulnerabilities which could have a critical impact if appropriate measures were not taken to mitigate and adapt to climate change.

29. Prospects for 2010 were not encouraging. Indeed the forecasts had assumed a slight recovery in international demand, a low level of available financial resources and a low fuel price compared to prices in the current decade. For that reason, the subregion would have to face 2010 with caution.

30. To cope with the volatile and fragile environment, the secretariat proposed the following recommendations:

- An in-depth and updated analysis should be conducted to assess the macro economic, sectoral, social and labor – market impact of the crisis and its transmission and response mechanisms;
- An analysis should be conducted to assess the effects of expansionary policies and ways of improving their effectiveness and impact ;
- Permanent crisis watch mechanisms should be instituted in concert with social partners ;
- Expansive macroeconomic and sectoral policies should be pursued, particularly in the agricultural sector, with a view to stimulating domestic demand, facilitating economic diversification and reducing imports ;
- Programmes having quantifiable objectives should be adopted to broaden and deepen the small and medium business fabric, more particularly in the rural and industrial sectors;
- Using the recommendations contained in the global employment compact recently adopted by the International Labour Organization (ILO), national employment policies, with

- measurable objectives, should be adopted and a systematic effort made to coordinate macroeconomic and sectoral policies with employment promotion policies;
- While broadening credit access targeting the productive sector, measures should be designed to strengthen the financial sector so that it can promote and accelerate the mobilization of national resources and diversify risk ;
 - Intra-subregional trade should be expanded to shore up weak demand from major partners. The role of AMU would be essential in this regard.
31. To cope with the challenge of climate change, the secretariat advanced the following recommendations :
- Promoting regional cooperation because the resources required to cope with climate change often exceed the financial, technological, infrastructural and other capacities of individual countries;
 - Mainstreaming climate change into all economic and social policies; and
 - Preparing for the Mexico conference to take place late in 2010. North Africa would have to adopt a common vision and strategy in this respect.
32. After highlighting the quality of the report on economic and social conditions both in terms of the analysis conducted and the relevance of the recommendations advanced by the secretariat, the Committee raised the following issues:
- Data: To finalize the report, some updated data needed to be sent to the ECA office for North Africa;
 - Regional integration: while stressing the need for developing complementarities among the countries, its importance was highlighted within the context both of crisis response and as a factor to be built into the structure of development strategies.
 - Social development: This issue was to be sustained on the ICE agenda, particularly in terms of social protection, youth, micro-financing and the impact of the crisis on achieving the MDGs;
 - Climate change: This issue assumes relevance for the development of countries in the subregion in the country given its socio-economic impact, including environmental migration and the need to strengthen the legal and institutional frameworks for coping with climate change.
33. Following discussions on the impact of the crises and the remedial measures taken by member States as well as on the outlook for the post-crises period, the Committee raised the following issues:
- The crises had been attenuated through public investment measures, purchasing power and private sector support particularly through the facilitation of access to funds from micro-credit schemes, guarantee and investment funds;
 - Action had also been taken to improve the business climate;
 - The crises had also highlighted the important role of the State;

- Despite a relatively positive performance, the crises had made it clear that the economies of the subregion were vulnerable to exogenous factors and remained undiversified.

34. At the end of its discussions, the Committee formulated recommendations to the effect that, in the post-crisis period, member States should set their economies back on a sustainable path of employment-generating growth and human development and mainstream climate risks into their national development policies.

VI. GROWTH AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION IN NORTH AFRICA

(agenda item 5)

35. An ad hoc expert group meeting on Growth and Employment in North Africa was held as part of the proceedings of the 25th ICE session. It was organized as follows:

A plenary session presenting:

- A summary of country case studies focusing on :
 - Employment trends and policies
 - Employment trends and growth linkages
 - Policies and strategies to be adopted in order to strengthen the linkages between growth and employment.

Two working groups were formed:

- Working Group 1: This group convened in two sessions, the first focusing on new job-creating sectors and the second focusing on the coherence to be achieved between economic policies and employment promotion policies.
- Working Group 2: This group reflected on case studies prepared on the linkages between growth and employment in each country of the subregion with a view to deepening and refining them for inclusion in a publication.

A plenary session to review the outcomes from the working groups and to summarize their recommendations was organized..

36. The secretariat presented the main recommendations of the ad hoc group of experts meeting of ICE for discussion and adoption. The Committee of officials stressed, in their discussions, how important the challenge of employment, particularly of young people was to countries of the subregion. To succeed, national policies and strategies would have to be designed to develop new sources of growth and to strengthen the linkages between economic policies and the employment marketplace.

37. The Committee took note of the workshop outcomes, amended and adopted the recommendations.

38. The Committee requested the secretariat to transmit the workshop recommendations to:

- The Conference of Ministers as the input from North Africa;
- The relevant national departments for implementation and follow-up.

VII. NORTH AFRICA AND REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDAS

(agenda item 6)

39. The secretariat presented an evaluation of the implementation of regional and international agendas (ECA/NA/ICE/XXV/3), coming out of global and regional conferences and meetings focusing on themes of importance to North Africa.

40. Under this agenda item, the Committee considered agendas relating to: (i) the MDGs and Human Development; (ii) Gender and the Beijing + 15 Review; (iii) Population and Development; (iv) Climate Change and Food Security; (v) Multi-lateral Trade Negotiations (concluded and/or ongoing at the World Trade Organization) and the Agadir Accord; (vi) Development Financing; (vii) the World Summit on the Information Society; and (viii) Statistical Development in North Africa.

41. It emerged from the discussions that most countries of the subregion still suffer from lack of substantive and updated socio-economic information. Concerted institutional reforms would have to be carried out with the assistance of various development partners of the subregion in areas such as education, economic diversification, human development, not to mention the sharing of information and experiences concerning best practices. Emphasis should also be laid on technological information, employment creation, partnership opportunities, the identification of innovative and flexible funding sources and the rationalization of the various economic and social integration mechanisms.

42. The Committee stressed the need for a higher profile of cooperation with other regions, particularly within the context of Afro-Arab, Euro-Arab arrangements and the need to share more relevant information on such themes and agendas as were being pursued by the Arab Free Trade Zone (AFTZ) to which only Mauritania had yet to accede. Participants, intergovernmental organizations and regional organizations like AIDMO stated their preparedness to grant access to their data and information resources on the policies pursued and to ensure the follow-up of questionnaires disseminated in the region, particularly to feed into the North African economic integration observatory and the establishment of a system for sharing and disseminating data specific to the sub-region.

VIII. REVIEW OF THE WORK OF ECA-NA IN 2009

(agenda item 7)

43. The work programme activities of ECA-NA from April 2009 to March 2010 were reviewed by the Secretariat in terms of meetings, workshops, seminars, ad hoc expert group meetings and publications as contained in document ECA-NA/ICE/XXV/4.

44. Those programme activities had been conducted within the context of ECA sub-programme 7 entitled, Supporting Subregional Development Activities, the ECA business plan for 2007-2009, the main outcomes of the ECA repositioning exercise launched by the Executive Secretary and the multi-year programme conducted with AMU. They were based on experience sharing, policy analysis and capacity building and had been conducted in close cooperation with member States, RECs, regional organizations and United Nations system agencies. The output included publications, meetings, seminars and advisory services.

45. The secretariat outlined the main areas of intervention by ECA-NA, mainly, analysis of economic conditions, regional integration, education and capacity building for job creation (2009) and Growth and employment creation (2010).

46. Participants took note of the report and commended the secretariat for the quality and relevance of the activities undertaken and the efforts made to respond to the needs of member States and to work in concert with them.

IX. STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF ASSISTANCE TO REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES

(agenda item 10)

47. The Committee meeting was graced by the presence of Mr. Habib Ben Yahia, AMU Secretary General, who made a statement highlighting the challenges that the sub region was facing from the global economic crisis and the need for finding ways and means of improving cooperation among the countries of the subregion. He also recalled the major activities the AMU Secretariat had conducted to facilitate subregional integration, especially those activities targeting the youth, desertification and private sector support.

48. He went on to commend the excellent quality of the working relationships between the AMU Secretariat and ECA and the strengthening of such cooperation, particularly within the context of the joint work programme established for 2008/2009 and the prospects for mapping out a new work programme for 2010-2012.

49. The secretariat described the activities ECA-NA had been conducting with the RECs, in particular the implementation of the 2008-2009 (ECA/NA/ICE/XXV/6), multi-year programme agreement concluded with AMU and the proposed programme for 2010 – 2012. Among other things, the secretariat stressed the importance of developing a joint strategy for co-opting new partners and mobilizing resources for joint activities. The cooperation between and AMU and other RECs must be deepened and the role of networking and communities of practice in experience sharing and knowledge management would be crucial. Accordingly, ECA was currently conducting an external evaluation of cooperation between its subregional offices and RECs with a view to improving its effectiveness in this area.

50. The Committee reaffirmed its support to ECA-NA for strengthening subregional integration in the Maghreb and commended the Office for the degree and quality of its cooperation with AMU.

51. Members of the Committee stressed the importance of institutional capacity building, policy harmonization, the sharing of best practices and the institution of a joint subregional approach within the context of partnership with the European Union, more particularly, at the level of the Mediterranean.

52. They also expressed the hope that a subregional capacity building programme would be prepared in order to help member States to mainstream climate change in their development policies with emphasis on subregional cooperation.

53. The League of Arab States expressed the wish to conclude a comprehensive cooperation agreement with ECA through its Subregional Office for North Africa.

54. The Committee also noted the interest of the following institutions to strengthen their partnership with ECA and AMU: The Islamic Development Bank, AIDMO, and CREDIF. It welcomed the proposal to organize regular meetings among the various subregional institutions in order to secure better coordination of the support they could provide to AMU/ECA cooperation.

X. 2010-2011 WORK PROGRAMME AND 2012-2013 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK *(agenda item 8)*

55. The secretariat informed the Committee about its 2010 – 2011 work programme currently being implemented and its 2012 – 2013 Strategic Framework (ECA/NA/ICE/XXV/5), which would be submitted to the forthcoming ECA Conference of Ministers for approval.

56. The Committee suggested the organization of workshops on economic prospects and modelling.

57. The Islamic Development Bank (IDB) repeated its proposal to organize subregional meetings for concerted action among the various intergovernmental organizations working in the subregion with a view to coordinating their activities and building aid synergies on the basis of experiences acquired by and within the countries.

58. AIDMO and CREDIF offered access to their databases to member States through ECA.

XI. ECA PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES FOR 2009, 2010 WORK PROGRAMME AND PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2011-2012 *(agenda item 9)*

59. Members of the Committee regretted the fact that no presentation was made on ECA activities in 2009, the work programme for 2010, and the proposed work programme for 2011-2012. They stressed the importance of receiving such presentations in order to comply with the ICE recommendation for better coordination of subregional and regional activities, all the more because the ICE traditionally meets before the Conference of Ministers.

XII. PRESENTATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING *(agenda item 13)*

60. The report was presented in two phases : First came the reading and adoption of the recommendations and second came the reading and adoption of the draft report as a whole.

61. The ICE recommendations were amended by participants and adopted as reproduced in the annex to the present report.

62. At the conclusion of their deliberations, participants in the 25th Meeting of the ICE expressed their deep appreciation for the quality of work done by the staff of ECA-NA and their satisfaction with the success of the meeting.

XIII. DATE AND PLACE OF THE XXVITH MEETING OF ICE *(agenda item 11)*

63. It was agreed at the 26th Meeting of ICE would be held before the 2011 ECA Conference of Ministers. Unless any State member informed the Secretariat that it would like to host it, the meeting would be held in Rabat.

XIV. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(agenda item 12)

XV. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

(agenda item 13)

XVI. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

(agenda item 14)

ANNEX I.

AGENDA

1. Opening Ceremony
2. Election of Officers
3. Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work
4. Report on Economic and Social Conditions in North Africa, 2009
5. Ad hoc Expert Group Meeting on Growth and Employment in North Africa
6. North Africa and regional and international development agendas
7. Review of ECA-NA programme activities (April 2009-March 2010)
8. 2010 – 2011 Work Programme and 2012-2013 Strategic Framework
9. Presentation of ECA programme activities
10. Status of implementation of the Multi-Year Programme of Assistance to RECs
11. Date and place of the next Meeting of the ICE
12. Any other business
13. Presentation and adoption of the Report
14. Closing of the Meeting

ANNEX II.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE XXVTH MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS

At the close of their deliberations, members of the ICE made the following recommendations and requested ECA-NA to transmit them to the ECA Conference of Ministers:

Member States should:

1. Improve the procedures for providing ECA-NA with the updated data requested

Economic and social conditions

With a view to managing the post-crisis situation and putting their economies back on a path of sustainable growth that would generate jobs and improve human development, they should:

2. Increase the volume of investment in productive sectors such as agriculture through suitable and decentralized mechanisms including national and regional investment funds, guarantee funds and micro-financing schemes
3. Strengthen subregional cooperation in order to facilitate the sharing of knowledge and experiences, the achievement of economies of scale, the enhancement of negotiating clout, the harmonization of national policies and the institution of joint responses
4. Conduct studies on the degree to which the impact of the crises would affect their achievement of the MDGs
5. Commission social protection studies with a view to improving their coverage and effectiveness
6. Enhance their capacity to anticipate risks by developing indicators, tools and methodologies as well as setting up institutional machinery such as crisis watch committees

With a view to mainstreaming climate risk in development policies, they should:

7. Strengthen their human, legal and institutional capacities for adaptation to climate change and for managing natural disaster risks; and
8. Conduct multi-sectoral studies on the impact of climate change involving universities and research centres

Workshop on Growth and Employment Creation

9. Transmit the workshop recommendations to relevant national departments for implementation and follow-up

International and regional agendas

10. Strengthen national statistical systems for better decision making
11. Intensify the sharing of information and best practices on agenda implementation
12. Identify and mobilize innovative and flexible sources of development financing in North Africa
13. Harmonize and coordinate the various economic and social integration strategies adopted by economic communities of the region

Regional integration

14. Facilitate access to ECA and AMU data with a view to improving the work of both institutions and feeding such data into the Maghreb Integration Observatory which is being established
15. Ensure the coherence of regional and subregional trade agreements concluded by member States
16. Take advantage of the opportunities created by the NEPAD for the development of the countries of the sub-region

ECA-NA should:

17. Increase the resources provided to member countries, particularly in terms of advisory services and technical assistance.
18. Enable ECA-NA partners, in particular AMU, to join the knowledge networks and communities of practice set up by ECA
19. Intensify exchanges with national focal points for a better access to country data

Economic and social performances

20. Include in the report a specific section on member State responses to the crises, using information to be provided by the countries
21. Help organize a youth forum to facilitate dialogue and to enable young people to articulate their needs and expectations within a development perspective, the year 2010 being the International Youth Year

Workshop on growth and employment creation

22. Transmit the recommendations of the workshop to the ECA Conference of Ministers as North Africa's input; and to relevant national departments for implementation and follow-up

Report on programme activities (April 2009-March 2010)

23. Transmit the report on ECA-NA programme activities to the Bureau of the Conference of Ministers for final approval

Regional integration

24. Pursue the cooperation activities initiated within the context of the multi-year programme with AMU and mobilize the resources needed for its implementation
25. Institute a subregional programme for building the capacity of member States to mainstream climate change into their development policies and appropriating the necessary resources
26. Organize concerted action with regional organizations like IBD, AIDMO and ADB with a view to improving the coordination of their respective programmes of action
27. Strengthening exchanges and cooperation among various RECs

2012-2013 Strategic Framework

28. Transmit the ECA-NA Strategic Framework document to the Conference of Ministers for final approval
29. Incorporate the specific areas of activity proposed during the ICE meeting into the preparation of the draft work programme for the period 2012-2013

ANNEX III

MAIN CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AD HOC GROUP OF EXPERTS MEETING

“Growth and Employment in North Africa”

Working Group 1

Session 1: Promoting and supporting new sources of growth and employment

This session focused on emerging opportunities for growth and employment. After reviewing recent international research and selected national experiences, the experts drew lessons, highlighting the following issues at the end of their discussions:

- The changes taking place nationally, regionally and globally such as the emergence of the green economy and the transformation of production and consumption patterns, including that of energies; the emergence of women on the job market; the demographic importance of young people and ageing populations; the massive and rapid urbanization; and the modernization of businesses and public administration, all present opportunities for creating greater wealth and sustainable jobs, particularly through their contribution to fiscal revenues, investments, local development, and diversification of products and exports.
- These new opportunities can be found especially in agriculture; renewable energies and energy efficiency; water; social services for women, youth and businesses; sanitation; transport; housing; construction; waste management; biodiversity; ecosystem management and other services.
- Pilot projects and other initiatives have been launched in some countries of the sub-region. In some cases, measures have been taken to improve the legislative and regulatory framework and to provide training and develop infrastructures. Particular attention was given to renewable energies.
- However, several obstacles impede their growth and employment potential. These include the lack of information, visibility, studies, access to financing and technologies, training, institutional capacity, and suitable incentives and tax breaks.
- The creation of wealth and sustainable jobs in these sectors often depends on the establishment of competitive national industries and the forging of partnerships between government, universities, businesses and local authorities.
- North Africa holds particular potential for the development of these emerging sectors, especially of renewable energies, which could form a basis for cooperation among the countries of the sub region.

In order to transform this potential into a real opportunity, member States should:

1. Conduct studies on these emerging sectors and launch information and sensitization campaigns on their employment, investment and local development potential
2. Adopt proactive and voluntary policies involving all stakeholders, to create an enabling environment for the expansion of these sectors, and put in place a system to provide global and integrated promotion and support services covering legal, fiscal, financial, economic, educational and technological areas with national and local dimensions
3. Promote partnerships with local governments, the private sector and universities, in particular through contracts between the State and these partners, on the basis of results-based performance criteria
4. Support the development of start-ups and of SMEs/SMIs capable of keeping abreast of new developments to promote national local production and looking towards the sub-regional market.
5. Promote sub-regional cooperation and collaboration in emerging sectors of common interest, particularly to share experiences and build capacities
6. Support international and regional initiatives that help in creating an enabling environment for access to markets, financing and technologies, especially through international cooperation.

Session 2: Strengthening coherence between employment policies, macro-economic and sectoral policies

This session focused on the linkages between employment promotion policies and economic policies. After singling out some international experiences in which the linkages between economic and employment creation policies had been strengthened, the experts noted that:

- Linkages between growth and employment can be stronger if the economic policies pursued long-term approaches and goals as to facilitate undertaking the structural transformation of economies, the accumulation of human capital and strengthening of institutional capacity, which are necessary conditions for sustainable growth and jobs creation.
- Short-term economic policies do not lead to sustainable growth, do not allow for absorbing shocks which often had long-term effects, particularly on employment, and do not allow reaching medium and long-term development objectives.
- Domestic resource mobilisation can facilitate a more effective expansion and better management of the fiscal space needed to promote public investment and expenditure and thereby contribute to job creation.
- Social policies, for employment promotion in particular, also contributes to economic growth.

For economic policies to contribute more to sustainable job creation, member States should:

7. Adopt macroeconomic policies aimed at addressing their medium and long-term development and structural transformation objectives and incorporate employment targeting indicators into these policies
8. Analyze the impact of economic policies, particularly to attract of FDI and for liberalisation, on the productive sector, non-tradable goods, SMEs and dynamic comparative advantages.
9. Conduct studies to identify the maximum fiscal space, especially using such domestic resources as fiscal revenues, for supporting investment expansion and job creation policies
10. Launch public investments in order to attract private investors into less privileged region.
11. Promote inclusive and adapted financial systems to help entrepreneurs expand operations and dynamically find their place in value chains and clusters.
12. Take the necessary measures, especially institutional and normative, required to transform the revenues derived from natural resources into investments to finance economic diversification, infrastructure and high-value added sectors.
13. Analyze the opportunities and prospects for strengthening the links between economic and social policies, especially between social protection policies, including pension funds, and financing policies for development and job creation.
14. Adopt proactive policies for economic diversification particularly through the upgrading of research and development to a national priority for developing a national system of innovation, support for SMI and SME innovation, and the involvement of the North African Diaspora in national universities and enterprise networks.

To mainstream employment policy objectives in all national development policies and strategies, member States should:

15. Adopt, in consultation with major stakeholders, active employment policies based on integrated programming approaches, which include national and sub national objectives and are backed with common information, follow up and evaluation mechanisms.
16. Adopt dynamic approaches and tools for the formulation of employment policies best suited to addressing the impact of external shocks
17. Create business development support programmes based on a holistic and comprehensive approach which takes financial, technical, training, fiscal and other aspects into account and strive to strengthen their linkages with clusters and insertion in value chains
18. Improve and enhance statistical systems on employment, particularly of women and young people, and promote wider use of ICTs with a view to supporting the coordination and sharing of information and experiences

19. Integrate employment goals in all economic, social, cultural and environmental policies.

20. Create and/or strengthen coordination mechanisms among institutions dealing with employment and those dealing with other economic, social and environmental sectors and provide them with work plans and indicators for performance-based monitoring and evaluation.

21. Match national and local employment creation policies with local development and poverty reduction policies through the adoption of such innovative programmes as Employment Guarantee Schemes, which make for the creation of sustained jobs through the improvement of infrastructural facilities and services

22. Adopt selective policies, including industrial policies, suited to the level of development and international market integration accompanied by a regulatory framework for managing performance and results.

ECA should:

23. Promote South-South cooperation and institute technical cooperation for the strengthening of linkages between social and economic policies

24. Promote cooperation between the International Policy Centre – Inclusive Growth (UNDP) and member States.

Working Group 2:

The work of this group focused on a presentation of national case studies analyzing the relationship between growth and employment in countries of the sub-region. The themes running through all the reports were:

- A long-term analysis of economic growth
- A long-term analysis of the labor market
- An analysis of the relationship between growth and employment
- Conclusions and recommendations

The main conclusions common to the studies comprised the facts that:

- Economic growth had often been volatile to a sharp degree for those countries dependent on oil exports
- Growth, though improving throughout the sub-region, had fallen below the level required to bring down unemployment rates significantly
- The groups most affected by unemployment are mainly the youth, women and graduates.
- The employment elasticity which varies by country and periods highlights the serious difficulties of addressing unemployment.

In the ensuing discussions, the following recommendations were made:

Member States should:

25. Conduct regular studies on the relationship between growth and employment at the macro, meso and micro levels, involving universities and research centres

26. Facilitate information to support ECA in updating and finalizing the national case studies.

ECA should:

27. Send the national case studies to member States for additional information and include all countries of the sub- region in the analysis contained in the summary of the national case studies.

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رسالة شكر وامتنان مرفوعة إلى حضرة صاحب الجلالة الملك محمد السادس

نحن المشاركون في أشغال الدورة الخامسة والعشرين للجنة الخبراء الحكومية الدولية لمكتب شمال أفريقيا التابع للجنة الأمم المتحدة الاقتصادية لأفريقيا، المنعقد في الرباط، في الفترة من 16 إلى 19 آذار/مارس 2010، وعلى إثر انتهاء أشغال هذا الاجتماع، نرفع إلى مقامكم العالي عبارات الشكر والامتنان على الحفاوة التي أحاطتنا بها المملكة المغربية بمناسبة هذا اللقاء.

وقد تطرق هذا الاجتماع إلى الأحوال الاقتصادية والاجتماعية وأثر الأزمة والإجراءات المتخذة لمواجهتها. كما تمحور حول موضوع النمو وخلق فرص الشغل بشمال أفريقيا. وقد أصدر هذا الاجتماع توصيات تهدف إلى جعل النشاط الاقتصادي أقوى ويمكن في نفس الآن من خلق مناصب شغل من شأنها أن تمتص البطالة في بلداننا وخاصة الفئات الضعيفة من النساء والشباب.

ونحن إذ نعبر لجلالتكم عن شكرنا وامتناننا على العناية الفائقة التي أحاطتنا بها الحكومة المغربية وما فتئت تشمل بها مكتب شمال أفريقيا التابع للجنة الأمم المتحدة الاقتصادية لأفريقيا، نسأل الله عز وجل أن ينعم على جلالتم بموفور الصحة والعافية وعلى بلدكم المضيف بمزيد من النجاح والازدهار تحت رعاية جلالتم السامية.

والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله.

الرباط، 19 آذار/مارس 2010