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Mission to Cairo, Egypt, 16-19 September 2019  
Lilia Hachem Naas, Director, SRO-NA

	Summary of discussions	Follow up actions
1.	<p><u>Conference organized by Arab International Women Forum in close collaboration with the American University in Cairo on “Women as Engines of Economic Growth: Empowering women innovators, entrepreneurs, executives and educators towards fulfilment of the SDGs in the MENA Region”.</u></p> <p>The conference brought together many high-level officials and private sector representatives from Egypt and the MENA region.</p> <p>I contributed to the key panel on: “<i>Advancing women’s leadership and gender diversity on corporate boards and in family business: Best practices from Egypt, the broader MENA region and internationally</i>”, along with French ex minister of health, Ms. Elisabeth Guigou, President, Anna Lindh Foundation (France), Jane Valls, Executive Director, GCC Boards Institute, (UAE), and Mona Al Moayyed, Managing Director, YK Almoayyed &amp; Sons, (Bahrain).</p> <p>The panel was moderated Dr Ghada Howaidy, Associate Dean Executive Education and External Relations, School of Business, American University in Cairo, Egypt, and Head of Egypt Observatory of Women on Boards.</p> <p>Participation agreed on the needs to strengthen women participation in Boards and that this process could be supported by a “positive discrimination” approach. Participants confirmed that the observatory is unique in the region and provides strong foundation to gather hard data and monitor participation of women on Corporate Boards. During the discussion, participants requested to have similar institutional setting replicated in other countries to be able to find adequate solutions and pragmatic approach to push women into the decision-making circle. There is need to ensure buy-in from men and for them to be closely association with such initiatives.</p> <p>During the discussion with Dr. Howaidy, it was felt that ECA could play an active role is supporting replication of the women on board observatory in North Africa and beyond. This will ensure more systematic follow up and rigorous approach to facilitate women, particularly young women, in corporate Boards. The discussion should be taken up with the Gender Unit in GPSPD.</p>	<p>Discuss with GPSPD possibility to organize a regional workshop working with the American University in Cairo to disseminate the concept of women on Board observatory in North Africa, and to provide support where requested</p>
2.	<p><u>Ministry of planning, monitoring and administrative reforms</u></p> <p>The MoU for the organization of ICSOE from 25 to 28 Nov in Aswan, Egypt was signed, providing the ground to move full speed in preparing the meeting.</p> <p>The discussion also focused on planned joint activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The side event on SDGs to be organized during UNGA was cancelled because the Minister did not attend the UNGA in New York.</li> <li>2. The event on wealth funds and investment promotion, we are still expecting the suggested place to host the event, the concept note and proposed programme from Egypt. Documentation from event organised by ECA an IDEP in Senegal was shared with the ministry of planning to be serve as a basis in conceptualizing the event for Egypt.</li> </ol> <p>In addition, the ministry of planning is undertaking an in-depth review of existing data related to private investment. The objective is to identify the gaps and put systems in place to fill missing data. Ministry requested ECA &amp; SRO-NA support in this area. A formal request will be submitted in due course. Similarly, for national accounts, areas where the ministry is currently working with ESCWA and areas of collaboration with ECA should be identified and further analyzed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Preparation of ICSOE will move full speed</li> <li>- Discuss with PSDF investment event to be organized</li> <li>- discuss with ACS and PSDF investment data gap analysis and what support can be provided by ECA.</li> <li>- Discuss with MGD possible support through macro-modelling to assess impact of global changes/shocks</li> </ul>

<p><u>Meeting with Ministry of Foreign Affairs:</u></p> <p>Amb, Aboeish Welcomes the fact that SRO-NA ICSOE meeting will be organized in Egypt this year, and look forward to supporting the process To consolidate ECA work in Egypt around specific priority areas, MOFA suggests to have an exchange of letters between ECA and the Minsitry of Foreign Affairs around the four areas below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- improving investment</li> <li>- Digitalisation</li> <li>- Industrialisation</li> <li>- IFF and financing development</li> </ul> <p><u>Information about the Aswan Forum organized on 11-12 dec. in Aswan Egypt</u> organised by CCCPA (Cairo International Center for Conflict Resolution, Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding)</p> <p>An invitation was sent to UN SG. OES requested SRO-NA to find more information about the event. The documentation regarding the event is attached. This is an African owned initiative. The event is organized under the auspices of President El Sisi and considered the most important and high-level event during his presidency of the AUC and chairmanship of the peace and reconstruction group. Organizers are keen for ECA to be part of the event and contribute to it (substantially). The event focuses on operationalizing the normative work to advance the nexus peace and development and understand what it means in terms of tools and resources</p> <p>Attendees: high-level officials from African countries, donors, private sector, and IFIs</p> <p>4 sectors of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• infrastructure</li> <li>• Banking and finance</li> <li>• Telecom and IT</li> <li>• Energy</li> </ul>	<p>Discuss with Legal office or OES possibility for exchange of letters to confirm areas of work</p> <p>Share information on Aswan Forum with HQ, follow up with CCCPA as needed</p>
<p><u>Meeting with Technical Ministry</u></p> <p><u>Ministry of finance, meeting with Ms. El Sharkawy, deputy minister of finance, economic affairs</u></p> <p>I discussed follow-up to the COM discussions particularly on improving fiscal policy and digitalization. The director promised to check internally and come back to me. I also discussed the letter related to the Luxemburg Protocol. The deputy minister expressed interest in this area as it is part of the issues she is working on. She promised to get back to us with a reponse to the proposed field mission.</p> <p><u>Ministry of trade, Ms. Nermin Abulata:</u></p> <p>Egypt is organizing several events at global and/or African level during the whole month of November. Major ones and where ECA is participating or could potentially participate are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 21-22 nov: OECD 13th plenary of PTG-GVC in CArio. This is a global meeting on digitalisation, trade and industry. Specific sessions will focus on Egypt 2030 and AfCFTA. Three sectors are being considered: agriculture and food, engineering, medical and pharma. The three sectors will be discussed during peer learning meetings: Agro with Italy, Engineering with Germany, pharma with Japan.</li> <li>- 22-23 nov: invest in Africa, and Made in Africa in Cairo</li> <li>- 24-30 nov PIDA organised with MOFA and AUC in Cairo</li> <li>- 1 and 2 Dec: African Economic Conference, in Sharm el Sheikh</li> <li>- 11-12 Dec: Aswan Forum, Sharm el Sheikh</li> <li>- 14 Dec: African Youth forum in Sharm el sheikh</li> </ul> <p>I informed Nermin that our Intergovernmental Committee of Senior Officials and Experts will also take place in Egypt, specifically in Aswan. It will be organised from 25 to 28 Nov. and will include an EGM on Trade facilitation. She promised to mobilise high level participation from the ministry of trade and Industry in Egypt as well as other countries in the sub-region. In relation with Trade facilitation, Nermine informed that currently the WTO and WCO are currently working on national data harmonization, (starting with East African</p>	<p>Continue follow up with Ministry of Finance on pending issues</p> <p>Follow up with ATPC to firm up ECA contribution to OECD event and PTPR.</p> <p>Share ICSOE and EGM documentation with ministry of trade</p> <p>Follow up with ministry of trade regarding areas of work and contribution to other events organized in Egypt</p>

	<p>Community in Africa) driving towards establishment of regional single window. Other initiative to encourage harmonisation and seamless transmission of data and information include: the TIN (Trader International number) initiative where traders will have a single ID to use globally, and UNICN (the International Consignment Number) to facilitate customs clearance. MTI would like to discuss possible support from ECA in these areas as well, in conjunction with operationalizing the AfCFTA.</p>	
	<p><u>Participate in UNCT meeting Egypt</u></p> <p>The meeting started with the new members around the table:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the new WFP representative, Mr. Menghestab HAILE, who is of Ethiopian origin and knows very well UNECA.</li> <li>2. The new head of UNTIL (UN Innovation and technology lab), a new institution established in Cairo UNTIL was briefly presented as a platform for UN agencies, NGOs, private sector, donors, and academia to network and connect initiatives within the continent. The purpose is to use technology innovation to promote entrepreneurship and overcome existing growth challenges. 4 sectors of focus: agriculture and agri-food, Health, Education, and Circular economy</li> <li>3. As this is the first time ECA is participating in the meeting, I was asked to present the work of the ECA regional office. I made a brief presentation of on-going activities in Egypt and at sub-regional level, in particular the work on macro-economic modelling undertaken with the Central Bank, activities linked to AfCFTA and trade facilitation, and area of specialization on employment, skills and sustainable development.</li> </ol> <p>The RC mentioned that in some areas there seems to be overlap and these areas need to be discussed in more details with concerned agencies. He also mentioned that trade is the missing link for UNCT in Egypt, as none of the agencies is working on trade issues. This an area where ECA could clearly add value.</p> <p>From UN system perspective, the challenge is that Egypt is covered by two economic commissions (UNECA and ESCWA) and there is need to ensure better coordination of activities implemented by both. Egypt being the host of the league of Arab States, it has been easier to work with ESCWA which covers the same geographical region.</p> <p>In terms of programming, it is foreseen that the CCA in Egypt will be completed by Dec. 2019. All major financial partners, including WB, EBRD, and IMF are undertaking economic analysis this year to develop new country strategy and define areas of intervention. It is important that the UN system joins in and takes advantage of this on-going process. It is important however for ECA to do the same exercise and support this process from a wider UN perspective. It is foreseen that UNSDCF will be completed to start implementation in 2022.</p> <p><u>Meeting with Richard Dictus, UN Resident Coordinator</u></p> <p>The meeting focused on the RC visit to Rabat on 21 October, to ensure better coordination of ECA work with UN Agencies at national level and at regional level (most regional offices covering North African countries being in Cairo). From the RC perspective the UNSDCF process needs more substantive analysis of the economic situation to propose innovative solutions to accelerate implementation of SDGs and ensure sustainable and inclusive growth. In particular, work at policy level and work in the area of trade development need to be better documented and integrated in a lean was as part of the UNSDCF to give more visibility to ECA work on the ground. Because of the complexity of its environment, and the great challenges it faces in terms of the development and peace nexus, the RC considers Egypt to be a good pilot case to operationalize the SG vision: to create a strong link between the global, the regional and the national levels.</p>	<p>Prepare RC visit to Rabat</p>

Signature :



date : 1oct. 2019