

Aide Mémoire

I Background

The 12th APF meeting held in Rome on 10 June 2009 accepted the offer of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to host a Special Session of the APF devoted to Climate Change. This APF decision is consistent with fulfilling the Forum's objective of catalyzing actions, stimulating international discourse and mobilizing partnership support for Africa's development agenda and priorities. In this regard, the Special Session will reinforce the awareness, understanding, measures and actions on African interests and expectations on climate change as promoted by the APF, particularly at its successive 8th, 10th, 11th and 12th meetings in Berlin, Tokyo, Addis Ababa and Rome, respectively.

The Special APF session will also contribute to implementing African Union Summit Decisions on climate change and serve to complement the outcomes of related African regional processes including the May 2009 African Ministerial Conference of Environment (AMCEN) special session on Climate Change held in Nairobi, as another step towards defining African common position on Climate Change. Overall, the forthcoming session reflects the weight and importance attached to Climate Change issues within Africa's development agenda by both Africa and its development partners.

II Core Objectives

To build a coalition around Africa's key concerns and expectations on climate change in order to ensure that these are adequately addressed in a new climate change agreement expected to be reached at the Fifteenth Conference of Parties (COP-15) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 7 to 18 December 2009.

III Format of the Meeting

The meeting will be divided into two main sessions with identified moderators/chairs. However, given the important issues to be discussed during the closing session, a short paragraph on the latter is included in this brief.

Session 1

A keynote Address to be delivered by H.E. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia provide an overview of Africa's concerns and expectations in the UNFCCC negotiations and a clear vision for the coalition to be built around these.

Following the keynote address, participants will hear a presentation from Lord Nicholas Stern, Chairman of the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment on the global dimension of climate change as it relates to Africa-specific issues. The presentation by the Minister of Energy and Water Resources of Sierra Leone and former Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Co-Chair of Working Group III, Honourable Ogunlade Davidson will narrow down to the regional level and will focus on climate change impacts on key sectors of Africa's economy. Heads of State and Government/Ministers will make interventions in response to the key issues raised in the Address and presentations, and will be followed by general discussions. H.E. Dr. Ibrahim Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of the NEPAD Secretariat will make concluding remarks that will capture the key messages from the various interventions and discussions.

Session 2

This session will comprise thematic presentations and discussions on Africa's key concerns and expectations in the context of the ongoing UNFCCC negotiations. Lead Presenters will focus on the thematic areas of adaptation, mitigation, technology development and transfer and financing will make presentations on the respective themes. General discussions will follow each presentation and key messages will be distilled from the presentations and discussions.

Closing session

This session will include a presentation of key political messages from the Special Session in the form of a joint statement. The next steps to be agreed will take into account the need to effectively disseminate the key messages to relevant regional and global processes that feed into, and could influence the outcomes of Copenhagen.

IV Expected Outcomes

The Special Session is expected to lead to:

1. Heightened awareness on Africa's key climate change concerns and expectations from the Copenhagen process
2. Increased political momentum to address Africa's concerns and to support the realization of its expectations from the Copenhagen conference.
3. A strong coalition built around Africa's key political messages on climate change.

V Outputs

A number of outputs are expected to be delivered at the end of the session:

1. Joint Statement that highlights Africa's key concerns, clearly articulates its expectations from Copenhagen, and the role of the coalition in this regard
2. A compilation of inputs and outputs of the Special Session

3. Press releases
4. Web publications

VI Meeting Documentation

Documents to inform the meeting will include focused background papers on Africa's key concerns and expectations in the context of the ongoing climate change negotiations:

1. Adaptation
2. Mitigation
3. Technology development and transfer
4. Financing

Capacity building will be addressed as a crosscutting theme

VII Participants

The following will be invited to the special session:

- H.E. Prime Minister Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia and selected Heads of State and Government from the African Conference of HOSG on Climate Change
- Ministers from the eight countries of the African Conference of HOSG on Climate Change, South Africa in its capacity as chair of AMCEN and from partner countries represented in the APF
- Special Guests - Honorable Ogunlade Davidson (Sierra Leone's Minister of Energy and Water Resources and former Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group III Co-Chair) and Lord Nicholas Stern (Chairman of the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment)
- APF members and Ministers in charge of Environment / Climate Change including NEPAD Partner institutions and Regional Economic Communities (RECs)
- Chair of the African climate change negotiators and coordinators of the different thematic issues under negotiation
- UNFCCC Secretariat and UNEP
- Diplomatic Corps in Addis Ababa (opening and session 1)
- Representatives of major civil society organizations working in the field of climate change in Africa and the African Progress Panel

VIII Dates and Venue

The Special Session of the Africa Partnership Forum on Climate Change will be held at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 3 September 2009.

IX Administrative Arrangements

These are provided in the information note accompanying the invitation letters.