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Activity Report of the Pan-African Parliament, July to December 2015

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Activity Report of the Pan-African Parliament, July to December 2015
 Contents

Introduction 1

Update on the ratification of the PAP Protocol 1

Lobbying for the electrification of Africa 1

The participation of the Pan African Parliament at the COP 21 in December 2015 in Paris 1

The Plenary 2

 1st Ordinary Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Pan African 2

7th Annual Conference of Speakers of African Parliaments 2

The 2015 PAP Women’s Conference 2

Parliamentary Committee activities 3

 Committees sittings 3

 Committee on Health, Labour and Social Affairs 3

 Committee on Gender, Family, Youth and People with disability 3

 Committee on Monetary and Financial Affairs 4

 Committee on Trade Customs and Immigration Matters 4

 Committee on Education, Tourism, Culture and Human Resources 4

 Committee on Rural Economy, Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources 4

 Committee of Cooperation, International Relations and Conflict Resolution 5

Other Activities of the MP’s 5

 Open Government Partnership Global Summit 5

 Election Observation Missions 5

 Awareness Seminar for Members of the Pan African Parliament on Animal Resources with the African Union
 InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources 5

 2nd Pan-African Parliamentary Summit on Climate Policy 5

Consultative meeting on the PAP revised protocol 6

Consultation with PAP and regional parliaments to promote constitutionalism and Rule of Law in Africa 6

Africa Region Policy Dialogue on Democracy and service delivery 6

First AU Customs Experts Trade Facilitation Forum 6

External relations 6

The Secretariat 6

 Medical Scheme 6

 Update on the implementation of the PAP organizational structure: Recruitment of general service category of
 staff 7

Key challenges 7

 Slow pace of ratification of the PAP Protocol 7

Inadequate financial resources	7
Host Country Agreement	7

Activity Report of the Pan-African Parliament, July to December 2015

1.0 Introduction

This report is a summary of the key activities of the Pan African Parliament (PAP) between July to December 2015. It highlights the key deliverables of the PAP namely, the Plenary, the Committees and the Secretariat, showing the progress made and challenges encountered in the course of their implementation.

2.0 Update on the ratification of the PAP Protocol

You will recall that the Revised Protocol of the Pan African Parliament was adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government during the AU Summit in June 2014, at Malabo, Equatorial Guinea.

May I use this opportunity to once again express our gratitude to the Republic of Mali for the ratification of the instrument, and Benin, Chad, Congo, Guinea-Bissau and Mauritania for signing and call upon them to complete the process.

Following the recommendation of the Plenary and Annual Conference of Speakers of African Parliaments, the Parliament developed an advocacy strategy dubbed 28 by 2016 to ensure that the requisite number of ratifications is achieved for Revised Protocol of the Pan African Parliament to come into force.

To this end, we have embarked on intensive advocacy, with the assistance of our development partners, to Gambia, Ghana, Kenya Senegal, Togo, Sierra Leone, and Zimbabwe with positive feedback and commitment by these Member States.

Your Excellencies, we solicit for your continued support for the empowerment of the PAP to develop the legal framework upon which Africa can begin the process of building strong democratic institutions that would deepen democracy, good governance, transparency and accountability which are the prerequisites for development peace and stability. Additionally, to empower the PAP to develop the transnational policy frameworks based on AU Shared Values and on those AU policies and practices whose benefits transcend national boundaries within the continent.

3.0 Lobbying for the electrification of Africa

At the invitation of Mr. Jean-Louis Borloo, President of Energy for Africa, a large delegation of the Pan African Parliament visited Paris in November 2015. The purpose of the mission was to educate the French Government through the National Assembly, the Senate and the Economic and Social Council, of the necessity to electrify Africa. Outstanding hospitality was accorded to the delegation led by the President, Hon Roger Nkodo Dang. The representatives of the French people and those of Africa on this occasion shared an exceptional moment of communion which allowed the French Government to register the need to electrify Africa and find ways to accomplish this, within the objectives of COP 21 that it announced.

4.0 The participation of the Pan African Parliament at the COP 21 in December 2015 in Paris

As an organ of the African Union, the Pan African Parliament was invited at the COP 21 as an observer. While the delegation did not participate in negotiations, it followed from start to finish thanks to the daily issues that were organized and that allowed to have a global overview of the progress of negotiations.

To increase its visibility, the Pan African Parliament took part in many "side events" (Conferences, debates etc...). Many interviews were also granted to the President, 1st Vice President and parliamentarians who were part of the delegation through television channels such as, Africa 24, France 24, Canal+ France, CRTV, Togolese, Senegalese, and Malian televisions, to name but a few, and radios such as RFI. Public interest was evident as proven by the numerous meetings of which the delegation was the object.

It is worth noting that the agreement signed in terms of COP 21 mentioned a clause relating to the electrification of Africa, demonstrating sufficiently the relevance and impact of deploying a delegation of Pan-African Parliament to Paris in November 2015.

5.0 The Plenary

5.1 1st Ordinary Session of the Fourth Parliament of the Pan African

The PAP organized the 1st Ordinary Session of the 4th Parliament of the Pan African Parliament from the 5th to 17th October 2015. The Plenary debated on topical issues pertaining to: Presentation on the project Electricity for All in Africa by H.E. Jean Louis Borloo; President of Energies for Africa and Former Minister of State of the Republic of France Presentation on the African Peer review Mechanisms (APRM) Countries Reports for Algeria, Lesotho, Burkina Faso and Uganda Presentation on Climate Change and African Position for COP 21 in Paris by H.E. Mrs Elisabeth Barbier, Ambassador of the Republic of France in South Africa and Mr Sunil Dowarkasing, Representing the Green Peace Movement Presentation on Peace and Security in Africa Presentation on the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area-The Role of Parliamentarians by H. E Mrs. Fatima Haram Acyl, the Commissioner of Trade and Industry of the African Union Commission

Following the debates on the presentations and reports of the Committees, the Plenary adopted 2 Resolutions and 6 Recommendations. (See attached).

In line with Rule 22 (2) of the PAP Rules of Procedure, the Parliament at its Plenary Sitting established the Committee on Audit and Public Account to consider the Internal, External audit reports relating to the PAP as well as the reports of the Board of External Auditors of the African Union and recommend appropriate measures for an effective implementation of the recommendations arising therefrom.

6.0 7th Annual Conference of Speakers of African Parliaments

The 7th Conference of Speakers of African Parliaments was held in Midrand, South Africa, from 6-7 August 2015. The Conference was organized under the theme: "**2015 Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063**".

The Conference is a platform to interact and exchange ideas with the leadership of Regional and National parliaments and other critical stakeholders, in line with Article 18 of the Protocol Establishing the PAP, on strategies to deepen parliamentary democracy, integrate and achieve development for the peoples of Africa in line with the core objectives of the African Union.

The conference was attended by the H. E. Quett Ketumile Joni Masire, the Guest of Honour and Former President, who applauded the initiative of hosting the Speakers Conference and highlighted the importance and timeliness of the theme of the Conference, for it provides an opportunity for the PAP to share ideas towards the domestication of Agenda 2063.

7.0 The 2015 PAP Women's Conference

The PAP held its Annual Women's conference in Midrand, South Africa from 12th to 13th October 2015 under the theme: "2015 Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063: From Dialogue to Action – The Role of PAP Women in Parliaments." Its aim was to enable the PAP Women's Caucus to effectively advance implementation of the Maputo Protocol with a focus on women's economic and social welfare.

The two-day Conference, which saw the participation of women from the continent, brought together more than 125 women parliamentarians from African countries, representatives from private sector, the civil society and from governments.

The main objectives of the conference are to improve the capacities of the participants to effectively advance implementation of the Maputo Protocol with focus on Women economic and social welfare with regard to the legislative and policy instruments and elaborate key recommendations to Parliamentarians at National level.

8.0 Parliamentary Committee activities

PAP has ten Permanent Committees whose mandates and functions are set out in Rules 22 to 27 of the Rules of Procedure. These functions correspond to those of the AU Specialised Technical Committees.

During the period under consideration, the Committees undertook the following activities:

8.1 Committees sittings

The Pan Africa Parliament held its Committee sittings in August, 2015 and on the sidelines of the 1st Ordinary Session of the Fourth Parliament which held from 5th to 15th of October, 2015 at the precincts of the Parliament in Midrand, South Africa. The Committees, Regional Caucuses, Women and Youth Caucus held meetings to discuss work plans for 2016 as well as matters relating to their mandate.

8.1.1 Committee on Health, Labour and Social Affairs

The Committee participated in the Policy Dialogue on SRHR in Africa Post 2015 which was organized by the International Planned Parenthood Federation Africa Region (IPPFAR). This meeting was held from 30th June to 2nd July, 2015 and provided a platform for key stakeholders from norms setting institutions/Regional Economic Communities (REC's), parliamentarians, invited governments, UN Agencies and civil society organizations to discuss how to better contribute to the desired levels of implementation of the Africa Development policies with focus on SRHR unfinished ICPD/MDG's business.

The dialogue developed strategies towards ensuring accountability and efficiency in the implementation of SRHR policies in Africa within the post 2015 Development Framework through a strengthen stakeholder's collaboration.

The Committee on Health, Labour and Social Affairs was represented at the African Parliamentarian and Leadership Colloquium which took place on 1st December, 2015 at Harare, Zimbabwe.

The colloquium was put in place to dialogue on key actions to end AIDS by 2030 including advocating for ending cultural practice that impact on HIV prevention thus exacerbating vulnerability to HIV infection, advancing promotion, respect and protection of Human Rights of women and girls in conflict and post conflict societies as well as domestic financing of health.

Furthermore, the Committee on Health, Labour and Social Affairs was represented by its Chairperson at the 2nd Biennial Scientific Conference on Medicines Regulation in Africa and the 4th African Medicines Regulators Conference which held on 30th November - 1st December 2015 and 2-4 December 2015 respectively in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The Scientific Conference which was organized under the theme "**Regulatory Systems Strengthening for advancing Research, Innovation and Local Pharmaceutical production in Africa**" was held to enable stakeholders to discuss how to strategically position medical products regulatory systems as a key aspect in facilitating research and development and local production of the needed medical products for diseases disproportionately affecting the people of Africa.

On the other hand, the 4th African Medicines Regulators Conference which will take place from 2-4 December 2015, has as its objective to support countries to accelerate the pace of establishing functional medicines regulatory agencies at national, regional and continental levels and strengthening the capacities of existing National medicines regulatory authorities (NMRAs) in the Region.

8.1.2 Committee on Gender, Family, Youth and People with disability

The members of the Committee on Gender, Family, Youth and People with Disability and the Committee on Health, Labour and Social Affairs of the Pan African Parliament held a

colloquium in collaboration with the Ipas Africa Alliance from 30th to 31st July 2015. The meeting addressed the public health, social equity and human right crisis posed by Maternal Mortality and Morbidity especially from Unsafe Abortion in Africa.

The meeting committed to create awareness on the challenge as well as develop further guidelines to assist member states in their review of national abortion legislation to conform with the minimum standards contained in the Maputo Protocol and other human rights instruments, while considering the diversity of countries.

It was recommended that relevant committees within national parliaments examine existing evidence, laws and policies related to abortion and develop recommendations on review of punitive or restrictive laws that contribute to maternal mortality and morbidity from unsafe abortion.

8.1.3 Committee on Monetary and Financial Affairs

The Committee held a capacity building workshop on July 30 and 31, 2015 The training which was sponsored by the GIZ was for the Committee to familiarize and equip itself with the necessary tools to enable it effectively undertake fiscal oversight on the Union. This became critical especially in view of the milestone reached by the PAP when for the first time in the history of the PAP, the African Union Budget was tabled before the Assembly during the Third Ordinary Session of the Parliament in March 2014.

8.1.4 Committee on Trade Customs and Immigration Matters

The Committee undertook a study visit to the ECOWAS Parliament and the Commission from 21st to 23rd September, 2015 in Abuja, Nigeria. The aim was to understand current and regional Integration efforts of the ECOWAS in the area of Trade, Customs and Immigration and the policies that have been put in place to enable the achievement of the African Union Vision of a Continental Free Trade Area by 2017 and ultimately the integration of the whole of Africa.

8.1.5 Committee on Education, Tourism, Culture and Human Resources

The Pan African Parliament's Committee on Education, Tourism, Culture and Human Resources held a Non-Statutory meeting in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 20 to 22 August 2015. Having been involved in the development of the Continental Education Strategy (2016-2025), the Committee had consultations with the AUC Department of Education and Social Development and Human Rights, Science and Technology on the role of the PAP in its implementation. Furthermore, the Committee engaged with the Department of Social Affairs of the AUC to determine possible areas of cooperation in the AUC project to develop a model law to combat illicit trafficking of Cultural Goods.

The Committee also met with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) to forge closer working relationship especially in terms of the dissemination of information related to programmes/projects and studies of the Social Development Policy Division of UNECA.

8.1.6 Committee on Rural Economy, Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources

In line with the mandate of the Committee on Rural Economy, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment to "promote the development and implementation of programmes of the Union relating to natural resources and environment", the Bureau of the Committee on Rural Economy, Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment held a consultative meeting with New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) on 4th and 5th November, 2015 in Kenya to be updated on the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP).

The Retreat served to provide orientation of the Committee Members on CAADP, being the agricultural and rural development programme of the African Union, particularly in the

context of the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation, and will thereby assist in developing clear strategic and work plans to enhance joint collaboration in advancing CAADP implementation between the two institutions.

The Committee also participated in a Training Workshop on Investment and LPI-ECOWAS projects organized by the Land Policy Initiative (LPI) in collaboration with the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) in Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire from 14th to 16th December 2015.

8.1.7 Committee of Cooperation, International Relations and Conflict Resolution

Sequel to the attempted coup of May 13th 2015 in Bujumbura, the PAP Committee of Cooperation, International Relations and Conflict Resolution represented by a delegation of six MPs undertook a factfinding mission to Burundi from 23rd to 27th November 2015. The objective of the mission was to monitor the situation in the country in accordance with its advisory role and in line with its objectives to promote peace, security, stability and democratic culture at all levels in the African Union.

9.0 Other Activities of the MP's

9.1 Open Government Partnership Global Summit

At the invitation of the Mexican Senate through the National Democratic Institute, the President of the Pan African Parliament, H. E. Roger Nkodo Dang participated in the Open Government Partnership Global Summit which held from 27th to 29th October 2015.

The objective was to exchange knowledge across governments, parliaments, civil society and international institutions on the opportunities and challenges associated with opening the legislative process.

9.2 Election Observation Missions

The Pan-African Parliament as part of the joint AU Election Observation Missions deployed Parliamentarians and staff to observe election in the following countries: Guinea, Egypt, Central Africa Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Seychelles and Burkina Faso.

9.3 Awareness Seminar for Members of the Pan African Parliament on Animal Resources with the African Union InterAfrican Bureau for Animal Resources

The PAP in collaboration with African Union Inter-Africa Bureau for Animal Resources (AU-IBAR), organized a high level seminar on 5th and 6th November 2015 in Nairobi, Kenya to awareness amongst the members of Pan African Parliament and establish a plan of action as well as a roadmap for the members of PAP at national, regional and continental levels on the livestock Development Strategy for Africa (LiDeSA), Policy Framework and Reform Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture in Africa (PFRS), VET GOV Programme and SPS Activities.

Considering the paramount role of legislators in the process of policies formulation and approval, and in the enactment of legislation related to animal resources, AU-IBAR, through the VET-GOV programme sought to foster partnership with the Pan African Parliamentarians, by providing them with information on policies and legislation development process related to animal resources and progress at national, regional and continental levels in order to solicit and secure their full support in this area.

9.4 2nd Pan-African Parliamentary Summit on Climate Policy

The Pan-African Parliament participated in the Second African Parliamentarians Summit on Climate Policy, from 10th to 13th November 2015 in Kenya, under the theme "***Towards a common position on climate justice and equity in the New Universal Climate Change Agreement***",

The Summit objectives were to identify the African common agenda in the countdown to COP21, and the role parliamentarians can play in the ongoing climate change negotiations for future

responses to climate change as well as strategize on how to jointly and effectively engage in climate justice and equity advocacy both in the lead-up to Paris and the period after.

10.0 Consultative meeting on the PAP revised protocol

The PAP attended consultative meetings from 19 to 20 November 2015 for a delegation of three in Brussels, Belgium at the European Parliament. The purpose of these meetings was for the African Center for Parliamentary Affairs, consultants commissioned by the PAP, to undertake a study for the review of the implementation of implications of the revised protocol.

11.0 Consultation with PAP and regional parliaments to promote constitutionalism and Rule of Law in Africa

In PAP in collaboration with the African Union Department of Political Affairs and in its capacity as the Chairperson of the AGA Cluster on Constitutionalism and the Rule of Law, participated in the consultative meeting to promote constitutionalism and Rule of Law in Africa from 25th to 27th November, 2015 in Midrand, South Africa. The consultation is part of the action plan of the Constitutionalism and Rule of Law Cluster of the African Governance Platform and first of a series of consultations to be undertaken with national and regional parliaments.

12.0 Africa Region Policy Dialogue on Democracy and service delivery

The Department of Legislative Business of the PAP participated in the African Region Policy Dialogue on 23rd and 24th November, 2015. The meeting was held to undertake a collective reflection on the growing challenges of service delivery to citizens in Southern Africa.

The forum provided an opportunity to understand the roots, effects, and consequences of the service delivery deficits facing the countries of Southern Africa as well as for knowledge-sharing and exchange of ideas about the particular situation and context in different countries for a better nuanced assessment of the overall service delivery situation in the region and with a view to delineating a plan that can serve as a basis for further action at different levels.

13.0 First AU Customs Experts Trade Facilitation Forum

PAP participated in the AU Department of Trade and industry, 1st African Union Customs Experts Trade Facilitation Forum, that was held from 19-21 August 2015 at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Headquarters in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo. The aim of the meeting which was attended by a representative of the Committee on Trade, Customs and Immigration Affairs was to provide a platform to share information on developments and endeavors in the area of Trade Facilitation as well as best practices in the scheduling and implementation of WTO Trade Facilitation measures.

14.0 External relations

The Pan-African Parliament has continued to develop partnership with International and regional organizations. Whilst in Mexico, the President of the PAP signed an MOU with the National Democratic Institute (NDI). The NDI will support the PAP to develop capacity in the areas of research, training, gender, youth participation, good governance, human rights, and the rule of law.

The President held bilateral meetings with certain Ambassadors resident in our host country, South Africa to forge partnership in areas of mutual benefit to both institutions. The Embassy of China on behalf of the Government of China has agreed to support the PAP with its ICT requirements, exchange visits and capacity building for MPs and staff. The Government of Turkey and Mexico through their embassies have expressed similar willingness and PAP delegation has since been constituted to cooperate with the office responsible for African Affairs.

15.0 The Secretariat

15.1 Medical Scheme

Support to Members of Parliament on medical coverage is being addressed. Currently, the Medical Scheme for Members of Parliament with Discovery Health has been suspended pending finalization

of the procurement process of another Medical Insurance provider as recommended by the AU Medical Services. Bid was received from Van Breda (now CIGNA) and coverage will be finalized prior to the session for whole of Africa with 100 percent coverage in Hospitalization, Ambulance services, Pharmacy, Laboratory, special transportation up to US\$25,000, orthopedic and dental and optics partially. The negotiation process is advanced.

15.2 **Update on the implementation of the PAP organizational structure: Recruitment of general service category of staff**

You will recall that I presented a report during the last Ordinary session on the status of implementation of the approved organizational structure in accordance with the Executive Council Decision EX. CL/720(XX1) during which I highlighted the engagement of staff of the Professional category to support the work of the Parliament.

With regard to the recruitment of the General Service Staff, the Appointments, Promotion and Recruitment Board (APROB) was constituted and convened on the 18th November, 2015 to consider among others, the report for the interviews that were conducted for some positions. Based on the consideration of the interview report and subsequent approval of the Bureau, letter of appointments were issued to successful candidates for the positions of Clerk-Sergeant-at-Arms (GSA2); Telephone Operator (GSA2); Ushers/Mail Runners and Drivers.

The PAP APROB also considered and endorsed the shortlist reports for the of Protocol Assistant (GSA 5); Human Resources Assistant (GSA 5); Information Technology Assistant (GSA 5); Stores Keeper (GSA 5); Cataloguer (GSA5); Cashier (GSA5); Accounts Assistant (GSA5); Printing and Reproduction Technician (GSA 5); Secretaries (GSA4); Printing and Reproduction Assistant (GSA3) and Registry Clerk (GSA3).

Following the approval of the shortlist report, written tests for the above positions were conducted in December, 2015 and oral interviews took place on 18th to 20th January, 2016.

16.0 **Key challenges**

The Pan African Parliament continues to experience several challenges militating against its ability to achieve its full potential as a continental legislative body. Your Excellencies, permit me to highlight a few of these challenges.

16.1 **Slow pace of ratification of the PAP Protocol**

There has been a slow pace in the ratification of the revised protocol of the Pan African Parliament. Since its adoption by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in June 2014 at Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, the Protocol has been signed, ratified and deposited by one Member State. The current advisory and consultative role that the Parliament plays limits the effective execution of its mandate, particularly as regards the establishment of the legal framework for the implementation of the programmes and policies of the African Union.

16.1 **Inadequate financial resources**

In order for the PAP to successfully implement the 2014-2017 Strategic Plan, adequate financial, human and technical resources need to be mobilised. Specifically, there is need to mobilise financial resources for the Programmatic and Committee activities. The inadequacy of the approved budget for the execution of the PAP's programmes and activities remain a major challenge for the institution. Even with the approved budget, only part of same is released. The PAP, like most other AU Organs, relies heavily on financial and technical support from donors to implement its programmes. This has not augured well for the effective implementation of its mandate and therefore needs to be addressed as a matter of priority.

16.2 **Host Country Agreement**

The PAP continues to maintain a good relationship with the Government and the people of South Africa who have continued to provide support to us to enable us carry out our functions and for which we remain grateful.

However, the Host Country Agreement (HCA) between the South African Government and the African Union expired since 2009 after a period of five (5) years as provided for in the agreement and therefore overdue for renewal. Some of the obligations under the agreement remains unimplemented for instance, the provision of permanent site, President's residence, internet facilities, communication and translation facilities provided over eleven years ago are in dire need of replacement and update.