

**DECISION ON THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN AFRICAN LEADERSHIP
IN THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION TO COMBAT
DESERTIFICATION (UNCCD) PROCESS
Doc. Assembly/AU/12(XXI) Add.2**

The Assembly,

1. **REITERATES** the terms of Decision Assembly/AU/Dec. 255(XIII) taken at the 13th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union held in Sirte, Libya, in July 2009, recognizing the importance of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in those countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa, for the livelihoods of millions of Africans affected by land degradation, desertification and drought;
2. **TAKES NOTE** of the various Declarations and Decisions of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, particularly its 13th Session (Bamako Declaration of June 2010) and its 14th Session (Arusha Declaration of September 2012) on the Rio+20 Commitments and their effective implementation by the African continent, within the framework of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
3. **INVITES** Member States to include land degradation, desertification and drought related issues on the list of priorities for their sustainable development;
4. **URGES** Member States to place desertification, land degradation and drought related issues at the centre of the debate on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and recognize it as one of the sustainable development goals, particularly the neutralization of land degradation (Zero Net Land Degradation);
5. **REITERATES** the crucial importance accorded by Africa to the Convention, and **RECOMMENDS** that the Secretary General of the United Nations ensure that African leadership is maintained at the helm of the UNCCD Permanent Secretariat and **CALL UPON** the UN to provide adequate financial support to that important institution;
6. **PAYS TRIBUTE** to the outgoing Executive Secretary Mr Luc Gnacadja who has greatly contributed to the advancement of the objectives of the Convention;
7. **REQUESTS** the Chairperson of the Commission to initiate consultations with all the principal stakeholders, take all appropriate measures for implementation of this Decision, and report thereon to the next ordinary session of the Assembly;
8. **URGES** Member States to participate actively in the Conference organized on the UNCCD in Namibia next September 2013 and **COMMENDS** Namibia for hosting that important Conference.