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## AFRICAN COMMON POSITION ON HUMAN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

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ANALYSIS OF THE CORE ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE SUMMIT AND
POLICY MEASURES TO ATTAIN ITS OBJECTIVES IN ACCORDANCE WITH
GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 47/92

African common position on human and social development in Africa

Note by the Secretary-General

Addendum

Document pre·    ¹ by the Conference on African Ministers
Responsible          ʲan Development to the Preparatory
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# Preamble

1.      We, the Governments of African countries represented by our ministers responsible for human and social development, meeting in Addis Ababa on 20 and 21 January 1994 as a preparatory regional conference on the World Summit for Social Development to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, during 6 to 12 March 1995, resolutely affirm the centrality of the human being as the initiator and beneficiary of development, the means and the end, the agent through whom and for whom, all development activities must be undertaken.

2.      Irrespective of the level and orientation of development, the end of the cold war and the spread of democracy now offers a unique historical opportunity to respond to common aspirations for a better future and so to give primacy to the well-being of individuals and communities.

3.      The World Summit for Social Development, coming on the eve of the 50th anniversary of the United Nations and after the 30th Anniversary of the OAU, presents a unique and timely opportunity for the international community as a whole to examine fundamental human and social concerns that are common to humankind as a whole, renew our resolve and strengthen our solidarity to uphold the ideals of peace, progress, dignity, and justice 'in larger freedom' as enshrined in the United Nations Charter.   To this end, the World Summit for Social Development should provide the world with a *bench mark* for improving the human condition as a new millennium dawns.

4.      Accordingly, we affirm that development can be sustainable only to the extent that it is human-centred.  This leads inexorably to our belief that new and imaginative ways must be found to respond to such common challenges as the persistence of poverty and wide disparities in the quality of life, high levels of unemployment, the adverse social effects of market-based strategies of economic management, disintegration of the social fabric, misgivings about environmental degradation and pollution, and instability wrought by ethnic tensions, civil strife and inter and intra state conflicts.

5.      Nowhere, perhaps, is the intensity of human deprivation more acutely felt than in our region. Africa remains the only region where human and social conditions continue to give grave cause for concern. More than a decade of economic decline has been accompanied by a significant deterioration, even reversal, of earlier gains in human welfare and well-being.  About half the region's population lives in absolute poverty.   Malnutrition and hunger are widespread.   Soaring unemployment and underemployment have reached unacceptably high proportions.  A host of diseases, including the resurgence of many previously under control, threatens the health and lives of millions of

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Africans. Access to education has declined affecting adversely the formation of the skills needed for self-reliant and sustained development, and high population growth rates have also put added pressure on the ability to educate children in many countries and increased the demand for social services. Perennial armed conflicts and civil strife continue to afflict the region resulting in a horrendous loss of human life, displacement of people and millions of refugees.

6.    The reversal of this alarming state of affairs requires comprehensive and concurrent action based on a clearly defined order of priorities. No less than deep-seated commitment and action at the national, regional and international levels is warranted. To this end, we, as African governments and people, must bear the major responsibility for meaningful and lasting change. However, we remain convinced that a conducive external environment and assured support must complement our efforts.

7.    Cognizant of the critical situation in Africa, it is incumbent on us, as Africans and equally incumbent on our external partners, to take stock of prevailing conditions and commit ourselves to an Actionable Agenda for Human and Social Development in the region.    To this extent, the Summit has a special meaning for Africa and its people. This conviction underlies the essence of the African Common Position on Social and Human Development in Africa.

8.    It is in this context, that Africa wishes to draw the attention of the International community to its Common Position.

# I    The State of Human and Social Development in Africa

9.    Today, an overwhelming majority of Africans are caught in a vicious circle of ignorance, poverty, unemployment and underemployment, malnutrition and hunger, disease and ill-health and lack of shelter. These adversities combine in a destructive manner to further complicate other social problems including weak family structures, crime, drug abuse, homelessness, street children, delinquency and prostitution.

10.    Through increasing inequities, disparities and social polarization, the common feature of these inauspicious trends is that they engender the marginalization and exclusion of social groups such as women, the permanently unemployed and the poor.    Social disintegration

deteriorated to such an extent that the social fabric in most countries is today worse off.

11. On top of this, since the independence era of the 1960s and thereafter, millions of lives have been lost through armed conflicts, apartheid destabilization, and civil strife. During the same period, additional millions of Africans have been pushed into various countries as refugees. As a result of civil strife, displaced persons have become a serious phenomenon in our continent.

12. Africa's human and social predicament is complex in origin and is attributed to the combined interplay of economic, social, environmental and political factors. The economic crisis arises fundamentally from the lop-sided structure of African economies compounded by policy failures in economic management and institutional weakness. Bias against rural areas in official policy has resulted in the neglect of food production and undermined the development of rural areas, not to mention people's capacities. All these have conjoined to encourage rural-urban migration, dislocation, unemployment, poverty, and a host of other social problems. Structural adjustment programmes have also produced a negative impact on social and human conditions.

13. Several external factors as dictated by the prevailing international economic order, have also contributed to the region's economic difficulties. Prominent among these is the dramatic collapse of Africa's exports in both volume and prices during the 1980s. As a result, export earnings have plummeted and recurrent balance of payments crises have been accompanied by external debt which, for the region as a whole, had reached US $282.8 billion by the end of 1992.[1] A crippling debt service burden drains the region of well over $26.1 billion annually, diverting resources that are desperately needed for development. These have been accompanied by unfair trade policies, insufficient levels of direct foreign investments, and inadequate transfer and assimilation of relevant technology.

14. Over and above this, in many countries a crisis of governance encompassing such well-known shortcomings as the near absence of democratic structures, popular participation, political accountability and transparency, policy and institutional weaknesses, is pervasive. The transition to democracy has not been free of problems.

15. Against this background, human and social conditions are no more perilous anywhere in the world today than in Africa. Key indicators of human well-being declined precipitously during the 1980s, a trend that has continued in the 1990s. This has reversed earlier gains in such

areas as health, education, food self-sufficiency and nutrition, among others.

## ⊕ Poverty

16.    Fewer opportunities for productive employment in the context of stagnating economies, plus a population of 622 million in 1992 growing at an average annual growth rate of 3.2 percent present, perhaps, the most fundamental challenge for dealing with the poverty problem at its roots. Time-series data on per capita income leads to the inescapable conclusion that poverty in Africa is severe and brutal. Per capita income in the region as a whole declined from US $732 in 1980 to US $654 in 1992 or at an average annual rate of 1 per cent. For sub-Saharan Africa, real per capita income declined from US $563 in 1980 to US $485 in 1992.[2] Over 105 million Africans were deemed to be living in poverty in 1985. By 1990, this number had increased to 216 million and is projected to reach 304 million people - about half the region's population - by the year 2000.[3]

17.    Rural poverty is most pervasive. The income and consumption of some 60 per cent of the rural population in sub-Saharan Africa fall below nationally defined poverty lines.[4] But rapid urbanization, now approaching 10 per cent of population, has been accompanied by spiralling growth in urban poverty. Indeed, the appalling conditions of the urban poor presents a depressing spectacle in most African cities.

18.    In general, the burden of poverty is most severe among women, and female-headed households. Moreover, the poverty of women has direct implications for the poverty of African families. About a third of African households are estimated to be headed by women. It is further estimated that the proportion of women living in absolute poverty rose by 50 per cent over the last twenty years as against 30 per cent for men over the same period.[5]

19.    These trends are all the more serious as projections show that the incidence of poverty in Africa will increase while falling in other regions of the world. The distribution of global poverty is estimated to shift dramatically towards Africa, increasing its share from 16 per cent in the mid-1980s to the startling figure of 32 per cent at the turn of the century.[6]

20.    It follows from this that the challenge of poverty alleviation has assumed greater urgency in the 1990s than it had during the

independence era of the 1960s. Aside from the political, economic and social marginalization of the poor, the effects of poverty are particularly damaging to the family structure and the prospects of social integration. The familiar sight of street children in urban areas, cut off from their families, and left to fend for themselves is but one example.[7] To this extent, economic stagnation in most African countries since the 1980s is fully reflected in the degeneration of the human condition.

## O    Unemployment and Underemployment

21.    Although data on productive employment in Africa are incomplete, outdated and  unreliable, the available evidence which exists points to a severe crisis in employment.  Productive employment in the region grew at an average rate of 2.4 per cent per annum in 1991 while the labour force increased at a rate of 3.2 per cent during the same period.[8]

22.    In terms of distribution, the share of the labour force in formal sector wage employment is not only low but also decreasing, from a regional average of 10 per cent in 1980 to less than 8 per cent in 1990.[9] On the other hand, employment in the urban informal sector showed an upward trend during the 1980s and accounted for 25 per cent of the labour force in 1991, suggesting an increasing informalization of the labour market.[10] The agricultural and non-farm rural sectors accounted for the remaining two-thirds.

23.    Open unemployment is estimated to have risen from 7.7 per cent in 1978 to 22.8 per cent in 1990 and is projected to increase to 30 per cent by year 2000.[11] Unemployment is especially high in urban areas, although its incidence is increasingly beginning to surface in rural areas as well.  The unprecedented rates of migration of the rural population to urban areas (displaced by war, collapse of agricultural and rural services and general disillusionment with unacceptable living conditions in rural areas) has exacerbated the unemployment problem in urban centres. Other factors contributing to the worsening employment situation in some countries include drought, degradation of the physical environment, and civil strife.

24.    Allied or in addition to this, the resort to retrenchment and a freeze on employment in the civil service and state-owned enterprises, as part of public expenditure cuts that accompanied economic recovery programmes, has contributed to unemployment. During the early 1980s, the public sector accounted for over 50 per cent of formal sector

employment in the region. This is expected to fall to 30-35 per cent of formal wage employment during the 1990s.[12] Few redeployment or retraining schemes have been initiated or sustained. Moreover, retrenchment has generally not been accompanied by substantial wage increases, better conditions of service, or other incentives for those who remain, to reduce the incidence of corrupt and unethical practices arising out of personal hardship, and to enhance public sector productivity and improve morale.[13]

25. A particularly disturbing feature of unemployment trends is the growing preponderance of young persons (15-24 years old) among the unemployed. Moreover, within this category, young women tend to experience higher rates of unemployment. In this regard, it should be noted that Africa is the only region where the proportion of young persons in relation to the overall population will continue to grow over the next 30 years.

26. To compound matters further, the contractionary measures introduced into the education systems of African countries in the decade of the 1980s, have had a negative impact on efforts to enhance quality and relevance in African education. As a result, increasingly more young people enter the labour market each year, with skills and qualifications that employers find more and more difficult to use. And in spite of the well-known skill shortages in the critical areas of development, increasingly larger numbers of educated people cannot be fully and effectively utilized. Moreover the environment in the workplace and in society at large has, with the economic difficulties experienced by African governments since the beginning of the 1980s, been such as to encourage the brain drain from African economies. This trend, which involves the loss of badly needed middle- and - high level professionals and technicians, has continued unabated and will be reduced or arrested only if socio-economic conditions improve.[14]

27. Underemployment, that is relatively low productivity, is a condition that is found in Africa's large rural sector as well as the growing informal sector. It increased throughout the 1980s and is estimated to affect about 90 million people in the region.[15] The causes include the poor health and nutritional status of large sections of the work force, the inadequacy of education and training, and rudimentary techniques of production. Compounding these short-comings, national policies and economic management have rarely provided an enabling environment for the stimulation of entrepreneurial impulses.

28. Real wages fell by about 10 per cent per annum between 1980 and 1990 as a result of massive and repeated devaluations in national

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currencies and high inflation rates. Indeed, real minimum wages in
many African countries fell below nationally defined poverty lines.[16] This
also has had adverse implications for human and social conditions, the
incentive structure and labour productivity.

29.    As a consequence of the critical unemployment situation , high
rates of inflation and falling real wages, living standards have been
severely eroded. This has contributed to the incidence and spread of
poverty.    Together with unfavourable social, political, and basic
employment conditions, this reality is forcing many African professionals,
technicians, and even unskilled labour to move to other countries in
search of better prospects.  Indeed, the brain drain is yet another
constraint on efforts to promote economic recovery.

## ⊛    Literacy, Education and Training

30.    Only about two out of every three men, and one out of every
three women are literate.  Yet access to education and training at all
levels in Africa continues to be limited in spite of the valiant efforts which
African countries have made in this regard, particularly during the
immediate post-independence years.  This is evident from declining
gross enrolments.  Between 1985 and 1989 gross enrolment at primary
school level increased at an annual average rate of 2 per cent;
secondary level at 5.3 per cent and tertiary level at 5.9 per cent.[17]
However, by the early 1990s, growth in enrolments at all levels
represented between only one third and a half of those in the 1970s,
with primary education recording the highest decline. This is evident by
the declining proportion of African children of the relevant age group in
primary school, from 79 per cent in 1980 to 72 per cent by 1990.[18]
These figures are alarming because of Africa's relatively high rate of
illiteracy.

31.    Wide disparities in the provision of educational facilities and
access to education, low female enrolments and high female drop-out
and repeater rates, also characterize many African countries' educational
systems.  Education for women is particularly important because of its
proven multiplier effect on the development process.  Studies and
experiences have shown that increasing levels of female education are
inversely correlated with high levels of fertility.  Allied to this, female
education generally has a positive impact on the nutritional status of the
family, thereby reducing chances of morbidity and mortality.

32.    Cuts in public spending on education, limited secondary school places, rising cost of attendance, and other different contributions required of children have reversed what was a steady improvement in school enrolment. Less than a third of African children now attend secondary school. Similarly, enrolments in vocational and technical training have significantly declined and sufficient attention has not been given to these important areas. Furthermore, only 2 percent, on average, of the relevant age group are receiving post-secondary and tertiary education. These trends, in conjunction with out-moded curricula, poor teacher quality, questionable teaching methods, and inadequate resources have adverse implications for skill enhancement and capacity building and, consequently, for informal sector and enterprise development. Accordingly, the capacity to utilize and assimilate modern development ideas and technologies and to contribute to their development is limited.

33.    Moreover, views are being advanced in some circles to the effect that Africa should not put much emphasis on higher education, especially university eduction, since its comparative social rate of return is much lower than secondary and primary education. This is an erroneous policy stance that ignores many realities. For example, such policy fails to acknowledge the important role of university education that is closely linked to development, and prepares and supports people in positions of responsibility in government, business, and the professions. It also underestimates the key role of universities as centres of development-related research in fields ranging from economics to environment and natural resources to nationality issues; and minimises the importance of the link between indigenous knowledge, human resources and the indigenization of the development process. Without acquiring the scientific and technological knowledge that is so crucial for the acceleration and sustainability of growth and development, Africa will have no future to speak of and the role of Africa's higher learning institutions in this regard is crucial.

34.    To the extent that human resource development through education and training stimulates and facilitates enterprise, raises productivity and enhances economic growth, declining trends pose a serious obstacle to sustainable development. In this regard, literacy, education and training at all levels must be viewed as critical investments to be protected from budgetary cuts. Developing countries are facing growing challenges as a result of rapid advancement in technology, changes in world markets, and other trends and policy factors that affects Africa's comparative advantage and the ability to be competitive on the national and international markets. The development of industry is therefore critical to Africa's overall development. Human

resources development for industry through education and training therefore, is pivotal in this process.

## ⊛ Food and Nutrition

35. Africa is essentially an agricultural and pastoral region yet food and agricultural output has declined substantially since the 1960s. Today, about 25 percent of food requirements are met through imports from abroad and food aid. While drought, desertification and other natural factors have contributed to the decline in food production, it would be incorrect to blame the food crisis entirely on the weather. Policies which neglected agriculture and rural development as well as political instability, among other factors, are also key factors among the causes of the food crisis.[19]

36. With the decline of food production per capita, the daily calorie intake averaged only 92 per cent of requirements during the last ten years. The number of Africans unable to obtain the minimum requirements of 1600-1700 calories has increased from 99 million in 1980 to 168 million in 1990/91.[20] That is a rise of nearly 70 per cent.

37. One of the consequences of the lack of food self-sufficiency and food imbalance is the prevalence of severe malnutrition in terms of protein-energy malnutrition (PEM), iron deficiency anaemia, vitamin A deficiency and iodine deficiency disorders are manifestations of persistent micronutrient deficiencies. The impact of this on adults includes low productivity and susceptibility to common diseases. Children have been the most affected. In 1990, out of 177 million malnourished children in the world, some 30 million were African.[21]

38. Malnutrition, particularly PEM, retards both the growth and development of the child. Furthermore, moderate to severe PEM increases the risk of dying of infectious. Similarly, nutritional anaemia and vitamin A deficiency increase morbidity and mortality in young children, while iodine deficiency disorders are associated with impairment of mental and intellectual functions in children and adults.[22]

## ● Health

39. Africa's socio-economic crisis has had a particularly devastating effect on the health sector resulting in severe budgetary cuts and a virtual collapse of the health infrastructure in many countries. Essential

drugs are in acute short supply or not available at all. The ratio of health service personnel to population is one of the worst in the world, e.g. in 1992 in sub-Saharan Africa one doctor served an average of 24,380 persons compared to 380 persons in industrialized countries.[23] These ratios have not significantly improved in the last few years. Moreover, this average masks serious differences between countries as well as between rural and urban areas within countries.[21] Over half of the African population have no access to modern health facilities and a third or more have no access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation facilities, Africa's under-five mortality rate is among the highest in the world.

40.    A very high percentage of Africans continue to succumb to diseases which in other regions of the world have been overcome through improvements in public health and living conditions and the application of preventive methods. Many common illnesses, including gastro-intestinal complaints, parasitic infections, malaria, tuberculosis, cholera, diarrhoea, measles, etc, are claiming many lives. Contaminated water has caused the death of millions. Water borne infections diseases are the commonest cause of death among children. On top of this, the HIV/AIDS pandemic is raging across the region.

41.    The data are simply staggering. Malaria killed almost 1.5 million under-5 children in 1989.[25] On average, diarrhoea claims the lives of 1.5 million children annually. It is estimated that in 1991 some 42 per cent of all cases of diarrhoea in the world occurred in Africa.[26] Significant continent-wide progress has been made in preventive health through the Expanded Programme of Immunization (EPI) against the six major killer diseases affecting children. However, diseases such as malaria, diarrhoea, pneumonia and acute respiratory infections, which have claimed the lives of millions of children, cannot be covered by EPI.

42.    The spread of the AIDS pandemic in Africa poses a major threat. Of the estimated 12 to 13 million people world-wide infected with AIDS in 1991, about 50 per cent were in Africa. By 1993, 7 million Africans were believed to be infected of which 1 million were new born babies. Unless effective measures are taken to control the risk of AIDS infection, nothing short of a major catastrophe awaits.[27]

43.    It is clear from the foregoing that practically all indicators show that rates of morbidity and mortality are higher in Africa than the rest of the world. Indeed, Africa's under-5 mortality rate at 179 is the highest in the world. The average life expectancy of 55.5 years is ten years lower than the world average. Needles to say, disease and sickness lower the productivity of the population, increases poverty, with adverse

consequences for the economy. Desert encroachment and worsening environmental degradation is a further threat to health in Africa. The lack of financial resources is luring some countries into accepting toxic waste dumping, which is a health hazard. The promotion of social development must, therefore, take into account environmental protection and avoid toxic waste dumping.

## ● Conflict, Civil Strife and Social Disintegration

44.     Armed conflict, civil strife, apartheid and social disintegration have been major obstacles to development. Armed conflict occurs within and between states when contending groups and factions resort to violence rather than peaceful means to settle disputes. During the period 1960 to 1993, there were more than 24 full-fledged wars in Africa, while currently there are 12 ongoing civil conflicts in a number of African countries. While reliable data on casualties from such conflicts is hard to come by, the number of people estimated to have lost their lives between 1960 and 1990 is around 7 million. Civil strife is closely associated with challenges to authoritarian structures of government, as well as ethnic and communal confrontations. Allied to this, the deepening socio-economic crisis, the exclusion of disadvantaged and marginalized groups, poverty and alienation, have resulted in the weakening of the family and increase in social disintegration. Crime, delinquency, prostitution, drug abuse, consequent neglect, and family tensions are some of the results.[28]

45.     Armed conflict, civil strife and social disintegration, have a devastating impact on Africa's social and economic progress including the destruction of physical and social infrastructure, irrigation systems, and agricultural activities, the collapse of civil society, the break-down of the family and the displacement of people. On this last point, over 20 million Africans are refugees and displaced persons. This represents almost half of the world's refugees.[29]

46.     Concomitant with the decline in all the indicators of human and social development is the virtual collapse of African institutional capacity. Hospital and health centres lack basic equipment and amenities; schools lack basic teaching aids and necessities such as chalk; African universities and institutions once the training ground for the region's leaders, professionals and technicians have now become poor performing institutions. The morale of those working in many of these institutions has reached rock bottom adversely affecting productivity and contributing to an exodus of professionals from Africa. But perhaps the

most serious short-coming is the weakening of Public and Private institutional capacities the purpose of which is to formulate, implement and monitor human development. Without a concerted effort to rebuild and rehabilitate African institutions, all talk about development and change will remain wishful thinking.

47. Though the state of human and social development is critical, one cannot be blind to the numerous successes in various social fields in a number of African states. Nor should the role played by African religious, customs, traditions, and indigenous social structure, particularly the extended family, in protecting the social fabric, and in offering mutual support to many families and local communities be ignored.

## II   Africa's Major Human and Social Development Concerns and Objectives

48. The foregoing review of human and social conditions suggests that there is no more urgent task and challenge facing Africa than to mount a persistent attack on the underlying causes of human deprivation and indignity. The urgency of dealing with the multiple challenges of human deprivation as well as restoring dignity to millions of Africans is predicated on the recognition that the human being must be at the centre of all development efforts as aptly asserted by the Khartoum Declaration.[30] Indeed, the poor and marginalized, especially women and youth, expect nothing less than recognition of their plight and sustained action to overcome the vulnerabilities under which they live. In this regard, four major interrelated areas of concern can be identified as follows:

- alleviating poverty;

- creating and sustaining productive employment and income generation;

- enhancing social integration, national cohesion, peace and political stability in the region; and

- promoting democratization, human rights and fostering popular participation.

49. These concerns are mutually reinforcing and require concerted action on several fronts to meet such objectives as:

o    putting the well-being of people at the centre of all
     development initiatives, policies and programmes;

o    effectively developing and utilizing human resources;

o    ensuring the effective implementation of the
     recommendations of the Dakar/NGOR Declaration on
     Population, Family and Sustainable Development;

o    ensuring that population policies and programmes are
     formulated with the involvement of the people and
     implemented in coordination with policies aimed at
     sustainable and accelerated development;

o    giving due attention and priority to the social implications
     of market-based strategies of economic management;

o    investing in human resource development especially in
     such areas as education, health, social services, and
     housing; and promotion of food self-sufficiency and
     security;

o    providing a conducive environment for entrepreneurship
     and enterprise development leading to the generation of
     productive employment and income;

o    providing viable opportunities for the productive utilization
     of developed human capacities and capabilities;

o    fostering peace, political stability and social integration and
     overcoming the legacies of apartheid;

o    paying special attention to the needs of vulnerable groups;

o    eradication of injustice and all forms of poverty and
     destitution to ensure social justice;

o    enhancing participatory democracy and mobilization of the
     people to realize their needs in social development and to
     achieve self reliance; and

o    establishing legislative and structural institutions for the
     implementation of social development programme.

50. Sustained development, without effectively tapping and utilizing human capacities, and capabilities is neither conceivable nor feasible. Indeed, it is a truism that human development 'weaves development around people, not people around development.'[31] In other words, development has to encompass the aspirations of the people and be sustained by the people themselves through their full and active participation.

51. The human dimensions of development must underlie all other objectives, be they economic, cultural, political, environmental or spiritual. Africa must break out of the vicious cycle of poverty, appalling social conditions and dependence, to achieve self-reliance and self-sustained growth and development. To do this, nothing short of the transformation of African economies is required. This can be accomplished only through investing in and building up people's capacities, as well as improving social and economic conditions.

52. An environment of political stability, peace and human security are necessary conditions for people to act with confidence, assurance and predictability. It follows from this that the human cost of armed conflicts and internal strife in two-thirds of the 52 African states in 1993 is incalculable.[32] It should be clear, therefore, that human security, peaceful ways of conflict management, and political stability are fundamental prerequisites for human-centred development.

53. To this extent, the importance of a sustained attack on the multi-faceted dimensions of poverty through the release of entrepreneurial dynamism, promotion of individual innovations, income generation activities and productive employment cannot be over-emphasized. Without innovative and imaginative strategies for productive employment and income generation, economic stagnation and poverty will persist.

54. This leads directly to the conclusion that human-centred development must be the focus of national and international interventions and efforts to promote economic recovery and sustainable development. In other words, the ultimate goal of development should be to ensure the people's overall well-being through a sustained improvement of their living standards.

## III Actionable Agenda for Human and Social Development in the 1990s and Beyond

55. Reversal of Africa's unfavourable human and social conditions requires nothing less than a reorientation of the whole basis of development in the region.* Such reorientation must build upon and strengthen indigenous capacities and capabilities and instill self-confidence. In all this, the empowerment of the people, including women and youth, as agents of positive change, must be a necessary accompaniment. What is needed is a comprehensive and integrated strategy of development and structural transformation in which human development concerns must form the core. Such a strategy calls not only for major policy shifts and a redirection of resources to human development at the national, subregional and regional levels, but also similar actions by Africa's development partners including international development agencies, bilateral donors, NGOs and people's organizations.

56. Allied or in addition to this, a new compact between African governments and African people, their organizations, and communities is required. We as Africans, governments and people, must commit ourselves to such a compact for human development in our region.

57. Substantial levels of investment in human development will be required for sometime to come. Whether in the form of increasing, reallocating or redirecting existing commitments for human and social development, the provision of the requisite resources will be an early test of the strength of national and international political will and commitment to improve the state of human conditions in Africa. In this regard, while the main responsibility lies at the national level, it is clear that national provisions must be complemented and reinforced by external actions and provisions and by a favourable international economic environment.

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* Several building blocks are in place. The World Summit for Children initiated preparations of National Plans of Action by African governments. Already, 33 countries have finalized their plans and have commenced implementation. A dozen more plans exist as drafts. Moreover, 4 African states have ratified the International Convention of the Rights on the Child. The Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women has been signed by many countries.

1     **Action at the National Level**

   A    **Policy Shifts**

      ●    **Poverty Alleviation**

58.    No amount of stop-gap interventions or interventions or palliative measures and conventional approaches which fail to attack the root cause of poverty and deprivation or effectively develop and utilize human resources and capacities can bring about any meaningful improvement in this area. The challenges of poverty alleviation in Africa, require a comprehensive approach. Accordingly, the position taken here is that poverty should be attacked at its roots rather than merely dealing with its symptoms. This requires the provision of appropriate conditions for raising the productivity of the labour force in the agricultural and informal sectors, where the majority of people work, and in the formal sector as well. It further requires the creation of an enabling environment that would unleash entrepreneurial talents, creativity, enthusiasm and the productive capacity of the people. Efforts should be intensified to strengthen policies and their application in the following areas:

o    creating employment-focused investment policies;

o    initiating efficient labour production systems;

o    empowering economic agents by increasing their access to productive resources including large-scale land reform to create employment and income for themselves;

o    creating an enabling environment for enhancing the effectiveness of the informal sector, developing market networks between the formal and informal sectors and the progressive integration of the informal sector into the formal sector;

o    removing institutional and policy biases against women and introducing special measures to support them with a view to enhancing their fuller participation and involvement in productive and remunerative activities;

o    pursuing pricing policies and other macro-economic measures including public spending that benefit the poor;

o    targeting of resources and social services to improve the conditions of the poor, marginalized and more vulnerable

sections of the population, including women, children, youth, and the disabled;

o supporting and encouraging the African extended family system to fulfil its traditional functions of social integration and security;

o achievement of population growth rates that are compatible with the desired economic growth and socio-development goals;

o instituting comprehensive prevention and control programmes for HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases which should be incorporated into primary health care and community based programmes; and

o initiating and strengthening programmes for the eradication of illiteracy.

● **Productive Employment and Income Generation**

59. The gravity of the employment situation in African countries warrants no less than a comprehensive approach to deal with this problem at its roots . While unemployment is a world-wide concern, most regions have experienced the extraordinary phenomenon of jobless economic growth. In Africa, on the other hand, unemployment is closely associated with economic stagnation. Therefore, large-scale employment creation in African countries is predicated upon achieving and sustaining a growth level higher than the rate of growth in the labour force. Employment policies need to be linked with overall economic policies, particularly investment policies.

60. In addition, action is required to reform educational systems and programmes to better respond to labour market requirements, thereby reducing the mismatch between the supply and demand for skills; to create the skills that are so crucial for the restructuring of African economies; and to produce 'job creators' rather than 'job seekers'.

61. In view of the limited capacity of the formal sector to generate jobs in the short-term, the agricultural, informal, and non-farm rural sectors will continue to absorb a large section of the labour force in the near future. But in all sectors, policy and support measures aimed at

promoting employment generation and productivity enhancement need to be put in place.

62.     Policy measures and actions in the formal sector that are required include:

o       a better climate for business confidence including reform of financial systems, fiscal, trade, and labour policies including incentives for labour intensive production methods;

o       appropriate measures and incentives to promote private investment, domestic and foreign;

o       creating a conducive environment for the development of entrepreneurship;

o       in the public sector, synchronising retrenchment with the retraining of those affected, to enhance their prospects of redeployment, and the provision of attractive redundancy benefits and incentives for self-employment through entrepreneurial ventures; and

o       creating a conducive environment for motivating and retaining high level manpower to strengthen and effectively utilize indigenous capacities, including the motivation of personnel in critical institutions involved in formulating and implementing policies that strengthen institutional capacities.

In addition, labour market polices in the formal sector must be flexible enough to make the region competitive in the context of economic globalisation as well as to facilitate regional integration objectives. Nevertheless, employment protection policies will have to be pursued during periods of serious economic recession by carrying out public works programmes that are labour-intensive (using unskilled labour in particular).

63.     Agricultural promotion requires creating an enabling environment with improved social services (education, health, transport and communications, water and electricity among others) aimed at reversing the current rural/urban pattern or migration to urban centres.

64.     Employment and productivity improvement measures in the agricultural sector include:

o       better access, especially of women, to land and credit;

o       provision of training and extension services, and
        production technology;

o       improving rural socio-economic infrastructure;

o       more effective dissemination and application of research
        and experimentation results; and

o       attractive producer prices and marketing arrangements.

Improved agricultural productivity will enhance food security and self-
sufficiency, stem the tide of rural-urban migration and resuscitate the
rural economy.

65.     The following interventions and supportive measures will be
needed for employment generation and productivity enhancement in both
the rural non-farm and informal sectors:

o       improved access to credit, appropriate tools, implements,
        equipment and technology;

o       development and provision of entrepreneurial training
        programmes particularly suited for women and youth;

o       provision of technical, promotional, advisory and
        consultancy services;

o       an improved rural infrastructure, and an enabling legal and
        institutional policy framework;

o       creation of rural institutions to support cottage industries
        and small-scale industries with emphasis on indigenous
        technology;

o       promoting business and work ethic, and facilitating
        linkages with formal sector enterprises;

o       access to appropriate health care including measures
        aimed at improving the health of workers;

o       special programmes for the employment of out-of-school
        and unskilled youth should be designed and implemented

to enable them to be effectively integrated in the labour market; and

o    providing financial assistance in the form of revolving funds for promoting and furthering special programmes already initiated to enable the out-of-school and unskilled youth to productively participate in self-employment activities.

Increasing levels of productivity in the informal sector will enable micro-scale enterprises to grow and graduate into small- and medium-scale businesses.

●    **Social Integration, Peace and Political Stability**

66.    The weakening of the family and related social problems, ethnic and communal tensions, political instability and lack of human security have thwarted progress in human development.    To this extent, appropriate polices and institutions must be put in place to enhance social integration and promote political stability in the region. Such efforts should include:

o    enhancing the capacity of families to meet their socio-economic needs;

o    promotion and upgrading of existing family welfare services and programmes and ensure social and legal protection of children in accordance with the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child;

o    promoting the status of women and strengthening their capacity to contribute effectively to development;

o    utilizing African traditions and other mechanisms of conflict mediation and resolution at the national and regional levels;

o    incorporating peace education, respect for human rights and environmental protection concerns in the school curricula and through other media; and encouraging tolerance for social, political and religious diversity;

o    affirming the responsibilities of governments in
     spearheading national reconciliations efforts by integrating
     former adversaries into the mainstream of political, social
     and economic life; and

o    relief should be viewed as a first phase in the continuum
     of relief, rehabilitation and development.

67.    Peace and civic education underscore the fact that values and
norms are not mere abstractions and encourages respect and tolerance
for diversity. Accordingly, the basic elements of peace education can be
found in the emphasis on cooperation to achieve collective objectives,
and to inculcate a repugnance of violence in its physical, psychological
or structural forms. Beyond this, the incorporation of new initiatives on
peace education as an integral part of the school curricula could pay rich
dividends in stemming the tide of social disintegration.

68.    Religion is also an important factor in social integration and the
general well-being of society. A revival of religious practices and beliefs
is apparently under way in the region. In so far as tolerance can be
inculcated, these beliefs have a strong potential for serving as a focus
of cohesion and integration through their promotion of such mores as
personal restraint and associated moral values.

69.    The issue of women in development should be considered within
the framework of a holistic gender approach which is a concept that is
not yet clear in most African policies for human development. While
putting an end to women's economic marginalization is a necessity, it is
of equal importance to consider her role within the family structure taking
into account values and religion. Providing women with education, social
recognition, health care and environmental awareness is of utmost
importance for their own well-being and the well-being of their children.
An assessment of women's aspirations and needs is necessary to allow
their crucial contribution to flourish. This gender analysis of the role of
women at the national level is necessary for the sake of sustainability.

70.    Many African traditions and practices are relevant to conflict
management and resolution. These include such practices as the
patient search for consensus and the role of elders in mediation and
reconciliation. The resolution of conflicts within and between African
states is an African responsibility in the first place. In this regard, the
establishment within the OAU of a mechanism for conflict management
and resolution is a welcome development and should be supported to
the full. The launching of an OAU Peace Fund is aimed at establishing
a permanent capacity within the organization to act expeditiously on

conflict situations. The Fund should be supported and provided with adequate resources for it to function effectively.[33]

### ● Democratization and Popular Participation in Development

71. In recent years, the African people have been vigorous in their demand for full and genuine participation in the political, economic and social processes of their countries and for having a meaningful say in the formulation of policies and programmes that affect their lives. Public policies and programmes have too often been framed without taking the people into account, the particular needs and preferences of the people who are directly affected by them or are supposed to benefit from them. The result, more often than not, is a failure of these policies and programmes because of irrelevance, apathy and indifference.

72. It follows from this that greater participation and consensus-building is required at all levels in the formulation and implementation of economic and social policies, including the identification and elimination of laws and bureaucratic procedures that pose obstacles to people's participation.[34]

73. This makes it imperative that a new partnership between African governments and the people should be established without delay in the common interest of democratic and good governance and of accelerated socio-economic development. In this regard, it is important to reiterate the principles of the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development, particularly the need to open up political processes to accommodate freedom of opinions, tolerate differences, accept consensus, protect and respect basic human rights and the right of the people to express themselves freely, as well as enhance the role of the organizations and institutions of civil society, including popular and voluntary associations, in human and social development.[35] All this is especially important in a continent where a democratic political culture and institutions have for so long been stifled by military regimes and repressive governments.

74. Indeed, the various elements of human and social development are intrinsically linked to popular participation and good governance. Human-centred development is contingent upon the creativity and popular enthusiasm of the vast majority of the people. To this extent, governments, the people themselves, as well as the international

community, have a responsibility for the promotion and consolidation of popular participation in development.

75.     Among the most critical actions that are required by governments are:

o       creating an enabling political and institutional environment which will favour social exchange and cooperation with NGOs and people's organizations;

o       popular education to instill democratic values and support to democratic institutes;

o       working with people and their representatives in formulating development strategies and policies with the aim of achieving self-reliant and people-centred development;

o       strengthening communication capacities for rural development;

o       fostering the democratization of development by supporting the decentralization of development processes which make genuine empowerment a reality;

o       developing creative and mutually beneficial partnerships between local government institutions, NGOs, and people's organizations; and

o       vigorous implementation of the African Charter on Human and People's Rights; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women; the Convention on the Rights of the Child; The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; ILO Convention No. 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize.

o       support for a strong, honest and independent judiciary;

o       strengthening of the legislative organs of the state;

o       fostering practices that would enable executive institutions to be more responsive;

o       support for a responsible, effective and free press;

o       encouraging people to join and contribute to development efforts through NGOs; and

o       planning strategies and techniques should favour a bottom-up rather than a top-down approach to development.

All these measures require governments to be fully committed to human rights, democratization and good governance. Indeed, good government must be able to respond to such universal human aspirations as liberty and freedom which in turn must be based upon open, responsive, and accountable government.

76.     On the part of the people and their organizations, it is essential that they continue to seize the initiative and become fully involved in all aspects of public affairs.   In this regard, it is crucial for popular enthusiasm and actions to be channelled and institutionalized in people's organizations that are voluntary, democratically administered, self-reliant and rooted in the tradition and culture of society so as to ensure community empowerment and self-development.[36]  Strong NGOs, with high managerial and technical skills, can provide the people with many services in the areas of education, health, environmental awareness and income generating activities, thus helping in alleviating poverty and unemployment.   NGOs being democratic by nature are the best candidates to help governments in the assessment of the real needs and aspirations of the people.  They are also very effective in invigorating self-help and accountability concepts in all human development areas which will lead to sustainability.  At the regional level, there is need for NGOs to share experiences and set common goals in support of development and peace-making efforts in Africa and also to establish strong communications links and cooperation particularly as related to the areas of environment, training and technology transfer.

77.     The international community also has a role to play in the promotion and consolidation of popular participation in development in the region.  In particular, external partners should examine their own record on popular participation, and hereafter support indigenous efforts which promote the emergence of a democratic environment to facilitate the people's effective participation and empowerment in their own societies.[37]  International NGOs also have the responsibility to support and strengthen national NGOs by providing them with financial resources and technical assistance.  International NGOs need to shift emphasis

away from relief efforts to support human development and long term development efforts.

## B    Resources

78.    In addition to action in substantive policy areas, there is urgent need to provide adequate and assured resources for all areas of human development.    Currently, for Africa, public spending on human development, mostly on education and health as a proportion of total public expenditure is not only low but has been declining since the mid-1980s, from 17.2 per cent in 1987 to 13.9 per cent in 1990.[38]    This amounts to roughly 6.5 per cent of GNP.[39]    In contrast, industrialized countries spend considerably more.    For example, OECD countries spend on average 14.6 per cent of GDP on education and health; North America spends 17.7 per cent; and Nordic countries spend 14.1 per cent.    However, industrialized countries' spending on all areas of human development including social security, as a proportion of GDP, on average ranges between 30 per cent in OECD countries to 43 per cent in Nordic countries.[40]

79.    While African and industrialized countries' relative expenditures are not exactly comparable, it is nonetheless clear that there is massive under investment in Africa.    In addition, there is also neglect of certain priority areas such as poverty alleviation and employment generation .    On top of this, in most African countries, spending on human development priorities is poorly targeted, with out-reach biased towards urban centres.

80.    There is consensus that resources for human development should both be increased to ensure that all priority areas are covered and more equitably distributed.  Nevertheless, this objective of increasing human development resources runs a serious risk of not being attained when implementing structural adjustment programmes under current conditions and modeli. Js.  Changes will accordingly have to be made in adjustment programmes with a view to attaining this objective.*

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*      For example, ECA has advocated reduction of government expenditure on defence as much as possible and on non-productive public sector activities.  In addition, it has proposed 'expenditure switching' (without necessarily increasing total government spending) to raise government outlays on the social sectors, particularly those aspects of education, health and integration of women in the development process that are likely

81.     An integral part of this Actionable Agenda is the recommendation that public spending on all areas of human development should increase from its current average level of 14 per cent to 30 per cent, and, thereafter, to maintain a growth rate in public outlays in these sectors at above the population growth rate as proposed in the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-Economic Recovery and Transformation.[44] A variety of approaches based on the context of each African country will be needed to mobilize and redirect resources. Some of the ways through which this could be accomplished are as follows:

o     Public spending in many African countries is high on defence and non-productive public sector activities.[45] Current military spending amounts to 15 per cent of total public expenditure which is slightly more than the combined spending on education and health.[46] There is an urgent need to reduce military spending by at least one-third of its current level and direct these resources to human development. The root causes which contribute to high levels of expenditure on defence need to be appropriately addressed.

o     In addition, the progressive reduction of subventions to state-owned enterprises other than those in the social sector and nationally strategic basic industries is required. Expenditure on non-productive public sector activities should be curtailed.

o     On the revenue generating side, rationalisation of fiscal polices is necessary. Nominal user charges are yet another means though perhaps not a significant way of increasing the resources for human development. In

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to increase productivity'.[41] The OAU has also advocated reduction of military expenditures. Similarly, with regard to the areas of education and health, the World Bank has suggested that 'even if all the necessary steps are taken to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery, to reduce unit costs and to improve user charges, a doubling of total spending from 4-5 per cent to 8-10 per cent of GNP from 1989 to the year 2000 and beyond to achieve universal primary education, health and family planning, food security and nutrition.'[42] An OAU/UNICEF study has also called for a substantial increase in investment in human development priorities.[43]

resorting to such means, equity considerations must be given priority.

o Capital flight through individuals and corporations represents a serious loss of resources for many African countries. On top of this, corruption, mismanagement and waste are other forms of leakages. Additional resources for human and social development could be made available if existing resources are utilized and managed more efficiently.

o Greater efficiency in the allocation, use and management of resources by utilizing a variety of cost effective strategies and practices. In this respect, better targeting of resources in priority areas of human development is essential.

82. There is also a role for indigenous and international NGOs which have become an important channel for providing resources for human and social development in the region. However, the Actionable Agenda requires that they increasingly redirect their resources and expertise from short-term relief and welfare activities to support long-term human development programmes.

## 2 Action at the International Level

83. African efforts at achieving human-centred development, as well as redirecting and mobilizing the requisite resources, must be supported by complementary actions by international development agencies, bilateral partners and NGOs. The evidence suggests that resource flows and aid levels to Africa are totally inadequate relative to Africa's needs and that they have also plummeted in recent years. Furthermore, severe imbalances in international development assistance to Africa are evident. Less than 7 per cent of total Official Development Assistance (ODA) is spent on human development programmes. Beyond this, poverty alleviation has not been a leading objective or practice of the international development agencies and financial institutions. And until recently, institutional capacity building in Africa has been virtually ignored. Moreover, tied aid has been a prominent part of bilateral ODA thereby reducing its impact and effectiveness.

84. An integral part of such a commitment will require development partners to put new emphasis on policies aimed at long-term development and transformation in Africa. In this regard, early action on

such outstanding issues as resource flows, debt and trade and more generally an external economic environment facilitating human-centred long-term development on sustained and sustainable basis is imperative.

85.     In addition to providing a favourable external environment, a substantial increase in resource flows to Africa, a fundamental reassessment of current aid policies and practices and an unambiguous commitment to support human-centred development is required by all development partners.     This requires a major policy shift so that the way will be open for a new and productive era for ODA - one based on commitment to human development.     In this context countries just emerging out of apartheid deserve special consideration.     Human development objectives should be explicitly stated in structural adjustment programmes and considered integral parts thereof.

86.     There is a growing consensus that at least 20 per cent of ODA should be committed to human development programmes as compared with the present average of 7 per cent.[47] Africa's development partners should commit themselves to meeting this target and match increased allocations that African countries will make to human and social development fields.

87.     With the end of the cold war, there is a new opportunity to redirect resources towards human development.     Global military spending is already falling.     Industrialized countries have reduced aggregate military spending from a peak of $838 billion in 1987 to $762 billion in 1990, representing a peace dividend of $76 billion.[48] Some of this dividend should be invested in human development in Africa.

88.     Africa's high debt repayment burden represents a large leakage and drain on resources, which could otherwise finance growth, development and human development.     Africa's creditors need to take bolder measures to reduce this burden.     Urgent measures need to be taken to write off ODA debt, adopt full Trinidad terms which allow for the cancellation of two thirds of Paris Club debt and alleviate the burden of debt to multilateral institutions which accounts for 25 per cent of total obligations and 40 per cent of total debt servicing payments.     Of particular importance are measures aimed at the effective application of debt for human development swaps to support human development efforts and the building up and strengthening of human resources capacities and institutions. Alleviating Africa's debt burden is essentially a political decision on the part of Africa's partners and there is no justification for this decision being delayed any further.

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89.    African governments are cognizant of the importance of global peace for sustained human and social development. This calls for constructive North-South and South-South partnerships in order to create secure international environment for human development. In this regard, the international community is urged to make financial contributions in support of peace, reconciliation and conflict resolution in Africa, including support for the OAU Peace Fund. There is also need for industrialized countries to respect and protect the rights of settler migrants originating from Africa.

90.    International development agencies are urged to encourage national implementation modalities in accordance with the decisions of the General Assembly to ensure the effective implementation of social and human development programmes.

## IV    Modalities for Implementation

91.    Implementation of the Actionable Agenda should take place at two levels - national and regional. But the national level is the most important. Against the background of the changing role of the state in economy and society, much emphasis should be placed on unleashing the creativity of a wide spectrum of partners such as people's organizations, NGOs, professional and socio-humanitarian associations, and many segments of the private sector in implementing the Agenda. This requires appropriate opportunities for interventions to be provided to various stake-holders to ensure that this Agenda becomes, indisputably a people's Agenda. Cooperation and coordination between people's organizations and the government is indispensable. In this regard, much can be learned from the experience of implementing the commitments made by African governments at the World Summit for Children - commitments which involved a series of time - bound goals for children and women by the year 2000. The subsequent International Conference on Assistance to African Children, and the preparation and implementation of National Plans of Action (NPA) for the survival, protection and development of children, in cooperation with these partners, has also shown that such cooperation can be active and effective. This is human development in practice.

### National Level

92.    The implementation of the Agenda at the national level will require the strengthening of policy management capacity; and the institutional framework.

### (i) Policy Management Capacity

93.    One of the cornerstones in the successful implementation of public policy on human and social development is competent policy analysis, management and implementation capacity. This is currently weak or lacking in most African countries. To this extent, there is need to give priority to developing and strengthening institutional capacity in this area. Such efforts should also include, training, attracting and retaining qualified African professionals.

### (ii) Institutional framework

94.    In most African countries, the different components of human development are scattered among sectoral ministries or agencies responsible, inter-alia, for social affairs, labour, employment, incomes, productivity, and local governments. There is therefore a need to ensure effective coordination of the activities of these entities. At the same time, the involvement of grassroot organizations in the implementation of human development programmes, as well as the decentralized implementation of these programmes, should be encouraged.

95.    Cooperation and collaboration for human and social development at the village, district, provincial and national levels should be intensified.

### Regional Level

96.    There is an important role for regional and sub-regional organizations in implementing the Actionable Agenda in areas of common or cross border interests including:

    o    advocacy on the primacy of human development;

    o    assisting member states in articulating policies and translating these into concrete strategies and actions; and assisting in monitoring the implementation of these policies;

    o    conflict mediation, management, and resolution;

    o    the harmonization of sub-regional and regional strategies on the development and utilization of human resources; and

    o    networking at the sub-regional and regional level to address common concerns.

## V Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

97. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting on the implementation of the Actionable Agenda on human and social development should take place at the national and regional levels. However, the most important must be the national level.

### (i) National level

98. At the national level, a government focal point should be responsible for monitoring, evaluating and reporting on progress on the state of human and social conditions. People's and grassroots organizations would also, on their part, monitor the implementation of the agenda.

99. Reporting of information on human and social development at the village, district, provincial and national levels could be done through published reports and the organization of workshops, symposia and other such fora, complemented by open informal discussion sessions at different levels. The mass media also has a crucial role to play in reporting on human development issues.

### (ii) Regional level

100. At the regional level, UNECA, jointly with the OAU and with the support and active collaboration of the ADB and other inter-governmental organizations, should be responsible for reporting to the Conference of African Ministers responsible for Human Development and its Follow-up Committee of Fifteen on progress made in the implementation of the Actionable Agenda. In order to facilitate the task of the joint ECA/OAU secretariat, reports on the human situation and reports on the progress made in the implementation of the Actionable Agenda at the national level should be made available to UNECA by member States.

## VI Conclusion

101. As ministers responsible for human and social development, we are concerned that conditions in our region are in a state of profound deterioration when compared to other regions of the world. We therefore call for an urgent and comprehensive approach to reverse our continued and appalling human predicament.

102. Consistent with this approach are the main themes and principles set out in our Common Position ( ) Human and Social Development for the World Summit for Social development. Nothing short of a renewed and massive commitment to invest in people, and to improve their well-being, will achieve the objectives we seek. That is why we have fashioned this Actionable Agenda for Human and Social Development in Africa.

103. At the national level, African governments must demonstrate the political will to make the necessary, and sometimes wrenching shifts in policy and programmes which are the prerequisites for change. Nor can this be done without committing substantial domestic resources. Only then will we be able to put human development policies at the heart of strategic planning and practical implementation; only then will we be able to attain sustained development and transformation.

104. But we cannot do it alone. We must have support and collaboration from Africa's development partners. And the support must mirror the over-riding truth of this Common Position: human-centred development. Efforts at the national level are not likely to succeed without complementary actions by Africa's development partners. In particular, external support must fall in line with national policies on human development. Over and above this, there is need for a new commitment to human-centred development as the basis of international cooperation, to provide an enabling external economic environment, and to increase and re-direct the flow of resources to support the Actionable Agenda. Without such support, national efforts will be inadequate to bring about a fundamental improvement in social and human conditions in Africa.

105. It has to be said however, that up to this point, the necessary support from the international community has not been forthcoming. While we are not inclined, in this document, to be accusatory, it is a matter of record that the undertakings made, time and again, by the international community to Africa, have not been fulfilled. There is only so much that the governments and peoples of Africa can do on their own. Indeed, in the face of unrelenting adversity, we have already dramatically restructured our economies and have pledged to continue to do so. When will a reciprocal commitment from our development partners be manifest?

106. The meaning of the previous paragraph is clear. If we are to transform human conditions in Africa; if we are to consecrate human development as the centrepiece of the development process; if we are, in sum, to implement the Actionable Agenda, then the promises of the

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past must become the realities of the future. This means that the flow of resources, terms of trade, commodity prices and African debt must finally be dealt with in a way which no longer frustrates the dreams and hopes of the people of Africa.

107. The World Summit for Social Development should be the turning-point. It is the crucial test. It is that moment in time when, together with the international community, we can begin to improve, qualitatively, the lives and living conditions of hundreds of millions of men, women and children in Africa. And if it can happen in Africa, it will benefit the world. What we desire for ourselves, we wish for all.

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