

AFRICAN UNION

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AUC Panelist- 5 Minutes

The African Union Commission is honored to be associated with the Africa Session of the Regional Discussions. The Commission participated actively in the Africa RIM, which provided Africa's inputs into the current CSD Session. AUC's collaboration with ECA is long-standing and has been undertaken within the framework of the Tripartite Secretariat, which includes the African Development Bank.

As the Secretariat to the AU, the principal organization on the continental responsible for spearheading socio economic development the AUC is committed to supporting the implementation of sustainable development commitments through AU structures and programs.

At this juncture, it is important to highlight that the New Partnership for Africa's Development provides the framework for sustainable development on the continent.

All five thematic areas under review in the current CSD- cycle, namely; transport, chemicals, waste management and mining have been addressed in the NEPAD Document; and strategies and actions plans have been elaborated for their implementation. NEPAD has now been integrated into AU structures. Strategies and programs in the Action Plan for the Environment Initiative of NEPAD, the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) all aim to reduce poverty and environmental degradation thereby ensuring sustainable development on the continent. Regional Economic Communities, which are the building blocks of the African Union Commission, have also an important role to play. They provide effective links between national level priorities and actions and regional level initiatives, which are essential to ensuring effective coordination and coherence in the implementation of policies and programs at the national, regional and continental levels.

Various African Ministerial bodies are now Specialized Technical Committees of the AU. A case in point is the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) whose work is relevant to the chemicals, waste and SCP thematic areas. It provides policy advice and guidance to the African Union. You will recall that AMCEN adopted the African 10- Year Framework of Programs on SCP. Other ministerial bodies such as the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW) and the Conference of Ministers of Agriculture of the African Union complement AMCEN's activities.

The Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Trans-boundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa of which the African Union Commission is the depository together with the ASP of which AUC is a member of the Steering Committee are testimonies of AU's commitments to seriously address waste issues on the African continent.

With regard to infrastructure development, the African Ministers responsible for transport and Infrastructure in April 2005 made a Declaration on the importance and role of transport in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and came up with concrete recommendations. Still in 2005, the African Union Heads of State and Government endorsed the need to develop clear policies and strategies on mining as a contributing sector to economy diversification in Africa and the Africa Mining Vision was also adopted.

Needless to say, AUC will do its utmost to ensure that the areas under review in the current CSD cycle are given due consideration at the highest level of decision making on the continent- AU Summit, and that Decisions taken at this level are translated into action on the ground.

AUC will continue to provide political support and direction for the implementation of the Africa's sustainable development agenda and to promote coherence and coordination in its resolve to achieve the socio economic development goals set for Africa.