



Informal report

Building the African Governance Architecture (AGA)

African Stakeholders further define the way forward during a technical meeting in Banjul

15-17 March 2010

Summary of the discussion

In line with its Strategic Plan 2009-2012, the African Union Commission (AUC) began a process of consensus building on the need to shape and consolidate an African Governance Architecture (AGA). In 2009, two consultative meetings were organised with key African institutional governance actors in Yaoundé (March) and Nairobi (December) on the topic. The Technical Meeting in Banjul (March 2010) sought to further operationalise the AGA - conceived as the **overall political and institutional framework** for the promotion of governance on the continent - and related African Platform on Governance - meant to operate as the motor of the AGA. Representatives from AU Organs, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), civil society actors and development partners participated in the meeting. ECDPM's Jean Bossuyt participated in the meeting as a technical support person.

Participants agreed that the AGA consists of **three pillars**: (i) a vision (supported by norms, values and agendas); (ii) a set of governance institutions and actors; and (iii) processes/interactions to promote synergies between these agendas and actors. The **core of the AGA** should be constituted by the relevant AU Organs and the RECs (as building blocks of the AU). Further dialogue between the AU and the RECs should help to clarify their respective roles/added value in the promotion of governance.

The **African Platform on Governance** will function as the **operational arm** to strengthen the overall AGA. Operating as an informal space for joint action, it should provide a flexible tool to enable/enhance coordination and complementarity among African institutions with a formal mandate to promote governance. The **five specific objectives** of the Platform are (i) to organise a systematic exchange of information and good practices; (ii) to improve dialogue between governance actors; (iii) to elaborate joint governance agendas; (iv) to increase Africa's capacity to speak with one voice; and (v) to monitor effective implementation, progress achieved and compliance. In terms of **composition**, the Platform should consist of the relevant AU Organs (including those dealing with Peace and Security) and the RECs. In line with the multi-



dimensional nature of governance, the participation of other relevant actors should be ensured through adequate engagement strategies.

In order to ensure effective delivery, the Platform should adopt **working approaches and methodologies** which make it possible to focus concretely on content, processes and outcomes. The **choice of thematic priorities** should be based on the following **criteria**: (i) existence of incentives for AGA members to participate; (ii) relevance with regard to the political agenda; (iii) potential to reduce fragmentation, connect agendas and build synergies; (iv) contribution to a more effective division of labour; (v) potential to articulate the various levels of governance (continental, regional, national and local); (vi) contribution to the consolidation of the overall AGA. The Platform should embody a number of smaller targeted forum and engagements to ensure deeper information sharing and collaboration in particular areas of governance.

In the light of providing relevant inputs into the 2011 AU Summit on 'Shared Values', it was recommended that the Platform should focus on a **priority agenda of work** articulated around i) the promotion of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance; (ii) improving the overall effectiveness and impact of the APRM processes (including its integration into the AGA); and (iii) elections in Africa (as a core process of democracy and governance as well a major source of conflict).

In order to facilitate an effective functioning of the Platform as an informal, multi-actor forum, focal points will be appointed among the core members of the AGA/Platform and rules of procedures will be elaborated. This would make it possible to formally launch the Platform by May 2010.

These advances in building an AGA and (light) coordination mechanism among African governance actors are to be welcomed. They may contribute to greater effectiveness and impact on the continent while facilitating a more balanced dialogue with external partners such as the EU in the framework of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES).