

PRESS RELEASE N°249/2016**Implementation of the continental Education Strategy for Africa**

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 23 June 2016: The two-day meeting on the implementation of the continental education strategy for Africa was held last week from 23rd to 24th June at the African Union Commission (AUC), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25) was adopted by the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in January 2016 to provide the post 2015 framework that links education to the human resource needs of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs, as well as national development goals. As Agenda 2063 calls for an education and skills revolution in Africa, CESA responds with a strategy that demands a paradigm shift in the organization and provision of education and training in Africa.

Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology, H.E Dr. Martial De-Paul Ikounga, in his opening remarks stated that achieving the African vision for peace, integration and prosperity is only possible if our people take ownership, and if Africa invests in inclusive and quality education that promotes entrepreneurship and innovation with special focus on the teaching and learning of science and technology. He elaborated that the continental education strategy for Africa (CESA) takes over since the Second Decade of Education for Africa ended in 2015. The content

of CESA was informed by continental and global discussions on post 2015 development goals, and is a reflection of Africa's contribution to the global Education 2030 programme, and constitutes Africa's implementation framework for Sustainable development Goal number 4.



In his opening remarks, Mr. Benno Sobre, Science Specialist of UNESCO Africa speaking on behalf of Dr. Edouard Matoko, UNESCO ADG for Africa, highlighted that the AUC is contributing towards enhancing quality and relevant education, responsive to the needs of the continent. He added that the AUC and UNESCO had many collaborative activities in the first decade of education from 1997-2006 and the second decade from 2006-2015. He

elaborated that studies show that the number of children and adolescents who are out of school is on the rise, children are living in conflict, child labor and discrimination based on ethnicity, gender and disability and girls and women are still the majority out of school. He lauded the AUC's efforts in education, as quality education enables people to develop the attributes and skills to achieve the potential of human beings and the society.

Speaking at the opening session, the United Nations Special Envoy on Human Rights Mr. Kishore Singh stated that education is a human right. He further underscored the right to education as a fundamental human right which is indispensable for exercise of all human rights.

The Planning Meeting brought together major actors and stakeholders working in education in Africa, including Member States, RECs, UN agencies, Civil Society as well as individual experts. The participants discussed establishment of CESA Thematic Clusters at national, regional and continental levels. A Cluster involves agencies working on similar fields of education collaborate in developing common implementation programmes. It was noted that some thematic clusters already exist, for example around School feeding; Women and Girls Education, technical and Vocational Education and Training; and Education Management Information Systems. Each Cluster of agencies will organize itself with a coordinator and terms of reference as well as an implementation roadmap. The thematic Inter-Country Quality Nodes established by ADEA would be taken into account as a supporting mechanism for the working of the Clusters.

Some Member States reported having started alignment of national education plans with CESA; and organization of multi-sectoral and inter-agency committees for the implementation of CESA. The Commission also presented a draft monitoring and reporting framework, and a communications strategy including use of social media. All those present committed to submitting annual reports to the AUC which would be presented to the Ten Heads of State identified to champion education in Africa.

The meeting ended on 24th June, with a call for enhancing communication around CESA to ensure stakeholder ownership and promote experience sharing around innovative interventions for strengthening education and training towards the Africa we want.

HE/BH

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