

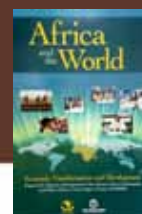


*Transforming the African Union
to drive the Africa we want.*



Case study five:

**Stimulate African Union activities
ownership by Member States
to drive the Africa We Want**



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EDITORIAL

H.E. Cherif Mahamat Zene

Chad's Resident Ambassador to Ethiopia and
Chair of the Permanent Representatives
Committee within the African Union

The African Union's main objective focuses on building a peaceful, prosperous and integrated Africa led by Africans, which represents a dynamic authority and critical partner on the international stage.

As part of the framework set up to achieve this objective, the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) – comprising the Ambassadors of the 54 Member States – contributes to strengthening the Member States' cooperation, and serves as a transmission mechanism between the States and AU organs in smoothing the communication, interaction and decision-making processes on various subjects relating to development and the continent's full integration. To that end, the PRC prepares, together with the African Union Commission, every meeting of the governing bodies, and plays a part in the Member States' ownership of the various programmes and actions decided at a continental level. As such, the PRC remains an important link in all the processes of consultation, experience sharing and decision-making aimed at transforming the continent and at meeting the African people's rightful expectations.

This publication aims at fostering a better understanding of the PRC, its operation, actions, objectives, and modest achievements. It also enhances the PRC's sheer determination and commitment to further participate in the African Union's makeover to achieve the Africa We Want.



54 Member States

are represented in the Permanent Representatives Committee.

11 The Permanent Representatives Committee has subcommittees

which examine issues related to:

Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Matters, Audit Matters, Contributions, Economic and Trade Matters, Headquarters and Host Agreements, Multilateral Cooperation and Strategic Partnerships, New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), Programmes and Conferences, Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine Relief in Africa and Structures.



The Permanent Representatives Committee consultation by the African Union Commission exists since

2002.

The importance of a continuous consultation mechanism with the member States within the Union







Importance of consultation

Diversity is a wealth of resources in Africa from its history, culture, resources and population. Each regions of Africa has its own specificity. According to the 13th Edition of *Ethnologue*, in 1996 there were 2,011 living languages in Africa clearly demonstrating the diversity and cultural wealth of the continent.

However, cooperation and dialogue can be improved within the African Union. Poorly managed, the lack of collaboration and engagement can become an obstacle for the development of the continent. It is in this context that the African Union has taking into consideration the importance of establishing a closer consultation mechanism within the institution. Indeed, without this consultation the gap between the reality of the member states and the activities developed and implemented by the Union be enormous. Without consultation, the final recipient will not be addressed efficiently.

Mechanism implemented

For an improved collaboration between the African Union and the member states, and for an enhanced monitoring of the programs and activities, the Permanent Representative Committee (PRC) was set up in the institution's operating structure.

The Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) conducts the day-to-day business of the African Union (AU) on behalf of the Assembly and Executive Council. It reports to the Executive Council, prepares the Council's work and acts on its instructions (under article 21 of the Constitutive Act).

The PRC responsibilities is to:

- Act as an advisory body to the AU Executive Council;
- Prepare its Rules of Procedure and submit them to the Executive Council;
- Prepare Executive Council meetings, including the agenda and draft decisions;
- Make recommendations on areas of common interest to Member States particularly on issues on the Executive Council agenda;
- Facilitate communication between the African Union Commission (AUC) and Member States' capitals;

- Consider the AU's programme and budget as well as the Commission's administrative, budgetary and financial matters, and make recommendations to the Executive Council;
- Consider the Commission's financial report and make recommendations to the Executive Council;
- Consider the Board of External Auditors' report and submit written comments to the Executive Council;
- Monitor the implementation of the AU budget;
- Propose the composition of AU organ bureaus, ad hoc committees and sub-committees;
- Consider matters relating to the AU's programmes and projects, particularly issues relating to the socio-economic development and integration of the continent, and make recommendations to the Executive Council;
- Monitor the implementation of policies, decisions and agreements adopted by the Executive Council;
- Participate in the preparation of the AU programme of activities and calendar of meetings; consider any matter assigned to it by the Executive Council; and carry out any other functions that may be assigned to it by the Executive Council.



The Permanent Representatives Committee





Membership

All Member States are represented at the PRC at the level of Permanent Representative. Similar to the Assembly and Executive Council, the PRC Bureau consists of a chairperson, three vice-chairpersons and a rapporteur. The Bureau positions are held by the same states that form the Assembly and Executive Council Bureaus. Office holders serve for one year (usually January to January). In addition to the official Bureau, a larger informal bureau of 15 Member States traditionally convenes to support arrangements for the Assembly Summit sessions.

At the PRC level, the five regional groups are informal discussion structures, chaired by the longest-serving representative who acts as the Dean. The most recently coordinator of the Deans is the Permanent Representative of DR Congo.



Operation

The PRC meets at AU Headquarters at least once a month and extraordinary sessions may also be held. The quorum is two-thirds of the Member States eligible to vote. The agenda for each session is drawn up by the Chairperson in consultation with the PRC Bureau and AUC. Sessions are closed, except when the PRC decides otherwise (by simple majority).

The PRC takes all its decisions by consensus or, failing that, by a two-thirds majority of Member States. Questions of procedure require a simple majority vote. Whether a question is one of procedure or not is also determined by a simple majority vote. PRC meetings are governed by rules 5–9 of the Rules of Procedure and decision taking by rule 13.

Structure

The PRC has 11 technical subcommittees established. These subcommittees have the mandate to examine issues related to a specific area on which each is assigned and issued their recommendations and their views thereafter.

Subcommittees established are the following:

- Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Matters;
- Audit Matters;
- Contributions;
- Economic and Trade Matters;
- Headquarters and Host Agreements;
- Multilateral Cooperation and Strategic Partnerships;
- New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD);
- Programmes and Conferences;
- Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons in Africa;
- Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine Relief in Africa;
- Structures.

Office holders:

January 2016 to January 2017

- **Chairperson:** H.E. Cherif Mahamat Zene from Chad
-
- **1st Vice-Chairperson:** H.E. Naim AKIBOU, Benin
-
- **2nd Vice-Chairperson:** H.E. Hope Tumukunde, Rwanda
-
- **3rd Vice-Chairperson:** H.E. Mahfud Rajab Rahiam, Libya
-
- **Rapporteur:** H.E. Andrew Hama Mtetwa, Zimbabwe

The current Deans are as follows:

- **Overall Dean:** H.E. Jacques Alfred Ndoumbe-Eboule Cameroon
-
- **East:** H.E. Mull Sebuja Katende, Uganda
-
- **Central:** H.E. Lazare MAKAYAT-SAFQUESSE Congo
-
- **North:** H.E. Sidi Mohamed Omar S.A.D.R.
-
- **Southern:** H.E. Mmamosadinyana Punkie Josephine. Molefe, Botswana
-
- **West:** H.E. Albert Francis Yankey Ghana



Focus on two activities





2016 Budget Review

The Union functioning plans that the Commission's budget for next year is systematically presented to PRC prior to adoption. The year 2016 was marked by an expansion of this exercise. Countries have been consulted not only for the budget of the Commission but also for organs.

This effort to broaden the scope of consultations of the countries in the budgeting was at its test stage this year. It demonstrates the commitment of the African Union to empower countries, which are the final beneficiaries, so that they take ownership of the actions of the African Union.

Budgeting process:



Advisory Sub-Committee on Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Matters:

The Advisory Sub-Committee on Administrative, Budgetary and Financial Matters oversees the financial and administrative management of the AU on behalf of the PRC. Under its draft terms of reference, the Sub-Committee's core tasks include to:

- Review the draft programme of activities and budgetary estimates presented by the Commission
- Review all administrative and other matters with financial implications
- Review administration of the programme budget and, in particular, the financial and accounting transactions of the Commission and regional offices
- Consider requests by the Commission for transfers of authorized budgetary funds to cope with any urgent decisions or projects
- Consider unforeseen urgent expenditure
- Consider requests related to the working capital or other funds

- Review the Commission's financial report for the preceding year and make recommendations to the PRC.

The Sub-Committee reports on each of its meetings and makes recommendations to the PRC. It may draft reports for review by the Executive Council on any issues concerning administrative, budgetary, management and financial matters. The Sub-Committee drafts the AU's financial rules and regulations, which are then submitted to the PRC.

Sub-Committee sessions are held at AU Headquarters at least once a month, and extraordinary sessions may also be held. The quorum is two-thirds of the Member States. The Chairperson draws up the agenda in consultation with the PRC Bureau, Sub-Committee Bureau and AUC. Sessions are closed, except when the Sub-Committee decides by simple majority to hold open sessions. Meetings are governed by rules 5–9 of the PRC Rules of Procedure.

African Union Restructuring

The AU's vision is to build an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena... To achieve this it must ensure that its operation is effective. It is in this perspective that institutional transformation project was launch in 2015.

The structure and the operation of the institution have been assessed, understood and redefined. The new pro-

posed arrangement, mechanisms and collaboration have been designed to better meet the real needs of the African citizen.

The result of this initiative has subsequently been submitted to the Subcommittee on the structure. Indeed the AU considers it important that countries are comfortable with the new operating structure that will be set up for better service.

Restructuring process:



Sub-Committee on Structures :

The Sub-Committee on Structures oversees organisational review of the AU. It is responsible for ensuring that relationships between the AU and its organs are functioning well in order to meet its core objectives. The Sub-Committee's mandate includes to:

- Evaluate and make proposals on organisational structures
- Review AU staff service conditions; criteria for recruitment including policies and practices around the equivalency of academic qualifications; work methods and procedures including with a view to ensuring fair remuneration for equal jobs; and the Staff Regulations and Rules
- Keep the structure within the Commission under regular review to ensure that activities are programme oriented and harmonised to avoid duplication
- Make recommendations on ways to improve coordination and accountability within Headquarters and between Headquarters and regional offices.



Sub-Committee sessions are held at AU Headquarters at least once a month, and extraordinary sessions may also be held. The quorum is two-thirds of the Member States. The Chairperson draws up the agenda in consultation with the PRC Bureau, Sub-Committee Bureau and AUC. Sessions are closed, except when the Sub-Committee decides by simple majority to hold open sessions. Meetings are governed by rules 5–9 of the PRC Rules of Procedure.

Countries speak







H.E. Joseph A. Nourrice
Seychelles' Resident Ambassador to
Ethiopia and Permanent Representative
to the African Union

As chair of the Subcommittee on Structural Reforms, H.E. Joseph A. Nourrice has an excellent understanding of the Permanent Representatives Committee. His interview will allow us to have a better idea of the changes and actions within this committee.

What is the added value of PRC consultations by the AU Commission?

'The PRC is an important organ of the AUC and is a platform for dialogue and advising on the various policy issues. The 54 Member States coming together as Permanent representative of our respective countries bring about a wealth of expertise that need to be put into good use to build the Africa we want.

One of the most critical elements of the PRC is that, while we have an obligation to our respective countries, we have to act collectively as we also have a duty to the African Union and the Continent as a whole. We have been brought together so we can benefit from the "bigger picture".

Consultation amongst and between Member States is therefore a critical factor in achieving the goals we have set ourselves, and in particular Agenda 2063.

Specific to Structural Reforms, this being a very complex and also a sensitive matter as we embrace the vision 2063, the PRC consultations become even more delicate as we address an array of issues that could impact on the lives and livelihoods of individual in our respective Member States.

With the vision to build the Africa we want, there has to be a serious alignment of the current structure to allow it to deliver on the programmes and projects of Agenda 2063.

The alignment hinges on two important tenets; namely having the right supporting structure with the operational capacity to deliver in a timely and most cost effective way.

African Ownership also means is ensuring that the African Union reduces its dependence on external funding and rely more on the contribution of its members. Unless there is constant engagement and consultation, this principle will remain an illusion.

Restructuring therefore needs to have a balance between what the optimal structure should be and its affordability. In this particular case the reform also calls for a sensitive approach given that we are dealing with an existing organisation and our recommendations may very well affect the existence of some jobs as well as the responsibilities of others.

This is the where the consultation process should be conducted in a manner inclusive of all stakeholders so as we can all claim ownership of the process, without which, implementation becomes perilous exercise.



What improvements and changes have you noticed in the consultation process this year?

'A number of Committees have been conducting several consultations may be unprecedented in the recent past. Both the extent and the scope of the work have been remarkable.'

We have seen measures being put in place to bring about operational efficiency unaffected by the structural proposal, plus the more rigorous scrutiny of the budget all likely to bring about improvements to the process.

A number of PRC Committees have faced several obstacles in trying to convene and conduct meetings to conclude their work. It is my wish that, together with the Commission, we address this deficiency in the next five months so that we can move closer towards creating the Africa we want.

In a nutshell the contribution of the PRC has been significant but we need to continue to address remaining and emerging challenges of such a dynamic organisation like the AU.'

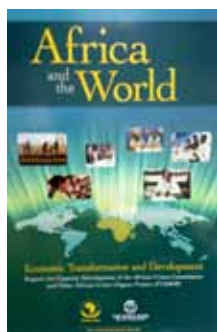
Which areas of the consultation process need to be improved or strengthened?

'Better participation and engagement in the work of the PRC by the PRC with the full collaboration of the Secretariat.'

There is also a need for timely information sharing, in particular when it comes to documentation. PRC consultations could be made more efficient and effective if documents could be made available in a timely manner. The electronic system already in place is one of the tools already developed and available to facilitate the work of the PRC.

It needs refining so that it can operate at its optimal level- in the process contributing to efficiency savings.

Finally, consultation, consultation and more consultation remain the dynamic force of the PRC that will drive our continent.'





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