EXCLUSIVE COUNCIL
Seventeenth Ordinary Session
19 – 23 July 2010
Kampala, Uganda

EX.CL/584(XVII)
Original: English

REPORT OF THE FOURTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (AMCOST IV),
Egypt, 8 – 11 March 2010
REPORT OF THE FOURTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (AMCOST IV),
Cairo, Egypt, 8 – 11 March 2010

The Fourth Ordinary Session of the African Ministerial Conference on science and technology (AMCOST IV) convened in Cairo, Egypt from the 07 to 10 March 2010 to discuss the progress made in the implementation of Africa's Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA), implementation of the African Union 2007 Summit Decisions and resource mobilization for the CPA. For the last two years, began with a meeting of Senior Officials from 07 to 09 March, followed by the meeting of ministers the 10 March 2010. A total of twenty-nine (29) AU Member States attended the meeting. Also in attendance were specialized institutions of the AU and a number of International Organizations.

The following Bureau was elected:

- Arab Republic of Egypt (North Africa) Chairperson
- Republic of Congo (Central Africa) 1st Vice-Chairperson
- Republic of South Africa (Southern Africa) 2nd Vice-President
- Republic of Burkina Faso (West Africa) 3rd Vice-Chairperson
- Republic of Kenya (East Africa) Rapporteur

The Ministers among other discussed: (1) the handing-over report of the outgoing Chair of the AMCOST III Bureau, (2) the report of the meeting of the AMCOST Experts, (3) Items proposed by Member States (4) International Cooperation and (4) the Progress Reports on the implementation of Africa’s Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA) and made the following recommendations:

(i) The need to launch (2011-2020) African Union Decade of science and technology);
(ii) The need for Au Summit to endorse the Republic of South Africa bid to host the Square Kilometer Array (SKA) project;
(iii) The need to ensure the enhancement of Science and Technology infrastructure in the AU Member States.

The report of the Conference is attached.
FOURTH ORDINARY SESSION
OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (AMCOST IV)
7-10 MARCH 2010
CAIRO, EGYPT

AU/MIN/ST/Rpt(IV)

REPORT
I. INTRODUCTION

1. The fourth session of the African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology (AMCOST IV) was held in Cairo on the 10 of March 2010 and was preceded by a senior officials session from 7 to 10 March 2010. The meeting discussed among other issues, the progress report on the implementation of Africa’s Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA), African Union (AU) decisions on science and technology, international cooperation and programmes proposed by Member States, and Regional Economic Communities.

II. DECISIONS

2. The AMCOST IV made the following decisions:

2.1 Governance

3. The African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology elected the following Member States to the Bureau and Steering Committee:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern Africa</td>
<td>Arab Republic of Egypt</td>
<td>Chair of the Bureau and the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Great Libyan Arab Jamahiriya</td>
<td>Member of the Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Africa</td>
<td>Republic of Congo</td>
<td>First Vice Chair of the Bureau and the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Republic of Chad</td>
<td>Member of the Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Africa</td>
<td>Republic of South Africa</td>
<td>Second Vice Chair of the Bureau and the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Republic of Namibia</td>
<td>Member of the Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Africa</td>
<td>Republic of Burkina Faso</td>
<td>Third Vice Chair of the Bureau and the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Republic of Ghana</td>
<td>Member of the Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Africa</td>
<td>Republic of Kenya</td>
<td>Rapporteur of the Bureau and the Steering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Republic of Tanzania</td>
<td>Member of the Steering Committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 CPA Implementation

2.2.1 AMCOST notes and appreciates the progress made by the AUC and the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NEPAD Agency) in the implementation of the Africa’s Science and Technology Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA).
2.2.2 AMCOST commends the work done by the AUC and all the partners and other stakeholders involved in the preparation of the Book of Lighthouse Projects as a basis to move forward the implementation of the CPA and the African Regional Action Plan on the Knowledge Economy (ARAPKE).

2.2.3 AMCOST calls upon the members states to urgently boost the capacity of the Science & Technology and ICT Division in the Human Resources, Science and technology (HRST) Department by seconding officers through the AMCOST organ and requests the Permanent Representative Committee (PRC) of the African Union to consider restructuring the Division of HRST in response to the evident increase of programmes under its portfolio.

2.2.4 AMCOST urges the AU Commission to develop a programme to ensure the enhancement of Science and Technology infrastructure in the AU Member States and further requests all partners to support this programme.

2.2.5 The AMCOST IV agrees to constitute a team of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Experts to evaluate and thoroughly consider the existing PAIPO documents and submit them to the next Bureau Meeting in a bid to expedite the implementation of the AU Assembly decision on PAIPO.

2.2.6 AMCOST appreciates progress made by the AUC and NEPAD Agency in harmonizing their respective Biosafety programmes in order to reduce duplication. However the African Biosafety Network of Expertise (ABNE) of the NEPAD Agency should concentrate on building capacity of national regulatory systems while the AUC Biosafety Unit concentrates on international forum issues and in revising the African Model Law on Biosafety and other policy development initiatives.

2.2.7 AMCOST commends the NEPAD Agency for its programmes on pharmaceutical innovation and harmonization of medicines registration in the AU Member States and RECs in line with the Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property (GSPA), AU Health Strategy, AU Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa and the CPA.

2.2.8 AMCOST commends the NEPAD Agency for providing leadership in developing a bio-energy programme, with expansion prospects, for Africa in collaboration with the AUC Infrastructure and Energy Department.

2.2.9 The AMCOST commends the establishment of the African Cluster for Science and Technology as a platform to coordinate the efforts of the CPA implementation and calls for strengthening the Cluster to respond to its mandate.

2.2.10 AMCOST acknowledges the role of the UN Cluster for Science and Technology in the CPA implementation and requests the convener, UNESCO to ensure that there are synergies among its cluster members.
2.2.11 AMCOST urges Member States to develop strategies and mechanisms to turn the brain drain in Africa to brain circulation within Africa for the enhancement of science, technology and innovation capacities.

2.2.12 AMCOST urges the steering committee of the AMCOST-IV to put in place a Working Group on space science and applications, to examine all the existing initiatives and prioritize the AU needs, considering the rapid increase of interest by Member States on space applications and as a process of implementing the Space Science flagship programme of the CPA.

2.3 ITEMS PROPOSED BY MEMBER STATES, RECs AND EMERGING PARTNERSHIPS

2.3.1 AMCOST commends the Partnership No. 8 on Science, Information Society and Space of the EU-Africa Joint Strategy and recognises the progress made and calls the AU and EU to expedite the execution of projects of the Book of Lighthouse Projects. It further welcomes the establishment of a high-level policy dialogue between EU and Africa on science and technology.

2.3.2 AMCOST urges member states to establish a forum for scientists to share experience and best practices on science and technology innovation funds mechanisms and research grants.

2.3.3 AMCOST commends the Arab Republic of Egypt and the National Science Foundation (USA) for the implementation of the Global Ring Network for Advance Applications Development (GLORIAD) project with a broader strategy for expansion across Africa.

2.3.4 The AMCOST urges Member States to participate in the EU-Africa Joint Experts Group (JEG-8), and African countries serving on JEG8-8 to report to the Steering Committee on its regular meetings.

2.3.5 AMCOST requests the Commission to develop a reporting mechanism; logical framework matrix through which Member States, RECs, NEPAD Agency and HRST Department will report on the implementation of the CPA and submit biannual reports for consideration by the AMCOST.

2.3.6 AMCOST requests the Commission to identify additional potential funding sources to foster the implementation of the CPA and disseminate such information to Member States.

2.3.7 AMCOST unanimously supports South Africa's bid for Square Kilometre Array (SKA) telescope initiative and calls upon all Member States to participate actively including in capacity building opportunities offered by the initiative. AMCOST further recommends this initiative to be presented to the AU Assembly.
2.3.8 AMCOST commends Egypt for hosting the AMCOST portal and calls upon all Member States to contribute to this initiative as a platform for knowledge sharing and exchange of best practices.

2.3.9 AMCOST urges Member States to put in place programs that promote informal science education to cultivate interest in science among children and youth.

2.3.10 AMCOST urges Member States and African Union organs to develop special capacity building programmes that lead to more participation of women and youth in science and technology.

2.3.11 AMCOST welcomes the proposed African Network for Drugs and Diagnostic Innovation (ANDI), and its anticipated contribution to on-going initiatives on building health innovation capacity in Africa. ANDI is requested to work with the NEPAD Agency in further development of the initiative in order to maximize synergies in health research and innovation.

2.3.12 AMCOST took note of the International Conference on the Role of Science, Technology and Innovation in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to be held in Nairobi, Republic of Kenya from 5 to 8 August 2010. The Conference is co-organized by the Republic of Kenya, UNESCO and its South-South Cooperation (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), the International Science, Technology and Innovation Centre (ISTIC).

2.4 AFRICAN UNION DECADE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (2011 – 2020)

2.4.1 Recognising the challenges that AU Member States are facing in harnessing S&T for socio-economic development and the need to sensitize the African Community and to engage the AU leaders in science and technology:

   (a) The AMCOST resolved to launch a decade of science and technology in 2011,
   (b) It further mandated its Bureau to work with the Commission to take all the necessary actions to ensure successful launch of the decade, and
   (c) Call upon the development partners including UN agencies to support the decade.

2.5 DATE AND VENUE FOR AMCOST-V

2.5.1 The AMCOST welcomes and approves the offer by the Government of the Republic of Congo to host the fifth meeting of the AMCOST planned to take place in 2012. It further requests the Commission to carry out consultations with the host country and inform the AMCOST on time.

2.6 APPRECIATION

2.6.1 The AMCOST expresses its appreciation to the Government and the people of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and in particular H.E. President Hosni
Mubarak and wishing him safe recovery. The hospitality of H.E. Hon. Dr. Hany Helal, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research is highly acknowledged by the AMCOST.

2.6.2 The AMCOST extends its appreciation to the outgoing Chair, H.E. Hon. Dr. Sally J. Kosgei, Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology of the Republic of Kenya and members of the bureau and steering committee for their able leadership during their tenure of office for AMCOST III.

2.6.3 The AMCOST congratulates and welcomes the incoming Chair, H.E. Hon. Dr. Hany Helal, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

2.6.4 AMCOST appreciates the offer by the Government of the Republic of Congo to host the fifth meeting of the AMCOST in 2012.

2.6.5 The AMCOST thanks the AUC and NEPAD Agency for efforts done to make the meeting a success.
“We are determined to deal once and for all with the scourge of conflicts and violence on our continent, acknowledging our shortcomings and errors, committing our resources and our best people, and missing no opportunity to push forward the agenda of conflict prevention, peacemaking, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction. We, as leaders, simply cannot bequeath the burden of conflicts to the next generation of Africans.” (Paragraph 9 of the Tripoli Declaration of 31 August 2009).