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**THIRD ORDINARY SESSION FOR  
THE SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON  
EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (STC-EST)  
10TH TO 12TH DECEMBER 2019,  
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

**HRST/STC-EST/EXP/Rpt(III)**  
Original : ENGLISH

**REPORT OF THE EXPERTS MEETING**

## INTRODUCTION

1. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Specialized Technical Committee on Education, Science and Technology (STC-EST III) meeting for senior's officials was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 10-12 December 2019. The meeting was held to provide a common platform for Education, Science and Technology experts to discuss and review progress on the implementation of the decisions of STC EST II as well as implementation of key policies and programmes in Africa pertaining to Education, Science and Technology. It also provided opportunity to advocate for investment in Education, Science, Technology and Innovation towards the attainment of AU's Agenda 2063 and the Global Sustainable Development Goals.
2. Among other key issues, the experts discussed the following items:
  - The Outcomes of the Committee of Ten,
  - One Million by 2021 Initiative,
  - The Digital Transformation Strategy of the African Union,

The experts then proceeded to two parallel sessions, one on Education and the other on Science and Technology where they considered specific items related to respective agendas.

## ATTENDANCE

3. The representatives of the following member states participated in the meeting: Algeria, Botswana, Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Cape Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Comoros, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Eswatini, Gabon, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sahrawi Republic, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
4. The following partners' institutions attended the meeting: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), African Capacity Building Foundation, Save the Children, IDEP, the Association of African Universities (AAU), African Development Bank (ADB), VMware, Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA), FAWE, Plan International, The World Food Program, Permanent Mission of Norway to the African Union, Commonwealth Association of Technical Universities and Polytechnics in Africa (CAPA), African Curriculum Association (ACA), African Commission on Nuclear Energy (AFCOM), Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN), African Center for Biodiversity, African Technology Policy Studies (ATPS), Center for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Africa (CEMASTE), Education International Africa Region, International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), Aide et Action International Afrique, Coalition on Media and Education for Development Africa Forum (CAFOR), International Center for Insects Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE), and the Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM).

5. The following specialized institutions of the African Union were represented: AU International Center for Girls and Women's Education in Africa (AU-CIEFFA), African Union Development Agency-NEPAD, IPED, AU-STRC and PAU.

### **ITEM 1: OPENING SESSION**

6. The opening session was marked by address from Dr. Mahama Ouedraogo, Director of Human Resources, Science and Technology (HRST) at the African Union Commission and Prof Amadou Abdoul Sow, Director General of Higher Education at the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation of Senegal as outgoing Chair of the STC EST II, expert's session. Dr. Mahama Ouedraogo welcomed the participants to this Experts meeting on behalf of the AUC and thanked the Chair of the STC as well as Members States' delegations for their attendance and for their continuous support to the HRST Department through the implementation of the CESA and other multi-sectoral policies and programmes fostering Education and Science and Technology in Africa. He also informed the meeting about key achievements during the tenure of STC 2 with regards to Education, Science and Technology.
7. Prof Amadou Abdoul Sow delivered a key note address in which he recalled the importance of giving priority to Education in African countries. He also expressed gratitude to the Members States and the HRST Department for their technical support. He highlighted key actions and progress made under the mandate of his country as Chair of the STC 3 with a specific focus of the organization of the 1<sup>st</sup> Summit of the Committee of 10 held in Lilongwe, Malawi.

### **ITEM 2: CONSULTATION FOR THE NEW BUREAU OF THE STC EST**

8. The consultations for the New Bureau of the STC EST 3 was conducted under the guidance of the AUC Office of the Legal Counsel. Based on agreement reached by the regions the following was proposed as the composition of the Bureau of the 3<sup>rd</sup> STC-EST :

<b>Regions</b>	<b>Countries</b>	<b>Positions in the Bureau</b>
East Africa	Uganda	Chair
Central Africa	Central African Republic	1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President
So uthern Africa	Namibia	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President
Northern Africa	?	3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice President
West Africa	Senegal	Rapporteur

**ITEM 3: ADOPTION OF AGENDA AND PROGRAM OF WORK**

9. The Agenda and Program of Work for the Experts meeting including the annotations were presented for consideration and adopted with amendments to be included under Any Other Business (AoB). Items proposed under AOB were:
- i. World Artificial Intelligence to be presented by Egypt,
  - ii. World Skills Africa to be presented by Namibia and
  - iii. African Education Fund by the African Development Bank.

**ITEM 4: CONSIDERATION OF THE C10 OUTCOMES**

10. Dr Mahama Ouedraogo, Director, HRST recalled the establishment of the Committee of Ten (C10) Heads of State and Government as Champions of Education, Science and Technology in 2015 by the AU Assembly.
11. He then outlined the outcomes of the 1st Extra Ordinary Summit for the Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government Championing Education, Science, and Technology (C10), which took place on the 3rd of November in Lilongwe, Malawi under the theme “**Strengthening Education, Science, Technology and Innovation for Africa’s Development**”.
- **Investment in Education, Science and Technology.** The Member States were urged to meet the original commitment of 1% GDP Allocation to Research & Development and 4 – 6 % on Education.
  - **Promoting Education in Africa** by investing in rebranding and modernizing TVET sector. They further committed to improve infrastructure and increase staff capacity development including female research leaders in Africa’s universities to support the implementation of the AU Agenda 2063.
  - They invited the **Private Sector and Philanthropists** to contribute to the Education and Science, Technology and Innovation Funds as well as develop innovative mechanisms for supporting STI in Africa such as tax breaks to industries that support education training, research grants, scholarships, etc.
12. He added that, the Statements of Commitment by C10 Heads of States included among others: establishing Research Chairs in Africa Universities to promote research excellence in Africa; Encouraging investment in Early Childhood Education and Development, setting-up of proper continental quality assurance mechanism as well as qualification frameworks to enhance mobility of skills and competencies across the continent, the promotion of the use of the Intellectual Property Rights including patents, trademarks for stimulating and supporting innovators.
13. It was proposed to increase investments in Education, Science and Technology and the operationalization of an Education Fund and STI Fund and provide financial support for girls and women to pursue studies and careers in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), and put measures in place to

ensure that all persons with disabilities access and complete relevant education and training that is compatible with their respective disabilities.

14. Participants were informed that the next Ordinary Session of the C10 Heads of States and Government will take place on the margins of the AU Summit in February 2020.

**The Experts request the Ministers to:**

**TAKE NOTE** of the Outcomes of the First Extra-Ordinary Summit for the Committee of Ten Heads of State and Government (C10) Championing Education, Science and Technology.

**ITEM 5:      CONSIDERATION OF THE ONE MILLION BY 2021 INITIATIVE**

15. Mrs. Prudence Ngwenya, Head of Human Resources and Youth Division at the African Union Commission presented the 1 Million by 2021 initiative as an initiative of the Chairperson of the Commission that seeks to reach one million young Africans with opportunities in the areas of Education, Employment, Entrepreneurship and Engagement (4E's) by the year 2021. The initiative aims at boosting action for youth development in Africa, towards harnessing Africa's demographic dividend and achieving the vision of Agenda 2063. The pan-African outlook underlines this initiative, as it facilitates strategic partnerships to open new opportunities for young people on the Continent.
16. The 1 Million by 2021 Initiative focuses on four key thematic areas: Education, Employment, Entrepreneurship and Engagement. The African Union Commission developed a project strategy where 12 specific intervention pathways were identified for effective delivery. Under Education, the key pathways of focus are scholarships, alternative learning pathways and models for teacher development.
17. The experts request ministers to:

COMMEND the initiative and ENCOURAGE partners, especially the private sector to collaborate with the AUC on the provision of affordable bandwidth for online platforms to facilitate teaching and learning.

Acknowledge the role of partners in the implementation of the 1 million by 2021 initiative and further CALL UPON the partners and private sector to support Member States in accelerating execution of the initiative at country level.

**ITEM 6:      CONSIDERATION OF THE PRESENTATION ON THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY OF THE AFRICAN UNION**

18. Mr. Moctar Yedaly, Head of IT, Department of Infrastructure and Energy at the African Union Commission, presented the digital transformation strategy of the African Union

as an *“Integrated and inclusive digital society and economy in Africa that improves the quality of life of Africa’s citizens, strengthens the existing economic sector, enables its diversification and development and ensure continental ownership with Africa as a producer and not only a consumer in the global economy.”* He further mentioned that the Strategy presents a major opportunity for development of Africa’s economies particularly through its foundational pillars of Environment, Policy and Regulation, Digital Infrastructure, Digital Skills and Human Capacity and Digital Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

19. In the discussions that ensued, members commended the commission and observed that it was critical that there was seamless interdepartmental coordination in the implementation of the strategy. This was confirmed by the Director of HRST who added that the Pan African Virtual and e-University will be launched from 20<sup>th</sup> of December as part of the implementation of the strategy.

**The experts request the Ministers to:**

**WELCOME** the development of a comprehensive continental Digital Transformation Strategy (DTS) as it will play a critical role in improving policy and regulation environment, digital infrastructure and emergency of an inclusive African digital society and economy.

**CALL UPON** Member States and all relevant stakeholders to promote through relevant interventions digital skills and human capital development, digital innovation and entrepreneurship as well as research and development in order for the continent to benefit from the fourth Industrial Revolution.

**ITEM 7: CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF REPORTS FROM PARALLELS SESSIONS ON EDUCATION AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**The African Union Commission, and its technical offices, AUDA-NEPAD, Member states and partners made presentations during the parallel sessions which were captured in the full report of the sessions.**

**A. REPORT ON EDUCATION**

20. The experts took note of the progress made in the implementation of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa and made the following recommendation to the Ministers:

**a. ON EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

**COMMEND** the Commission for efforts in Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED) through establishment of the ECED Cluster under the umbrella of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA).

**CALL FOR** a regional study to understand ECED financing models and levels in the region and recommend practical solutions for achieving prioritization of ECED in Africa.

**REQUEST** the Commission in partnership with the coalition of stakeholders in the CESA ECED Cluster to identify and mobilize champions to strengthen advocacy for key priority areas of ECED.

**SUPPORT** the efforts of the Government of Seychelles to establish the Centre for the Early Childhood Education and Development (ECED).

#### **b. ON HOME GROWN SCHOOL FEEDING**

**ENDORSE** the Continental Home Grown School Feeding Cluster Strategy, Terms of reference, Work plan and Indicators 2019 – 2021.

**TAKE NOTE** of the progress made in the implementation of school feeding by the Commission.

**URGE** all member states to increase investment in HGSF so as to harvest increased impacts on education and learning indicators, Health and Nutrition, and Agriculture and Local Economic Development.

**REQUEST** the Commission to encourage Member States to implement National school feeding programs funded by the Government through the utilization of local farmers in the areas

#### **c. ON TEACHER DEVELOPMENT**

**URGE** Member States and RECS to actively support and promote the AU Continental Teacher Prize and to recognize Teachers at National and Regional Levels as a means of raising the status of the Teaching Profession and facilitate sharing of best practices in Teacher excellence in Africa.

**COMMEND** the Commission for the establishment of the AU Continental Teacher Prize which seeks to celebrate the work of distinguished teachers on the African continent.

**URGE** the Commission to disseminate the Continental Teacher Mobility Protocol to Member States for further consultation.

#### **d. ON TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

**COMMEND** the commission for developing the Plan of Action for the African Decade for Technical, Professional, Entrepreneurial Training and Youth Employment (PoA)

**URGE** member states and TVET practitioners to closely align their TVET policies and strategies with this Decade Plan of Action, and undertake TVET reforms that will respond

to aspirations of the youth by providing the needed skills for gainful employment and job creation.

**CALL ON** Member States, RECs and relevant partner agencies to popularize and implement the Decade Plan of Action and share country experiences in addressing inherent challenges in TVET and Youth Employment through the Continental Dialogue Platform.

**CALL UPON** Member States to support the rebranding of the CAPA to the “Association of Technical Universities and Polytechnics in Africa (ATUPA), and encourage Technical Universities and Polytechnics in their countries to join this continental association.

#### **e. ON INNOVATING EDUCATION IN AFRICA**

**COMMEND** the Commission, the Republic of Senegal and the Republic of Botswana for successfully organising the two previous editions of the Innovating Education in Africa Expo which is imperative to the implementation of the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25), the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA 2024) and the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Strategy for Africa (TVET Strategy) towards the realisation of Agenda 2063.

**AGREE** to convene the Innovating Education in Africa Expo as an annual event to keep momentum for Education Innovation in Africa towards attracting and supporting young innovators across the continent, and **FURTHER ENCOURAGE** Member States and Regional Economic Communities to support the work of the Commission regarding the organisation of this event.

**REQUEST** the Commission to document selected innovations and best practices for the benefit of stakeholders including Member States and RECs, and establish a Network of African Education Innovators.

#### **f. ON QUALITY ASSURANCE AND HARMONISATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**CALLS ON** Member States to use the African Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance towards domestication at national and regional levels.

**URGE** Member States to actively involve and support the development process of the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF).

**EMPLOY** the African Quality Rating Mechanism (AQRM) in universities as a tool for quality improvement through self-evaluation and external validation.

**ENCOURAGE** the establishment of National Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agencies in Member states that do not have them.



**REQUEST** the Commission to establish a Technical Working Group to develop a Statute specifying the legal framework and the organizational set-up of the Pan African Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency.

**URGE** Member States to expedite ratification of the Addis Convention in their respective countries.

#### **g. ON THE UPDATE FROM CIEFFA ON GIRLS AND WOMEN EDUCATION**

**RECALL** the recommendation made by AU Ministers during the 2<sup>nd</sup> STC –EST , requesting the AU/CIEFFA and its partners to work on the feasibility on the appointment of an AU Special Rapporteur on Girls' Education in Africa who will champion the AU's Agenda on girl's education and present annually a report during the AU High Level Dialogue on Gender and Education.

**REQUEST** the AU Chairperson to appoint a Special Rapporteur on Girls' and women's Education in Africa.

**CONGRATULATE** the AU/CIEFFA for inclusion of various stakeholders namely the Pan Parliament, Regional Economic Communities, AU Organs and specialized Institutions, Traditional and religious leaders, CSO's, Media, the Youth and especially the African Governments for the implementation of policies pertaining to girls' and women's education.

**APPEAL to** Member states to adopt specific measures to re-integrate girls in school with affirmative actions as completion rates of girls are still very low due to early pregnancy, child marriage and various other socio-cultural, economic and socio-cultural factors.

**REQUEST** for the institutionalization of the AU/CIEFFA Dialogue with Traditional and Religious leaders on Girls retention in Educational systems, to be held every year in collaboration with the Council of Traditional Leaders (COTLA) and the Department of Social Affairs;

**REQUEST** Member States to reconsider the approved AU/CIEFFA structure and authorize recruitment of more international professionals for the Centre to efficiently fulfil its mandate.

#### **h. ON THE UPDATE FROM IPED ON EDUCATION MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEM**

**TAKE NOTE** of the progress made in strengthening National EMIS systems using new and modern technologies

**ENCOURAGE** Member States to link National EMIS Systems to the AU continental EMIS platform

**ENCOURAGE** Member states to increase funding for strengthening Education data collection, transportation, analysis and dissemination.

## **B. REPORT ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

21. The experts took note of the progress made in the implementation of the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA-2024) and made the following recommendation to the Ministers:

### **a. ON THE REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF STISA-2024 (2014 – 2018) AND 5 YEARS ACTION PLAN**

**WELCOME** the Report and the 5 Year Action Plan to boost the implementation of STISA-2024 with a view for the continent to transform into an innovation-led, knowledge-based economy, Science Technology and Innovation;

**URGE** Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Institutions to implement the Action Plan at all levels in the next 5 years before the review of the current strategy

**COMMEND** the strong collaboration between the Commission and UNESCO to improve science, technology and innovation on the continent, and **INVITE** other Regional Institutions to collaborate in this regard in order to promote coordination, synergies and maximize socio-economic impact of STI.

**RECOMMEND** that in line with the work plan, undertake an end of period review of STISA2024 and enable preparation of the next iteration of STISA 2034

### **b. ON THE AFRICAN UNION KWAME NKRUMAH AWARDS FOR SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE**

**TAKE NOTE** of the Launching of the programme annually from January and Request Member States and Regional Economic Communities to widely disseminate information about the programme at national and regional levels to attract more applicants and raise the popularity of STI;

**CALL UPON** Member States, the RECs and Partners to enhance synergies with similar awards programs at regional and continental levels in order to gain efficiency and sustainability, and

**URGE** Member States to collaborate with the Commission to financially support the AU

Kwame Nkrumah Awards for Scientific Excellence programme.

### **c. ON AFRICAN UNION RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAMME**

**COMMEND** the African Union Research Grants Programme as a continental financial instrument to support and promote collaborative research in Africa; and capacity building for the Commission to create and manage a credible and competitive system of grants as a way to involve and support African scientists and researchers to collaborate on common research priorities of STISA-2024.

**WELCOME** the technical and financial support by the EU for the Research Grant Programme and **CALLS UPON** the AU Commission to consider a durable long term view for the programme to evolve into a continental financial instrument dedicated to finance research.

**URGE** Member States, the Private Sector and Development Partners to collaborate with the Commission to explore sustainable options to fund research programmes in the continent in response to the implementation of STISA-2024.

**FURTHER URGE** member states to promote South-South collaboration and encourage the pooling of major scientific equipment and the creation of large regional centres open to the African scientific community with African but also foreign co-financing.

### **d. ON AU-EU HIGH LEVEL POLICY DIALOGUE ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

**COMMEND** the AU-EU High-Level Policy Dialogue (HLPD) on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for the progress made in the implementation of agreed programme and **URGE** the Partnership to ensure sustenance of the current activities and to pay special attention to addressing the common socio-economic challenges, capacity building on research and infrastructures, human capital development, innovation and other cross-cutting issues;

**FURTHER COMMEND** the progress in the implementation of the Research and Innovation (R&I) Partnerships on “Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (FNSSA) and On Climate Change and Sustainable Energy (CCSE)”, **AND CALL UPON** other relevant EU and African stakeholders to take part in the implementation of the R&I Partnerships;

**WELCOME** the strong focus on Innovation through the recently established AU-EU Innovation Partnership as a critical framework to foster collaborative alliances and relationships between our continents to promote technology transfer and uptake;

capacity-building, access to markets and removal of barriers that impede innovation and creativity as well as deepening dialogue and engagement between policy-makers and innovators;

**URGES** the Commission to ensure that the African Member State have constant dialogue to formulate their common position and priorities for future orientations of the cooperation between EU and Africa on STI.

#### **e. BIODIVERSITY PROGRAM**

**UNDERLINE** the potential of Africa's biodiversity for development and its conservation and sustainable use and **INVITE** Member States to enhance the value of biological good and services and scale up investments in sustainable utilization of biological resources for Africa's transformation;

**TAKE INTO ACCOUNT** the emerging issues in particular Digital Sequence Information on genetic resources, and the need for global and national measures for access, fair and equitable benefits sharing such as appropriate technology transfer, capacity development, and monetary values at national and regional levels;

**ENCOURAGE** the Commission in collaboration with its partners to continue its support in coordinating the African Group of Negotiators on Biodiversity to ensure that strong African common positions in the field of biosafety, biodiversity and ABS of genetic resources are achieved

#### **f. AFRICAN SPACE POLICY AND STRATEGY**

**CONGRATULATE** the Arab Republic of Egypt upon the decision of the Assembly to host of the African Space Agency and **INVITE** the Commission and Egypt to expedite Hosting Agreement and process to enable the continent to establish the Space Agency;

**WELCOME** progress being made in the implementation of GMES & Africa Initiative and **INVITE** Member States, National, Regional Institutes and Private Sector to access the GMES & Africa products and services from the Regional Implementing Centers;

**CALL UPON** AU Commission and European Commission to expedite the development, the finalization and the launch of the next phases of GMES & Africa initiative in order for the continent to benefit from the full potential of the programme;

**ACKNOWLEDGE** with appreciation the technical and the financial support by the European Commission and the partner institutions in the implementation of GMES & Africa Initiative and **INVITE** Member States and Regional Economic Communities to continue supporting its implementation;

**g. ON STRC PROGRAMME WITH SPECIAL FOCUS ON AFRICAN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND INNOVATION COUNCIL (ASRIC)**

**REQUEST** the African Union Commission to allocate reasonable financial resources for ASRIC flagship projects;

**CALLS UPON** international partners, Africa venture capitalists, and African financial institution to champion the mobilization of resources and to contribute to ASRIC.

**h. ON THE STATE OF SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION INDICATORS IN AFRICA - POLICY IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION**

**TAKE NOTE** of the report of the African Observatory for Science Technology and of the usefulness of STI data in facilitating policy and decision-making process;

**ACKNOWLEDGE** the efforts made by Member States in collecting, using and sharing statistical data;

**INVITE** Member States to consolidate the efforts gained in institutionalising STI data collection;

**i. ON THE PROGRESS REPORT OF AUDA-NEPAD**

**TAKE NOTE** of the end of the third phase of the African Science, Technology and Innovation Indicators (ASTII) jointly coordinated by AUDA-NEPAD and AUC through AOSTI; and the planned launching of the 3<sup>rd</sup> report of the African Innovation Outlook (AIO-2019) at a side event during the forthcoming Heads of State and Government Summit in 2020;

**TAKES Note** of the progress of African Panel on Emerging Technologies (APET) which is currently analysing the second set of three technologies, namely artificial intelligence, next generation batteries and block chain. **MEMBER STATES UPDATE ON STISA IMPLEMENTATION AT COUNTRY LEVEL**

**REQUEST** the Commission to expedite the develop a reporting template for Member States to track progress and harmonize reporting during the STC-EST meetings;

**CALLS UPON** Member States, RECs and relevant Partners to support the development and implementation of the STISA M&E Framework.

## j. ON OPEN SCIENCE

- a) **ACKNOWLEDGE** the game changing potential of open science in Africa for reducing the existing inequalities in STI and accelerating progress towards the implementation of the Agenda 2063 and the achievement of SDGs.
- b) **SUPPORT AND PROMOTE** open science initiatives at the national, regional and continental levels to increase access to scientific information, data, knowledge and networks and to bring science closer to society;
- c) **COMMEND** UNESCO for taking the lead in building a global consensus on open science;
- d) **COMMIT** to support and actively contribute to the consultative and inclusive process led by UNESCO to develop a new international standard setting instrument on Open Science - the UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science to be adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in 2021.
- e) **“NOTING** that in Africa , the UNESCO Man And the Biosphere programme is under the responsibility of most of the Ministry of Science and Technology **CALL UPON** Member States to use the current 79 Biosphere reserves in Africa as sites for research and training in STI to enhance environmental sustainability and to support the initiative of creation a fund for their sustainable financing.

## k. ON SPACE WEATHER

**ACKNOWLEDGE** the importance of space weather, as espoused in the African Space Strategy, and the need to address the possible adverse effects on technical systems in space and on Earth’;

**NOTE** the Republic of South Africa’s recent designation by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to provide space weather information to all flights within the African airspace on 24/7 operational basis;

**WELCOME** South Africa’s successful bid for providing space weather information to the aviation sector, thereby ensuring the safety of lives over the African continent;

**WELCOME** the involvement of other African countries in the hosting of in-situ instrumentation to enhance our scientific research and development capabilities in this important field and thus enhancing the lives of our citizens; and

**CALL ON** Member States, the Commission and the Regional Economic Communities to cooperate with the Republic of South Africa on this global initiative.

**ITEM 8: CONSIDERATION OF PROGRAMME AND AGENDA FOR MINISTERIAL SESSION**

22. The Draft Agenda and Program of Work for the Ministerial Session of the STC-EST 3 was adopted as amended.

**ITEM 9: ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

23. Egypt, Namibia and AfDB respectively presented to Experts for information on Artificial Intelligence (AI), World Skills Africa Competition and Education Funds.

**A. Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

24. Presentation on AI was made by The Arab Republic of Egypt. The presenter observed that the future of the world will be driven by AI, which is estimated to contribute to the global GDP by nearly 25.5% of about 13 Trillion USD. African needs to develop a continental AI strategy that requires capacity development in education, research and development innovation with adequate infrastructures, relevant to Africa. Egypt recommends the integration and harmonization and synergies between the various Departments of the commissions of the AUC in developing the AI strategy.

**B. World Skills Africa 2020**

25. The Republic of Namibia made a presentation on the upcoming World Skills Africa Competition to be held from 25<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> of October 2020. They outlined that World Skills Africa aims at leveraging investments and excellence in skills development so as to develop a human-centered agenda for socio economic development. Key focus areas shall be capacity building of Member States and Skills Conference. All Member States were invited to participate at the event.

**C. Education Fund**

26. The African Development Bank presented the operational structure of the African Education Fund (AEF) to the Experts. The presentation highlighted the operational capitalization of the AEF being hosted by the AfDB at 300 million Dollars, expected to grow to 1 billion in 10 years, to support Member Countries (public and private sectors) to achieve skills development outcomes in Africa. The AEF focuses on post-secondary education specifically TVET, STEM, Higher Education, Research and Innovation. The AfDB requested Member States to demonstrate their commitment to operationalization of the fund through financial commitments which will unlock significant external/donor funding/investment in fund.

**ITEM 10: PRESENTATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE EXPERTS**

27. The report was presented by the Rapporteur of STC-EST II and adopted as amended.

**CLOSING SESSION**

28. In the closing session Dr. Mahama Ouedraogo, Director for HRST, AUC thanked the participants and congratulated the new bureau of the STC III.

29. The Chair also congratulates the experts for their support and declared the experts meeting closed.