

# MAPUTO DECLARATION

(African Civil Society Organisations)

To the Second Summit of the Heads of States and Governments of the African Union,

Maputo, Mozambique

4th- 12th July 2003

## PREAMBLE

We, the members of the African Civil Society having met on the occasion of the second summit of the Heads of States and Governments of the African Union, Maputo - Mozambique, 27th June - 02nd July 2003, hereby submit the following declaration which pronounces our convictions, commitment and call for action in attaining and realising a people centered African Union.

***Noting your*** commitment to build partnerships with all segments of civil society as enshrined in the constitutive act of the African Union;

***Believing that*** we have a vital role to play in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes for the advancement of development in Africa;

**We reaffirm our belief and commitment in an African society characterised by:**

Unity in diversity, equality and equity;

Guaranteed fundamental human rights and basic needs of its people;

Effective participation and empowerment of all stakeholders in particular women, the elderly, persons with disabilities, youth, children and the poor in decision making processes;

Participatory democracy and sustainable development;

**In pursuit of the above, we are deeply concerned about:**

The continued imposition and adoption of neo-liberal policies that continue to impoverish the African people;

The continued gross violation of human and economic rights especially in Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Liberia, Cote D'Ivoire, Burundi, Sudan, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia, Nigeria, Western Sahara amongst others;

The civil strife and armed conflict in the continent;

The deteriorating terms of trade within the continent;

Lack of access, deterioration and privatisation of basic social services such as water, energy, health and education;

The erosion / neglect of African cultural heritage;

The ballooning levels of internal and external debt;

The lack of political will to resolve the exploitation and mismanagement of natural resources in particular energy, water, minerals, flora and fauna and marine resources;

Plundering, mismanagement, removal of local resource management and lack of benefit sharing, through inter alia biopiracy, promotion of genetically modified organisms and patents on life and life processes;

Lack of corporate accountability by transnational corporations;

The HIV/AIDS pandemic and other diseases such as malaria, TB and its socio-economic implications particularly for orphans and children and elderly in Africa;

The lack of collective and concrete actions to resolve the land issues in Africa;

**We therefore call on the African Heads of states and governments to:**

Recognise, engage and utilise indigenous knowledge systems, which is inherent and intrinsic to the poor and resides amongst them. This is as a means to involve the poor in social and economic upliftment processes by investing in them as a resource of development;

Fight corruption and pursue good economic governance and make aid more responsive to development needs through the establishment of a joint civil society - government forum to engage donors and development partners;

Respect the commitments made and agreed to, for the effective popular participation and promotion of human rights and democracy as enshrined in the international and national conventions;

Develop democratic and autonomous local level institutions involved in land acquisition, allocation, conflict resolution and land management;

Formulate natural resources management policies and legal frameworks that ensure improved access to land, forests, wildlife, water, fisheries and mineral resources by the rural communities;

Ensure that all state members ratify the peer review mechanism;

Further urge the African Union to consult widely and ensure that the peer review is done in an objective and transparent manner;

Ensure that all members ratify international treaties and agreements such as the ODCCP protocol, ILO 182 (worse forms of child labour) as part of its task to combat child abuse especially the trafficking of children for sexual exploitation as well as the implementation of the African charter and the convention of the rights of the child;

Strengthen the peace and resolution mechanism set in the continent;

Take a united stance and common position in rejecting the "new issues" at the fifth ministerial meeting of the WTO - investment, competition, transparency in government procurement and trade facilitation; and rolling back agreements that have exacerbated poverty, underdevelopment and injustice;

Reclaim and retain policy space for the regulation and monitoring of the movements of capital investments and transnational corporations on the continent;

Enhance intra-regional trade and harmonise policy frameworks in regional economic communities including establishment of mechanisms for regulation and control;

Take collective action on the call for total and unconditional cancellation of African countries external debt, restitution of our stolen wealth and the "demand" for reparations;

Honour the Dakar commitments on quality basic education for all by 2015 in addition to previous un declarations on education since Jomteim;

Agree on a well defined civil society space for engagement in the context of AU and NEPAD;

Ensure the participation of youth for intergenerational equity in all AU / NEPAD organs and processes;

Abide by the principle of parity in the organs of the African Union and NEPAD to guarantee gender balance in decision-making processes of each member state;

Ensure participation of civil society to the specialised technical commissions of the African Union;

Halt and reverse water privatisation, biopiracy planting of GMO and life patents through national laws, collective positions and strategies at the WTO, IMF and world bank, implementing their commitments to multilateral and regional environmental agreements, ensuring corporate accountability;

Support agricultural marketing, extension services, credit and research with a gender perspective to enhance food security;

**Release all imprisoned African journalists and repeal all anti-free expression legislation in Africa;**

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, we want to welcome the principle in the constitutive act of the African Union, which allows participation of the African peoples in its vision.

We are convinced of the crucial role played by the civil society in development and governance and further call the AU member states to establish the necessary mechanisms to involve civil society in policy making, development planning, implementation monitoring and evaluation in accordance with the African charter on popular participation and development.

Civil society shall continue to engage with NEPAD. We urge African leaders to partner with African civil society in all processes of implementation and further urge for a process that does not replicate structural adjustment programmes, which have impoverished the continent but take into consideration the views and needs of Africa.

The success of the AU will depend on the active involvement of the African people, governments, business community, civil society organisations and groups relevant to the struggles of the oppressed / marginalised and excluded majority of the continent.

**A LUTA CONTINUA, ANOTHER SUSTAINABLE AFRICA IS POSSIBLE!!!!**

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**MWENGO is a Reflection and Development Centre for NGOs in Eastern and Southern Africa.**