AFRICAN UNION
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UNION AFRICAINE
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STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE COMMISSION

OF THE AFRICAN UNION

VOLUME 2: 2004 – 2007 Strategic Framework of the Commission of the African Union

May 2004

Prepared by the Commission of the African Union

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

APRM :	African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)
CEDEAO :	Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
CEEAC :	Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)
CEN-SAD :	Economic Community of Sahelo-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)
CER:	Regional Economic Community (REC)
COMESA:	Common Market for Eastern & Southern African States (COMESA)
CSSDCA:	Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa
CUA:	Commission of the African Union
IGAD:	Inter-Government Authority for Development
NEPAD:	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OIG:	Inter-Governmental Organization (IOG)
OUA:	Organization of African Unity (OAU)
SADC:	Southern African Development Community
UA:	African Union (AU)
AMU:	Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)

FOREWORD

Formulating a Programme of Work to translate the Vision of the African Union into concrete action is a priority for the Commission.

The Vision has a long-term horizon, but the strategy to get there is necessarily sequential. This document retains the 2004 – 2007 horizon, in the spirit of realism and pragmatism. It spells out the broad outlines around which the programme of the Commission could be built.

The qualitative transformation of the OAU into the African Union reflects the awareness by Africans that the Continent has arrived at a cross roads, and that it is absolutely necessary to change its future and infuse renewed hopes in the daughters and sons of Africa. To this end, the Constitutive Act establishing the African Union offers a unique opportunity: that of paving the way for the Continent's integration and thereby speeding up its renaissance. The document titled "Vision and Missions" has charted the course to follow. The objective of the African Union is to build a new Africa, an Africa victorious over its numerous challenges, an Africa that will tomorrow assert itself as a dynamic force in the global arena.

The Commission is at the very centre of this endeavour. In accordance with the wishes of the Founders of the African Union, the Commission is even the pilot of this endeavour; and in pursuance thereof, it is backstopped by the guidelines issued by our Heads of State and Government, and supported in its operations by the other Organs of the Union as well as by the building blocks of the Union, namely: the Regional Economic Communities.

In order to effective discharge its mission, it is needful for the Commission to map out its flight plan, while identifying the key factors of success which would enable it to attain the desired goals. This is the primary objective of this Second Volume of the 2004 – 2007 Strategic Plan of the Commission of the African Union captioned "Strategic Framework".

Formulated in a participatory manner and synergizing all Departments of the Commission, the Strategic Framework presents the strategic guidelines which blend the long-term vision (Volume 1) with the Action Plans of the Commission (Volume 3). The active collaboration and the unalloyed and abiding commitment of all staff members of the

Commission is a prerequisite for the effective execution of this Strategic Framework.

Guided by the absolute need for efficacy and driven by the virtues of voluntarism and tenacity, the Commission places high on its agenda for the period 2004 – 2007, the establishment of the basic foundations and infrastructure of the future of the African Union. Strengthening the capacities of the stakeholders, installation of the key institutions and implementation of the priority programmes will therefore form part of the areas of focus in this first phase of progress towards the economic and political integration of the Continent.

I. FROM VISION TO ACTION: THE KEY CHALLENGES FOR 2007

I.1 A Recap of the Vision of the African Union

The African Union has set for itself the ambition of building, by the year 2025:

> *"A united and integrated Africa; an Africa imbued with the ideals of justice and peace; an inter-dependent and virile Africa determined to map for itself an ambitious strategy; an Africa underpinned by political, economic, social and cultural integration which would restore to Pan-Africanism its full meaning; an Africa able to make the best of its human and material resources, and keen to ensure the progress and prosperity of its citizens by taking advantage of the opportunities offered by a globalised world; an Africa engaged in promoting its values in a world rich in its disparities".*

This ambition is reflected in a strong and shared Vision: **'build an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, an Africa driven and managed by its own citizen and representing a dynamic force in the international arena".**

I.2. The Major Challenges of Continental Integration

Weak linkages and bridges between the resources of the continent

An integrated continent needs to be systematically interlinked and yet the African continent has huge problems in this area. Overcoming this obstacle is therefore one of the key first steps to undertake in integrating the continent. A first challenge is reaching far greater public levels of consensus on a shared vision of the future for the continent. But it is also the infrastructure that is lacking that prevents people from circulating easily around the continent and sharing their ideas and experiences. Roads, rail links, vital bridges over major rivers and telecommunications infrastructure are all patchy in their development, hampering easy and fluid movement of people, information and goods around the continent. Many rural areas beyond the capitals and major towns remain hard to reach. Moving around the continent takes time and effort and involves excessive costs that discourage integration and trade. The lack of a common currency, and the need for visas at borders discourage free movement from one country to another.

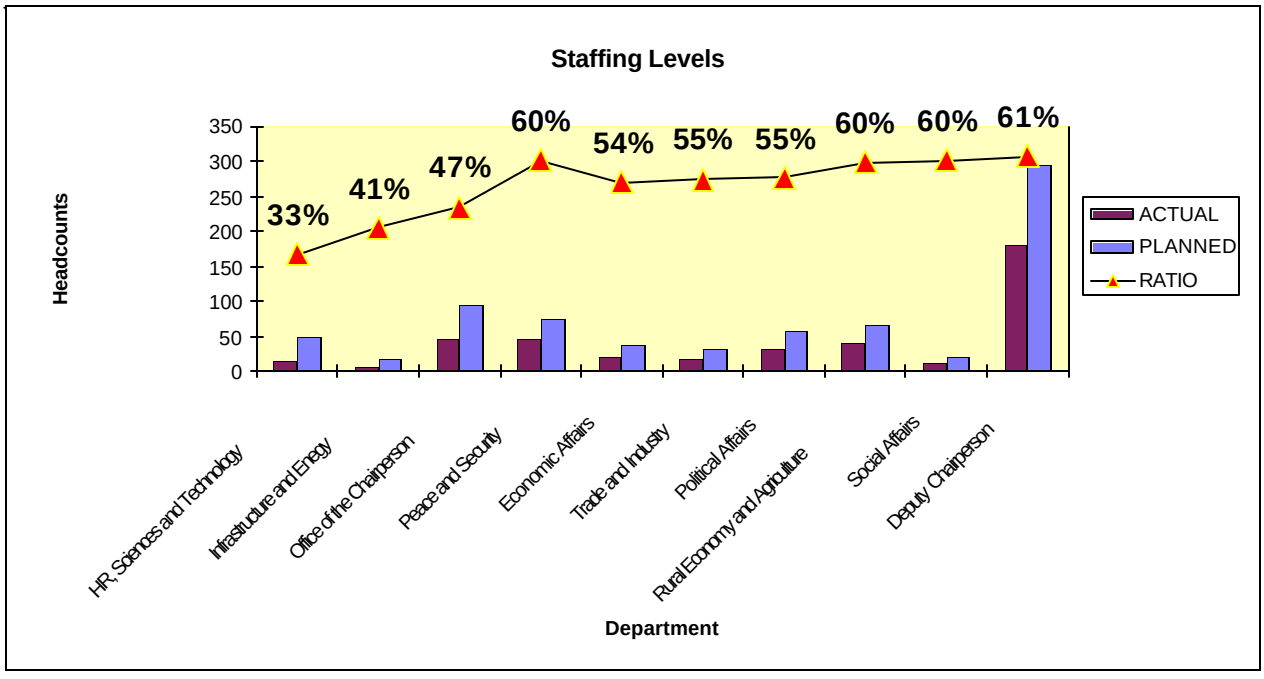
In addition formal and informal networks between individuals and groups that enable opportunities for exchange and the development of common projects and collaborative ventures need to be enhanced.

Universities and other knowledge centres do not easily exchange students or communicate fluidly amongst themselves. Associations and civil society organisations work in restricted areas and do not benefit enough from the opportunities that greater levels and easier networking would bring. Basic networks and links do exist but they are patchy and piecemeal and need to be woven together into a far stronger and interlinked web capable of carrying forward continental integration in a proactive and dynamic fashion.

The Weakness of the Existing Capacities in the Commission

The Commission of the African Union, which is supposed to be the engine of the Union and of the integration process, does not yet posses the necessary capacities to achieve the stated objectives. The institutional heritage of the OAU is characterized by numerical and qualitative staff shortage, ineffective structures resulting in compartmentalization of the Departments, a highly hierarchical and bureaucratic organizational structure, and systems and procedures that do not enhance modern, transparent and results oriented management.

Figure 1: Staffing Levels



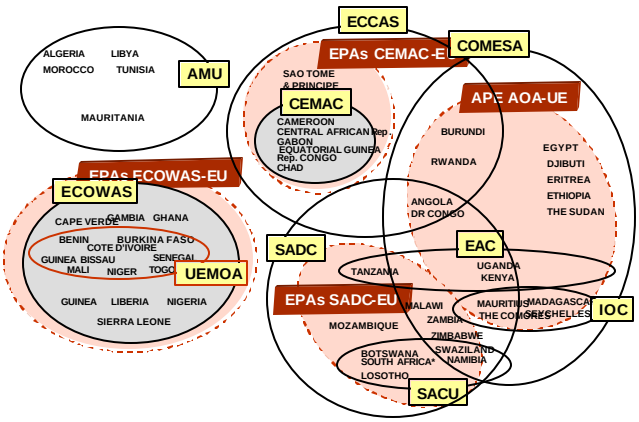
Institutional Cacophony

Furthermore, one of the key aims of the African leaders who established the African Union was to bring together the large number of continental and sub-regional institutions established in Africa over the past 50 years and make them work together in one inter-related and well organised whole that could more effectively deliver results. Thus, for instance, the AU Constitutive Act incorporates the African Economic Community established by the Abuja Treaty (1991) and its regional integration programme along with the RECs established to deliver that programme.

In the economic development field alone, this inheritance from past decisions has led to the existence of a dozen or so regional and sub-regional economic organisations in Africa with many Member States belonging to several of them. Inevitably such interlocking and overlapping mandates result in confusion, most evident at times when coordinated action is required, for instance during international negotiations.

The complex discussions required to establish what groupings to use for the current EPA trade negotiations with EU illustrate this well (Figure 2).

Figure 2: "Institutional Cacophony"



(* Morocco, member of AMU and founder member of the OAU left the Continental Organization in 1984 consequent upon the admission of the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR).

The existence of several integration groupings in each of the five Regions of the Continent has obvious disadvantages, notably:

- lack of leadership and the impossibility of mapping out harmonized and coordinated goals; and therefore, the impossibility of undertaking any organized planning;

- dispersal of studies, approaches, programmes, actions and solutions;

- competition which thwarts solidarity and blurs the sense of sacrifice for the common good;

- dispersal of resources and initiatives, stretched dangerously thin and rendered ineffective;

- competition and, at times, even contradiction in the cooperation, partnership and assistance requests presented to bilateral and institutional development partners, a factor which contributes to "donor fatigue";

- proliferation of community headquarters, staff positions and meetings – all of which place a huge financial burden on States.

The above situation led the OAU and the ECA to undertake in-depth reflection on the whole question of rationalization. A seminar organized by the OAU in 1993 on the African Economic Community, concluded that rationalization of Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) was more of a political than a technical issue; and therefore called for courageous political decision and action to reduce and/or rationalize some of the IGOs with a view to turning them into specialized institutions of the larger Regional Economic Communities.

OAU Policy Organs had also adopted several Resolutions and Decisions regarding Harmonization of the IGOs and the RECs:

- by Resolution CM/Res.464 (XXVI) paragraph 2(a), the Council of Ministers decided at its 26th Ordinary Session in 1976 that "there shall be FIVE Regions of the OAU, namely: Northern, Western, Central, Eastern and Southern";

- the Final Act of Lagos and the Abuja Treaty (Article 6, 2(a) provided for the strengthening of the existing economic communities and the establishment of new communities where they do not exist, thereby covering all the Regions of the Continent;

- by Resolution CM/Res.1043 (XLIV) paragraph 7, the Council of Ministers meeting in its 44th Ordinary Session in 1986, requested the OAU Secretary General ... to "examine the practical and operational modalities for coordinating and harmonizing the activities and programmes of existing Sub-Regional economic groupings";

- by Resolution AHG/Res.161 (XXIII) paragraph 7, the Heads of State and Government meeting in their 23rd Ordinary Session in 1987, requested "the OAU Secretary General, the ECA Executive Secretary and the authorities of the Sub-Regional and Regional economic groupings, particularly ECOWAS, PTA, SADCC and ECCAS to take necessary steps to ensure coordination, harmonization and rationalization of the activities, projects and programmes of all the African Intergovernmental cooperation and integration organizations in their respective regions so as to avert overlaps, conflict of power and wastage of efforts and sources".

In the present context whereby the African Union and all its Policy Organs are gearing to tackle head-on the issues of peace, security, governance and socio-economic development in Africa, rationalizing the IGOs and RECs has become a question of collective survival.

The Challenge of Creating Effective Governance Instrument for the African Union

The Constitutive Act entrusts the accomplishment of the goals and ambitions of the African Union to different institutional players, each with its specific role: the Commission (as the engine of the Union); Member States (as the political project managers); the Pan-African Parliament and ECOSOCC (as democratic control and monitoring organs); the RECs (as building blocks of the Union); the Court of Justice (as judicial and arbitration body); and the African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights. The success of the African Union will, to a large extent, depend on effective understanding and collaboration between these

various organs, as well as on respect for their individual roles and functions. The Union would not be able to garner the necessary political consensus for accomplishment of its mandate, unless we have in place an appropriate governance tool.

I.3 A Gradual Approach is a Necessity

The Vision of a united and integrated Africa will necessarily take time to achieve. However, what is more important is to launch the process, infuse it with an irreversible momentum and establish the milestones to attain the ultimate objective. The Abuja Treaty quite understood this imperative, as it has marked out six intermediate stages that should culminate in the advent of the African Economic Community. Similarly, the African Union, which has fully taken on board the objectives enshrined in the Abuja Treaty, has retained a gradual approach for harmonious progress towards the full integration of the Continent.

On this score, acceptance by Member States of gradual transfer of sovereignty and delegation of power at Regional level might lead the RECs to evolve from intergovernmental management approach to con-federal, and later, federal management.

This development will, in turn, dictate the evolvement of the African Union: that is, intergovernmental management with transfer of sovereignty, followed by con-federal management, leading to con-federation upon the RECs attaining the con-federal stage.

It has therefore become extremely urgent to build the foundation of the future integration by removing the obstacles standing in the way of erecting the body works of integration.

Consequently, we can crystallize the broad frameworks for building the African Union in **three stages.**

In the short-term that is by the year 2007, the global objective would be to **consolidate the institutional pillars of integration, build the human network and forge a network of relations for the Continent.**

In the medium term, that is between 2007 and 2015, **the emergence of virile Regional Communities** would pave the way for the

development of far-reaching inter-regional cooperation, speed up harmonization of their policies and programmes and completely remove all barriers to integration.

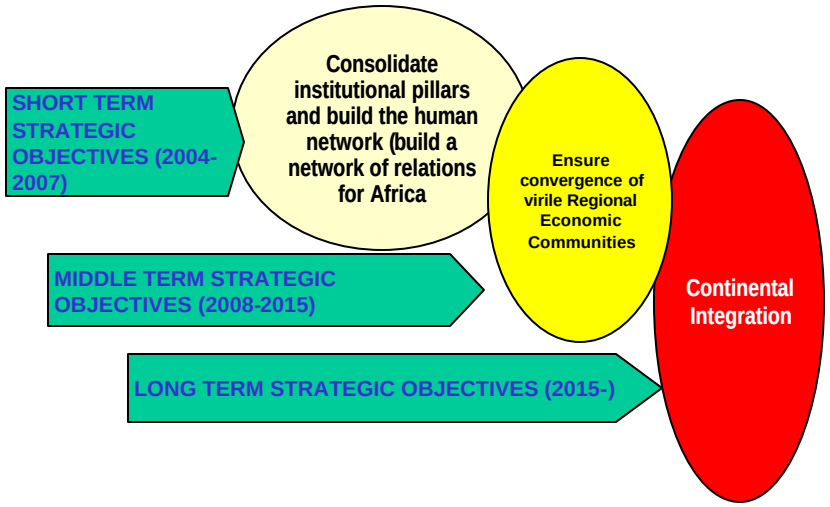
Lastly, **in the long-term,** that is by the year 2030, we would have accomplished fully and entirely the objective of **Continental integration,** on the basis of the gains realized during the first two phases.

These three stages of integration are presented in Figure 3.

II. STRATEGIC AREAS

Here, the objective is to present the strategies that would be implemented by the Commission to attain the global objectives set for 2007, namely: consolidate the institutional pillars, build the human network and forge a network of relations for the Continent.

Figure 3: Stages of Continental Integration



II.1 The Strategic Objectives of the Commission for the Year 2007

In order to consolidate the institutional pillars, build the human network and strengthen the body work of integration, the Commission has set for itself seven strategic objectives for the year 2007:

- establish an effective and responsible African Union;
- build consensus around a shared Vision and Agenda in the Continent;
- promote the emergence of societies based on the principles of the rule of law, good governance and human security;
- promote regional economic cooperation as a foundation for irreversible integration in the Continent;
- develop integration infrastructure;
- address the structural causes of poverty and under-development;
- enhance the dynamism of African culture and creativity.

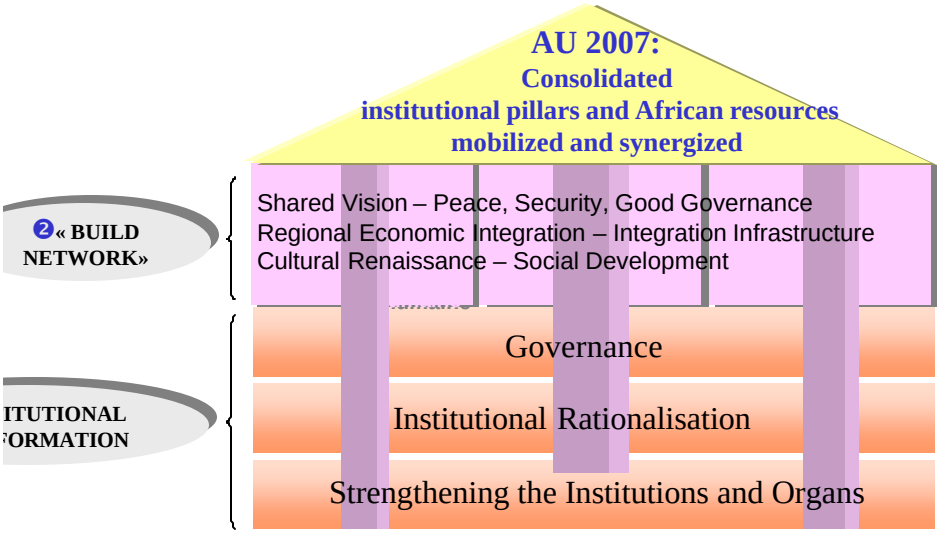
The above Objective may be grouped under two broad headings:

- Profound *institutional transformation* anchored on three components:
  - Institutional strengthening of the AU Commission;
  - Rationalization of the institutional architecture;
  - Refinement of AU governance processes.
- Definition of sectoral Action Plans in six key areas with a view to networking the Continent's resources:
  - Shared Vision;
  - Peace, security and good governance;

- Regional economic integration;
- Infrastructure development;
- Social development;
- Culture.

Figure 4 hereunder describes the overall logic underpinning the programme of action of the Commission for the period 2004 - 2007

Figure 4 Global Logic of the Action Programmes of the Commission



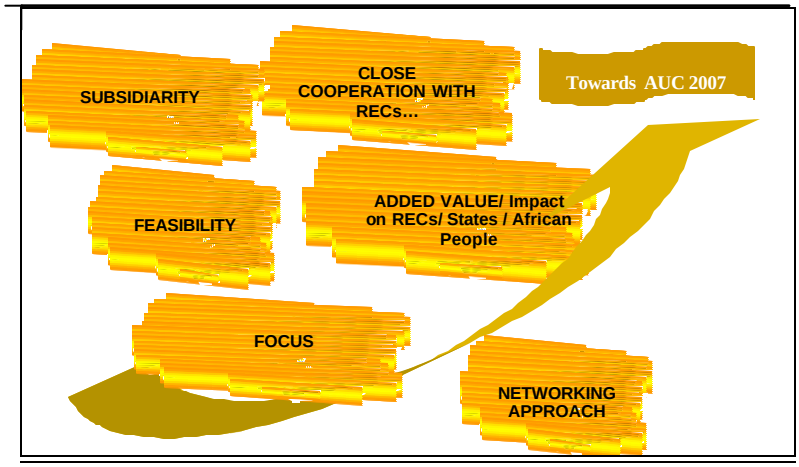
The above programme has to be implemented in a way to ensure that the Commission takes on board the following principles:

- complementarity and feasibility: these principles should come into play only in situations where they offer comparative advantage in relation to other players, or where conditions, especially human and financial conditions make it possible for the Commission to apply such principles; close coordination with the RECs (this point has been developed in the following section); results orientation and search for the real impact of the activities carried out in favour of the RECs, Member States and the people of Africa;

- taking on board the ultimate objective of all positive actions, in order to conserve coherence and sustainability of approach;

- establishing appropriate networks (see Figure hereunder).

Figure 5: The Commission's Principles of Action



II.2 Institutional Transformation

Strategic Objective: Establish an efficient and responsible African Union

Strategy: Design and implement an institutional transformation programme:

Develop Effective Governance. Build effective structures and Human Resource policy. Promote an Effective and Enabling Management Culture. Establish a strong Knowledge Management capacity and infrastructure (IT). Build Networking Capacity (partnerships).

From the outset of the transition process from the OAU to the AU, it was recognised that the effective functioning of the AU would require profound institutional changes. If the Commission is to mark a break with the past and act as the 'motor' of the Union, it needs to drastically improve its capacity to define priorities as well as to formulate, implement and monitor policies and programmes in a transparent, accountable and participatory manner. This, in turn, requires a

sustained process of change of the overall organisation, administrative culture and ways of doing business.

Objectives of the transformation process

The reform process should allow the African Union Commission:

- to demonstrate towards all its constituencies that the AU is a different type of institution than the OUA;
- to respond to new mandates and missions with the available resources;
- to add value to the development efforts undertaken by existing institutions or programmes (RECs, NEPAD, etc.);
- to enable departments and staff to play new roles (facilitation, change agent, etc);
- to break down the functional silos and promote a culture of working together;
- to deliver concrete benefits and results to the people of Africa;
- to ensure participation and accountability;
- to support the establishment and functioning of the organs of the Union.

Key issues to address in the transformation process

Carrying out an ambitious institutional transformation process is not an easy undertaking to achieve. For the process to succeed, it will be essential to ensure:

- close alignment of the institutional development agenda with the strategic priorities of the AU (as the institutional reform process should focus on helping the Commission to realise its core missions and prioritised action plans);
- an integrated process approach to implementation, based on a clear definition of the main focus areas where institutional change is needed;
- agreement on a realistic and properly sequenced roadmap for implementing the institutional transformation plan;
- ownership of the institutional transformation process by AU Commission staff

- leadership and appropriate mechanisms at the level of the AU Commission to steer and manage the institutional transformation process;
- political commitment of Member States to build a strong, efficient and accountable AU Commission by supporting the reform;
- an ongoing dialogue with the external partners of the AU in order to ensure a coherent and coordinated support to the institutional transformation process.

Change management requires a global approach

Internal discussions on the obstacles to change and the institutional changes required to meet the challenges ahead have identified three key areas where transformation is essential to enable the AU Commission to carry forward its Strategic Plan 2004-2007. Each of these components regroups a number of tasks and underpins the achievement of the 6 strategic objectives of the AU.

The three components of the institutional transformation are:

1. Institutional strengthening of the AU Commission
2. Rationalisation of the institutional architecture
3. Refinement of AU governance processes

These three components of the institutional transformation are both part of the Strategic Plan and a fundamental condition for the overall achievement of the Plan. They are each of a different nature but are complementary to each other, and all are important if the AU Commission is to transform itself into a new and high performance organisation as required for the successful achievement of the Strategic Plan.

Institutional Transformation Field 1: Institutional Strengthening of the AU Commission

The **institutional strengthening component** involves renewing and reinforcing the way the Commission works and ensuring that it has the resources required to carry out its functions. The same process will also have to be undertaken with other key AU institutions as this becomes necessary, but in the first instance the target of the work under this pillar is primarily the Commission.

This first component of the transformation process includes six (6) main areas of work:

- Adapting structures to the strategy and challenges;
- Reinforcing teams and their capacities; Modernising the organisational culture;

- Building Networking Capacity (partnerships);

- Improving the work environment; Modernising the information systems and organising knowledge management.

The Structures

The following changes and adjustments are desirable in the structure of the Commission:

- make some adjustments in the Organizational Structure so as to respond to needs which have now been well understood after this initial experience of the functioning of the Commission and the current exercise in strategic brainstorming, particularly:

  - slight modification to the nomenclature of some Departments:

    - the Social Affairs Department should be renamed Social Development Department responsible for Culture and Sports;

    - the Political Affairs Department should be renamed Department of Political Affairs and Foreign Relations;

  - creation of a robust Strategy and Evaluation Directorate, capable of monitoring and stimulating modernization of the management tools in the Commission;

  - establishment of a Training Centre in the Commission;

  - redefinition of the Mission of the CSSDCA Unit;

- integration of NEPAD into the Commission;

- Establish a diplomatic map of the African Union by fielding credible diplomatic missions in all the key countries, and by choosing African Embassies to represent the Union in other countries;

- Establish delegations of the Commission to the RECs;

- Create a post of Internal Mediator attached to the Office of the Chairperson of the Commission with the responsibility of resolving internal conflicts within the Union.

Human Resources

An analysis of the current staff establishment shows that most of the services are operating with less than half of the envisaged staff strength. It is necessary to upgrade the staff positions from 400 to about 800 (in consideration of the already identified fresh needs) to enable the Commission to carry out its mandate. In this connection, there is a need to progressively fill the vacant posts, as a matter of urgency, especially those considered critical by the appropriate authorities.

The first step is to put the new management team in place by September 2004. Thereafter 'critical posts' in each department will be filled so as to ensure they can carry out their first steps in the Strategic Plan promptly and on time. The new Human Resources system and style will be brought in parallel as this first recruitment proceeds. Thereafter it will be possible to fill out the staffing structure in further stages as funding permits.

Beside the size of the structure, the challenge is to bring in a new and progressive style of human resource management based on seeking out and properly rewarding good performance. The AU Commission is thus conducting its recruitment on merit criteria, although it is recognised there is still a need to ensure nationals of all AU Member States get a fair chance and the quota system will be applied as agreed. Professional induction and training will also be established. A training centre will therefore be established in the Commission.

Work Environment

The work environment which is already fraught with problems is likely to hamper the proper functioning of the Commission unless resolute measures are taken right away to beef up the available office spaces and utilize all the possibilities on offer in terms of resources: temporary relocation outside the main operational area for some services; rearrangement of some floors in open office spaces; construction of new buildings.

Management Culture

The top management of the organisation is well aware that the positive dynamics from high performance staff can be quickly neutralised if they are not given the space and scope to use their initiative and move ahead with their work.

New systems and methods will therefore be brought in to avoid a slide back into the old fashioned and more bureaucratic ways of working, and to promote instead a strong team spirit and good internal governance:

- setting up of a management by results with the example set at the highest level in the organisation;

- promote new values within the Organization: *responsibility, team spirit, devotion to the ideal of African integration, performance, integrity, etc.;*

- organize more flexible and more transparent inter-departmental information sharing so as to build a closely – knit organization and stimulate collaboration between the various services;

- establish several management bodies for the Organization either for decision taking or simply to enhance interdepartmental coordination and the sense of belonging. Such bodies could form part of a pyramidal system of periodic meetings, with membership and frequency varying according to the hierarchical level concerned:

    - Daily Executive Briefing between the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Commission;

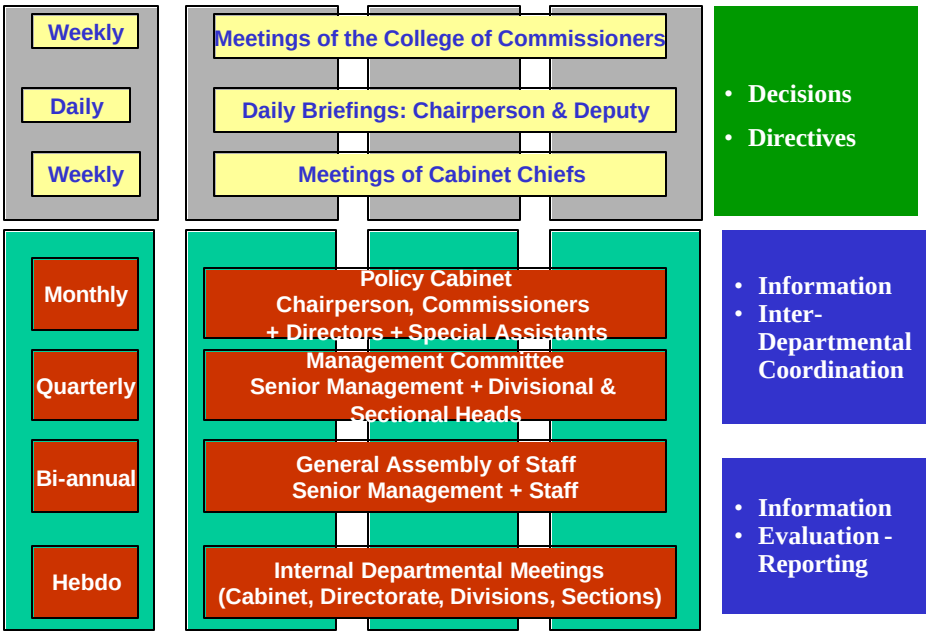
- Weekly meeting of the College of Commissioners preceded by a meeting of the Chiefs of Cabinet of the Commissioners;

- Monthly meeting of the Policy Committee (Commissioners and Directors);

- Quarterly meeting of the Management Committee (Commissioners, Directors and Heads of Division);

- Bi-annual Assembly of the African Union (Top Management and the entire staff).

Figure 6: Coordination within the Commission



- It will also be needful to create several internal technical committees (see **Insert 1)** to prepare the decisions of the College in specific technical areas that require active multi-disciplinary participation;

- Definition of or amendment to the baseline operational rules and regulations of the Organization as enshrined in Charters,

Manuals of Procedure, and Manuals on Power Devolution especially in the following areas:

a) Management: Management Charter;
b) Audit: Audit Charter and Manual;
c) Financial: (Administrative and Financial Procedures Manual, Reporting Procedure, Planning Procedure, Budget Management Procedure);
d) Human Resources (Recruitment Charter, Personnel Management Procedure, Code of Ethics, Disciplinary Code, Guide for Integration of New Recruits, Acting Appointment Plan, Mission Management Procedure with standard reporting guidelines);
e) Computer Related Operations (Guides to the Use of the New Information Technologies);
f) Communication (Communication Charter, Guide to Media Relation);

- Formulation of a hierarchical system of annual targets for each Department, Division, Section and for each staff member of the Commission, on the basis of the Strategic Plan of the Commission.

Insert 1: Internal Technical Committees

- Ethics Committee to come up with Rules of Ethics and ensure their proper application;
- Computer Operations Committee to manage the computer operations master plan and connectivity project;
- Audit Committee (composed of Audit bodies external to the Commission) to validate the Audit Charter, the Annual Audit Programmes and Audit Report;
- Communication Committee to coordinate all activities that impact on the institutional image (graphics, logo, anthem and emblems of the Union Charter, Annual Communication Plan, Communication Charter);
- Finance Committee to be responsible for the Union's major investment projects;
- Human Resource Committee to come up with and manage

activities, prepare proposals in matters of Human Resource Development Master Plan, the Annual Training Plan, Internal Disciplinary Code, Recognition and Compensation Programme for Employees of the Union;

- Social Committee to be responsible for problems of hygiene and security at work, staff driven prevention initiatives, particularly in combating pandemics (HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria) as well as in matters of sports and culture.

Build Networking Capacity (partnerships)

The "Networking Capacity building" Field addresses the need for the Commission to develop new partnerships and complementarities with stakeholders. The AU has a vast array of potential issues to tackle. It cannot hope to do everything nor will it ever have the resources to do so. Moreover, in many of fields, there are countless other actors in Africa whose expertise and dynamism must be harnessed and built on, if the Union is to achieve its ambitious goals. The Commission must therefore become a networking organization with the reflexes and capacity to link up, enable and facilitate rather than seek to dominate. It must learn to provide a framework where it is competent, to coordinate but flexibly and lightly so as not to inhibit other actors. A number of key stakeholder groups that can contribute have already been identified while others are likely to emerge with time. These networks exist within the RECs, Civil society organizations, the Diaspora, the private sector, the various African knowledge institutions (universities, research centres, policy NGOs, government institutes, etc.).

Information technology and Knowledge Management

Knowledge Management involves transforming the AUC into an organisation that uses information and knowledge effectively: sharing it across the organisation and drawing in and exchanging with knowledge centres across Africa and beyond. It has both a technical side and a culture side: there will be investment in and upgrading of the Commission's ICT infrastructure, but also a programme to encourage staff to relate to and use knowledge in far more effective ways so as to further enhance the organisation's overall performance.

The Commission has also to identify and exploit the mine of expertise and disseminate them to all the stakeholders of the integration project in the Continent. The Commission will therefore play a leadership role in any key area where its input will be decisive. To this end, the Commission has started implementing a connectivity project between it, the RECs, Member States and partners (see **Insert 2**).

Insert 2: African Union Connectivity Project

OBJECTIVE:

The objective of this connectivity project is to establish a reliable IT communication infrastructure with: Regional Economic Communities (RECs); the NEPAD Secretariat; the Regional Offices (ROs) of the Commission within and outside the African Continent; and eventually with the Heads of State of Member countries and other organs of the Union.

TECHNICAL PARTNERS: The International Telecommunications Union (**ITU**) Regional Office for Africa is the current technical partner working closely with the Commission to define the requirements of the project in terms of suitable solution, material, human and financial resources.

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS: The Regional Economic Commissions, NEPAD Secretariat, Regional Offices of the Commission, Embassies of the African Member States based in the hosting countries and eventually Heads of State of Member Countries.

CURRENT SITUATION: Currently, the ITU team assisted by the AU technical team is performing the following task:

- Gathered the required information from all the institutional partners to define the required parameters for connectivity (data transmission rate to and from the partners, space segment requirement, bandwidth requirement etc.),
- Had visited the potential satellite service providers and equipment manufacturers in Washington, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Egypt, Ethiopia and South Africa for suitable solutions to the project.
- Designing the possible scenarios of the AU network architecture with different options that compare cost, time efficiency and security.
- Finalizing the report on assessment and design, that will be submitted to the commission in about three weeks time (Mid of June 2004). However, preliminary report is expected to come within a week.

NEXT STEP:

After getting the final report from the ITU consultants, the AU will be expected to do the following: Internal approval (endorsement) of the project document and funding; Prepare and release Request for Proposal (RFP) for potential bidders; Selection of successful bidders and contract negotiation; Provision of equipment, installation, testing and acceptance of the solution; Personnel training, operation and maintenance.

EXPECTED RESULTS: Upon completion of the project, all the institutional partners will be able to use the facility for: Telephone and Fax communication; Exchange of Data among themselves and with others; Video Conferencing session with the Commission; get access to the Internet super high way fast and securely;

ESTIMATED PROJECT TIME: An average of **9** to **12** months

ESTIMATED PROJECT COST: Preliminary estimation indicates that the project cost might vary from **2** to **5** million US dollars depending on the type of solution selected.

The main organisations or groups of organisations with which this process will be carried out, include:

- Member States
- The RECs
- NEPAD (until its full integration in the AU)
- Specialised Institutions of the AU
- The AU Organs
- The AU's international partners

Figure 7: Stakeholders of the Integration Process

Relation with Member States

For the African Union to effectively become the integration organization that it is designed to be by virtue of the Constitutive Act, it is absolutely necessary for Member States to recognize that achieving integration is an imperative and for them to accept all that contributes to this goal. This includes in particular providing the Commission with adequate resources to enable it to optimally operate its organs as well as leaving for the new Organization some room for manoeuvre.

This presupposes that the Commission should reassure Member States in terms of respecting their prerogatives and inspire them with confidence in terms of its capacity to effectively help them to crystallize their ambitions for Africa. In this connection, it is vital that the presentation of all African Union major programmes or issues should always be preceded by wide consultation within the College of Heads of State and Government as a way of ensuring ownership of such programmes and issues by all and sundry.

It is furthermore necessary to take a few measures to improve the functioning of the institutions of the Union, such as:

- effectively operationalizing Rule 3 paragraph 2 of the Rules of Procedure of the PRC which stipulates that Member States shall ensure that they are represented in the PRC by a permanent representative resident at the Headquarters of the Union;

- strengthening the capacities of the representatives of States particularly in the field of information and communication technologies, in order to facilitate their work with the Commission;

- presenting a draft programme for convening the Specialized Technical Committees that are concerned the most by the priorities contained in the draft Strategic Framework, and defining more clearly the role of these Committees in relation to the functions of the Commission;

- reducing the duration of open Sessions of the Assembly and giving preference to in-depth closed door deliberation, by limiting the floor time for speakers as indicated in Rule 10 of Rules of Procedure of the Assembly;

- ensuring that draft Decisions are effectively distributed to delegations in all the working languages **prior** to consideration, and that such Decisions as have been amended should be made available to Member States in their final form, within three full days following their adoption;

- marking the close of each Session by adoption and open reading of a statement on the conduct of such Session and its major conclusions;

- clearly identifying in each country a Minister to be specifically responsible for issues relating to African integration (AU and RECs in particular);

- inclusion of the Chairperson of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Parliament and/or a member of the Pan-African Parliament in all national delegations to the Executive Council Sessions preparing the Assembly;

- ensuring adequate representation of women and children in all African Union meetings.

Harmonization of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs)

The Regional Economic Communities are defined in the Abuja Treaty as the 'pillars' of the AU. In order to achieve this goal the AU

Commission, while ensuring its continental leadership in the integration process, should coordinate and establish close cooperative relationships with the RECs and involve them fully in as many aspects as possible of the AUC's work. Due attention will be paid to the key principles of subsidiarity and complementarity in developing this relationship. Constructing and securing this relationship will be a key transformation to enable the AUC Strategic Plan's short-term goal of *Strengthening the Regional Pillars* by 2007.

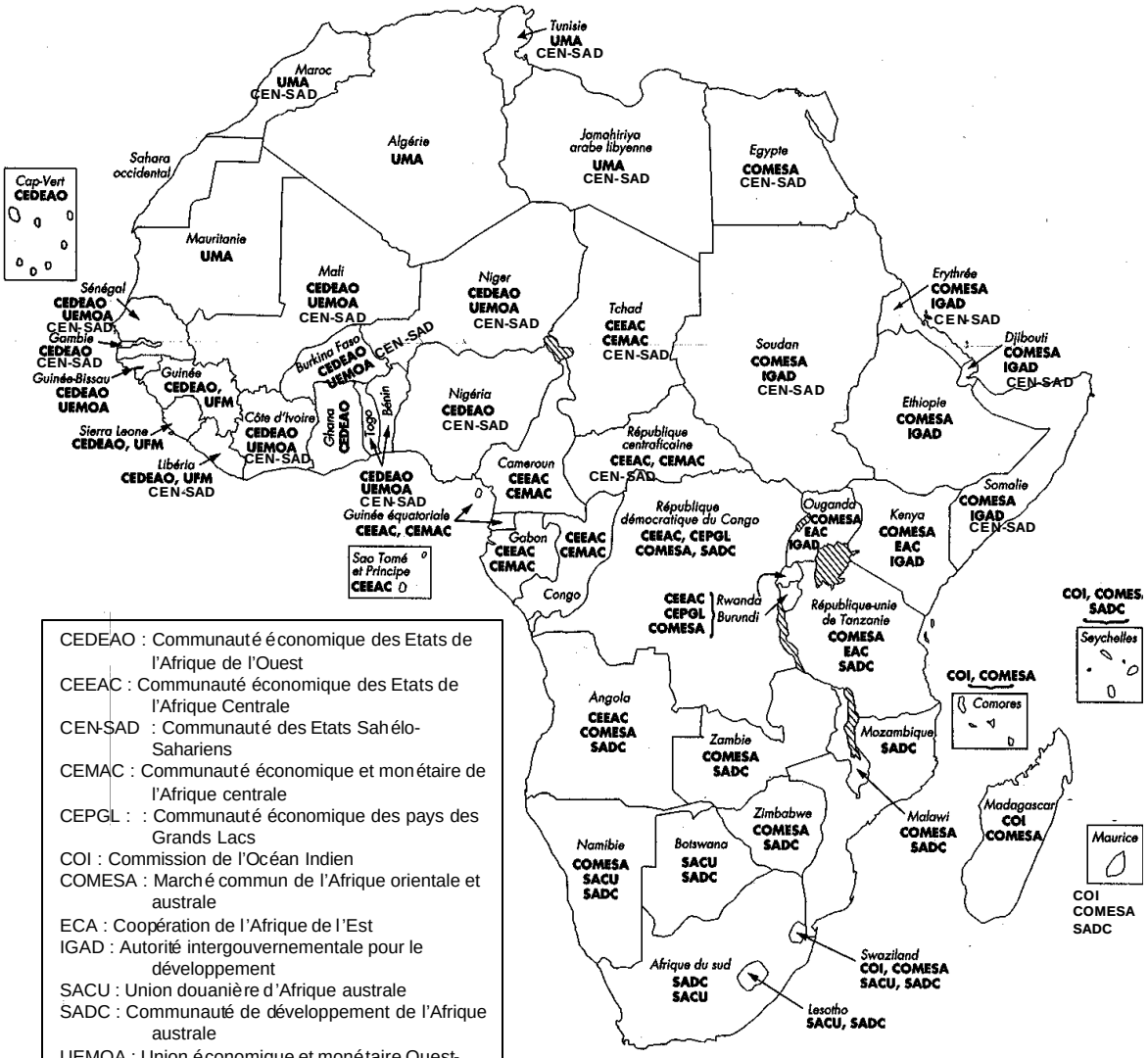
Two parallel processes are planned for clarifying the AUC relationship with the RECs. The first involves content and programmes; the second covers respective roles and the harmonisation of the RECs.

The first process will start in the latter half of 2004 and continue for 6 months into the first quarter of 2005. It will involve discussion with each REC on the state of their work on regional integration and an assessment of their anticipated integration programme for the period up to 2007. The prime objective of this discussion will be to assess the feasibility of each REC delivering on a standard minimum integration programme (MIP) by 2007 (**Insert 3**). Once this assessment has been conducted with each REC a standardised MIP will be designed and proposed to the RECs.

Insert 3: Minimum Integration Programme (MIP)

The concept of the MIP (Minimum Integration Programme) is intended to provide greater coherence in the overall movement towards regional integration on a continental level. The MIPs could include a set of programmes to deliver on such goals as the establishment of a regional brigade for the African Stand-by Force, coordination of and a common approach to international trade negotiations, trade liberalisation, free movement goals within each REC, regional common policy in various areas, common monetary policy, common policy in various sectors, etc...

The Regional Economic Communities



CEDEAO : Communauté économique des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest
CEEAC : Communauté économique des Etats de l'Afrique Centrale
CEN-SAD : Communauté des Etats Sahélo-Sahariens
CEMAC : Communauté économique et monétaire de l'Afrique centrale
CEPGL : : Communauté économique des pays des Grands Lacs
COI : Commission de l'Océan Indien
COMESA : Marché commun de l'Afrique orientale et australe
ECA : Coopération de l'Afrique de l'Est
IGAD : Autorité intergouvernementale pour le développement
SACU : Union douanière d'Afrique australe
SADC : Communauté de développement de l'Afrique australe
UEMOA : Union économique et monétaire Ouest-africaine
UFM : Union du fleuve Mano
UMA : Union du Maghreb arabe

* Les îles dans les encadrés ne sont pas à l'échelle

Les frontiéres et les noms indiqués sur la présente carte n'impliquent pas reconnaissance ni acceptation officielles de la part de l'ONU.

Source : ONU Afrique Relanc

The next step in the process will be to reach agreement with RECs on these MIPs and based on this a Strategic Plan for the achievement will be prepared with each REC. This will form the basis of a Protocol between each REC and the Commission.

To this end, the Commission has already decided to immediately open a Delegation in each REC and to put in place a connectivity project for the RECs, paving the way for the creation of a shared platform for management of skills and expertise. Furthermore, the Commission has to find the ways and means to more closely involve the RECs in its work by transmitting to them the reports on PRC meetings as mentioned in Rule 5 of the Rules of Procedure of this Organ. The Commission could also systematize invitations to Executive Secretaries to Executive Council and Assembly Sessions, and convene two annual coordination meetings with the RECs (May and October). Lastly, an annual report on the state of the Union will be prepared each year in partnership between the Commission and the RECs.

The second process involves reflection and dialogue with the RECs on their role, capacities, and ability to deliver on a standardised regional integration programme such as envisaged in the MIPs. This would be nourished with studies and inputs from a number of sources such as UNECA and academic institutions and lead to a first evaluation of the RECs by July 2005, on the basis of previously established criteria. Member States would be also involved so as to reach some level of standardisation in the mandates they all give to the RECs to which they belong. Agreement would then be sought with the major stakeholders with a view to a final decision being taken later on. Thereafter implementation of the agreements would be embarked on smoothly, so as to achieve the overall AU Commission short-term strategic objective of strengthened regional structures by 2007.

To affirm their regional leadership, each of the RECs retained at the end of the harmonization process, should work towards opening missions in its member countries and encourage the latter to ensure that they are represented at the Headquarters of the concerned Regional Economic Communities.

Harmonization of the RECs will ensure:

- more effective management of the Continental integration process;

- visibility of each Regional Economic Community;

- greater facility for harmonization of projects and programmes;

- greater focus on and appropriate treatment of issues relating to peace, security and conflict prevention and resolution;

- the building of physical infrastructure (roads, bridges, telecommunication, energy, river and lake basin development).

Integration of NEPAD into the Commission of the African Union

NEPAD is a programme of the AU adopted as such at the OAU Summit in Lusaka in July 2001. It constitutes a dynamic and proactive framework for coordination of implementation of a wide variety of economic and social development projects across the continent. In addition it has successfully established a space for international dialogue that has opened up a constructive debate on continental development needs with some of Africa's principal international partners.

Efforts are well underway to fully integrate the NEPAD programme into the work plans of the AU so as to increase synergies and achieve maximum complementarity. Further work still has to be done in developing a strong team spirit, integrated processes and collaboration mechanisms without at the same time losing the key qualities and assets of NEPAD, its dynamic and proactive culture, its focus on results and its collaborative and networking approach. This integration process will be carried forward and completed in the next two years.

As the NEPAD Secretariat becomes step by step more integrated into the AU Commission, it will also be involved in all aspects of the institutional strengthening programme of the AU Commission.

Rationalization of the Specialized Institutions of the African Union

A study on the status and prospects of the Specialized Institutions will be conducted in pursuance of the Lusaka Decision of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government. This study will help define a new strategic framework to govern the relation between the Commission and

these institutions, and to rationalize their global institutional architecture.

Establishment of the Organs of the African Union

The global architecture of the African Union provides for the establishment of 18 organs the full implementation of which, within the earliest time frame, is key to accelerating the integration process.

A number of these, such as the Assembly, the Executive Council and PRC, the Commission and most recently the African Court of Human and People's Rights and the Peace & Security Council, are already in place.

The process of establishing the next wave including such key institutions as the Pan-African Parliament, the ECOSOCC and the African Court of Justice is well underway and is expected to be completed in the next one to two years by mid 2006. A further wave will then follow, including the financial institutions.

The Peace & Security Council protocol entered into force in December 2003. Its members were elected by the Executive Council in March and the first meeting was then held the same month. The formal inauguration is to be held on 25 May 2004, but the Council has already started functioning at permanent representatives level.

The final steps remaining for the African Court of Human & People's Rights are first to decide the venue which should be done at the Summit in July 2004, and then appoint the judges. Criteria and guidelines for these appointments have been sent to Member States and nominations are expected shortly.

The PAP, Court of Justice and ECOSOCC are vital institutions for the transformation process of the AU. The Court and the PAP will complete the legal framework for a balanced operation of the whole Union, and the PAP and ECOSOCC will provide the two principal formal channels through which the voice of ordinary African people will come to be heard in the system. All three institutions are therefore essential for providing a solid institutional architecture through which to ensure good governance in the AU.

The ratification threshold for the Protocol of the PAP was recently passed and the Parliament was therefore formally established in March 2004. The institution has held its first sitting, the officers were elected and Bureau formed. Committee members have also been elected. Work is however still going on drafting the rules of procedure and a seat for the PAP will be agreed in July 2004. Thereafter, the Secretariat of the Parliament can be established.

The process for establishing the ECOSOCC is also well underway with a civil society working group currently reviewing the rules of procedures. These will then need a final check by experts before they are adopted by ECOSOCC at its first session. Meanwhile the statutes have been submitted to Member States for approval in the PRC, Executive Council and Summit in July 2004. Thereafter a meeting of civil society organisations could be held in October 2004 at which ECOSOCC can be formally launched.

The Protocol for the Court of Justice was recently finalised on the basis of discussions with legal experts from Member States, but so far the 15 ratifications required to establish the Court have not yet been received. A decision also still needs to be taken on the seat of the Court. Once ratified, Member States will be officially informed and they will be invited to nominate judges. The nominations will then be submitted to the Assembly for approval and the appointments made. The modalities for establishing the Court also still have to be finalised and agreed. The completion of this whole process is expected to be achieved by 2007.

As regards the financial institutions (the African Central Bank, the African Monetary Fund and the African Investment Bank) the strategy would be to first establish embryos of these institutions, under the leadership of the Commission and with the technical support of representatives of African structures and the partners, and then to allow for their progressive development to their definitive status.

The AU's international partners

Top on the Agenda of the new Africa in the making is the building of an open and transparent dialogue as well as genuine partnership at the global level. To this end, the Commission will take steps to involve everyone wishing to make an input to Africa's development, through implementation of the programmes of African Union.

At the level of Africa, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the African Development Bank (ADB) are natural partners of the Commission with which it is vital to share Africa's agenda and establish cooperation linkages with a view to enlisting their expertise in the service of the African Union.

A variety of international donors have also expressed interest in supporting the work of the AU and more particularly the institutional development process of the AU Commission and the broader AU. This support will be integrated into a single framework so as to ensure that it is really effective. It is envisaged that some form of joint partnership agreement, managed by the AU Commission Resource Mobilisation Unit, will be worked out with a group of donors that agree to support the AU's institutional development.

Management of the support of such a group of donors should be clearly located within the AU Commission, which will appoint a contact person to act as the focal point for donor coordination. The donor group should reciprocate by appointing a *chef de file* to act as liaison point on their side. Fixed moments for the joint strategic planning of support will then be organised at regular intervals to review progress and plan forthcoming support needs.

To operationalise this process the AU Commission will hold a conference with its international partners in October 2004. The prime aim of this conference will be to get agreement on a unified 'basket' type fund directly linked to the AU Commission Strategic Plan, for donor support to the AU Commission. The conference will also cover both the needs for donor support to the Institutional Transformation process and to the operational programmes of the AU.

Institutional Transformation field 3: Governance

The establishment of a good governance system in the African Union opens in vast institutional field. The various institutional players should, first and foremost, agree on the good governance principles that will be applicable in the African Union. Then, new rules and regulations will have to be defined in order to clarify the nature of the relation between the organs. Furthermore, clear-cut and transparent mechanisms have to be instituted to enhance participatory management of the Union. Also vital are cultural changes and development of new capacities.

The African Union Principles of Good Governance

The effective implementation of the mandate of the Union requires that all the concerned institutional players commit themselves to respect the following principles of good governance.

- *autonomy of the various organs.* Participatory governance first and foremost calls for respect for the principle of autonomy. To this end, it is needful to endow the Commission of the African Union with the necessary capacity and flexibility to discharge its mandate (as an executive organ of the Union); respect the powers of the democratic control organs and ensure the independence of the future Court of Justice;

- *Interdependence.* This second principle is the corollary of the autonomy accorded to the various organs, which is not an end in itself; rather, it is a means to achieve responsible joint management of the African Union. The proper functioning of the Union indeed calls for a common will to move forward and for consensus on how best to accomplish the mandate enshrined in the Constitutive Act;

- *Transparency.* This is the key principle of good governance which should guide the participation of the various organs and be reflected in credible systems for information circulation, communication and joint analysis of financial reports;

- *Competence.* The joint management of the Union cannot be successful unless the various organs possess the requisite capacities for effective participation;

- *Dialogue.* Permanent dialogue will be necessary to build a vision, define together the strategies and priorities of the Union and determine at regular intervals, desirable changes in the integration process.

Respect by each of the stakeholders for the above listed principles should facilitate confidence building, strengthen ownership of the Union endeavour and enhance performance.

Four (4) Key to Successful Governance of the Union

1. Formulation of decision making mechanisms that would facilitate the building of a shared vision

To facilitate the building of consensus among the various institutional players, it is needful to revisit the AU policy formulation, decision making and evaluation processes. The existing institutional arrangements do not facilitate strategic, robust, participatory and efficient collaboration and cooperation. The following changes are imperative in the area of policy formulation and decision-making:

- create among the stakeholders, dialogue and strategic consultation spaces on the policy initiatives developed by the Commission or driven by Member States;

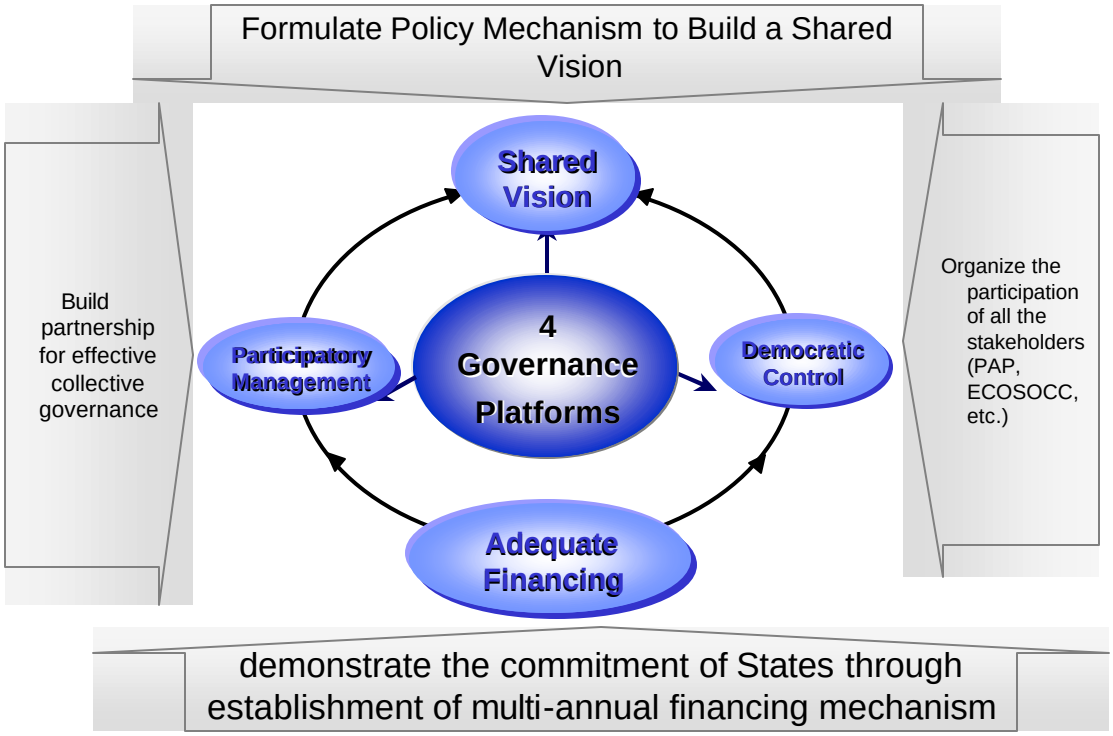
- promote a culture of joint and responsible decision taking;

- establish follow up evaluation mechanism to regularly review progress, and expected development of the Union;

2. Partnership for Participatory Governance

The effective implementation of the mandate of the Union requires an institutional arrangement facilitating credible participatory governance in which every institutional stakeholder will be able to play its due role. The following diagram illustrates the multi-player governance framework that could be established and tested in practical terms.

Figure 8: The Four Governance Keys



For such participatory governance to function, it will be vital to develop new capacities at the level of the various organs concerned: not only analytical capacity; but also a capacity to circulate information, communicate and to dialogue.

3. Organize Participation

The Constitutive Act of the African Union provides for the involvement of two democratic control organs in the governance of the Union: the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and the Economic, Social, and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC). The African Union Commission should facilitate their establishment and effective functioning. The challenge here is not only to formulate internal rules and procedures for these democratic organs, but also to clarify the nature of their relation with Commission and the organs representing Member States (the PRC and

Assembly) as well as the modalities of dialogue and participation in decision-making and financial report analysis processes.

Furthermore, the Africa Union Commission should attach great importance to involvement of the various components of the civil society, local communities and the Diaspora in the African integration initiative. Their specific institutional challenge will be to create effective consultation frameworks that would facilitate the active association of the active forces in the governance of the Union.

4. Progress towards a multi-annual financing structure

Such a financial structure will constitute a vital element for the good governance of the Union. As a matter of fact, the African Union Commission cannot effectively play its role as the engine of the integration process nor accomplish its ambitious objective if it is obliged to function solely on the basis of established annual budget.

Establishment of a multi-annual financing structure would be a reflection of the genuine commitment of Member States to the integration project. This structure offers other advantages such as:

- establishing a system of management by objectives (definition of programmes, objectives and output indicators);
- predictability of available resources;
- possibility of defining priorities within specific timeframe;
- promoting a culture of strategic planning in the Commission and its various Departments;
- greater flexibility in resource utilization (management by programmes and budget);
- review of the management of the various Funds currently existing in the African Union (**Insert 4**);
- publication of the accounts of the African Union Commission based on a global balance sheet (relative to mandates and budgets clearly defined over a four year period).

Insert 4: African Union Funds

- Solidarity Fund
- Agricultural Management and Guarantee Fund
- Scientific Research Fund
- Cinema Fund
- African Investment and Research Fund
- Peace Fund
- HIV/AIDS Fund
- Malaria Fund
- Special Health Fund for Africa
- African Cultural Fund
- OAU Assistance and Cooperation Fund
- Special Fund for the Development of Africa
- Telecommunications Financing Fund
- Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa
- Agriculture Development Fund

Furthermore, the new missions of the Commission cannot be adequately covered unless the available financial resources are commensurate with the challenges to be addressed. Financing the Commission has so far been carried out solely on the basis of annual contributions by Member States in accordance with the scale of assessment adopted during the creation of the African Union. At the moment, several Member States are indebted to the Union in terms of arrears of contribution amounting to US$45 million. Exceptional contribution by some AU Member States could help absorb these arrears as part of solidarity with the countries in exceptional situations, which prevent them from provisionally paying their contribution.

In more structural terms, estimates carried out of the resource needs for the period 2004 – 2007 (**see Section III.2**) show that the existing resources of the Commission can hardly finance one-tenth of the minimum requirements to implement the 2004 – 2007 Strategic Plan.

Consequently, it is needful to identify alternative sources of financing to reinforce the available resources in the Commission, thereby enabling it to successfully implement the agenda of the Continent. Such alternative sources include, among others:

- deduction of an amount equivalent to 0.5% of the budget resources of each Member State[1]. To demonstrate the political will of Member States, this deduction could be incorporated in the budget of each Member State under the heading "African Union Contribution".

- a 10% deduction from the budget of Defence Ministries of AU Member States to finance the peace and security agenda of the Continent;

- the RECs ceding to the Commission, a part of their resources;

- establishment of a Fiduciary Fund amounting to US$500 million (**Insert 5**);

- exceptional contribution from the cost of air tickets for travels from outside or to the Continent.

Insert 5: The Fiduciary Fund

Establishment of an African Union Fiduciary Fund will enable countries, institutions or people of good will to contribute to a fund managed in accordance with modalities to be defined. Part or the whole of the products of placement of this fund will be used to finance activities of the Commission.

The following bodies could also be financed by this fund:

- national integration commission;
- Pan-Africanise associations and federations;
- African voluntary bodies.

The objective will be to rekindle the Pan-African ideal particularly in the civil society.

In addition, the private sector and external development partners (bi-lateral and multi-lateral) could backstop the Commission in the financing of its programmes.

[1] A simulation conducted by the Services of the Commission on the basis of the 2001 budgets of Member States shows that a 0.5 %deduction from the budgeted income of Member States would yield about US$700 million for the Commission.

To develop the existing system of annual budget into a multi-annual programme budget system based on new resources and on rationalization of AU funds, the African Union Commission plans to adopt a concerted approach in which Member States and other stakeholders will be fully involved. A technical committee, membership of which includes representatives of States has therefore been set up to help work out a new budgetary system in accordance with mutually accepted modalities and calendar.

II.3 Sectoral Action Plans

In addition to institutional transformation, the Commission will implement six sectoral programmes in the period 2004-2007.

This six areas of action which are in line with strategic objectives, relate to the following:

- definition of a shared vision for the Continent; promotion of peace and good governance; regional economic integration; development of integration infrastructure; combating poverty and social under-development;

- cultural renaissance of the Continent.

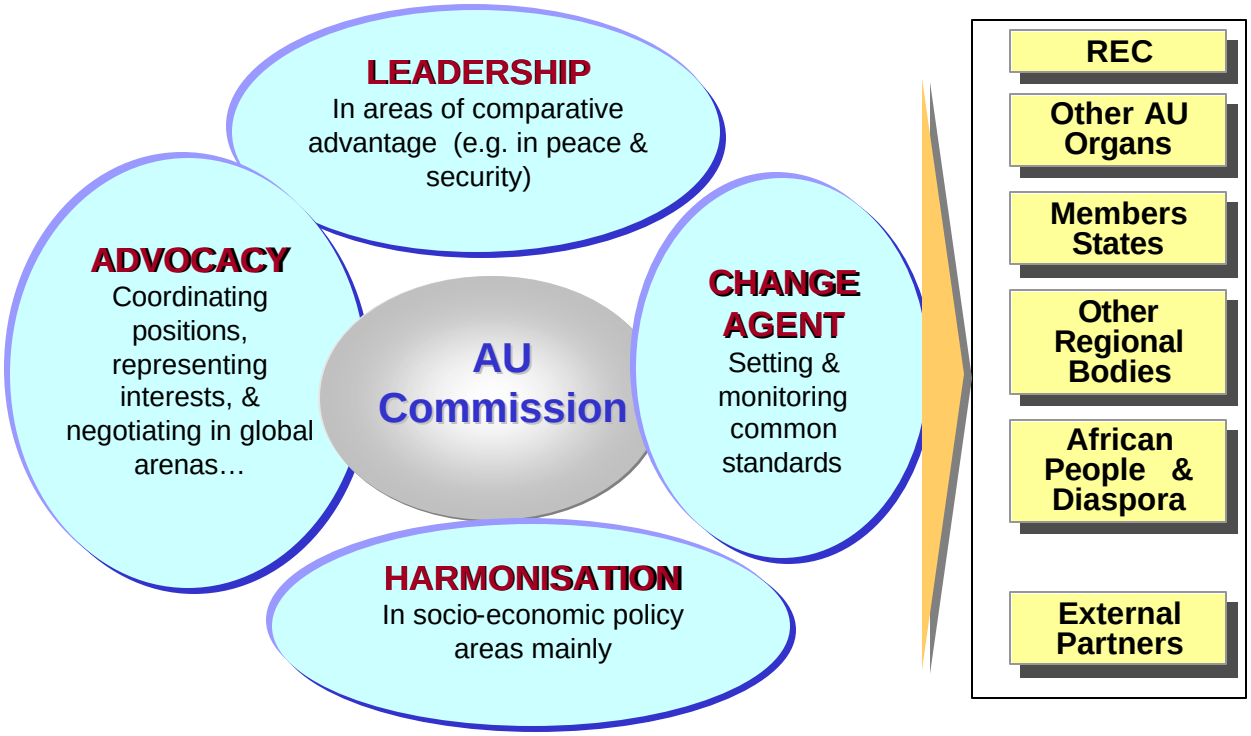
For each area of the sectoral programme, the Commission could use four action platforms alternatively:

- brainstorming/advocacy (preparation of white papers, coordination of positions and representing the interest of the Continent, negotiation in international fora);

- harmonization of policies and formulation of common standards, particularly for the RECs;

- follow up/evaluation to stimulate change and encourage adoption of best practices; leadership role (especially in the area of conflict management and security).

Figure 9: The Roles of the Commission



The actions to be undertaken in the various programme areas are detailed hereunder. Priorities should, of necessity, be defined so as to ensure effective implementation of the measures envisaged; reason for which the Commission has retained, for each area of action, a number of baseline programmes which will make decisive input in the accomplishment of the global objective set for 2007.

Action Area 1: Shared Vision

Strategic Objective: Build consensus around a shared vision and agenda in the Continent

Strategy 1: Create a programme to communicate the vision and agenda effectively to Africa and all stakeholders;

Strategy 2: Develop Institutional Mechanism with stakeholders for negotiation, building consensus and ensuring accountability on strategic issues;

Strategy 3: Develop a coordinated process for global negotiations;

Strategy 4: Develop strategic thinking and promote policy debates on key issues for Africa;

Strategy 5: Institutionalise the participation of Africans in the organs, policies, and programmes of the AU.

With its demographic clout, territorial space, immense natural and material resources and its values of humanism, Africa should craft for itself a prime position in the concert of nations. To this end, it needs to project itself and also position itself as the author of a partnership project that will benefit the entire humanity, using its values and its recognized traditions of solidarity. African should also exert its best efforts to contribute to democratic governance of world affairs, forge strategic alliances in order to advance the cause of equitable distribution of global wealth through just and fair remuneration of trade, absolute respect for human and peoples' rights, consolidation of peace, international security and global solidarity in order to face up to humanitarian crises.

It is therefore vital to endow Africa with negotiation capacity in international fora and ensure that it speaks with only one voice. Africa's common positions should be brought to bear in major issues of the moment: debt, raw materials, the environment, GMOs, migration, multi-lateralism, international development financing, negotiation within the WTO and EPAs, reform of the United Nations system, collective security, reform of the Bretton Woods institutions, and even North-South Dialogue for a global partnership aimed at renewed development in conformity with the spirit of NEPAD and the Millennium Development Goals.

Currently, the lack of a common vision on the above issues weakens Africa; thereby exposing it to all sorts of shocks and increasing its dependence on its Northern partners.

To build this Vision, it is imperative that Africans accept the fact that they share the same destiny and the same projects to achieve economic and political integration in the Continent as spelt out in the Vision of the African Union.

In fact, the Constitutive Act of the African Union that seeks to establish a "people-friendly African Community" predicated on popular participation and partnership with all segments of African society. This vision has two critical elements. First, is to mobilize the energies of all relevant social and economic forces through its various organs and programmes in the formulation, refinement, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and performance. Two, is to stress the element of popular participation as a condition for development. The strategic orientation of the Constitutive Act is further elaborated in the Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan of the AU Commission with its emphasis on "African Citizenship" as a key component of the drive for a peaceful, integrated and prosperous Africa, driven by its people, a dynamic force in the global community.

To promote ownership of the political integration project by Africans, the Commission will facilitate establishment a national integration commission in each Member State, and launch popularisation activities for the African Union.

The second stage will be to promote, particularly through the setting up of a research institute, the formulation of white papers and organization of forums, the management by Africans themselves of thoughts concerning the future of their Continent and the broad issues of the day, thus enabling the Continent to express shared views in the international arena.

Lastly, the creation of diplomatic network and organization of anAfrican diplomatic conference will facilitate the building of a common external policy embryo which is absolutely necessary in projecting Africa's effective and active presence in international bodies where important world affairs are managed.

The Following Five Priority Programmes will therefore be implemented to attain the objective of a shared vision and agenda for the Continent:

Priority Programme 1: "African Union, our future" aimed at popularising the African Union across the Continent and within the

various segments of Africa's population (the youth, women, local farmers, workers, entrepreneurs, members of the Diaspora, etc.);

Priority Programme 2: "Citizens of Africa" with the objective of actively involving African citizens at large and members of the Diaspora in the process of building Continental integration;

Priority Programme 3: "Africa's Visibility";

Priority Programme 4: "Afro-Arab brotherhood" aimed at highlighting the special relation that should exist between the Arab world and Africa – a Continent that is presently home to a majority of Arabs in the world;

Priority Programme 5: "Africa reflects on its future".

The above programmes are presented in detail in Volume 3.

Action Area 2: Good Governance, Peace and Human Security

Strategic Objective: Promote the emergence of society built on the principles of rule of law, good governance and human security

Strategy 1: Set standards and actively promote a political culture based on democratic principles, human rights, governance and rule of law;

Strategy 2: Strengthen the role of the AU to play its leadership role in promoting peace and human security in the Continent and to make its contribution to international peace and security. A little over four decades after independence, the African Continent continues to grapple with numerous conflicts with catastrophic consequences both from humanitarian and socio-economic standpoints. These conflicts pose the greatest threat to any citizenship worthy of its name, given the fact that in such situations, force gains primacy over legality.

This is reason for which the African Union has set as one of its priorities, the establishment of a conflict and security management mechanism in the Continent comprising several organs:

- Peace and Security Council;
- Panel of the Wise;

- Continental Early Warning System aimed at preventing conflicts;
- African Standby Force anchored on regional mechanisms (contingents, observation areas);
- Military Staff Committee;
- Peace Fund.

Furthermore, through the Protocol relating to the establishment of Peace and Security Council, the African Union has set about implementing the African Common Defence and Security, policy adopted in Sirte, Libya in February 2004, which is expected to serve as reference for all AU initiatives aimed at promoting peace and security.

The Protocol also contains detailed provisions on post-conflict reconstruction and peace consolidation.

Additionally, attention should be accorded to management of the refugee and displaced persons problem. The A.U will deal with the management of these phenomena in the short term, alleviate the plight of Internally Displaced Persons in the medium term and provide a durable solution to the humanitarian crises in the long term.

The promotion of peace and human security in Africa also requires that sustained efforts be deployed in many other related areas such as illegal natural resource exploitation and international criminality, all of which help to sustain the scourge of conflict in the Continent. Similarly, sustained attention should continue to be accorded to problems such as disarmament (small arms and light weapons, anti-personnel mines, chemical and nuclear weapons) and terrorism.

The objective is to ensure effective operationalization of the existing Continental and international instruments, particularly through the strengthening of the capacities of Member States to honour their commitments.

In the area of conflict prevention and management, the African Union has continued to work in concert with many other stakeholders, prominent among which are the United Nations and regional mechanisms. The complexity of the situations that need to be managed is such that it requires effective coordination of efforts based on the comparative advantages of the respective organizations concerned. For the Commission, this entails development of a dynamic and flexible

cooperation framework, which would allow for more effective response to the challenges of peace and security in the Continent.

Peace is expensive: Peace initiatives call for considerable resources which, quite often, are well beyond the actual resource capacity of the African Union. The existing financing mechanisms are dependent on contributions from Member States (transfers from the regular budget of the AU and voluntary contributions) and from AU partners. Experience in recent years has clearly shown the limitations of these mechanisms. And yet, the AU is supposed to play an increased role in conflict prevention and management, particularly with regard to deployment of peace and/or observer missions as stipulated in the Protocol relating to the establishment of Peace and Security Council; hence the urgent need to put in place more credible financing mechanisms.

In any case, peace and security promotion in the Continent calls for sustained dialogue between the AU and its partners, be it bilateral and multilateral or civil society organizations. The objective in this regard is to build greater interaction and also to continue to mobilize the necessary political support for peace initiatives in the Continent. To this end, it is planned to organize, every two years, a Round Table on Peace and Security in Africa to serve as forum for views sharing and brainstorming.

In the area of peace and security, like in other areas, accession to the integration option is vital. Also vital is the conviction on the part of Governments and citizens alike, that Africa's future depends on the sons and daughters of this Continent. The following ideas could help stimulate and strengthen the various stakeholders:

- make prevention of the causes of breaches of peace a top priority; and to this end, pay special attention to education for peace, identification of cultural convergences and various forms of intermingling in and among African nations and the potential role of civil society organizations (including the so-called traditional organizations);

- popularise the slogans aimed at enhancing the emergence of Pan-African consciousness across the Continent (for instance: "the AU, our future");

- organize country seminars and meetings for military and security personnel to familiarize them with the ideals, objectives and principles of the African Union so as to get them to realize the importance of organizing Pan-African level solidarity in the areas of peace and security;

- establish a border management programme to build consensual solution on border delimitation;

- undertake brainstorming on land related issues as sources of conflict in the Continent;

- launch an African decade for peace and for combating violence (2005-2015).

Furthermore, a study conducted on the causes of conflicts and instability in the Continent shows that poverty and failure to meet basic material needs are a vital explanatory variable. One of the objectives of the Strategic Framework will therefore be to find how best to stimulate sustainable economic development which is fundamental in eradicating poverty. The study however, also revealed that lack of good governance and democracy, negation of individual and collective rights and shortcomings in matters relating to the culture of peace have a significant role to play in explaining the causes of conflicts and internal upheavals in African countries (coups d'état, civil wars, etc.). It is therefore necessary to create governance mechanisms capable of promoting peace, stability and human security thereby reducing the causes of conflicts in the Continent.

The Commission will then play the role of a multidimensional change agent by:

- Advocating for and building the capacity of AU Member States to realize human and peoples' social, economic, civil, cultural and political rights, and oppose impunity;

- Promoting gender and respect for the rights of women;

- Working towards the emergence of democratic institutions and sustained popular participation particularly through ratification of the Charter on elections, democracy and governance;

- Advocating for the increase of the Member States joining the NEPAD APRM mechanism;

- Creating an African elections observatory and promoting the establishment of independent electoral commissions in Member States;

- Creating an African democracy and human rights observatory;

- Encouraging transparency and accountability in public affairs through the promotion of the Charter for the Public Service in Africa;

- Promoting ratification of the Convention against corruption.

In the final analysis, the success of the African Union in the areas of peace, security and good governance will enable it to consolidate and even broaden the gains made in other areas.

Three priority programmes will therefore be initiated during the period 2004 – 2007:

Priority Programme 6: "Peaceful Africa in a peaceful world";

Priority Programme 7: "Democracy in progress";

Priority Programme 8: "A well governed Africa".

These programmes have been presented in detail in Volume 3.

Action Area 3: Regional Economic Integration

Strategic objective: Promote regional economic cooperation as a foundation for irreversible integration of the Continent

Strategy: Establish a policy framework to support the RECs in developing programmes for:

a) Creating enabling conditions and facilitate actions to improve agricultural productivity, reduce food insecurity and rural poverty;

b) Promote capacity building and Science and Technology as tools for economic development;

c) The establishment of strong industrial and services clusters;

d) The improvement of circulation of persons, goods and services within and among the RECs.

Regional integration has proved to be an invaluable tool for speeding up the economic and social development of nations across the world. This is even more true in the context of globalisation; reason for which the African Union, upon establishment, took the decision to consolidate the guidelines contained in the Abuja Treaty for the gradual accomplishment of the objective of integration of the economies of the Continent. The Commission will focus attention on updating the stages defined in this Treaty so as to fix timeframes for accomplishment of the integration process (**Insert 6**).

Insert 6: The Abuja Treaty

The Abuja Treaty provided for the AEC to be set up through a gradual process built on the strengthening, gradual harmonization and then integration of the RECs. This involve 6 stages over 34 years from 1994 to 2028:

1. Strengthening of RECs (5 years)
2. Stabilisation of tariffs & other barriers to regional trade, strengthening of regional integration & infrastructure, coordination & harmonization of RECs (8 years)
3. Establishment of a free trade area & customs union at REC level (10 years)
4. Coordination & harmonization of tariff & non tariffs between RECs (2 years)
5. Establishment of an African Common Market & common policies (4 years)
6. Integration of all sectors, establishment of African Central Bank, African single currency, African Economic & Monetary Union and electing the first Pan-African Parliament (5 years).

Following the creation of the AU and the integration of the African Economic Community within the AU, the 6 stages will be updated.

Actions will be undertaken at both Continental and Regional levels.

In the short and medium terms, the priority will be to consolidate the capacities of the RECs to play their role as the pillars of integration and as spaces for transfer of sovereignty as stipulated in the Abuja Treaty. Each of these RECs should progressively put in place the key tools for an integration area (intra and inter RECs free trade area or Customs Union in order to develop intra-African trade, common policies in specific sectors, monetary and economic union, etc.) borrowing from the best international practices and experience in some of these areas accumulated by some of the RECs in the Continent.

The Commission will therefore work with the RECs to formulate a minimum integration programme (to be known as *"Integration Horizon 2007")* which will be a common regional cooperation pact paving the way for attainment in 2007 of sufficient integration level to orientate all the RECs towards an irreversible momentum of Continental integration.

To this end, harmonization of policies and programmes of the RECs in all the sectors will be systematically promoted. The Commission will contribute thereto by formulating white papers and undertaking advocacy initiatives vis-à-vis the RECs and their Member States.

At the level of agriculture, the objective will be to ensure that the RECs come up with a common agriculture policy aimed at speeding up agricultural productivity, ensuring food self sufficiency and protecting the environment and natural resources in all regions of the Continent.

It is a matter of fact that much of the African Continent is still overwhelmingly rural amidst a growing urban population. Agriculture is therefore the principal economic preoccupation for most of Africa's people. Agriculture accounts for about 60 per cent of Africa's employment and supports 70 to 80 percent of the total population. Not only is agriculture central to the quality of life of most African people but it is also a significant contributor to nearly all the national economies in Africa.

But, while the developing world has made some progress in hunger reduction during the past three decades, Africa has lagged behind both in absolute and relative terms. Africa is the only region in the world in which average per capita food production has been constantly falling for the past 40 years. If the current trends persist, the number of undernourished persons in the continent will increase between now and 2015 in contrast to the other developing regions.

In order to reverse this agricultural malaise, first and foremost, Africa needs to mobilise itself. The Maputo and Sirte Declarations by the Heads of State and Government have already committed Member States to bring to the level of at least 10% the share of the budget agriculture and rural development sector in their national budget. The Sirte Declaration also promotes integrated resource management throughout the continent, in order to reach the development targets. All this illustrate the strong political will to confront the problems of food security and agricultural development in the continent.

In the industrial sector, the challenge is to accelerate the Continent's industrialization through local processing of agricultural, mineral and fisheries resources, rather than export them in their raw state. A prerequisite in this regard is the attraction of fresh direct investment and promotion of technological invention and innovation

(including development of indigenous skills and expertise). The stakes for Africa is also to scale up its value chain and establish a foothold in global trade networks. The Commission of the African Union will elaborate a model industrial strategy from which the RECs could draw inspiration to formulate common industrial policies.

Apart from harmonization of sectoral policies, the Commission will directly take on the issues for which the Constitutive Act of the African Union has spelt out clear-cut objectives and for which it has comparative advantage. Examples in this regard are preparations for creation of the AU financial institutions (the Central Bank, African Monetary Fund and African Investment Bank).

Furthermore, the Commission could play a leading role in investment promotion by focussing attention on the global improvement of the Continent's image vis-à-vis the RECs investors and by carrying out advocacy initiatives vis-à-vis and States with a view to removing the constraints that blur the attractiveness of their business environment.

With regard to African countries' external debt, the Commission will work towards definition of a common African strategy with a view to strengthening the Continent's negotiating capacity. A position was expressed under NEPAD, calling on developed countries to speed up reductions particularly to backstop poverty reduction. This position will be further fine tuned in partnership with Member countries and the RECs with a view to obtaining the best treatment of the problem of African countries' debt reduction.

In the field of commerce, African countries need, through the African Union, to mobilize and unify efforts in their fight for a fairer international trading. In this regard, the issues of African commodity prices, of subsidies from developed countries and of Market Access have been highlighted as major obstacles to boosting African export performance. Apart from improving the supply capacities in AU Member States, by diversifying the export base and making more conducive the environment of the productive sector, the ability to actually enter markets is fundamental.

Despite the facilities given through various schemes, exports from AU Member States actually face market entry barriers arising from restrictive rules of origin, stringent technical barriers to trade (TBT), sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) measures, growing indiscriminate use

of contingency protection measures (anti-dumping measures) and the recent introduction of various security related actions. Other anti-competitive structures and practices, as well as environmental requirements under governmental regulations and voluntary private sector or NGO-created standards, significantly add to these barriers.

Furthermore, it has been noted with grave concern that Africa has become a dumping ground for expired products like canned foods, milk powder, medicine, etc, for the reason that the Customs Departments in Africa and the supportive Regulatory Bodies like the Bureaux of Standards have not been very vigilant on goods entering the continent either due to negligence, lack of capacity, or corruption, etc. and perhaps more so because our Trade Associations have not been equally vigilant in protecting their own from such dumping of unserviceable commodities in the continent. The dangers posed by such dumping are quite immense as, in addition to threatening the economic survival of African industries, they also pose a hazard to our citizenry. In order to harness this problem, the AU Commission will develop policies and programs to facilitate advocacy on this front during the strategic plan period.

Bringing Africa to speak with one single voice in the international discussion on the issue of Biosafety in Biotechnology, more specifically on the issue of GMOs, will also be a major area of emphasis of the programme of the Commission.

Lastly, the Commission will strive to facilitate the movement of African citizens in different countries of the Continent so as to promote rapprochement of peoples and build a network of relations as well as a human network for the Continent. The issuance of an African passport, among other tools, could sustain in concrete terms this free movement initiative in the Continent.

Thus, to consolidate regional economic integration, the Commission has designed nine priority programmes:

Priority Programme 9: "Integration: Horizon 2007";

Priority Programme 10: "Free Movement";

Priority Programme 11: "Food security and food sufficiency";

Priority Programme 12: "Water for All";

Priority Programme 13: "Invest in Africa";

Priority Programme 14: "Made in Africa";

Priority Programme 15: "Made in Africa";

Priority Programme 16: "Equitable Global Trade";

Priority Programme 17: "Towards an African Currency".

The above programmes are presented in detail in Volume 3.

Action Area 4: Infrastructure

Strategic Objective: Develop integration infrastructure

Strategy: Initiation, facilitation and implementation of priority integrative infrastructure projects and programmes.

Infrastructure constitutes the bedrock of physical integration, commercial flows and socio-economic and cultural interaction. However, Africa is lagging behind in terms of establishment of quality infrastructure as well as their interconnection. The consequences of this infrastructure shortage are:

- low level competitivity of the Continent's products on the international market;
- narrowness of the African market and inter-State horizontal trade, which hampers socio-economic integration;
- weak economic growth.

To interconnect the countries of the African Continent and strengthen networks, the challenge is to establish viable, efficient and affordable integrated transport infrastructure systems (roads; railways; air, maritime and river transport) capable of boosting integration in the Continent and ensuring Africa's participation in the globalisation drive. In this connection, NEPAD has identified several key projects (see Volume 3, No.24 "Priority Programmes of the African Union – NEPAD").

It will also be needful to harmonize policies, strategies as well as legal and regulatory frameworks in these sectors and strengthen the capacities of the stakeholders and institutions.

The challenge here is also to bridge the gap separating Africa from the other continents in the area of the New Information and Communication Technologies (NICT) and Internet services. This is because availability and access to the NICT are a key ingredient for speeding up development, and can in particular serve as basis for:

- promoting trade through commercial information obtained via the Internet;

- developing distance learning and the use of NICT at all levels of education;

- putting in place improved primary and secondary health care through tele-medicine;

- enhancing good governance through availability and easy access to information;

- improving financial systems through electronic banking transactions.

To bridge the digital divide, the Commission will focus its efforts on:

- development of NICT infrastructure and their interconnection;

- promotion and use of the NICT;

- capacity building;

- strengthening international cooperation in the search for adequate financing;

- coordination of Africa's participation in the World Summit on Information scheduled to take place in Tunis in 2005;

- active promotion of the Global Fund for Digital Solidarity;

Thus, to interconnect Africa and overcome the digital gap, the Commission has defined two priority programmes in its 2004 – 2007 Strategic Plan:

Priority Programme 18: "Interconnect Africa";

Priority Programme 19: "Bridge the Digital Gap".

The above programmes are presented in detail in Volume 3.

Action Area 5: Social Development

Strategic Objective: Attack the structural causes of poverty and social underdevelopment

Strategy 1: Contribute to the achievement of the MDGs;

Strategy 2: Promote the values of solidarity within Africa.

As a whole, the standard of living of African Communities is low and becoming lower due to the multitude of challenges facing the continent. These include widespread poverty, low literacy rates, ill health, hunger, unemployment and under employment, marginalization of women, communicable diseases especially HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, drugs, migration, poor governance and lately, civil strife and armed conflicts.

Freedom from hunger, disease, ignorance and marginalization are pre-requisites for sustainable security, stability and development. Indeed, the right to development is embodied in the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. It is therefore imperative that African Governments invest in human beings to enable them to enjoy their social, economic and cultural rights. A human development paradigm based on a rights-based approach should therefore inform all the AU programmes and activities.

Poverty is one of the greatest challenges and threats to survival in Africa. It is recognized as a multi-dimensional phenomenon and therefore economic or income poverty is only one side of the problem facing the continent. The most unpalatable, most disturbing feature of poverty is that it is linked to socially and historically disadvantaged groups: women,

persons with disabilities, rural communities, the elderly, people affected and infected by HIV/AIDS, and people in war-ravaged, conflict-ridden settings. In short, the poor are poor because they have long been excluded from enjoying the benefits of development and pushed down and down by inappropriate development policies, and a host of political, economic, social and natural factors.

Programmes and activities which will be developed by the AU on the twin problems of poverty and exclusion should, among others, aim at addressing demographic dynamics, health, nutrition and food security, water and sanitation as well as the linkage between population pressure, rural-urban migration, unemployment, diseases, gender inequality, poor governance, and the impact of rapid urbanization on the development of sustainable cities and towns in Africa. Poverty reduction efforts should also pay particular attention to the active and full participation of all stakeholders, in particular marginalized groups, in decisions and actions that affect their lives.

One of the symptoms of poverty in the continent are low social indicators. In Africa, three-quarters of the adult population can neither read nor write, and nearly a half of school age children have no access to school; they are deprived of a fundamental human right, that is, the right to education. These millions of adults and young people cannot therefore acquire the competencies and knowledge needed to participate effectively in the societal life of the 21st Century. It was to take up this challenge that the Heads of State and Government in 1996 proclaimed a Decade of Education in Africa for the period 1997 – 2006. Furthermore, the World Forum held in Dakar in 2000 led to the launch of the programme "Education For All (EFA) by 2015". As the Decade will expire in 2006, it is vital at this stage of the 2004 – 2007 programme to undertake an evaluation of the Decade and draw the necessary lessons.

African Union's programmes in the area of education are also predicated on harmonization and coordination of education policies and activities among Member States, and the search for and implementation of strategies aimed at significantly strengthening capacities in the Continent at less cost (Distance Learning Network). Such strategies will also entail the creation of Centres of Excellence for Higher Education and Scientific Research; students' scholarship and exchange programmes in the area of specialized scientific knowledge with the participation of the African Diaspora, creation of an African Union University as well as production and publication of common curricula.

Another symptom of the poverty status of the continent is the eternal burden of communicable diseases. Old diseases like malaria and tuberculosis had been controlled three decades ago but later resurged. Diseases associated with poor personal hygiene and environmental sanitation and housing are still highly prevalent. Sadly, diseases due to vaccine-preventable diseases still kill or maim our children. This is very unfortunate as the vaccines are accessible and available cheaply or free-of-charge. Many communities still lack access to correct information, live in remote inaccessible locations or are just too poor.

The emergence of HIV/AIDS in the early 1980s found fertile ground to spread unhindered, decimating millions in their prime of life. AIDS is a leading cause of death in Sub-Saharan Africa and the fourth leading cause world-wide. The devastation of this pandemic, which still has no proven cure or effective vaccine, has an impact on all social sectors. Many strategies are in place but require effective coordination, implementation and monitoring. This entails developing an AU strategy on HIV/AIDS and mechanism for effective flow-up, monitoring and reporting on the 2001 Abuja Declaration and Framework Plan of Action on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Other Related Infectious Diseases and the 2003 Maputo Declaration on HIV/AIDS and Related Infectious Diseases. This strategy should include ensuring that people living with HIV/AIDS and other diseases get access to generic drugs to sustain their lives and to make them productive members of society.

African societies live in solidarity and the concept is not entirely new. This is so because Africans interact in network relationships and responsibilities to one another through personal friendship, family and kinship ties, community cooperation and social interaction. However, the level of cooperation and interaction has often been limited to people with primordial ties and national boundaries though regional and international solidarities exist with different objectives. In view of the ongoing emphasis on regional and continental integration enshrined in the Constitutive Act of the AU, it is imperative to push the level of Solidarity to a higher and deeper level. In particular, vulnerable people and the handicapped need to be re-included in the priorities of the member States. Furthermore, at a time when Africa is trying to forge strong political, economic and cultural unity, a solid programme on solidarity between countries, institutions, communities and ordinary citizens within and outside the continent should be an indispensable component of the African Union Commission's strategy to accelerate

continental integration based on mutual respect and understanding. The most important value of social solidarity is that it refers to a "horizontal axis", not a top-down type of relationship. Through solidarity, individuals/communities/countries strengthen their sense of fraternity, community and society.

Therefore, to contribute significantly to improvement of the social indicators in the Continent and the accomplishment of the Millennium Development Goals, the African Union will launch four programmes as part of its 2004 – 2007 Strategic Plan:

Priority Programme 20: " Priority Education";

Priority Programme 21: Programme "Stop HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis";

Priority Programme 22: "Fight Poverty and Exclusion";

Priority Programme 23: "Interdependent Africa".

These programmes are presented in detail in Volume 3.

Action Area 6: Culture

Strategic Objective: Enhance the dynamism of African Culture and Creativity

Strategy 1: Promote an African view of its heritage, its diverse cultures and its values, especially for a new generation of Africans, and its acceptance in the international arena;

Strategy 2: Develop cultural and heritage industries throughout Africa;

Strategy 3: Promote sports in Africa and take advantage of its exchange and integration capacity.

Africa is rich not only in natural and human resources, but is also endowed with a multitude of cultural diversities and ways of life. However, these diversities have not been well understood, at best, and misunderstood or often deliberately misinterpreted, at worst. For centuries, the Slave Trade, colonial occupations, neo-colonial interference, and now globalization have all played against the

development of African cultures and have eroded African social identities though they have not completely killed the dignity and self-esteem of Africans. There have been efforts by Governments and civil societies to restore the cultural freedom of the Continent; and the struggle for spiritual salvation still continues.

The major project currently providing hope and mobilizing energy in Africa is the establishment of the African Union. In order to achieve this, it is just as imperative today that appropriate cultural policies accompany the construction of the African Union. The rationale is that this new edifice cannot be built on a foundation of a community of exclusively material interests; for, culture is and should remain at the beginning and at the end of development. The cultural policies and programmes to be designed should provide the leaders and principal development actors with appropriate data and instruments to assist them to know African peoples and their ways of life in order to better serve them; promote peace on a sustainable and humane basis; use African languages for interaction and proximity administration; ensure that African democracy does not become a hostage of tribalism or ethnic preferences; promote pluralism, ethnic/cultural diversity, tolerance and respect for human rights; ensure that the issues of development are couched in African rationality; produce universal African texts which reflect the genius of the African people; and promote indigenous know-how as a basis for a truly "African Cultural Renaissance".

Africa is a land of cultural antiquity and diversity. Different countries and regions of the continent host a bewildering variety of archaeological remains, spots of ancient civilizations and living, but often endangered - by looting and misappropriation - cultural heritages. It is the duty of the African Union in general and of Member States in particular to protect and preserve cultural heritages and make them real assets to their creators. For centuries, large quantities of cultural heritages have been removed from the continent either by individuals or groups owing to some historical advantages, which favoured their expatriation. These cultural heritages are inalienable copyrights of Africa's sons and daughters who have the right to repossess and use them for whatever ends: social, psychological and economic.

Inter-African and inter-continental cooperation is key to the promotion of understanding and mutual acceptance among people with diverse cultural background. One of the tasks of the African Union should be to ensure that countries and cultural communities pursue the

goals of cultural exchange, cooperation, and interaction. The Commission will see to it that cultural exchange policies as well as diplomacy and national, regional and pan-African cultural practices are developed. Exchanges of information and initiatives will be made at the bilateral and multilateral levels and especially in the area of cooperation. Some of the initiatives to mobilize communities are festivals, exhibitions, and theme fairs, at both national and international fora. Africa could therefore participate in the give-and-take rendezvous of world culture and develop its multiform input to humanity's heritage.

The following priority programme will therefore be initiated in this area for the period 2004 – 2007.

Priority Programme 24: "Cultural Renaissance".

This programme is presented in detail in Volume 3.

III. THE 2004 – 2007 STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AGENDA

The programme of activities of the Commission is ambitious; but ambition is an imperative if the objective of Continental integration is to be attained.

As a matter of fact, the challenge resides more in the definition of a good strategy for implementing the identified strategic areas of action, thereby paving the way for mobilizing all synergies and all resources around a well thought out change plan.

To this end, it is vital to clarify the kind of mechanism that should be put in place to manage the institutional transformation process and spell out precise modalities of implementation of the priority programmes of the Commission.

III.1. Management of the Transformation Process

Need to take on board the Conditions for Successful Implementation of a Change Programme

The experience of large public or private organizations shows that the African Union Commission should take on board several factors in its drive to achieve institutional transformation:

- first and foremost, the Commission has to effectively communicate the defined Vision to the concerned stakeholders in a way to make them understand the meaning and direction of the reform actions on offer. The formulation of the document "Vision and Missions" and the existence of this Strategic Framework designed in a participatory approach prove that the Commission already possesses the key tools to trace the Road Map of its future actions. What now remains is for the Commission to convince its staff, the citizens of Africa and the entire stakeholders to appropriate the Vision as defined and contribute, each one at its own level, to its implementation;

- the second key factor is the selection of the team expected to manage and carry through the change. Particularly decisive in this regard will be the solidarity of the College of Commissioners and harmonious role sharing among them,

thereby giving an example to the rest of the staff and mobilizing the latter around the new objectives of the African Union. The institutional transformation exercise has the distinctive feature of coinciding with the selection of fresh staff of the Commission, an issue which is both a challenge and an opportunity. It will be necessary to train staff at all level so as to instil in them the new success paradigms, and more importantly, to get them to demonstrate genuine cooperation and dedication, working hand-in-hand and in professional manner, to take up the challenges of change;

- the third condition for successful change is for the Commission to identify integration programmes from which it could obtain visible and tangible results in the short-term. Given the timeframe set for the entry into force of the process of change, it can be said that the Commission should be able to present an initial concrete balance sheet of its achievement to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in July 2005. This is imperative to sustain the momentum of change and progressively keep going the various fields of reform;

- lastly, the new attitudes and approaches introduced by the institutional transformation process should mutate into genuine cultural change that will structurally and irreversibly, pervade all the Departments and Units of the Commission. It is only by so doing that a new organization could really be born.

Implementation of the 2004 – 2007 Strategic Plan would be carried out in two phases

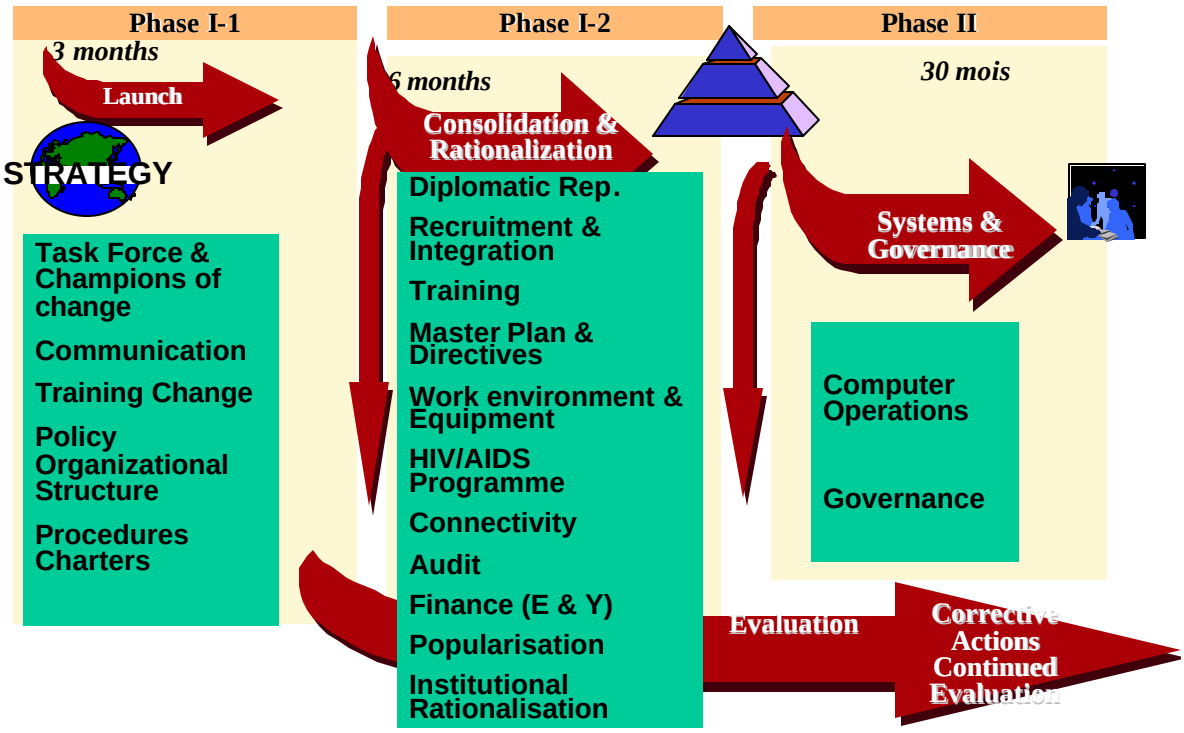
The Strategic Planning of the AU Commission has defined clear priority plans for 2004-2007 for both the Commission as a whole and for the different departments. However, considering its current institutional weaknesses, the AU Commission will adopt a phased approach to implementing the 2004-2007 Strategy, which properly balances the imperative of institutional development with the delivery on programmes and activities.

To this end, the AU Commission proposes to implement its strategic plan 2004-2007 in **two phases:**

- In **Phase 1 (September 2004 – May 2005)** priority will be given to institutional reform as this constitutes a pre-requisite for effective action by the AU Commission. Most time and energy in these 9 months will be devoted to ensuring that the necessary human resources, processes, management systems and IT are put in place at the level of the AU Commission. In this period of in-depth institutional transformation, the different departments will concentrate on achieving a limited set of programme activities (or 'quick wins'), linked to agreed core priorities.

- In **Phase 2 (June 2005 – 2007),** once the AU Commission has been considerably reinforced, the priority will shift to content work. The AU Commission will then proceed to full steam implementation of the Strategic Plan 2004-2007. During this second phase, further institutional development will take place, based on the roadmaps identified for each of the key areas of the reform process.

Figure 10: Strategic Plan Phases

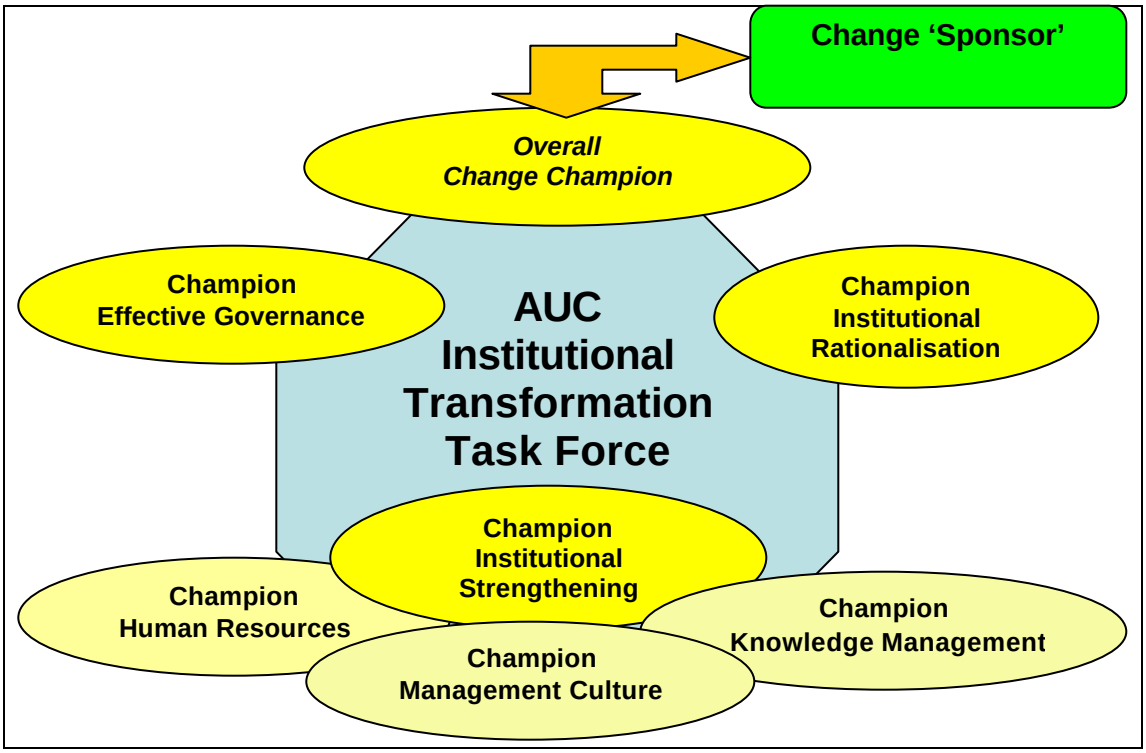


Institutional Arrangements for Change Management

To manage the transformation, the Commission will adopt a process approach. This means being able to follow the institutional transformation, step by step, throughout its evolution, monitoring progress, continuously assessing if it is meeting expectations and responding flexibly as it goes along with changing needs and circumstances. To follow this process approach, the AUC is establishing a number of tools:

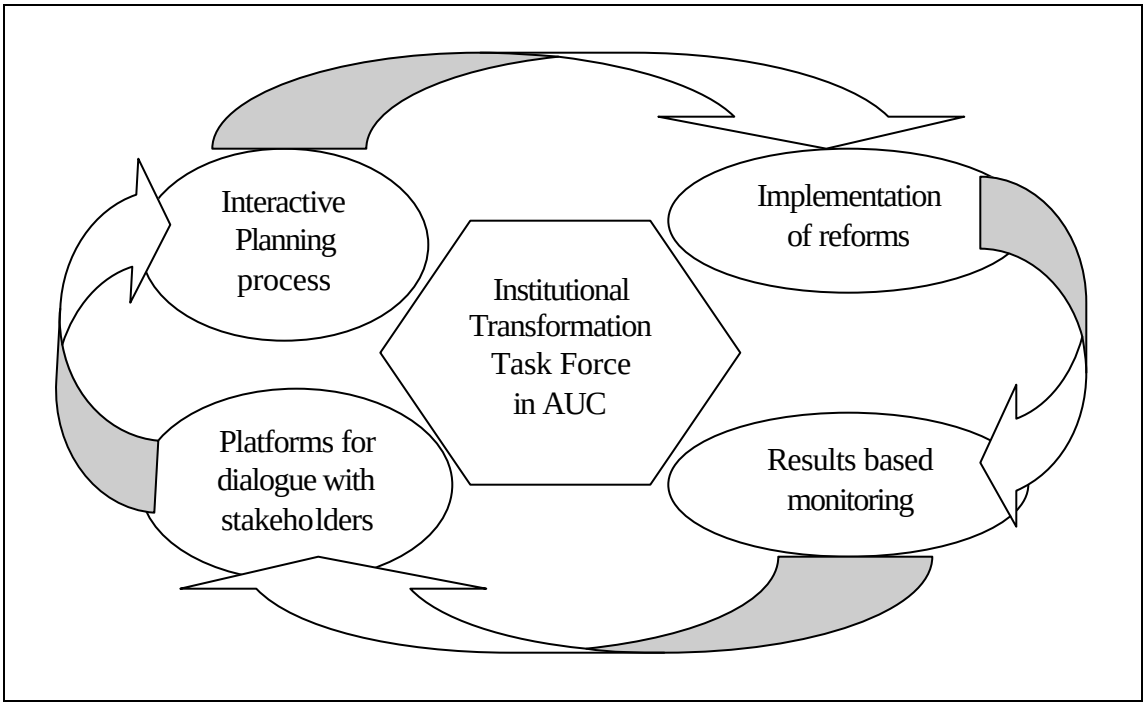
- First and foremost the process needs to be piloted. This will be done by an internal **Institutional Transformation Task Force** that is able to carry out this on-going function: providing continuity to follow the process and guide it effectively. This Task Force will have the resources and authority to perform this task and will be linked organically to a number of key functions within the AUC so that it is able to liase efficiently with all those officials implementing different aspects of the transformation plan.

Figure 11: Task Force & "Champions of Change"



- Second, the process needs a mechanism for assessing whether needs are being met. This will take the form of periodic **platforms for dialogue** with all internal stakeholders. These will be regular meetings or brainstorming sessions where stakeholders can voice their views on progress and indicate to the Institutional Transformation Task Force whether needs are being met satisfactorily. The Task Force will also use the platforms to test new proposals and ideas for adaptation to the reform process. The overriding purpose of these dialogues is to ensure that the institutional transformation has strong legitimacy and remains *demand-driven*. Although the need for change is widely recognised in the AUC there remains a need to encourage a thorough and wide-ranging mobilization on the change process. As a first step, the Institutional Transformation Task Force will organise a *retreat of key officials* to discuss the change process and review the steps identified for the different major programs in-depth so as to firmly establish ownership of the process.

Figure 12: Process Approach



- The Institutional Transformation process also needs **political leadership** and direction**.** The Task Force has to be given a mandate and will have to have its work reviewed by a higher authority. This collective decision-making function is provided by the College of Commissioners. They in turn handle the interface with the Member States (via the PRC) ensuring that they endorse and support the direction of reform. Within the College, the Task Force will have a '*Change sponsor*' – one member of the Commission who takes a close interest in its work and ensures the link with the whole College.

III.2. Financing the Strategic Plan

The success of the Strategic Plan will very much depend on availability of funds to cover the needs identified in various action areas to be implemented during 2004 – 2007.

Apart from the institutional transformation programme, the Commission has identified a number of sectoral programmes, which it considered as priority. These programmes prepared on the basis of the action areas defined in the Strategic Framework are presented in the form of individual action sheets in Volume 3.

Furthermore, to speed up the progress towards integration and build upon the momentum of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), a priority African Union-NEPAD programme (**see Action Sheet 24 in Volume 3**) incorporating integration projects capable of changing the face of Africa, has been formulated. This programme will be endowed with a special implementation strategy which will include dedicated authorities to define the implementation approach, seek the necessary financing and forge public – private partnership for the various projects identified.

The Commission will also put in place a special programme titled "African Initiatives" (**Action Sheet 25 in Volume 3**) aimed at devising for African citizens and members of the Diaspora a conducive framework for placing their creative talents in the service of Africa. This programme covers several activity sectors which include the information and communication technologies, culture and social initiatives.

Based on these programmes, Table 1 hereunder presents the financing needed to implement the Strategic Plan of the Commission during the next three years (2004 – 2007).

The estimated needs by strategic area (in US$) are as follows:

- institutional transformation programme: US$40 million to be shared by three components, namely: strengthening the Commission; institutional rationalization; and governance of the African Union;

- "Shared Vision" programmes: US$40 million;

- "Peace, governance and human security" programmes: US$35 million (excluding the Peace Fund);

- "Regional economic integration" programmes: US$70 million;

- "Integration infrastructure" programmes: US$35 million (excluding African Union – NEPAD priority programme fund);

- "Social development" programmes: US$60 million;

- "Culture" programmes: US$20 million.

Sub-Total: US$300 million

This budget includes, among other things, project implementation, meetings and seminars and cost of formulation of policy documents.

The following should be added to the budget:

- Salaries and common staff costs taking into account the expected cost of the increase in staff establishment (estimated at +25% per year thus doubling the staff strength over four years) could amount to US$105 million in three years;

- Running costs (official missions, rentals and maintenance, communication, supplies and services, equipment and maintenance) which could amount to US$30 million over three years.

To the above figures we should also add the triennial budget of the new organs of the African Union:

- The Pan-African Parliament: US$30 million;

- The Court of Justice: US$3 million;

- The African Court of Human and Peoples' Rights: US$3 million;

- ECOSOCC: US$9 million

- Council for the Future: US$1.5 million.

For further inclusion in the above estimates are:

- The Peace Fund: US$200 million a year, that is, US$600 million over 2004 – 2007;

- NEPAD priority programme Fund: US$200 million a year, that is US$600 million over 2004 – 2007;

- Financing of the "Special Initiatives" priority programme: US$33 million over 2004 – 2007.

In total, the global financing needed to implement the 2004 – 2007 Strategic Plan of the Commission stands at:

US$1.7 Billion over three years,

representing an average annual financial outlay of US$571 million.

INDICATIVE BUDGET FOR THE 2004 – 2007 STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE AU COMMISSION

		Million $	%
INSTITUTIONAL TRANSFORMATION	a) Strengthening the Commission	25	1.46%
	b) Institutional Rationalization	10	0.58%
	c) Governance	5	0.29%
	Sub-Total	**40**	2.33%
ACTION AREA 1: SHARED VISION	1) African Union, our future	10	0.58%
	2) Citizens of Africa	10	0.58%
	3) African's Visibility	10	0.58%
	4) Afro-Arab Brotherhood	5	0.29%
	5) Africa Reflects on its Future	5	0.29%
	Sub-Total	**40**	2.33%
ACTION AREA 2: PEACE, GOVERNANCE & HUMAN SECURITY	6) Peaceful Africa in a Peaceful World	20	1.17%
	7) Democracy in Progress	10	0.58%
	8) Well Governed Africa	5	0.29%
	Sub-Total	**35**	2.04%
ACTION AREA 3: ECONOMIC INTEGRATION	9) Integration Horizon 2007	15	0.87%
	10) Free Movement	5	0.29%
	11) Food Security and Self-Sufficiency	20	1.17%
	12) Water For All	5	0.29%
	13) Invest in Africa	5	0.29%
	14) Made in Africa	10	0.58%
	15) Equitable Global Trade	5	0.29%
	16) Towards a Common African Currency	5	0.29%
	Sub-Total	**70**	4.08%
ACTION AREA 4: INTEGRATION INFRASTRUCTURE	17) Interconnect Africa	20	1.17%
	18) Bridge the Digital Divide	15	0.87%
	Sub-total	**35**	2.04%
ACTION AREA 5: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	19) Priority Education	20	1.17%
	20) Stop AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis	10	0.58%
	21) Fight Poverty and Social Exclusion	10	0.58%
	22) Interdependent Africa	20	1.17%
	Sub-Total	**60**	3.50%
	23) Cultural Renaissance	**20**	1.17%
	Sub-Total Programmes	300	17.50%
Overhead Costs	Staff Salary and Emoluments	**105**	6.12%
	Running Costs	**30**	1.75%
AU Organs	Pan-African Parliament	30	1.75%
	Court of Justice	3	0.17%
	African Court of Human and Peoples' Right	3	0.17%
	ECOSOCC	9	0.52%
	Council for the Future	1,5	0.09%
Special Funds	Peace Fund	**600**	35.00%
	AU-NEPAD and APRM Priority Programme Fund	**600**	35.00%
	Special African Initiatives Programme	**33**	1.92%
	GRAND TOTAL	**1714,5**	