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**SIXTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE SPECIALISED  
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT,  
LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (STC-SDLE-6)  
27<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>th</sup> JULY, 2026.  
WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA**

**STC-SDLE-6/EXP/RPT**

***Theme: “INVESTING, STRENGTHENING AND EXPANDING SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS  
IN AFRICA: CRITICAL ENABLERS FOR INCLUSION, RESILIENCE AND SOCIAL  
JUSTICE”***

**REPORT OF THE EXPERTS' MEETING  
27<sup>TH</sup> – 29<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2026**

## INTRODUCTION

1. The Experts' Meeting of the Sixth Ordinary Session on the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment (STC-SDLE-6) was held from 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> July 2026, Windhoek, Namibia. The theme of the meeting was ***“Investing, Strengthening and Expanding Social Protection Systems In Africa: Critical Enablers for Inclusion, Resilience and Social Justice.”***
2. The Experts' Meeting considered and reviewed key policy, normative and strategic instruments, including the AU Model Law on Online Child Safety, Common Africa Position on Ending Violence Against Children in Africa, Draft Declaration on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers, Guidelines on the Development of a Model Migrant Welfare Programme/System, AU Guidelines and Toolkit on the Collection and Utilization of Quality Administrative Data for Labour Migration Statistics, the AU Guidelines on Private Sector Engagement to Advance Regular Migration Pathways, Terms of Reference for the AU Special Rapporteur on Child Labour, Forced Labour, Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery in Africa and the Terms of Reference for the Africa Labour and Employment Council.
3. The Experts were briefed on strategic policy, governance and implementation reports, including the progress on the Joint Labour Migration Programme, African Social Security Institutions Coordination and Cooperation Forum (ASSCCF), Labour Migration Statistics, the AU Ten-Year Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) Strategy, and the Youth Employment Strategy for Africa (YES-Africa), Social Protection for Informal and Rural Economy Workers (SPIREWORK), the ratification status of the Protocols on Social Protection and Social Security, Older Persons, and Persons with Disabilities; Guidelines on Ending Violence Against Children in Africa, the Joint Commitment on Disability Rights; the Comprehensive African Social Protection Framework (CASPF); Sign Language as the Seventh Official Language of the African Union, reports on AU Child Protection Monitoring Missions, the AU Accountability Framework on Eliminating Harmful Practices, the Compendium of Exemplary Practices (Southern Africa), the 2025 AU Champion's Report on Ending Child Marriage, the Fourth African Girls Summit, the AU Champion on Disability and Special Envoy on Albinism, the Continental Action Plan on Long-Term Care, the AU Plan of Action on the Family, the REC Focal Point Model on Disability Inclusion, and initiatives to strengthen social protection systems in Africa, among others.

## ATTENDANCE

4. The Experts Meeting was attended by delegates from the following AU Member States: Algeria, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Egypt, Eswatini, The Gambia, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Republic of Congo, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

5. The meeting was attended by the following social partners: Business Africa, ITUC-Africa, Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU), and the Trade Union Congress of Namibia
6. The following AU Organs, Regional Economic Communities(RECs), Inter-Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations and cooperating partners were represented: Governmental Organizations and cooperating partners were represented: ACALAN, ACERWC, ACHPR ,AUDA-NEPAD, STATAFRIC, Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Southern African Development Community (SADC), Africa Social Security Association (ASSA), African Development Bank, African Regional Labour Administration Centre (ARLAC), Pan African Productivity Association (PAPA), Pan-African Women's Organization (PAWO), Womens Legal Resources Centre (WOLREC), The World Bank, Government Council for Social Innovation (GCSI), HelpAge International, GIZ, Plan International, Statistics Sweden, World Vision International, ILO, IOM, UNECA, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC) and Strathmore University.

#### AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING CEREMONY

7. In delivering his welcome remarks, **Mr Ben Nangombe**, the Executive Director, Ministry of Justice and Labour Relations of the Republic of Namibia, welcomed delegates and expressed appreciation to the African Union Commission and national teams for their collaboration in preparing the session. Emphasizing the shared aspirations of Agenda 2063, he highlighted the importance of STC-SDLE 6 in advancing an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa through policies that strengthen social protection, resilience, inclusion and social justice, particularly for young people. The meeting's theme was noted as closely aligned with Namibia's Vision 2030 and National Development Plan, which prioritise human-centred development, stronger social protection and labour market inclusion. Delegates were encouraged to engage openly, share good practices and develop practical, actionable recommendations that would inform the ministerial segment and contribute to improved livelihoods, labour justice and sustainable economic prosperity across Africa.
8. On behalf of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa), **Mr. Joel Odigie** called for universal, adequately financed social protection as a fundamental right and productive investment. He highlighted that inflation, widespread informality, working poverty, unemployment and limited coverage as urgent challenges. He also advocated for industrialization to create decent jobs and broadens the tax base, supported by genuine tripartite social dialogue. He further urged Member states governments to expand social protection with adequate financing to translate continental commitments into adequately financed and accessible systems that protect all Africans, including workers in the informal economy.
9. On behalf of Business Africa, **Mr. Stephen Obiro**, underscored the tripartite nature of the STC and commended Member States that included employers and workers in their delegations. He emphasized that meaningful social dialogue should deepen mutual understanding and

produce practical solutions that strengthen businesses, create decent jobs, improve workers' welfare and expand government revenues. Noting Africa's persistent poverty, limited fiscal space and rising public expectations, he called for stronger productive capacities and continental solidarity. He urged participants to translate the STC's strategies, commitments and resolutions into concrete, measurable action, supported by robust monitoring and accountability mechanisms. He reaffirmed employers' commitment to Africa's socioeconomic transformation and thanked Namibia, the African Union, Member States, the Bureau and the Secretariat for convening and preparing the Sixth STC.

**10. Ms Daphine Muzawazi**, Head of the Institutional Strengthening, Governance and Social Inclusion Cluster at the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), in her statement, emphasized the need to translate the theme of the STC-SDLE 6, into a practical systems agenda that is politically relevant, technically sound, fiscally sustainable, and implementable. She underscored the importance of advancing integrated, inclusive, and shock-responsive social protection systems supported by strengthened data systems, institutional coordination, digital transformation, sustainable financing, and accountability mechanisms. She further highlighted AUDA-NEPAD's support to Member States through the development of the Comprehensive African Social Protection Framework (CASPF) and called for actionable recommendations with clear responsibilities, timelines, resources, and measurable outcomes to strengthen implementation and continental accountability.

**11.** In his opening statement, **Dr. Sabelo Mbokazi**, the Head of Labour, Employment and Migration, Department of Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development (HHSD) of the African Union Commission, welcomed delegates to the Experts' Meeting of the STC-SDLE-6. He emphasized the strategic importance of the meeting in advancing Africa's social development, labour and employment agenda through integrated and evidence-based policy approaches. Dr. Mbokazi highlighted the key policy instruments, strategic frameworks and progress reports before the Experts and called for constructive, consensus-driven deliberations to formulate practical recommendations for consideration by the Ministerial segment and to accelerate the implementation of Agenda 2063 and relevant African Union policy commitments.

## **AGENDA ITEM 2: REPORT OF THE OUTGOING STC-SDLE-5 BUREAU**

**12.** In his statement, **Mr. Mahamat Batrane**, Director of Labour at the Ministry of Public Service and Social Dialogue of the Republic of Chad, underscored the substantial progress achieved since the STC-SDLE-5 in advancing Africa's social development, labour and employment agenda. He highlighted strengthened continental leadership, enhanced regional cooperation and sustained support to Member States in translating policy commitments into concrete action. Notable achievements were recorded in labour migration governance, the expansion of social protection systems, promotion of the Social and Solidarity Economy, youth employment initiatives, child protection, disability inclusion and healthy ageing. These advances, he noted, reflect the growing commitment of Member States and continental institutions to fostering inclusive growth, social justice and resilience. While acknowledging that the pace of ratification and domestication of key African Union legal instruments, particularly

the Protocol on Social Protection and Social Security, requires further acceleration, he called for renewed political commitment and stronger collaboration to consolidate gains and deliver sustainable development outcomes for all Africans.

### **AGENDA ITEM 3: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME**

13. The meeting considered and adopted the Agenda and Programme of Work.

### **AGENDA ITEM 4: PRELIMINARY ELECTION OF THE STC-SDLE-6 BUREAU**

14. Pursuant to the Rules of Procedure governing the composition of the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment (STC-SDLE), and following the requisite consultations among Member States and social partners, with due regard to the principle of tripartite representation, the Experts elected the following Bureau to serve for the Sixth Ordinary Session of the STC:

|                                   |            |                 |             |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Chairperson:                      | Government | Southern Africa | Zambia      |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Chairperson: | Government | North Africa    |             |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairperson: | Employer   | West Africa     | Senegal     |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice Chairperson: | Worker     | East Africa     | South Sudan |
| Rapporteur:                       | Government | Central Africa  | Chad        |

### **AGENDA ITEM 5: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE THEME:**

15. The African Union Commission (AUC) presented the theme of STC-SDLE-6, emphasizing social protection as a fundamental right and a strategic investment for inclusive growth, human capital development, resilience and social justice. The presentation highlighted progress in expanding continental social protection coverage from 17 per cent in 2020 to 19.1 per cent in 2024, while noting the need to further strengthen coverage for vulnerable groups, including children, persons with disabilities, informal workers and rural populations. The Commission called for accelerated implementation of the AU Protocol on Social Protection and Social Security, increased domestic financing, expanded contributory and non-contributory schemes, shock-responsive systems and integrated social registries to advance inclusive and sustainable social protection systems across Africa.

### **AGENDA ITEM 6: TECHNICAL PRESENTATION ON SOCIAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS IN AFRICA**

16. **Ms Daphine Muzawazi**, Head of the Institutional Strengthening, Governance and Social Inclusion Cluster at the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), presented an update on the progress made in the development and implementation of the Strengthening National Institutions Supporting Vulnerable Communities (SNVC) Programme. She underscored the Programme's strategic role as AUDA-NEPAD's flagship continental initiative to enhance institutional capacity, strengthen national coordination mechanisms, and support

Member States in establishing and delivering inclusive, integrated, and shock-responsive social protection systems that effectively address the needs of vulnerable communities.

## **AGENDA ITEM 7: FEEDBACK FROM PARALLEL SESSIONS**

**17.** The meeting divided into two parallel sessions namely:

- a. Social Development
- b. Labour and Employment.

### **A. SECTORIAL SESSIONS OUTCOMES – SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

**18.** The Sectorial Session on Social Development was chaired by **Ms Madrine Bbalo Mbuta**, Director policy planning and information, Ministry of Community Development and Social Services representing Zambia as the Chair of the newly elected Bureau of the STC-SDLE-6.

### **AU CHILD PROTECTION AND ENDING HARMFUL PRACTICES**

#### **On the Draft Common African Position on Ending Violence Against Children**

**19.** The AUC presented the Common African Position (CAP) on Ending Violence against Children (EVAC).

**20. Based on the deliberations, the Experts made the following recommendations:**

- i. Experts recommend that the Draft Common African Position on Ending Violence against Children be submitted to the Ministerial Session for endorsement.
- ii. Member States should accelerate the implementation of the CAP EVAC through strengthened national coordination, integrated child protection systems, and robust monitoring and accountability mechanisms.
- iii. The African Union Commission should support implementation, facilitate peer learning, and report on progress to the relevant policy organs.

#### **On the Draft AU Model Law on Child Online Safety**

**21.** The AUC presented the Draft AU Model Law on Child Online Safety

**22. Based on the deliberations, the Experts made the following recommendations:**

- i. Experts recommend that the Draft AU Model Law on Child Online Safety be submitted to the Ministerial Session for consideration and endorsement as a non-binding continental legislative guide.
- ii. Upon endorsement by the Ministers, the Draft AU Model Law on Child Online Safety, be submitted to the STC on Justice and Legal Affairs for consideration subsequent adoption by the Assembly.
- iii. Member States should utilize the Model Law to support the development or strengthening of national legal and policy frameworks for the protection of children in digital environments, in accordance with national legal systems and priorities.

**23.** The AUC further presented on the following child protection and ending harmful practices initiatives and policy processes:

- i. **AU Child Protection and Ending Harmful Practices Programmes - Country Monitoring Missions (2025 – 2026)**, highlighting progress, findings, and key areas requiring continued national engagement and follow-up to strengthen child protection systems and accelerate the elimination of harmful practices.
- ii. **The Implementation Progress and Operational Status of the African Union Accountability Framework on the Elimination of Harmful Practices in Africa**, providing updates on implementation, coordination, monitoring, and accountability mechanisms to advance continental commitments.
- iii. **The Compendiums of Exemplary Practices on Ending Harmful Practices Across Africa**, showcasing evidence-based approaches, innovations, and impactful practices to promote knowledge exchange, peer learning, and the scaling up of effective interventions across Member States.
- iv. **The AU Champion's Report on Ending Child Marriage (2025)**, highlighting progress, advocacy efforts, and priority actions to accelerate continental and national commitments towards ending child marriage.
- v. **The Fourth African Girls' Summit**, outlining key outcomes, commitments, and strategic priorities for accelerating continental efforts to advance the rights, empowerment, protection, and meaningful participation of girls across Africa.
- vi. **The AU Convention on Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (AU-CEVAWG)**, highlighting its adoption by the 38th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in February 2025 as a comprehensive continental legal instrument for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls.
- vii. **The Thematic Report on Harmful Practices Affecting Children in Africa**, providing insights into the prevalence, drivers, and emerging trends of harmful practices affecting children across the continent, while identifying progress, persistent challenges, and priority actions to strengthen prevention and response efforts in line with relevant African Union instruments.
- viii. **The Draft Guidelines on Ending Violence Against Children in Africa**, ACERWC presented the draft Guidelines on Ending Violence Against Children in Africa

**24. Based on the deliberations, the Experts made the following recommendations:**

- i. Member States should facilitate and support AU country monitoring missions on child protection and the elimination of harmful practices, and strengthen the implementation, monitoring, and reporting of national commitments.
- ii. Member States should strengthen the implementation and institutionalization of the AU Accountability Framework on the Elimination of Harmful Practices, including the

establishment of effective national coordination, monitoring, data collection, and reporting mechanisms.

- iii. Member States should document, share, and promote evidence-based and innovative practices on the elimination of harmful practices to facilitate peer learning, policy dialogue, and the replication of successful interventions across the continent, while strengthening education and awareness among families, caregivers, and communities across the continuum of care.
- iv. Member States should accelerate the implementation of commitments to end child marriage, strengthen multisectoral prevention and response measures, and support the advocacy efforts of the African Union Champion on Ending Child Marriage in advancing continental action.
- v. Member States should participate in the African Girls' Summit, convened on a biennial basis, and to utilize the platform to strengthen national commitments and actions towards promoting the rights, empowerment, protection, and meaningful participation of girls and boys, while accelerating efforts to eliminate harmful practices and all forms of violence against children.
- vi. Member States expedite the ratification of the AU-CEVAWG and, upon its entry into force, take the necessary measures to ensure its effective domestication, implementation, and sustainable financing in accordance with national legal frameworks and priorities.
- vii. Member States should strengthen the implementation of multisectoral strategies to prevent and eliminate harmful practices affecting children, and enhance monitoring, coordination, and accountability mechanisms in accordance with relevant African Union legal and policy instruments.
- viii. Member States should promote and strengthen strategic public–private partnerships to support resource mobilization, service delivery, and multisectoral interventions for child protection and the eradication of harmful practices.

## **AGEING, FAMILY, DISABILITY INCLUSION AND RIGHTS-BASED SOCIAL PROTECTION**

### **On Strengthening Disability Inclusion and Accessibility through the Recognition of Sign Language.**

**25.** The AUC presented the rationale for recognising sign languages as a means of advancing linguistic inclusion and accessibility.

#### **26. Based on the deliberations, the Experts made the following recommendations:**

- i. Member States strengthen legislative, policy and institutional measures to enhance accessibility, inclusive communication, and the full, effective and meaningful participation of persons with hearing disabilities in all spheres of public life.
- ii. In accordance with constitutional, legal and policy frameworks, Member States should recognise and promote their national sign language(s) as official or legally recognised languages.



- iii. The AUC should undertake a comprehensive assessment of the legal, technical, operational, and financial implications of the potential recognition and increased use of Sign Language within the AU institutional framework.
- iv. Member States and the AUC should promote the ethical application of Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled sign language technologies to enhance accessibility and inclusion for persons with hearing disabilities, in accordance with the African Union Continental Artificial Intelligence Strategy.

### **On the Designation of the African Union Champion on Social Protection and Disability Inclusion.**

**27.** The AUC further presented for consideration **the designation of the African Union Champion on Social Protection and Disability Inclusion.**

**28.** Based on the deliberations, the Experts made the following recommendation:

That the Ministers recommend to the Heads of State the designation of H.E. President of the Republic of Namibia as the AU Champion on Social Protection and Disability inclusion, subject to approval by the Assembly.

### **On the Status of Ratification of AU Protocols on Social Protection and Social Security, The Rights of Older Persons, and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities**

**29.** An overview was provided on the status of key AU human rights instruments advancing social inclusion, social protection and the rights of vulnerable populations, namely:

- i. Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa (2016);
- ii. Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Africa (2018); and
- iii. Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security (2022).

The presentation highlighted that the entry into force of the Protocols on the Rights of Older Persons and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities marks a significant milestone for Africa's human rights and social development agenda. As of April 2026, both Protocols had secured 17 ratifications, while the Protocol on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security had received **only two ratifications** and had not yet entered into force.

**30.** The AUC presented updates on the following initiatives and policy processes:

- i. **Status of the Implementation of the Common African Position on Long-Term Care Systems for Africa**, showcasing progress made towards advancing integrated, sustainable, and rights-based long-term care systems, while emphasizing efforts to strengthen policy coordination and support Member States in responding to evolving care needs.
- ii. **Development of the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) Disability Inclusion Focal Point Model**, presenting the proposed model for establishing coordinated disability inclusion mechanisms within RECs, underscoring its role in strengthening policy

coherence, regional collaboration, and mainstreaming disability inclusion across development frameworks.

- iii. **Status of the Appointment of the African Union Special Envoy on Albinism**, providing insight into progress towards the appointment process and spotlighting efforts to enhance continental advocacy, coordination, and visibility in addressing discrimination and human rights challenges affecting persons with albinism.
- iv. **Pan-African Dialogue Series on Ageing and Development**, capturing the significance of the Dialogue Series as a continental platform for policy reflection, knowledge exchange, and advancing rights-based and development-oriented approaches to ageing.
- v. **Proposal for the Development of a Common African Position on Ageing**, introducing the need for the development of a Common African Position on Ageing and emphasizing the importance of establishing a coordinated continental framework to address demographic transitions, promote healthy ageing, strengthen social protection systems, advance inclusion, and uphold the rights and dignity of older persons.
- vi. **Report of the Technical Dialogue on the Status of the Plan of Action on the Family and the Advancement of Ratification of African Union Instruments on Social Protection and the Rights of Older Persons**, synthesizing key outcomes from the Technical Dialogue and drawing attention to progress in strengthening family-centred policies, expanding social protection systems, and advancing ratification of relevant African Union instruments.
- vii. **Proposed Development of the African Union Plan of Action on Disability Rights and Inclusion**, articulating the vision and objectives of the proposed continental roadmap to advance disability rights, accessibility, participation, and inclusive development in alignment with the African Disability Protocol.
- viii. **Member States' Commitments on Disability Inclusion Arising from the 2025 Global Disability Summit**, reinforcing the importance of translating Summit commitments into measurable national actions and **spotlighting** opportunities to strengthen accountability, inclusive policies, and disability-responsive programming across Member States.
- ix. **Comprehensive African Social Protection Framework (CASPF)**, establishing a coherent implementation framework to support the operationalization of the Protocol on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security and strengthen inclusive social protection systems across Africa.

**31. Based on the deliberations, the Experts made the following recommendations:**

- i. Member States should accelerate the ratification, domestication and implementation of the Protocols on the Rights of Older Persons, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security.
- ii. Member States should recognize the growing demand for long-term care arising from Africa's demographic and social transitions and accelerate the implementation of the

Common African Position on Long-Term Care Systems for Africa through integrated, rights-based national policies and sustainable long-term care systems, while requesting the AUC to periodically review the Common African Position.

- iii. Regional Economic Communities should strengthen disability inclusion focal point functions, while the AUC develop operational guidance and coordinate the implementation of the RECs Disability Inclusion Focal Point Model.
- iv. The AUC should develop the African Union Plan of Action on Disability Rights and Inclusion in consultation with Member States, RECs, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities and relevant stakeholders.
- v. The AUC should expedite the implementation of Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.1063(XXXV) on the appointment of a Special Envoy on Albinism.
- vi. The AUC, Member States, and development partners should sustain the Pan-African Dialogue Series on Ageing and Development as a continental platform to advance the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa, while supporting the mainstreaming of ageing into national development planning and policy frameworks.
- vii. The AUC in collaboration with Member States should initiate the development of a Common African Position on Ageing through a coordinated continental consultative process by nominating national focal points to support its development, and with relevant continental platforms, including the Biennial Africa Ageing Conference, serving as opportunities for stakeholder engagement, knowledge exchange, and technical dialogue.
- viii. The AUC should review and update the African Plan of Action on the Family to address emerging social, demographic and development priorities.
- ix. Member States should strengthen the implementation, coordination, monitoring, and reporting of commitments on social development and disability inclusion, taking into account the outcomes of the Second World Summit for Social Development, as reflected in the Doha Political Declaration, and the Global Disability Summit, as reflected in the Amman–Berlin Declaration, consistent with relevant African Union legal and policy frameworks.
- x. Member States should commit to strengthening national social protection systems as a cornerstone for inclusive growth, resilience and social justice across Africa through supporting the development of the Comprehensive African Social Protection Framework (CASPF) as an implementation framework to guide harmonised action, promote policy coherence, strengthen institutional collaboration, mobilise sustainable financing, and accelerate the expansion of effective social protection systems across Member States, in line with Agenda 2063 and relevant African Union Assembly Decisions.

## **B. SECTORIAL SESSIONS OUTCOMES – LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT**

- 32.** The Sectorial Session on Labour and Employment was chaired by **Mr. Givens Muntengwa**, Labour Commissioner, Ministry of Labour and Social Security representing Zambia as Chair of the newly elected Bureau of the STC-SDLE-6.

### **On the draft Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers**

- 33.** The AUC presented the Draft Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers.

**34. Based on the deliberations, the Experts made the following recommendations:**

- i. The Draft Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers was deferred to the STC SDLE-7.

### **On the draft Guidelines on the Development of a Model Migrant Welfare Programme/system**

- 35.** The AUC presented the Draft Guidelines on the Development of a Model Migrant Welfare Programme/System.

**36. Based on the deliberations, the Experts made the following recommendations:**

- i. Member States should establish and strengthen comprehensive migrant welfare programmes, including accessible protection and support services throughout the migration cycle, and reinforce labour attaché and consular services to safeguard the rights and welfare of migrant workers.
- ii. The AUC in collaboration with Member States and partners should support the implementation of the Model Migrant Welfare Programme/System through pilot initiatives, technical guidance, monitoring, and biennial reporting to the STC on progress, challenges, and lessons learned.
- iii. The African Union Commission should intensify advocacy and provide technical assistance to Member States to promote the effective use of the AU Guidelines on Bilateral Labour Agreements in developing, negotiating, implementing and monitoring rights-based bilateral labour agreements with countries of destination.
- iv. Member States to implement transformative economic and employment policies that stimulate productive investment, enterprise development and economic diversification, thereby expanding decent and sustainable employment opportunities, particularly for women and young people.
- v. The Draft Guidelines on the Development of a Model Migrant Welfare Programme/System should be submitted to the Ministerial Session for endorsement.

### **On the draft African Union (AU) Guidelines and Toolkit for the collection and utilization of quality administrative data for labour migration statistics in Africa**

**37.** The AUC presented the Draft AU Guidelines and Toolkit for the Collection and Utilization of Quality Administrative Data for Labour Migration Statistics in Africa.

**38. Based on the deliberations, the Experts made the following recommendations:**

- i. Member States should strengthen and harmonize administrative labour migration data systems in line with African Union and international statistical standards and enhance the production and use of disaggregated labour migration statistics to inform evidence-based policymaking.
- ii. Member States should adopt and apply the Guidelines and Toolkit across relevant institutions, strengthen national coordination mechanisms for labour migration statistics, and enhance interoperability between labour market information systems.
- iii. The African Union Commission should provide technical assistance and capacity building to Member States and Regional Economic Communities for the effective implementation of the AU Guidelines and Toolkit for the Collection and Utilization of Quality Administrative Data for Labour Migration Statistics in Africa.
- iv. Member States should ensure that administrative data are adequately disaggregated and incorporate relevant labour and employment indicators, and should establish interoperable data systems that facilitate secure data exchange, integration and reporting across institutions.
- v. The Draft AU Guidelines and Toolkit for the Collection and Utilization of Quality Administrative Data for Labour Migration Statistics in Africa should be submitted to the Ministerial Session for endorsement.

### **On the draft AU Guidelines on Private Sector Engagement to Advance Regular Pathways**

**39.** The AUC presented the Draft AU Guidelines on Private Sector Engagement to Advance Regular Pathways.

**40. Based on the deliberations, the Experts made the following recommendations:**

- i. Member States, RECs, and the AUC should strengthen public–private partnerships and regional platforms to promote regular labour mobility, skills matching, labour market information exchange, and ethical recruitment practices.
- ii. The Draft AU Guidelines on Private Sector Engagement to Advance Regular Pathways should be submitted to the Ministerial Session for endorsement.

### **On the Terms of Reference for the African Labour and Employment Council (ALEC)**

**41.** The AUC presented the Terms of Reference for the African Labour and Employment Council (ALEC).

**42. Based on the deliberations, the Experts made the following recommendations:**

- i. The AUC in collaboration with Member States, RECs, employers' and workers' organizations, and other relevant stakeholders should operationalize the African Labour and Employment Council (ALEC).
- ii. The Terms of Reference of the ALEC should be submitted to the Ministerial Session for endorsement.
- iii. The African Union Commission, through the ALEC should monitor continental productivity trends and provide evidence-based policy guidance and technical assistance to Member States to enhance productivity, competitiveness and decent employment creation across Africa.

**On the Terms of Reference for the AU Special Rapporteur on Child Labour, Forced Labour, Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery in Africa**

**43.** The AUC presented the Terms of Reference for the AU Special Rapporteur on Child Labour, Forced Labour, Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery in Africa.

**44. Based on the deliberations, the Experts made the following recommendations:**

- i. Member States should strengthen national systems and institutional capacities for the prevention and elimination of child labour, forced labour, modern slavery, and trafficking in persons insofar as it constitutes child trafficking or labour exploitation, including through effective legislation, robust enforcement mechanisms, comprehensive victim protection, improved access to justice, and the systematic application of relevant AU-developed tools and guidance.
- ii. The Terms of Reference for the AU Special Rapporteur on Child Labour, Forced Labour, Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery in Africa should be submitted to the Ministerial Session for endorsement confining the Special Rapporteur's trafficking-related mandate strictly to the sale and trafficking of children (as a worst form of child labour under ILO Convention No. 182) and trafficking for forced labour exploitation (under ILO Conventions Nos. 29 and 105).

**45. The AUC further presented the following reports:**

- i. **Progress Report on the AU-ILO Youth Employment Strategy for Africa (YES-Africa)**, highlighted the official adoption of the strategy at the AU Summit in February 2025 and progress in the implementation of the YES-Africa, including the Africa Youth Employment Action Lab and targeted policy dialogues.
- ii. **Progress Report on Labour Migration Governance in Africa – Joint Labour Migration Programme (JLMP)**, showcasing achievements under the JLMP in translating continental labour migration commitments into practical interventions, including strengthened labour

migration governance, migrant worker protection, social protection portability, skills recognition, improved data systems, and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

- iii. **Progress report of AU Ten-Year Social and Solidarity Economy Strategy and Implementation Plan (2023-2032)**, underscoring the official adoption of the strategy at the AU Summit in February 2025, and progress made in the wide dissemination of the strategy including the plans to develop a continental communication and advocacy strategy to amplify the visibility of the SSE across Member States.
- iv. **Status, Implementation, and Revitalization of AU Social Protection Plan for the Informal and Rural Economy Workers (SPIREWORK)**, providing an overview of the status and implementation of SPIREWORK, including progress made, emerging priorities, and measures towards its revitalization to enhance its contribution to employment promotion, skills development, and labour market transformation.
- v. **Report on the AU-ILO Joint Programme on the Informal Economy (2019–2024)**, capturing key achievements, lessons learned, and proposed follow-up actions from the implementation of the AU-ILO Joint Programme on the Informal Economy, with emphasis on strengthening support systems for informal workers and enterprises.
- vi. **Report on the ILO Social Protection Strategy for Africa (2021–2025)**, outlining the strategic priorities, implementation progress, and key areas of focus under the ILO Social Protection Strategy for Africa (2021–2025), including efforts to advance inclusive, sustainable, and resilient social protection systems.
- vii. **Report on the African Social Security Institutions Coordination and Cooperation Forum (ASSCCF)**, underscoring the role of the ASSCCF in promoting coordination and harmonisation of social security systems, extending coverage to informal, rural, and migrant workers, strengthening the institutional capacity of national social security bodies; and advocating for the effective implementation of AU legal instruments on social protection.

**46. Based on the deliberations, the Experts made the following recommendations:**

***On Youth Employment Strategy for Africa (YES-Africa)***

- i. Member States should strengthen the implementation of youth employment policies and programmes by promoting employment-centred development strategies, investing in skills development, supporting innovation and entrepreneurship, and creating pathways for young Africans to access productive and decent work opportunities in line with YES-Africa priorities.

***On Joint Labour Migration Programme (JLMP)***

- ii. Member States in collaboration with the RECs, AUC and relevant partners should continue to strengthen labour migration governance through improved policy frameworks, migrant

worker protection measures, social protection portability, skills recognition, and enhanced labour migration data systems.

***On Social Solidarity Economy (SSE)***

- iii. Member States should establish SSE legislation or where partial frameworks exist, strengthen and harmonise them in line with the AU Ten-Year SSE Strategy.
- iv. The AUC should develop a coordination and monitoring mechanism for the implementation of AU SSE Strategy at national and regional level.

***On AU Social Protection Plan for the Informal and Rural Economy Workers (SPIREWORK)***

- v. The African Union Commission in collaboration with Member States and partners should advance the revitalization and implementation of SPIREWORK to enhance its contribution to employment creation, skills development, and labour market transformation in Africa taking into account emerging socio-economic realities, including climate change, digitalization, demographic change and evolving labour markets.
- vi. Member States should strengthen national legal and policy frameworks and progressively expand social protection coverage for workers in the informal economy and rural sectors, consistent with Agenda 2063 and the AU Protocol on Social Protection and Social Security.
- vii. The AUC, in collaboration with Member States and development partners, should mobilize technical and financial support for the implementation, monitoring and regular reporting on SPIREWORK through the established continental coordination mechanisms.

***On AU-ILO Programme on decent work for the transformation of Informal economy in Africa***

- viii. Member States should strengthen measures to support the formalization of the informal economy through inclusive policies, improved social protection coverage, and decent work opportunities.
- ix. The AUC, in collaboration with the ILO and other partners, should develop a successor programme that builds on the achievements and lessons learned, while supporting Member States in accelerating the transition to formality.
- x. Member States and development partners should strengthen cooperation and joint resource mobilization to support the implementation of policies and programmes that promote decent work, productivity, social protection and the progressive transition from the informal to the formal economy.

***AU-ILO Africa Social Protection Strategy***

- xi. AUC and ILO should revise and finalize the Africa Regional Social Protection Strategy, 2026-2030, in alignment with international labour standards, the AU Protocol on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security, the Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063, the SDGs, relevant regional and global frameworks, and emerging developments in the world of work and social protection.



- xii. AUC and ILO should report on progress made in the development and implementation of the Strategy at the 7th Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment (STC-SDLE 7).

***On African Social Security Institutions Coordination and Cooperation Forum (ASSCCF)***

- xiii. Member States and social security institutions should strengthen regional cooperation, knowledge exchange, and institutional coordination to enhance the effectiveness, sustainability, and transferability of social security entitlements for workers across Africa, through the ASSCCF in collaboration with International Social Security Association (ISSA) and Africa Social Security Association (ASSA).

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| <b>AGENDA ITEM 9: BRIEFING BY GENEVA AFRICA GROUP</b> |
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47. The Coordinator of the African Group in Geneva briefed the Experts' Meeting on key developments within the ILO and matters requiring strategic guidance from African Ministers.

48. Following the deliberations the Experts made the following recommendations:

***On the Democratisation of the ILO***

- i. The Ministers should await the outcome of the review of the list of countries of chief industrial importance, in anticipation that the review would result in an inclusion of new members who have already ratified the 1986 amendments.
- ii. In the event that the review would not change the status quo the Ministers and Social Partners should challenge the outcome and refer the matter to the International Labour Conference for decision.
- iii. The ministers should take note of the ongoing ILO reforms and request the experts to continue advocating for African interests and ensure that the reforms do not disproportionately affect Africa.

***On Palestine,***

- iv. The Ministers should take note of the accession of Palestine to the status of Non-member Observer State granted by the 113<sup>th</sup> Session of the International Labour Conference.

***On the Election of the ILO Director General***

- v. The Ministers should support the candidature of Mr. Gilbert Houngbo for a second term as Director General as the sole candidate representing Africa.
- vi. The Ministers should facilitate timely payment of statutory contributions to ILO.

***On the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the Right to Strike***

- vii. The Ministers should take note of the report on the advisory opinion handed down by the ICJ which asserts the right to strike as enshrined in ILO Convention 87.

***On the Nominations for the ILO Governing Body for 2027-2030***

- viii. The Ministers should facilitate timely nomination of Member States for the ILO Governing Body for the period 2027-2030 following the AU procedures.
- ix. The Ministers to welcome the adoption of ILO Convention 193 by the 114<sup>th</sup> session of the International Labour Conference and encourage Member States to ratify and implement Convention 193.

#### AGENDA ITEM 10: DATE AND VENUE OF THE 7TH MEETING OF THE SPECIALISED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT

- 49. South Sudan expressed interest to host STC SDLE-7 in 2028, with the specific dates to be determined through the established AU processes.
- 50. The Experts recommended the endorsement of the offer from South Sudan to host the STC-SDLE-7.

#### AGENDA ITEM 11: CONSIDERATION OF THE AGENDA AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MINISTERS' MEETING

- 51. The Ministerial Programme of Work was considered and adopted by the Experts.

#### AGENDA ITEM 12: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 52. No other business was discussed during the Experts meeting.

#### AGENDA ITEM 13: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE EXPERTS' MEETING

- 53. The Meeting adopted the Report of the Experts and requested the AU Commission to facilitate finalization for consideration by the Ministerial Meeting.

#### CLOSING REMARKS

- 54. The Secretary General of the Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU), **Mr. Arezki Mezhoud**, in his closing remarks, highlighted the importance of strengthening and expanding social protection systems across Africa. He emphasized that social protection is a fundamental right and an essential foundation for human dignity, social justice and inclusive development. He further underscored the importance of tripartism, effective social dialogue and respect for trade union rights as prerequisites for building inclusive and sustainable social protection systems. Mr. Arezki Mezhoud commended participants for their active engagement throughout the Experts' Meeting and encouraged continued participation in the Ministerial Segment to advance the recommendations and promote a more equitable and prosperous Africa.
- 55. In his closing remarks, the Head of the Labour, Employment and Migration Division, Dr. Sabelo Mbokazi, commended delegates for their active participation, technical expertise and constructive engagement throughout the Experts' Meeting. He noted that the deliberations had strengthened key continental policy instruments and produced recommendations for the Ministerial Segment. He thanked the Government of Namibia, development partners and participants, and encouraged continued collaboration to implement the agreed outcomes.
- 56. **Mr. Ben Nangombe**, Executive Director of Namibia's Ministry of Justice and Labour Relations, in his closing remarks, underscored that the theme of the STC-SDLE-6 reflects urgent continental realities highlighting the need to promote youth employment, extend social

protection and address climate shocks. He noted that deliberations, grounded in AU Agenda 2063 and other AU instruments, were thorough, practical and conducted in a positive, professional spirit. He further commended experts for their substantial achievement as a demonstration of commitment to the continent's socioeconomic development and the "Africa We Want" agenda. He concluded his remarks by thanking the chair, secretariat, experts and delegates for their valuable contributions across plenary and parallel sessions.

**57.** In his closing remarks **Mr. Givens Muntengwa**, the Chairperson of the Bureau expressed appreciation to the African Union Commission, the Government of Namibia, Member States, social partners, Regional Economic Communities and partners for their contributions to the successful session. He highlighted the recommendations advanced across social development, social protection, labour, employment and labour migration, emphasizing their contribution to inclusive transformation and Agenda 2063. The Chairperson urged Member States to translate the commitments into national policies, legislation, programmes and measurable results. He underscored the importance of tripartism, social dialogue, decent work, skills development and resilient labour markets. He further called for African unity in advancing the continent's interests within global labour governance and officially declared the Experts' Session closed.

**58.** The meeting was then adjourned.