

Conference Report

**The Fifth Citizens'  
Continental Conference on the  
13<sup>th</sup> African Union Summit**

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 5 and 6 June 2009

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# Acronyms

ARS	Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia	ISS	Institute of Security Studies
AMISOM	AU Mission in Somalia	LRA	Lord Resistance Army, Uganda
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women	MONUC	UN Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo
CePSERD	Centre for Peace Building and Socio-Economic Resources Development, Nigeria	MDC	Movement for Democratic Change, Zimbabwe
CNDP	Congr�s Nationale pour la Defense du Peuple, DRC	NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
CSO	Civil society organisations	NGO	Non-governmental organisations
CCP-AU	Centre for Citizens' Participation in the African Union	OAU	Organisation of African Unity
CNDP	National Congress for the Defence of the Congolese People	OSJE	Organisation for Social Justice in Ethiopia
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo	PCRD	Post-conflict reconstruction and development
ECOSOCC	Economic, Social and Cultural Council, African Union	PSC	AU Peace and Security Council
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	REC	Regional Economic Communities
FARDC	Forces Arm�es de la R�publique D�mocratique du Congo	SADC	Southern African Development Community
FIDH	International Federation for Human Rights	SPF	Social Policy Framework
FDLR	Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda	TFG	Transitional Federal Government, Somalia
ICC	International Criminal Court	UNAMID	African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
IDP	Internally displaced people	UNHCR	Office of the UN Health Commissioner for Refugees
IGAD	Inter-Governmental Authority on Development	ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front

# Background

On June 5th and 6th 2009, over sixty African civil society representatives convened for the Fifth Citizens' Continental Conference before the 13th African Union Ordinary Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The theme of the summit was: "Investing in Agriculture for Economic Growth and Food Security." Apart from the civil society organizations (CSOs), H.E. Ato Miteku Kassa, Deputy Minister of Agriculture in Ethiopia, Dr. Abebe Haile Gabriel, Director of Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission, and other representatives from African Embassies and missions based in Addis Ababa attended the conference. This conference was organized by the Centre for Citizens' Participation in the African Union (CCP-AU)

and its partner organizations. It represented the fifth independent gathering of civil societies and the Diaspora before the African Union Summits. The attendees informed each other of key issues and policies that will be of relevance in the coming year; consulted various sustainable engagement strategies; and worked to adopt shared positions on key issues that had been previously overlooked. The broad socio-economic justice theme also encompassed other topics such as peace and security and human rights and gender in Africa that will also be agenda topics for the 13th Ordinary Summit. A communiqué was adopted at the end of the conference that will be presented to Heads of State and Government at the 13th African Union Summit.



# Opening session

As master of ceremonies for the opening session, **Mr. Desire Assogbavi**, Head of the Liaison office with the African Union, Oxfam, welcomed the participants to the Fifth Citizens' Continental Conference.

He emphasized the AU's desire, contrary to the goals of the former OAU, to create a dialogue between those that govern and those that are governed. He stated that since the replacement of the OAU by the AU, there is now more space for non-state actors to participate in the decision-making process. The organization of such continental conferences is designed to implement this objective, he said.

In addition to outlining the program for the Fifth Citizens' Continental Conference, he also discussed the agenda of 13<sup>th</sup> African Union Summit.

He concluded his speech by thanking the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and the Director from the AU Commission for attending the conference before calling on Ms. Yemisrach Kebede, Executive Director of CCP-AU, to extend a welcoming speech.



**Ms. Yemisrach Kebede** emphasized what a significant milestone this conference represents and what a great pleasure it has been for CCP-AU to host all the participants in Addis Ababa

She described CCP-AU as an independent platform committed to the realization of a people-centred African Union (AU) and to the strengthening of a substantive AU-CSO engagement.

She stressed the past and present importance of citizens' conferences as a means of fostering communication between African CSOs, the AU and its decision makers and as a venue for the implementation of advocacy efforts. She highlighted the need for CSOs to engage at the capital level and reiterated the importance of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as an official part of the AU mechanism.

She stated that for this conference, time and resources would be focused on the discussion of such issues as agriculture, food crisis, development financing, peace and security, and human rights.

She concluded her speech by urging participants to continue their engagement with their CSO networks and the AU and assuring them that their participation in the conference will be of great importance.

## Special tribute to Dr. Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem

After the welcoming talk, **Brian Kagoro**, Policy and Advocacy Manager for Action Aid International, made a special tribute to the late Dr. Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem. He described Dr. Tajudeen as the great pan-Africanist and liberator of Africa. Mr. Kagoro explained how Dr. Tajudeen led Justice Africa's initiative in partnership



with the African Union since its early days. He also discussed Dr. Tajudeen's many different roles as General Secretary of the Pan-African Movement, chairperson of the Centre for Democracy and Development, the Pan-African Development Education and Advocacy Program, and as a fighter in the struggle to get the UN's Millennium Development Campaign to support meaningful programs. In addition, Dr. Tajudeen wrote a weekly 'Pan African Postcard' that was published in dozens of African news sources on a regular basis.

Mr. Kagoro expressed his deepest regrets over losing a man of such great importance and encouraged the public to remember Dr. Tajudeen by his famous words, "don't agonize, organize!" and concluded his tribute with a moment of silence and by notifying the audience of the forty-day commemoration that will take place starting July 4<sup>th</sup> 2009 across the continent in memory of Dr. Tajudeen.

**Dr. Abebe Haile Gabriel**, Director of Rural Economy and Agriculture Department of the African Union Commission, began his speech by expressing his appreciation of CCP-AU and its partners for organizing the Fifth Citizens' Continental Conference and for centring the debate on "Investing in Agriculture for Economic Growth and Food Security".

He argued that the vision of the AU as a union of African people would never be realized without the participation, engagement and ownership of the African people. He emphasized the importance of developing and strengthening the mechanisms that will help articulate the various voices of the African people.

He asserted the importance of the agriculture and rural sector in the political, social and economic development of Africa. He added that although African people are dependent on agriculture, the performance of this sector has been very poor despite its vast potential. He explained that Africa has been a net importer of food from the rest of the world but its intra-African trade in food has been insignificant.

He noted climate change as another challenge that Africa has had to grapple with especially considering Africa's heavy dependency on climate-sensitive sectors. He added that although Africa has not contributed to the sharp increase in food prices across the globe it is being hit hard by the food crises. These crises should serve as a lesson that Africa needs a sound and comprehensive policy, he said.

In his conclusion, he promised that the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission will make every concerted effort to ensure that the key issues discussed in the conference will be brought to the attention of the appropriate policy-making organs in the AU.

**His Excellency Meteku Kassa**, Deputy State Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, gave the next key note speech.

He began by discussing the immense challenges Africa faces in its pursuit of continental food security. He blamed over-dependence on aid, under-exploitation of its development and natural resource potential, and chronically biased international policies on trade and agricultural production as the main impetuses preventing many Africans from





achieving food security. He also contended that the role of marginalized groups, such as pastoralists and women, should be the epicentre of economic development in Africa.

In light of these deficiencies, African Ministers of Agriculture under the AU Commission created the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP), he said. He stated that the purpose of the CAADP is to help African countries achieve higher economic growth through agriculture-led development, thereby eliminating food insecurity, reducing poverty, and supporting environmental resilience. He went on to add that through the CAADP, African governments are

committed to increasing public investment in agriculture by a minimum of 10 percent of their national budget.

He ended his speech by wishing success to the participating African CSOs and the organizers in their endeavour to bring a meaningful change in the lives of small-holder farmers in Africa.

After the opening ceremony ended, the participants of the conference were divided into two working groups namely: **Agriculture, Food Crisis and Development Financing for Africa (Working Group One)**; and **Peace and Security and Human Rights in Africa (Working Group Two)**

# Agriculture, food crisis and development financing for Africa

## Presentations

Lamina Ndiaye, Pan African Head of Economic Justice at Oxfam International, gave the first presentation on “CAADP-A vision for the restoration of Agriculture”.

CAADP (Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program), adopted in 2003, is the continental African vision for agriculture. The program uses agriculture-led growth as the main strategy in obtaining food security and alleviating poverty. He noted that the program was the first of its kind to be produced by Africans. He emphasized that the target goal of CAADP is 6% annual growth rate in agricultural productivity. He said that for this to be achieved, the CAADP needs validation and to be internalized by regional and national governments.

He went on to describe the four pillars of CAADP: “Land management and water control; infrastructure and market access; food security, production and safety nets; and research and technology.”

Despite CAADP’s vast impact, he noted that many governments are not aware of its existence. He pointed to the following factors as additional challenges that are faced by CAADP: engaging the private sector, the Diaspora, limited commitment to the Maputo declaration, low participation of farmer organizations and the CSOs, weak capacity of parliamentarians to advocate for CAADP issues etc.

He concluded his presentation with the following recommendations:

- National Governments need to align their agriculture programs to CAADP;
- Chain development and agro-industry need to be valued more highly by private sector (training, finance / credit, policy etc...)

- Institutional capacity building & mutual learning from other countries in Africa needs to be strengthened
- Opportunities for South to South cooperation with China, India, Brazil, and Japan must be explored
- National farmers’ organisations support to CAADP needs to be broadened
- CAADP should be implemented in alignment with the social policy framework that was recently adopted by the AU.

**Lamine Ndiaye’s** next presentation focused on “**Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)**”. He commenced his presentation by posing the following question: why is a revolution in African agriculture necessary? He answered that today, agriculture accounts for 60% of the total labour force and 17% of GDP.

He explained that AGRA was initially launched in 2006 with a budget of US \$300 per year but that it is now expected to pave the way for genetic engineering technology. Nevertheless, he expressed his concern that the right of African People’s and Government to determine their own food policies may be undermined by AGRA. He stated the following reasons as explanations to why AGRA will not benefit African Agriculture: only 5% of arable land is irrigated in Sub-Saharan Africa; land tenure systems are complex, decentralized and not well codified in many countries; the majority of small scale farmers have limited or no access to conventional agriculture technologies; and there is limited access to financial services, poor infrastructure etc.

In order to overcome these challenges, the need for a different approach, such as the Rainbow Revolution was proposed by the presenter. This revolution includes promoting increased security access and control of natural

resources to small farmers; rehabilitating the productivity of degraded agriculture and pastoral lands; revitalising research and extension services; and promoting public sector support for development etc.

He concluded his presentation with the following recommendations: making agriculture centre stage; investing in agriculture more wisely; filling the gap with the private sector; building sustainable rural livelihoods; and investing in marginal areas.

The next presentation was conducted by **Mr. Cheikh Mammadou Cissoko**, a representative of the African Farmers Association, on “Food Crisis in Africa.” He explained the history of the food crisis and how it has reached such a dire stage in Africa. He stated that for the past ten years African governments have been investing in infrastructure in capital cities. As a result, the governments have reduced the support that was given to the agricultural sector. At the same time, there was overproduction in the north and western countries and the cost of storing this overproduction was too high. Consequently, the governments in the north and western countries had to subsidize the exportation of those products in Africa. The importation of food led to the destruction of the small livelihoods that the farmers had survived on. The food aid and the structural arrangement destroyed the public institutions and as a result will their jobs and unemployment increased. He argued that this is the very process that initiated the destruction of Africa’s agriculture.

He concluded his presentations with the following recommendations:

- The right to food can’t be negotiated
- We need to protect our markets in terms of circulating local products freely in the regions
- Every worker should have a guarantee revenue including the farmers
- Agricultural policy should be driven by farmer organizations
- The place of farmers need to clear and structured

**John Macharia**, affiliated with Resource Oriented Development Initiatives in Kenya, conducted the third presentation on “**Current Trends of Food Security and Crisis in Kenya and Seed Security**”. He began his presentation by describing how Kenya’s economy is highly dependent on agriculture since it makes up 26% of the country’s GDP and another 27% through indirect means. He also stated that the sector contributes to 60% of export

earnings while giving sustenance to 80% of Kenyans living in rural areas. He noted, however, that Kenya’s agriculture nonetheless operates on a small scale and accounts for 75% of the total output of agriculture and 70 % of marketed produce.

He shared this concern by stating that despite the fact that Kenya is a chief agriculture and food producer, three to seven million Kenyans suffer from the food crisis and depend on food aid each year. Furthermore, 50% of Kenya’s total population is a victim of food insecurity.

He explained that the current food insecurity is the result of numerous factors including climate change and variability; inequality and marginalization of areas from mainstream development; land and environmental degradation (water and soil fertility); conflict; poor policy focus and implementation (agricultural, land, trade and planning); high cost of farm inputs; reducing market prices; high levels of poverty; poor infrastructure; and unfair trade deals and gender inequity. This problem has been aggravated by reduction of donors’ aid towards agriculture development in Sub-Saharan Africa.

He concluded his presentation with the following recommendations:

- Make farm inputs affordable to small scale farmers and allocated of more money to support the system
- Promote agriculture (organic and sustainable)
- Empower farmers to add value and store foods
- Improve on irrigation Agriculture
- Increase support on Agriculture to honour Maputo declaration
- Increase support on Agriculture in terms of financially and technically
- Use our schools to nurture agriculture and use schools as centres for holistic learning to nurture sustainable agriculture
- Challenge the AU based on the social policy framework.

The next presentation was conducted by **Brian Kagoro**, Policy and Advocacy Manager, Action Aid International, on “**The African Agriculture Question: Missed Opportunities or Sabotage?**”

In his presentation Mr. Kagoro explained the different commitments undertaken by our African governments on agriculture. He stated that the first commitment began with the Maputo declaration on food security, which was adopted in 2003. This declaration intends to enhance the area under sustainable land management and reliable

water control systems, improve rural infrastructure and trade related capacity for market access, increase food supply, reduce hunger, adoption and allocation of 10% of resource budget to agriculture (CAADP) etc.

The next commitment undertaken by our African governments were the decisions made at the 2004 Sirte meeting. This meeting highlighted the need to address water resources, desertification and drought, and to increase trade in agricultural products by reducing trade barriers and enhancing agricultural information systems as essential prerequisites for the development of regionally integrated value chains.

The third commitment, in his opinion, was the Abuja Declaration on fertilizers, which was adopted in 2006. The decisions taken as part of this declaration include: creation of a strategic investment program to increase the availability and use of fertilizer along with other inputs to facilitate the green revolution in Africa.

The fourth commitment was made at the Abuja Food Security Summit in 2006, he said. These decisions highlighted intra-African trade in food and agriculture, resource mobilization to implement commitments, and integration of nutrition into all agricultural and food security programs.

He concluded his presentation by stating that the last of these commitments was undertaken during the Sharm-El-Sheikh African Union Summit in 2008. Some of the short and long-term measures that were made included: immediate assistance to the vulnerable segments of populations through targeted food assistance and safety net measures; intensifying agricultural production and productivity through the use of targeted input subsidies; investing in appropriate social safety nets; and scaling up investments for sustained agricultural growth including expanded public spending on rural infrastructure.

**Ms. Wangari Kinoti** of Action Aid conducted the last presentation on “**Women, Agriculture and Land**” for the working group one. She began her presentation by explaining that women are the primary agriculturalists in Africa and are disproportionately burdened with having to secure food, as well as most other aspects of household tasks including obtaining water, fuel and firewood, processing

crops and preparing food. She stated that women have a heavy workload yet have little control over the resources needed to conduct their tasks. She stated that women are responsible for between 60-80% of food production in Africa (FAO) yet they own and control on average less than 5% of the land.

She further explained the challenges faced by rural women by pointing to the lack of viable employment opportunities as well as their inferior access to markets, productive resources, credit and land. In addition, women’s farming activities continue to be overlooked in agricultural policy. She mentioned that many governments have refused to reform laws that continue to prevent women from enjoying the same rights to land as men.

She underscored the necessity of securing land rights for women so as to allow them to diversify their livelihood strategies and reduce their dependence on smallholder farming. This would also improve their status and reduce gender inequalities that in turn will reduce poverty. If there is greater access to land for women, she hypothesized that there will be an increase in food supply, increase in household income and improved family welfare (nutrition, health etc) at the household level.

She ended her presentation by stating that the following results could be achieved if women own and control land (Using studies in South Asia):

- Greater role in household decision making and resource allocation
- Saving for the future
- Giving property to daughters
- Increasing confidence about their future and their children’s future
- Greater mobility and social support
- Securing more access, control and ownership of land for women and giving them necessary support and assistance in farming and food production

The rest of the afternoon was set aside for focused discussions on each thematic area and recommendations to be included in the communiqué were discussed upon and drafted.

# Peace and security and human rights in Africa

## Presentations

**Tim Murithi**, Programme Head of Peace and Security at the Institute for Security Studies, made the first presentation on “**The Overview of Peace and Security in Africa.**” He started his presentation by stating that while there were successful democratic processes in Benin, Zambia and Botswana and in Ghana early this year, several crises have been witnessed in countries such as Chad, Guinea, the Central African Republic, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritania and Zimbabwe. He stated that in general, violent conflicts in Africa seem to move from open, full wars and to diffuse low scale but destructive conflicts with a strong potential of affecting regions.

He then went on to explain the peace and security situation in the different regions of Africa. North Africa, although widely consolidated and gearing towards a phase of sustained economic growth due to increased demand in commodities, still has some human security challenges including a constant security threat in the region due to various reported bomb explosions, indiscriminate suicide attacks and hostage taking. On the other side, the Horn of Africa has witnessed an escalation in violence against civilians in the past year leading to the displacement of large numbers of people in Darfur and south/central Somalia.

He further explained that developments in West Africa in 2008 continued to illustrate the difficulties faced by countries attempting to transition from civil conflict to democratic peace. In Central Africa, events in 2008 have been driven largely by the continuing crisis in the east of Democratic Republic of Congo.

He noted that in East Africa there have been contested elections in Kenya. In Rwanda, the ruling party won an overwhelming victory in the legislative elections

in 2008. Southern Africa in 2008 was important year since Parliamentary and presidential elections were held in the region. He said that the greatest challenge in the region, however, has been the forced resignation of South Africa’s Thabo Mbeki in September 2008 and the election of Zuma. The coup d’état in Madagascar has demonstrated the fragility of democratic governance on the continent, he said.

He concluded his presentation by listing some of the following peace and security challenges in 2009: peace processes are threatened by overwhelming poverty and lack of resources; elections have become a source of concern while they were supposed to ensure smooth political transition or power transfer; environmental degradation threatens the very existence of the population; the proliferation of militias groups creates the easy flow of light weapons, protracted armed insurgencies, refugee crisis, and food insecurity.

**Mr. Dismas Kitengue**, President of Group Lotus and Vice President of FIDH, made a presentation on “**Human Rights Governance and Justice in Africa.**” He argued that the peace and security situation hasn’t improved in the continent since the last summit. He pointed to the coups d’états as an indication of problems with democracy and human rights in the continent. He urged participants to consider why Africa repeatedly exhibits undemocratic tendencies and what to do to avoid them. He noted that there are various opportunities in Africa to advocate for human rights at the national, regional and international level as well as to promote democracy. The implementation of these things, however, is very difficult due to lack of respect of these laws and good will, he said. He concluded his presentation by underscoring the need to strengthen

these opportunities in order to promote the situation of human rights in Africa.

**Mr. Desire Assogbavi**, Head of Liaison office with the African Union, Oxfam, made a presentation on **“Enhancing the Role of CSOs on Peace and Security.”**

His presentation highlighted the importance of civil societies’ role on peace and security. He noted that compared with the role played by CSOs in West Africa in collaboration with ECOWAS, engagement with the African Union Peace and Security Council department is still very weak and unorganized.

Nevertheless, he underlined the possibility and opportunities for CSOs to play a greater role. He mentioned the

recent adoption of the Livingston Formula by the African Union Peace and Security Council. The Livingston Formula creates a formal mechanism for non-state actors to engage the peace and Security Council. This includes direct access of the council by the organizations that have experience on the particular issue.

He stated, however, that although the Livingstone Formula gives the leading role to ECOSOCC, it also limits the participation of the CSOs that could not be a part of ECOSOCC. He concluded by calling CSOs to use the limited space that is given through the Livingston Formula and the various other informal ways to engage the Peace and Security Council.



# Country specific discussions in Africa

The participants discussed various crisis situations in Africa and made the following specific recommendations.

## Democratic Republic of Congo

### To the DRC Government

- Call on the Congolese authorities to fight against impunity of the most serious crimes by cooperating with the ICC and by transferring the individuals under the ICC arrest warrant to the court, implementing legislation of the Rome Statute, and strengthening the capacity of its national jurisdictions to prosecute the perpetrators of international crimes as well as sexual crimes.
- Call on the national authorities to respect the provisions of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' rights, notably on freedom of expression and the right to assemble
- Call on the national authorities to fully respect the UN Declaration on the protection of Human Rights Defenders that was adopted on by the UNGA on December 1998.

### To the AU

- Call on the AU to ensure accountability for the heinous human rights violations that are still being committed in DRC
- Call on the AU to encourage the continuation of President Obasanjo's mediation efforts with the different parties (LRA, FDLR) to the conflict in the DRC

- Urge the AU member states to contribute to the strengthening the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC)
- Call upon the AU to urge the DRC government to enforce the ICC'S arrest warrant issued against Bosco Ntanganda

## Mauritania

- Call on the AU to condemn any violation of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, notably the freedom of expression and the right to assemble
- Call on the AU to urge the military junta to ensure that all political opponents currently detained on an arbitrary basis are to be released immediately
- Call on the AU to lobby for free and fair elections in keeping with the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance to which Mauritania is a party

## Guinea

- Call on the AU to urge the Guinean military Junta to respect the independence of the judiciary
- Call on the AU to urge the Junta to respect the agreed road map towards a civilian government to prepare for free and fair elections
- Guinea Bissau
- Call on the AU to condemn the recent killings of presidential candidates in Guinea Bissau
- Call on the AU to be fully involved in the resolution of the crisis in the country

## Somalia

- Call on the AU to increase the number of the AMISOM troops and strengthen its logistical capacity as well as its mandate regarding the protection of civilians
- Call on the AU to enlarge the humanitarian space in order to assist the numerous internally displaced persons (IDPs) and Somali refugees who are living in a very precarious humanitarian condition
- Call on the AU to enforce the UN Arms Embargo and to impose targeted sanctions against those who are providing arms to the parties in Somalia
- Call on the AU to condemn the ongoing human rights and humanitarian law violations committed in Somalia by all parties in conflict

## Sudan

- Call on the AU to condemn the recent expulsion of international humanitarian NGOs and the closing down of three independent Sudanese human rights NGOs
- Call on the AU to ensure that the humanitarian aid gap in Darfur left by the expulsion of the humanitarian aid agencies is filled
- Call on the AU to ensure that the Sudanese government respects local human rights organizations and allows them to operate in Sudan
- Call on the AU to condemn the ongoing human rights and humanitarian law violations committed in Darfur by all parties in conflict

## Zimbabwe

- Call on the AU to urge the Government of Zimbabwe to guarantee independence of the Judiciary, respect the rule of law, and guarantee the security of human rights defenders
- Urge the PSC to monitor the implementation of the Global Political Agreement

## Kenya

- Urge the AU to closely follow up on the implementation of the agreement that led to the government of national unity

- Urge the AU to closely monitor developments in preparation of the 2012 elections
- Call on the AU to support transitional justice mechanisms in Kenya as well as the establishment of the special tribunal with the mandate to prosecute crimes committed during the post-election violence

### The next session was on “**The engagement strategy of CSOs with the AU**”

The participants identified short and long-term strategies to engage the AU before and during the 13<sup>th</sup> African Union Summit once the communiqué was adopted.

## Short time strategy

The issue of how the communiqué can be spread among the different countries in the continent and the responsibility of doing so was discussed among the participants. It was decided that the communiqué would reach individual countries starting from Addis. Every international mission and permanent representative of the AU countries must also get the copy of the communiqué. The need to have media coverage focused only on the summit was also suggested. Since the 13<sup>th</sup> African Union Summit will start in two weeks, the communiqué should be distributed to the ambassadors, ministries of foreign affairs and the parliamentarians soon.

## Long-term strategy

As a long-term strategy, civil societies' engagement with AU organs and public and popular participation were suggested as different ways to have an impact on the AU. Therefore, after the summit, the need to review how to have permanent dialogue with the AU and the need to conduct popularizing activities by looking at the African calendar days at the national level were suggested. Engaging other national institutions and universities for the further expanding of ideas was also stressed. Commitment to have a debriefing session which will inform the civil societies of the decisions that were made during the summit and following up on its impact at a national level were also some other suggestions that were made as a long-term strategy.

## **Discussions and recommendations**

- To make ECOSOC operational
- To identify the best ways and means to share CSO's roles.
- To engage in the debriefing summits and to bring the civil society and governments together.
- Need to take the initiative to produce documents on institutional reform with AU
- To use different medias and efficiently mobilize different bodies
- To bring those civil societies who have cordial relations with ECOWAS, and find ways to engage these organizations
- Monitoring the actions that are conducted in the capital.

# Closing session and adoption of the communiqué

The final session was devoted to reviewing the collated recommendations raised throughout the two-day period and adopting the resulting communiqué. Ms. Yemisrach Kebede, Director of CCP-AU gave a short speech to

close the conference, thanking participants for their active participation and wishing them all a fruitful time lobbying and engaging decision makers at the upcoming Summit and beyond at the national and regional level.



