

**AFRICAN UNION**

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**Sixth Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on  
Justice and Legal Affairs (Experts Meeting)  
23-27 November 2020  
Video-Conference**

**STC/Legal/Exp/ Report  
Original: English**

**REPORT**

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. Pursuant to the Rules of Procedure of the Specialized Technical Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs (STC-JLA), the Commission in consultation with the Bureau, convened the Sixth Ordinary Session of the Government Legal Experts of the STC on Justice and Legal Affairs from 23 to 27 November 2020 through videoconference to consider various draft legal instruments in preparation of the Ministerial Session of the said STC.
2. The STC-JLA comprises Ministers of Justice and Attorneys General or Keepers of the Seals, Ministers responsible for Human Rights, Constitutionalism and the Rule of Law or such other Ministers or authorities duly accredited by the Governments of Member States.
3. The STC-JLA includes Experts from Member States responsible for sectors falling within the areas of competence of the STC on Justice and Legal Affairs, whose meetings precede the Meetings at Ministerial level.

## **II. ATTENDANCE**

4. The following Member States were in attendance:

**Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Kenya, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Mali, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe,**

5. The meeting was also attended by the following AU Organs and Institutions: African Union Commission; African Union Commission on International Law; African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights; and African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights.

## **III. OPENING OF THE MEETING**

### **i. Statement by the Chairperson of the STC on Justice and Legal Affairs**

6. The meeting was opened by the Chairperson of the STC-JLA, Mr Cherno Marenah, Solicitor General and Legal Secretary of the Republic of the Gambia. He welcomed all participants to the 6th Ordinary Session of the STC-JLA.
7. He assured the meeting of his commitment to steer the affairs of the STC-JLA impartially and efficiently and sought the support and cooperation of the Vice-

Chairpersons and the general membership of the STC-JLA to ensure a successful meeting.

8. The Chairperson emphasized the importance of the session of the STC-JLA in offering an auspicious opportunity to review and fine-tune several draft legal instruments prior to their adoption by the Ministerial Meeting.

9. He extended his appreciation to the Bureau of the STC-JLA for adapting to the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic by initiating a virtual meeting and further expressed hope that the STC-JLA would be able to reconvene in-person in the not too distant future.

10. He enumerated the seven (7) draft legal instruments on the provisional agenda. He underscored their importance, placing particular emphasis on the draft Protocol seeking to eradicate Statelessness on the Continent which he viewed as timely and crucial to resolving one of the most volatile sources of conflicts in Africa.

11. The Chairperson also lauded the draft Framework for the implementation of the judgements of the African Court citing the interdependence between human rights protection and effective enforcement mechanisms.

12. He concluded his remarks by encouraging the STC-JLA to give serious consideration to all the draft legal instruments with a view to their adoption and expressed confidence that the STC-JLA was committed to playing a rightful role in ensuring the effective promotion and protection of human and peoples' rights in Africa.

## **ii. Statement by the Representative of the Legal Counsel of the African Union Commission**

13. The representative of the Legal Counsel, on behalf of the Legal Counsel of the African Union Commission Amb. Namira Negm (Dr), welcomed the delegates to the Sixth Ordinary Session of the STC-JLA.

14. She presented the apologies of the Legal Counsel who could not be at the opening of the Meeting due to health issues.

15. The Representative enumerated the legal instruments that had been considered by the 5th Ordinary Session of the STC-JLA in November 2019 and informed the meeting that all the instruments had been adopted by the Executive Council and Assembly in February 2020.

16. She further informed the meeting that although the Executive Council had approved an extraordinary session to be held before the 37th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, they were unable to convene the Session due to the COVID-19 Pandemic which had made it difficult for sectorial STCs to convene and submit documents for the consideration of the extraordinary STC-JLA.

17. The Representative then referred to the seven (7) draft legal instruments on the Provisional Agenda of the sixth ordinary session of the STC-JLA, that had already been enumerated by the Chairperson of the STC-JLA. She informed the meeting that the draft agenda had been drawn by the Bureau of the STC. She also informed the meeting that all the executive summaries had been circulated to Member States in accordance with Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec. 1074(XXXVI).

18. She recalled Executive Council Decisions EX.CL/Dec. 1068(XXXV) and EX.CL/Dec. 1074(XXXVI) whereby the Executive Council requested AU Organs and the Commission to dedicate sufficient time to the AU treaty-making process and to encourage consensus-building among the Member States; and for the STC-JLA and the Commission to desist from considering any item that is not in line with the Rules of Procedure of the STC-JLA, respectively.

19. The Representative concluded by pledging the support of the OLC in facilitating the work of the STC-JLA.

#### **IV. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF DRAFT AGENDA**

20. The Chairperson introduced the provisional agenda comprising of seven (7) items which was adopted by the meeting, without any amendments, as follows:

1. Opening Ceremony
2. Consideration and adoption of the draft agenda
3. Organization of work
4. Consideration of draft legal instruments:
  - i. *Draft Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Specific Aspects on the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa;*
  - ii. *Draft Model Law on Protection of Cultural Property and Heritage;*
  - iii. *Draft Framework for the Implementation of the Judgments of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights;*
  - iv. *Draft Rules of Procedure of the Ministerial Committee on Implementation of Agenda 2063;*

- v. *Proposed amendment of Article 22(1) of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption;*
  - vi. *Draft Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security;*
  - vii. *Proposed amendments to the Statute of the African Union Commission on International Law.*
5. Any Other Business
  6. Adoption of draft legal instruments and draft report
  7. Closing ceremony

## **V. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT LEGAL INSTRUMENTS**

After the Opening ceremony, the Chairperson could not avail himself for the remainder of the programme due to prior work commitments. In this regard, Eritrea, the Second Vice Chairperson, chaired the rest of the Meeting.

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES APPLICABLE TO THE CONSIDERATION OF ALL DRAFT LEGAL INSTRUMENTS:**

21. The following principles were applicable during the consideration of the draft legal instruments:
  - i. use standard definitions and terms already appearing in other AU instruments, where appropriate;
  - ii. provide clarity on the usage of some terms and proof of their usage in existing AU legal instruments;
  - iii. maintain standard numbering of AU Treaties ;
  - iv. align language in all the texts;
  - v. define ambiguous terms constantly referred to in the text;
  - vi. resolve redundancies;
  - vii. improve legal drafting style;

- viii. retain standard final provisions, with minor editorial, amendments; and
  - ix. focus on legal issues and not on technical issues.
  - x. incorporate all the changes and pending issues in the revised draft instruments.
- i. Draft Protocol to The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Specific Aspects on the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa**

22. An overview of the Draft Protocol was presented by a Consultant hired by the Department of Political Affairs. He explained the validation process for the Draft Protocol outlining the various sessions undertaken in this respect, namely: one (1) introductory meeting for Member States; two (2) experts' meetings and one (1) meeting of the STC on Migration, Refugees and IDPs in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea in November 2018 whereby the Draft Protocol was adopted. He also highlighted several pending issues that were deferred to the STC-JLA.

23. The legal basis for submission of the Draft Protocol to the STC-JLA was cited as Executive Council Decision (**EX.CL/Dec.922 (XXIX)**) wherein the Executive Council:

*welcomed the development by the ACHPR of ..., the Draft Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Specific Aspects on the Right to a Nationality and the Eradication of Statelessness in Africa and REQUESTS the Commission to take the required steps to ensure the processing of these draft instruments in line with the procedures for the development of AU legal instrument.*

24. The meeting extensively deliberated on whether or not to defer the consideration of the Draft Protocol. In this respect, it was noted that the Draft Protocol contained provisions that may conflict with several national laws and thus require further consultations at the national level, especially from relevant governmental departments. Secondly, it was noted that the potential for conflicting obligations necessitated a holistic and multifaceted examination of the Draft Protocol beyond its legal aspects. It was further noted that the Draft Protocol had omitted technical inputs from Government Experts from some Member States. Lastly, the Experts noted the challenges associated with considering such a complex legal instrument through a virtual meeting.

25. A Representative of the OLC advised against deferring consideration of the Draft Protocol by reminding the meeting that there were other equally important legal

instruments on the agenda of the STC-JLA hence deferring the Draft Protocol, on the basis that it required a physical meeting, would also mean deferral of the other draft legal instruments. He further noted that currently, AU meetings, including those of the Policy Organs, are held virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic and that the STC-JLA would ably deliberate on the Draft Protocol Virtually. Finally, he noted that the Sectorial STC had validated the Draft Protocol and thus it was not advisable for the STC-JLA to defer it back to the Sectorial Committee.

26. The Chairperson acknowledged the above intervention but contended that the STC-JLA comprises of Member States, with the prerogative to make proposals for deliberation. Accordingly, he opened the floor for discussion on the proposal for deferral.

**Conclusion:**

27. Due to the reasons stated in paragraph 24, the meeting agreed to defer consideration of the draft protocol and to refer it back to the Member States for further consultations with their relevant departments.

**ii. Consideration of Proposed Amendment of Article 22(1) of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption**

28. A Representative from the OLC made a brief presentation of the draft amendment. She informed the meeting that the draft amendment was proposed by the Federal Republic of Nigeria, through Note Verbal addressed to the Bureau of Chairperson of the African Union Commission.

29. She recalled that the draft amendment was circulated to Member States on 14 November 2019 in accordance with Article 25 of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption which stipulates the amendment procedures.

30. She informed the meeting that the draft amendment was, in essence, a proposal to amend the name of the follow-up or implementation mechanism of the Convention (African Union Advisory Board on Corruption (AUABC / Board)) to correctly reflect its functions.

31. The delegation from the Federal Republic of Nigeria further clarified the need to amend the name of the Board to reflect its function of preventing and fighting corruption. He stated that the current nomenclature was misleading as it gave the impression that the Board promotes corruption.

32. There was consensus that the Board's current designation does not appropriately capture its purpose and indeed may suggest a contrary intention.

33. Upon deliberation, the Meeting agreed on the following wording: "There shall be an Advisory Board on preventing and combatting corruption. It shall be called the African Union Advisory Board Against Corruption".

34. There were no outstanding issues.

**Conclusion:**

35. The draft amendment was adopted with changes.

**iii. Draft Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security**

36. The Draft Protocol was presented by a representative from the Department of Social Affairs. She informed the meeting that the Draft Protocol was based on the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and other AU policies and frameworks.

37. She referred to Executive Council decision EX.CL/Dec.876 (XXVII) wherein the Executive Council requested the AUC, in collaboration with the ACHPR, to develop an Additional protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Citizens to Social Protection and Social Security.

38. She outlined the validation processes and the consideration by the Specialized Technical Committee on Social Development, Labour and Employment (STC-SDLE-1) in December 2019.

39. She informed the STC that the Draft Protocol was considered by the Executive Council in February 2020, who referred it to the STC-JLA.

**Consideration of the Draft Protocol**

40. During the extensive deliberation on the Protocol, the general principles in paragraph 21 were applied. The following specific issues were noted:

- i. make reference to the exact Executive Council Decision that requested the elaboration of the Draft Protocol;



- ii. make reference to specific provisions on Social Security in various AU Treaties ratified by Member States;
- iii. delete some words that were irrelevant and that would conflict with the cultural and religious sensibilities of some Member States;
- iv. reflect that economic obligations of Member States emanating from the draft protocol would be implemented in accordance with States capacities;
- v. qualify several provisions by making reference to national laws of Member States. However, Legal advice was provided discouraging subjecting the protocol to national laws, citing the human rights nature of the protocol; international law principles that oblige States to align their national laws to international obligations and the AU Principle to harmonize policies in Member States. Nevertheless, the Meeting decided to retain the reference to national laws on the basis that the Protocol contained obligations that would ordinarily conflict with Member States' national laws hence the phrase was a necessary compromise which would encourage Member States to ratify the Treaty.

41. **Outstanding issue:**

**Article 18: Education**

- (a) It was proposed that sub-articles 4 should be deleted because Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) education for the youth was deemed inappropriate; would offend the cultural and religious sensibilities of some Member States and was not necessarily relevant to the provision of social protection.
- (b) In response, the ACHPR noted the inter-linkage between SRHR and social protection by referring to the definition for social protection which indicates that social protection “refers to public and private, or to mixed public and private measures designed to protect individuals against life-cycle crises that curtail their capacity to meet their needs...” It was argued that issues related to SRHR potentially create life-cycle crises that curtail the capacity to meet needs hence its inclusion.
- (c) The subparagraph was revised. Any reference to children was deleted; an element of subjectivity was introduced by beginning the sentence with “

where appropriate” and the involvement of parents and communities was emphasised.

- (d) There was no consensus and the matter was referred to the Ministerial session for further consideration.

### **Conclusion:**

42. The Draft Protocol was adopted with the proposed amendments, outstanding and bracketed provision.

#### **iv. Draft Rules of Procedure of the Ministerial Committee on AU Agenda 2063**

43. The Draft Rules of Procedure were presented by a representative of the Office of the Legal Counsel. She explained that the Draft Rules sought to regulate the proceedings and meetings of the Ministerial Committee on Implementation of Agenda 2063.

44. She further explained that the Draft Rules had been submitted to the STC-JLA in accordance with Executive Council Decision Ex.CL/Dec.1066(XXXV) whereby the Executive Council called upon the STC-JLA to examine the draft Rules of Procedure for their subsequent submission to the Executive Council for further consideration and adoption.

45. The Chairperson added that the Ministerial Committee on Implementation of Agenda 2063 was in existence and had already considered and adopted the Draft Rules. Hence the STC-JLA could only deliberate on legal matters as opposed to substantive technical issues.

### **Consideration of the Draft Rules of Procedure**

46. During the extensive deliberations of the Draft Rules of Procedures, the general principles in paragraph 21 were applied. The following specific key issues were discussed:

- i. The Ministerial Committee has two (2) categories of Membership emanating from Executive Council Decision **EX.CL/Dec.807 (XXIV)**. The first category are Member States with voting rights, while the second category are Non-member States without voting rights;
- ii. The Champion of Agenda 2063 was currently Cote d'Ivoire and was selected by the Executive Council to give guidance and brief the Assembly on the status of implementation of Agenda 2063;

- iii. Invitation for hosting meetings of the Committees would come from Member States, in accordance with the practice of the AU;
  - iv. The correct reference for the provisions was “Rules” and not “Articles”;
  - v. Most provisions in the Draft Rules of Procedure were standard provisions from the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Council;
  - vi. Only Member States designated by their regions can be Members of the Bureau.
47. The Draft Rules of Procedure were adopted with the proposed amendments.

**v. *Draft Model Law on Protection of Cultural Property and Heritage***

48. A Representative of the Department of Social Affairs presented the Draft Model Law. She highlighted that it was developed pursuant to Executive Council Decision **EX.CL/Dec.921 (XXIX)**. She narrated the process leading to the elaboration of the Draft Model Law dating as far back as 2015 until its adoption by the STC on Youth, Culture and Sports in Algiers in 2018.

49. She further highlighted that the Draft Model Law will assist Member States in developing national legislation or revising and strengthening their current legislation on the protection of cultural property and heritage.

**Consideration of the Model Law**

50. During the extensive deliberation on the Draft Model Law, the general principles in paragraph 21 were applied. The following specific key issues were discussed:

- i. reflect Africa’s colonialisation and stress the criminalisation of the systematic and illicit trafficking of African cultural property outside the continent;
- ii. Some provisions should be subject to national laws;
- iii. The Model law included both protection and promotional components;

**Conclusion:**

51. The Draft Model Law was adopted with the proposed amendments and there were no outstanding issues.

**vi. Proposed amendments to the Statute of the African Union Commission on International Law (AUCIL)**

52. The draft amendments were presented by a representative of the AUCIL Secretariat. He cited two (2) Executive Council Decisions: **EX.CL/Dec.1019 (XXXIII)**, and **EX.CL/Dec.1047 (XXXIV)**, whereby the Executive Council recommended that the Statutes of AUCIL be amended to enable the AUCIL present the findings of its Studies to the STC-JLA; and requested the AU Commission to formally inform the Government of Equatorial Guinea of the procedure for hosting AU bodies and the conditions for the transfer of the AUCIL Secretariat, respectively.
53. He also highlighted the amendment procedure of the AUCIL Statute and informed the meeting that the proposed amendments had originated from the AUCIL and had been adopted during its eighteenth ordinary session in accordance with Article 26 the AUCIL Statute.
54. Lastly he referred to Executive Council decision **EX.CL/Dec.1083(XXXVI)** adopted in February 2020 whereby the Executive Council decided to transmit the Study and recommendations on the amendments of AUCIL Statute to the STC on Justice and Legal Affairs for consideration.

**Consideration of the proposed amendments**

55. During the extensive deliberations, the general principles in paragraph 21 were applied. The following specific key issues were discussed:
- i. The STC-JLA should not go beyond the mandate stipulated in Decision **EX.CL/Dec.1019 (XXXIII)** whereby the Executive Council recommended that the Statutes of AUCIL be amended to present the findings of its Studies to the STC on Justice and Legal Affairs;
  - ii. To bear in mind the reform process of the Union whereby the Assembly had delegated some of its mandate to the Executive Council;
  - iii. To bear in mind that the STC-JLA already had the mandate to consider studies by the AUCIL;
  - iv. To use *mutatis mutandis* the following wording for all proposed amendments on the submission of the findings of the studies of the AUCIL to STC-JLA: “... to the STC for consideration. The STC in turn shall submit its recommendations for decision to the Executive Council and/or the Assembly, as applicable.” and;

- v. The Commission and the AUCIL were tasked to consult and merge the following proposed amendment within a suitable Article in the AUCIL Statute:

**Findings of studies**

**(2) The findings of the studies undertaken by the AUCIL shall be submitted to the STC for consideration by the Executive Committee and / or the Assembly, as applicable.”**

**Outstanding Issues**

**a. Article 7(2)**

56. During the adoption of the draft legal instruments the delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco informed the meeting that during the consideration of Article 7(2), they had been under the impression that the discussion was not concluded and that discussions would be reopened on the item. They therefore sought to introduce the underlined sentence to the new Article 7(2) as follows:

57. *The findings of the studies undertaken by the AUCIL shall be submitted to the STC for consideration by the Executive Council and / or the Assembly, as applicable **(taking into due account of legal corpus and decisions of the Assembly)**.*

58. The OLC advised that Article 7(2) was a reflection of the Executive Council decision **EX.CL/Dec.1019 (XXXIII)**. Further, although the proposed sentence would not alter the essence of the sub-article, it had no added value.

59. The Chairperson said the discussion on the matter had been concluded. He recalled that there was consensus regarding the content of the sub-Article and the only outstanding issue was the appropriate provision of the Statute within which to merge it. The AUCIL and OLC had been tasked to find an appropriate provision in this regard.

60. He concluded by saying that during the adoption of draft legal instruments, the task before the meeting was to confirm whether all the amendments proposed during the consideration of the draft legal instruments had been effected. It was therefore un-procedural to seek to introduce substantive issues during this stage.

61. The Kingdom of Morocco was not in agreement with the ruling and the matter was therefore bracketed for further consideration by the Ministerial Session.

**b. Article 21**

62. One of the proposed amendments to the AUCIL Statute related to the relocation of the Secretariat of the AUCIL and read as follows:

***“Article 21: Secretariat of the AUCIL***

***The AUCIL shall be provided with a Permanent Secretariat with the necessary means, staff and infrastructure to enable it carry out its duties effectively.”***

63. The meeting deliberated whether the AUCIL Statute could be amended to provide for a permanent Secretariat, before the associated structural and financial implications being considered by the PRC and Policy Organs.

64. The AUCIL and the OLC referred to Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec. 1083(XXXVI) which provides as follows:

***“TAKES NOTE*** of the Study and recommendations on the amendments of AUCIL Statute; and, in accordance with its Article 26 of the AUCIL Statute, ***DECIDES*** their transmission to the STC on Justice and Legal Affairs for consideration;

***5. RECALLS*** the offer of Equatorial Guinea to host the AUCIL Secretariat and ***CALLS ON*** the PRC and the AUC, to expeditiously finalize the structure of an independent AUCIL Secretariat, the process of its relocation, and submit a report upon the adoption of the amendments;

65. They submitted that in accordance with the wording of the decision, the amendment of the AUCIL Statute should precede the other processes stipulated in the decision; namely the finalization of the structure and the process of its relocation.

66. However, some Member States were of the view that it would be against AU practice to amend the Statute before consideration of the structural and financial implications. They further argued that the STC-JLA had been tasked to consider the proposed amendments of the AUCIL Statute, which task had been fulfilled.

67. Some Member States were of the contrary view and submitted that the Executive Council Decision was a clear request to the STC-JLA to consider the proposed amendment while calling upon the AUC and the PRC to finalize the structure and the process of relocation. They were of the view that adoption of the proposed amendment would not in any way bar the consideration of the structural and financial implication by

relevant organs. Lastly, they submitted that the transfer of the AUCIL Secretariat was long overdue and was crucial towards the effective functioning of the AUCIL as an Organ of the AU.

68. There was no consensus and the matter was referred to the Ministerial session for further consideration.

### **Conclusion:**

The proposed amendments of the AUCIL Statute were adopted with the proposed changes and bracketed provisions.

### **69. Draft Framework for the Implementation of the Judgments of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights**

70. The Draft Framework was presented by the Registrar of the Court. He referred to Executive Council Decision EX.CL/Dec.1044 (XXXIV) whereby the Executive Council recommended the Draft Framework to the STC on Justice and Legal Affairs, for consideration.

71. He informed the Meeting that the Draft Framework was necessitated due to the low compliance rate with the judgments of the Court by Member States. He further said the low implementation rate was mainly due to lack of a monitoring mechanism.

72. He outlined the process leading to the development of the Draft Framework, highlighting a study which was undertaken and which forms the basis for the draft framework. He presented the draft implementation framework highlighting the seven (7) proposed steps therein.

### **Consideration of the Draft Implementation Framework**

73. The following specific key issues were noted:

- i. The monitoring unit proposed under the draft mechanism would be under the Registrar's Office and was in line with the recently adopted Rules of Procedure of the Court, and the same would be reflected in the draft Implementation Framework;
- ii. There were deliberations as to whether the PRC, was a suitable Organ to consider compliance reports under the framework, bearing in mind its political nature and lack of legal expertise. However it was clarified that in accordance with Rule 4 of the Rules of Procedure of the PRC, the PRC had the mandate to prepare the meetings of the Executive Council hence the

PRC could consider the reports. Further the PRC subcommittee on Democracy, Governance and Human Rights would be suitable to facilitate this task.

- iii. During the adoption of the draft legal instruments, the Republic of Rwanda informed the meeting that they had forwarded reservations to the OLC as they were unable to submit them during the consideration of the item, due to technical challenges. They were in opposition to the draft implementation framework as they felt Member States needed to focus on other important issues such as low compliance rate with the Courts' decisions and withdrawal by Member States of the Declarations made under Article 34(6) of the Court Protocol. Lastly they were of the view that the Draft Implementation Framework infringed on State Sovereignty.

### **Conclusion**

74. There were no outstanding issues and the draft framework was adopted as amended.

### **VII. AOB**

75. The meeting discussed the agenda and working program for the Ministerial Session.

76. The Meeting raised a concern regarding the unavailability of translation and working documents in other AU working languages, especially Arabic and Spanish, and sought the confirmation of the OLC that this would be resolved during the Ministerial Session.

77. The OLC assured the Meeting that translation and working documents would be availed in all working languages except Spanish which was recently adopted as a working language, and for which they did not have funds for hiring of the translators and interpreters.

### **VIII. CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF EXPERTS' REPORT**

78. The Meeting deliberated and adopted its report with proposed amendments

### **IX. CLOSING**

79. In his closing remarks, the Chairperson thanked all participants for their active participation.



80. He acknowledged the complex nature of the Meeting as it dealt with legal matters which require focus. However he lauded the participants for their dedication, flexibility and expertise which contributed to the smooth conclusion of the meeting.
81. He further lauded the meeting for concluding deliberations on all the draft legal instruments within the allocated schedule.
82. He concluded by thanking all participants, Secretariat and interpreters.