



**AFRICAN PARLIAMENTARY UNION
APU**

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RESOLUTION

***“The development of infrastructures in Africa
with a view to fostering long-term growth”***

(adopted by the 32nd Conference)

The African Parliamentary Union, meeting at its 32nd Conference in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 19 to 20 November 2009,

Aware of the fact that infrastructures are basic physical and organizational structures vital for the smooth running of a society and are also important services and facilities for the economy to function,

Considering that infrastructures play a major role in economic growth and constitute the backbone for development as well as the basis for the physical, economic and political integration of the continent,

Convinced that developing infrastructures and related services, by improving trade and employment prospects, contributes to poverty reduction and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

Considering that poverty reduction is closely linked to the access, by the most deprived populations, to water, sanitation, energy, transport and communication, which contribute to improving the living standards of African populations,

Concerned by the current lack of infrastructures on the continent and its negative impact on economic growth, poverty alleviation efforts and sustainable human and social development,

Aware of the fact that the lack of adequate and quality infrastructures, which leads to high production costs and marketing on the continent, is a major hindrance to trade between African countries and seriously affects the competitiveness of African products,

Convinced that the resumption of economic growth in Africa requires increasing infrastructural investments to interconnect national and regional water supply, transport, power, telecommunications and other networks across the continent, and also investments for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

Aware of the fact that internal armed conflicts and civil wars in Africa have contributed to the destruction and deterioration of the already weak infrastructures on the continent,

Aware of the urgent need to provide critical infrastructure and basic services to the most deprived populations, especially in the rural areas, and especially to internally displaced persons and refugees, and *emphasizing* the need for governments to support local authorities in this regard,

Noting that Africa's low level of the integration, its relatively weak impact on global trade and the drop in the volume of African exports are, to a large extent, due to the lack of adequate infrastructures and information services,

Concerned by the inefficient communication infrastructures at the national and continental levels, as well as heavy and complex bureaucratic inter-State and cross-border procedures in Africa,

Aware that to make for its backwardness with regard to infrastructures, the African continent needs to accelerate the development of efficient infrastructures and increase financing in this area, by allocating adequate funds; as the continent has to invest 5 to 10 % of its GDP to foster growth in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

Concerned by the heavy debt burden for most African countries and the impact of the financial crisis on the development of infrastructures in Africa,

Acknowledging the role of the State as the main provider of infrastructures, especially in the rural areas, where development still depends on public funds or donors,

Deploring the fact that some donor and beneficiary countries are reluctant to incur social expenditure, with low immediate benefits and which lead to recurrent costs,

Underlining the major role of the private sector in the development of infrastructures in Africa,

Commending the infrastructural development initiatives taken on the continent by African countries and their partners to resolve the issue of the lack of infrastructures and to ensure the continent's integration, namely:

- The Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) comprising studies conducted by the African Development Bank (AfDB), the African Union Commission and the Secretariat of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) ;
- The Infrastructure Consortium for African (ICA) ;
- EU-Africa for infrastructures as part of the European Union strategy for Africa, which aims at increasing European and African infrastructure investments and related services,

Deploring the inefficiency of public amenities and its attendant resource waste, and *noting with concern* the limited access of the African people to :

- Safe drinking water;
- Electricity;
- Telecommunications, especially between African countries, which often have to be channelled through developed countries in the North because of lack of inter-connections and switching centres, causing heavy costs for Africa;
- Basic sanitary facilities;
- Efficient sewage systems;

and that

- While road transport constitutes the key means of inter-urban transport, connections and services are inappropriate;
- The railway network is not well developed, with few interconnections between them;
- Several airports and ports are struggling to offer competitive services;
- River and lake transport facilities are not very well integrated into the transport system.

Recalling the commitment made by Heads of State and government to promote private and public sector partnerships, especially in the area of heavy infrastructure development, made at the 10th meeting of the Ordinary Session of the African Union Summit held 31 January to 2 February 2008 in Addis Ababa),

Recalling also:

- The Declaration on Development of Transport and Energy Infrastructure in Africa, adopted by the Heads of State and government of the African Union at its 12th Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1-3 February 2009;
 - The resolution of the African Parliamentary Union on: “The role of Parliaments in the protection of the environment and the achievement of sustainable development”, adopted at its 30th Conference held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 13 November 2007;
 - The resolution of the Inter-Parliamentary Union on “Climate change, sustainable development models, and renewable energies”, adopted at its 120th Assembly held on 10 April 2009 in Addis Ababa ;
 - The Millennium Declaration of 8 September 2000,
1. *Welcomes* the decisions made by the Heads of State and government of the African Union in the declaration they adopted on the Development of Transport and Energy Infrastructure in Africa, at their 12th Ordinary Session held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 1-3 January 2009;
 2. *Affirms* that strong political commitment from governments and parliaments of all African countries to infrastructure development is of a special importance to the implementation of joint strategies for infrastructure development;
 3. *Urges* all African States to take appropriate measures, particularly legislative and budgetary measures, to redirect a significant part of their current expenses to the development of this sector, particularly by reducing military spending for instance;

4. *Stresses* the role of parliaments and parliamentarians in formulating public policies as well as their role in the development of economic ties between countries;
5. *Commits* African decision-makers to accelerate, within the context of PIDA, the implementation of the strategic framework for the development of regional and continental infrastructures (water, energy, transport, information and communication technology, and *further calls their attention* to the need for applying international standards when executing such projects;
6. *Encourages* States to speed up the development of mega regional and continental hydroelectric projects, in order to provide the African people with reliable and affordable electric power, as well as to ensure energy security for Africa;
7. *Strongly supports*:
 - (a) The commitment by Heads of State and government of the African Union to give high priority to environmental protection, transport and energy safety and security to promote sustainable development of infrastructure and related services;
 - (b) The decision by the Hads of State and governments of the African Union to take appropriate measures to complete the missing sections in the major transport corridors and remove all physical and non-physical barriers to the development of inter-States transport in Africa on the one hand, and to implement appropriate institutional, legislative and regulatory reforms that foster private investment for infrastructure development, on the other hand;
8. *Encourages* African parliaments to support, through appropriate legislative measures or any other means, the commitment of African Heads of State and government to enhance institutional and research capacities to develop a non-traditional alternative sources of energy, to meet Africa's long-term energy needs, specifically nuclear energy for peaceful purposes;
9. *Urges* African governments to formulate strategies based on efficient public policies to promote public investment in education and human capacity building, technology and health;
10. *Advocates* for the setting up of sustainable, viable, reliable, efficient, and affordable environmentally-friendly infrastructure systems, to meet economic demand and provide basic social services, particularly for the deprived populations;
11. *Urges* African governments to formulate accelerated joint infrastructural development strategies and programmes, focused on planning, shared infrastructural project studies and management, and *recommends* collective negotiations with donors for their financing, so as to obtain soft rates and conditions and ensure that the cost is shared by several countries;

12. *Recommends to* African States to promote regional cooperation, South-South cooperation and North-South cooperation in the area of infrastructural development, and especially strengthen the role of Regional Economic Communities in their cooperation ties among African countries, at the sub-regional, regional and continental levels;
13. *Urges* African States to create mechanisms to assess the needs of the continent and to coordinate actions aimed at improving infrastructure networks in Africa (equipment, maintenance, sanitation and modernization);
14. *Requests* African States to mark, as national priorities, the various regional and continental programmes and plans on the inter-connexion of infrastructure networks, *encourages* parliaments to dedicate enough allocations to their funding and *invites* governments to promote innovative financing mechanisms to accelerate infrastructure development;
15. *Recommends* that emphasis be put on partnerships between the private and public sectors in the field of investment in infrastructures in Africa, so as to bridge the financing deficiency gap which impede this sector;
16. *Supports* dialogue with the private sector, through informing different financial institutions of the different infrastructure projects and their crucial role in the process of integration and poverty alleviation in the continent, and *invites* African States to establish transparent policies aimed at supporting the African private sector, so as to increase its abilities to invest in infrastructure-related development projects;
17. *Calls* for the application of the fundamental principles of good governance, and *invites* African parliaments to work for institutional and legal reforms that are conducive to private investments in infrastructure-related development projects, particularly the adoption of effective and deterrent laws against graft, which govern the allocation of contracts of public projects in a clear and a transparent manner;
18. *Affirms* the role of parliaments and parliamentarians in formulating national development strategies and in controlling their effectiveness, and *invites* African parliaments to have institutions that are capable of monitoring public policies on infrastructural development at the national level;
19. *Calls* on developed countries to meet their commitment to allocate 0.7% of their GNP to developing countries in form of Official Development Assistance (ODA), and requests the parliaments of these developed countries to urge their governments to do so;
20. *Requests* developed countries and financial institutions to increase their financing and technical support for infrastructural development in Africa so as to address the consequences of the crisis;

21. *Stresses* the unbearable nature of the debt burden for most African countries, which are compelled to allocate a considerable portion of the funding received for development aid to service debts, *encourages* parliaments to support international initiatives aimed at the cancellation or reduction of the external debts of African countries, and *urges* creditors to speed up the implementation of an efficient debt cancellation process;
22. *Encourages* African governments to dedicate a substantial part of the funds released from debt reduction and cancellation, to finance the development of infrastructures, and particularly, for training African experts in infrastructural work, to build capacities to conduct feasibility studies and to develop projects, and to improve the legal frameworks and the global business environment.