Abuja Ministerial Session: CISLAC-SOTU Urges Sincere Domestication and Implementation of African Union Frameworks

As Ministerial members of African Union (AU) prepare to gather for Extra-Ordinary Session of Ministers of Economy and Finance in Abuja between 21st and 24th March, 2014 to address developmental related issues such as proposals on the mechanisms for implementing the recommendations from the Report on Alternative Sources of Financing the AU; the statute of the AMF; and technical study on the establishment of the Pan African Stock Exchange; and the Study Report on the African Integration Fund, State of the Union Coalition (SOTU) in Collaboration with Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) observed that:

1. In 2009, at meeting of Head of States of 53 member countries of the African Union, the decision to ratify and accede to all OAU and AU treaties was taken; however, many regional nations have showed no committed effort to ratify the instruments and policy frameworks.

2. While some countries have been painstakingly slow in the domestication of the instruments and frameworks, others have deviated from the acceptable standards in their commitments towards ratification.

3. Inadequate knowledge among government officials about various AU instruments and frameworks and lack of political will for implementation have altered effective implementation of the instruments across the region.

4. Though African Health Strategy was committed to allocate 15% of member national budget to health in 2007 in response to the large burden of disease, which was identified as a major barrier to socio-economic development in Africa; however, Africa still faces major health challenges including high rates of maternal and child mortality, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria.

5. Despite the existence of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) launched in 2003 to allocate a minimum of 10% of the member states’ national budgets to invest in agriculture, in order to achieve an annual agricultural growth of 6%, Africa has continued to experience intense rate of malnutrition emanating from lack of political will to institute meaningful agricultural development in some member states including Nigeria.

6. The implementation of African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption ratified in 2006 meant to promote accountability and transparency in the management of public affairs has suffered setback as African community witnesses increasing level of corruption, massive looting and economic mismanagement.

7. Civil Society and relevant stakeholders have continued to advocate for a democratic culture, effective public institutions accountability and meaningful citizens’ participation in public affairs to demand the delivery of key political, social, and economic rights that directly impact their lives.

CISLAC urges the participating Ministers and Civil Society Groups to critically take cognizance of the following prayers:

1. Aggressive awareness campaign to popularize the African Union legal instruments and frameworks across the region.
2. Constructive and intensified government-CSOs-AU partnership towards effective domestication of the respective instruments and frameworks.

3. Strong political will to combat the growing rate of corruption that has denied various African nations meaningful development.

4. Prompt and decisive move by African governments in the legislating, monitoring and committing various AU instruments to avert their deviation from the established standards.

5. Committed and innovative efforts toward full-fledged budgetary allocation (15%) to the Health sector; and agriculture (10%) across Africa.

6. Workable commitment by African governments to enhance the health and wellbeing of African citizens by taking health initiatives and agricultural development as matters of importance.

7. Continuous collaboration with Civil Society and relevant stakeholders to establish a democratic culture, effective public institutions and meaningful citizens’ participation in public affairs to demand the delivery of key political, social, and economic rights that directly impact their lives.

Signed:

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