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DECLARATION

THE EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE AFRICAN UNION SPECIALIZED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SERVICE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT, URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND DECENTRALIZATION (STC No. 8) ON THE RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

10 June 2020

By Videoconference

PREAMBLE

We, Members of the Bureau of the **African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Public Service, Local Government, Urban Development and Decentralization** meeting through Video conferencing on 10 June 2020 during this Extraordinary Session organized by the African Union Commission (AUC) to consider strategies and actions to support the continental response strategy to the COVID-19 pandemic;

CONCERNED by the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on African societies and economies resulting in the deepening of poverty, inequality and unemployment exacerbated by other natural disasters such as locust infestation, floods, drought and famine;

COGNIZANT of the Africa Framework for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (NUA), Agenda 2063-The Africa We Want and the 2030 global agenda on sustainable development and the importance of urban development and transformation in Africa, given that cities are most affected by this pandemic;

REAFFIRMING of the outcomes of the meetings of the African Union (AU) Bureau of Heads of State and Government held on 26 March and 03 April 2020 focusing on Africa's response to the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as the meeting of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa with African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on 19 March 2020;

MINDFUL of the urgent need for the STC. No. 8 to frame its strategic response to the Covid-19 pandemic;

HEREBY COMMIT OURSELVES TO:

SUPPORT efforts underway under the stewardship of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa-CDC) towards the effective implementation of the Continental COVID-19 Response Strategy in general and specifically as it relates to public service and administration, decentralisation and local governance as well as housing and urban development;

FOSTER a coordinated continental response by AU Member States to the COVID-19 pandemic and mitigate its impacts on Public Service and Administration, Decentralisation and Local Governance as well as Housing and Urban Development

ENHANCE provision of public services while strengthening institutions of public administration as part of the continental response to the COVID-19 pandemic with the ultimate goal of building and/or strengthening capable and developmental states;

STRENGTHEN local authorities and support traditional governance institutions in our efforts to empower communities in our collective response to COVID-19 while striving towards resilience of societies during and beyond COVID-19;

SUPPORT efforts aimed at planned urbanisation, access to basic services (water, sanitation, electricity and transport), improved housing and human settlements to address challenges of urban poverty, informal settlements which have been exacerbated by COVID-19; and support to the informal sector.

MOBILISE adequate resources and promote innovation to ensure and facilitate effective and efficient service delivery and performance;

BUILD partnerships with key regional, continental and global institutions as well as the Private Sector to effectively facilitate resource mobilization for STC. No.8 in supporting Member States efforts to respond, recover and rebuild societies in light of the adverse social-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic;

ENCOURAGE AU Member States to ensure that the delivery of public services under COVID-19 restrictions at national level should be inspired by the principles of Public Service and Administration as enshrined in the provisions of the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration; and to this end, Member States should engage in experience-sharing and lessons-learning on COVID-19 response strategies anchored on effective and efficient public services;

URGE all the Member States of the African Union, who have not yet done so, to ratify, domesticate and implement to African Charter on the Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration and the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development;

CALL on all the Member States to ensure that the delivery of public services under COVID-19 restrictions at national and local levels should be inspired by the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration; the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development; and the Harmonized Regional Framework for the implementation, monitoring and reporting on the New Urban Agenda in Africa;

IMPLORE the African Union Member States, Regional Economic Communities, with support from the international community, to ensure that even as we respond to COVID-19, we also make concerted efforts to prevent, manage and resolve violent conflicts in line with the theme

of this year: **Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development.**

REQUEST the Commission to develop the action-plan aimed at ensuring the effective implementation of this declaration and report regularly during the sessions of the STC No.8.

Adopted on 10 June 2020