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PROGRESS REPORT
**on Research Policy Framework, Capacity Building for the
African Policymakers and the Formation of the Pan African
Intellectual Property Organisation (PAIPO)**

Progress Report on Research Policy Framework, Capacity Building for the African Policymakers and the Formation of the Pan African Intellectual Property Organisation (PAIPO)

1. Reporting Progress on Pan African Intellectual Property Organization (PAIPO)

Recent developments on intellectual property involving major institutional initiatives at the global level have made it vital for Africa to establish a continental structure that would be responsible for protection of innovations and promotion of inventive activity. Considerable progress has been made under Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) that requires a common policy front by African countries. Growing pressures of globalization have also set the pace for many countries to secure effective guidance that, with the right policy and institutional framework, African countries can forge ahead in stimulating both inventiveness and the generation of productive innovations.

Issues of prosperity and progress in well-being are organically interwoven with innovative experiences and how societies devise mechanisms to protect innovations, including institutions that guide wealth creation through innovational growth. The vision of the African Union, namely, of evolving a peaceful integrated and prosperous continent that is part of the global knowledge economy, is significantly realizable through systems that harmonize intellectual property policy management.

Since the Summit decision by the Heads of State to establish the Pan African Intellectual Property Organization (PAIPO) in January, 2007, the Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology has embarked on several activities to facilitate the operational existence of this continental structure. As a first step, the Department has appointed AU-STRC as the focal point for all PAIPO matters, and communication with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and other key stakeholders would proceed via this focal point. A consultant has been engaged to prepare a draft document defining the Constitutive Articles of the organization which will be subjected to discussions during the Stakeholders Meeting to be held early in 2008. When the draft is ready, it will be circulated to the various stakeholders prior to the meeting. This will set the tone for the deliberations.

The draft document will clearly outline the objectives, structure, staffing, funding, location, linkages with major stakeholders, steering committee meetings, scope of operations, and other relevant details. It is important to state that PAIPO will only address issues of policy and will not affect the day-to-day operations of existing regional organizations. PAIPO's existence will NOT lead to the

dissolution of existing IP institutional arrangements. Rather, their prestige, influence, and continental scope will be greatly enhanced.

2. Reporting Progress on Infectious Diseases Programme

The problem of infectious diseases has been a recurring theme in many meetings and consultative fora in Africa. Climatic and tropical conditions has made it difficult to deal with maladies especially because concerted practical efforts have been limited compared to the magnitude of the problem. If the productive potential of Africa is not to be sapped by enervating experiences of infectious diseases, than the need to integrate scientific and technological dimensions into the various programmes becomes all the more urgent.

The meeting held in Pretoria, South Africa on 5th September, 2007 entitled: ***'Infectious Diseases: preparing for the future - Africa'*** was organized by United Kingdom's Foresight Programme with collaborative participation by the African Union, and whose objective was to focus minds in Africa on the significance of science and technology inputs into an infectious disease programme. The incorporation of scientific and technological components has been seen as an effective way of meeting the challenge posed by such debilitating experiences.

Objectives

1. To disseminate the findings of the Foresight infectious diseases programme to be coordinated by the Department of Human resources, Science and Technology, African Union. This would entail
 - a. Advancing a vision for infectious disease management.
 - b. To undertake a cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary approach to infectious disease management which would involve the surveillance of infections in humans, animals and plants.
2. To raise awareness at a high-level within the African Union and other leading African stakeholder organisations.
3. To facilitate the exchange of ideas and perspectives on the future threats of infectious diseases, and how they might best be managed

At the present time, AU-STRC and the Foresight Programme (UK) is planning to host a meeting of stakeholders in February, 2008 with a view to generating a framework on how the various regions of Africa will implement programmes on the ground. The draft framework will form the basis of a formal agreement that will be processed through the appropriate AU channels.