



Citizen Engagement for African Integration and Transformation

Report on the 2nd Consultative Dialogue between Civil Society Organizations
and the Pan African Parliament

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Introduction

The 2nd dialogue between civil society organizations and the Pan African Parliament (PAP) brought together civil society leaders from across Africa to engage with members of PAP on issues related to state and citizens' relations. Under the theme, "African Integration, Transformation & Citizen Engagement," the focus of the meeting was African citizens' role in political and economic transformation on the continent. In particular, the 'democratic deficit' in Africa was addressed as a major impediment to governance and integration. This dialogue was also a celebration of Africa Day - the 25th of May.

The overall objective of this dialogue was to strengthen the democratic space for civic engagement and to underscore the urgency for protecting citizens' participation and voice in Africa's development. The specific objectives of the meeting included:

- Providing space for civil society engagement with and access to the Pan African Parliament (structures, programmes/projects and Members of Parliament) thereby implementing the objectives of the Midrand Civil Society Support Facility for engagement with the African Union institutions based in Midrand, South Africa;
- Exploring innovative ways of addressing current challenges hindering collaboration between civil society, parliaments and governments;
- Strengthening research findings and gaining further insights on the legislative framework and regulatory systems for civic engagement in Africa;
- Providing civil society recommendations and inputs into the dialogue on the transition of the Pan African Parliament from an advisory authority to a legislative body.

The meeting was both timely and relevant given the unique opportunity of the Pan African Parliament's 11th Ordinary Session which deliberated on the transformation of the parliament from an advisory to a legislative authority. During the 11th session PAP also elected a new Bureau of Parliament to manage and administer the affairs and facilities of the Parliament for the next 3 years.

The Pan African Parliament is a critical tool for implementing citizens' rights and providing a platform for their demands and concerns at the continental level. It is therefore imperative for the Parliament and citizen formations to work closely, collaboratively and in complimentary ways to improve relations between citizens and their states as well as contribute jointly to the general welfare of citizens. Echoing the concerns raised during the May 2007 PAP CSO dialogue on "Building Effective Mechanisms for Civil Society Engagement with Pan African and Regional Institutions," both parliamentarians and civil society leaders spoke to the absence of formal linkages between national, regional, and continental initiatives among civil society organizations and with intergovernmental processes. In effect, these weak linkages effectively stifle the voice of citizens' groups in regional and continental policy development processes.¹ It was again recommended that there be formalization of engagement mechanisms between civil society formations and the PAP in order to support the Parliament fulfill its vision.

¹ Report on Building Effective Mechanisms for Civil Society Engagement with Pan African a Regional Institutions, May 7-8 2007, page 4. – available at www.southernafriatrust.org/docs/PAP_Dialogue-dft5.pdf

Background

People's movements, faith-based formations and various constellations of civil society have always been involved in the democratization of the public sphere in Africa. Historically, these groups were active in liberation struggles and nation building across the continent. Today this same civil society sector continues to play a critical role in economic and political processes. However, this important work is often overlooked. In fact, many African governments have forgotten the significance of a vibrant civil society and have instead developed an aversion to this sector, enacting legislation which in some cases is aimed at restricting the operations of civil society organizations and undermining their work.

The alarming pace at which these laws are put in place or invoked provided the context for the Southern Africa Trust (the Trust) and TrustAfrica to commission studies of the legislative environment for civil society in Africa. Although all the studies were not completed by the time this report was produced, its preliminary findings were appropriate for the 11th Ordinary Session of the Pan African Parliament, during which discussions began on plans to transform the PAP into a fully legislative body of the African Union. Based on the existing working relations between the PAP and the Trust, a 2nd consultative dialogue was organized bringing primary stakeholders together in order to discuss practical means of engagement. This would foster collaboration and cooperation in the interest of advancing the Pan African Parliament's vision to "provide a common platform for African peoples and their grass-roots organizations to be more involved in discussions and decision-making on the problems and challenges facing the continent."²

This meeting built on a previous dialogue organized in May 2007 by the Trust and its advisory committee³ on engagement with Pan African institutions based in Midrand, South Africa, in collaboration with the PAP and co-funded by TrustAfrica. This was a two-day consultative dialogue between the Pan African Parliament and civil society organizations on the margins of the 7th Ordinary Session of the Parliament in Midrand, South Africa. The aim of the meeting was to facilitate a deeper discussion around the need to find practical approaches and/or mechanisms to foster closer working relationships between and among civil society organizations and the PAP, thereby increasing awareness and knowledge of PAP processes and sustained engagement with civil society organizations. The dialogue informed civil society organizations about the official opportunities available for engagement with the PAP and provided a way forward to have a more structured approach to civil society engagement with Pan African institutions.

Following the 2007 meeting, civil society engagement with the PAP has become an important aspect of strengthening marginalized voices through the various structures of the Pan African Parliament. In order to give effect to this engagement and the recommendations from the first dialogue, a Civil Society Support Facility (CSSF) was set-up in Midrand to facilitate civil society linkages with the Pan African institutions based in Midrand (PAP, the New Partnership for Africa's Development – NEPAD, and the African Peer Review Mechanism - APRM). This was done following TrustAfrica taking steps towards establishing a Civil Society Interface Facility at the African Union headquarters in Addis Ababa in order to enable direct civil society engagement with the African Union structures and leadership there. The goal of these facilities is to stimulate and facilitate African civil society to effectively and efficiently interface with these intergovernmental institutions in order to contribute to strengthening governance and securing economic development in Africa. Both facilities also work closely with the Centre for Citizen's Participation – AU (CCP-AU) based in Addis Ababa to promote and ensure a sustained and structured engagement with the African Union by African citizens.

² <http://www.pan-africanparliament.org/>, as articulated in the preamble of the protocol establishing the Pan African Parliament.

³ Comprising individuals from Oxfam, Action Aid, AFRODAD, OSISA, EISA, TrustAfrica, African Monitor, and the Center for Policy Studies.

The **Pan-African Parliament** is the legislative body of the African Union. Established in 2004, through Articles 5 and 17 of the Constitutive Act, and the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the AEC relating the Pan African Parliament, the Pan African Parliament (PAP) currently serves as a consultative and advisory body that investigates, deliberates, makes recommendations, and advocates for positions on continental affairs. During its first term, 2004 – 2009, the PAP was expected to put in place the processes and administrative structures necessary to facilitate its full operation, so that in its second term and beyond, the PAP would evolve into a legislative arm of the African Union composed of directly elected members.

The PAP structure is headed by a bureau that performs executive roles and is supported by the Secretariat based in Midrand. The PAP began its second phase through the election of a new bureau at its 11th Ordinary Session in May 2009. The current composition of the bureau which was elected on May 28 2009 is:

The President and members of PAP bureau are currently as follows:

- President Hon. Dr. Idriss Ndele MOUSSA from Chad
- First Vice-President Hon. Bethel AMADI (representing West Africa)
- Second Vice-President Hon. Mary MUGYENYI (representing Eastern Africa)
- Third Vice-President Hon. Laroussi HAMMI (representing Northern Africa)
- Fourth Vice-President Hon. Joram GUMBO (representing Southern Africa)

Building on this history of interaction, the Trust and TrustAfrica hosted a second dialogue with the Pan African Parliament and a luncheon with members of parliament (sponsored by MTN). This report therefore focuses on the debates and recommendations which emerged from this meeting between Pan African parliamentarians and civil society organizations on May 25, 2009. It also details the concerns raised by various stakeholders at the meeting and seeks to amplify their remarks in order to develop a set of actionable recommendations for improving collaboration between the Pan African Parliament and civil society formations.

Opening of the 2nd Consultative Dialogue between African CSOs and the Pan African Parliament

Sadly, the dialogue began with the news of the untimely death, in the early hours of the 25th of May 2009, of Dr. Tajudeen Abdul-Raheem, one of the Pan African movement's greatest advocates and visionaries. Mr. Neville Gabriel commenced his opening remarks by bringing the meeting to a moment of silence to honour Dr. Tajudeen who had been involved with various Pan-African processes across the continent including being a speaker at the first PAP/CSO dialogue and the head of the UN Millennium Campaign in Africa. Mr. Brian Kagoro of Action Aid opened the second session by giving a short tribute to Dr. Tajudeen; after which, he called on participants to honor Dr. Tajudeen's memory by keeping in mind his dream of a truly united Africa where citizens could move freely, unrestricted by the restraints retained by their governments, and a Pan African Parliament with legislative authority which African people can go to for relief. Refer to:

<http://endpoverty2015.org/english/news/dr-tajudeen-abdul-raheem-1961-2009/25/may/09>

<http://www.pambazuka.org/en/category/features/56576>.

Before the opening remarks by the organisers of the dialogue there was a presentation by the 2010 World Cup organising committee on the state of preparation for the 2010 World Cup. The presentation by Mr. Rich Mkhondo, the Chief Communications Officer of the 2010 FIFA World Cup Organising Committee highlighted the importance of generating support for the World Cup next year from across Africa.

MTN reflected on the importance of telecommunications as a catalyst for the integration of the continent. Integration has to be supported by the corporate world and MTN's presence in most countries in Southern Africa and East Africa was testament to their foresight and commitment in spearheading the integration of services.

In his opening remarks, Southern Africa Trust's Executive Director, Mr. Neville Gabriel, while congratulating PAP on its first five years, recalled the PAP's first President, Dr. Gertrude Mongella's description of the Pan African Parliament as representing the "voice of the voiceless." Mr. Gabriel referred to the establishment of the facilities developed to support civil society engagement with Pan African institutions in Addis Ababa and Midrand as processes requiring active citizen engagement. The example of the SADC Regional Poverty Observatory was used to illustrate another example of multi-stakeholder engagement with intergovernmental structures. Mr. Gabriel challenged PAP to provide spaces for citizens and their formations to participate and contribute to their own well being through committees so that the recommendations of PAP to other bodies of the AU are grounded in the citizens' aspirations, especially the poor. He further requested that parliamentarians consistently support legislation that enables citizens to embrace integration and participate fully and freely in their own development.

On the 36th anniversary of Africa Day, TrustAfrica board member, Bishop Malusi Mpumlwana, spoke to the meaning and symbolism of African unity which promotes social, political, and economic integration for the advancement of African people. He drew attention to the nuance that although the lead actors of integration may be heads of State and Government, integration can only be pursued on behalf of Africa's citizens. Accordingly, the symbiotic relationship between citizens and their governments is mirrored in the interaction between the Pan African Parliament and civil society organizations. One cannot exist and/or have relevance, without the other. He emphasized the importance of PAP assuming legislative powers as critical for its effectiveness in integrating the continent. Bishop Malusi concluded by celebrating the work of the PAP since 2004. He called on participants to put citizen's desires and concerns at the heart of the PAP in order to enhance the work that has been accomplished over the past 46 years since the establishment of the Organization for African Unity.

Finally, Dr. Gertrude Mongella, President of the Pan African Parliament, addressed participants echoing Bishop Malusi's call for solidarity in the face of persistent challenges. She celebrated the achievements that PAP made in the first five years of its existence. Dr. Mongella underscored the importance of embracing democratic practice which would yield positive results such as the enhancement of women's leadership. In particular, she paid attention to the electoral observatory missions led by Honorable Marwick Khumalo of Swaziland. She however lamented the challenges still persistent in bringing about good governance, particularly the negation of the rule of law. Dr. Mongella concluded by thanking PAP for its support to her during her tenure and pledged her support to the incoming bureau.

Governance for Africa's integration

This session was in the form of a panel discussion amongst PAP regional caucus chairpersons (or representatives) and a representative of civil society. The panel included:

West Africa - Hon. Sawadogo Lassane (Burkina Faso)
East Africa - Hon. Sunil Dowarkasing (Mauritius)
Central Africa - Hon. Obami- Itou (Congo)
Southern Africa - Hon. Marwick Khumalo (Swaziland)
Northern Africa - Hon. Laroussi Hammi (Algeria)
Civil society - Dr. Bhekinkosi Moyo (TrustAfrica)
Moderator: Dr. Monica Juma (Africa Institute of South Africa)

Dr. Monica Juma opened the first session by asking participants to reflect on the opportunities and challenges for citizens' participation in the integration process bearing in mind current governance practices in various regions.

Members of parliament representing regional blocs made presentations on the state of integration in their regions and how integration initiatives related to the broader goal of African unity, while specifically speaking to the opportunities and challenges that exist for citizens' engagement in integration processes. Among the most important obstacles to African integration, speakers cited the historic dualities of differing colonial legacies across regions and within regions, resulting in linguistic and cultural divisions which continue to obstruct integration processes. Another critical challenge to integration is general instability and the persistence of conflict zones in many of the continent's sub-regions (West Africa - Ivory Coast, Guinea, and Guinea Bissau; Central Africa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and in East Africa - Somalia and Sudan).

Governance was underlined as the most prevalent obstacle to integration from the smallest level of corruption at border posts that undermines the free-movement of people to the revision of constitutions which disenfranchises citizens across the continent and undercuts faith in governance structures and processes. Hon. Marwick Khumalo also felt that governments which steadfastly cling to their sovereign status were prolonging the lack of integration of the continent. Particular reference was made to stringent regulations requiring student and work permit as a hindrance to the free movement of people. This was contrasted with the movement of workers between Rwanda and Kenya without the use of work permits as an example that promotes integration.

However, African integration has also made important advances which were highlighted by various speakers. It was noted that the establishment of the ECOWAS passport which allows free movement of people in West Africa is a considerable achievement. Hon. Sunil Dowarkasing pointed to the East African Community Monetary Union expected to come into force in 2025 as key to the integration and free movement of people, goods and services. In the same line, Hon. Marwick Khumalo cited the example of Namibia's NamPower as a noteworthy illustration of regional integration and infrastructure whereby surplus energy produced by NamPower is shared with its regional neighbours. Hon. Sawadogo Lassane emphasized the importance of using regional intergovernmental bodies to accelerate the quest for unity and developing formations or aligning existing formations with the bodies. However there were also concerns about the lack of implementation on various initiatives meant to harness the regional integration agenda such as the SADC Free Trade Agreement.

Hon. Laroussi Hammi spoke to the spirit of African unity citing the tremendous investment of 6 North African nations which provide 50% of the African Union's annual budget. Particular reference was made

to the need for wireless infrastructure in order to connect the continent. Hon. Dowarkassing had equally lamented the challenges of telecommunication on the continent.

Dr. Bhekinkosi Moyo spoke as an "honorable member of civil society," representing a constituency that is the 7th largest economy in the world; a major employer with a 39.5 million person global staff; and a 1.3 trillion dollar industry. Dr. Moyo explained that in terms of regional integration citizens have always led the way, setting the example for Heads of State. The fault lines that exist in hindering regional integration are social, political, and economic. Although these boundaries have hindered states from integrating with one another they have served as a motivating factor for integrating citizens divided by artificial boundaries. Beyond the free movement of people over Africa's land borders, Dr. Moyo called for the integration of Africa's public spheres in which citizens' initiatives are being restricted and where space should be open and free to all of Africa's people to participate in areas that have the potential to influence their development.

In response to the challenges to integration raised, Dr. Moyo insisted on the need to rekindle the Pan African aspiration in order to overcome the long-standing debate on linguistic, ethnic, and national divides. In terms of political governance, Dr. Moyo raised the question of how citizens can contribute to the rule of law and have space for civic engagement in order to avoid democratic recessions. Given the enormous global investment in civil society, civil society needs to evaluate whether African people are getting value for their money. What are the concrete results of continued investment in Africa's civil society and how can these be measured and understood? Dr. Moyo proposed two strategies for engaging citizens with the Pan African Parliament:

- (1) Procedurally through classical functions, citizen formations could play an oversight role, monitoring and reporting on Parliament deliberations and recommendations;
- (2) Civil society organizations could play a substantive role through non-classical functions such as convenings, workshops, access to journals, petitions and information housed in the Parliament.

Citizens' participation and African integration

The panel for this session included:

Hon. Joram Gumbo (Zimbabwe)

Hon. Anab Abdulkadir (Ethiopia) – representing the PAP Women's Caucus

Hon. Njingum Musa Mbutoh (Cameroon)

Mr. Désiré Assogbavi – Centre for Citizen's Participation

Mr. Brian Kagoro – Action Aid Africa, Policy & Advocacy Manager

Moderator: Ms. Lerato Mbele – CBNC Africa

Ms. Lerato Mbele of CNBC Africa moderated the panel on citizens' participation in African integration by recalling her SABC coverage of the 2002 launch of the African Union in Durban, South Africa. By 2002, the Organization of African Unity's fundamental ambition of liberation from the vestiges of colonialism and apartheid had been achieved. The inauguration of the African Union marked African Heads of States' renewed commitment to political and economic integration on the continent. In 2004, the Pan African Parliament was established in order to represent the voice of "ordinary Africans" at the African Union and provide a means of engagement for citizen formations to interface with AU structures. Ms. Mbele asked speakers to focus their comments on practical means of engagement between civil society organizations and the Pan African Parliament.

Pan African Parliament members and civil society representatives spoke to the historical linkages between citizens' participation and the African Union which was born of the Pan African movement. Speakers also addressed the need to have a common African voice at the international level in order to form a trading block capable of holding its own with the rest of the world and reinforcing the continent's weaker economies.

New trends in African integration were identified including women's increased political participation and leadership at the local and national level which are indications that women's influence continues to grow. Hon. Anab Abdulkadir noted that although these advances in women's leadership and political representation are encouraging, there remains much work to be done in terms of achieving gender equality in Africa.

Hon. Mbutoh stressed the importance of transforming PAP into a substantive legislative body by stating that it is *'time to move from a talk shop to a work shop'*. Several speakers underlined the need to go beyond the grand gestures of the first generation of African leaders, and move towards action. In their view, the regional integration process can only be supported by a consolidated approach to alleviating the continent's economic and political impediments. One proposition in this line of thought included the establishment of an African Central Bank that would serve as the focal point for all African governments.

Parliamentarians concerns were echoed by representatives of civil society who spoke to the need for ownership of Africa's development agenda. Speakers urged African leaders to move beyond mere participation and become change agents capable of influencing international development policy in favor of African people. It was noted that within the current African development paradigm, African institutions lack the power to implement, which undermines their ability to support people-centered economic growth and development.

The challenge of funding was also raised, where multinational corporate voices are heard more loudly in the debate on African development due to their ability to mobilize resources in favor of their own projects. As a consequence, business rather than people oriented processes have taken precedence in the integration agenda.

Mr. Brian Kagoro interrogated effective ways in which citizens can participate in the Pan African Parliament, underlining the need for citizen formations to have a stake in and control of the Parliament. One recommendation which emerged was to have citizens' formations evaluate and monitor Parliament, strengthening it from within rather than standing on the outside.

Mr. Desiree Assogbavi celebrated the democratic foundations of the Pan African Parliament that hold promise to effectively translate the direct will of citizens into legislation at the continental level. He drew attention to the need to capacitate the PAP in order to facilitate citizens' entry points for participation, monitoring and strengthening.

The discussion on the floor pointed to the need to engage integration locally and nationally first in order for it to manifest effectively on the continental level. The discussion concluded with the need to engage citizens in the legislative and deliberative processes at the PAP through mechanisms that include advocacy, information exchange, legislative reform, and sharing best practices in order to achieve citizen empowerment and unity.

Opportunities and challenges for citizens' participation in Africa's development

Dr. Bhekinkosi Moyo (TrustAfrica)

Moderator: Dr. Francis Ikome (Institute for Global Dialogue)

Presentation by Dr. Bhekinkosi Moyo – Africa Needs Civil Society: Strategies for engaging citizens

The strategies used to engage African citizens in democratic processes are implemented at three levels, national, sub-regional, and continental. In addition, three main historical periods have shaped citizen's engagement in political processes. During the colonial era, the euphoria and momentum that surrounded liberation blurred the line between political and civil society. Importantly, people's movements, faith based organizations and various constellations of civil society were instrumental in decolonization and anti-apartheid struggles. During the post-independence era, closed spaces began to emerge as nascent states claimed full control of the public sphere and distanced themselves from civil society partners. This period was characterized by an adversarial relationship between government, trade unions, and civil society formations. The cordial and enabling environment for interaction that had once existed between government and civil society was replaced by restricted and hostile engagement. This adversarial relationship was tempered to some extent during the transitional period from one-party rule to multi-party participatory democracies. Relationships between governments and civil society became collegial and were based on civil society's ability to deliver social and economic services to disadvantaged populations. However, throughout the history of state formation in Africa, advocacy work and human rights activism have remained contested territory, and today, civil society is increasingly seen as a politically active agent, and hence as a threat to ruling governments.

Dr. Moyo presented a synthesis report on the legislative environment for civil society organizations in Africa commissioned by Southern Africa Trust and TrustAfrica. Preliminary findings from the survey of 12 countries⁴ indicate that the type of relationships that emerge between African governments and civil society are in large part determined by the history of state formation, the process through which non-governmental organization legislation is developed, and the ministry responsible for administering the civil society sector. In countries where the context for state formation was stable - the environment for civil society tended to be more permissive, whereas in the case of states which emerged from conflict and instability, the relationship between government and civil society tended to be more adversarial and repressive. Additionally, where laws emerged from a consultative process between government and civil society formations laws tended to be more enabling. Where the law making process is state driven, laws tend to be more repressive. Accordingly, a state driven process will likely assign the civil society sector to the ministry of internal affairs or the ministry of justice, indicating that the sector represents a threat to security or the rule of law, whereas a consultative legislative process is more likely to be housed in the ministry of social or economic development indicating that civil society is recognized as an actor and partner in the development process.

Repressive or constraining NGO legislation has arisen as a result of the adversarial relations between government and civil society actors. These laws include narrow definitions of national versus foreign NGOs, cumbersome registration procedures, restrictive internal governance requirements, as well as restrictions on freedom of association, speech and the right to fundraise. In Africa in particular, the political and human rights arena is at the core of the fractious relationship between civil society and the state. As a consequence, all forms of development that occur outside state driven processes become politically sensitive. This situation is exacerbated by the role of foreign funding in Africa, which feeds

⁴ Angola, DRC, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

adversarial competition between these two sectors. This is widely perceived by political elites as fostering political opposition and impeding government control of civil society. Accordingly, elections which serve to legitimize political leadership become the theatre for outright contestation and even violent conflict between these two sectors.

In light of this analysis of the history and implications of the relationship between the state and civil society in Africa, Dr. Moyo posed the following questions as discussion points:

1. What is the greatest threat to citizen participation in development processes? Is it civil society formations themselves or legislation and other restrictions erected by governments?
2. Does foreign funding help or hinder the agenda of civil society organizations and how can this resource be used effectively?

The discussions which followed this presentation unearthed latent debates and concerns of both civil society leaders and parliamentarians, focusing on issues of accountability, representation, and legitimacy. On the one hand, civil society organizations purport to represent local constituencies but do not follow the procedural practices of direct suffrage, therefore their status as spokespeople and representatives of citizens requires scrutiny. Many African states lack international recognition due to weak governance records and poor infrastructure. Civil society organizations have therefore increasingly become recipients of significant amounts of development aid which often rivals ministerial budgets, thereby exacerbating existing hostilities between the two sectors. There is a perception that foreign funding undermines the legitimacy of both sectors by influencing their development agendas and shifting accountability from local constituencies to foreign donors. Overall, both sectors struggle for formal and direct accountability to their stakeholders. For parliamentarians, the electoral systems in their home nations determine the level of representational legitimacy they have, whereas, civil society organizations tend to lose direct accountability as they grow in stature and move away from the grass-roots constituencies from which they originated. Both these sets of concerns need to be addressed and procedures put in place to make sure that both parliamentarians and civil society leaders are truly representing and working for the benefit of Africa's citizens.

Strategies for engaging the Pan African Parliament

Ms. Nadia Ahmadou (Institute for Security Studies)
Ms. Barbara Kalima-Phiri (Southern Africa Trust)
Moderator: Ms. Ibrahima Kane (Open Society Institute)

The final presentations by Ms. Barbara Kalima-Phiri and Ms. Nadia Amadou discussed practical means of engagement between the PAP and civil society organizations. The Midrand Civil Society Support Facility and TrustAfrica's negotiations to establish a civil society interface facility in Addis Ababa were discussed in detail, focusing on mechanisms for civil society and parliamentarians to make use of these facilities.

Ms. Ahmadou began by highlighting that challenges of civil society and parliament relations begin at the local and national levels. The competitive nature of the funding environment leads to lack of collaboration among CSOs that engage with various committees of the PAP arising in conflicting messages to the parliament. PAP spaces are also dominated by international NGOs which overshadow the "true" African voice of locally rooted civil society formations. Policy briefs, fact sheets and other such materials generated by civil society rarely make their way to the committees for use by Pan African parliamentarians.

Ms. Kalima-Phiri challenged both civil society leaders and parliamentarians to ensure that these civil society facilities are inclusive. It is equally important that these facilities receive recognition from their interfacing bodies as support mechanisms that can promote integration and development through an interface between African citizens and their formations with the AU and its structures such as the PAP.

The main recommendations emerging from these discussions include:

1. To move beyond 'invited spaces' where civil society organizations are only able to engage continental bodies by invitation and are therefore limited by their dependence on 'host' institutions.
2. To develop working relationships (as opposed to having interactions) between AU structures and civil society formations so that both sectors can learn from one another and formalize engagement on matters of common concern.
3. To formalize the dissemination of information on AU processes and structures in order to empower civil society organizations with the information necessary to access AU structures and services.
4. To harmonize parallel initiatives led by civil society organizations and AU structures in order to achieve maximum effectiveness and take advantage of the competitive funding environment which too often pits organizations working towards the same goals against each other.
5. To increase civil society knowledge of means of engagement with the Pan African Parliament and increase commitment of the Pan African Parliament to work with civil society organizations. In particular the need to overcome cultures within civil society and the Pan African Parliament which undermine efforts to increase collaboration between the two sectors. Parliamentarians need to move beyond internal politics of the parliament and civil society leaders need to learn humility in their engagement with parliamentarians.
6. To capacitate the Pan African Parliament and civil society organizations which suffer from a lack of administrative capacity to manage information and communicate processes and initiatives effectively. This makes efforts to bridge the divide between the civil society sector and continental structures all the more difficult and cumbersome. Mechanisms need to be put in place

to reinforce the capacity of both sectors, sharing strengths so that their success and challenges are documented and shared with relevant partners.

7. To democratize civil society and increase transparency and information about the ways in which parliamentarians are appointed to the Pan African Parliament. The current ad hoc mechanisms through which CSOs engage the AU tend to favor civil society formations that do not necessarily have more legitimacy than others, but benefit from a network of contacts at the continental level that enable them to promote their agendas, regardless of whether or not it is anchored in people's movements on the ground. Formalizing processes should equalize the terrain for civil society engagement with African Union structures and thereby contribute to reinforcing democratic and egalitarian engagement.

Annexure 1: The Midrand Civil Society Support Facility

The goal of the Midrand Civil Society Support Facility is to stimulate and facilitate effective and efficient civil society engagement with the pan-African institutions based in Midrand, namely the Pan African Parliament (PAP), the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).

The objectives of the Facility are:

- a. To increase the knowledge base of both CSOs and the pan African institutions about each other in order to secure enhanced interface
- b. To facilitate an increase in the capacity of CSOs to access and engage the pan African institutions in Midrand efficiently and effectively
- c. To monitor and evaluate the levels and quality of CSO participation in the pan African institutions
- d. To empower African citizens to have a positive effect on the role of the pan African institutions.

Developing and operationalizing the facility will follow 3 distinct strategies:

- Information gathering, dissemination and awareness building
- Deepen CSO engagement with pan African institutions in policy debates and formulation
- Monitoring and evaluation

In the period immediately after the 2009 PAP/CSO dialogue the facility will:

- Follow-up the dialogue by facilitating engagement of CSOs with the Pan African Parliament committee meetings scheduled for August 2009
- Create stronger linkages with other AU-focused civil society support facilities, e.g. CCP-AU in Addis Ababa
- Develop a website and mailing lists for the facility
- Enhance the engagement of the facility with NEPAD and the APRM with a view to entrenching effective and sustainable CSO engagement with both structures
- Develop a monitoring and evaluation strategy for the pan African institutions based in Midrand to measure and assess their engagement with civic organisations
- Facilitate a platform for analytical work and learning about key processes and decisions in the pan African institutions
- Identify and popularise entry points for engaging PAP, NEPAD and the APRM continentally, regionally, and nationally