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Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

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### INFORMATION FROM THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

The following communication, received on 14 October 2016, is being circulated at the request of the Delegation of the African Union Commission (AUC).

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#### 1 AUC SPS RELATED-ACTIVITIES

1.1. The global conference AU-EU Investing in a Food Secure Future was held in Noordwijk, The Netherlands, from 4 to 6 July, 2016. The conference was attended by representatives from the AU and the EU governments, international organizations, businesses, investment groups, research institutions and civil society. The conference provided a platform for delegates to share their experiences and expertise and to partner in efforts to sustainably transform agriculture to achieve food security, improved nutrition, and rural growth. The conference was framed within the context in which Sustainable Development Goals and the African Union's Agenda 2063 vision and priorities give a fresh chance to demonstrate political leadership, strengthen international food security policy and to position the international political agenda for achieving zero hunger by 2030.

1.2. The Conference was built around a two-day Experts' segment followed by a High Level Ministerial segment on the third day, giving political orientations to improve AU-EU agricultural cooperation and build on previous international efforts and existing structures and focused on the following five themes of cooperation: 1) Climate-Smart Agriculture; 2) Reducing Food Losses and Waste; 3) Improving Market Access, regionally and internationally; 4) Increasing Responsible Private Investment in Sustainable Agriculture; and 5) Science & Innovation for Development.

1.3. The discussions on the thematic area, *Improving Market Access* included the positions to: set up an Africa-EU multistakeholder agricultural business platform focused on market access; develop a dialogue to promote coherence between agricultural and trade policies, within a regional free trade area; and build private sector capacity in compliance with and enforcement of marketing and trading standards.

1.4. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Continental SPS Committee meeting for Africa was held from 17-19 August 2016 in Accra, Ghana. The meeting was attended by members of the Continental SPS Committee from the Regional Economic Communities (RECS), international organizations (FAO, WHO, FARA, ECA, etc.), and other departments of the African Union, namely Trade and Industry and Social Affairs.

1.5. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Consolidate and sustain the momentum of operationalizing the Committee;
- Review the action points from previous meeting;
- Brief from members and organizations represented to enhance sharing of information;
- Identify areas of support; and
- Review working documents and provide input to the draft SPS Annex for the CFTA protocol.

1.6. The AUC convened the 12<sup>th</sup> Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program Partnership Platform (CAADP PP), which was held in Accra, Ghana under the theme Innovative financing and Renewed Partnerships to Accelerate the Implementation of CAADP.

1.7. The platform meeting brought together over 400 African and global leaders from international organisations, African Governments, including parliamentarians from AU member States, private agribusiness firms, farmers, NGOs and civil society organizations.

1.8. The 12<sup>th</sup> CAADP PP focused discussions and consensus on specific actions to deliver on the 2014 Malabo commitments for the next decade of CAADP in line with the thrust of the AU Agenda 2063 and compliance to standards and SPS was considered a critical component of that effort.

1.9. The CAADP Results Framework 2015-2025 places emphasis on the role of the private sector as a central catalyst and driver of inclusive agribusiness development for sustainable agricultural growth. The Commission convened stakeholders to validate the Continental Agribusiness Strategy. The main objective of the Continental Agribusiness Strategy is to provide a framework for the promotion and the development of a robust and inclusive agribusiness sector, propelling agricultural value chains across the continent, creating jobs, creating wealth and retaining it along the chains. This strategy encourages an enabling policy and regulatory framework. It foresees an African agribusiness sector driven by private sector businesses and investments as well as public private ones. The strategic thrusts identified here will be the foundation for vibrant agribusiness and agricultural trade promotion in Africa, building on existing and new initiatives at continental, regional and national levels. This strategy will, therefore, improve coordination, mobilization, advocacy, and communication among various actors in the agribusiness landscape in Africa (producing, processing, storing, marketing, exporting, consuming). The strategy is aimed at contribution toward the implementation of CAADP and the achievement of the Malabo Commitments.

1.10. The AUC is coordinating the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) processes including the development of technical documents for negotiations by African Union member States. In this regard a Draft SPS Annex has been developed for the CFTA Protocol for consideration the AU Chief Trade Negotiators.

1.11. The European Union in collaboration with the AUC organized the Better Training for Safer Foods (BTSF) training in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in September 2016 to enhance the capacities of food businesses to improve the food hygiene management.

1.12. The African Union Commission held the Second Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa – Partnership Platform Meeting (PACA – PPM) in Entebbe Uganda from 12 to 14 October 2016. The 2<sup>nd</sup> PACA PPM will bring together senior government officials from AU member States (government ministries from agriculture, trade and health), REC representatives, farmer organizations, consumer associations, large and small business sector representatives, civil society, development partners, donor communities, the African Union, and others to:

- Track progress of implementing the specific actions identified at the 1<sup>st</sup> PPM;
- Revisit other efforts of the last two years (2014-2016) of implementing PACA activities at continental, regional and national levels, in order to assess the attained successes and recorded challenges, for the development of a clear roadmap for the next two years of implementation;
- Endorse planned approaches for implementing PACA Phase II, 2016-2019;
- Celebrate the numerous programs and activities being implemented by partners in managing aflatoxin, particularly the active leadership of key agents of change and aflatoxin mitigation champions active on the continent; and
- Strengthen instruments and mechanisms for accountability, M&E and reporting for all PACA stakeholders.

## **2 AU-IBAR SPS RELATED ACTIVITIES**

### **2.1 ANIMAL HEALTH**

2.1. Meeting of African animal health experts to analyze and comment on OIE proposed changes to the Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Health Codes held in July 2016 for the meeting of the OIE Code Commissions in September 2016.

2.2. Expected outcome: identification of animal health issues of common interest to African countries and proposition of coordinated positions.

2.3. Participation of the African Union in the 84<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of OIE Delegates from 22 to 27 May 2016 in Paris, France. The African Union has coordinated the strategic attendance of African OIE Delegates during this session.

## **2.2 FOOD SAFETY**

2.4. September 2016: AU-IBAR organized an African food safety expert's consultation on residues of veterinary drugs in foods in Nairobi to examine items of the agenda items of the Codex Committee on residues of veterinary drugs in foods for its 23<sup>rd</sup> session.

2.5. In October 2016, AU-IBAR organized an African food safety expert's consultation on food hygiene in Nairobi to examine items of the agenda items of the Codex Committee on food hygiene for its 48<sup>th</sup> session.

2.6. The meetings of food safety experts are to provide scientific advice to African Union member States in collaboration with the Coordinator of CCAfrica during their preparation of national positions. This is an effort of African Union to improve the effective participation of its MS in the work of the Codex Alimentarius Commission.

2.7. AU-IBAR supported workshops on the strengthening and revitalisation of the National Codex Committees of Guinea-Bissau and Niger as well as the National SPS committees in Bissau and Niamey respectively.

## **3 SPS ACTIVITIES**

### **3.1 AU-IBAR DISCUSSION FORUM ON SPS MATTERS IN PREPARATION FOR THE 67TH SESSION OF THE SPS COMMITTEE IN OCTOBER 2016**

3.1. AU-IBAR is organizing since 1 October 2016 a discussion forum for African delegates to the SPS Committee in order to discuss issues on SPS to form the priority matters to raise during the 67<sup>th</sup> session of the SPS Committee. A meeting will be held on 24 October 2016 in Geneva to consolidate the issues and to form positions on each of the issue.

### **3.2 AU-IAPSC SPS RELATED ACTIVITIES**

3.2. IAPSC has developed the annual program within the context of the phytosanitary capacity building strategy for Africa and the recommendations from its Steering Committees and General Assembly. IAPSC programs were aligned to the strategy and the objectives of Rural Economy and Agriculture Department of the African Union and the recommendations of SC & GA. Their main mandate is to facilitate compliance with Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Standards to address challenges African countries face in the agricultural trade.

3.3. In April 2016 AU-IAPSC, in collaboration with held a meeting in April 2016 in Addis Ababa to get common position for the CPM meeting in FAO (Rome) and 12 countries participated in the meeting. The output was shared with all contracting countries in IPPC to get one common position during CPM meeting.

3.4. The second meeting was held in Addis Ababa from 13-16 September 2016 to harmonize the ISPM draft and attended by 22 countries in collaboration with the FAO. The recommendations from the meeting have been shared with the other countries.

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