



PAN-AFRICAN CONFERENCE ON FIGHTING IFFs IN AFRICA

“From Words to Actions”

15-17 March 2023 (Tunis, Tunisia)

Draft Programme of Work



Co-funded by the European Union



Ulkoministeriö
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland



Wednesday, 15th March 2023	
8 :30 – 09 :00	Registration of participants
09 :00 – 10 :30	Official Opening ceremony Press Conference Group Photo
10 :30-11 :30	High Level Panel Discussion on the theme “ From Words to Action”
11 :30– 12 :30	Discussion Panel 1: Development and Current initiatives on IFFs <p><i>According to the Report of the High-Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) from Africa, ¹indicates that, the value of total aggregated illicit outflows surged from approximately USD 4 billion in 1990 to USD 50 Billion in 2015. UNCTAD (2020)² estimates capital flight is valued at USD 88,6 billion per annum. In view of the negative consequences of this phenomenon on the economic growth of African countries and on the achievement of the objectives of the African Union Agenda 2063 and United Nations 2030 Agenda, it is important to recall the extend of this scourge before identifying some initiatives that have been taken to curb IFFs and achievements. Therefore, in addition to a brief presentation of the scale and impact of IFFs in Africa, this first panel will also take stock of current initiatives and progress in the fight against IFFs in Africa. The aim is to identify the bridges between actions in order to obtain better results in the fight against IFF. Moreover, this panel will officially launch a European initiative whose objective is to support Africa in combating Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) and Transnational Organized Crime (TOC), based on a holistic and coordinated approach.</i></p>
12 :30 – 13 :30	Lunch

¹ AU/ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, ‘Report on High-Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa’, 2015, p.2015. p.57

² UNCTAD (2020). “Tackling Illicit Financial Flows for Sustainable Development in Africa”, Economic Development In Africa Report 2020, PDF, https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/aldcafrica2020_en.pdf, accessed 19 June 2021

13 :30 – 14 :30	Discussion Panel 2: IFFs Prevention <p><i>In view of the complexity of the recovery of funds from IFFs, it is undeniably necessary to initiate actions upstream. These actions focus on prevention mechanisms through awareness raising and, above all, the establishment of mechanisms to monitor financial movements as well as the creation of strong and independent institutions in charge of the fight against corruption. However, one of the major challenges for African countries is the coordination and harmonization of responses to IFFs at national and regional levels. In some cases, there is overlap between the different agencies involved in the fight against corruption, money laundering, drug enforcement and other illicit economic and financial activities, while in other cases their roles are not clearly defined and delineated. The low level of collaboration within public institutions and with private institutions somewhat hinders the ability of countries to effectively prevent IFFs. Therefore, the exchanges and discussions organized around this panel discussion should allow on the one hand to have a regional perspective of the challenges that hinder the prevention of IFFs and on the other hand for countries to share their experiences on the appropriate mechanisms to curb these challenges.</i></p>
14 :30 – 15 :00	Health Break
15 :00 – 16 :00	Discussion Panel 3:IFFs Investigation and Prosecution <p><i>Investigation and Prosecution of IFFs requires adequate legislation and the development of financial investigation skills among anti-corruption actors. Therefore, during the discussions on this topic, it will first be discussed what actions can be taken to support national judicial, police authorities and law enforcement to introduce innovative investigation methods and to collaborate with each other in order to achieve better results in the fight against IFFs. In a second step, issues related to the challenges of cross-border cooperation at regional level will be addressed.</i></p>
18 :30 – 21 :00	Welcome Dinner
Thursday, 16th March 2023	
09:00 – 09:30	Recap from Previous day
09:30 – 11:00	Discussion Panel 4:Resource Mobilization <p><i>The ability of the African continent to mobilize financial resource is a strong predictor of its capability to achieve the goals spelt out in the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 and in the (UN) Agenda 2030.Domestic resource mobilisation (DRM) is considered to have great potential for sustainable development finance. However, tax-to-GDP revenue sources in most African countries remain extremely low, averaging only 18 percent in 2018. Tax revenue under-collection in the region is</i></p>

	<i>high with IFFs identified as one of the main obstacles, deriving primarily from tax evasion, tax avoidance, and base erosion and profit shifting (BEPS) activities. Therefore, Impact of illicit financial flows on domestic resource mobilization is very high. The aim of this Panel is to share experience on the initiatives set up by African governments and international organizations to mobilize domestic resource and optimize tax collection, win the fight against corruption and strengthen tax cooperation to stem IFFs.</i>
11:00 – 11:30	Break
11:30 – 13:00	Discussion Panel 5: Asset Recovery <p><i>Downstream, the main objective of the fight against Financial Flows is the repatriation or recovery, as far as possible, of funds and assets of which the continent has been deprived. To do this, it is necessary to obtain the cooperation of the states of destination of the funds, which are for the most part developed countries with a low tax burden or where tax havens are located. The process of tracing, freezing, confiscating and returning the stolen assets to their country of origin is usually a complex and lengthy one, involving multiple jurisdictions and often complicated by technical, legal or political barriers. Mechanisms exist at the regional level (CAPAR) and at the international level to facilitate the repatriation of funds. The HLP has also highlighted some success stories by some African countries in this sphere. The discussions in this panel will therefore aim to share experiences and tips to succeed in this.</i></p>
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:30	Discussion Panel 6: Managing Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) Risk: Applying the environment, social, and governance (ESG) Framework to Curb IFFs <p><i>The environment, social, and governance (ESG) is becoming increasingly important to curb IFF. African countries have an obligation to stay informed, to communicate, and to be active participant in shaping the future course of mitigating IFF through a sound ESG strategy. In this panel, our panelists will collectively address this interplay between ESG and IFF that are of critical importance to all the stakeholders. The focus of this panel will be: i) To clarify the underlying concepts of ESG ii) To determine metrics for ESG measurement and applications in IFFs mitigation iii) Explain the connection between ESG and IFFs iv) Explain how individual components of ESG enable stronger risk management and curb IFFs and v) Propose a an ESG IFFs framework that African countries can implement.</i></p>
15:30 – 17:00	Visiting the booths
18:30 – 22:00	Cultural Activity

Friday, 17th March 2023

09:00 – 09:30

Recap from previous day

09:30 – 11:30

Discussion Panel 7: Contribution of Citizens and Private sector

In identifying the actors that play an important role in the proliferation of IFFs in Africa, private sector companies have often been singled out as the main culprits, particularly through the practice of transfer pricing (mostly multinationals). The Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) are doing their best to denounce these phenomena, despite their weak structure, poor access to information and often a limited capacity to analyze and understand international financial exchanges. Therefore, the establishment of a credible and effective mechanism to fight against illicit financial flows on the continent cannot be done without the involvement of these essential stakeholders.

11:30 – 11:45

Health Break

11:45 – 13:00

Round Table discussion: Adoption of conference resolutions

In order to frame the final exchanges and above all to be able to retain relevant actions, the following prospective questions could guide the discussions: How can we learn from our mistakes and good experiences of others? Is there any proper mechanism of collaboration between rich countries, that offer tax heaven, and African countries from which resources are pooled to fight IFFs? What can be improved? From this conference, what kind of strategies can be implemented, going forward, to substantially reduce IFFs from Africa? How can all stakeholders synergize to ensure the cooperation and collaboration are effectively used?

13:00 – 14:00

Closing ceremony

14:00 – 15:00

Lunch



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