Towards a People-Driven African Union

AfriMAP, AfriMAP

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This report is the first independent, substantive and public assessment of the progress of the African Union. TOWARDS A PEOPLE-DRIVEN AFRICAN UNION: CURRENT OBSTACLES & NEW OPPORTUNITIES analyses the preparations of African Union member-states, the AU Commission and civil society organisations during the twice-yearly AU summits.

The main finding is that despite some welcome new opportunities for participation, the African Union’s vision of an Africa driven by its own citizens remains largely unfulfilled. Detailed recommendations are offered to help deliver on this vision in future. These include that member states should broaden and deepen their consultation processes in advance of summits; that procedures around preparations for and follow-up to summits need to be revised and strengthened; that the distribution of information about AU processes needs to be greatly improved; and that if the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), the AU’s new civil society organ, is to play the role intended for it, it must become a much more genuinely representative body.

Published by AFRODAD, AfriMAP and Oxfam, this report is endorsed by over fifteen organisations in Africa and elsewhere, and is based on interviews with more than 70 representatives of member-states, the AU Commission and civil society organisations in eleven African countries.

Very useful and professional input towards evaluating the progress of the African Union. It shows that we are still far from CSOs playing an effective role in the affairs of the Union. Based on experience, there are too many exclusion strategies of keeping the ‘good’ CSOs close and the ones that staff disagree with, out.

Faiza Mohamed, Equality Now

We CSOs need to get more political about how we engage the Union project, we missed opportunities with the strategic plan formulation, perhaps over-focused on ministerials and summits, and neglected the PRC and national level advocacy, we must correct this in future.

Dr Chris Landsberg, Centre for Policy Studies

This is an area that has not been looked at carefully. I welcome this study as it deals with areas that are often taboo. Professor Abdalla Buya, Development Policy Management Forum