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Comparative Regional Integration Studies



REGIONAL INTEGRATION IN ACP COUNTRIES: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS



NETRIS Final Conference – this event is co-organized with Addis Ababa University and UNECA



Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 22-24 November 2011

TENTATIVE AGENDA

Background and objectives

The NETRIS Final Conference will be held in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) with the support and full involvement of the School of Economics, Addis Ababa University and UNECA. This Conference will serve a double purpose. Taking stock of the most relevant contributions made by HEI partners and associates, the conference will open, during three days, 22-24 November 2011, a space for debate on real and pragmatic prospects for regional integration in ACP countries.

In simplified terms, beyond similarities with regional integration processes in other Regions, lessons learned from NETRIS have revealed a number of fairly distinct approaches and toolboxes which explain the specificity of regional integration processes in ACP countries: from a more “holistic, institution-building” approach marked by whether regionalism and regional integration provide a realistic, appropriate window of opportunity for more effective governance and, on the other hand, an “incremental approach” resting on action taken and progress made step-by-step, by consensus.

The different NETRIS activities have reflected these differences, especially under activity area 5 focusing on capacity building and training. It was the case for the three seminars on “*Researching and Advancing the Good Governance Dimension of Regional Integration*” (IIR/UWI, Port of Spain, March 2010), on “*Prospects for Trade and Economic Integration in ACP countries. Challenges facing Regionalism and Regional Integration Arrangements*” (UKZN, Durban, September 2010) and on “*Regional Integration and Migration Policies in ACP Countries*” (UCAD, Dakar, March 2011).

In addition, the Conference of Addis Ababa is also seen as a way to further on engage the HEI network and other stakeholders, including policy makers, on key issues of regional integration, forming part of the research programs of the network members. In that sense, the conference will not only be an important space for intellectual debate but also increase the visibility of the network.

In preparing the agenda and gathering the contributions of the HEI stakeholders and selected resources persons, particular attention will be paid to key challenges and possible responses to the different factors explaining the specificity of Regionalism and regional integration processes in ACP countries. Recognizing that each regional integration process involves its own history, backgrounds and dynamics, and cannot be designed in the same way, the focus will rest on what can realistically be done? What is really needed, from different perspectives?

- (a) **Governance and Political leadership forces as determinants to regional integration processes;** constraints deriving from continental and sub-continental/regional initiatives, as well as constraints and obstacles to provide the regional level an effective “legitimation” process;
- (b) Fixing objectives, priorities and a sequence based on the feasibility of each step to be taken **in economic and trade integration**, such as: improvement of data and

information, infrastructure, trade facilitation, integration of services markets and related obstacles; mobility of factors of production, effective dispute settlement mechanisms, community financing of solidarity mechanisms; rationalisation and financing of regional institutions;

- (c) **Overlapping and duplication of regional structures in ACP**, proliferation of Institutions between the continental and regional levels; coordination and coherence between national and regional levels: what efforts are needed to rationalize the structures?
- (d) **Involvement of civil society, political parties, social actors in regional integration process in ACP**; obstacles to remove from a top-down approach, seeking a collective support and involvement to regional integration processes.

Tuesday 22 November

09.30

Registration of participants

Administrative arrangements

10.00

Opening session and welcoming addresses

Prof. Fesseha Afewerk G. Anania, Director College of Management, Information and Economics Sciences, AAU (tbc)

Mr. Xavier Marchal, Head of the Delegation of the EC in Ethiopia (tbc)

Mr. Koen Vervaeke - European Union Special Representative to the African Union (tbc)

Dr. Girma Estiphanos, NETRIS Conference Coordinator, AAU

Mr. Eric Maertens, Senior Supervisor NETRIS, CoE/UNU-CRIS

11.00

Presentation of the main NETRIS activities and achievements

Ms. Maria Cristina Macovei, NETRIS Project Coordinator, CoE/UNU-CRIS

11.30

Coffee Break

12.00

Fast-tracking the establishment of an African Continental Free Trade Area

Presentation by Mr. Simon Mevel, UNECA RITD Division

13.00

Lunch

14.00

Global South: regional coherence and strategies

'New' Regionalism in the Global South after the 'global' crisis: from rebalancing to reordering?

Prof. Tim Shaw, IIR/UWI

Coherence of various regional support strategies

Ms. Kathleen Van Hove, ECDPM

Discussion

Chair Prof. John Kabudi, UDSM

15.30

Coffee break

16.00

Regional Integration: reflections and experiences from ACP (I)

Challenges and prospects of regional integration: the case of COMESA

Dr. Girma Estiphanos and Ms. Saba Yifredew, AAU

Regional integration: reflections and experiences from the Pacific

Mr. Tolu Muliaina, USP

La rationalization du processus d'intégration en Afrique Centrale

Dr. Jean Kenfack, IRIC

Discussion

Chair Prof. Tim Shaw, IIR/UWI

17.00

Closure

18.00

Welcoming cocktail by the Addis Ababa University and CoE/UNU-CRIS

Wednesday 23 November

09.30

Regional Integration: reflections and experiences from ACP (II)

L'intégration sous-régionale en Afrique Centrale a l'épreuve de la résistance des souverainetés

Dr. Yves Paul Mandejem, IRIC

New regional structures in South America and the prospects and challenges for small states' participation: Guyana and Suriname in the UNASUR

Dr. Mark Kirton, IIR/UWI

Regional Integration: Deeper Integration of Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe: Problem Statement and Context

Dr. Ibbo Mandaza, SAPES Trust

Discussion

Chair Ms. Kathleen Van Hove, ECDPM

10.30

Coffee break

11.00

Regional integration: trade and economic perspectives

Investigation of economic integration within the ACP

Dr. Hong Chen, USP

Determinants of trade in services in Africa: a gravity model approach

Mr. Michael Tedla, AAU

Contemporary economic analysis of regional trade agreements

Prof. James Fairburn, UKZN

Discussion

Chair: Ms. Vanessa Tang, UKZN

12.30

Lunch

14.00

Regional integration: investments and resources mobilizations

Strategic policy responses to aid and investments flow: growth and development in ECOWAS

Mr. Richard Simson and Ms. Vanessa Tang, UKZN

Mobilizing resources for ACP/African RECs: a comparative perspective

Ms. Melissa Daleau, ECDPM

Discussion

Chair: Dr. Girma Estiphanos, AAU

15.00

Coffee Break

15.30

Regional Integration: human rights perspective

Negotiating human rights and democracy in EU-ACP relations, is there a place for ACP's regional organisations

Mr. Emmanuel Fanta, Project researcher, UNU-CRIS

Impact of regional integration on human rights protection in Africa

Mr. Jean Bosco Ngendahimana, PhD student UDSM

Discussion

Chair Dr. Stephen Kingah, UNU-CRIS

16.30

Regional integration: democracy and competition

Regional integration in CARICOM: competition and Court

Prof. Kusha Haraksingh, IIR/UWI

The role of regional parliaments in enhancing democracy in ACP countries

Dr. Stephen Kingah, UNU-CRIS

Discussion

Chair: Dr. Ibbo Mandaza, SAPES Trust

17.00

Closure

Thursday 24 November

10.00

Conclusion of the two-day sessions on regional integration in ACP countries: prospects and challenges

Presentation by Dr. Girma Estiphanos, Conference coordinator AAU and Ms. Maria Cristina Macovei, Project Coordinator NETRIS, CoE/UNU-CRIS

Discussion

11.00

Edited book proposal

Discussion chaired by Prof. Tim Shaw

11.30

Coffee break

12.00

Round-table: In conclusion – the NETRIS project

All representatives of NETRIS are invited to express their views on the success and lessons learned of NETRIS

Discussion chaired Ms. Maria Cristina Macovei, CoE/UNU-CRIS

13.00

Lunch

14.00

Round-table: linking research capacity building projects with policy-making realm

Invited- representatives of the AU, the EC, the EU to the AU, UNECA

Discussion chaired by Mr. Eric Maertens

15.00

Closing session with the presence of Authorities of the Addis Ababa University and CoE/UNU-CRIS

Dr. Girma Ethiphanos, NETRIS Conference Coordinator, AAU

Mr. Eric Maertens, CoE/UNU-CRIS