



**Conference of African Ministers
Responsible for Civil Registration**
Sixth session
Expert segment

Addis Ababa, 24–28 October 2022

Item 15 of the provisional agenda for the expert segment*

Discussion and endorsement of the draft conclusions and recommendations

Draft report on the expert segment

I. Introduction

1. The expert segment of the sixth session of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration was held at the United Nations Conference Centre in Addis Ababa from 24 to 27 October 2022, under the theme “A decade into the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems: reflecting on progress and accelerating efforts towards 2030 through transformed systems”. The meeting was jointly organized by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank, with support from members of the regional core group on civil registration and vital statistics.

II. Attendance

A. African States

2. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following African States: Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

* CRMC/6/EXP/2022/1.



B. Observers

3. The meeting was attended by observers from the following international, regional, subregional and national organizations:

(a) International, regional and subregional organizations and institutions: African Development Bank, African Union Commission, Bloomberg Philanthropies Data for Health Initiative, Global Financing Facility; Organisation internationale de la Francophonie (OIF).

(b) Entities of the United Nations system: ECA, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Statistics Division, World Health Organization (WHO).

(c) Other private sector representatives, including Digitech, OpenCRVS and WCC Group.

III. Opening of the expert segment [agenda item 1]

4. At the joint opening of the expert meeting of the sixth session of the Conference of African Ministers in charge of Civil Registration, the eighth meeting of the African Regional Committee of the United Nations Geospatial Information Management Initiative and the eighth session of the African Statistical Commission, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Demeke Mekonnen, delivered an opening statement. He emphasized that African governments can play a crucial role in updating and improving national civil registration and vital statistics systems and should therefore allocate sufficient and sustainable budgetary resources to this end.

5. Opening statements were also made by the Minister for ICT and National Guidance of Uganda, Chris Baryomunsi, the Director of the African Centre for Statistics, Oliver Chinganya, and the Acting Director of the Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division of ECA, Edlam Abera Yemeru.

6. The participants in the three meetings then broke out into their respective conference rooms.

7. The opening session of the expert segment was chaired by the Principal Registrar of the Department of National Registration, Passport and Citizenship of the Ministry of Home Affairs of Zambia, Peter Moyo, on behalf of the outgoing Chair, the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs of Zambia, Josephs Rikki Akafumba.

8. Keynote addresses were made by the Chief of the Demographic and Social Statistics Section of the African Centre for Statistics, William Muhwava, and the Director of Child Protection of the Programme Group at UNICEF, Cornelius Williams.

IV. Election of the Bureau and adoption of the agenda and programme of work [agenda item 2]

9. The following countries were elected by the Committee to form the new Bureau:

Chair:	Ethiopia – East Africa
First Vice-Chair:	Cameroon – Central Africa
Second Vice-Chair:	Senegal – West Africa
Third Vice-Chair:	Morocco – North Africa
Rapporteur:	Botswana – Southern Africa

10. After a statement of acceptance by the newly elected Bureau, represented by the Director General of the Civil Registry of Ethiopia, Biruhtesfa Mulugeta, the experts adopted the following agenda, on the basis of the provisional agenda (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/1):

1. Opening of the expert segment.
2. Election of the Bureau and adoption of the agenda and programme of work.
3. Panel discussion: Ten years after the establishment of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems and eight years to 2030 – Are we on track to realizing our civil registration and vital statistics commitments?
4. Statutory issues:
 - (a) Report on progress in the implementation of ministerial resolutions of the fifth session of the Conference;
 - (b) Report on the evaluation of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems (2010–2020);
 - (c) Report of the regional core group on civil registration and vital statistics interventions in the period 2018–2022;
 - (d) Report of the African Union Commission on the No Name Campaign;
 - (e) Report of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention on a continental framework for strengthening mortality surveillance.
5. Assessing progress in the development of civil registration and vital statistics systems in the region: How can Africa accelerate progress in meeting regional and international commitments?
 - (a) Birth registration;
 - (b) Death registration and recording causes of death;
 - (c) Marriage and divorce registration.

6. Civil registration in humanitarian contexts: Building on experience gained during the coronavirus disease pandemic.
7. Role of the health sector in building civil registration and vital statistics systems and the benefits of those systems for the health agenda.
8. Parallel sessions:
 - (a) Session I: Digitalization of civil registration and vital statistics systems;
 - (b) Session II: Leadership, budget advocacy and sustainability in civil registration and vital statistics systems;
 - (c) Session III: Legislation as an enabler of efficient civil registration and vital statistics systems;
 - (d) Session IV: Building integrated civil registration and vital statistics and digital identity systems.
9. Assessing progress in the production of civil registration-based vital statistics on the continent.
10. Population registers and the opportunities they offer for improved public administration and statistics.
11. Panel discussion: Digitalizing civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa to optimize their efficiency and use.
12. Panel discussion: Legal identity for migrants, refugees and marginalized population groups.
13. Regional strategy and action plan for civil registration and vital statistics and achieving the commitments of the 2030 Agenda.
14. Subcommittee on Civil Registration.
15. Discussion and endorsement of the draft conclusions and recommendations.
16. Other matters.
17. Closing of the expert segment.

V. Panel discussion: Ten years after the establishment of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems and eight years to 2030 – Are we on track to realizing civil registration and vital statistics commitments? [agenda item 3]

A. Presentation

11. Under this agenda item, a representative of the secretariat of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems introduced a progress report on the Programme (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/6).

B. Discussion

12. Experts from Côte d'Ivoire, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United Nations Statistics Division, UNICEF and WHO identified several achievements and challenges related to the development of civil registration and vital statistics in Africa. Experts underlined that, at the current pace, most African countries would not attain Sustainable Development Goal target 16.9. Countries should redouble their efforts to achieve the target by the 2030 deadline.

C. Recommendations

13. In the light of the discussion, the experts made the following recommendations:

(a) African States should:

(i) Review and update legal frameworks to improve vital event registration and the production of vital statistics, ensure legal and policy frameworks, eliminate discriminatory provisions, provide free registration and certification services and facilitate the harmonization of marriage laws to support marriage and divorce registration, using a life course approach;

(ii) Engage in awareness-raising and communication activities on the importance of civil registration at the national, subnational and community levels and with other stakeholders, such as civil society;

(iii) Renew their commitment to increasing the financial resources allocated to supporting national civil registration and vital statistics systems;

(iv) Adopt and/or strengthen a holistic and interoperable approach to civil registration, the generation of vital statistics and identity management for all vital events from birth to death, in line with the recommendations contained in the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda;

(v) Undertake regular monitoring and evaluation activities at the national and regional levels;

(vi) Promote the use of tested, innovative home-grown good practices and encourage the adoption of those practices by the relevant authorities in other African States;

- (b) ECA and the African Union Commission should:
 - (i) Compile all resolutions adopted at past conferences;
 - (ii) Inform African States of the progress made, what remains to be done and bottlenecks to realizing these commitments.

VI. Statutory issues [agenda item 4]

A. Presentation

- 14. A representative of ECA introduced the report on the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations made at the fifth session of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/5).
- 15. A representative of the African Union Commission introduced the report entitled “‘No name campaign’: advocating universal birth registration in Africa” (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/7).
- 16. A representative of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention introduced a report on the continental framework of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention for strengthening mortality surveillance systems in Africa (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/8).

B. Discussion

- 17. Experts shared their experiences and discussed how the continental mortality surveillance framework could be aligned with existing mortality data-collection initiatives.

C. Recommendations

- 18. In the light of the discussion, the experts recommended that African States should:
 - (a) Ensure the adoption of the continental framework for mortality surveillance;
 - (b) Align that framework with existing national policies and instruments;
 - (c) Ensure that those policies and instruments were adequately funded to guarantee sustainability.

VII. Assessing progress in the development of civil registration and vital statistics systems in the region: How can Africa accelerate progress in meeting regional and international commitments? [agenda item 5]

A. Birth registration

1. Presentation

- 19. A representative of UNICEF introduced a report on the status of birth registration in Africa (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/9). Country presentations highlighting progress in birth registration were made by experts from Angola, Chad and Namibia.

2. Discussion

20. Experts noted practices and strategies that had led to accelerated progress in birth registration, such as the decentralization of registration processes, the creation of interoperability with health systems and the political commitment of Heads of State and Government and other senior officials. They underlined the need to focus on improving the registration of births occurring outside health facilities.

3. Recommendations

21. In the light of the discussion, the experts recommended that African States should adopt a one-stop-shop approach to birth registration and certification that is interoperable with health and immunization systems, including in humanitarian assistance contexts.

B. Death registration and recording causes of death

1. Presentation

22. A representative of WHO introduced a report on death registration and availability of information on causes of death in Africa (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/10). Experts from Burundi and Kenya explained how their countries had improved death registration for deaths at health facilities and at home.

2. Discussion

23. Experts highlighted the unavailability of high-quality, disaggregated data on deaths and causes of death as a major challenge on the continent and underscored major challenges that contributed to underperformance in death registration.

3. Recommendations

24. In light of the discussion, the experts recommended that African States should:

(a) Establish and/or strengthen multisectoral collaboration mechanisms with all relevant stakeholders, especially those in the health sector and in cemeteries and mortuaries;

(b) Ensure that causes of death are coded correctly and that an appropriate medical certificate is issued;

(c) Conduct a verbal autopsy, in close collaboration with health facilities and community health structures, if no medical doctor is available to determine the cause of death.

C. Marriage and divorce registration

1. Presentation

25. A representative of UNFPA delivered an oral report on the status of the registration and certification of marriages and divorces on the continent. Country presentations were made by experts from the Congo, Seychelles and South Africa.

2. Discussion

26. The importance of marriage and divorce registration was noted, and it was indicated that the area was generally neglected. Experts observed that there was a need for continuous assessments of the quality and coverage of registration data and for the regular generation of vital statistics from marriage and divorce registration records, even in countries that had low registration coverage.

3. Recommendations

27. In the light of the discussion, the experts recommended that African States should:

(a) Conduct further research on the supply and demand factors influencing marriage and divorce registration;

(b) Work closely with religious institutions to ensure better coverage of marriage and divorce data.

VIII. Civil registration in humanitarian contexts: building on experience gained during the coronavirus disease pandemic [agenda item 6]

A. Presentation

28. Representatives of ECA delivered an oral report on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic on strengthening civil registration and vital statistics systems for greater resilience during emergencies. Representatives from Burkina Faso, Somalia and Togo shared their experiences in managing and sustaining such systems in emergency and humanitarian contexts and ensuring access, coverage and continuity of vaccination, birth registration and maternal and child health-care services, among others.

B. Discussion

29. It was noted that a robust legal framework was critical to supporting operations and efforts during humanitarian crises. It was important to have electronic data during humanitarian crises to restore manual data distorted during the crisis period. Experts emphasized the role of United Nations entities, taking note of the support provided by such partners as UNFPA, UNHCR and the World Bank in ensuring civil registration and vital statistics operations during humanitarian crises in the absence of State actors.

C. Recommendations

30. In the light of the discussion, and considering that civil registration provides planning information in humanitarian contexts, the experts made the following recommendations:

(a) African States should:

(i) Ensure continuous access to civil registration services, including during humanitarian crises, by adopting relevant disaster management and mitigation strategies;

(ii) Digitalize civil registration and vital statistics systems in all African States in

order to protect against massive losses of documents and records during humanitarian crises;

(b) Development partners should create partner coordination mechanisms in all countries for the harmonization and leveraging of technical and financial resources in emergencies.

IX. Role of the health sector in building civil registration and vital statistics systems and the benefits of those systems for the health agenda [agenda item 7]

A. Presentation

31. A report on strengthening the role of the health sector in civil registration and vital statistics systems (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/12) was introduced by a representative of the World Bank. A panel comprising representatives of Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Mozambique, Senegal and the United Republic of Tanzania held a discussion that was moderated by an official from the World Bank. Panel members emphasized the role that health facilities played in the registration of births and deaths. Country representatives shared their ongoing efforts to engage the health sector in collecting data.

B. Discussion

32. It was noted that countries were establishing civil registration and vital statistics centres in health facilities to ensure the integration of these services and that all data on births, deaths and causes of death were adequately captured.

C. Recommendations

33. In the light of the discussion, the experts recommended that African States should:

(a) Improve the interoperability of the health system and the civil registration system by formalizing the collaboration and coordination between authorities in the areas of health, civil registration and vital statistics, including establishing in law such matters as duties, business processes and the exchange of data, and signing memorandums of understanding;

(b) Ensure that capacity-building activities for civil registration and vital statistics are incorporated into national plans, including strategic national health plans, and accordingly budgeted for, with clearly specified roles for the health sector within the civil registration and vital statistics system and clear terms of interaction between health, civil registration and statistical agencies and any other relevant stakeholders;

(c) Explore the possibilities of leveraging District Health Information Software to support efforts to build interoperability between health systems and civil registration and vital statistics systems;

(d) Promote decentralization by establishing civil registration services in health facilities.

X. Parallel sessions [agenda item 8]

A. Session I: Digitalization of civil registration and vital statistics systems

1. Presentation

34. Representatives of ECA, AfDB and the non-governmental organization Vital Strategies delivered an oral report on best practice guidelines for digital civil registration and vital statistics. A representative of UNICEF delivered an oral presentation on safe, innovative and cost-effective digitalization practices. Delegates from Benin, Liberia and Rwanda delivered presentations on the experiences of their countries in digitalizing civil registration and vital statistics systems.

2. Discussion

35. Participants discussed the essential features of information technology solutions, the advantages and disadvantages of various software services and options for licensing, hosting and procurement, including of custom-developed software, off-the-shelf commercial software and open source software.

3. Recommendations

36. In the light of the discussion, the experts made the following recommendations:

(a) African States should:

(i) Actively pursue the digitalization of civil registration and vital statistics systems to harness their full potential, enhancing registration coverage and outreach;

(ii) Strengthen the safety and security of data-sharing practices and interoperability between systems;

(iii) Take into consideration key legal and regulatory frameworks and the information technology and infrastructure in place at the national level in their efforts to modernize and digitalize civil registration and vital statistics systems, according central priority to data safety and security, system integrity, the clarity of data ownership and data availability;

(iv) Take into consideration the available technical and resource capabilities when planning, procuring and implementing digital technologies, which should include ensuring well-developed business processes;

(v) Develop the technical capacity of essential personnel to understand, manage and sustain systems use, thereby avoiding extensive reliance on solution providers and potential vendor lock-in;

(b) Partners should continue to provide relevant support for capacity-building on the management and use of civil registration and vital statistics systems.

B. Session II: Leadership, budget advocacy and sustainability in civil registration and vital statistics systems

1. Presentation

37. Presentations were delivered by delegates from Cameroon, the Niger and Uganda in a session moderated by a delegate from Ghana. A representative of Vital Strategies introduced a report on leadership and budget advocacy for sustainable civil registration and vital statistics systems (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/14).

2. Discussion

38. It was noted that many African countries depended on external, project-based donor funding, which could stagnate and lead to the collapse of projects in the absence of sustainable funding. Emphasis was placed on the importance of garnering political support and leadership to ensure adequate domestic financing.

3. Recommendations

39. In the light of the discussion, the experts made the following recommendations:

(a) African States should:

(i) Conduct resource mapping and develop strategies for sustainable financing;

(ii) Identify and engage high-level officials to champion civil registration and vital statistics initiatives;

(iii) Consider engaging national electoral commissions as members of civil registration and vital statistics coordination committees and exploring ways to leverage resources available to the commissions through the consolidation of population registration and vital event registration activities;

(b) Development partners should:

(i) Harmonize support for countries and ensure the sustainability of all initiatives;

(ii) Align and coordinate all support through national strategic plans for civil registration and vital statistics.

C. Session III: Legislation as an enabler of efficient civil registration and vital statistics systems

1. Presentation

40. The representative of the United Nations Statistics Division introduced a review of laws on civil registration and vital statistics (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/15). Experts from Guinea, Senegal and South Sudan shared experiences, challenges and prospects for improving legal frameworks for civil registration.

2. Discussion

41. Participants agreed that, in most African countries, civil registration laws were outdated and needed to be revised. Despite the willingness of some countries to revise their legal frameworks, sociocultural and religious constraints sometimes arose.

3. Recommendations

42. In the light of the discussion, the experts recommended that African States should:

(a) Review their legal frameworks for civil registration, including ensuring that existing laws promote the digitalization of the civil registration system and collaboration among key stakeholders, and for the building of integrated systems for the systematic registration and securing of civil registration data, as recommended in the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda;

(b) Integrate elements of sustainable financing into legal frameworks for civil registration and national statistical systems.

D. Session IV: Building integrated civil registration and vital statistics and digital identity systems

1. Presentation

43. Experts from Botswana, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Tunisia shared their experiences in establishing integrated civil registration and vital statistics and identity management systems.

2. Discussion

44. Experts emphasized the importance of legal reforms to ensure the harmonization of laws and remove any duplication of civil registration functions. Delegates underscored the importance of integrating such systems in order to verify and automatically share information.

3. Recommendations

45. In the light of the discussion, the experts made the following recommendations:

(a) African States should mainstream the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda into existing frameworks, ensuring a holistic approach to civil registration, vital statistics and identity management, based on the life cycle approach;

(b) The United Nations Legal Identity Task Force should continue to support countries in implementing the Legal Identity Agenda;

(c) ECA, the African Union and partners should support countries in mobilizing resources from partners involved in civil registration and vital statistics and identity management.

XI. Assessing progress in the production of civil registration-based vital statistics on the continent [agenda item 9]

A. Presentation

46. A representative of UNFPA introduced a report on the role of national statistical offices in improving and generating vital statistics in Africa (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/13).

B. Discussion

47. In the panel discussion that followed, delegates from Madagascar, Nigeria and Zimbabwe shared the best practices that their countries had adopted to facilitate the production of vital statistics from civil registration data and the main challenges that they faced.

C. Recommendations

48. In the light of the discussion, the experts recommended that African States should:

(a) Strengthen their capacity (at all levels) to produce vital statistics, including on causes of death, in collaboration with ECA, UNFPA, WHO, the African Union Institute for Statistics and other stakeholders;

(b) Adapt existing global guidelines to the African context.

XII. Population registers and the opportunities they offer for improved public administration and statistics [agenda item 10]

A. Presentation

49. A representative of ECA introduced a report on population registers as key drivers of good governance and statistical development (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/18). A representative of UNFPA delivered an oral report on the potential uses of population registers for statistical production. The representative of Kenya presented legal and policy considerations for establishing an administrative population register. The representative of South Africa showcased national progress in developing an administrative population register and its use for statistical purposes.

B. Discussion

50. A discussion followed on the need to consider establishing national population registers that contained up-to-date information on residents, which could serve important statistical purposes and support the holistic identification of all residents.

C. Recommendations

51. In the light of the discussion, the experts recommended that ECA, UNFPA and other partners should:

(a) Build regional capacity to establish population registers, in full compliance with the framework of the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda;

(b) Build regional capacity to produce statistics from population registers, in full compliance with the provisions of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

XIII. Panel discussion: Digitalizing civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa to optimize their efficiency and use [agenda item 11]

A. Presentation

52. Representatives from African States, the secretariat of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems and the regional core group delivered oral reports and introduced a report on the digitalization of civil registration and vital statistics systems in Africa (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/19). A delegate from Rwanda gave a presentation on the development of a home-grown end-to-end digitalized system.

B. Discussion

53. Participants highlighted requirements for digitalization, including having adequate frameworks for coordination and sufficient access to information technology, developing relevant legislation and policies, and addressing concerns about data confidentiality and protection. The fact that civil registration and vital statistics systems, unlike other identification systems, were not a priority in national budgets, posed an obstacle to their digitalization.

C. Recommendations

54. No recommendations were made under this agenda item.

XIV. Panel discussion: Legal identity for migrants, refugees and marginalized population groups [agenda item 12]

A. Presentation

55. Representatives of IOM and UNHCR introduced reports on the importance of legal identity systems in ensuring safe and orderly cross-border migration and mobility (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/20) and birth registration for the prevention of statelessness in Africa (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/16). The panel comprised representatives from Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya and Zambia, and representatives from IOM, IOM mission in Cameroon, UNHCR and UNICEF. The discussion was focused on the following areas:

- (a) Integration of legal identity and civil registration and vital statistics systems;
- (b) Legal identity for refugees and marginalized population groups;
- (c) Progress on the implementation of the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda.

56. Panellists referred to existing regional and global frameworks and the commitments made to ensure that complete legal identity was achieved in every country. Legal identity was multisectoral and a whole-of-government approach was needed to deliver results. Home-grown solutions should be given the necessary attention to ensure sustainability. Strengthening coordination, enhancing capacity and establishing interoperability between civil registration and vital statistics systems and national identification systems were important to achieving universal

coverage. Progress had been made by African States in implementing the Legal Identity Agenda, including the development of standard operating procedures for vital event registration and the conferral of legal identity to refugees, migrants and members of displaced, stateless and unregistered populations.

B. Discussion

57. Delegates discussed the measures adopted by African States to develop and ensure the implementation of the Legal Identity Agenda during humanitarian crises. It was important to engage the military as stakeholders in the civil registration and vital statistics system in areas affected by humanitarian crises.

C. Recommendations

58. In the light of the discussion, the experts recommended that African States should:

(a) Adopt principles of equality and non-discrimination in improving civil registration and vital statistics systems, including ensuring that all refugees and stateless persons, irrespective of age, have access to civil registration services, taking proactive approaches to ensure that events of marginalized populations are registered;

(b) Ratify the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community relating to the Free Movement of persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment, if they have not yet done so.

XV. Regional strategy and action plan for civil registration and vital statistics and achieving the commitments of the 2030 Agenda [agenda item 13]

A. Presentation

59. A representative of ECA introduced the strategy and action plan of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems for the period 2023–2027 (CRMC/6/EXP/2022/21). Acknowledge of the evaluation of ten years of implementation of the APAI-CRVS funded by AfDB was noted.

B. Discussion

60. The ECA initiative to draft a regional civil registration and vital statistics strategy and action improvement plan for the period 2023–2027 was noted.

C. Recommendations

61. In the light of the discussion, the experts recommended that the secretariat of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems should:

(a) Cost the regional civil registration and vital statistics strategy and action improvement plan for the period 2023–2027 and submit it to the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration at its sixth session;

(b) Strengthen mechanisms for monitoring the progress made in implementing ministerial resolutions, including by organizing regular field visits to all countries to assess progress and identify existing challenges;

(c) Ensure that all future meeting and programme documents are provided in all official languages of the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa.

XVI. Subcommittee on Civil Registration [agenda item 14]

A. Presentation

62. The representative of the Office of Legal Counsel of the African Union Commission gave an oral presentation on the operationalization of the Subcommittee on Civil Registration.

B. Discussion

63. Representatives of African States took note of the presentation and commended the African Union Commission for its commitment to and establishment of the Subcommittee.

C. Recommendations

64. The experts recommended that the African Union Commission make appropriate arrangements for the imminent start of the Sub-Committee's activities.

XVII. Discussion and endorsement of the draft conclusions and recommendations [agenda item 15]

65. The draft report of the expert segment on its sixth session was adopted, as amended.

XVIII. Other matters [agenda item 16]

A. Discussion

66. The sponsorship of national experts and ministers was discussed.

B. Recommendations

67. In the light of the discussion, the experts recommended that African States should consider sponsoring their ministers and experts to attend future sessions of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration in order to ensure the sustainability of the Conference, which was an important statutory meeting that informed country-led initiatives to improve civil registration and vital statistics systems.

XIX. Closing of the expert segment [agenda item 17]

68. The Director of the African Centre for Statistics announced that the ministerial segment of the sixth session of the Conference would be held in Addis Ababa at the beginning of 2023.

69. The Chair indicated that the recommendations should be seriously considered and forwarded to the experts as soon as possible in the different languages of the African Union.

70. The Chair declared the meeting closed at 5 p.m. on Thursday, 27 October 2022.

Annex

Draft resolution for consideration by the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration

A draft resolution, the text of which was approved by the expert segment, is set out below for consideration and possible adoption by the Conference of Ministers.

Financing for ministers to attend future sessions of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration

The Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration,

Considering that civil registration is the foundation for legal identity, as set forth in target 16.9 (legal identity for all, including birth registration) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹

Recalling that the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, at its twenty-seventh ordinary session, held in July 2016, declared the period 2017–2026 to be the decade for repositioning civil registration and vital statistics in Africa,

Anchored in the vision of the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems, “Everyone visible in Africa”, which is aimed at ensuring that Africa is leaving no one behind, and that no one is excluded or denied universal human rights and access to basic economic opportunities,

Considering the major achievements and gains made in the past 10 years by the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems, under the leadership of ministers responsible for civil registration and with support from development partners,

Recognizing the strategic role that the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration has played in elevating civil registration and vital statistics issues in the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union,

Acknowledging the importance of individual records and data on birth, death and causes of death in policy planning, strategy formulation, resource allocation and access to basic government services, such as health and education,

Concerned that external resources are becoming increasingly limited, with many competing priorities, which contributed to the rescheduling of the ministerial segment of the sixth session of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration,

Inspired by the growing commitment of some African States to sharing the cost of facilitating the attendance of their government delegations at past conferences,

1. *Calls upon* African States to consider sponsorship of their ministers and experts to attend future sessions of the Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration.

¹ General Assembly resolution 70/1.