Opening Remarks

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African Union Commission

At

Regional Training Programme on Combating Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs) through the Common African Position on Asset Recovery (CAPAR)

Theme: "Strengthening Oversight and Curbing Illicit Financial Flows: The Role of Public Accounts Committees in Advancing Accountability and the Common African Position on Asset Recovery"

20–22 October 2026

Maputo, Republic of Mozambique

- **His Excellency Helder Ernesto Injonjo, First Deputy Speaker of National Assembly of the Republic of Mozambique;**
- **His Excellency Eneas da Conceicao Comiche, Chair of Planning and Budget Committee of the National Assembly;**
- **Hon. Madam Alice Ponco , Southern African Development Community Organisation of Public Accounts Committees (SADCOPAC) Deputy Chairperson;**
- **Hon Madala Mhlanga, SADCOPAC Secretary General**
- **Hon. SADCOPAC bearers present;**
- **Hon Members of Parliament from different SADC member states;**
- **Hon Edmund Shoko , AFROSAI-E,**
- **Representatives of Supreme Audit Institutions;**
- **Representatives of anti-corruption agencies**
- **Resources Persons**
- **Ladies and gentlemen .**

It is a distinct privilege to be with you in Maputo for the opening of ***this Regional Training Programme for the Public Account Committee (PAC) and Technical Oversight Committee of SADC member States*** on Combating Illicit Financial Flows through the Common African Position on Asset Recovery.

At the outset, allow me to convey the warm greetings of ***H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union Commission.*** On his behalf I also wish to express our sincere appreciation to the Government and people of the Republic of Mozambique for their generous hospitality and for hosting this important regional initiative.

I equally wish to commend the leadership and members of SADCOPAC for bringing us together around an issue that is central to governance, accountability and sustainable development across our continent.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Illicit financial flows continue to deprive Africa of resources that are urgently needed to advance our development aspirations. According to UNCTAD Every year, $88 billion to $89 billion leave the continent through corruption, money laundering, trade misinvoicing, tax evasion and other illicit practices.

These are not simply financial losses. They represent schools that are not built, hospitals that are not equipped, infrastructure projects that remain incomplete, and opportunities that are denied to millions of Africans.

The impact extends beyond economics. Illicit financial flows weaken public institutions, undermine public confidence in governance, reduce domestic resource mobilisation and constrain the ability of governments to deliver essential services. Addressing this challenge is therefore not only a matter of sound financial management; it is also a matter of accountability, transparency and sustainable development.

The ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2063 remains fragile when illicit financial flows (IFFs) continue to drain resources that are needed to fulfil human rights and pursue sustainable development. Domestic resource mobilization, assets recovery and curbing IFFs are more critical than ever. Governments' capacities to raise resources through return of assets will be fundamental to rescue the 2030 and 2063 Agendas.

Africa has recognized this challenge and responded with a robust normative and policy framework.

Agenda 2063 calls for an Africa founded ***on good governance, democracy, accountability, justice and the rule of law***. The African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption remains the continent's principal legal instrument for ***strengthening integrity and promoting accountability***.

Building on these foundations, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, at its 33rd session adopted the Common African Position on Asset Recovery, CAPAR, in 2020. CAPAR, ***a policy, strategy and advocacy instrument to guide and facilitate African countries***, represents an important milestone because it situates asset recovery within Africa's broader development agenda, national laws and other legitimate government objectives, while respecting the sovereignty of Member States. It recognizes that resources lost through corruption and other illicit activities ultimately belong to the people and that their recovery must contribute to development, accountability and public confidence in institutions.

Today, our challenge is no longer the absence of frameworks or commitments. Our challenge is implementation.

Honourable Members,

Parliaments occupy a unique position within the accountability ecosystem. Public Accounts Committees, in particular, play a critical role in safeguarding the integrity of public finance.

Through your scrutiny of public expenditure, review of audit reports and oversight of executive action, you help ensure that public resources are managed effectively, lawfully and in the public interest.

Yet effective accountability cannot be achieved by any single institution acting alone.

Strong oversight depends on effective collaboration among Public Accounts Committees, Supreme Audit Institutions, anti-corruption agencies, financial intelligence units, law enforcement bodies, ministries responsible for public finance and civil society organisations. The greatest impact is achieved when these institutions work together as part of a coordinated accountability framework.

This is precisely why the theme of this programme is both timely and relevant. Strengthening oversight and curbing illicit financial flows requires partnership, cooperation and a shared commitment to accountability.

Over the next three days, participants will explore important issues ranging from the typologies of illicit financial flows and asset recovery processes to oversight mechanisms, legislative reforms and the management of recovered assets.

Allow me to highlight five priorities for your consideration.

First, use CAPAR as a practical oversight tool and encourage regular reporting on asset recovery efforts.

Second, strengthen collaboration between Public Accounts Committees and Supreme Audit Institutions to ensure that audit recommendations are systematically followed up and implemented.

Third, make full use of available oversight tools, including audit reports, procurement records, beneficial ownership information and asset declaration systems.

Fourth, deepen cooperation among oversight institutions, anti-corruption bodies, financial intelligence units and civil society organisations.

Fifth, continue supporting legislative reforms that strengthen asset recovery frameworks and promote transparency, accountability and effective management of recovered assets.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The African Union Commission remains firmly committed to supporting Member States and regional institutions in implementing CAPAR and strengthening accountability systems. Through the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, working closely with the AU Advisory Board Against Corruption and other partners, we will continue to support capacity-building, peer learning and policy dialogue in this area.

We also believe that the partnership between the African Union Commission and SADCOPAC represents an important model of regional cooperation that can inspire similar initiatives across the continent.

Ultimately, recovered assets are more than financial resources. They represent better schools, improved healthcare services, stronger infrastructure and expanded opportunities for our citizens. They represent stronger institutions and renewed public confidence in governance.

While illicit financial flows cannot be eliminated overnight, the institutions represented in this room have a critical role to play in reducing them. By ***strengthening oversight, enhancing cooperation and advancing accountability***, we can help ensure that Africa's resources remain available to finance Africa's development priorities and aspirations.

Allow me to once again thank the Government of Mozambique for its hospitality, SADCOPAC for its leadership, the facilitators and resource persons for their expertise, and all participants for your commitment to this important agenda.

I wish you fruitful deliberations and a successful training programme.

I thank you.