Talking notes: by Dr. Tobias Thiel, Country Director GIZ African Union during the Stakeholders meeting on the establishment of the Pan-African Asset Recovery Practitioners Forum convened by AUC-PAPS and AUABC

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Salutations

The Office of the Minister of Justice of Ethiopia.
The Chairperson African Union Advisory Board against Corruption, Hon Seynabou Diakhate Ndiaye.
The African Union Advisory Board against Corruption Board member, Hon Principe Ntibasume.
The Head of Governance and Human Rights, Department of Political Affairs, Peace, and Security African Union Commission Remarks by Mr. Issaka Garba Abdoul.
Distinguished guest Prof. Bolaji Owasanoye SAN, OFR
Chairpersons, Chief Executive Officers, Directors and representatives of various National Anti-Corruption Agencies and Asset Recovery agencies.
Members of Diplomatic Corps;
Development Partners;
GIZ colleagues present today, and
Distinguished delegates;

Good morning!

Remarks

1) It gives me great pleasure and privilege to join you in this important meeting as you seek to enhance the continent’s efforts and interventions in promoting asset recovery. The recovery and return of assets is a topic of immense importance for the African continent and globally. Asset recovery is not merely a matter of financial restitution; it is a matter of justice, sovereignty, and the restoration of resources to the rightful jurisdictions for sustainable development.
2) The African Union has demonstrated commitment to fight Illicit Financial Flows including repatriation of stolen African assets through among other approaches development of the Common African Position on Asset Recovery. This is a great milestone for the continent, and it sends a strong message to criminals that Africa will not let crime pay, and efforts will be marshalled amongst all stakeholders as may be necessary to succeed in this endeavor.

3) It is essential to recognize that the success of the Common African Position on Asset Recovery (the CAPAR) hinges on the buy-in and support from all stakeholders. The role of national institutions and regional networks is pivotal; you have been, and will continue to be, at the forefront of asset recovery initiatives. Understanding and embracing collaboration in asset recovery is not just a formality—it is a necessity.
4) This stakeholders meeting is an opportunity to share the wealth of experience you have. The idea on the establishment of an asset recovery practitioner’s forum for Africa to support jurisdictions in the complex process of asset recovery is apt. CAPAR was designed with your insights and expertise in mind, addressing the real gaps and obstacles you encounter daily in your work. This policy direction offers new opportunities to enhance our efforts, ensuring more efficient and effective recovery of assets.

5) GIZ recognizes these significant efforts by the African Union focused on enhancing the implementation of the CAPAR. I would like to recognize AUC-PAPS and AUABC for their continued dedication to this critical topic and appreciate their efforts in rallying the member states to implement CAPAR. We reaffirm our commitment to support efforts and interventions to enhance and fast track implementation of CAPAR.
and combating Illicit financial flows to ensure that these resources are returned to their rightful owners and used for the development and betterment of African nations.

6) GIZ recognizes the importance of the four pillars of the CAPAR and acknowledges that Political engagement is crucial, as it underscores the commitment of African leaders to this cause; The pillars reflect the collaborative effort between practitioners and policymakers, ensuring that the strategy is both practical and comprehensive. Your participation has been, and will remain, integral to this process to achieve the objectives of the CAPAR.

7) To this end the establishment of a Pan-African Asset Recovery Practitioners forum for the continent will promote unity in addressing the challenges posed by illicit financial flows and create a platform for coherence in the asset recovery and return efforts in the continent. It
will also provide a joint platform for Africa to engage globally on advocating for the return of assets within terms that are favorable for the African continent. We hope to leverage on the CAPAR to strengthen initiatives and advance towards a more transparent and accountable asset recovery framework in the continent.

8) GIZ reaffirms its commitment in combating illicit financial flows and its support to the African Union in increasing policies and interventions that will promote a better Africa through achievement of Agenda 2063.

9) Thank you for your dedication and continued efforts in this vital area of work, I wish you fruitful deliberations and a positive atmosphere as you share your insights and collaborate towards a common goal: to promote and enhance asset recovery in the continent.
Thank you

Dr. Tobias Thiel, Director GIZ African Union