



“Connecting African Civil Society to the African Union”

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## 1.0 BACKGROUND

The Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC) is an advisory organ of the African Union, established during the third Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2004 under the provisions of Articles 5 (i) and 22 of the AU Constitutive Act. The organ is mandated to actively engage civil society in the processes and work of the Union, particularly with regards to Africa's integration and development.

ECOSOCC's mandate includes:

- Contributing, through advice, to the effective translation of the AU's objectives, principles and policies into concrete programmes, as well as evaluating those programmes.
- Undertaking studies and making recommendations to AU organs or member states from the perspective of African civil society.
- Contributing to the promotion and realization of the AU's vision and objectives
- Contributing to the promotion of human rights, the rule of law, good governance, democratic principles, gender equality and child rights.
- Promoting and supporting the efforts of institutions engaged in reviewing the future of Africa and forging pan-African values in order to enhance an African social model and way of life.
- Fostering and consolidating partnership between the AU and African civil society organisations.
- Assuming functions referred to it by other AU organs.

## 2.0 CIVIL SOCIETY SPACE AT ECOSOCC

The term Civil Society Organization (CSO) is commonly used to encompass a broad plethora of organisations which are engaged in the development process. ECOSOCC comprises various social, private sector and professional groups of member states of the Union, and the African diaspora (Assembly/AU/ Dec.48 (III)) and functions primarily as a bridge through which the African Union can partner and engage with civil society organizations on the continent.

The ECOSOCC Statutes guide the membership of CSOs within the African Union ecosystem; as per **article 3** CSO members include but are not limited to:

### SOCIAL GROUPS

- Women, Children, Youth, Elderly, People with Disabilities & Special Needs

### PROFESSIONAL GROUPS

- Artists, Engineers, Health Practitioners, Social Workers, Media, Teachers, Sport Associations, Legal Professionals, Social Scientists, Academia, Business Organisations, National Chambers Of Commerce, Workers, Employers, Industry And Agriculture, As Well As Other Private Sector Interest Groups

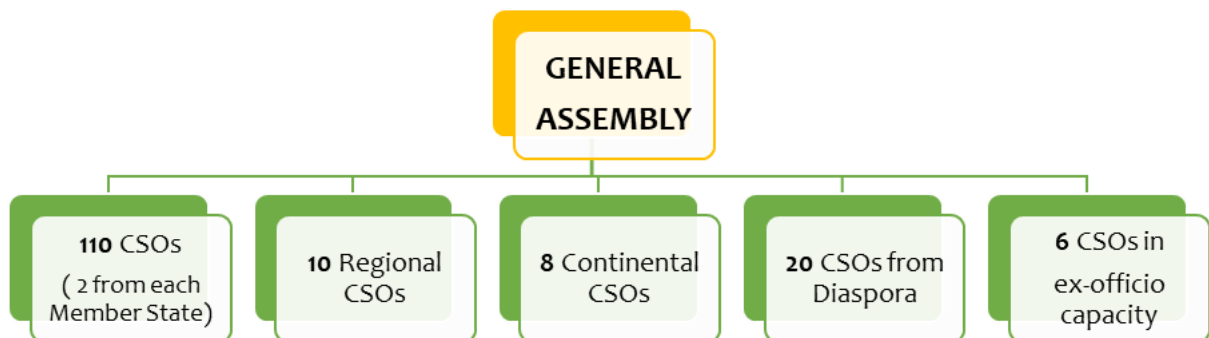
### NBOs, CBOs & Cultural Organisations

- Non-governmental organisations (NGOs)
- Community-Based Organisations (CBOs)
- Voluntary Organisations
- Cultural Organisations

### DIASPORA

- Social and professional organisations in the African Diaspora (in accordance with the definition approved by the Executive Council)

Traditionally, ECOSOCC has been engaging with elected members of its General Assembly which is composed of CSOs as below:



Pending the guiding documents for the elections of CSOs from the Diaspora; even when operating at its full capacity ; the ECOSOCC General Assembly is limited to a maximum 134 CSOs . As much as ECOSOCC does engage CSOs outside the permanent General Assembly, there is a huge number of African CSOs and Experts, who are left outside the engagement process in the absence of a framework for non-GA CSOs.

### 3.0 ABOUT CONNECT 2 ECOSOCC

Article 11 of the ECOSOCC Statutes establishes the Sectoral Cluster Committees (SSCs) as the primary operational mechanisms of the organ to formulate opinions and provide inputs into the policies and programmes of the African Union from the perspective of African civil society. The cluster committees were initially designed to correspond directly to the technical departments of the African Union Commission (AUC), alongside which they are expected to work in close collaboration in order to remain informed of the current programmatic priorities of the Union and to propose actionable recommendations for civil society participation therein. With the AU Reforms, the technical departments at the AUC have been reorganized, thus requiring the imminent revision of the ECOSOCC Statutes to ensure realignment.

Pending the new mapping; ECOSOCC has proactively constituted 8 Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) as tabulated below to widen the civil society space within the organ.

SN	CODE	THEMATIC WORKING GROUPS	AREAS
1	ARBE	Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agriculture and Food Security</li> <li>• Rural Development</li> <li>• Sustainable Environment</li> <li>• Climate Change</li> <li>• Environment;</li> <li>• Water and Natural Resources</li> <li>• Desertification</li> </ul>
2	ETIM	Economic Development, Trade, Industry, Mining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trade</li> <li>• Industry</li> <li>• Handicrafts</li> <li>• Customs Immigration</li> <li>• Mining</li> </ul>
3	ESTI	Education, Science, Technology & Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• ICT</li> <li>• Human Capital</li> <li>• Innovation</li> <li>• Science and Technology</li> <li>• Space</li> </ul>
4	ITEN	Infrastructure, Transport and Energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Communications</li> <li>• Infrastructure</li> <li>• Tourism</li> </ul>
5	PAPS	Political Affairs, Peace and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflict Management</li> <li>• Peace Building</li> <li>• Prevention and Combating Terrorism</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drug &amp; arms trafficking</li> <li>• Security reforms</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> <li>• Rule of Law</li> <li>• Democratic and Constitutional Rule</li> <li>• Good Governance</li> <li>• Electoral Institutions</li> <li>• Humanitarian Affairs</li> </ul>
6	HHS	Health, Humanitarian Affairs & Social Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Drug Control</li> <li>• Population &amp; Migration</li> <li>• Labour and Employment</li> <li>• Family &amp; Elderly</li> <li>• The Physically Challenged</li> <li>• Sports &amp; Culture</li> <li>• Social Integration</li> </ul>
7	WG	Women , Gender & Youth Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women Empowerment</li> <li>• Children</li> <li>• Gender Equality</li> <li>• Youth Affairs</li> </ul>
8	CC	Cross-Cutting Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HIV/AIDS</li> <li>• COVID-19 Response</li> <li>• International Cooperation</li> <li>• Partnerships</li> <li>• Diaspora</li> </ul>

‘Connect 2 ECOSOCC’ is an ambitious initiative to tap- the enormous expertise within African civil society and provide a platform to engage ECOSOCC and help advance the African Union development and integration agenda.

#### 4.0 TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership is:

- Open to all African nationals and Afro-descendants willing to contribute to the developmental agenda of the Union on a pro-bono basis
- Predicated on subject matter expertise in one or more of the thematic areas identified above
- Subject to verification of credentials and professional experience.

## 5.0 REMUNERATED SERVICES

Members on the 'Connect 2 ECOSOCC' database **may be invited** to provide technical expertise on a number of ECOSOCC initiatives as and when required. In such cases, they will be eligible for remuneration through a fixed honorarium in line with the relevant provisions of the African Union Financial Rules & Regulations.

## 6.0 REGISTER

<https://www.auecosocc.org/connect>