**

***Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation***

***Inter-ministerial Committee for Human Rights***

***Italy’s contribution following the Call for input by the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent***

***June 2021***

**

**Italy’s contribution following the Call for input by the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent**

Following the Call for input by the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, Italian authorities are pleased to provide the following information.

On 15 December 2020 the strategic document drawn up by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation entitled Partnership with Africa was launched. The document sets out Italy’s foreign policy priorities in the medium to long term with regard to the African continent, also in consideration of the Italian role as G20 Presidency for 2021 and co-Presidency of COP-26 (jointly to United Kingdom). The Italian long-standing and intense position in Africa has been featured by many initiatives of the Italian development cooperation, the deep-rooted experience of Italian NGOs and volunteers, the role of religious and archaeological missions, and a strong presence of Italian nationals working together with local people and African communities based in Italy for the promotion of entrepreneurship interventions.

In line with the strategic guidelines of the Italian Three-Year Planning Document of the Development Cooperation and with the principles of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union 2063 Agenda, Italy promotes actions countering poverty and improving sustainable economic and social progress of African populations. The favourite approach is based on an active involvement of African concerned communities to become effective partners and actors in development processes, favouring the participation of civil society organisations, local authorities and the private sector.

In accordance with the priorities identified by the local authorities ("national ownership"), development interventions are concentrated in sectors such as: food security and rural development; economic development and job creation, with emphasis on the empowerment of women and young people as a driver of progress; improvement and increased access to basic services (health and education); environmental protection and combating the effects of climate change.

Aware of the structural nature of migratory phenomena, the Italian Cooperation has for some time now intensified its commitment in the implementation of initiatives aimed at limiting the root causes of irregular migration and mitigating its effects, intensifying support for private enterprises and enhancing the contribution of African diasporas in Italy.

On 24 October 2020 the virtual event about ‘Towards the National Diaspora Forum: strengthening, consolidating and enhancing participation’ was held, following the second step of the “National Summit of Diasporas” (SND) initiative for 2018-2019: this project was designed to inform, train and assist migrant associations on the opportunity to participate in Italian development cooperation, while also seeking to contribute to changing the controversial narrative on migration.

The numbers and the contribution of ideas from the diasporas have been significant, but above all, the wealth of knowledge and relationships of trust built up over these years is significant, and now allows to better calibrate the objectives and actions for a concrete participation of diasporas in Italian cooperation and in general for the objectives of sustainable development.

Through direct testimonies of diasporic associations and networks of associations that were born during the path of the National Summit of Diasporas, the path towards the National Forum of Diasporas has been re-activated.