



YAOUNDE DECLARATION

The 10th plenary meeting of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes (the Global Forum) was held in Yaoundé, Cameroon on 15 – 17 November 2017. The meeting, hosted by the Government of Cameroon, gathered 186 delegates from 78 jurisdictions (including 15 African jurisdictions) and 12 international organisations and regional groups.

African members of the Global Forum took advantage of this 2nd Global Forum plenary meeting to be held in Africa to reflect on ways of ensuring that African countries can benefit from the enhanced tax transparency landscape. To this end, H.E. Alamine Ousmane Mey, the Minister of Finance of Cameroon hosted a high-level meeting of African Finance Ministers and Heads of Tax Administrations on 15 November. Participants recognised that while the global landscape for fighting tax evasion and avoidance has changed, African countries are not fully exploiting the advances in international cooperation in the mobilisation of their much needed domestic revenues. A call for action was made through a landmark document, the "Yaounde Declaration" which urges the African Union to begin a high level discussion on tax cooperation and illicit financial flows and their link to domestic resource mobilisation. Attached hereby is the text of the Declaration.

The 5th African Union and European Union summit held on 29-30 November 2017 in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, has also recognised the importance of this issue and emphasized that international cooperation is key to combat illicit financial flows and tax avoidance. This reinforces the message of Yaoundé Declaration that exchange of information is the most efficient way of improving cooperation between tax authorities around the world that it is essential to intensively promote this agenda in Africa in the coming years.

The Yaoundé Declaration is generating a lot of interest with more African countries joining it. The French President, H.E. Emmanuel Macron and the United Kingdom Prime Minister H.E. Theresa May have also endorsed it during their summit on 18 January.

The intention is to approach the African Union, the United Nation Economic Commission for Africa and other continental bodies with a critical number of endorsements by African Ministers of Finance and engage it in promoting improvements in international tax cooperation to serve Africa's interests in fighting against Illicit Financial Flows.

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A CALL FOR ACTION TO TACKLE ILLICIT FINANCIAL FLOWS THROUGH INTERNATIONAL TAX COOPERATION

We, signatories of this joint declaration gathered in Yaoundé, Cameroon on 15 November 2017, for the Tenth Plenary meeting of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes (the Global Forum);

Recalling the commitment of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to redouble efforts to substantially reduce illicit financial flows by 2030, with a view to eventually eliminating them, including by combating tax evasion through strengthened national regulation and by scaling up international tax cooperation, including to support access to beneficial ownership information for competent authorities and progressively advance towards automatic exchange of tax information among tax authorities as appropriate.

Acknowledging that the report from the African Union and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa's High Level Panel on Illicit Financial Flows from Africa has focused attention on the scale of the issue of illicit financial flows in Africa, which includes tax evasion and other criminal activities, and its negative impact on Africa's development and governance agenda while also identifying ways in which to tackle it, in particular by increasing cooperation and exchange of information to improve domestic resource mobilisation.

Emphasizing the unprecedented efforts made by the international community to improve tax transparency and exchange of information which are a prerequisite for effectively tackling international tax evasion and addressing gaps and mismatches in tax rules that allow for artificial profit shifting.

Recalling the universal Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, and in particular the domestic resource mobilisation objective, as well as the African Union principles in this area.

Affirming that sustainable development and good governance are among the seven African aspirations of the African Union Agenda 2063.

Having deliberated on the theme "Fighting illicit financial flows through international tax cooperation: A Call for Action in Africa".

Reaffirm the important role of the Global Forum in bringing about transparency in tax matters and in assisting developing countries in the implementation of the standards of exchange of information in tax matters (EOI) and the use of the EOI instruments in their domestic resource mobilisation strategy.

Note that while progress has been made in Africa, many countries still do not fully benefit from the new transparent tax environment: only 27 African countries are participating in exchange of information on request (EOIR), only five African countries are committed to automatic exchange of financial accounts information (AEOI), and a large number of African countries continue to have a small EOI network, gaps in their domestic legislation and administrative capacity constraints that hamper efforts to tackle international tax evasion.

Encourage all African countries and the Regional Economic Communities to strengthen their efforts in the fight against international tax evasion through tax cooperation and transparency and work towards more regional coordination;

Resolve to lead by example in using the powerful EOI infrastructure which has now emerged to counter international tax evasion and to support domestic resource mobilisation;

Endorse the renewal for three years (2018-2020) of the Africa Initiative launched in 2014 by the Global Forum with the support of the African Tax Administration Forum and the Centre de Rencontre et d'Etudes des Dirigeants des Administrations Fiscales and the World Bank Group.

Welcome the continuous support of the French Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Swiss Confederation to the Africa Initiative and **Call upon** other international bodies to support the efforts of African countries in building their capacities.

Consider that tackling illicit financial flows in Africa through improved tax cooperation and transparency would be enhanced if carried out at the continental level under the auspices of the African Union with the support of all development partners and international and regional organisations.

Undertake an initiative by the African Union to begin a high level discussion on tax cooperation and illicit financial flows and their link to domestic resource mobilisation.

Encourage African countries with the support of the Global Forum Secretariat to explore with the African Union, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Regional Economic Communities and the African Development Bank a collaboration aimed at boosting African countries' efforts towards implementing the international EOI standards and using EOI tools to improve their domestic resource mobilisation;

Request the Global Forum Secretariat to report back to the Africa Initiative Taskforce on the outcome of the above proposal within 6 months.

Made in Yaoundé, Cameroon, on 15 November 2017

In two originals in English and in French,

LIST OF SIGNATORIES (as of 25 March 2019)

	Country	Representative	Date
1.	Cameroon	H.E. Alamine Ousmane Mey, Minister of Finance	15/11/2017
2.	Liberia	H.E. Adolphus Forkpa, Deputy Minister of Finance and Development Planning	15/11/2017
3.	Uganda	H.E. Haruna Kasolo Kyeyune, Minister of State, Minister of Finance, Planning and Economic Development	15/11/2017
4.	Benin	Mr. Servais Adjovi, Chief of Staff, Representing the Minister of Economy and Finance	15/11/2017
5.	Togo	H.E. Sani Yaya, Minister of Economy and Finance	19/01/2018
6.	Ghana	H.E. KEN OFORI – ATTA, Minister of Finance	22/02/2018
7.	Seychelles	H.E. Peter Larose, Minister of Finance, Trade and Economic Planning	22/02/2018
8.	Chad	H. E. Dr Abdoulaye Sabre Fadoul, Minister of Finance and Budget	26/03/2018
9.	Madagascar	H.E. Andriambololona Vonintsalama, Minister of Finance and Budget	04/04/2018
10.	Niger	H. E. Massoudou Hassoumi, Minister of Finance	09/04/2018
11.	Gabon	H. E. Régis Immongault, Minister of Economy, Prospective and Sustainable Development Planning	10/04/2018
12.	Burkina Faso	H. E. Edith Clémence YAKA, Minister Delegate to the Minister of Economy, Finance and Development	13/04/2018
13.	Congo	H. E. Calixte NGANONGO, Minister of Finance and Budget	13/04/2018
14.	Guinea Bissau	H.E. João Alage Mamadu FADIA, Minister of Economy and Finance	13/04/2018
15.	Senegal	H.E. Amadou BA, Minister of Finance and Planning	17/04/2018
16.	Mali	H.E. Bakary Bocar MAIGA, Representative, Minister of Economy and Finance	13/04/2018
17.	Mauritius	H.E. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth	28/05/2018
18.	Mauritania	H.E. Mohamed Ould Kembou, Minister of Economy and Finance	04/06/2018
19.	The Comoros	H.E. Said Ali Said Chayhane, Minister of Finance and Budget	05/06/2018
20.	Côte D'Ivoire	H.E. Moussa Sanogo, Secretary of State	21/06/2018
21.	Lesotho	H.E. Moeketsi Majoro, Minister of Finance	19/07/2018

22.	Nigeria	H.E. Kemi Adeosun, Minister of Finance	06/08/2018
23.	South Africa	H.E. Nhlanhla M Nene, Minister of Finance	19/09/2018
24.	Morocco	H.E. Mohamed Benchaaboun, Minister of Economy and Finance	21/03/2019

PRESENTS DURING THE INITIAL SIGNING

H.E. Gilles Thibault, Ambassador of France in Cameroon

Mr. Pascal Saint-Amans, Director, Centre for Tax Policy and Administration, OECD

Ms. Maria-José Garde, Chair of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes

Ms. Monica Bhatia, Head of the Secretariat of the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes

Ms. Elfrieda Tamba, Commissioner General, Liberia Revenue Authority, Liberia

Mr. Sie Abou Ouattara, Director General of Taxes, Côte d'Ivoire

Mr. Modeste Mopa, Director General of Taxes, Cameroon

SUPPORTERS OF THE DECLARATION

Country/organisation	Level of endorsement	Comments
France	Head of state	France/UK Summit, 18 January 2018
United Kingdom	Head of state	