

**DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION****MEDIA ADVISORY****JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE****INVITATION TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEDIA**

WHAT: Media briefing on Fall Armyworm Infestation in Africa

WHEN: Friday, 04 August 2017 at 3 P.M.

WHERE: AU Commission, (Plenary Hall, Old Conference Centre), Addis Ababa

WHO: Deputy Chairperson of the AU Commission, H.E Thomas Kwesi Quartey; H.E Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, Mrs. Josefa Sacko and Mr. Patrick Kormawa, FAO's Sub-regional Coordinator for Eastern Africa

OBJECTIVE:

The objective of the press conference to brief the Africa continent on the gravity of the situation presented by the FAW on the food security situation and the steps being taken by AU to create awareness and mobilize political and technical support to control the pest.

BACKGROUND:

Fall Armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*), is an insect pest that has the potential to affect more than 80 plant species, causing damage to economically important cultivated cereals such as maize, rice, sorghum, cassava and also to vegetable crops and cotton. It is native to tropical and subtropical regions of the Americas. It is the larval stage of the insect that causes the damage. FAW reproduces at a rate of several generations per year, and the moth can fly up to 100 km per night. It is believed to have come to Africa from South America. So far, it has been reported in more than 25 African Union Member States and is spreading fast across the continent.

Journalists are invited to participate and cover the press conference on Friday, 04 August 2017, at 3 P.M. in the Plenary Hall of the Old Conference Center, AU Commission.

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