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## THE AFRICAN UNION MOVES TOWARDS OPERATIONALISATION OF THE AFRICA CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

### MOU SIGNED BETWEEN THE AU AND CHINA TRIPARTITE DISCUSSIONS HELD



**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 16 June 2016:** H.E. Mr Erastus Mwencha, the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, and Mr. Zhang Xiangchen, Deputy International Trade Representative of the Ministry of Commerce of China have signed an MOU between the AUC and the Ministry of Commerce of China on the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

Through the MOU, signed on 15 June 2016, China will support the realization of the African Union's "Agenda 2063", to *inter alia*, improve the public health disease control system, integrate medical resources, gradually establish disease prevention, surveillance, detection mechanisms including rapid response to epidemics and pandemics, and build capacity among African Union Member States.



In the meantime, on the same day, a tripartite meeting to discuss the operationalization of the Africa CDC was held between the African Union Commission (AUC), the United States Mission to the African Union (USAU) and the delegation of the mission of the People's Republic of China. The discussions also aimed to

strengthen the tripartite cooperation between the AUC, China & U.S. on the Africa CDC.

Addressing the partners, H.E. Dr. Mustapha Sidiki Kaloko, Commissioner for Social Affairs of the AUC reaffirmed that the AUC welcomes the collaboration with China and the US and is confident that in this spirit the three parties can together change the trends of the health development challenges in Africa. As China and the US are aware of Africa's pains, struggles and trials in lifting the continent's people from the quagmire of infectious and other diseases, Dr Kaloko said the Commission welcomes this partnership, and hopes that it will enable the three parties to accelerate efforts in building and rebuilding health systems and enhanced disease surveillance and response.

H.E Mr. Zhang Xiangchen restated China's strong collaboration with the AU, with emphasis on health. In addition, Mr. Xiangchen applauded and appreciated the efforts of the AU in the development of the Africa CDC so far. "China commits to work with the AU and US throughout the process of the establishment of Africa CDC" Mr. Xiangchen concluded.

Mme. Kary Hintz-Tate, Deputy Chief of the US Mission to the AU, underscored that the US is excited about the cooperation to establish the African CDC "We are getting close to officially launching the Africa CDC". Mme. Hintz-Tate appreciated the AU and the governing board of the Africa CDC for their efforts and overcoming several obstacles throughout the process.

The tripartite discussions follow on previous engagements between the AU and the two partners. In April 2015, the Chairperson of the AUC Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, and Mr John Kerry, U.S Secretary of State, signed an MOU on public health. Both China and the U.S. also added the item of cooperation on the Africa CDC into the MOUs on development and cooperation they signed in September 2015.

The cooperation has registered progress since then. For example, the Chinese government provided two (2) million USD cash aid to the Africa CDC, while the U.S. committed ten (10) million USD and is fully supporting installation of equipment for the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) of the Africa CDC. Furthermore, both China and the U.S. held a successful joint training program for the Africa CDC fellows this year, contributing to capacity building. **HS/WZM**

**For more information on the Africa CDC:**

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