



Addis Ababa, Ethiopia P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: +251 11 551 7700 / +251 11 518 25 58/ Ext 2558
 Website: www.au.int.

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Press Release N°

Minister Abena Ondo grants audience to AUC Director Mahawa Wheeler at the margins of AFCON in Cameroon



Yaoundé, 7 December 2016: - H.E Prof. Marie-Therese Abena Ondo, Minister of



Women Empowerment and the Family of the Republic of Cameroon on Saturday 3rd December 2016, received in audience Mrs. Mahawa Wheeler Kaba, Director of Women, Gender and Development of the African Union Commission (AUC) at the margin of the women African Football Cup of Nations (AFCON) held in Cameroon. The AFCON tournament was organized by the Confederation of African Football (CAF) from 19 November to 3rd December 2016 under the theme: "Together against the Marriage of Young Girls". This theme was widely popularized during the AFCON games under the umbrella of the Cameroonian Ministry of

Women Empowerment and the Family.

The AU Commission together with UNICEF and partner organizations used the women AFCON platform to promote the End Child Marriage Campaign. Cameroon was the 16th African country to launch the campaign on 18 November 2016. Messages aimed at stopping the marriage of young girls were read by the captains of the different football team prior to the start of the football match and widely mediatized to impact on the mass population under the guidance of the Cameroonian Ministry of Women Empowerment and the Family.



During the meeting with the Minister, Director Wheeler expressed her appreciation on the positive sensitization campaign launched by Cameroon to end child marriage while enhancing the education of young girls. “The potentials of young girls needs to be harnessed so that they can contribute to nation building and be part of the

development process of the continent in line with Agenda 2063”, stressed Director Wheeler. She commended the Ministry of Women Empowerment and the Family for taking the leadership in raising awareness and mobilizing the population in the fight against the marriage of young girls. She also congratulated the Government of Cameroon on behalf of AUC Chairperson, H.E Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, for hosting the Women African Cup of Nations and for the impressive turnout during the successful organization of this important event. The AUC Director added that the performance of women in football has greatly demonstrated that there should be no gender discrimination in sports and in other fields dominated by men.

The Director of Women Gender and Development Directorate further pointed out the following activities for action in the near future: She invited Cameroon to be represented at the next Gender Pre-Summit scheduled for January 2017 at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; she also underlined the importance of the contribution of Member States to Women’s Fund with the view to finance the socio-economic investment projects by women and empowering them economically.

Director Wheeler highlighted the progress made by the AU Commission to promote gender equality and women empowerment under the leadership of the current AUC Chairperson. “Two consecutive years have been dedicated to women development - 2015 focused on Women empowerment while 2016 is the year of human rights with a particular focus on the rights of women. 2017 will be on harnessing the demographic dividend with a particular attention on Youths Development” noted the Director. She

added that, investing on the youths as a way of implementing the Africa Agenda 2063 will greatly enhance the development of the continent.



Minister Abena Ondoa thanked Director Wheeler for the fruitful exchanges during the audience and for providing her ministry with useful information about the AU's effort in promoting women's and youth's development agenda. The Minister presented the work of her ministry in boosting the potentials of women and enhancing their economic growth.

Prof. Abena Ondoa availed to the AUC Director a copy of the national strategy for the promotion

of women as well as other useful publication produced by her Ministry.

Present at the audience with the Cameroon Minister of Women Empowerment and the Family was Mrs. Esther Azaa Tankou, Head of the Information Division of the AUC and two close collaborators of the Minister.

At the end of the audience, the Minister and the AUC representatives attended the AFCON finals played on the same day at the Yaounde Omnisport Stadium.. The football match opposing the Indomitable Lionesses of Cameroon and the Nigerian Super Falcons. Nigeria won the football finals by 1-0 and was crown African Champions for the AFCON 2016. Director Wheeler met the players later to convey to them the message of encouragement of the AUC Chairperson, H.E Dr. Dlamini Zuma.

Media contacts:

Esther Azaa Tankou, Head of Information Division, Tel. +251 911361185, E-mail: yamboue@africa-union.org

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: DIC@african-union.org | Web Site: www.au.int | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

Follow us:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AfricanUnionCommission>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/_AfricanUnion

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/AUCCommission>