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Directorate of Information and Communication

**MEDIA ADVISORY/ 32<sup>nd</sup> AU SUMMIT**

**High level working session on Banning Plastics in Africa; towards a  
pollution-free Africa**

**INVITATION TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEDIA**

**WHAT:** High level working session on Banning Plastics in Africa; towards  
a pollution-free Africa

**DATE:** **Sunday** 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2019

**TIME:** **3 p.m.**

**WHERE:** African Union Commission Plenary Hall, Old Conference Centre, Addis  
Ababa, Ethiopia

**BACKGROUND:**

The African Union is concerned with the increasing pollution especially in the major cities of Africa. The world is swamped by harmful plastic waste; an estimated 8 million tonnes of plastic ends up in the oceans. If the present trend continues, by 2050 our oceans will have more plastics than fish.

Plastics affect all biological spectrum, including posing risks to human health and wildlife. According to EcoWatch, the accumulation of these products has led to increasing amounts of environmental pollution around the world including Africa. About 90 percent of all trash floating on the ocean's surface is believed to be emanating from plastics.

Therefore, controlling plastic pollution demands the participation of all conceivable stakeholders including governments and civil society organizations. It also entails development of alternatives to plastics that will also compensate for immediate economic losses associated with companies and individuals involved in the plastic business.

Africa has already made traction in addressing plastic pollution, with 13 African countries having banned the use of plastics and are promoting the use of alternatives such as biodegradable bags. However, many people still use plastic bags illegally hence the effectiveness of the bans and taxes are not visible on the ground in many African countries.

Progress has also been made at continental and global level, with the African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN) at their 2017 meeting held in Libreville, Gabon, urging African Countries to reduce all forms of pollution including waste and chemicals in line with the Bamako Convention. In the same vein, the United Nations Environment Assembly Declaration of December 2017 called for a Pollution-free Planet and adopted a resolution which invites relevant international and regional organizations and conventions to increase their action to prevent and reduce marine litter and micro plastics and their harmful effects, and coordinate where appropriate to achieve this end.

## **OBJECTIVES:**

- Advocacy and awareness on the impacts of plastics in Africa;
- Share experience on strategies and measures being undertaken at national level to address the plight of plastics;
- Agree on modalities and partnership for taking the process forward.

**WHO:** The event will be graced by: **African First Ladies**  
**Others participants include the Heads of Delegations attending the February 2019 African Union Summit; African institutions: African Union Commission; NEPAD; African Development Bank; UN Economic Commission for Africa; Regional Economic Communities; and Development Partners.**

**Journalists are invited to cover the event on February 10th, from 3 p.m. at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.**

## **JOURNALISTS ARE STRONGLY ADVISED TO OBSERVE TIME**

### **Media Contact:**

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