

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Media Advisory No:

Date: 24 October 2023

Venue: African Union Commission

FRIDAYS OF THE COMMISSION

Theme: Urgency to expedite resilience-building in Africa following a series of natural disasters.

What: Fridays of the Commission will focus on the urgency for Africa to expedite resilience-building on the continent following a series of natural disasters. The first series will focus on cyclone Freddy.

When: 27th October 2023

Where: The event will be held at the Nelson Mandela Hall at the African Union Commission. You can also follow the event virtually on:

<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0pfuirpjsiHtQbKIFk9Q9VPNDqhGpvbyob#/registration>

Who: The event will be addressed by Senior officials from the African Union, Senior Government officials, and development partners, among others.

Background information.

From Cyclone Freddy to Storm Daniel, and to the Earthquake in Morocco, the year 2023 has been one the deadliest years on the African continent. The recent events present only the tip of the iceberg. Small and slow-onset disaster events most often receive less attention and account for significant losses. This is often because they do not directly lead to massive disaster deaths. Yet, these small events result in huge economic impacts and wider, long-term impacts on development.

In 2022 alone, disasters in Africa led to economic losses of USD 38.5 billion. This economic loss for 2022 is more than the combined GDPs of 15 African countries in the same year. These include Eswatini, Sierra Leone, Djibouti, Liberia, South Sudan, Burundi, Central African Republic, Lesotho, Eritrea, The Gambia, Cabo Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Seychelles, Comoros, and São Tomé and Príncipe. With climate change and unregulated development, disaster risk and losses are projected to increase exponentially. However, the disaster losses can be prevented or substantially reduced.

The Programme of Action for the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in Africa aims to substantially reduce continental disaster losses by 2030. Further to this, the AU Commission has developed several programmes to achieve this ambition. These include

1. Strengthening Disaster Risk Governance for Resilience in African Regions and Countries;
2. Sahel Resilience Project;
3. Africa Multi-hazard Early Warning and Early Action System (AMHEWAS);
4. Africa Urban Resilience Programme (AURP); and
5. Ongoing establishment of Pan African Civil Protection Mechanism for Disaster Preparedness and Response.

The Fridays of the Commission series will present the state of disasters in Africa and appraise the efforts being taken or needed to build resilience. The Commission envisages three events of the series in 2023. The first series will focus on the impact of Cyclone Freddy across Malawi, Mozambique, and Madagascar. The second series will discuss the devastating floods in Libya and Earthquake in Morocco; and the third series will focus on the protracted droughts in the Horn of Africa. The discussions will include the impact and efforts needed to support immediate recovery, as well as those necessary to build long-term resilience. During these series, AU initiatives and progress on disaster risk reduction and resilience will be presented.

For more details on what the African Union is doing on disaster risk reduction and resilience visit [Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment \(ARBE\) | African Union \(au.int\)](#)

For further information, please contact:

Doreen Apollos Information and Communication Directorate | African Union Commission | Email: ApollosD@africa-union.org.

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission, **E-mail:** DIC@african-union.org | **Website:** www.au.africa | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia Follow Us: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#) | YouTube