

**Press Release N° 024/2013****AU Commissioner and AGRA President discuss strategic partnership**

**Addis Ababa 15 March 2013-** Commissioner Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture; and Ms. Jane Karuku, the President of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) held a meeting at the African Union Commission on Friday 15 March 2013.

The objective of the meeting held between AUC-DREA and AGRA was to share the vision, objectives, and modes of operation of the two parties, aiming to identify areas of strategic congruence and concrete scope for enhanced partnership and cooperation.

In her opening statement, Commissioner Tumusiime commended AGRA for the continued partnership with AUC and for its work in advancing agricultural development at country-level across the continent especially in extension services, input delivery, output market development and functioning, and farmer organization and capacity building.

She called for closer collaboration between AGRA and AUC-DREA in furtherance of the shared goal of increased agricultural production, productivity, food and nutrition security on the continent. She said these efforts need to be stepped up especially this year which marks the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the African Union's predecessor, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), 10 years of the existence of the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), and in preparation for the 2014 AU Year of Agriculture and Food Security.

Specifically, the AU Commissioner outlined areas for coordinated collaboration such as sustaining the CAADP momentum that Member States are calling for and heightening support to country Investment Plans; the African Fertilizer Financing Mechanism in addition to follow up and implementation of African Union declarations and decisions on strategic commodities, value chain development, fertilizer use, irrigation, agricultural research and technology, sanitary and phytosanitary issues, post-harvest loss reduction and climate-resilience.



Taking the floor, the President of AGRA registered her own and her organization's gratitude to the Commissioner for her leadership on the continent and also expressed appreciation for the collaboration that AGRA enjoyed with the AUC-DREA. She highlighted AGRA's key areas of engagement in AU Member States and Regions from small holder farmer support to input-output markets and micro-finance, from fertilizer and soil management to post-harvest interventions, from research and development to value chain development, and demonstrating success models. She pledged her readiness and willingness to ensure that AGRA heightens its alignment

and cooperation with AUC-DREA on policies, programmes and projects in advancing agricultural development on the continent particularly leveraging on the AU's convening power and policy advocacy.

Ms. Karuku further highlighted the strong conceptual, programmatic, and operational alignment of AGRA's investment portfolio with the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme (CAADP), opening considerable scope for a strong and rewarding partnership. The AU Commissioner and AGRA President highlighted the importance of women in agriculture at both production and agribusiness levels which they agreed to collaborate in supporting in more concrete terms.

The two principals expressed satisfaction with the proceeding and outcomes of the meeting. They agreed to work more closely for enhanced productivity of this strategic partnership. The meeting was attended by senior officials of the AUC and AGRA.

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