

**PRESS RELEASE N° 65/2015****AU COMMISSIONER TUMUSIIME CALLS ON UN SRSG MARGARETA WAHLSTROM**

**16 March 2015 Sendai, Japan-** Her Excellency Tumusiime Rhoda Peace, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture at the African Union Commission, who is in Sendai, Japan leading the official delegation of the African Union Commission to the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) called on Mrs. Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General at the United Nations Office for

Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR).

The two exchanged views on issues pertaining to the ongoing Conference in particular and especially those relating to DRR in Africa.

The AU Commissioner hailed the support that UNISDR has been providing to the AU and its Member States to take forward issues of DRR. The SRSG, on her part, commended the Commission of the African Union for the effective coordination of the process that culminated in the adoption by the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Strategy on DRR; the creation and operationalization of Africa's political Regional Platform and its technical Working Group; and, indeed the development of Africa's Plan of Action.

While acknowledging these compliments, the AU Commissioner observed that it was now time for AU Member States to capitalize of these mechanisms to mainstream in their development planning issues of DRR and make the necessary interventions to advance them and that rather than wait to react to emergencies they should enhance their readiness as well as preventive measures through building resilience. She also

called for heightened advocacy and public awareness as well as empowerment of communities to deal with DRR issues from the grassroots level where they are felt most.

The Commissioner expressed the hope that as part of international cooperation, friends and partners of Africa would extend the necessary support towards its DRR programs and projects. The SRSB expressed the confidence that the global momentum built over the years of implementing the overarching Hyogo Framework of Action 2005-2015 would be sustained in the post-2015 era that combines strategically interrelated processes of DRR, Sustainable Development Goals, Climate Change and Financing for Sustainable Development.

They both voiced optimism that the Sendai Conference would be successful and reaffirmed their personal and respective institutions' commitment to continued collaboration at the service of their shared constituency.

## **Media Contact**

Ms. Carol Jilombo, Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture; AUC  
[jilomboc@africa-union.org](mailto:jilomboc@africa-union.org)

Mr. Molalet Tsedeke; Directorate of Information and Communication, AUC;  
[molalett@africa-union.org](mailto:molalett@africa-union.org);

## **For further information contact**

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: [dinfo@african-union.org](mailto:dinfo@african-union.org) | Web Site: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int) | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

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