



DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Press Release

Ambassadors present Letters of Credence to AUC Chairperson

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 14 January, 2014: Five newly appointed Ambassadors to Ethiopia and Permanent Representatives to the African Union from Benin, Sovereign Order of Malta, Finland, Switzerland and India, respectively, have, successively presented their letters of Credence to the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma on 14 January 2014.

Ambassador of Benin

Welcoming H.E. Mr. Naim Akibou, Ambassador of the Republic of Benin, the Chairperson congratulated him upon his appointment and expressed the hope to see Benin remain as active as it has always been on AU matters. She said her doors are always open to support him in enhancing the cooperation between Benin and the African Union.

Ambassador Akibou conveyed the greetings of President Yayi Boni, as well as a message of congratulations to the Chairperson for her sustained efforts to maintain peace and security on the continent.

Responding to President Yayi Boni's invitation, the Chairperson promised to visit the Republic of Benin in the near future.

Ambassador of the Sovereign Order of Malta

Presenting his letter of credence, the Permanent Representative of the Sovereign Order of Malta, H.E. Alberto Bertoldi, expressed the interest of his country to enhance collaboration with Africa, where it already has 34 Embassies. With interest in areas such as social development and healthcare, the Government of the Sovereign Order of Malta is currently helping constructing a university in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The AUC Chairperson expressed her appreciation to Sovereign Order of

Malta for its interest in deepening collaboration with Africa, particularly in the development of human resources.

Ambassador of Finland

On her part, the newly appointed Ambassador of Finland to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the AU, H.E. Sirpa Maenpaa, expressed her delight in representing her country in Africa, which she had been following for some decades. She appreciated the work of the AU, particularly in the areas of peace and security which is one of those areas of Finnish support to the continental organization.

Ambassador Sirpa Maenpaa took the opportunity to announce the upcoming visit to Ethiopia of the Finnish Prime Minister and the Minister of Development at the end of this January, during which they will meet with the Ethiopian Prime Minister, H.E. Hailemariam Desalegn. Ambassador Maenpaa requested an appointment for the Prime Minister with the AUC Chairperson, H.E. Dr. Dlamini Zuma.

The Chairperson and the Ambassador also exchanged views on other areas of mutual interest.

Ambassador of Switzerland

Presenting his letter of credence, the newly appointed Ambassador of Switzerland, H.E. Mr. Andrea Semadeni, appreciated the AU's increasing role in maintaining continental peace and security. He expressed the hope that Switzerland and African countries will strengthen their partnership in order to deliver more results on pertinent continental issues.

Beyond contributions to peace and security, the AUC Chairperson and the Swiss Ambassador looked forward to greater cooperation in the area of agriculture and food security. They agreed that enhancing agricultural cooperation, trade and industry can be critical in post-conflict reconstruction and development, particularly in the Sahel and Great Lakes region.

Ambassador of India

The Chairperson congratulated and welcomed H.E. Mr. Sanjay Verma, on his maiden diplomatic assignment to Africa, after 24 years of service in Asia. She hailed the very good cooperation that India has had with Africa, both at the Member States and Union levels.

The newly appointed Indian Ambassador and the Chairperson agreed to work more closely to bring India-AU cooperation to new heights, especially in the areas of agriculture, education, health and information technology.

The Chairperson wished each of the new Ambassadors successful tour of duty during their stay in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

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