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African Union Addresses the Challenges of Language to face Modernization

Addis Ababa, June 7, 2012 – French speaking officials of the African Union Commission (AUC) have received training from the French and Gabonese Ecole Nationale d'Administration (ENA) sponsored by the “Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie” (OIF), on modernization of international civil service and the challenges it poses with regard to the issues of globalization.

The seminar, which was held from 4 to 7 June 2012 at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, falls within the framework of the OIF programme to strengthen the use of French in the African Union.

As part of the institutional transformation process initiated by the Commission since 2004, participants at the seminar worked on ethics, values, and missions among others. As a follow-up of lessons learnt during the training, participants underlined the need to create a network of French speaking public servants to promote linguistic diversity within the Commission.

Speaking at the closing of the training, Dr Abdul-Hakim Elwaer, Director of Administration, reaffirmed the multilingual nature of the AU Commission and the willingness of the administration to have a balanced policy between the four working languages of the institution. He said that change is always difficult in large organizations but that with the current commitment of the AU to promote language diversification, measures will be taken to ensure that French language is used widely. Finally, he welcomed the idea of establishing a network of Francophone and Francophile officials.

The training was officially opened by Prof. Jean-Pierre Ezin, Commissioner for Human Resources, Science and Technology of the AUC, and Ambassador Libère Bararunyeretse, Permanent Representative of OIF to AU. The training was provided by

Anne Gazeau-Secret, State Councillor of the French Republic, Mr. Max Brunner, Deputy Director of International Relations of ENA-France and M. Anatole Tsioukacka, Director General of ENA-Gabon.

YNS/ ETA