



PRESS RELEASE

African Editors to join forces with the African Union in Imaging Africa

Kigali, Rwanda, 29 November 2012

– African editors and political leaders discuss ways to enhance the democratic development of the continent during the African Editor's Forum holding from 27-29 November 2012 in Kigali, Rwanda, within the framework of its fourth national dialogue and fifth biannual general meeting on media development in Africa.

The African Union Commission (AUC) was represented at this forum by Dr. Ibrahim Elham Mahmoud, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy. She took part in a panel discussion, held on 28 November 2012, as one of the six guest speakers (2 Ministers, 1 AU Commissioner and 3 editors) on the theme: *"Imaging Africa: roles and responsibilities of political leaders and editors in positioning African Media Globally"*.



According to the organizers, this was a historical moment as it was the first time the African Editor's Forum was involving political leaders to exchange views on a common theme.

The other panelists were: Hon. Louise Mushikiwabo, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Rwanda; Hon. Collins Chabane, South African Minister in the Presidency; Ms. Aishatu Sule, Deputy Director New Radio Kano FM in Nigeria; Mr. Mondli Makhanya, Editor – in – Chief of the Sunday Times in South Africa and Mr. Collin Haba, Managing Editor of the News Times in Rwanda.

The debate was moderated by Mr. Mathatha Tsedu, one of the founders of the African Editors Forum (TAEF) while the current TAEF president, Mr. Cheriff.Sy presented an overview and context of the Forum.

In her introductory remarks, Dr. Ibrahim reiterated the commitment of the AUC Chairperson Dr. Nkozasana Dlamini-Zuma, to put communication as one of her priorities in view to stimulate more interest amongst the African media in contributing to the development agenda of the continent.

The Commissioner reminded the editors that each year the AU Heads of State and Government meet to adopt Decision and Declaration which needs to be implemented at national levels. These instruments need to be popularized so that the African citizens can follow-up what is being done at continental level to improve their living conditions. She also highlighted other important instruments of the AU such as the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights; the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa; the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance among others needs to be well known both by the African citizens and the political leaders to ensure their full implementation. "Let us work together to enhance the development of our continent" Dr. Ibrahim said, calling on the African editors to report on the progress African has made in the different areas of development. "In May 2013, the AU will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). This is another opportunity to popularise the achievements of Union 50 years after and reflect on the vision of Africa in the next 50 years". She noted.



One of the outcomes of the forum was that the AUC should facilitate in creating a framework where leaders and editors can meet to discuss issues related to the development of the continent.

The participation of the AUC at the African Editor's Forum in Kigali culminated with a visit to the site of the genocide where Commissioner Ibrahim deposited a bouquet of flowers in memory of the victims of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide.

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