

AFRICAN UNION

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African Union rallies private sector to fight Ebola on 8 November in Addis Ababa

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia - 31 October 2014: The African Union is joining forces with Africa's private sector, for the first time, to fight the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, at a forum to be held on November 8 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The aim of the meeting is to mobilize resources from within Africa to join national and international efforts on the ground, as well as discuss reversing the economic decline of the countries and post-Ebola recovery.

High profile African business people, including Yosuf Manji from Quality Group Tanzania, Strive Masiyiwa of Econet Zimbabwe and Patrice Motsepe of ARM South Africa have already confirmed their attendance.

Other confirmed attendants are: Kola Karim, MD and CEO of Shoreline Energy International and Shoreline Power Company Limited, Ms. Cristine Stenbeck from Kinnebeck, and Mr. Bob Collymore from Safaricom, Kenya.

The Roundtable is co-hosted by AUC Chairperson Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Donald Kaberuka from the African Development Bank and Carlos Lopes from the UN Economic Commission for Africa.

Recently, the World Health Organisation (WHO) stated that the spread of Ebola may be slowing in Liberia, one of the three West African countries – including Sierra Leone and Guinea – that have been most ravaged by the deadly virus. This indicates that global efforts to combat the outbreak are making headway, thanks in no small measure to the AU Support Mission's efforts to mobilise technical expertise, resources and political and financial support the fight against Ebola.

Through its AU Support to the Outbreak of Ebola in West Africa (ASEOWA) mission, the AU has deployed over a hundred volunteer medical and health workers to the three affected countries. Among them are epidemiologists, medical doctors, clinicians, public health specialists and communications personnel. These teams have enhanced the capacity of existing national and international response mechanisms.

Following Dr. Dlamini Zuma's call to all African Heads of State to contribute more health workers towards this efforts, over 2000 medical personnel have so far been pledged. Contributions from the business people will support the deployment of these volunteers.

“There is much more work to be done, and we welcome the willingness already shown by big businesses on the Continent in helping to restore normality to the regions affected, where Ebola has had a major socio-economic impact. The pride of the African continent lies in our commitment to help other Africans. The Ebola outbreak in West Africa is unprecedented, and our co-ordinated responses to the crisis are therefore urgent. We need to continue to provide financial assistance to these regions, to be able to track and contain the disease, provide treatment to those who are sick, and restore normality to these communities.” says Dr. Dlamini Zuma.

For further information, visit <http://pages.au.int/ebola>

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About the African Union

The African Union spearheads Africa’s development and integration in close collaboration with African Union Member States, the Regional Economic Communities and African citizens. AU Vision: to accelerate progress towards an integrated, prosperous and inclusive Africa, at peace with itself, playing a dynamic role in the continental and global arena, effectively driven by an accountable, efficient and responsive Commission. Learn more at: <http://www.au.int/en/>