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Ministerial meeting adopts Statute of the Africa CDC

Urges fast tracking of the establishment of the continental mechanism on disease control and prevention



Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, 20 July 2015-

African Union Ministers of Health meeting in Malabo adopted the Statute of the Africa CDC and urged the fast tracking of the establishment of the institution. The Statute of the African CDC establishes the Africa CDC as

a specialised technical institution charged with the responsibility to promote the prevention and control of diseases in Africa.

“We must do everything possible to establish an Africa CDC that is robust and capable enough to conduct lifesaving research on priority health problems” said His Excellency, Dr. Mustapha Sidiki Kaloko, the Commissioner for Social Affairs of the African Union Commission. “It should serve as a platform to share knowledge and build capacity in responding to public health emergencies and threats” he added.

Responding to public health emergencies and threats

The Africa CDC will provide strategic direction and promote public health practice within Member States through capacity building, promotion of continuous quality improvement in the delivery of public health services. It will also work on the prevention of public health emergencies and threats. Member States will maintain national-level ownership on disease control and prevention simultaneously through an advisory role in the shaping of Africa CDC priorities. In the event of a public health emergency on the continent with cross border or regional implications, the Africa CDC is mandated to deploy responders, in consultation with affected Member States to confirm and/or contain the emergency.

Regional Collaborating Centres

Regional Collaborating Centres will be selected in the regional communities to support the Africa CDC. The collaboration and support of these centres is to ultimately bring into reality an Africa CDC that supports the continent at the point of need. Each centre represents an existing government entity that has met set criteria.

Cooperation with Member States, WHO and key stakeholders

The Africa CDC will work with ministries of health and agencies dealing with disease control and prevention. It will pursue closer collaboration with WHO to build capacity in countries, deploy experts for rapid response teams and establish links in emergency operations centres. The AU Commission and WHO are developing a framework for collaboration to guide their support to countries.

The Africa CDC will maintain working ties with development partners and stakeholders, particularly Regional Health Organisations, Regional Economic Communities, the private sector, civil society organisations and various organs of the African Union.

The recent Ebola epidemic provided further impetus for a continental and global rethink of the existing health emergency response

architecture for disease control and prevention. The key lesson from the Ebola epidemic is that there must be better preparedness for global health threats. There is thus work at various levels to streamline governance of the continental and global health systems. This starts with providing full support for countries to comply with core capacities of International Health Regulations (2005) that improve countries ability to detect, assess, notify and respond to public health threats.

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