

PRESS RELEASE N° 165 / 2011

AFRICAN UNION STRIVES TO MEET THE GOAL OF ZERO MOTHER TO CHILD TRANSMISSIONS OF HIV



Addis Ababa, 30th November 2011 – The African Union (AU) makes “Zero Mother to Child Transmissions” its focus as it prepares to commemorate the World AIDS Day tomorrow, Thursday, December 1st, 2011, at its headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

As part of the activities marking the Day, the Department of Social Affairs of the African Union Commission (AUC) has organised a Panel Discussion on the theme of the 2011 World Aids Day: “Getting to Zero”, scheduled to take place on **1st December 2011**, as from **2:00pm – 5:00pm** in the Plenary Hall of the AU Conference Center.

The Panel Discussion will focus on formulating an African plan of Action, to end mother to child transmissions. The discussants will deliberate on Africa’s approach to eliminate new infections as

well as lessons drawn from existing HIV-AIDS programmes and best practices that have worked successfully for Africa.

The panelists will also highlight some of the major challenges Africa has been facing in general in trying to address the HIV pandemic.

The Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr. Jean Ping is expected to chair the opening ceremony of the Panel Discussion, along side Advocate Bience Gawanas, Commissioner of Social Affairs of the AUC; Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, UN Under Secretary General and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and Mr. Jan Beagle, UNAIDS Deputy Executive Director.



Other key note speakers at the Panel Discussion will include, Honorable Dr. Toupta Boguena, Minister of Health of Chad, Mrs. Akila Belembaogo, UNICEF Representative to the AU and ECA, Mrs. Doreen SANJE representative of Southern African Development Community (SADC), and Mme. Consolée Kamaro, representative of the Civil Society Organisation (CSO) on HIV, Burundi.

The Panel Discussion is expected to produce concrete recommendations that will be specifically directed to the various stakeholders including the African Union and its organs, governments, RECs, UN agencies, CSO's and Development Partners.

It is worth recalling that, in April 2011, an African Common position on HIV/AIDS to the UN High Level Meeting on AIDS was adopted by the 5th Session of the AU Conference of the Ministers of Health (CAMH5), and endorsed by the AU Summit in Malabo, in July 2011, urging AU Member States to implement the AU initiatives and decisions.

The Heads of States also committed themselves to step up leadership and ownership by enhancing appropriate responses to HIV and AIDS for implementation of the campaign “zero new infection, zero discrimination and zero death related to AIDS”.

Some AU slogans include:

“No baby will be born HIV positive!” , “No more orphan victim of HIV/AIDS!”,

“No more death due to lack of access to treatment!”

AFRICA NEW GENERATION FREE OF HIV NOW!

Note that, the above photos are a sample of the artistic drawing on HIV-AIDS by the Greek School Pupil in Addis Ababa, to be displayed during the event at the AU headquarters.

Journalists are invited to cover the Panel Discussion.

Attached is the program of Panel Discussion on 1st December at the African Union Headquarters.

For more information, visit the AU website: www.au.int

Interview request should be directed to Mrs. Esther Azaa Tankou, Senior Editorial Officer, Directorate of Information and Communication, African Union Commission, E-mail: yamboue@africa-union.org / esthertankou@yahoo.com .

Zero Mother to Child Transmission

DRAFT PROGRAM

World Aids Day Commemoration 2011

PANEL DISCUSSION

December 1st, 2011, 2:00-5:30pm African Union Commission Conference Center

- 2:00 Introductions from Meeting Chairperson: **H.E. Commissioner Bience Gawanas**
- 2:15 World Aids Day Commemoration Speech: **Mrs Jan Beagle UNAIDS Deputy Executive Director**
- 2:30 ECA World Aids Day Commemoration Speech: **H.E. AbdoulieJanneh**
- 2:45 World Aids Day Commemoration Speech: **H.E. Chairperson Jean Ping**
- 3:00-3:30 **Joint Press Conference-** Media Room
- Group Photo
- Tea Break-** Congo Hall
- 3:30-5:00 **Panel Discussion on the Elimination of Mother to Child Transmission**
- Chaired by **H.E. Commissioner Bience Gawanas**
- Presentation on Draft African Plan :**Dr Benjamin Djoudalbaye**
- Panelists**
- UNAIDS: Deputy Executive Director, **Mrs Jan Beagle**
- Minister of Health of Chad, **Honorable Dr. Toupta Boguena**
- UNICEF Representative to the AU & ECA, **Mrs. Akila Belembaogo**
- SADC: **Doreen SANJE**
- CSO/HIV Burundi: **Mme. Consolée Kamaro,**
- 5:00-5:30 Question & Answer Session
- 5:30-7:00 Reception by invitation