



## JOINT PRESS RELEASE

### **African Union Commission and Oxfam hold pre- Summit training to engage the Civil Society Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisation to know and brand the AU**



**20<sup>th</sup> January 2013, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**– A training to engage the Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) took place on 18 and 19 January 2013 at the headquarters of the African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The training, was jointly organised by the Directorate of Information and Communication (DIC) of the African Union and Oxfam International, Addis Ababa Office in view to enlighten the CSOs; the NGOs

and the media on the need to know the vision and missions of the AU and to bring in their own contribution in their respective capacities in supporting the development agenda of the AU Commission.

The training aimed to familiarize the civil societies and media with the structures and organs of the AU as well as policy making process of the Union. Participants were briefed on their expected role to take active part in the development of the continent. They were urged to work in close collaboration with the Directorate of CIDO and ECOSSOC as an entry point to the AU given their important participation in the building process of all sectors of development. The training workshop was conducted by experts from Oxfam International and the DIC-AUC.

Addressing participants at the opening ceremony, Mr. Desire Assogbavi, Head of Oxfam International liaison Office to Addis Ababa, recalled that the African Union has been seeking to achieve a strong integration of the continent by setting up a strong partnership between government including the civil societies and media so that they can play their role in narrowing the gab of misinformation. He underlined the need to update one another through effective and efficient communication activities.

Speaking on behalf of Mrs. Habiba Mejri-Cheikh, Director of Information and Communication of the AU Commission, Mrs Esther AzzaTankou said the DIC has engaged in a number of partnership in line with its communication and advocacy strategy including: Oxfam, UNESCO, FES in a bid to enhance the media landscape through creation of networks with African journalists as well as promote the activities of the Union. A presentation of NETPEACE, one of the networks grouping journalists interested in covering peace and security issues in the continent was done by Ms. Yaye Nabo Sene, Information Officer in the DIC.

Participants also received briefings from the followings: Mr. Alimany Sesay representing the Legal Counsel of the AU Commission addressed the issue on the AU policies and decision making process, while Mr. Takwa Zebulon representing the department of Peace and Security of the AU Commission presented the issue of conflict prevention and resolution as well as the peace and security architecture. Mr. Dismas Nkunda representing International Refugee Rights Initiative and Ms. Jamilah Mwanjisi representing the state of the Union (SOTU) addressed the issues of social mobilisation in view to enable the CSOs take active part in the AU's development efforts.

The training ended with a written exercise by the participants to test their knowledge on the African Union. Certificates were awarded at the end of the training.