

Check against Delivery

**Opening Remarks**

**By**

**H.E. Ambassador Kongit Sinigiorgis  
Permanent Representative of Ethiopia to the  
African Union and UNECA and Chairperson of the  
Permanent Representatives Committee**

**At**

**The Special session of the Permanent  
Representatives Committee on HIV/AIDS,  
Tuberculosis and Malaria**

**12 July 2013**

**Abuja**

**~~Excellency, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission~~**

***Excellencies, Colleagues,***

***Distinguished Representatives of United Nation System and Representatives of development partners,***

***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

Let me begin by welcoming you all to this session of the PRC, which is convened to prepare for the Special Summit on HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. I would also like to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to the people and the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the warm welcome to this beautiful city of Abuja.

My special thanks goes to my dear brother Ambassador Paul Lolo of Nigeria for the warm welcome and the excellent arrangements put at our disposal.

I also wish to thank the African Union Commission, United Nations Agencies and Development partners for all their efforts in organizing this Special Summit.

***Excellencies,***

***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

The objective of the Special Summit is to review the progress made in our fight against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria as well as the efforts so far made to achieve the health related MDGs. As we are meeting at a time when multilateral negotiations are taking place to chart a global development framework beyond 2015, this meeting affords us the opportunity to make further contributions to the draft African common position on the post 2015 development agenda by articulating Africa's priorities particularly in the social sector.

During our meeting today, we will receive the report of the Experts meeting and examine the working documents to be submitted to the Executive Council and subsequently to the Summit for their consideration. Particularly, we will deliberate on the report of the Abuja call for action towards universal access to

HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and exchange views on ways and means of consolidating our gains and overcoming our challenges in the fight against these diseases.

***Excellencies,***

***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

We all agree that encouraging achievements have been registered over the past decade in our fight against HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria in Africa. No doubt, this was made possible through the joint efforts of governments, development partners and communities. Some countries in Africa have indeed performed better towards achieving the health related MDGs, particularly in the areas of HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria. These success stories should, therefore, inspire other African countries that are lagging behind to scale up their efforts in the coming years.

In spite of these achievements, however, we recognize that there are still a number of challenges in our endeavours to achieve the objectives set in the Abuja Call for Action and the health related MDGs. In this regard, I wish to note the gaps that still exist particularly in terms of access to HIV prevention, treatment, social

protection, care and support, resource mobilization as well as in strengthening the systems of service delivery, sustainable financing, governance and leadership.

Therefore, we should continue to exert more efforts to reverse the impact of the three diseases by ensuring universal access to services and strengthened health systems based on the principle of ownership, accountability and sustainability. The support of our development partners has, of course, been very critical and I hope they will continue to assist us by providing flexible and predictable financing.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

The Non-state Stakeholders and Civil society Pre-summit Consultations which ended a couple of days ago, here in Abuja, recommended, among others, that the Heads of State and Government of the African Union strengthen surveillance and promote research to support evidence informed AIDS, TB and Malaria policy development and programming to support the development of medicines, vaccines diagnostics and new prevention technologies.

As far as the Ethiopian Government is concerned, this is one of the most important recommendations which can pave the way forward in terms of finding a lasting solution to arrest the spread of these three killer diseases. In this connection, my delegation believes that it is now time for Africa to think about establishing its own Centre for Disease Control (an African CDC) which will not only carry-out life-saving researches on medicines, vaccines diagnostics and new prevention technologies but also reduce our continent's over-dependence on foreign CDCs.

*Excellencies,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Finally, I am confident that, with your cooperation, we will finalize our work within the set time frame. I conclude my brief remarks by wishing you all a fruitful deliberation.

I thank you