



## DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

## Press Release

**AUC hosts the first task force Meeting on the Pan African Virtual University****Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 17****March 2015:** The first task force on the Pan African Virtual University under the auspices of the Human Resources Science and Technology department (HRST) was held on 17 March 2015 at the African Union (AU) headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The main purpose of the meeting is to reflect on the importance of

Open and Distance Learning which is in line with one of the flagship Projects under Agenda 2063.

Addressing participants at the opening ceremony, H.E. Dr. Martial De-Paul Ikounga, HRST Commissioner, highlighted the technicality of the meeting and the importance of distance learning with the current use of social media to allow continuous teaching regardless of time, the necessity for education for all, open, without discrimination and cost efficient. Commissioner Ikounga encouraged the various presenters to be innovative and “crazy” with ideas and Initiatives, to share their different experiences, state of technology used to enhance e-learning processes in the continent.

Dr. Mahama Quedraogo Ag. Director HRST department on his part, acknowledged the importance of the flagship project towards achieving Agenda 2063.

Dr. Beatrice Njenga, Head of Education Diversion (AUC), recalled that, the 6<sup>th</sup> aspiration of Agenda 2063 is “an Africa where development is people-driven, unleashing the

potential of its women and youth”. She explained the importance education and training to help equip and enrich the youths while preparing them for a better future full of progressive development.



Professor Rotimi Ogidan the representative from the African Council for Distance Education (ACDE) gave an overview about his institution. He said it consist of different levels of memberships and comprises of 52

institutional, 7 associate and 272 individuals located in different regions of Africa, including members from Australia and the United Kingdom.

Fernandes Therezinta, representative from the African Virtual University (AVU) introduced the institution saying its Headquarters is in Kenya. Furthermore, she stated that the main purpose of the Virtual University is to increase distance learning on the continent. In addition, it encourages African people to take advantage of the booming technological advancement and to explore all the possible options for the attainability of distance learning.

The Task Force came up with a conceptual framework and road map for developing the Project Framework document to be presented to the June 2015 Summit. The conceptual framework envisages the University as a multi-dimensional system aimed at bridging temporal, spatial, pedagogical and epistemological distances between learners on one hand and courseware, tutors and institutions on the other hand. The University will leverage existing institutional and infrastructural capacity already in existence. In this case, there will be a need to explore the adaptability of the Pan African e-network infrastructure; as well as the systems already established by other stakeholders. Other major stakeholders and expert institutions will be brought on board very early in the process of developing the Pan African E-University.

The Pan-African E-University will be a dedicated University operating through open distance and e-learning (ODEL) for the benefit of the African continent. It will be managed and operated by Africans for Africa’s development. The Task Force members are chosen for their historical and technical experience in providing open and e-learning in Africa.

**BM/HS/EAT**

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