

**PRESS RELEASE NO. 02/ 22nd AU SUMMIT****AUC Chairperson underscores the need to strengthen the relationship with the PRC for a more productive and successful Commission**

Addis Ababa, 21 January 2014 – The 27th Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC), kicked off today, Tuesday 21st January 2014 against the backdrop of discussions on the launch of 2014 as the year of Agriculture and Food Security. This year is also marking the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture and Development Programme (CAADP).

The African Union Ambassadors alongside officials of the African Union Commission observed a minute of silence in memory of famous Ghanaian born journalist and BBC broadcaster, Mr. Komla Dumor, who past away recently at the age of 41. “He was a household reporter” stated the Chairperson of the PRC, Ambassador Kongit Sinegiorgis.

In her opening remarks, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), wished a happy, productive and successful year to the ambassadors, stressing on the need to strengthen the working relationship between the AU Commission and the PRC in order to build a strong and efficient continental institution. She expressed appreciation to the PRC and its sub-committees on multilateral affairs and other partnerships for working with the AU Commission to accomplish progress in various areas of development. “It is my sincere belief that, by working together, we will achieve our fundamental goals of promoting the interests of the Union, and transforming our continent.Our institution must strive towards excellence in all activities, taking forward the Pan African goals of our Union and in service of the African people”, she underlined.

The AUC Chairperson further expressed worries over the conflict situations in Central African Republic and Southern Sudan while acknowledging progress made in Mali, Somalia and Madagascar which she said should make the Commission more resolute than ever to fulfill the pledge of the 50th Anniversary Solemn Declaration not to bequeath to future generations of Africans the legacy of wars and conflicts by silencing the guns by 2020. “Our collective efforts are not only to end the bloodshed, but also to address the

recurring and root causes of these conflicts in order to build lasting peace and stability”, she said. (See complete statement of AUC Chairperson on the AU website: www.au.int).

The Chair of the PRC on her part called on her peers to deliberate on ways and means of enhancing the institutional capacity of the Commission as well as reflect on some of the challenges both the member States and the AU Commission are facing with a view to finding appropriate remedies to help improve the implementation capacity of the Organisation. She expressed satisfaction with the progress made in the advancement of the peace, integration and development agenda of the continent as reflected in the report of the Commission for 2013 as well as the successful celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) now the African Union (AU). “The development of our own narrative to tell the African story from our perspective and raise the profile of our Union, the adoption of the strategic plan of the Commission for the years 2014-2017, the crafting of an AU wide strategic framework for the next 50 years through a wide consultative process, the strengthening of Africa's partnership with the rest of the world, the implementation of the key priorities and programmes of the African Union as well as the promotion of peace and security and democratic governance are indeed some of the major activities carried out last year”. She highlighted.

Ambassador Konjit stressed on the need of the PRC and the AU Commission to improve their working relations as this is “very critical in order for us to fully rededicate our concerted efforts towards the implementation of decisions adopted by the policy organs and achieve the desired outcomes”. She noted. (See complete speech of Ambassador Kongit Sinegiorgis on the AU website: www.au.int).

Meanwhile, during the next two days, the PRC will discuss items on the agenda in preparation the 24th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council to be held from 27 to 28 January 2014, which will in turn pass on its recommendations to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government who will meet from 30 to 31st January 2014.

For more information about the event, visit the 22nd Summit web page of the AU at the following link: <http://summits.au.int/en/22ndsummit>

Journalists are invited to cover the event

Journalists wishing to interview the leadership of the AU Commission during the Summit should submit their requests to Mrs Esther Azaa Tankou E-mail: YambouE@africa-union.org / esthertankou@yahoo.com

For further information contact

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