

**PRESS RELEASE N°01/ 24th AU SUMMIT****24th African Union Summit to dwell on Year of Women's' Empowerment and development in Africa**

Addis Ababa, 22 January 2015- The “*Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063*” will be top on the agenda of the 24th Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU), scheduled to take place from 23 – 31 January 2015 at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Meanwhile some pre-Summit activities began holding on Wednesday 21st January 2015, such as the 8th Gender Pre- Summit that took place on 21 and 22 January 2015 and the 3rd Africa Risk Capacity (ARC) Conference of the Parties which kicked off today Thursday 22 and ends on Saturday 24 January

2015 at the AU Conference Center.

The 24th AU Summit will officially start on Friday 23rd January 2015 with the twenty Ninth (29th) Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) at 10:00am, in the Medium Conference Hall of the AU Conference Center. The PRC will discuss items on the agenda in preparation of the 24th AU Summit, to be submitted to the Executive Council for adoption.

The opening session of the PRC will include among others, a speech by the Chair of the PRC, a welcome remark by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, and a group photo of Ambassadors with Commission Members. According to the PRC agenda for the 24th AU Summit, the Ambassadors will, for two days (23 and 24 January 2015) exchange views on specific reports of the Commission.

On the other hand, the twenty Six (26th) Ordinary Session of the Executive Council will hold on Monday 26 and Tuesday 27 January 2015 in the *Large Conference Hall (plenary) /AUCC - Nelson Mandela Plenary Hall*. The opening ceremony of the ministerial meeting will take place from 10:00 to 10:30 am. It will include the following:

Welcome remarks by the Chairperson of the Executive Council; statement by the Chairperson of the AU Commission; statement by the UN Under Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the UNECA; opening statement by the Chairperson of the Executive Council and a group photo of the Ministers. Later, the Ministers of External Affairs and other ministers or authorities designated by the governments of AU Member States will deliberate on the different reports of the ministerial meetings organised by the AU Commission during the last six months.

The 32nd Summit of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC) is scheduled to take place on Thursday 29 January 2015 from 10:00 – 12:00 noon while the 22nd Summit of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Forum of Heads of State and Government will hold same day from 15:00 – 17:00 hrs and the meeting of the Peace and Security Council at the Level of the Heads of State and Government will be from 19:00 – 21:00 hrs, same day.

Meanwhile, the 24th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union is scheduled to take place on Friday 30 and Saturday 31st January 2015. The opening ceremony will include the following:

H.E. Mr. Mohamed Ould Abdelaziz, President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and Chairperson of the African Union will declare the beginning of the Session ; AU Anthem by the AUC Choir; a minute of silence will be observed in memory of the late President Michael Chilufya Sata of the Republic of Zambia (deceased on 29 October 2014); inauguration of the Nelson Mandela Hall by the Chairperson of the African Union and the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union ; statement by H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union; statement by H.E. Ban Ki Moon, Secretary General of the United Nations ; opening statement by H.E. Mohamed Ould Abdelaziz, President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and Chairman of the African Union; welcome remarks by the Chairperson of the Union to the newly elected Heads of State and Government and presentation to the Assembly ; election of the Chairperson of the African Union and members of the Bureau / members of the drafting Committee; announcement of the results of the elections by the Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps; acceptance statement by the incoming Chairperson of the Union *and launch of “2015 Year of Women Empowerment and Development towards Africa’s Agenda 2063”*, which is the theme of the 24th AU Summit.

For two days, the Heads of State and Government will consider the progress report of the Commission on the African Union Agenda 2063; the report of the Commission on the Ebola crisis; the report of the Conference of Ministers of Finance and Economy on the Alternative Sources of Financing the African Union; the report of the Peace and Security Council on its activities and the State of Peace and Security in Africa; the report of the Commission on the Establishment of the African Centre for Disease Control and Prevention; the Outcomes of the 2nd Africa-Turkey Summit, Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, 19-21 November 2014 and an awards ceremony for the Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Awards for 2015 by the Chairperson of the African Union and the Chairperson of the AU Commission among others.

AU Summit to Discuss Presidents’ Activity Report:

The Heads of State and Government will exchange views on the report of H.E. Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal and Chairperson of NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC); the report of H.E. Mr. John Dramane Mahama, President of the Republic of Ghana and Chairperson of the High Level African Trade Committee (HATC); and that of H.E. Mr. Jakaya Mrishro Kikwete, President of the

United Republic of Tanzania and Coordinator of the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) on the outcome of climate change negotiations at the 20th Conference of Parties (COP 20) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Lima, Peru, 27 November – 12 December 2014.

The Summit will further consider the report of H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia and Chairperson of the High Level Committee on the inputs to the African Common Position on the Post-2015 Development Agenda as well as that of the APRM as Chairperson of the African Peer Review Mechanism; the report of H.E. Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Chairperson of the Committee of Ten on the UN Reforms; the Report of H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda on the Kigali Plan of Action for implementing the Assembly Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.516(XXII) on the Implementation of Sharm El Sheikh Commitments on Accelerating Water and Sanitation Goals in Africa;

Highlights of the 24th AU Summit will include the appointment of the eleven members of the Advisory Board on Corruption; the appointment of the seven members of the African Union Commission on International Law (AUCIL); the appointment of the president and the vice president of the Council of the Pan-African University (PAU) as well as that of the host country for the Rectorate of the Pan African University.

A press conference addressed by the Chairperson of the African Union (AU) and the Chairperson of the AU Commission will crown the event on 31st January 2015.

For more information on media accreditation and coverage of the Summit please visit the 24th AU Summit web link: <http://summits.au.int/en/24thsummit>.

Journalists are invited to cover the official opening and closing ceremonies of the 29th Ordinary Session of the PRC on 23 and 24 January 2015 , the 26th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council on 26 and 27 January 2015 and the 24th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly on 30 and 31st January 2015.

Journalists are also invited to cover all the photo sessions.

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

For further information contact

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: dinfo@african-union.org | Web Site: www.au.int | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

Follow the AU Commission:

Face book: <https://www.facebook.com/AfricanUnionCommission>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AfricanUnion>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/AUCommission>

Learn more at: <http://www.au.int>