

**PRESS RELEASE N°003/ 24<sup>th</sup> AU SUMMIT****AUC-DIC and OXFAM organise Awareness Training on Understanding the African Union**

**Addis-Ababa, 24 January 2015-** A two-day training aimed at engaging civil society organizations (CSOs) and the media in popularising the activities of the African Union (AU) opened today 24<sup>th</sup> January 2015 at the AU headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, under the theme: “ Understanding and Engaging the African Union’.



Jointly organized by the Directorate of Information and Communication (DIC) of the AU Commission and OXFAM International Liaison office to the African Union , the annual training workshop is holding at the sidelines of the 24<sup>th</sup> Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Arican Union held from 23 - 31<sup>st</sup> January 2015 at the AU Conference Center.



Addressing participants of the workshop during the opening ceremony, the Director of Information and Communication of the AUC, Mrs. Habiba Mejri-Cheikh, stated that the training falls with the framework of the AU Communication and Advocacy Strategy 2014-2017 aligned to the AU Strategic Plan aimed at promoting the development agenda of the continent in view of Agenda 2063. She noted that the CSOs have an important role to play in this process given that their actions on the ground can positively influence public opinion as well as the decision makers. “ The African Union’s mission is to build an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven and managed by its citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena, therefore the contribution of all is very needed to have the change that can improve the lives of many Africans”. Mrs. Mejri-Cheikh emphasised.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Désiré Assogbavi, Resident Representative of OXFAM International said: “ It is another big milestone for Oxfam to join the African Union Commission in organizing this training for the third time aiming to bring the AU to the citizens of the continent and encourage their participation in the affairs of the Union”. For two-days the over 30 participants will receive briefings from resource persons from the different departments of the African Union and Civil Society Experts from OXFAM on the theme of the 24<sup>th</sup> AU Summit, the organs and structures of the AU, the background history of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to AU, and the African governance architecture, among others.

Worth recalling that, the objective of the AUC-DIC/OXFAM awareness training is to familiarize African CSOs and the media with the philosophy and orientations of the African Union including its fundamental law, the Constitutive Act of the Union as well as the vision, mandate and Strategic Plan of the Commission with the view to broaden outreach and knowledge about the African Union.

The AU-DIC/OXAFAM joint training ends tomorrow Sunday 25 January 2015 with an evaluation test for the issuance of a joint AU/OXFAM completion of training certificate and a guided tour of the AU headquarters.

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