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### African Union Signs Memorandum of Understanding with Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



**Addis Ababa 05 July 2011-** A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the African Union Commission (AUC) and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was signed today at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa. Mrs. Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, the AUC Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, and Dr. Castro Camarada, Coordinator of the Sub-Regional Office for Eastern

Africa and Representative in Ethiopia, to the AU and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), FAO represented their respective organizations at this event and signed on their behalf.

The MoU defines the areas of cooperation between the two bodies in support of regional capacity building to reduce post harvest losses. Indeed, there is an increasing acknowledgment amongst governments of Africa and the international development community that post-harvest losses (PHL) reduction and improved value-addition are important approaches to reduce food and nutrition insecurity. However a key factor plaguing current interventions is the use of inappropriate and out-dated approaches. According to the Technical Cooperation Project (TCP) document, “interventions which may have been successful in the past are no longer so, due to the growing influence of private sector led enterprise, rapid market integration and changes in public sector roles”.

In this regard, the objective of this project by the AUC is to fill some of the existing gaps through training of regional institutions, national government officials and development

agencies in designing policies, strategies and investment programmes targeting PHL reduction. It also aims at identifying and implementing country level PHL reduction projects and the use of post-harvest loss assessment methodologies and PHL assessment tools.

The project will also support the establishment of a virtual network and formulation of proposals for investment projects targeting reduction of PHL in Africa.

The TCP on post harvest losses is one of the serious engagements between the AUC and FAO in the framework of the existing memorandum of understanding for cooperation and collaboration in Agriculture, food and nutrition security.