

## PRESS RELEASE N° 160/ 2011

## African Union Medical Service Provides Free HIV Counselling and Testing



**Addis Ababa, 28<sup>th</sup> November 2011** – The African Union (AU) Medical Services Directorate (MSD) began its Volunteer Counselling and Testing (VCT) services for HIV on Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> November 2011, at the Headquarters of the AU Commission (AUC), in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The exercise is currently taking place inside an erected tent in front of the Medical Center where medical experts and practitioners are receiving people of all classes and works of life, including AU Staff who are interested to know about their status.



The HIV counselling and testing services will be available daily from **9:00 AM to 5:00 PM**, throughout the week starting until **Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2011**.

The Counselling and Testing for HIV is one of the activities amongst a series of events leading to the commemoration of the World Aids Day to be observed worldwide on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011. The week-long activities and events are organized by the AU Medical Services Directorate in collaboration with the Department of Social Affairs of the African Union Commission. The activities include: A Panel discussion to be held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011, focussed on the theme of the 2011 World Aids Day: “Getting to Zero”, particularly on the sub-theme: “ Zero Mother to Child Transmission”; the Panel discussion will be followed by a Press Conference; the launch of an AU Commission’s HIV-AIDS Workplace Policy to be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> December and a Family Evening consisting of poems, drama, songs, cultural display and arts competition to take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2011, at the AU headquarters.

The objective of the Volunteer Counselling and Testing is to increase awareness on the issue of HIV/AIDS and sensitize AU staff, users and visitors on the importance of testing for HIV and know their status.