

**AFRICAN UNION**

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**DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION**

**Press Release N° 184/2011**

**AFRICAN UNION PREPARES TO LAUNCH PAN AFRICAN UNIVERSITY**



**Addis Ababa, 13 December 2011-** The Department of Human Resources, Science and Technology (HRST) is organizing a two-day official launching of the Pan African University (PAU). The first day of the launch, 13 December, comprised participants from the Association of African Universities (AAU) which, on behalf of the AUC invites its member institutions, represented by Vice Chancellors, Rectors and other institutional heads, as well as other higher education

stakeholders, particularly researchers, development partners, student representatives and policy makers from AU Member States.

On the first day of the planned two day launch activities, three themes were discussed:

1. Promoting intra-African trade through higher education;
2. Quality imperatives of African higher education;
3. Financing of African higher education.

The Director of HRST, Mrs. Vera Brenda Ngosi observed that it was an exciting day for the AUC to have such distinguished academics present for the realization of the dream of the PAU.

In her welcome remarks, Mrs. Ngosi said that the PAU is a priority education project of the Commission of the African Union, which has been endorsed at the highest political levels in recommendations of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMEDAF) and decisions of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the African Union. She said that the development of the project concept was through engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, from representatives of African academic institutions and governments; international partners; and the Africa Roundtable of the World Conference on Higher Education (WCHE), among others. A High Level Panel (HLP) composed of leading African intellectuals was appointed by the Chairperson of the AUC to support the implementation of the PAU.

Despite the enormous challenges, the African Union Commission, working closely with its higher education partners that include the Association of African Universities (AAU), which is designated as the lead implementation agency, has developed the blue print based on the revitalization of Africa higher education component of the Plan of Action for the

Second Decade of African Education (2006 – 2015), and the Africa Consolidated Plan of Action for Science and Technology. The conceptualization of this model- Pan African University, was endorsed by the Fourth Ordinary Session of the Conference of Ministers of Education of the African Union (COMDAF IV) held in Mombasa, Kenya in November 2009 as an academic network of already existing post-graduate and research institutions.

The Pan Africa University provides an opportunity for the continent to claim her rightful place in the global knowledge-based economy. In itself, the PAU is not an isolated new institution but one based on already existing centres across the continent, seeking to promote science and technology in Africa and a strong link between scientific research and economic development. The PAU will enhance the triple missions of modern universities around the world, namely; education and training; research; and public service/ engagement, which in the case of the PAU, is the entire African continent.

The following five areas constitute the thematic areas of PAU:

1. Space sciences (Southern Africa, with a host institution yet to be identified);
2. Water and Energy Sciences, including climate change (North Africa, with a host institution in Algeria);
3. Basic Sciences, Technology and Innovation (Eastern Africa, with Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology, Kenya, as the host institution);
4. Life and Earth Sciences, including health and agriculture (Western Africa, with University of Ibadan, Nigeria, as the host institution).
5. Governance, Humanities and Social Sciences (Central Africa, with University of Yaounde I, Cameroon as the host institution)

The PAU will be officially launched at the AU Commission's conference center on 14 December 2011, followed by a press conference. In addition to the PAU launch, the Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Awards for Women will also take place at the same venue.

**Journalists are invited to cover the opening ceremony of the Launching of the Pan African University (PAU) at 10:00 am, and participate at the Press Conference at 13:30.**

For more information, visit the AU website: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int)

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