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Launch of the first African Human Development Report

"Towards a Food Secure Future"



Addis Ababa, May 15th, 2012 - The African Union Commission (AUC), jointly with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), launched a first ever African Human Development Report (AFHDR) at the African Union (AU) headquarters on Tuesday, 15th May, 2012, under the theme: **"Towards a food secure future"**, to address hunger for sustained human development in sub-Saharan Africa.

Mr. Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission in his remarks said the report discusses the critical challenges of food security and its implications for human development on the continent. He emphasized that in the face of the new challenges of climate changes, the road towards a food secure Africa is still bumpy and requires political will and commitment to hard work.

Mr. Mwencha mentioned that the report was timely, as it came out at a time when the continent is grappling with severe food shortages and malnutrition. He said "if governments in Africa had met the aspirations of their people, food insecurity would have long been addressed and this report would be focusing on a more contemporary theme".



The report says achieving food security in sub-Saharan Africa will remain out of reach so long as the rural poor, and specially women, who play a major role in food production, do not have more control over their own lives.

According to the AFHDR report, nearly 55 million children are malnourished. This figure has increased during the last ten years and it is set to rise even further. One in four Africans i.e.,

218 million people are under nourished. During the last decade, average rainfall declined in Sub-Saharan Africa more than in any other region, and the number of people affected by drought, extreme heat and wildfires doubled over the last 10



years.,The number of floods, storms and mass migration almost tripled.

The report focus on how Africa can move forward in building food security by setting polices across national development agendas to raise agricultural productivity among smaller holder farmers, enhance nutrition among women and children, build resilient communities and households and empower women and the rural poor. It says policies are already changing and action is underway in many countries.

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Mr. Eugene Owusu, UNDP Resident Representative, on his opening remarks said, “had African governments over the past thirty years met their people’s aspiration, this report would not be necessary. One quarter of the Sub-Saharan Africa would not be under nourished, and one third of African children would not be stunted”.

Mr Samuel Bwalye, Economic Advisor OF UNDP gave key highlights on the report. He said that, linking food security and human development is the unique thing about the report. Sub- Saharan African people are confined in a vicious cycle of low food security and human development.

Mr. Hailemariam Desalegn, Deputy Prime Minister of Ethiopia and Minister of Foreign Affairs indicated in his remarks that the report provides deep analysis in sub-Saharan Africa and explanatory Paradox in the continent and food insecurity is critical specially in sub-Saharan due to poverty, HIV, climate change terrorism, corruption and many more reasons.

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