

Press Release No. 5 / 19th AU Summit**The Permanent Representatives Committee of the African Union Evaluates the last six months of the Union**

Addis Ababa, July 9, 2012 – The 24th Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) of the African Union (AU) officially opens today, Monday 9 July 2012 at the headquarters of the AU in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Ambassadors and other plenipotentiaries who represents the 54 Member States of the AU are meeting ahead the Executive Council to prepare for the 19th Assembly

of Heads of State and Government of the AU scheduled to take place from 15 to 16 July 2012 in Addis Ababa.

Following the agenda of the [19th AU Summit](#), the PRC will review the work and progress made by the AU Commission during the last six months and the issues that impact on the management and functioning of the Union. They will also assess progress under the four pillars of the Strategic Plan covering the period 2009 to 2012. They are: peace and security; development, integration and cooperation; shared values and institutional capacity building.

In his opening remarks, the Deputy Chairperson of the AU Commission, [Mr. Erastus Mwencha](#) recalled the 10th anniversary of the entry into force of the Protocol establishing the Peace and Security Council of the AU, the central organ for the prevention and resolution of crises and conflicts. Mr. Mwencha also recalled that in 2012 is the AU year of the shared values, " There is no doubt that



democracy, good governance and the rule of law as well as the upholding of Human Rights has increasingly taken strong roots in Africa” he said. Mr. Mwencha regretted the escalation in the tension between Sudan and South Sudan, which he said led at some point, to military confrontation between the two



countries as well as the coup d'état in Guinea Bissau and the multifaceted crisis in Mali.

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed the resilience of Africa in the face of the global economic crisis. “During the past six months, the AU Commission has focused on consolidating the roadmap and architecture to implement the

continental free trade area. Drought and famine in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel have also tested the resilience of the continent. The AU Commission has endeavored during the last six months to implement risk reduction strategies to reduce the recurrence of famine and drought and their impacts”, he underlined.

Meanwhile, the current Chairperson of the PRC, who is also the Ambassador of the Republic of Benin to the AU and Ethiopia, Mr. Ferdinand Montcho, together with the Deputy Chairperson of the AU Commission, Mr. Mwencha reported respectively on the need to address the Commission’s budget for the year to consider the alternative sources of funding. Mr. Montcho underlined the importance for the Commission to raise its budget through an alternative source of financing so as to be more independent in implementing its development programs. “More than 90% of the programme budget is financed by the AU development partners. We wish to express our appreciation for their support and goodwill”, he noted. (The full speech of Ambassador Montcho is available at www.au.int)

The Ambassador further explained that the 24th Ordinary Session of the PRC will address the issue of the transformation of the AU Commission into an Authority. He underscored the need for Member States to ensure the implementation of the Assembly decisions which he said is indication for the advancement of the integration process of the continent.

The 24th Ordinary Session of the PRC will end on 10 July 2012 with the recommendations of the PRC to be submitted to the 21st Ordinary Session of the Executive Council scheduled to take place from 12 – 13 July 2012, for consideration and adoption.

YNS/ ETA