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**THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION AND THE INTERNATIONAL MUSLIM WOMEN UNION SIGN A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) TO STRENGTHEN COOPERATION AND COLLABORATION**



**Addis Ababa, 16 May 2015:** The African Union Commission (AUC) and the International Muslim Women Union (IMWU) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) today for strengthening cooperation and collaboration between the two parties to facilitate the implementation of the women empowerment, development and integration agenda of the African Union.

The MoU was signed by H.E. Dr. Aisha L. Abdullahi, Commissioner for Political Affairs of the African Union Commission, and Dr. Afaf Ahmed Mohammed Secretary General of the International Muslim Women Union (IMWU).

Dr. Aisha L. Abdullahi thanked the IMWU for its efforts to empower and support African women and also expressed her appreciation for the level of the existing working relationship between the two institutions and described the signed MoU as a platform to strengthen this important partnership.



The Commissioner for Political Affairs also made reference to the Declaration of 2016 as "African Year of Human Rights with Special Focus on the Rights of Women", which provides an opportunity for the entire continent to take stock of the human rights situation on the continent in general, and the rights of women in particular. Dr. Abdullahi further added that the celebration of 2016 as the year of human rights in Africa seeks to, among other things, enhance public awareness on

human rights' instruments and mechanisms; assess the ratification and implementation of the human rights instruments, in particular women's rights.

Dr. Abdullahi concluded by calling on the International Muslim Women Union (IMWU) to encourage its members to be part of the continental women's movement that is supporting the implementation of the AU Agenda 2063 by adopting policies, plans of actions and programmes at the national level. She also called on the IMWU to work closely with the AUC to promote democracy and good governance as well as the empowerment of women in Africa.

Dr. Afaf Ahmed Mohamed, Secretary General of the IMWU reaffirmed the commitment of her organization to work closely with the AUC towards the two institutions' common goals as well as the implementation of joint activities to ensure the involvement of African women in the promotion of democracy, good governance and the empowerment of women in Africa. She also reiterated the intention of the IMWU to partner with the AUC in the implementation of the AU Agenda 2063.

According to the signed MoU, the African Union Commission and the Afro-Arab Youth Council will explore opportunities for cooperation and non-exclusive partnership in the following areas:

- The participation of African women in policy development and implementation at the continental level;
- The involvement of African women in the promotion and protection of human and peoples' rights in Africa;
- The implementation of the AU Human Rights Strategy for Africa;
- The implementation of Project 2016;
- The implementation and population of the AU Agenda 2063.



For further information please contact:

**Amb. Salah S. Hammad**  
Department of Political Affairs  
HammadS@africa-union.org  
Tel: +251-11-551 77 00

**Esther Azaa Tankou**  
Ag. Director of Information and Communication  
African Union Commission (AUC)  
Tel: +251(0) 911361185 / E-mail: [yamboue@africa-union.org](mailto:yamboue@africa-union.org)

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission  
E-mail: [dic@african-union.org](mailto:dic@african-union.org) | Web Site: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int) | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia  
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