

**PRESS RELEASE 2016**

TURKEY IS BRACING UP AHEAD OF THE FIRST WORLD HUMANITARIAN SUMMIT: H.E ERASTUS MWENCHA WILL LEAD THE AFRICAN UNION DELEGATION TO ISTANBUL ...



Istanbul, Turkey, 21 May 2016 – Turkey, the host of the first-ever World Humanitarian Summit will on 23 and 24 May 2016 be the center of attraction where most organisations dealing with humanitarian issues will converge to address global humanitarian crises including conflicts, pandemics, exodus of refugees among others. The African Union (AU) delegation to this important historical event will be led by H.E Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the AU Commission. H.E. Dr. Aisha Laraba Abdullahi, Commissioner for Political Affairs of the African Union and other high level officials of the AU Commission will be part of the AU delegation at the World Humanitarian Summit.



The AU's theme for this event is *“One Africa, One Voice, One Message at the World Humanitarian Summit”*.

The city of Istanbul has been branded with posters and banners carrying messages announcing the global event. Today, Saturday 21 May 2016, many Journalists and delegates from all over the world gathered at the venue of the Summit for the registration formalities in view to participate at the upcoming event.



The African Union has set up an exhibition corner at the Summit venue to showcase the different activities undertaken by the Union to address the humanitarian situation and concerns of the African people. An African Union High Level Panel on the theme: ‘Humanitarian Effectiveness in Africa’ has also been scheduled for 24 May 2016 to unveil

Africa’s proposed reforms to its humanitarian architecture. The panelists will exchange views on how to achieve effective humanitarian response and durable solutions to the humanitarian crises in the continent.

According to the organisers, the current international humanitarian system can no longer adequately address today’s humanitarian crises. Yet, today, we observe three basic facts:

- Growing complexity of contemporary humanitarian crises, the great majority of which are conflict related;
- Growing financing gap between ever-increasing needs and limited resources; and
- Growing suffering of affected peoples and communities, as a consequence.

Today, 80% of humanitarian needs are caused by conflict, with most being recurrent or protracted crises lasting years long. Moreover, such crises are transcending borders as the recent tragic exodus of refugees and effects of pandemics are constantly reoccurring.



The World Humanitarian Summit will therefore address the extraordinary challenges to the current international humanitarian system.



COMMON AFRICAN POSITION ON HUMANITARIAN EFFECTIVENESS



The Summit, co-hosted by Turkey and the UN Secretary General, would gather the world leaders with the affected communities and would seek answers for the urgent challenges to the future of the system together with NGOs, private sector and representatives of other stakeholders.

The World Humanitarian Summit will hold against a backdrop of a rapidly changing humanitarian landscape, with Africa facing growing impact of disasters. To that effect, the African Union will present its own commitments to the continent and its people including *the need for redefining the international humanitarian system...as* formulated in the

Common African Position on Humanitarian Effectiveness.

In spite of the gravity of these crises, humanitarian response in Africa still relies heavily on a global system, whose character is complex and need to be reformed. This is because of the fact that the humanitarian system founded by UN **Resolution 46/182**, 20 years ago is overstretched and requires fundamental reforms.

The Africa Union will seize the moment at Istanbul to reaffirm its future priorities and unequivocally call for an inclusive, transparent and fairer humanitarian system. Recalling its fundamental Ideals, the Africa Union will renew its call for mutually beneficial partnerships that seek to put humanity at the fore by enhancing collective ownership of the proposed ***Agenda for humanity***.

Media contact:

Esther Azaa Tankou | Ag. Director of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: Yamboue@african-union.org | Tel: +251 911361185 | Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: DIC@african-union.org | Website: www.au.int | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

For further information:

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: DIC@african-union.org | Website: www.au.int | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

Follow us

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/AfricanUnionCommission>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/_AfricanUnion

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/AUCommission>

Learn more at: <http://www.au.int>