



DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

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Friday's of the Commission Session dedicated to the World Humanitarian Day

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 19 August 2016:**

On Friday 19th August 2016 the AUC Department of Economic Affairs and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) through the collaborative initiative of the AUC department of Political Affairs held a session of Fridays of the Commission dedicated to current economic, financial, agricultural and humanitarian challenges facing African economies. The event was held on the theme **“Building Institutional and**

Community Resilience in the face of floods, droughts, conflict and economic shocks in Africa: Lessons from the response to El Nino in Eastern and Southern Africa”

Some of the delegates in attendance were H.E. Dr. Aisha Abdullahi, Commissioner for Political Affairs, H.E Lamine Yahiaoui, Chair of the Permanent Representatives' Sub-Committee on Refugees, Returnees and IDPs, H.E Ambassador Devdone Abmaboroshimana, Chair of the PRC Sub-Committee on Special Emergency Assistance Funds (SEAF), Mr. Sunday Babatunde, Head of OCHA-AU liaison Office, members of the UN liaison team to the African Union, members of the Emergency Preparedness and Response Sub-cluster (RCM), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), NCPA (NEPAD Coordination and Planning Agency) and African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF). The delegates came together to discuss the 2015 and 2016 El Niño weather events that led to massive droughts and the devastating impacts it had on food security and the livelihood of millions of people across the horn of Africa, Eastern Africa and Southern Africa.

The event aimed to find answers on how to build resilience through disasters, risk reduction and climate change adaptation, contribute to building coherence between humanitarian and development interventions and strengthening resilience to shocks and vulnerabilities through bridging the humanitarian-development divide.

H.E. Dr. Aisha L. Abdullahi, described the conference as a special one as the AU joined other humanitarian workers to celebrate the world humanitarian day that is commemorated every 19th of August. H.E.



Dr. Abdullahi reiterated that it is a day to stand in solidarity with those affected by humanitarian crisis and to celebrate humanity. She said 'It is only through humanitarian interventions that lives can be saved' which also provides protection and assistance to the affected population. "This year's world humanitarian day being celebrated under the theme 'one humanity' provides us with the opportunity to reaffirm our shared values" underlined

Dr. Abdullahi .In her conclusion, the Commissioner of Political Affairs called on the need to invest in humanity, peace and security which translates into the need to fight against risk factors such as violations of human rights, political exclusion, social economic marginalization, corruption and all that hinders good governance and development of society.

Speaking at Friday's of The Commission dedicated to the World Humanitarian Day, H.E Ambassador Lamine Yahiaoui, Chair of the PRC sub-committee on Refugees, Returnees and IDPs, in his welcome remarks, highlighted the importance of celebrating (WHD) which was introduced to commemorate the victims of the UN headquarters bombing in Baghdad.

'This year's celebration in particular has come at a time when Africa faces a number of humanitarian issues, the belt of Africa that was referred to as the Green Belt is now known as the yellow fever belt due to the yellow fever that has affected the region, including other diseases such as cholera, meningitis, zica virus and more.' stated Ambassador Yahiaoui. The Ambassador called on the unified spirit among Africans to overcome humanitarian challenges that have caused major setback to the continent's development

H.E Amb. Devdone Abmoporoshimana, Chair of the sub-committee on Special Emergency Assistance Funds underlined that the World Humanitarian theme for this year was chosen not only to commemorate those who died in Baghdad, but also to remind Africans to keep and hold their values of solidarity.

Ambassador Abmoporoshimana reiterated that this year's celebration comes at a time when Africa is faced with many challenges and urged Africans in the battle to overcome these challenges, 'Africans should ensure no one is left behind and that the efforts made to eradicate the struggles must be felt in every corner of the continent by every affected person'. In his conclusion, Ambassador Abmoporoshimana encouraged the involvement of the continent's young people in creating positive change as they are the drivers of the future

Mr. Sunday Babatunde, the Head of the OCHA-AU liaison office, in his World Humanitarian Day message, said that the 19th of August, the World Humanitarian Day is celebrated every year to pay tribute to aid workers who risk their lives in humanitarian service and to mobilize people to advocate for more humanitarian work. Mr. Babatunde highlighted the importance of maintaining the common African position of humanitarian effectiveness as was presented at the world humanitarian summit



During the celebrations, a short video with a message from United Nations Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki Moon was played reminding all leaders to keep their promise, invest in humanity and leave no one behind, 'We are one humanity with a shared responsibility' stressed Mr. Ban Ki Moon in the video.

BM/TE/CM

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