

**Press Release NO/309/2016****African Union Commission, HelpAge International sign transformative Agenda for Older Persons in Africa**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia 13 September, 2016:** The African Union Commission (AUC) and HelpAge International signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on 13 September 2016, with the aim of advancing the rights and well-being of older people and the ageing population in Africa.

Signing the MoU, the Commissioner of Social Affairs AUC, H.E. Dr. Mustapha Sidiki Kaloko said that issues of older persons and people with disabilities are usually forgotten in a lot of discussions. 'Spare a thought for older people, because they want to be useful even in their old age' the Commissioner emphasised. He further highlighted significant progress made by African Union member states in sustaining the socio-economic needs of the ageing population. He applauded efforts undertaken within the East African Communities with regards to the ageing schemes in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania respectively.

Speaking at the signing of the MoU, the Director of Social Affairs at the AUC, Dr. Olawale Maiyegun noted that addressing issues of older persons in Africa requires concerted efforts, and the MoU provides the basis for stronger partnership between the AU and key partners such as HelpAge. Furthermore, he highlighted the importance of an inclusive population towards the realisation of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs.



On his part, Dr. Prafulla Mishra, Regional Director - Help Age International, also noted that the increasing number and needs of older persons in Africa call for African governments to unite in their efforts to institutionalise urgent measures aimed at addressing the needs of older persons, such as prohibiting all forms of

discrimination against older persons and encouraging the elimination of social and cultural stereotypes which marginalise older persons and those with disabilities. In addition, he added that there is a need for care and support, social protection as well as protection against discrimination in employment. As relates to the rights of older women there is a need to ensure protection from violence, sexual abuse and discrimination based on gender. In addition older persons should have access to education, good health care services and participation in recreational facilities and programmes.

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