

**DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION****Press Release****African Union Commission pledges continued partnership with WFP**

June 15, 2017, Rome, Italy –The African Union Commission has reiterated its commitment to working with the World Food Programme (WFP) in enhancing the livelihoods of the African citizenry.

Speaking at the 2017 opening session of the Annual WFP Executive Board meeting, AUC Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, H.E Josefa Sacko, representing the AUC Chairperson, H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, lauded the WFP for its continued support to hundreds of millions of Africa's vulnerable populations over the past decades, through various initiatives like supplying food aid, school feeding programmes and promoting smallholder farmers through incentive creation strategies, among others.

Commissioner Sacko also recognized the WFP's role in advancing the AU's Agenda 2063 and the agenda for transforming Africa's agriculture for achieving food and nutrition security to realize sustained economic growth, through the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Agriculture. She further highlighted the major initiatives that the Commission has embarked on including the commitment to ending hunger by 2025, and the efforts in peace and security on the continent as well as empowering Africa's youth in line with the AU 2017 theme of '*Harnessing the Demographic Dividend*.'

"In 2014, our Heads of State and Government made the bold declaration for ending hunger and poverty by 2025, we have since developed frameworks for guiding implementation of programmes and investment plans at the country level and also developed and launched a Post-Malabo Business and Operational Plan that includes nine strategic areas which are directly linked with the goal of ending hunger and malnutrition in Africa," Commissioner Sacko said. "We recognize that the new WFP Strategic Plan is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and our 2030 Action Plan of the Africa Agenda 2063. We will make efforts to advocate that our Member States make joint plans for implementing short to long term humanitarian and sustainable developmental activities, which are aimed at hunger eradication, building resilience to climate change and other humanitarian disasters."

Prior to the WFP Executive Board Meeting, Commissioner Sacko met with the new Executive Director of WFP, Mr. David Beasley. She also met and briefed the Group of African Ambassadors in Italy and Permanent Representatives to the Rome-based UN Agencies, about the AUC's current initiatives and in particular the Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture's initiatives in food security and climate change mitigation.

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