



## PRESS RELEASE N°163/2017

### **African Union Chairperson commends ongoing national and international efforts in the battle against plague in Madagascar**

*Urges African Union Member States to provide financial and human resources to the ongoing response efforts*

**Addis Ababa, 20 October 2017-** The plague outbreak was declared on 13 September 2017. The government of Madagascar, with the support of African and international partners, has accelerated its efforts in the fight against the recent plague outbreak. A multisectoral national response coordination committee was established, under the leadership of the Ministry of Public Health to coordinate the response to the plague outbreak. Latest estimates from the Ministry of Health showed that as of 18 October 2017 a total of 1032 were reported; of these, 89 deaths were documented from 38 districts within 15 Regions. Based on the current situation, the cost of the joint response plan between the Government of Madagascar and its partners is estimated at 9.5 million United States dollars.

"In order to stop the transmission and win the battle against the plague outbreak, which may have dire health, economic and security consequences, in the absence of adequate control, we need to strengthen our overall continental response" said H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC). "In the spirit of Africans helping Africans, and bearing in mind that diseases do not recognise borders, I urge all African Union Member States to provide financial and human resources to support the fight against this current plague outbreak" he added.

In order to streamline the response, efficient and effective coordination mechanisms and resource utilisation are critical for the control of this outbreak. Africa Center for Disease Control (CDC) epidemiologists, deployed on 10 October, are assisting the Ministry of Health in coordinating the response of government agencies and other partners.

Plague is caused by a bacterium known as *Yersinia Pestis* usually affecting human beings and other animals including domestic animals such as cats and dogs. The majority of cases involve the lungs, a form of the disease called "pneumonic" Pneumonic plague is particularly dangerous, because people with pneumonic plague can infect other persons by coughing at close range.

For more information visit [www.au.int](http://www.au.int)

**Media contact:**

**Tawanda Chisango** | Advocacy and Partnerships Expert | Department of Social Affairs | African Union Commission |  
E-mail: [chisangot@african-union.org](mailto:chisangot@african-union.org) | Tel: +251934167052

**Esther Azaa Tankou** / Head of Information Division / Directorate of Information and Communication / AUC / [E-yamboue@africa-union.org](mailto:E-yamboue@africa-union.org) / Tel: +251 911361185

**About the African Union**

The African Union spearheads Africa's development and integration in close collaboration with African Union Member States, the Regional Economic Communities and African citizens. AU Vision: to accelerate progress towards an integrated, prosperous and inclusive Africa, at peace with itself, playing a dynamic role in the continental and global arena, effectively driven by an accountable, efficient and responsive Commission. Learn more at: <http://www.au.int/en/>

**Follow us**

Face book: <https://www.facebook.com/AfricanUnionCommission>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AfricanUnion>

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

**Learn more at:**

<http://www.au.int>