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### **African Union Commission Deputy Chairperson meets high level government officials in his two-day official visit to Nigeria**

**Abuja, Nigeria October 26, 2017** – The Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission Amb. Kwesi Quartey has concluded successful bilateral meetings, separately, with Minister of Foreign Affairs Geoffrey Onyeama and Minister of Budget and National Planning, Senator Udoma Udo Udoma, during which they had discussions on issues of importance to Nigeria and the African Union.

The audience with both ministers focused on issues of mutual concern such as security and the fight against terrorism, the implementation of the decision on financing of the Union, the upcoming AU-EU summit, Africa's integration and strengthening collaboration with the Regional Economic Communities, among other strategic issues.

In respect to security and the fight against terrorism, radicalization and violent extremism, Amb. Kwesi noted that he was particularly encouraged by the commitment and efforts President Muhammadu Buhari's administration is undertaking to address the root causes of terrorism, further commending the efforts of the governments in the Lake Chad region to restore normalcy in the region. "The AU Commission shares a vital interest in the continent's stability and we will continue doing our part and working closely with the governments in what we can do together, to tackle the scourge of terrorism and other forms of security threats that face us", the Deputy Chairperson stated. The involvement of women in peace and reconciliation measures was also underscored.

Advocating for education and skills development was cited as one of the important elements that would facilitate the meaningful engagement of the youth in development agenda as part of addressing the security challenges. This is also in

line with the African Union 2017 theme of the year on ‘Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in the Youth’.

The meeting was also an opportunity for the Commission to discuss the implementation progress of the decision on “Financing of the Union” to impose a 0.2% levy on eligible imports to finance the operations, programs and peace support activities of the Union. Amb. Kwesi briefed the Ministers that over 20 countries had paid their assessed contributions under the new scale and expressed optimism of the growing momentum around the decision. “I am grateful for the opportunity to update on the progress of the implementation of the decision and to also express our gratitude to Nigeria, and the ECOWAS bloc for supporting the process”, he said.

On the upcoming African Union- European Union Summit, Amb. Kwesi briefed in the status of the ongoing preparations and shared details of the recently concluded retreat of the Executive Council. The Deputy expressed the Commission’s great anticipation to have all the 55 member states actively participate and engage in the November Summit.

During his official visit, the Deputy Chairperson also joined Mrs. Cessouma Minata Samate, AU’s Commissioner for Political Affairs and senior officials from Nigeria’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for a High- level Dialogue on anti-corruption. The dialogue focused on the African Union Theme for 2018 “Winning The Fight Against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa’s Transformation”.

Amb. Kwesi regretted that African countries are losing an average of 50 billion dollars annually through Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs), an amount approximated to be double the official development assistance (ODA) Africa receives. The Deputy Chairperson added that the money is siphoned through the activities of multinational companies operating in the continent who earned or transferred their resources through massive corruption. “Curtailling this illegal outflows from Africa would provide a major source of funds for socio-economic development in the continent and address issues of poverty, inequality, unemployment and so on”, he said.

President Muhammadu Buhari was unanimously endorsed by Heads of State and Government in the July 2017 Summit, to champion the 2018 annual theme of the African Union. The Assembly in their endorsement lauded Buhari administration's for

demonstrated commitment in the fight against corruption in Nigeria, observing that the President would provide resourceful leadership by working closely with other African Leaders in fight against graft in the continent.

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