

**DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION****NOTE TO EDITORS****AU-US HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE DISCUSSES PROMOTION OF OPPORTUNITIES AND DEVELOPMENT**

During the dialogue that took place in Washington DC on 16 November 2017, the US lead, USAID Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, Ms Cheryl Anderson kick started the Opportunities and Development Technical Working Group discussions with a brief remark. She emphasized that the US government strongly supports the AU's agenda 2063 and believes in inclusive development for all Africans.

In her opening remarks, the AUC HRST Commissioner, H.E Prof Sarah Anyang Agbor, underlined that the AU-US partnership is important for Africa. She indicated that the AU-US partnership responds to AU Agenda 2063 Aspiration 1: "A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development and Aspiration 6 on unleashing the potential of youth and women to contribute in the development of the continent. She also referred to evident linkages with the AUC Strategic Plan (2014-17) Pillar no.2 on "Social, Economic and Human Development".

On the issue of **Youth Engagement**, the meeting discussed the importance of the promotion of opportunities of Africa's key demographic – the Youth and the urgent need to harness its potential to positively influence Africa's economic development. This, she said must be buttressed by a strong capacity to generate and use knowledge to maintain a competitive edge. Agenda 2063, specifically, aspirations 1 and 6 provide the basis for investing in Africa's Youth. The meeting further discussed about the several strategies, programmes and events put in place for youth engagement in Africa. The programmes seek to promote youth participation, capacity building and empowerment through service and skills exchange such as the AU- Youth Volunteer Corps (AUYVC) Programme, the Africa- German Youth Exchange Programme (AGYI), Africa Talks Jobs Conference, Business linkage forums, the continental Strategy for TVET, the AU Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa (STISA), the continental strategy for Education in Africa (CESA) etc.

The meeting further applauded the Julius Nyerere scholarship programme, the Pan African University and the AU Scientific grants programme; for the roles they play in extending capacities of African youth. The AU also runs an unpaid internship program for youth earlier in their career to complement development-oriented studies with practical experience in various aspects of multilateral technical cooperation. The AU is in the process of setting up the Young Professionals Program (YPP), for exceptional young people interested in a career path with the AU. The importance of strengthening these programmes and ensuring a wider reach also discussed.

On Women's Empowerment, the meeting discussed the US's efforts on women's and girls' empowerment. The US also applauded the efforts of the AU Special envoy on Women and Peace and reaffirmed their support for the AUC Women, Gender Department (WGDD), particularly on its work women peace and security.

On **Health**, the Campaign for Acceleration of the Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA) was discussed. USAID has continued to provide support on the online African Health Statistics data platform, an innovative data site that charts, maps and compares key health indicators across all 55 African Union member states.

Regarding the Africa Center for Disease Control (ACDC), the US representative noted with pleasure that the AUC now has a fully functional Africa CDC centre. The US informed the meeting about the support on the establishment of the ACDC Surveillance unit, the 5 year strategic plan and further looks forward to playing a closer role in building the capacity of the regional coordinating centers (RCC). The Africa CDC has engaged in dialogue with the U.S. CDC to map existing centers of excellence in Africa and supporting the objectives of the AU and WHO with expertise. Following the official launch, the Africa CDC started implementing its strategic plan in coordination with the Regional Collaborating Centers (RCCs). One of these activities is to provide a platform for regional member states to timely share public health information in terms threats/ epidemiological trends/ IHR notifications etc. and also share best practices in addressing priorities within the region for strengthening individual countries preparedness and response public health events.

On **Migration and Mobility**, the meeting discussed and agreed that migration and mobility is at the centre of making Africa a conducive environment for its youth. The AU-EU framework on migration provides a policy framework for the AUC's work on migration. The Ouaga+10 Declaration and Plan of Action on Employment, Poverty Eradication and Inclusive Development was adopted in 2015, along with its First Five Year Priority Programme (2016-2020).

In conclusion, the meeting emphasized on the need for strengthening public private partnership (PPP) engagement to increase engagement in this priority area. Both parties underscored the need to build on the achievements that have been realised so far within the AU-USA cooperation framework, while drawing on lessons that would enhance tangible outcomes. Both partners applauded the partnership and pledged support to see it grow and play a major role in realizing the Africa envisaged by Agenda 2063.

Media Queries contact:

Esther Azaa Tankou, Head of Information Division, Directorate of Information and Communication, AUC; E-mail: yamboue@africa-union.org

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