



NOTE TO THE EDITORS

BREAKING OFF THE CHAINS OF CORRUPTION TO ERADICATE THIS SOCIETAL FLAW IN ALL ITS FORMS, IS THE COMMITMENT TAKEN BY AFRICAN UNION HEADS OF STATE DURING THE 30TH AU SUMMIT

Addis Ababa, 12 January 2018 – Under the umbrella of the Department of Political Affairs of the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Union has adopted the theme: ***“Winning the Fight against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa’s Transformation”*** as the theme for the year 2018.



The logo that was designed to brand the theme on fighting corruption in the continent derives its color scheme from the African Union symbols as prescribed by the Constitutive Act of the Union. This includes the Emblem of the AU: the palm leaves shooting up on either side of the outer circle stand for peace; The gold circle symbolizes Africa's wealth and bright future; The green circle stands for African hopes and aspirations; The plain map of Africa without boundaries in the inner circle signifies African unity and the small interlocking red rings at base of the Emblem stand for African solidarity and the blood shed for Liberation of Africa.

The entire motif of the logo on the theme of the year 2018, depicts Africa’s struggle with acts of corruption in the continent - from the shackles of slavery; colonialism; apartheid and the modern concept of State Capture, while the hand cuffs-breaking signifies our resolve to break free from the historical and current burden of Corruption in all its forms'.

H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the AU Commission, in his speech during the 32nd Ordinary Session of the Executive Council recalled that the theme of the year 2018 is in perfect correlation with investing in youth by harnessing the demographic dividend which was the theme of the previous year. He said the figures put forward by many credible reports of experts show that this scourge has reached alarming proportions. The same reports state clearly that the resources diverted by corruption from

Africa can, if invested in development, replace the use of external assistance, which then only becomes a mere supplement to the resources and potential of the Continent.

In relation to this problem, the report of the Mbeki Panel shows that corruption coupled with illicit financial flows, deprives Africa of about 50 billion US dollars every year. “The numbers speak for themselves”, he emphasised. The AUC Chairperson called on all African nations to be concerned in one way or another, at more or less varying degrees. “Like terrorism, the fight here should be global and can only be won by our collective action. The year 2018 is set to be the year of this fight” he emphasised.

According to the Chairperson of the AU Advisory Board on Corruption (AUABC), Hon. Mr. Begoto Miarom, one of the first steps in combatting corruption is having strong laws and even stronger institutions. The adoption of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC) in 2003 and its rapid entry into force in 2006 gave hope to many in Africa that governments were determined to fight corruption. “It is commendable that, to date 49 of the 55 AU Member States have signed the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption. 38 of them have gone on to ratify the Convention and are States Parties to it”, stated Hon. Begoto. He expressed satisfaction that many of these states parties have gone on to domesticate the Convention through the enactment of national laws as well as establishment of national anti-corruption agencies. “While, these are indeed commendable efforts that must be lauded, some gaps still exist as 17 countries are yet to ratify the Convention. The universal ratification by all Member States will symbolise Africa’s determination to fight corruption” he noted.

Hon. Begoto reiterated in a message to the African citizens during the 30th AU Summit that, the AU has designated 2018 the African Anti-Corruption Year in an effort to reflect on the successes and challenges in the fight against corruption. He said, in particular, we wish to use the year to;

1. Deepen the resolve, focus and expertise for addressing the many facets of corruption facing Africa;
2. Scale up and increase effectiveness of advocacy efforts; and
3. Enhance and broaden partnerships with all stakeholders through strategic collaboration aimed at fighting corruption on the continent.

He further underscored the need for partnership and collective action as an important factor to fighting corruption, especially the challenges facing corruption are interrelated and co-dependent. “As part of the programme of activities, we will seek to involve the broadest range of actors including national anti-corruption agencies, central banks, national audit and investigative agencies, civil society organisations, the youth and women”, he said.

Media contact:

Esther Azaa Tankou | Head of Information Division | Tel: (251) 911361185 | E-mail: yamboue@african-union.org

For Further Information:

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: DIC@african-union.org | Web Site: www.au.int | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

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