

Press Release

**MEMBER STATES EXPERTS MEET ON THE GUIDELINES FOR THE DESIGN,
PRODUCTION AND ISSUANCE OF AFRICAN PASSPORT**



Nairobi, June 9, Addis Ababa, 2018: Immigration Experts from African Union Member States met in Nairobi for a three-day technical meeting to fine-tune the draft guidelines for the design, production and issuance of the African Passport.

Article 10 of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons calls for the adoption, production and issuance of the African Passport. The implementation roadmap provides the necessary action and time-frames for the adoption, production and issuance of the Passport, including convening of meetings of African Chiefs of Immigration to guide the process.

In his speech on behalf of H.E. Minata Samate Cessouma, Commissioner for Political Affairs of the African Union Commission, Dr Khabele Matlosa, Director of Political Affairs Department, said the meeting was a follow on to the meeting of the Chiefs of Immigration held in Seychelles in May of this year, where the meeting tasked the African Union to convene a meeting of Experts to discuss the technical specifications and security features of the African Passport.

The Director said African Passport will be meaningless without the full and effective implementation of the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons.

“The Protocol on Free Movement of Persons will be incomplete without the African Passport. Like twins, the Protocol and the African Passport are inextricably interlinked” Dr Khabele said.

He said that in order to ensure effective implementation of the Protocol and the issuance of the African Passport, Africa needs to take the first step of abolition of visas to facilitate the right of entry through its introduction.

He also pointed out that the agreed guidelines of the technical meeting would be adopted by the Special Technical Committee on Migration, Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons in October 2018, and thereafter be adopted the AU assembly of Heads of State and Government in 2019 to set the stage for AU Member States to begin the process of production and issuance of the African passport in accordance with their national laws and regulations.



Declaring the meeting open on behalf of Kenyan government, Mr Charles Munyao, Head of Passport Section of the Republic of Kenya, said Kenya has already rolled out East African Regional Passport as a prelude to the establishment of the African passport.

Munyao said as part of her commitment to the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons in Africa, the Kenyan Government has opened up for all Africans to get Visa upon arrival to enable all Africans access the country without hassles of obtaining Visas before travelling.

The three day technical meeting which has Immigration experts on passports from Member States, which is also being attended by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), would followed by a two-day meeting of Immigration Chiefs from Africa.

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