



## COMMUNIQUÉ

### VISIT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION IN WEST AFRICA

**Addis Ababa, 3 October 2018:** As part of his regular interactions with the Heads of State and Government of the Member States, the Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, concluded today, 3 October 2018, a two-day visit to Senegal. His tour in West Africa will subsequently take him to The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau.

On 1 October, in Dakar, the Chairperson of the Commission met with President Macky Sall, with whom he discussed various aspects of the AU agenda. The meeting provided the opportunity to exchange views on continental integration, including the Continental African Free Trade Area, the Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and the African Passport and the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM). Discussions also focused on efforts to promote peace and security, as well as on the AU institutional reform. The Chairperson of the Commission expressed the AU's appreciation to President Macky Sall for his commitment and Senegal's contribution to the achievement of the objectives of the Union, as set in Agenda 2063.

On 2 October, the Chairperson of the Commission, together with the Prime Minister of Senegal, Mahammed Boun Abdallah Dionne, opened the 3<sup>rd</sup> Partnership Platform Meeting for Aflatoxin Control in Africa. The meeting is part of the overall AU efforts to address the challenge of food safety, of which aflatoxin is one of the most pervasive manifestations on the continent.

In his statement, the Chairperson of the Commission highlighted the dangers posed by these toxins, which affect multiple staple and cash crops, such as maize, groundnuts, sorghum and many others. Aflatoxins have serious health implications, are a hindrance to intra-African trade, and threaten the competitiveness of African agricultural products on the world market. They also cause significant post-harvest losses, thereby reducing the availability of food. The Chairperson of the Commission stressed the need for greater mobilization at the continental level to combat this scourge, building on the work already done within the framework of the Partnership for Aflatoxin Control in Africa (PACA) established within the AU Commission since 2012.

The Chairperson of the Commission subsequently met with the Prime Minister, with whom he discussed various issues related to continental integration. He seized the opportunity to underline the importance of renewed collective efforts to accelerate the ongoing process.

On 3 October 2018, the Chairperson of the Commission visited the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC), which has been a specialized agency of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) since 1978 and is headquartered in Dakar. Its mandate includes coordinating civil aviation issues, in collaboration with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and other stakeholders, as well as acting as the executing agency for the implementation of the 1999 Yamoussoukro Decision on the liberalization of the African skies.

Discussions with AFCAC officials included the status of implementation of SAATM and the responsibilities entrusted to AFCAC in this regard. They also provided an opportunity to discuss the challenges facing AFCAC in the execution of its mandate and ways and means to overcome them.

The Chairperson of the Commission is traveling to The Gambia today for a 24-hour visit. He will subsequently travel to Guinea-Bissau, from 4 to 5 October 2018. In both The Gambia and Guinea Bissau, he will hold talks with national officials and other actors on various issues of mutual interest. These visits will also be an opportunity for the Chairperson of the Commission to mark the AU's solidarity with The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau and its support for their efforts to strengthen stability, as well as ensure the deepening of democracy and respect for human rights.