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Press Release

The AU Commission and IFRC Agree to Strengthen Joint Humanitarian Interventions and Epidemic Response

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – 21 October 2019: The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, met Elhadj As Sy, the Secretary General of International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), and discussed ways of strengthening the current partnership between the AU Commission and IFRC in the areas of humanitarian action, humanitarian diplomacy and response to epidemics at the continental level.

The Chairperson and the Secretary General shared perspectives on the need to regionalize response in humanitarian situations, especially in natural disasters, forced displacement and epidemics, and the role that both institutions can play in this regard.

The Chairperson commended the important work of IFRC to prevent and respond to disasters and displacement crises on the continent. The Chairperson emphasized the AU's priority to build strong national institutions and systems capable of addressing these humanitarian challenges particularly within the context of the AU annual themes of 2019 and 2020, which are Forced Displacement and Silencing the Guns, respectively.

The Chairperson further stressed the central role IFRC can play in supporting the AU's efforts to operationalize the African Humanitarian Agency, and promote a culture of peace and non-violence in Africa.

Mr Sy, on his part, outlined the priority areas of IFRC. He stressed the importance to build robust institutions focusing on prevention and adaption to climate change. Mr Sy also expressed the need to identify synergies with the Commission to address public health emergencies in Africa.

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