PRESS RELEASE

AUC at the 12th Annual International Forum MEDays

Tangier, Kingdom of Morocco- 16 November 2019: H.E. Dr Amani Abou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy took part in the 12th Annual International Forum MEDays, running in Tangier, Morocco from November 13-16. This year’s edition was organized under the theme “Global distrust crisis: Facing subversion and uncertainties”. The event was attended by 4,000 participants from across the Continent and elsewhere.

H.E. Commissioner addressed various sessions of the Forum where she underscored the ongoing efforts, led by AUC, to fast-track the Continent’s regional integration process with the aim of accelerating Africa’s economic transformation.

“For deepening and implementing the continental integration, major projects are on the Agenda of the African Union such as the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons (FMP) and the launch of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) in 2018. This will certainly contribute to galvanizing the Continent’s economy and positioning it on the right path towards accelerating economic growth and improving living standards.” said Commissioner Abou-Zeid

The Commissioner underlined the place of energy in boosting the Continent’s capacity in building the much-needed infrastructure to connect Africa. In general, significant progress has been made in the energy sector especially in promoting clean energy initiatives. In that regard, the AUC has facilitated a number of geothermal energy projects in the eastern Africa region and is currently working on frameworks to promote solar energy, small hydropower schemes and to support renewable energy projects in Island States as well as spreading clean cooking technologies while at the same time emphasizing gender mainstreaming in the sector.

Furthermore, the Commissioner presented the actions taken in the transport sector, notably the establishment of the Single African Air Transport Market as a quick-win solution for accelerating physical integration of the Continent. So far, 32 African States have formally signed on to the SAATM, covering more than 800 million persons across Africa, and this number is expected to increase substantially as more countries realize the benefits and decide to join the SAATM.

The progress in the implementation of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) was also central in the discussion and presentation of the Commissioner. The PIDA
programme has produced the following development impact contributing to the implementation of Agenda 2063: (i) A total capacity of approximately 16,066 km of highways were built throughout the continent; (ii) A total capacity of 4,077 km of railways was built through PIDA projects; (iii) In the Energy sector, a total transmission line capacity of approximately 3,506 km was added; (iv) In the ICT sector, a total of 17 countries are connected with regional fibre optic cables; (v) Through constructed and operational PIDA projects, 112,900 jobs were directly and 49,400 indirectly created.

“Going forward, the second phase of the PIDA’s Priority Action Plan Two (PIDA-PAP2) 2021-2030, under consideration by Member States, will integrate the multi-sectorial corridor approach. By integrating the value add of the respective services through a corridor approach, the creation of industrial, logistical hubs, special economic zones and therefore regional markets can be facilitated and strengthened” noted Dr Abou-Zeid

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