

PRESS RELEASE

AFRICAN UNION AND GOVERNMENT OF CUBA IN TALKS TO STEP UP POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION IN AFRICA



Addis Ababa – Ethiopia.

Wednesday, January 29, 2020. The African Union is in talks with the Government of Cuba to start Postgraduate Medical Education in Africa. Today marked the beginning of a three-day Consultative Workshop to commence preparation leading to a roll-out of this ambitious project.

The main items tabled for discussion were to identify current and future areas of need for Specialist Medical Personnel within Africa, as well as to develop a Concept Note on the depth and breadth of collaboration and to produce an Action Plan to guide the process.

Mr Kwesi Quartey, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), welcomed the delegation to the AU on behalf of the Chairperson, HE Mr Moussa Faki Mahamat.

He hailed the achievements of Cuba in health care, particularly, in maternal and infant mortality and expressed the hope that with increased science education, Africa could replicate this impressive example of Cuba medical education on a continent wide basis.

Referring to Aspiration 6, of Agenda 2063 which envisaged, '*An Africa, whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children*', he acknowledged that a healthy citizenry is the greatest asset for the sustainable development that the Continent is in dire need of.

Mr Quartey further expressed optimism that, with technical assistance from Cuba, combined efforts of the team and partners, Postgraduate Medical education, would bring quality and affordable healthcare to all the African people.

'This is an opportunity for the Member States to experience in practical terms, the direct relevance of the African Union in their daily lives, as the Commission is poised to create

an Africa Union of the African people'. He assured the team of the support of the entire Commission.

HE Mr Angel Villa, Cuba's Ambassador to Ethiopia and the African Union, expressed gratitude to be associated with such a vision. He reiterated Government of Cuba's total commitment to the project.

HE Amb. Villa stated that over 9000 African Students are in Cuba receiving training in various fields of Medicine, adding that Cuba is ever willing to share its technical knowledge for the success of the project.

He also introduced two eminent Cuban Professors as representatives of the Government of Cuba for the project. The two were, Dr Leonardo Ramos Hernandez, Head of the Department of Research and Post-Graduate Studies, Medical Faculty No. 1 Santiago de Cuba and Dr Maria Eugenia Garcia de Cespedes, Vice Director of the 'Juan Bruno Zayas' Hospital, Santiago de Cuba.

This project will be undertaken by tripartite cooperation between the Government of Cuba, The African Union Commission and other Partners.

It is hoped that the Postgraduate Medical Education will cover fields such as Nurses, Physicians, Surgeons, and Pharmacists etc.

Other Resources Persons participating in the Consultative Workshops are: Professor King David Terna Yawe, Professor of General Surgery, University of Abuja School of Medicine, Abuja – Nigeria. Past President, West African College of Surgeons (WACS), Professor Chris Bode, Professor of Paediatric Surgery, University of Lagos College of Medicine Lagos – Nigeria. President of the Pan Africa Association of Surgeons (PAAS). Professor Serigne Gueye, Professor of Urology, Universite Cheikh Anta Diop de Dakar, Dakar- Senegal, President, West African College of Surgeons Professor Miliard Derbew, Professor of Paediatric Surgery, Addis Ababa University College of Medicine, Addis Ababa – Ethiopia. Past President of College of Surgeons of Eastern, Central and Southern Africa, and Professor Dereje Gulilat, Professor of Cardiothoracic Surgery, Addis Ababa University College of Medicine, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, President, Ethiopian Surgical Society.

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