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Teleconference Meeting of F15 and Task Force African Ministers of Finance
Thursday, April 9, 2020
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

A teleconference session of African Ministers of Finance of F15 and the Task Force Ministers was convened on April 09, 2020 to reflect and combine efforts in providing a collective and coordinated response to the pandemic crisis.

The following Member States, Members of F15 and Task Force, took part in the teleconference: Cameroon, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda and South Africa. The teleconference was chaired by H.E. M. Tahir Hamid Nguilin, Minister of Finance and Budget of the Republic of Chad.

The AU Commissioner for Economic Affairs, Prof Victor Harrison, AU Commissioner for Social Affairs, Mrs. Amira El Fadil, ECA Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary, Dr. Vera Songwe and Dr. John Nkengasong, Director of Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC), also took part in the teleconference.

After the ensuing discussions, the Ministers decided the following:

1. **APPLAUDING** the efforts made by the African Union Commission (AUC) in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) to organize this teleconference Meeting;
2. **ACKNOWLEDGING** that the COVID-19 pandemic presents critical global challenges, affecting individuals, families, communities, health services and our economies and **CONSCIOUS** of the need to increase their health care capacities for better management of the pandemic in the event of worsening;
3. **MINDFUL** about the negative effects of the health crisis on growth for all African economies;
4. **CONCERNED** about the colossal negative impact of the crisis on trade, employment, tourism industry, inflation, and on external sources of finance as well as increase of the external debt of African countries;
5. **ALARMED** by the harm being caused by export bans to COVID-19 related medical supplies and equipment, as well as on food by some countries;

6. **CONSCIOUS** of the need to put in place a comprehensive pandemic management plan (during and after the pandemic crisis);
7. **RECALLING** a teleconference of the Bureau of the African Union Heads of State and Government chaired by His Excellency President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa, in his capacity as Chairperson of the African Union, held on 26 March 2020 where it expressed grave concern about the rising local infections, in the context of densely populated human settlements on the African continent and underscored the importance of coordination across the continent and the necessity to exchange credible and real time information about the spread of the virus;
8. **ALSO RECALLING** the establishment of a continental anti-COVID-19 Fund to which Member States of the Bureau agreed to immediately contribute US \$12.5 million as seed funding where African Union Member States, the international community and philanthropic entities are urged to contribute to this fund.
9. **UNDERScoreD** the significance of matching efforts to increase domestic production and increase the availability of local manufactured pharmaceuticals and medical supplies and personal protective equipment and also the significance of standby responders that can be sent to countries affected.
10. **HAVING** deliberated on (i) the impact of COVID-19 on Health and social Sectors and measures to counter the spread, manage the pandemic and initiate emergency responses to mitigate the social and health crisis; (ii) impact of COVID-19 on the Economies and Economic Responses; and (iii) African Debt management.

11. WE hereby agreed on the following:

- a) **Agree** that the current exceptional situation demands African and global solidarity with coordinated and agreed efforts to promote the sharing of expertise and good practice, and to catalyze action;
- b) **Request** from international communities and multilateral institutions an emergency financial support of **US\$ 100 billion** to counter the spread and management of the COVID-19 pandemic including urgently increasing and strengthening health capacities and infrastructure, pooled procurement of adequate sanitary equipment, medical and pharmaceutical products, and the social management of lockdown;
- c) **Encourage** Member states to support the local production of medical equipment where possible;
- d) **Explore** ways of opening up humanitarian corridors for the distribution of supplies and other facilities pertaining to address the COVID-19 pandemic;
- e) **Eliminate** export restrictions to on staple foods and essential medical supplies, and work with ports, aviation and border authorities to keep trade flowing;

- f) **Urgently suspend** tariffs on imports of essential COVID-19 medical supplies and create expedited customs ‘green lanes’ for health goods.
- g) **Request** the cancellation of external debt of Low Income African countries; and a standstill on the servicing of external debt of other African countries for a period of two years; and
- h) **Also request** from international communities and multilateral institutions a total of **US\$ 100 billion** to support and revive African economies.

9th April 2020