

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

Press Release No: /2020

Date: 14 December 2020

Venue: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Ground Breaking and Unveiling Ceremony for Africa CDC HQ



Today, H.E. Amira Elfadil Mohamed Elfadil, Commissioner for Social Affairs and H.E. Ambassador Yuxi Liu, Head of the Mission of the People’s Republic of China to Ethiopia, on behalf of the African Union Commission and the Government of China attended the ground breaking and unveiling ceremony for the China aided Project of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) Headquarters building. The event took place in the presence of representatives from the AU Commission, the Government of China, and the Government of Ethiopia.

Speaking on behalf of the African Union Commission Chairperson, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Commissioner Amira Elfadil thanked the Government of China for offering to construct the building and for their continuous support to the AU. She said the Department of Social Affairs worked with other AU departments and units to ensure speedy processing of all documents and approvals required to realize the project.

Commissioner Amira Elfadil said that the partnership between African Union (AU) and China is strategic and the AU is extending hands to all partners who are looking for mutual cooperation with Africa. The Commissioner for Social Affairs spoke about challenges in the acquisition of vaccines in Africa. She applauded the efforts by His Excellency, President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa of the Republic of South Africa and the Chair of the AU in the establishment of the COVID-19 African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team (AVATT) as a component in support of the Africa Vaccine Strategy that was endorsed by the AU Bureau of Heads of State and Government on 20th of August, 2020. The Commissioner concluded her statement by assuring that the construction for the other Africa CDC five Regional Collaborating Centres located in Egypt, Gabon, Kenya, Nigeria, and Zambia, for the Northern Africa, Central Africa, Eastern Africa, Western Africa, and Southern Africa regions, respectively will commence in the near future.

Addressing the ground Breaking Ceremony virtually, H.E Mr. Qian Keming, Vice Minister of Commerce of the People's Republic of China said that building the Africa CDC is a concrete action to follow through with commitments made at the 2018 Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). He underlined the President Xi Jinping reiteration that China will continue to support Africa in the fight against COVID-19, and start ahead of schedule the construction of the Africa CDC headquarters this year. "The ground breaking ceremony will take the project into a new stage. Hope this flagship project in China-Africa practical cooperation can benefit African people and become another shining example in China-Africa friendship". Mr. Qian Keming concluded by emphasizing the commitment of China to the principle of pursuing shared benefits through consultation and collaboration with African Union towards the implementation of Agenda 2063.

From his side H.E. Ambassador Liu Yuxi underlined the significance of the project. "China and Africa supported each other and fight shoulder to shoulder. China got valuable supports from the African Union and African countries when it faced the hardest period" said Ambassador Yuxi. He further added "When the outbreak reached Africa, China sent medical expert teams to 16 African countries, built pair-up hospital cooperation with 42 African countries, offered urgent medical supplies to African Union and almost all African countries". The Ambassador underscored the commitment of China to implement the G20 Debt Relief Initiative.

About Africa (CDC) Headquarters Project

At the 2018 Beijing Summit and the 7th Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China - Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) held in Beijing, the Government of China further expressed its commitment to support the building of the Africa CDC HQ, and the African leaders welcomed with appreciation and committed to support for its realization.

Located in the African Village, south of Addis Ababa, the new site covers an area of 90,000m² with a total construction area of nearly 40,000m². When completed the building will include an emergency operation centre, a data centre, laboratory,

resource centre, briefing rooms, training centre, conference centre, offices, and expatriate apartments, all to be constructed, furnished and equipped by the Government of China.

In accordance with a number of agreements concluded between the AU and the Government of China, the AU Commission and the Ministry of Commerce of the People`s Republic of China have signed the Implementation Agreement on the Africa CDC HQs building project in July 2020.

The headquarters building is expected to become one of the best-equipped centres for disease control in Africa, allowing Africa CDC to play its role as the technical institution coordinating disease prevention, surveillance and control in the continent in partnership with the national public health institutes and ministries of health of Member States.

For further media inquiries, please contact:

1. Ms. Wynne Musabayana | Head of Communication Division| Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: MUSABAYANAW@africa-union.org |
2. Mr. Gamal Ahmed A. Karrar | Senior Communication Officer| Directorate of Information and Communication, African Union Commission | E-mail: GamalK@africa-union.org

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