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Pan African Parliament and Africa CDC explore enhanced collaboration to address health emergencies on the continent.

The Africa Center for Disease Control (Africa CDC) has committed to enhanced and continued collaboration with the Pan African Parliament (PAP) to ensure African Union policies and decisions on health emergencies are formulated, advocated and implemented. Speaking at a capacitation programme for PAP legislators in Midrand, South Africa, Dr. Lul Riek, Africa CDC Regional Coordinator, noted that the synergies for cooperation have come at an opportune time as the African continent moves into the post COVID-19 era. “There is no substitution for working in partnerships, coordination and provision of effective leadership. Africa responded well to COVID-19 because it has chosen to work together instead of working against itself. In fact, Africa is the only continent that effected a joint continental strategy for COVID-19 outbreak,” said Dr. Riek.

Worth noting that, the African Union through the Africa CDC has made efforts aimed at vaccinating 70% of the African population by the end of 2022. The interventions include coming up with a COVID-19 Response Fund and a Consortium for COVID-19 Clinical Vaccine Trials. PAP will provide the necessary support, leadership and advocacy in supporting the efforts of AU Member States in the fight against COVID-19 to ensure no country is left behind. The PAP is also committed to creating an enabling environment for championing the full implementation of the New Public Health order towards self-reliance through various platforms, voices, leaderships, legislations, and engagement of national and regional parliaments. The New Public Health order seeks to have a strengthened public health workforce, increased domestic health financing, strengthened public health institutions, and expanded local medicine manufacturing.

Uganda's Hon. Felix Okot Ogong commended actions undertaken so far and urged Africa to come up with its own narrative "Africa is capable of writing its own story and we need to propose solutions in line with lessons learnt in Africa."

In his closing remarks Dr Riek said: "Indeed this is an important engagement, a historical milestone, and timely for the Pan African Parliament to do what is right for the next generations. The time is now and the choice is yours."

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