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STATEMENT OF H.E TUMUSIIME RHODA PEACE,  
COMMISSIONER FOR RURAL ECOPNOMY AND AGRICULTURE

AT THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

OPENING SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF  
THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENT  
(AMCEN)

SUNDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2011

NAIROBI, KENYA

Hon. Tiemoko Sangare, President of AMCEN

Honourable Ministers, Members of the Bureau of AMCEN

Dr. Mounkaila Goumandakoye, Director, UNEP Regional Office for Africa (ROA) also representing the Executive Director of UNEP

Dr. Serge Bounda, Head of the UNEP Liaison Office to the African Union

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

I have the honour to participate in this important Meeting of the Bureau of AMCEN. I would like to transmit to you warm greetings and best wishes from the Commission of the African Union and, in particular, from Dr. Jean PING, the Chairperson. We salute you, Honourable Ministers, for the continued political leadership you continue to provide for the African continent's policies, programmes and activities in the areas of environment, natural resources, climate change, bio-diversity and sustainable development, among others.

The African Union recognizes and appreciates your decisive contribution to the achievements attained at various international fora including the first African High-Level Conference on Biodiversity held on 12-17 September 2010, in Gabon; the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Bio-Diversity that took place in December 2010 in Nagoya, Japan, the global climate change negotiations in Copenhagen and Cancun, and others.

These are in addition to the guidance and orientation that you provide in your respective countries and regions, championing the common interests of Africa.

The Commission, therefore, remains at your service as you pursue your mandate which is vital for our continent's survival and prosperity. We also welcome and value your continued guidance in all our work at national, regional, continental and even global levels.

I would like, at this juncture, to also register the gratitude of the African Union, particularly UNEP and especially under the able stewardship of Dr. Achim Steiner, for the sustained support and, indeed, fruitful collaboration over the years and through concrete programmes and projects including hosting and assisting the Secretariat of AMCEN, facilitating AMCEN, supporting the capacity building project on Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) and others. On the basis of this firm foundation, we are even working more closely on exploring other areas including the green economy, carbon markets and so on.

I wish to reaffirm the commitment of the Commission of the African Union to taking forward our partnership to greater heights at the service of the citizens of our Member States and Regions all of which aspire for efficient and effective natural resource management, higher standards of living and sustainable development.

Once again, I thank you, Mr. President, for the enhancement of partnership you have exhibited since you came into Office.

I thank you, Honourable Ministers and Distinguished Delegates, for your kind attention.

