



## DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

## Press Release N° 063/2017

### Dr. Amani Abou-Zeid takes the Commissioner reins at the Department of Infrastructure and Energy

**Addis Ababa, 19 April 2017:** The new African Union Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, Dr. Amani Abou-Zeid, assumed office today with an all staff retreat applauding all employees, who she said are “acutely intelligent and forward-thinking” and that she will continue to empower the talented Department staff to rethink the traditional ways of doing things in their fields.



The main objective of the retreat was to assess the activities and programmes of the Department as well as its achievements and challenges and to foster a strong team spirit among staff and challenge them to contribute to creating a highly successful Department through innovation and hard work.

The retreat, included discussions on the different initiatives the Department is working on, how to mobilize resources for the projects, and how to effectively communicate the work of the Department to demonstrate the top priorities that would lead to attaining its vision.

Discussions at the retreat also focused on strengthening internal capacity through enhanced collaboration and synergies with other Departments to improve operational effectiveness. Staff members also brainstormed on how to reduce bureaucracy as the

actual productive work being done currently was sometimes outweighed by the bureaucratic steps that needed to be taken each day.

In her closing remarks, Dr Amani Abou-Zeid encouraged everyone to be part of the reforms the AU has embarked on and encouraged all staff members to contribute towards the integration of the continent.

The outcome of the discussions could set the tone for the rest of the Commissioner's tenure by sharpening the Department's focus, clarifying priorities and boosting team building among staff. It offered an invaluable opportunity for the whole team to look back at where the Department is coming from, and project that into a shared future, which is result oriented with focus on impact to improve the lives of people in the continent.

In her first interview since taking the helm on 15 March 2017, Commissioner Abou-Zeid also spoke to the International Hydropower Association today where she talked about the Department's priorities over the next four years.

She explained what it means to the African Union and Africa as a whole to co-host the 2017 World Hydropower Congress with the International Hydropower Association, the UN Economic Commission for Africa and the World Bank Group. This high-level event, scheduled to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 9 to 11 May 2017, is intended to chart the course for hydropower development and operations over the coming decade, with the aim to ensure reliable and resilient water and energy systems for all.

#### **More information:**

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