



PRESS RELEASE N° 01/ 18th AU Summit

EIGHTEENTH AFRICAN UNION SUMMIT TO HOLD ON THE THEME: “BOOSTING INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE”

Addis Baba, 10 January 2012- The 18th Ordinary Session of the Summit of the African Union (AU) is scheduled to take place from 23 to 30 January 2012 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Holding under the theme: “*Boosting Intra-African Trade*”, the summit will officially kick off on Monday 23 January 2012, with the 23rd Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC).

According to the PRC agenda for the 18th AU Summit, the Ambassadors will for two days (23 and 24 January 2012) exchange views on specific reports including the reports of the sub-committees on structures; multilateral cooperation; contributions; economic and trade matters; the report on NEPAD as well as that of the Special Emergency Assistance Fund for Drought and Famine in Africa (SEAF). They will consider the working documents and draft decisions in preparation of the 20th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council.

On the other hand, the 20th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council will hold from 26 to 27 January at the headquarters of the AU in Addis Ababa. The Ministers of External Affairs and other ministers or authorities designated by the governments of Member States will deliberate on the different reports of the ministerial meetings organized by the AU Commission during the last six months. They will consider the activity report of the Commission; the recommendations of the PRC on the implementation of previous Decisions of the Executive Council and the Assembly; and the report of the ministerial committee on candidatures.

The Executive Council will further look into reports of some AU organs including the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR) and the African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights (AfCHPR) before embarking on the consideration of items proposed by Member States.

The 18th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union is scheduled to take place on 29 and 30 January 2012. One of the high moments of the AU Summit will be the inauguration of the New African Union Conference Center on 28 January 2012 in the presence of all the Heads of State and Government present for the Summit.

The opening ceremony on 29 January 2012 of the Assembly will also pay tribute to the memory of the late Prof. Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate and former Presiding Officer of the ECOSOCC of the African Union and the late Mrs. Elisabeth Tankeu, AU Commissioner for Trade & Industry.

AU Summit to Discuss Activity Reports

During their meeting, the AU Heads of States and Government will consider the recommendations of the Executive Council on the report of the Commission on the implementation of previous Decisions of the Executive Council and the Assembly; the report of the Peace and Security Council on its activities and the state of peace and security in Africa, including the activities of the Panel of the Wise; the report of Mr. Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of the Ethiopia and Chairperson of NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee (HSGOC); and his report on the outcome of the 17th Conference of Parties of the UNFCCC (COP 17), that took place in Durban, South Africa, 28 November – 9 December 2011.

The Presidents and Heads of Delegations will also exchange views on the report of Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President of the Republic of Congo and Africa's Coordinator on Africa's preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) with respect to the Common Position and Strategies vis-à-vis the challenges posed by the global economy and the international governance of the environment. They will discuss the report of Mr Ernest Bai Koroma, President of Sierra Leone and Chairperson of the Committee of Ten on the UN Reforms and that of Mr. Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda, on the 4th High Level Forum on Aid effectiveness held in Busan, South Korea, 29 November - 1st December 2011.

Other issues under consideration by the Heads of State are the progress report of the Commission on the implementation of Assembly Decisions on the Hissene Habre Case and the progress report of the Commission into the African Union Authority among others.

Election of Members of the AU Commission:

Given that the current bureau of the AU Commission is coming to the end of its four year mandate in January 2012, the Heads of State and Government of the African Union at the their 18th Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, will elect the Chairperson of the African Union Commission and that of the Deputy Chairperson of the

Commission. The Executive Council will elect the Commissioners of the African Union; ten members of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) and one judge of the AU Ad-hoc Administrative Tribunal.

Meanwhile, there will be a ceremony for the Kwame Nkrumah Scientific Awards during the event. During the Summit, the Heads of States are expected to adopt the decisions and recommendations of the 20th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council as well as the declaration of the Summit. They will also agree on the date and venue of the 19th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union.

For more information, consult the African Union website: www.au.int and visit the 18th Summit web page of the AU at the following link: http://au.int/en/summit/18thsummit

Journalists are invited to cover the official opening and closing ceremonies of the 23rd Ordinary Session of the PRC on 23-24 January 2012, the 20th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council on 26-27 January 2012 and the 18th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly on 29-30 January 2012.

Journalists wishing to interview the leadership of the AU Commission during the Summit should submit their requests to Mrs. Esther Azaa Yambou Email: YambouE@africa-union.org esthertankou@yahoo.com