



DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

Venue: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE JOINT MINISTERIAL MEETING OF MINISTERS OF FINANCE AND MINISTERS OF HEALTH

HELD ON 03 JUNE 2020

The African Union Commission convened a virtual meeting on 03rd June 2020 with African ministers of Health and Finance to discuss progress made and status of the Continental Response to halt transmission and combat the social and economic shocks in Africa related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In his welcoming remarks, HE Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, welcomed the Ministers to the Meeting. Chairperson Faki updated the Meeting on the status of pledges received by the AU COVID-19 Response Fund, established by the Bureau of the AU Assembly of the Heads of State and Government. He urged the three coordinating ministerial committees of Health, Finance and Transport of the AU COVID-19 Response Fund to maintain the coordinated multi-sectoral support the AU Member States.

The meeting was moderated by the Commissioner for Social Affairs, H.E. Amira Elfadil. In her remarks, she updated the Ministers on the AU mechanisms and strategies in response to COVID19. She also commended the efforts of the AUC Chairperson H.E. Moussa Faki, H.E. President Cyril Ramaphosa the Chair of the Union and the collaboration of the AU Special Envoys with Africa CDC in fundraising and establishing the continental Medical Supplies Procurement Platform. She noted that the platform would scale up the capacity of the AU Member States by providing the necessary medical supplies.

For his part, Dr John Nkengasong, Director of Africa CDC, provided an epidemiological update of the COVID-19 transmission trends on the Continent. He highlighted the need to scale up testing capacity on the Continent through the Partnership to Accelerate COVID-19 Testing (PACT), launched by the Chairperson of the Commission, in order to test, trace and treat COVID-19 cases in a timely manner and thus minimise the impact of the pandemic on the Continent.

“The Partnership to Accelerate COVID-19 Testing (PACT), the initiative launched by the President of the African Union Commission to Test, Trace and Treat COVID-19 cases will

help to ease lockdowns and strengthen COVID-19 response on the continent; as the initiative aims at 1) conducting increased millions of tests which allow for implementation of targeted measures that will replace lockdowns; 2) deploying 1 million community healthcare workers which will increase tracing and allow for more effective isolation of infected individuals; 3) training one hundred thousand (100,000) healthcare workers for increased treatment which allow for more people to access the medical care that they will need”; said Dr John Nkengasong.

He recalled that Africa CDC’ s continental strategy is axed on three pillars, namely, preventing transmission, preventing deaths and preventing social and economic harm; and emphasized the need of commodities procurement to prevent transmission and deaths. He stressed that if we join forces, we can beat the virus on the continent and unlock economies.

AUC Special Envoy Mr. Strive Masiyiwa, introduced the Africa Medical Supplies Platform, a continental platform for the pooled procurement of medical supplies for Member States.

The Africa Medical Supplies Platform is a closed, online marketplace for Member States with local and international healthcare manufacturers that aims to address the urgent need to procure critical medical equipment and bridge the supply gap in order to help fight the pandemic over the next six months.

H.E. Prof. Victor Harison, AUC Commissioner for Economic Affairs provided updates on the progress made since the last F15 meeting of Ministers of Finance held on 06 March 2020 with the A.U. Special Envoys and International and African development institutions which includes virtual working sessions on economic recovery with the World Bank Group, IMF and the World Economic Forum.

The A.U. Special Envoys gave a briefing on their ongoing efforts which include the development of a strategy to work with bilateral financiers and private sectors; the mobilization of direct resources with multilateral institutions to disburse funds directly to A.U. Member States; ongoing negotiations with multilateral financiers on Special Drawings Rights to enable an increase in liquidity and moratorium for two years.

The Ministers of Health and Finance took note of the progress made in tackling the impact of the pandemic on African nations and various actions taken by the AUC, A.U. Member States and Africa CDC.

Following the sharing of experiences of different A.U. Member States, the Commission reiterated the need to promote good public health practice during the pandemic; to implement the AUC COVID-19 strategy to prevent transmission, deaths and social and economic shocks on the continent; a coordinated approach between AUC and Africa CDC to support and scale up the ability to test, trace and isolate affected Africans; mobilize resources to finance the prevention of the pandemic; coordinate a continental approach for financing research for pharmaceuticals; and, invest and promote local production of medical supplies, pharmaceuticals and equipment.

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