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ASSEMBLY OF THE AFRICAN UNION

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**REPORT OF THE HEADS STATE AND GOVERNMENT
ACTION COMMITTEE ON AIDS WATCH AFRICA
(AWA)**

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Breakfast Meeting of the AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) Action Committee of Heads of State and Government was held at Sheraton Addis Hotel, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 14 July 2012. The meeting was chaired by H.E Dr. Boni Yayi, President of the Republic of Benin and AU and AWA Chairperson. This Meeting was preceded by the meeting of the Consultative Experts Committee (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 21-22 June 2012), which prepared documentation and other plans for the Action Committee Meeting.

2. AWA was revitalized by the AU Assembly in January 2012 for stronger leadership to mobilize action and resources, and promote accountability in the response to HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB. The Assembly also requested the AU Commission, NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency (NPCA) in collaboration with UNAIDS to work out a roadmap of shared responsibility for a viable response including Health Financing for AIDS.

3. The main objectives of the Meeting was to provide an opportunity for AWA Heads of State and Government to share information amongst themselves and with partners, and to consider the reports and recommendations of the AWA Consultative Experts Committee meeting.

II. ATTENDANCE

4. The Action Committee Meeting was attended by fourteen (14) of the twenty three (23) AWA Member States: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Chad, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda and Tanzania. The First Lady of Namibia in her capacity of Chairperson of OAFLAA also attended.

5. The Meeting was also attended by dignitaries and executives of the following Non-African States, UN Agencies, Regional and International Organizations and Civil Society Organizations: USA Global AIDS Coordinator, Haiti, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UNOCHA, UNEP, PEPFAR, ALMA, IOM, Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, CAF, UAM and SAfAIDS.

III. OPENING SESSION

6. The Opening Session was addressed by H.E Mr. Jean Ping, Chairperson of AU Commission who delivered welcome remarks that provided the background on AWA and emphasized the importance of keeping the fight against HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria at the forefront of development agenda.

7. H.E Dr. Yayi Boni, President of Benin, Chairperson of AU and AWA delivered the opening statement in which he acknowledged the progress that have been made in the fight against HIV, TB and Malaria and advised against complacency. He called for accelerated action towards accountability and resource mobilization to attain MDGs by 2015 and commended all partners for their role in public health and development.

IV. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

- i) The provisional Agenda and Provisional Programme of Work were adopted as presented;
- ii) The elections of the Vice-Chairperson and Regional Champions were postponed in order to ensure further consultations.

SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

1. Consideration of the Outcome of AWA Consultative Experts Committee Meeting

8. H.E Adv. Bience Gawanas, AU Commissioner for Social Affairs presented the summary of the outcome of the AWA Consultative Experts Committee meeting which took place on 21-22 June 2012 in Addis Ababa. The Experts recommended two important documents for consideration of the AWA Action Committee of Heads of State and Government: (i) "Future Direction of AIDS Watch Africa 2012-2015", and (ii) "Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity for Africa's Response to AIDS, TB and Malaria: Roadmap 2012-2015".

2. Discussion and Responses by AWA Action Committee Heads of State and Government

9. The presentation was followed by responses and rich discussions with constructive contributions from the Heads of State and Government. They all reaffirmed their commitment to step up the fight against the three diseases and stressed accountability for results. H.E President Idriss Deby Itno of Chad, H.E President Hifikepunye Lucas Pohamba of Namibia and H.E Amb. Olugbenga Ashiru, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, on behalf of H.E President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan of Nigeria made specific presentations.

3. Goodwill Messages

10. Goodwill Messages were delivered by the following executives and dignitaries: H.E Amb. Eric Goosby, United States Global AIDS Coordinator, on behalf of H.E President Obama, H.E Mr. Michel Sidibe, Executive Director of UNAIDS, Dr. Luis Gomes Sambo, WHO Africa Regional Director, on behalf of Dr. Margaret Chan, WHO Director-General and H.E Prof. Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director of UNFPA. They all commended the efforts of Member States and pledged continued financial and material support for AU Member States in the fight against AIDS, TB and Malaria, as well as their support for AWA.

11. H.E President Yayi Boni expressed the appreciation of AU to all partner organizations that delivered goodwill messages as well as those present at the meeting.

4. Consideration of Draft Outcome of the Meeting of AWA Action Committee

12. H.E Adv. Bience Gawanas, AU Commissioner for Social Affairs presented the under listed drafts documents which were adopted after consideration and amendments:

- i) Recommendations and decisions of the AWA Action Committee Meeting;
- ii) Communiqué of Meeting of AWA Action Committee for dissemination (copy attached);
- iii) Assembly Declaration on Report of AWA Action Committee Meeting for the 19th Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly (copy attached).

13. The key recommendations and decisions included the following:

- i) Endorsed the Future Direction of AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) 2012-2015 and beyond, comprising of 4 implementation phases and during this period AWA will actively advocate for: (a) long-term reliable and sustainable mobilization of domestic and external resources through agreed and recommended channels and urged development partners to fulfill their pledges to Africa; (b) better planning, coordination and rational use of existing resources at national level;
- ii) Endorsed “the Roadmap on Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity for Africa’s Response to HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria 2012-2015”, which has three strategic pillars: diversified financing; access to medicines; and enhanced health governance. It defines the goals, results, roles and responsibilities with which to hold stakeholders accountable for the realization of these solutions between 2012 and 2015.
- iii) The Action Committee decided that:
 - a) AWA is opened to all AU Member States for membership;
 - b) The annual meetings of AWA Action Committee should be held during the June/July Summit; while Consultative Experts Committee will hold bi-annual meetings;
 - c) At country level, a National Working Group on AWA, which can be an existing national level forum should serve as an advisory body to the AWA Head of State;

- d) Each AWA Head of State should nominate a national expert conversant with HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria issues to the Consultative Experts Committee;
- iv) In line with the Decision No. Assembly/AU/Dec.395 (XVIII), and in the spirit of taking full ownership, recommended that the budget of AWA Secretariat should be included under the regular AUC budget.

5. Closing Session

14. In his closing remarks H.E Yayi Boni noted that it was time to turn commitments into actions and called on partners to reinforce their support and collaboration in the fight against HIV/AIDS, TB & Malaria. He expressed his appreciation to the leadership of AU Commission, all speakers, participants and those who contributed to the success of the breakfast meeting. The Commissioner for Social Affairs delivered the vote of thanks.

2012-07-15

Report of the heads state and government action committee on aids watch Africa (AWA)

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