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**ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION**

**Twenty-Fifth Ordinary Session**

**14 – 15 June 2015**

**Johannesburg, SOUTH AFRICA**

**Assembly/AU/14(XXV)**

**REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF AIDS WATCH AFRICA  
(AWA) HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

## **REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS OF AIDS WATCH AFRICA (AWA) HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. The AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) Heads of State and Government met in Sandton, Johannesburg, South Africa on 14 June 2015.
2. The main objective of the meeting was to provide a high level advocacy platform for the AWA Heads of State and Government to deliberate and make decisions for the African continent on key health priorities pertaining to HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria. The meeting took place in the context of the expiring MDG goals and in alignment with Agenda 2063 aspirations. The AWA Heads of State and Government shared information amongst themselves and with partners, and considered the progress made on the AU Roadmap for Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity for AIDS, TB and Malaria Response (2012-2015).

### **ATTENDANCE:**

3. The AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) Heads of State meeting was attended by the Heads of State and Government, heads of delegations attending the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of the AU Assembly; former Heads of State and Champions of AIDS Free Generation, first ladies, as well as Heads of UN Agencies, other partners including Global Fund. Also present were the Regional Economic Communities: EAC, COMESA, SADC, and ECOWAS and AU Organs: NEPAD, APRM and PAP. The meeting was chaired by H.E. President Robert Mugabe as Chair of the African Union and AIDS Watch Africa

### **OPENING**

#### **i) Remarks by the AUC Chairperson, H.E Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma**

4. In her remarks, the AUC Chairperson articulated the African aspirations espoused by Agenda 2063. She noted that if health issues are not addressed within the broader development agenda, serious omission with dire consequences would have been committed since health constitutes a vital development pillar and an indicator of socio-economic development. She further reiterated the recommendation made by Ministers of Health regarding development of a Catalytic Framework to End AIDS, TB and Malaria by 2030, as recommended by the Abuja plus 12 Summit in 2013.
5. The Chairperson of the Commission further expressed her appreciation and paid tribute to the past and current Chairpersons of AWA for the leadership AWA has demonstrated in the fight against AIDS, TB & Malaria. She urged AWA to continue to provide leadership, take ownership, and mobilise sufficient resources for an effective response to these three diseases.
6. The AUC Chair recalled the lessons that Africa has learnt so far in leading the response to the epidemics and emphasised the need for a new health systems architecture for early detection and management of epidemics. She further pointed out

that in line with the AU Assembly mandate, the AUC has accelerated impetus towards the establishment of the African Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

**ii) Remarks of the H.E. Cde. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Chairperson of AU and AWA**

7. President Mugabe reiterated the foundational substance of the AWA platform. He stated that AWA's vision is to hasten the end of the HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria epidemics in Africa and its mission is to lead advocacy and accountability efforts to accelerate the African response to HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

8. The Chairperson of AU/AWA recalled the West Africa's catastrophic experience with the Ebola outbreak. highlighted the impact of the epidemic to the health systems of affected countries and the broader socio-economic ramifications. He further pointed out that upon reflecting on the Ebola experience, Africa can take pride on its resounding response efforts inspired by a pioneering spirit of African Solidarity Initiative predicated on the countenance of Africa helping Africa. He also indicated that the African Union has since been spearheading continental efforts to respond to Ebola with the framework of African novel and noble initiative, the African Union Support to Ebola in West Africa (ASEOWA) which epitomizes Pan African solidarity. Liberia was congratulated for its efforts with the support of the international community that resulted in it being declared Ebola free.

9. In that regard he encouraged the Heads of State to support the Ebola Conference scheduled to take place in Equatorial Guinea from 20 to 21 July 2015.

10. The Chairperson stressed that placing development at the core in Africa should be the priority whilst ensuring universal access to health. He further stated that investment in health is investment in the continuity of the human race and therefore investment in the future.

11. In terms of the review of the AU Roadmap on Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity, the Chairperson urged Heads of State to consider extending the life span of the Roadmap from 2016 to 2020.

**PROCEDURAL MATTERS:**

12. The meeting adopted the provisional Agenda and Programme of Work without amendment. Also under procedural matters, the meeting was informed of the appointment of Prime Minister of Ethiopia as the Vice Chair of AWA in his capacity as the ALMA Chairperson and champion of Malaria

**Address by of H.E. Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, ALMA Chairperson as the Vice Chairperson of AWA**

13. In his address, the Ethiopian Prime Minister pointed out that the AWA meeting celebrates the achievements and shared experiences on AIDS, TB and Malaria. He called on Heads of State and Governments to redouble efforts in order to eliminate the

three diseases. He underlined that as countries strive for elimination of the three diseases, and essentially to sustain commitments, there is need to focus on domestic financing and efficient use of resources.

**14.** He further called on the African Union Commission working with Member States to develop the Roadmap to eliminate malaria by 2030.

**15.** The Prime Minister urged Heads of State to support the 5<sup>th</sup> Global Fund Replenishment cycle.

### **Election of AWA Vice-Chair and Regional Champions**

**16.** The nomination of the North and South AWA Regional Champions was deferred pending consultation.

### **Consideration of the Report of the AWA Consultative Experts Committee Meeting**

**17.** The Commissioner for Social Affairs presented the outcome of the AWA Consultative Experts Committee meeting that took place from 4 to 5 May 2015 in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. He gave a summary of the recommendations of the Experts which was contained in the following documents:

- i) The Outcome Report of the AWA Consultative Experts Committee Meeting;
- ii) Africa eMTCT Best Practices;
- iii) Draft Assembly Decision on the Report of AWA Heads of State and Government.

**18.** The Recommendations were summarized as follows:

- At a country level, map Africa's on-going large capital projects particularly those in the areas of transport, energy, oil and gas, mining and agriculture that have started in the past two years and all capital development planned within national development plans;
- AU Member States and RECs should review their Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Policies and Plans in alignment with the Pharmaceutical Plan for Africa (PMPA);
- Extend the life-span of the AU Roadmap on Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity from 2016 to 2020;
- Strengthening Health and Community Systems should further strengthen health systems and community service delivery in order to make them more efficient with focus on integrated AIDS, TB and malaria services;
- With regards to the eMTCT report, the Commissioner for Social Affairs presented the Best Practices documented in the five AU regions represented by Rwanda, South Africa, Chad, Tunisia and Nigeria and he emphasized that

the documentation anchored on the need to gather evidence-based information on successful programming and leadership for eMTCT service delivery in countries with success stories in order to replicate in other countries;

- The Draft Assembly Decision on the Report of AWA Heads of State and Government was presented for consideration after which the AWA meeting adopted the document.

## **Messages of support by the Development Partners**

### **Mr. Michel Sidibe, UN Undersecretary General and Executive Director of UNAIDS**

**19.** The Executive Director of the UNAIDS pointed out the challenge of inequity as the major problem of the world with 25% of the health burden in Africa. He noted that Africa accounts for less than 1% of the global investment in health services. He concurred with the Chairperson on the importance of investing for health. He noted that investing in health infrastructure is a pre-condition for development and provided an example of how Ebola had sidetracked the growth rates in the three affected countries. He noted success made in countries such as Zimbabwe, South Africa, Kenya, Senegal and Congo among others in breaking the trajectory of the AIDS epidemic and applauded the work of the Heads of State in this regard.

### **Dr. Mark Dybul, Executive Director of Global Fund**

**20.** The Executive Director of the Global Fund, Dr. Mark Dybul expressed appreciation to the Heads of State for their leadership and success in the AIDS response. The Executive Director stressed that declining new infections and increased domestic financing would leverage the necessary international support for shared success.

**21.** The Executive Director further requested the Heads of State to continue their support to the Global Fund in preparation for the next replenishment cycle.

## **CLOSING**

**22.** In his closing remarks, the Chairperson of AWA implored the Heads of State and Government to support AWA to implement its mandate particularly at country level. The Chairperson pointed out that great strides would always be achieved if Member States work in unison in implementing their commitments for development.

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# Report of proceedings of Aids Watch Africa (AWA) Heads of State and Government

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