

The European Union and the African Union join forces to build disaster resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa

Brussels, 24 April 2015 - The African Union and the European Union announced a new EUR 80 million initiative with the AU Commission in the lead to drive the implementation of the African Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy with a view to help protect Africans from the threat of natural hazards and climate change.

The initiative, launched during the AU-EU College to College meetings in Brussels, comes at a decisive moment, roughly a month after the adoption of the new Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. The AUC will deliver on its regional commitments while responding to the challenges of this new global framework.

EU Commissioner for International Cooperation & Development, Neven Mimica, said: *"The EU stands firm on its commitments to address disaster risks and climate change as key for sustainable development. While natural hazards cannot be avoided, long-term management of risks can save lives and livelihoods. This partnership with the AUC is a good example of the multiple facets of resilience, an approach we intend to pursue in the negotiations on key issues such as Financing for Development, Sustainable Development Goals and Climate Change. Our goal is to ensure that resilience is an integral part of those processes, an opportunity not to be missed"*.

H.E Mr. Ersatus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission added: *"Africa is repeatedly hard hit by a range of natural and human-induced hazards with droughts and floods impacting most severely the lives of Africans and their livelihoods. Poverty, Climate change, livelihood insecurity and population increase are among the drivers of risk that amplifying such disastrous events potentially reversing years of development. Our expectations for this partnership with the EU stand high given the challenges Africa is faced with and are happy to take the first step to move from policy to practice."*

Activities at regional level will support African countries with policy advice, planning and coordination of regional risks, through the Regional Economic Communities. The Regional Climate Centres will enhance weather prediction at regional and national levels for applications for disaster risk reduction (early warning systems), through the deployment of Regional Advanced Retransmission Services and Numerical Weather Prediction. Decision-making and capacity to take appropriate action will also be improved through national risk profiling, probabilistic risk modelling and sovereign risk financing strategies.

This initiative results from a partnership between the EU, the AU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group with key partners such as the African Development Bank, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the World Bank-led Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery.

Background:

The College-to-College meetings are held to provide regular political guidance to the Africa-EU Partnership by bringing together the European Commission and the African Union (AU) Commission for political and policy dialogue. The 2015 meeting is the first annual one since the new European Commission took office on 1 November 2014 and will provide an opportunity to maintain the positive momentum of the 4th EU-Africa Summit of April 2014.

The Programme "Building Disaster Resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa" is an initiative of the European Union in the context of the Intra-ACP cooperation with the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group and with the African Union, under the AU-EU Partnership. The purpose is to accelerate the effective implementation of the African Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy and its successor post-2015.

Photos of the event are available here:

<http://ec.europa.eu/avservices/photo/photoByReportage.cfm?ref=028084&sitelang=fr>

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