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**THE AFRICAN UNION AND UNDP REGIONAL BUREAU FOR
AFRICA SIGN A TRADE CAPACITY BUILDING AGREEMENT**

The African Union and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Bureau for Africa, yesterday, signed a regional project agreement estimated at a cost of US\$4.250 million for trade and capacity building, poverty reduction and sustainable human development in Africa.

The regional project agreement was signed at the AU Headquarters by the AU Commissioner for Trade and Industry, Mrs. Elizabeth Tankeu and UNDP Regional Director for African Bureau, Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, on behalf of their respective organizations.

The UNDP is expected to contribute US\$1.650 million of the cost of the project over the next three years, while the balance will be contributed by participating partners.

The fund will assist some African countries in building and strengthening human and institutional capacity for effective participation in multilateral and international trade negotiations. The facility will also be used to support the African countries participating in the Doha work program of the World Trade Organization, the ACP-EU negotiations on economic partnership agreements and for intra-African trade within the AU.

Partnerships have been established with key research, policy and development support institutions and countries including ECA, DfID, the World Bank and the Nordic countries as well as with the civil society and the private sector for the implementation of the programme.

Addis Ababa, June 1, 2004