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*Press Release*

**The Chairperson of the African Union Commission Concludes a four-day Visit to Tanzania**

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), Dr. Jean Ping on Tuesday 9 November 2010, concluded a four-day visit to Tanzania during which he attended, along with several Heads of State and Government and high-level foreign delegations, the swearing-in ceremony on 6 November 2010 in Dar es-Salaam of H.E Dr. Jakaya Kikwete as President of the United Republic of Tanzania, following his re-election to a second five-year term

On the occasion, Chairperson Ping extended his warm congratulations to President Kikwete and pledged full cooperation and support of the Commission to the Tanzanian Government's efforts to strengthen democratic institutions and achieve good governance.

The Chairperson further expressed confidence that Tanzania would continue to offer its valuable and much appreciated contribution to the work of the African Union.

During the visit which took place from 6-9 November 2010, the Chairperson also travelled to Zanzibar where he co-chaired a meeting of the Coordination Committee of the African Union (AU), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the United Nations Economic Committee for Africa (UNECA) and the African Development Bank (AFDB).

In his opening remarks, Dr. Ping recalled that long before the independence of most of the African states, several African leaders had called for the creation of regional economic blocs, convinced that the future belonged to big continental bodies. He said Africa, was thus, a trailblazer in the regional integration movement which later developed around the world.

The Chairperson, however, noted that despite this pioneering role, the regional integration process in Africa had been hindered by several challenges, including problems related to infrastructure development, funding, the free movement of persons, peace and security issues and the latent but ever present debate over the speed and scope of integration.

The Chairperson announced that pursuant to the deliberations of the last AU-RECs-ECA-AFDB Coordination Committee meeting in Libreville, Gabon, and in accordance

with the recommendations of the 4<sup>th</sup> Conference of Integration Ministers held in Yaounde, Cameroon, in May 2009, the Commission had launched a study on the funding of African integration. The issue will be further debated next month in Tripoli, Libya at the 5<sup>th</sup> Conference of Integration Ministers, and as directed by African Heads of State and Government during their July Summit in Kampala, Uganda, the Commission will soon convene a meeting of AU Ministers of Finance and Economy to finalize discussions and propose possible solutions to the leadership.

The Chairperson further stated that the establishment of three pan-African financial institutions envisaged by the AU Founding Charter, namely: the African Central Bank, the African Investment Bank and the African Monetary Fund, will help raise the necessary funds to finance regional integration efforts and achieve greater harmonization of the monetary and financial sector.

With regard to the free movement of persons, Chairperson Ping observed that African Integration Ministers had opted for an incremental approach, which initially grants visa exemptions to holders of diplomatic passports and gradually extends the measure to the rest of the continent's citizenry. He commended the Regional Economic Communities, such as the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS), the East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC), for taking measures to ensure the free movement of persons and exhorted other RECs to do the same.

On the issue of peace and security, the Chairperson acknowledged the progress made in harnessing and harmonizing conflict resolution and crisis management activities on the continent and called for greater coordination and consultation to ensure that conflicts do not spill over from one region to another and avoid unnecessary confusion and duplication in efforts and mandates. Chairperson Ping commended the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD) for its support of AU efforts to restore peace and unity in Somalia and lauded the collaboration between SADC, the AU and International Mediators in the search for a solution to the crisis in Madagascar.

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**Addis Ababa, 9 November 2010**