

AUC NEWS



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“Africa must claim the 21st century as its own and all Africans must rise as one and march together for integration and development” - AUC Chairperson Professor Alpha Oumar Konare on the occasion of the celebrations of 43 years of building an integrated, developed Africa.

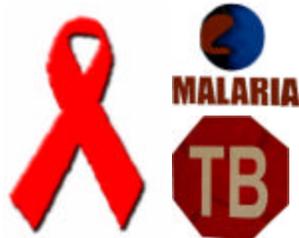
The theme for this year’s commemorations was “Working Together for Integration and Development”

page 2



Special Summit on HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis And Malaria (ATM)

..... 4



Departmental News

AU Women’s Committee inaugurated 5

Main parties in Darfur sign peace accord ... 6

May 16 marks beginning of DPA 7

Retreat provides negotiators opportunity to develop common position 7

Africa environment outlook for youth is launched 8

New investment to improve fisheries management 8

Committee of eminent jurists meet over Hissen Habre case 9

AU calls for nominations for outstanding service 9

Corporate News

Japanese prime minister visits AU

..... 10



China contributes to AU in Darfur 11

Chairperson honoured by Rotary 11

Staff announcement 12

Know your African Union 12

Contact details 12

As Africa marks 43rd anniversary of formation of OAU

AU CALLS ON ALL AFRICANS TO RISE AND WORK TOGETHER FOR INTEGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

It was on 25 May 1963, that the then African leaders made history and gave significant impetus to the continent's collective struggle for independence by forming the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), precursor to the African Union. Nearly four decades followed in which African states stood united in the framework of the OAU while making efforts to give depth and meaning to their political independence and striving for the socio economic development of their people. Those efforts yielded positive results, culminating in the establishment of the African Union.

Since its formation, the AU has continued to focus on the resolution of conflicts as part of the agenda for integration and development. In his statement to mark Africa Day, AUC Chairperson Alpha Oumar Konare said some of these efforts have borne fruit as evidenced by the completion of the transitional process and holding of elections in Liberia, the Navasha Agreement in Sudan and the recently negotiated peace agreement in Darfur.

He said the AU will continue to focus on the amelioration of the situation in Cote D'Ivoire, a successful transition in DRC, the establishment of a constitutional order in Somalia and

the search for a constructive and definitive solution to the crisis in Darfur.

He said Africa must claim the 21st century as its own and called on all Africans to rise as one and march together for integration and development.

Africa Day was widely observed on the continent with special coverage in many newspapers and on broadcasting stations across the land. In Addis Ababa, headquarters of the African Union, the day was marked in a special way. On 24 May, the AU Commission held an innovative round table discussion, moderated by Commissioner Maxwell Mkwezalamba of Economic Affairs Department. Representatives of the AU, UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), African Development Bank (ADB) and European Union (EU)



Round Table Facilitator: Dr.



AU representative: Dr



Dr Hakim Ben Hamouda: ECA



Mr. Nicola Delcroix: EU Commission delegation



Dr Pierre Seya: ADB



Professor Alpha Oumar Konare
AU Commission Chairperson

discussed the theme "Working Together for Integration and Development". Members of the Permanent Representative Council (PRC) and other groups, who were present, later contributed to a lively and open discussion of the issues surrounding integration, the successes, challenges and way forward. In the face of the recent agreement to revitalize the joint ECA, ADB and AU secretariat, these discussions formed a significant forum for constructive dialogue between the three organizations and development partners.

The theme for this year's celebrations was informed by the need to mobilize all of Africa's resources for the achievement of the objective of building an integrated and developed Africa.

AU Commission Chairperson Professor Alpha Oumar Konare opened the day's proceedings and set the tone with a few remarks. He observed and commended the immense role played by the OAU in bring-

(Continued on page 3)

AFRICAN UNION INAUGURATES AFRICAN UNION WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

On 29 April 2006, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission Professor Alpha Oumar Konare inaugurated the African Union Women's Committee (AUWC).

The committee of 15 women will serve as an advisory body to the Chairperson and the Commission in general on issues of gender and development. It will watch over progress towards gender equality on the continent, within the framework of the Heads of State Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality



Director of Gender Directorate: Ms. Winnie Byanyima (top left) poses for a group photographs with some of the AUWC members

in Africa.

The women are drawn from each of the 5 regions of Africa and

from the African community in the diaspora. A release issued by the Gender Directorate said the women were chosen because of their competence in gender equality and women's empowerment issues but also for their high moral standing and proven integrity gained through distinguished service in government, the judiciary, academia, civil society and private sector.

They will serve in their individual capacities for a 3 year term, renewable once.

(Continued from page 2)

ing independence, adding that independent Sudan is now 50 years old and that next year, Ghana will be celebrating the same milestone. He also observed that many institutions and organs of the AU are now in place. At the forthcoming Banjul Heads of State and Government Summit, it is expected that the African Court of Justice will come to life, that there will be a clear road map to establishment of the United States of Africa and that issues to do with harmonization of the Regional Economic Communities and other outstanding issues will be solved.

Dr Kouassi, Director of Economic Affairs Department presented a before and after analysis of the process of integrating the RECs. His main argument was that African integration and development will be better served by having fewer RECs with clearly defined mandates and objectives. The ADB Resident Representative outlined his organization's role in inte-

gration and development. The Director of Integration and Trade at the ECA discussed the historical aspects and challenges ahead in the process of integration while the EU representative expounded on the EU's strategy on Africa.

Reaction from the floor was varied, largely positive but also peppered with a few cautionary remarks, which contributed to the quality of the discussions. All the delegates commended the innovative round table discussion. Some, like the representative of Uganda spoke about the many initiatives already underway in their region, aimed at enhancing integration. These included free trade, formation of a customs union, free movement of people, creation of a common market, and moves towards political federation. Some of the concerns brought up included the fact that Africa needs to add value to products, that civil society, the private sector and people in the diaspora should have a voice in the integration process, and that the AU should find ways of making sure that Africa Day is celebrated uni-

versally on the continent.

One delegate also commented that it is time the AU paid more attention to other development issues, outside of Peace and Security. Africa has to look at its agriculture, trade, boosting of infrastructure, human resources and technological and scientific development among other issues.

The discussions which were brought up were by no means exhaustive as time was a major constraint. But they represented a commendable way of looking at Africa, a forum where political leaders, civil society, and development partners can gather together and openly discuss issues of convergence and divergence on a given theme, in a constructive manner from which Africa can only benefit.

After the discussions, the Chairperson and Mrs. Konare hosted a reception for all who attended the discussions as well as AU members of staff.

ABUJA CALL REDEDICATES AFRICA TO PROVIDE UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO HIV & AIDS, TB AND MALARIA SERVICES BY 2010



Left: AU Chairperson Mr Dennis Sassou Nguesso with AUC Chairperson Professor Alpha Oumar Konare in Abuja
Top: AUC members of staff at work at the Special summit. **Bottom:** Commissioner Gawanas and Tankeu and other AUC delegates attending a press conference held by Presidents Nguesso, Obasanjo and Konare at the end of the Summit
Right: Former Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda singing a song of encouragement at the Summit

African leaders have, since the turn of the century, employed collective strategies to halt and reverse the spread and impact of HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (ATM). The two Abuja Summits in 2000 and 2001, the African Ministers of Health conference in Gaborone in 2005, the Bamako Initiative on Traditional Medicines, the Continental Forum on HIV and AIDS and Human rights of November 2005, the Brazzaville Conference of 2006, and the Continental Meeting on Scaling Up of Treatment, Care and Support held in March this year bear testimony to some of the rigorous efforts being deployed to remove the threat posed by ATM.

In addition, the African Union annually leads the continent in celebrating World TB Day and Malaria Day. On 11 April this year, 2006 was launched as the Year of Acceleration of HIV and AIDS Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support, with events running simultaneously in Addis

Ababa and a number of other African capitals. All this is done under constant reminders of the gravity of the disease burden.

WHO statistics on mortality and morbidity attributable to the three diseases were uppermost in the minds of Heads of State and Government who met in Abuja, Nigeria on 4 May at the end of a three day Special Summit on HIV and AIDS, TB and Malaria. The leaders met to review progress made in the implementation of earlier African commitments and the Millennium Development Goals and to rededicate themselves to these commitments. They came up with the Abuja Call for Accelerated Action Towards Universal Access to HIV and AIDS, TB and Malaria Services in Africa by 2010, a Draft Common Position to the UN General Assembly on AIDS to be held in June and a Decision to the World Health Assembly in Switzerland at the end of May. The three documents serve the purposes of strengthening Africa's own commitment towards fighting ATM, and articulating its common positions on these important issues.

Taking stock of how previous commitments have been implemented, the leaders recalled that AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) was born out of the Abuja Summit as an advocacy platform; that 33% of countries have allocated at least 10% of their national budgets to health; that Regional Economic Communities have integrated health and social issues in their development programmes; that the AU Commission developed and is implementing its HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan and that several countries have been able to access bilateral and multilateral finance for the fight against ATM.

In addition, the Summit heard from various people actively engaged in the fight against the three killer diseases. Success stories of the fight against stigma and discrimination were highlighted when Nigerian President and Summit host, Olusegun Obasanjo gave a woman living with HIV and AIDS, a sewing machine and a work area after she gave testimony of the struggle

she had gone through after her HIV positive status became known. He said "in 2001, Mariam would not have been able to come out publicly and tell her story", a pointer to the strides made in societal acceptance of PLWHA. The World Health Organisation said TB case detection has risen from 20% in 2001 to 50 %. In 2005 distribution of Insecticide Treated Nets has increased ten fold. Former Zambian President, Kenneth Kaunda spoke to the Summit in song, as he declared that Africa will conquer HIV and AIDS.

African Union Chairman and Congo Republic President, Mr. Dennis Sassou Nguesso lamented that in Africa so many people, at least 2.9 million according to WHO statistics, are dying from HIV related illnesses every year; and said Africa must stop being "a reservoir of people living with HIV and AIDS".

The Special Summit, whose theme was "Universal Access to ATM Services by a United Africa by 2010, was unequivocal that ATM should continue to be considered a state of emergency in Africa as the three diseases are a major threat to national and continental socio economic development, peace and security.

The leaders took stock of the numerous challenges and obstacles to accelerated action towards universal access to ATM services in Africa including lack of adequate financing, weak planning, inadequate access to essential drugs, weak health systems, stigma, discrimination and gender inequalities, lack of coordination, weak monitoring and evaluation and other development challenges. AU Commission Chairperson, Professor Alpha Oumar Konare called for

local production of drugs, more access to education and information, and provision of special care to vulnerable groups. He added a key element in assuring the success of the efforts to beat ATM, i.e. peace; security and stability which will help create a conducive environment for investment. Other speakers spoke of the need to integrate traditional medicines alongside western medical care.

In making the Abuja call, the leaders rededicated themselves to intensifying the fight against ATM. The 10 priorities they identified are; Leadership at National, Regional and Continental Levels; Resource Mobilization; Protection for Human Rights: Poverty Reduction, Health and Development; Strengthening Health Systems; Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support; Access to affordable Medicines and Technologies; Research and Development on HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Other Related Infectious Diseases; Partnership; and Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting.



Members of Nigerian & international media attending a press briefing. Daily briefings were organised throughout the Summit

As a way forward, various key players were identified as crucial players in a multi sectoral and integrated approach to disease control. Ministries of Health, National AIDS Councils, Ministries of Fi-

nance and Economic Planning, development partners, UN agencies, civil society, private sector, RECs, the Pan African Parliamentary Committee on Health, Labour and Social Affairs and the community were said to be major partners. In addition, the Peace and Security Council, The Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSSOC) and national parliamentarians were called upon to play an effective advocacy role.

The African Union was mandated to:

Effectively implement the AU Commission HIV and AIDS Strategic Plan and AWA Strategic Framework 2005-2007;

Promote regional integration and collaboration in the areas of Disease Control;

Ensure that HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria are catered for in the NEPAD Health Strategy;

Ensure that malaria prevention and control is accelerated with the goal to eliminate malaria in Africa by 2010 using all available control strategies

Coordinate in broad partnership with Civil Society and the private sector, the effective implementation of the Abuja Call and report annually to the AU Assembly.

In order to meet the agenda to provide universal access to ATM services by 2010, consultative reviews on the implementation of the Abuja Call for Accelerated Action Towards Universal Access to HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria services of 2006 will be conducted in 2008 and 2010.



MAIN PARTIES SIGN DARFUR PEACE AGREEMENT

Agreement calls for, among others, the disbandment of rebel forces and the disarmament of the Janjaweed militia

On 5 May 2006, the Sudanese government and the main rebel group, the Sudan Liberation Army led by Mr. Minni Arcua Minnawi, signed a peace deal aimed at ending three years of conflict. The agreement was the culmination of peace talks that lasted two years in the Nigerian capital Abuja, under AU mediation. Among the highlights are:

Security Arrangements

Under security arrangements, the deal

Requires complete, verifiable disarmament of the Janjaweed militia by mid October 2006

Places restrictions on the movements of the Popular Defense Forces (PDF) and requires their downsizing

Requires the Sudanese government to punish violations of the ceasefire by Janjaweed, PDF and any militia

Establishes buffer zones around IDP camps and humanitarian assistance corridors

Defines the principles for integration of the rebel forces into

the Sudanese Armed Forces and police

Provides for strong rebel forces representation in leadership positions in the Sudanese Armed Forces

Requires the Sudanese government of National Unity to review security institutions, to ensure professionalism and to focus on the rule of law

Power Sharing

The Power sharing agreement:

Gives rebel movements 4th highest position in Government of National Unity and

Establishes democratic processes

Wealth Sharing

Under wealth sharing, the agreement

Creates a fund for Darfur Reconstruction and Development

Calls for a Joint Assessment Mission to determine the specific reconstruction and development needs of Darfur

Commits the international Community to hold a donors conference to pledge additional funds for Darfur

Establishes a Commission to work with the UN to help refugees and displaced persons to return to their homes

Creates a commission to provide compensation to victims of the conflict

Creates transparent process to track the flow of grants and money from Khartoum into Darfur



The African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) has been involved in peace operations in the Darfur region



for people of Darfur to choose their leaders and determine their status as a region

For the three year period to elections, the deal allocates to the rebels chairmanship and control in the Transitional Darfur Regional Authority, 12 seats in the National Assembly in Khartoum, 21 seats in each of the Darfur state legislatures, one state governor of Darfur and two Deputy Governors, senior positions in State Ministries, and guarantees them key posts in local government.

However two smaller rebel groupings, the Justice and Equality Movement and a faction of the SLA led by Abdel Wahed Mohammed al- Nur rejected the deal, despite last minute efforts to secure their support. According to reports, the rebels wanted, among other things, a post of Sudanese Vice President, a Darfur regional government, greater representation in national institutions and allocation of 6.5% of Sudan's national income to a Darfur development fund.

The rebels took up arms in 2003.

MAY 16 MARKS BEGINNING OF DARFUR PEACE AGREEMENT

In the aftermath of the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) on 5 May 2006, the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union met at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa on 15 May to consider the report of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Professor Alpha Oumar Konare on the status of the implementation of the PSC decision of 10 March on the situation in Darfur and the conclusion of the Abuja

Peace talks.



Signing of the Darfur Peace Process was an important step in bringing peace and stability to the Darfur region

After listening to the Chairperson's report, the Council decided, among other things that the effective date for the commencement of the implementation of the DPA would be 18:00 GMT on 16 May 2006.

The agreement was signed by the Government of National Unity in Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Army/ Movement led by Mr. Minnawi.

AU RETREAT PROVIDES AFRICAN NEGOTIATORS AND STAKE HOLDERS OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP AN AFRICAN COMMON POSITION ON AFT

Given the fact that capacity building and supply-side constraints have been a major factor in the lack of competitiveness and the relatively poor trade and growth performance of Africa, the WTO Ministerial Conference decision on the Aid For Trade (AFT) represents an important development in the continent's quest for a development-oriented multilateral trading system. Experience under ACP-EU Lome Conventions and AGOA has shown that African countries will not be able to take full advantage of market access opportunities in the emerging multilateral trading system if the issues of trade capacity building and the removal of supply-side constraints are not effectively addressed. It was in recognition of this that the Commission of the African Union organized, with the financial and technical sup-

port of the UNDP, UNCTAD, UNIDO, and ILEAP, a Retreat on AFT for African Ambassadors and Stakeholders.

The objective of the Retreat, which was held in Montreux, Switzerland from 7-8 April 2006, was to provide African negotiators and stake holders an opportunity to develop an African common position on the AFT initiative with a view to ensuring the effective participation of African countries in the shaping of its architecture and contents.

The Retreat was attended by African Ambassadors and Experts based in Geneva and Brussels as well as by the representatives of the RECs Also in attendance were participants from continental and international organizations, including the UNDP, UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNECA, ITC, ILEAP and South Center. The Chair of the

Aid for Trade Task Force, Ambassador Mia Horn of Sweden, attended and addressed one of the Sessions of the Retreat. In her statement, she indicated that Africa is one of the major constituencies expected to play the role of a handmaiden in the process of the delivery of AFT that was still to be born.

Guided by background documents prepared by experts and resource persons, the Retreat deliberated extensively on the following issues:

- Supply-Side Constraints on the Trade Performance of African Countries;
- Evaluation of Current Multilateral Trade Capacity Building Programmes: JITAP and IF;
- and
- The new WTO Aid for Trade initiative.

NEW INVESTMENT INITIATIVE AIMS TO IMPROVE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT AND REDUCE POVERTY IN AFRICA

A new partnership aimed at restoring depleted fisheries and reducing poverty in Africa was launched in May by the African Union (AU), the World Bank, WWF – the Global Conservation Organization, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). The launch took place in the Kenyan capital Nairobi.

According to a press release issued by the four organisations, this partnership includes a commitment of US\$60 million from the Global Environment Facility which is to be matched 3-1 in funds from other donors



Fish already make a vital contribution to the food and nutritional security of millions of Africans

for a total of approximately US\$240 million over the next ten years. The new funding scheme is the first of its kind focussed on sustainable fisheries in the large marine ecosystems of Africa and will work to reduce poverty in coastal communities and curtail overfishing of marine resources.

The funding will be used to assist countries' efforts to better manage their marine fisheries

and improve the living conditions of fishing communities. Community-driven management programmes, monitoring, control and surveillance of fisheries, marine protected areas and developing alternative livelihoods to fishing are among the activities eligible for support through the fund.

The World Bank, FAO and WWF, through an extensive consultative process with stakeholders, have over the last two years designed the investment fund and promoted the partnership with the African Union and coastal countries that underpins it. The African Union will chair an advisory committee that includes regional fisheries management organizations and which will oversee the fund and partnership activities.

Fish already make a vital contribution to the food and nutritional security of 200 million Africans and provides income for over 10 million mostly small-scale fishers, farmers and entrepreneurs engaged in fish production, processing and trade. In addition, fish has become a leading export commodity for Africa, with an annual export value of US\$ 2.7bn. To maintain and further enhance the contribution of fisheries to food security and poverty reduction, the new Sustainable Fisheries Investment Fund will, over the next ten years, seek to restore depleted fisheries and significantly improve the livelihoods of coastal communities in Africa

"This Strategic Partnership will support African countries to improve the livelihoods of millions of Africans in the fisheries sector and contribute to the African Union's vision of 'an integrated, peaceful and prosperous Africa'", said Ms. Rosebud Kurwijila, the African Union's Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture.

Africa Environment Outlook for Youth Launched

The second Africa Environment Outlook (AEO) for Youth was launched at the eleventh session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment held in Brazzaville Congo, from 22-26 May 2006. The AEO highlights the value of the environmental assets of the continent and improves the ability to leverage funding for the protection and sustainable use of those assets.

According to a press release issued at the end of the conference, African Union Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture Mrs. Rosebud Kurwijila spoke to the youth. She said: "This AEO-for-Youth publication was commissioned by the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and produced by UNEP. It has re-packaged the main AEO report in a youth-friendly manner. This is a report on Africa's environment through the eyes of the African youth."

The President of AMCEN, Mr. Abdul-Hakim Rajab Elwaer affirmed: "African youth have joined their hands and spoken out in one voice. This voice captures youth perspectives on the state of the environment and shares youth prescriptions on environmental sustainability. Such unique perspectives should prompt action, not only from policy makers but also among the youth themselves".

"The voice of youth is an invaluable asset. In capturing this voice, this publication offers young people a roadmap for Africa's environmental journey towards sustainable development, concluded the Interim Officer Director of UNEP, Mr. Shafqat Kakakhel.

COMMITTEE OF EMINENT AFRICAN JURISTS ON THE HISSÈNE HABRÉ CASE MEET

The African Union Committee of Eminent African Jurists on the Hissène Habré case met at the AU Headquarters from 22 to 24 May 2006 to consider all aspects of the case and to submit a report and recommendations to the next Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in July 2006.

The Committee is composed of seven eminent African Jurists appointed by the Chairperson of the African Union in consultation with the Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union. The composition of the Committee takes into account geographical distribution, gender representation, integrity of the members and relevant competencies such as international criminal justice, public international law, human rights and international humanitarian law as well as relevant experience in high judicial office and in academia.

The Committee is mandated, in conformity with decision (Assembly/AU/Dec. 103 (VI)), of the Sixth Ordinary Session of the Assembly meeting in Khartoum, the Sudan in January 2006, to: "consider all aspects and implications of the Hissène Habré case as well as the options available for his trial, taking into account the following benchmarks:

a) Adherence to the princi-

- ples of total rejection of impunity;
- b) Adherence to international fair trial standards including the independence of the judiciary and impartiality of proceedings;
- c) Jurisdiction over the alleged crimes for which Mr. Habré should be tried;
- d) Efficiency in terms of cost and time of trial;
- e) Accessibility to the trial by alleged victims as well as witnesses;
- f) Priority for an African mechanism".



AU Legal Counsel: Mr. Ben Kioko

The Committee is also mandated to make concrete recommendations on "ways and means of dealing with issues of a similar nature in the future".

AU legal Counsel, Mr. Ben Kioko said the recommendations of the Committee will be addressed to and will have to be submitted to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government before they can be released to the public.

AFRICAN UNION CALLS FOR NOMINATIONS FOR TWO AWARDS

The African Union Commission has advertised for nominations for two prestigious awards; i.e. human rights defenders and children's champions in Africa. The awards are being run by the Departments of Political Affairs and Social Affairs respectively.

To be eligible for the human rights defenders award, a candidate should be an African individual, groups, associations, Non-Governmental Organisations, and/ or civil society organizations working toward the promotion and protection of human rights in Africa.

He or she should promote civil and political rights; socio-economic and cultural rights; women's rights; children's rights; labour rights; human rights education; human rights policy advocacy; humanitarian affairs; right to self determination or solidarity rights; minority, indigenous and environmental rights; right to development; peaceful resolution of conflicts; poverty alleviation, anti-corruption, foreign debt issues and economic development policies ; or be engaged in academic research on any of the above. The closing date for nominations is 10 June.

The African Union Award for Children's Champions in Africa will focus on programmes and activities that are transplanted beyond their immediate community. It will focus on children's champions who run programmes and activities

(Continued on page 10)

JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER VISITS AU COMMISSION

During a working visit on Monday, 1 May 2006, to the Headquarters of the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, the Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Junichiro Koizumi, held lengthy talks with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré. Subsequently, he met with the African Union Commission, before being received in an official session with members of the Diplomatic Corps and international organizations represented in Addis Ababa.

During the different stages of his visit, Mr. Koizumi underscored the crucial importance and depth of ties linking Japan and Africa. He stressed Japan's irreversible commitment to a lasting, multifaceted cooperation with Africa, as evidenced by the launching in 1993 of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), which is held every five years. He pointed out that TICAD was established at the end of the Cold War, and that it now has three crucial pillars: consolidation of peace, poverty reduction through economic growth and human centered development. The Prime Minister added that he declared last year to be the year of Africa and that Japan would double its official development assistance

to Africa in the next three years. With the goal of ensuring that the WTO Doha Development Agenda will truly benefit developing countries. Mr Koizumi said he introduced, in December last year, the Development Initiative for Trade to contribute to developing countries' trade promotion.



Japanese Prime Minister Mr. Junichiro Koizumi who was recently in Addis Ababa

The Japanese Prime Minister also called for the immediate implementation of the reform of the UN Security Council in order for Africa's voice to be heard therein. In conclusion, he reaffirmed his country's commitment to reinforce its cooperation with African countries confronted with the new challenges facing the international community

as a whole, such as environmental problems at global level and energy security.

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Alpha Oumar Konaré spoke about the exemplary cooperation between Japan and Africa. He stressed that it was thanks to Japan's support that Africa's presence was now felt in the G8. He thanked Mr. Koizumi for the deep confidence Japan continues to place in Africa, as attested by its renewal, through the present visit of the Prime Minister to the African Union, of its unfailing support.

Mr. Konaré made an urgent appeal to his guest for the continued support of Japan to the AU through its development programmes such as NEPAD, peacekeeping, poverty alleviation, post-conflict reconstruction, etc. He highlighted the importance of infrastructure without which there could be no development. Touching on the issue of the reform of the UN Security Council, President Konaré recalled that Africa has always supported Japan's position on the need to act immediately, in view of the advent of a new world order. He however added that Africa was relying on Japan to ensure that it received fair treatment in due course.

(Continued from page 9)

targeting children in isolated rural communities. The Award will also take account of children's champions who do outstanding research related to laws, policies and programmes on children and thereby secure their upliftment.

The African Union Award for Children's Champions in Africa will consist of a prize and a seal. The selection for the Award winner will be an integral part of the annual 16 June celebration of the Day of the African Child. The AU Commission, in collaboration with the African Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, will assume over-

all responsibility for the management and administration of the African Union Children's Champions Award. According to a notice from the Department of Social Affairs, the winner will be invited to the AU Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in July 2006 to receive the Award.

China Contributes \$400 000 to African Union Mission in Darfur

The African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) Darfur operations received a boost on 26 May, when the Chinese government donated \$400 000. The cheque was handed over to AU Commission Chairperson, Professor Alpha Oumar Konare by Mr. Zhang Yangwu, charge d'Af-faires and Interim of the Em-bassy of the Republic of China at a short ceremony at the AU Headquarters in Addis Ababa. Mr. Yangwu said his govern-ment will continue cooperating with the AU. He also thanked the AU for inviting China to partic-ipate in the forthcoming Ban-jul Heads of State and Govern-ment Summit.

Speaking at the same occasion, Chairperson Konare said it is important for the AU to assume leadership in the resolution of African conflicts. He hailed signing of the May 5 Darfur Peace Agreement as a great accom-plishment and confirmed that the UN will soon come in to help. AU will however continue to contribute because many of the soldiers will be African. He thanked the Chinese govern-ment for its continued support to AU and wished success for the China- African summit.

Mr. Konare said the AU still re-quires resources. In this re-spect, it will organize a confer-ence in Brussels in June to mo-bilize resources.



AUC CHAIRPERSON RECEIVES HONOR FROM ROTARY CLUB



Mr. Konare receiving the award from a representative of Rotary

On May 4, on the sidelines of the Abuja Special summit, African Union Chairperson, Professor Alpha Oumar Konare received a Cham-pion Award from Rotary Interna-tional for his work in the fight against polio on the African con-tinent.

A statement from Rotary said in 1994, together with Nigerian President Chief Oluse-gun Obasanjo, he co-ordinated the launch of the West and Central Africa Synchronized National Immunization days. He personally dispensed drops at the opening ceremony for the immunization ac-tivities, which reached over 80 million chil-dren under the age of 5 in 23 African coun-tries.

Professor Konare also strove to make sure that polio was on the agenda of the 2005 African Union Summit.

The award takes cognisance not just of Professor Konare's efforts as AUC Chairperson but also of the work he did during his tenure

as President of Mali, when he also served as the Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States and offi-cially launched the first ever regional synchronized polio immunization activities.

In accepting the award, Pro-fessor Konare said he would like to share the award with all men and women at the African Union Commission in par-ticular the Depart-ment of Social Af-fairs, under whose portfolio, the fight against polio falls.



A close up view of the award

In receiving the award, Professor Konare joins a group of other distinguished leaders whom Rotary

has honoured, including UN Secretary General Mr. Koffi Annan, Nigerian President Mr. Olusegun Odasanjo, Niger's President Mr. Mmamdou Tandja, Australian Prime Min-ister Mr. John Howard, Former US President Mr. Bill Clinton and the late World Health Or-ganisation Director General Mr J W Lee.

HOW THE AUC CELEBRATED AFRICA DAY



Some pictures from the reception hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Konare to celebrate Africa Day



KNOW YOUR AFRICAN UNION

Can you name the organs of the Africa Union?

1. The Assembly of Heads of State
2. The Executive Council
3. The Pan African Parliament
4. The Court of Justice
5. The Commission
6. The Permanent Representatives Committee
7. The Specialized Technical Committees

- The Committee on Rural Economy and Agriculture
- The Committee on Monetary and Financial Affairs
- The Committee Trade, Customs and Immigration Matters
- The Committee on Industry, Science and Technology, Energy, Natural Resources and Environment
- The Committee on Transport, Communications and Tourism
- The Committee on Health,

Labor and Social Affairs

- The Committee on Education, Culture and Human Resources
- 8. The Economic, Social and Cultural Council.**
- 9. The Peace and Security Council**
- 10. The Financial Institutions**
 - The African Central Bank;
 - The African Monetary Fund;
 - The African Investment Bank

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New Conference Center African Union HQ
PO Box 3243
Roosevelt Street
Old Airport Area
Addis Ababa Ethiopia
Tel: 251 11 5517700
Fax: 251 11 5511299

Staff announcements

On 7 May, the AU Commission sadly lost one of its employees, Mr. Elegbe John Timothy who was an Assistant Accountant within the Directorate of Programming, Budgeting, Finance and Accounting. He was 53. Our sincere condolences to his family and friends.

Chief Editor

Habiba Mejri– Cheikh
habibam@africa-union.org

Editor/ lay out and design

Wynne Musabayana
musabayanaw@africa-union.org

Photography:

Engda Wassie; AMIS

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