



## PRESS RELEASE N° 214 /2016

**AU-HOAI Convenes its 3<sup>rd</sup> Senior Officials Meeting to Address the Challenges of Human Trafficking and Smuggling of Migrants within and from the Horn of Africa**

**Sharm-El Sheikh, Egypt 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2016:** Ahead of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Ministerial Meeting of the African Union-Horn of Africa Initiative (AU-HOAI), Experts from the Core and Neighboring countries of AU-HOAI as well as partner governments and institutions converged in the Rixos - Sea Gate Resort in Sharm-El Sheikh, Egypt, for the Senior Official segment which kicked off Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2016 to discuss the challenges of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants within and from the Horn of Africa.

At his opening remarks, Dr. Olawale Maiyegun, Director of Social Affairs of the African Union Commission said “we have come a long way and have managed to convene a forum and dialogue among ourselves to discuss and implement concrete actions that take us to the next level in our fight against organized crime. We will be adopting an activity matrix to guide our activities”. “It is likely that the issues discussed will be considered at the Heads of State and Government at the Summit in Kigali”, he added.

Speaking earlier, Ambassador Hisham Badr, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt noted that the issue of migration occupies a prominent place in the relationship between developed and developing countries, due to its association with many political, economic and social aspects. Several factors, including poor economic conditions, push people to migrate from developing countries to developed countries in search of safety, security or a better future. However, the role of migration in achieving sustainable development has become threatened by negative effects ranging from human trafficking, exploitation of migrants and irregular migration, said the Ambassador.

On his part, Mr. Cosmas Chanda , UNHCR representative to the AU and ECA said the issue of migration and mixed migration flows remains of deep concern to UNHCR as a significant number of persons on the move through and from the Horn of Africa to Europe and Southern Africa are asylum seekers and refugees –persons of concern to UNHCR , deserving of international protection and durable solutions. He emphasized that the AU-HOAI remains an important step towards establishing and moving forward a comprehensive regional response to the challenges of human trafficking and smuggling of persons in the region.

Ms. Maureen Achieng, IOM representative to the AU/ IGAD /UNICA on her part said that the spirit of the inter-state partnership and collaboration that continues to characterize the AU-Horn of Africa Initiative has been a critical ingredient in bringing

together states with varied perspectives for frank dialogue with the end goal of agreeing to collective and cooperative approach to combating trafficking and smuggling network that sometimes seem to operate with great efficiency across national borders.

Over two days, the Experts will discuss challenges and opportunities around the AU-HOAI aimed at sustaining the momentum to galvanize action among the Member States in addressing the challenges of human trafficking and smuggling of migrants as well as irregular migration within and from the Horn of Africa. The Senior Officials Meeting will conclude tomorrow Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> , June and will submit its report to the Ministerial Conference which will be held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2016.

Formally established at the First Regional Ministerial Conference in Khartoum, Sudan in October 2014, the AU-HOAI is one of the flagship processes initiated by the African Union Commission to respond to this critical issue of human trafficking and people smuggling on the continent. The core countries of this initiative are Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan and Egypt and neighbouring countries are Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, and South Sudan.

***For more information please contact:***

**Philip Bob Jusu** / Migration Officer / Social Affairs Department | African Union Commission/  
E-mail: [jusup@africa-union.org](mailto:jusup@africa-union.org)/ Tel: **+251923297366**

**Dareen SAKR**/ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt/

E-mail: [mrt.mofa.eg@gmail.com](mailto:mrt.mofa.eg@gmail.com)

***Media contact:***

**Afrah Mohamed Thabit** / Communication Officer / African Union Commission/  
E-mail: [Thabitma@africa-union.org](mailto:Thabitma@africa-union.org)/ Directorate of Information and Communication / **Tel: +251 911 200922**

**For further information:**

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: [DIC@african-union.org](mailto:DIC@african-union.org) | Website: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int) | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

**Follow us**

Face book: <https://www.facebook.com/AfricanUnionCommission>

Twitter: [https://twitter.com/\\_AfricanUnion](https://twitter.com/_AfricanUnion)

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/AUCCommission>

Learn more at: <http://www.au.int>

**About the African Union**

The African Union spearheads Africa's development and integration in close collaboration with African Union Member States, the Regional Economic Communities and African citizens. AU Vision: to accelerate progress towards an integrated, prosperous and inclusive Africa, at peace with itself, playing a dynamic role in the continental and global arena, effectively driven by an accountable, efficient and responsive Commission.