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PRESS RELEASE

Commissioner Chergui receives UNAIDS Representative

Addis Ababa, 05 September 2014: The African Union (AU) Commissioner for Peace and Security, Amb. Smail Chergui, received today at AU Headquarters, the Representative to the AU and UNECA of the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), Ms Rosemary Museminali. The meeting offered both parties an opportunity to discuss a broad range of issues related to the promotion of a safe and healthy environment for all populations, especially in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Since February 2013, a draft Protocol on Integrating HIV interventions in AU Peace Support Operations has been developed collaboratively by the AU Department of Peace and Security, the Medical Support Services and the Medical Services Directorate. The draft Protocol is a support tool to the draft AU Health Support Manual which was produced by the Peace Support Operation Division (PSOD) of the Department of Peace and Security. The Manual is intended, *inter alia*, to serve as a reference guide for Troop Contributing Countries' Operational Health Planners, Force Medical Officers, Commanders and field personnel operatives, and to provide guidelines for planning AU peace support operations. Furthermore, the UNAIDS and the International Labour Organisation provided funds for a High-Level workshop held in October 2013, and technical support which included a Consultant.

Commissioner Chergui stated that the meeting was very timely and welcomed further technical discussions between the Department of Peace and Security and UNAIDS, to ensure that the draft Protocol is finalised and other relevant critical interventions implemented. He reiterated that the AU welcomes UNAIDS' approach of results-oriented cooperation to ensure integrated professional planning and management of healthcare interventions for deployed personnel in peace support operations.

On her part, the UNAIDS Representative thanked the Commissioner for the opportunity offered to her organisation, which is also working with the AU Department of Social Affairs, and expressed her commitment to close collaboration with the Commission in addressing HIV and AIDS in the context of peace support operations, through policy development and training.

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