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PRESS RELEASE

AU Executive Council endorses report of the 2nd African Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

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Nairobi, Kenya - The African Union (AU) Executive Council has endorsed the report of the second African Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). This was done at the 16th African Union Summit, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 25-31 January. The report includes the extended Programme of Action for the implementation of the Africa Strategy for DRR (2006-2015) and the recommendations of the second African Ministerial Declaration on DRR held in Nairobi in April 2010.

The overall goal of the extended Programme of Action (2006 to 2015) is a substantial reduction of the social, economic and environmental impacts of disasters on African people and economies, thereby facilitating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other development aims in Africa.

“The endorsement of the report of the second African Ministerial Conference on DRR is a great milestone and shows Africa’s political commitment for disaster risk reduction”. Said Pedro Basabe, Head, United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), Regional Office for Africa.

Commenting on the endorsement, Margareta Wahlström, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction, praised the move from words to action.

“The extended Programme of Action is a welcome sign that governments and regional cooperation mechanisms are moving concretely towards a common position – one that recognizes that we can mitigate and limit the effects of natural hazards through well thought out combinations of prevention, insurance, and sensible coping mechanisms. The tangible actions in support of this will save many lives.”

The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), in partnership with the AU, is currently working on the implementation of the extended Programme of Action and the recommendations of the Ministerial Declaration. To this end, the reactivation of the Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction is an inaugural step to coordinate actions and support implementation to member states jointly with the regional economic commissions and NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA), UNISDR, specialised entities and donors.