



**AFRICAN UNION PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES' COMMITTEE (PRC)
BRIEFING ON THE OUTBREAKS OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES OF 2016 IN
DIFFERENT PARTS OF AFRICA**

16th AUGUST 2016

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

**Opening Remarks by H.E Chimango Edward Chirwa
Ambassador of Malawi**

Excellences, Ambassadors, and the Esteemed Members of the PRC,
Regional Economic Community Representatives
Distinguished representatives from the UN and other International organizations,
Representatives from the African Union Commission
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you all in this briefing for the commemorating of the **African Humanitarian Week**. In commemoration of the week, this year we will focus on communicable diseases as a cause of humanitarian crisis facing our continent.

There is an increased recognition of the severe impact of epidemic diseases on socio-economic and political stability in Africa. The growing mobility of populations and commodities acts as a catalyst for the spread of diseases across borders. While the effect of the largest outbreak of Ebola in West Africa in 2014 still hits our minds, and other outbreaks of communicable diseases which continues to take down the lives of our people, we cannot remain quiet. Cognizant to the burden of diseases and epidemics, the Heads of State and Government stressed out the urgency of establishing a platform to help Member States address these challenges. Upon this wisdom and under African

Union Commission came Africa CDC, joining existing partners in such efforts including UNOCHA and WHO, who have joined hands together to prepare this briefing today.

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

Your presence here today demonstrates the commitment and concern we all share together in addressing these challenges and reduce the burden of communicable diseases, epidemics and disasters.

In this meeting we will receive technical briefing highlighting the current and near future situation of our continent regarding communicable diseases and outbreaks. We will also discuss on how to scale up existing response efforts from a broad range of stakeholders. This is therefore to urge you all to fully participate in the briefing and subsequent discussion to bring up ideas that will help achieve a safer and prosperous Africa.

I thank you.