



PRESS RELEASE N129/2011

AFRICAN UNION FLAG IS FLYING AT HALF MAST FOLLOWING DEATH OF COMMISSIONER ELIZABETH TANKEU



Addis Ababa, 17 October 2011 - The African Union Flag is today, 17 October 2011, flying at half mast at its Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, following the untimely death of Mrs. Elizabeth Tankeu, AU Commissioner for Trade and Industry, who passed away yesterday, 16 October 2011, at the age of 67, in a hospital in Paris, France, where she was evacuated about three months ago for medical treatment.

On this sad occasion, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Mr. Jean Ping, has addressed a message of condolences to the Government of the Republic of Cameroon, her country of origin, the family of the deceased and the entire African Union officials and staff.

Before her death, Mrs. Elizabeth Tankeu was serving a second term mandate in the African Union as Commissioner for Trade and Industry. In this capacity, she was responsible for the promotion of intra-African trade. She had also initiated preparation of the theme selected for forthcoming AU Summit which is : *"Boost Inter-African Trade"* as the theme of its January 2012 Summit. She was also responsible for issues related to the World Trade Organisation (WTO), trade negotiations and negotiation of Africa-EU Economic Partnership Agreements. She globally initiated and oversaw all appropriate measures aimed at encouraging African countries to develop common positions for multilateral trade negotiations as well as designed strategies to build the supply side capacity of African countries in both regional and international markets.

Mrs. Tankeu had a wide and varied expertise in many areas such as long-range planning, development policies (macroeconomic management, finance and sector-based policies), financial set up of socioeconomic infrastructure projects, cooperation for development, poverty reduction strategies, environmental and gender issues, with a highly relevant field experience in several African, American, Asian and European countries.

It is recalled that Mrs. Tankeu was first elected to the post of Commissioner for Trade and Industry of the African Union during the Second Ordinary Session of the African Union Assembly held in Maputo in July 2003, for a four-year mandate. She was re-elected in January 2008 during the 10th Ordinary Session of the AU Heads of State Summit held in Addis Ababa.

Before joining the African Union Commission, Mrs. Tankeu had a rich professional career which culminated in her appointment as Cameroon Minister of Planning and Regional Development in charge of International Cooperation, after serving in the same Ministry as a Director of Strategic Plan.