

## **AU commits itself to the fight against child and maternal mortality**



ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia, May 1, 2009/African Press Organization (APO)/ — African Union (AU) Ministers of Health will from 4-8 May 2009, meet within the framework of the Fourth Session of the AU Conference of Ministers of Health, scheduled to take place at the headquarters of the AU in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, under the theme : “Universal Access to Quality Health Services: Improve Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health”.

The ministerial meeting will be preceded by an Expert meeting grouping African experts in the domain of health, scheduled to take place from 4 to 6 May 2009.

The meeting will discuss health related issues and neonatal issues amongst other things. The experts will brainstorm on ways of eradicating poliomyelitis as well as facilitation of drugs accessibility especially for persons living with HIV/AIDs, tuberculoses, and malaria.

Issues related to the resistance of tuberculosis drugs and treatment as well as progress made in the elaboration of strategies to eradicate malaria, will equally be discussed during the meeting. The experts will also consider the financing of the health sector in Africa.

Meanwhile, the Department of Social Affairs of the African Union will officially launch a campaign on the eradication of maternal and child mortality in Africa, dubbed, (CARMMA).

500.000 women are dying every year in the world while giving birth to babies. The majority of these women are Africans.

According to the Department of Social Affairs, if no action is taken in the next decade, 2.5 million women will die as a result of maternal mortality and almost same numbers will die as a result of child mortality. To that effect, 49 million women will suffer of a post-partum handicap if there is no solution to the problem.

SOURCE: African Union Commission (AUC)