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### AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION LAUNCH PATTEC POSTAGE STAMP FOR THE CAMPAIGN ON ERADICATION OF TSETSE AND TRYPANOSOMIASIS



**Addis Ababa, 21 July 2009-** “The eradication of tsetse and trypanosomiasis from Sub Saharan Africa is moving in the right direction, but we need to enhance the pace”. Mrs. Rhoda Peace Tumusiime, Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture of the African Union Commission, was speaking while launching the Postage Stamps of the Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign (PATTEC) today, Tuesday, 21 July 2009, at the headquarters of the AU in Addis Ababa Ethiopia.

Commissioner Tumusiime hailed the launching of the PATTEC Commemorative Postage Stamps as a historic occasion, “first of its kind in any Pan African advocacy work aimed at ridding the continent of tsetse and trypanosomiasis”. The Commissioner reiterated the success story of Botswana and Namibia as testimony of a success story that could be emulated within the framework of the campaign against tsetse.

During the ceremony, some advertisement and information material highlighting the commitment of some African countries in the eradication of tsetse fly were presented. In this regard, the Commissioner underscored the need to intensify collective commitment to achieve the objectives set out in the decision adopted by the Summit of the African Heads of State and Government to eradicate tsetse and trypanosomiasis from Africa within the shortest possible time. She commended the effort of the Ethiopian government in this campaign which is intended to free Africa from the problems of tsetse fly.

(See the complete speech of Commissioner Tumusiime, on the website of the African Union Commission: [www.africa-union.org](http://www.africa-union.org) )

Mr. Levi Uche Madueke, Assistant PATTEC Coordinator in his speech explained that, a comprehensive and strategic information dissemination activities are being undertaken by PATTEC to accelerate the eradication process of the tsetse fly and the disease transmitted by this fly, underscoring that this disease still remains unknown to many people, and has become a major constraint for rural development in Sub Saharan Africa given that close to 50, 000 people and 3 million cattle die every year due to lack of

vaccine and drugs. (See the complete speech of Mr. Uche, on the website of the African Union Commission: [www.africa-union.org](http://www.africa-union.org) )

Mr. Gidey Gebre Yohannes, Representative of Ethiopian Minister of Transport and Communication, on his part, underlined the effort and commitment of the Ethiopian Postal Service Agency to create awareness and sensitize the African population as well as governments and the entire world on the need to work together in fighting the disease. (See the complete speech of Mr. Gidey, on the website of the African Union Commission: [www.africa-union.org](http://www.africa-union.org) )

According to one official of the AU PATTEC Coordination Office, stamps are very powerful tools in promoting and advocating the cause of any event at national and international levels. The African Union PATTEC Coordination Office is using various means of promoting the objective of the PATTEC initiatives. Within this context and at the request of the AU Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture, the Ethiopian Ministry of Transport and Communication has been cooperative in issuing the New Stamps. The New Ethiopian PATTEC stamps will be used as a role model for other African countries to produce similar stamps.

Worth recalling, that three Countries have already declared freedom from Tsetse flies. They are: Zanzibar (Tanzania), Botswana, Namibia More Countries are now engaged in large scale operations to fight Tsetse flies in their Countries. Angola and Zambia are mobilizing their own local resource in using large scale aerial spraying technology for the eradication of The Flies. Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali and Uganda have taken long term soft Loans from the African Development Bank to the tune of USD 75 Million. More Countries are now finalizing their PATTEC Strategies and PATTEC Project documents and are looking for Resources to join the Pan African programme.