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Dakar, Senegal, 20 March, 2017 (ECA) – The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) will this week launch important reports at the second Africa Development Week that begins here March 23 ending March 28, 2017.

Apart from the flagship Economic Report on Africa 2017 and the second generation of Country Profiles focusing on 21 nations, the ECA will launch the Africa scorecard on domestic financing for health and the human rights impact assessment of the continental free trade area in Africa (CFTA).

The Africa scorecard on domestic financing for health will be launched on Saturday 25 March in conjunction with the World Health Organization (WHO). The two UN entities will during the Conference of Ministers host a side event of Africa's health and finance ministers to promote dialogue on health financing and social protection for universal health coverage.

As a prelude to the ministerial meeting, the side event will include a presentation of a technical report prepared by the ECA and the WHO with discussion panels comprising selected ministers of health and financing and key development partners in the region being held.

Presentations will be made by experts on key issues related to financing for health systems and programs. Following the plenary sessions and discussions on the presentations, participants will work together to come up with recommendations of key actions related to health financing for ministers of finance in the region.

On the same day, the ECA, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung organization will launch the human rights impact assessment of the continental free trade area in Africa (CFTA) report.

The organizations have conducted an assessment of the potential impacts of the CFTA in three key policy areas; food security, decent livelihoods and employment based on forecasts.

The assessment provides recommendations on how to ensure the CFTA advances and upholds these normative outcomes, taking into account the policy frameworks for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063.

ECA's Regional Integration and Trade Division Director, Stephen Karingi, said the side event, which will include a presentation of the findings of the assessment and recommendations with regard to CFTA, is timely because, among other things, the topic of the event complements the theme of the 2017 Conference of Ministers, which focuses on employment and inequality.

“Most importantly, the CFTA negotiations are expected to be completed by the end of 2017 so the discussions and launch are timely as CFTA negotiations continue,” said Mr. Karingi.

One of ECA's partners, the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), will launch the Africa Capacity Report 2017 which shows that capacity in its various dimensions, though improving, remains a problem for African economies generally

For example, the report notes that though two-thirds of African countries have STI policies and strategies, their capacity to implement them remains very low.

A side event will be held to discuss the report and managing and coordination large scale infrastructure projects for development. This will be in conjunction with the ECA and the African Union Commission.

Crucial discussions will also be held in side events hosted by the ECA and its partners on industrialization and infrastructure and the role of cities in ending the AIDS epidemic in Africa.

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