

## Experts call for acceleration of civil registration and vital statistics ahead of Ministerial conference

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Durban, 3 September, 2012 (ECA) – Experts have called for the acceleration of civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) as it has an impact on Africa's development and good governance. The call was made this week at a meeting preceding the second Conference of African Ministers responsible for civil registration and vital statistics. The 3-5 September meeting aims to provide a comprehensive analytical framework and a roadmap that will inform the recommendations for the Ministers to ratify.

According to Dimitri Sanga, Director African Center for Statistics at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), The Ministerial Conference will be held on 6-7 September marks an important juncture in the efforts needed to address the challenges caused by the absence of reliable vital events data such as births, deaths, marriage and divorce. The conference is coordinated by the ECA, the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Development Bank, and hosted by the Government of South Africa.

Approximately 400 participants, including African ministers responsible for civil registration are expected to attend.

Addressing participants in the opening session, Mr. Sanga, stressed the importance of addressing issues related to CRVS at the national level. These, he said, include identifying the key challenges as well as recommending and implementing solutions at the national level in each respective country.

Mr. René N'Guettia Kouassi, Director of Economic Affairs at African Union Commission (AUC) stated that a good registration system in countries is an indication of good governance and proper management of public affairs and that "Africa cannot expect to realize full progress if the process of civil registration and vital statistics is not exercised to the highest standards."

Ms Fatima Chohan, Deputy Minister of Home Affairs of the Republic of South Africa, underlined that CRVS is the key that enables Africa to tackle the economic challenges of the 21st century and become the engine that drives the world economy back on to its feet. "If Africa is to establish adequate systems of democracy and free and fair elections, civil registration and vital statistics are crucial," she said.

In his opening remarks, Charles Leyeka Lufumpa, Director of Statistics Department of the African Development Bank, (AfDB) expressed the Bank's commitment to play a key role in providing the necessary financial and technical support for improving statistics in African countries, including civil registration and vital statistics.

He noted that the Bank's support for CRVS is in line with the Busan Action Plan for Statistics that was adopted by the international community in December 2011 to guide statistical development over the next decade.

"In the context of the Busan Action Plan, the Bank is providing support to African countries and regional economic institutions to provide the latest information and communications technologies available to enhance data management and dissemination through the installation of data portals and open data systems," he said.

To facilitate the coordination and management of knowledge exchange on CRVS, a community of practice and a knowledge sharing platform (<http://crvs.africa-devnet.org>) has been established for this purpose. Through this platform, experts and ministers responsible for CRVS will continue to generate knowledge in collaboration, follow up on implementation of recommendations, as well as share lessons learned, conference materials and best practices of member states on civil registration and vital statistics during and after the conference.

[2<sup>nd</sup> Conference of African Ministers Responsible for Civil Registration](#)

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