

African Union Summit



What you need to know about the UN at the AU Summit

From Thursday 21 January to Sunday 31 January 2016, the African Union Commission (AUC) in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, will host the 26th AU Summit, under the theme: "2016: African Year of Human Rights with a particular focus on the Rights of Women".



When do AU Summits take place?

The African Union Ordinary Summit is the gathering of all key policy organs of the AU. Two ordinary Summits are held every year, one in January in Addis Ababa and one in June in another African capital. Each Summit consist of three two-day meetings that always take place in the same sequence. There are usually 1 or 2 days breaks between these meetings. The Permanent Representative Committee (PRC, composed of Ambassadors), the Executive Council (comprising Ministers of Foreign Affairs) and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government.

Who participates in the AU Summit?

The Summit brings together policy making Organs of the Union, representatives from the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), the Private Sector, the Diaspora, Partner Organizations, International media and dignitaries. The United Nations actively participates through the Secretariat and its many funds, programmes and agencies. Here is what to expect.

Who from the UN is participating?

The Secretary-General will lead a delegation to the AU Annual Assembly, comprising senior advisers, experts and support staff from UNHQ, Political and Peacekeeping missions, and those Departments and agencies whose work is related to Peace and Security issues on the African continent. Other UN specialized agencies will also participate.

What is the UN's Role at the Summit?

At the leadership level, the UN SG will deliver a speech on the theme of the year and emphasize UN and AU efforts to address conflict on the continent. He will engage with Heads of State to discuss and promote peace and security among other issues. The Principals will attend the Heads of State meeting of the Peace and Security Council, hold bilateral meetings with several ministers of Foreign Affairs and partners. They will specifically attend the following side events: the meeting of the Guarantors of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework Agreement on the DRC and the Region; the Meeting of the Special Envoys on the Sahel; the meeting of the International Contact Group on Libya. On Sudan and South Sudan issues, UN Senior advisers will attend both the Meeting of the High Level Ad Hoc Committee on South Sudan as well as the Open Session of the Peace and Security Council at the level of Heads of State and Government on the situation in South Sudan. The UN-AU Joint Task force meeting will take place immediately following the Summit. UN Senior advisors will finally attend both the Open Session of the Peace and Security Council at the level of Heads of State and Government on efforts of the AU against Terrorism, and the Donor Conference on the Multinational Joint Task Force (MNJTF) against Boko Haram.

What will be discussed at the AU Summit?

The 26th AU Summit will officially start with the 31th Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) on Monday 21 January 2016. The PRC will discuss items on its agenda and prepare appropriate recommendations for consideration by the Executive Council before submission to the Assembly of the Union for adoption. For three days, the Ambassadors will consider the reports of the various activities of their sub-committees. They will also exchange views on the draft agenda as well as the draft Decisions and Declarations of the 28th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council, and those of the 26th AU Summit, before adopting their report. The meeting of the PRC will officially end on Saturday 23 January 2016.

The 28th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council will take place on 27 and 28 January 2016. This will be preceded by a Ministerial retreat of the Executive Council scheduled to take place on 25 January 2016 in Mekele, Ethiopia. In closed session the Ministers will deliberate on agenda items including consideration of the report of the Permanent Representatives' Committee (PRC); the 2015 Annual Report of the Chairperson of the Commission, the revised AUC budget for the 2016 Financial Year, and other reports such as the follow up Committee on Agenda 2063 and the report of the Ministerial Committee on Elections of the Members of the Commission in June/July 2016. The Executive Council will notably be electing and appointing all fifteen (15) members of the Peace and Security Council for mandates of 2 and 3 years.

The 26th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union is scheduled to take place on 30 and 31 January 2016. The first part of the Summit will be dedicated to the election of the New Chairperson of the African Union for the year 2016, who will take over from the AU Chairperson for 2015, H.E Mr. Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe. The Summit will then launch of the theme "*2016: African Year of Human Rights with a particular focus on the Rights of Women*",