

## **Africa and China commit to deepen cooperation for public healthcare**

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### **For strengthening disease diagnosis, workforce development in Africa**

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and the China Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (China CDC) leadership have committed to enhance their collaboration in advancing public health in Africa.

The commitment was made during a visit by Dr Shen Hongbing, the Director General of the China CDC along with Ambassador Hu Changchun, the Head of China Mission to the African Union. Both parties have expressed their commitment to strengthening disease diagnosis, infectious disease, workforce development, outbreak response, surveillance and early warning in Africa.

The visit presented a timely opportunity to unveil the state-of-the-art Reference Laboratory at Africa CDC Office buildings constructed through the support of the People's Republic of China.

The Laboratory facility which has two biosafety level (BSL)-I, four BSL-II, two specialised BSL-II (BSL-II plus) and two high containment laboratories (BSL-III) aims to address significant gaps in laboratory systems in Africa. Currently, less than 5% of African laboratories possess fully developed and sustainable capacity for diagnosing the priority diseases within their countries, properly transporting specimens, and adhering to international standards and regulatory requirements.

The Africa CDC Reference Laboratory named after Chinese Scientist Dr Wu Lien-teh, who is a pioneer of modern medicine in China, is fully equipped and will promote collaboration on capacity building of Member States to have strong laboratory systems and networks to improve clinical care, support surveillance and outbreak response and facilitate technology transfer to African institutions.