



AU appoints Olusegun Obasanjo as High Rep. for the HoA

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By **Neamin Ashenafi**

The Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union (AU), Moussa Faki Mahamat, appointed former President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo as AU's High Representative for the Horn of Africa (HoA) region.

According to the statement from the bureau of the Chairperson, the decision to appoint a higher representative to the HoA region is part of the AU's drive to promote peace, security, stability and political dialogue all over the HoA region.

Specifically, the High Representative will intensify engagements with all relevant political actors and stakeholders in the region towards entrenching durable peace and stability within the HoA, the statement states.

Olusegun Obasanjo has served Nigeria for two successive terms from 1976-1979 and 1999-2007. He became the Nigerian Head of State for the first time in February 1976 following the assassination of Murtala Ramat Mohammed (Gen.). Until then, he served as Federal Commissioner for Work and Housing in Murtala's military government.

The appointment of the former Nigerian President as a high representative is the third appointment made recently. It can be recalled that the US President Joe Biden on April 23, 2021 appointed the seasoned diplomat Jeffrey Feltman to serve as the U.S. Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa.

The appointment of Feltman, apart from strengthening the multilateral diplomatic relations between the US and the countries in the wider horn region, seeks to give attention to the volatile situation in Ethiopia, including the conflict in Tigray, escalating tensions between Ethiopia and Sudan, and the dispute around the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

Similarly, Annette Weber, a German national with over 25 years of experience in the region, was also appointed as the European Union Special Representative (EUSR) for the Horn of Africa from July 1, 2021 until August 30, 2022. She has an established track record of advising the UN, the EU and the German government on the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea region. She is also a speaker at the Munich Security Conference on regional issues.

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