The 2nd International Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA 2022), which is being held in Kigali, Rwanda, at the Kigali Convention Centre has kicked off today with African Heads of State, ministers of health, and leading researchers and scientists scheduled to give remarks during three days of official sessions.

The conference, which is taking place from 13-15 December, is now in its second edition and aims to build on conversations started at CPHIA 2021, helping to serve as a catalyst for accelerating progress against the continent's most significant health challenges and building more resilient health systems.

CPHIA 2022, hosted by the AU and Africa CDC in partnership with the Government of Rwanda, will include remarks from several distinguished speakers including Rt. Hon. Édouard Ngirente Prime Minister of the Republic of Rwanda, Hon. Dr. Yvan Butera, State Minister of Health, Rwanda, Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus Director-General at the World Health Organization (WHO), Professor Agnes Binagwaho, CPHIA 2022 Co-chair, Prof. Senait Fisseha, CPHIA 2022 Co-Chair and Dr.

Speaking about the conference, Ahmed Ogwell Ouma, Acting Director of the Africa CDC has said, "There has been an incredible amount of interest in CPHIA 2022 from across Africa and around the world. It is clear this conference is needed now more than ever,"

Professor Senait Fisseha, CPHIA 2022 Co-Chair and Vice President at The Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation notes that last year's virtual conference, CPHIA 2021, was a tremendous success and this year's convening we're excited to build on that for the second edition.

"We hope to continue using this extraordinary conference as a platform to elevate and advance African voices and solutions for years to come." Said Professor Senait.

CPHIA 2022 will feature nine plenary sessions, 14 parallel sessions, 9 abstract-driven sessions, a high-level ministerial session and opening and closing ceremonies.

There will also be more than 50 official in-person side events in Kigali beginning on 12 December, plus an additional 10 side events held virtually.

"This conference brings essential conversations about Africa to Africa – conversations on topics like pandemic preparedness, increasing local vaccine

production, tackling infectious and non-communicable diseases and African leadership in health,”

Professor Agnes Binagwaho, CPHIA 2022 Co-chair points out “We are grateful to the Africa CDC and our CPHIA 2022 co-hosts the Rwandan Government for bringing us together this year and driving progress toward the Africa We Want.”

The conference is coming at a critical time when many African countries continue to feel the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which not only exerted enormous pressure on health systems but also sounded the alarm on the need to reform and revitalize the continent’s health system.

Additionally, the witnessed emergence and re-emergence of infectious disease outbreaks such as Ebola and the growing burden of Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) further pose a grave threat to the health and lives of millions in Africa.

“It’s time that countries should collectively invest in stronger health system governance, including multisectoral collaboration within countries,” said Dr Ahmed Ouma, Ag. Director, Africa CDC.

“Africa CDC has presented its vision of a New Public Health Order, which aims to ensure that effective health systems exist before a crisis and remain resilient during and post-crisis. CPHIA 2022 will shine a spotlight on this new approach to public health shaped by local leadership and regional solutions.” He adds.

Dr Sabin Nsanzimana, Minister of Health, Rwanda also noted that recurrent outbreaks highlight gaps in our health systems.

“CPHIA 2022 is a great opportunity to come together as leaders in the public health sector and discuss building more resilient systems that will allow our countries to better respond to emerging health threats while continuing to address long-standing infectious and non communicable diseases,” he added.

Other leaders expected to participate in the conference include Prof Salim Abdool Karim, Director, Center for the AIDS Program of Research in South Africa (CAPRISA), Madam

Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director, UNAIDS, Cheikh Oumar Seydi, Director, Africa, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Prof Claude Mambo Muvunyi, Director General for Rwanda Biomedical Centre (RBC) and Dr Monique Wasunna, Director,

Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative, Africa Regional Office, among many others.