

AFRICAN UNION

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Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: 00 251 11 551 7700 Fax: 00 251 11 551 7844  
Website: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int) [www.africa-youth.org](http://www.africa-youth.org)

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**AFRICA DAY CELEBRATIONS**  
**AFRICAN UNION HEADQUARTERS,**  
**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**  
**25 MAY 2017**

**CONCEPT NOTE**

## **BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

On 25 May 1963, Africa made history with the foundation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) which brought the Continent together. Since then, the 25 May has been celebrated widely across the world particularly in Africa to signify Africa's identity and unity.

Africa is on the march towards a more prosperous future in which all its citizens, young, old, male, female, rural, urban, of all creeds and backgrounds are empowered to realize their full potential, live with satisfaction and pride about their continent. A future with healthy, well educated people living in robust and developed economies. Indeed, this is a progressive march towards the "Africa we want" as envisioned in Agenda 2063.

The African union (AU) is now in full swing driving Agenda 2063 to realize the African people's aspirations. Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063 particularly talks of "*an Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African People, especially its women, youth and caring for children*".

## **INTRODUCTION**

To effectively implement the Africa Union Assembly Decision (Assembly/AU/Dec.601 (XXVI) of January 2016 to devote the theme of the year 2017 to "Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through investments in Youth", Africa Day presents a unique opportunity to discuss and reflect while celebrating important milestones on youth development across the continent.

The central importance of the demographic dividend to Africa's transformative development has been repeatedly acknowledged by African leaders at the highest level and in key ministerial platforms. Over the last ten years, it has become evident that a demographic dividend lens offers a strategic basis for focusing and prioritizing investments in people in general and the youth in particular, in order to achieve sustainable development, inclusive economic growth, and to build "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, which is driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena".

If the theme of the year is to be successfully realized, it is imperative that platforms of national authorship and ownership be speedily established to enable a cross session of

ordinary Africans to connect with what is at present an abstract concept restricted to the ivory tower of the political elite, bureaucrats and academics.

Against this background, the Africa Day is a golden opportunity to promote the theme of the year all over Africa and the Diaspora. The African Union Commission is therefore calling on all AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities, United Nations Agencies, Africans all over the world and the Diasporas. The day will be celebrated at the African Union Commission Headquarters on the 25 May 2017 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, across Africa and worldwide to commemorate and celebrate Africa Day.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. Celebrate Africa Day.
2. Create, maintain and increase awareness for the public at large on:
  - The African Union Agenda 2063;
  - The theme of the year “Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through investments in Youth”;
  - On youth programmes within the African Union Commission.
3. Create African Unity through activities.

### **PARTICIPANTS**

- AU Member States;
- AU Commission Staff;
- All institutions represented in AUC;
- Partners : Non-African Countries and International Organizations;
- Civil Societies representing Youth and Gender;
- Civil Society Organizations;
- Students from International schools;
- Self-Sponsored from abroad.