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DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

## PRESS RELEASE N°04/ 27<sup>th</sup> AU SUMMIT

**Unity and market liberalization will spur African economic growth- Chairperson Dlamini Zuma**



**Kigali, 10 July 2016** - Opening up the market for Africa, liberalization of the economies and facilitating free movement of people across the continent are among the identified factors that will drive continent's economic growth and development.

H.E Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma the Chairperson of the African Union Commission while addressing the 32<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Session of the Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) of the African Union observed that it was imperative for countries to cooperate and open up the market.

“The world is moving towards mega trading blocks, that all exclude us, and the Doha development round of negotiations have failed to even start. Unless we unite to form our African common market, the little bit of preferential trade we have at the moment, will be

further eroded,” she said while addressing the session as the African Union summit kicked off at the level of the PRC in the Kigali Convention Center (KCC), Rwanda.



The AUC Chairperson mentioned that business operators, farmers, and entrepreneurs are still hungry of the free market and this has created a negative impact on the continent’s economic growth since competing at international market is still a challenge.

“If we continue building momentum on the continental free movement of people and on the Continental Free Trade Area it will create better conditions for our traders, farmers, business, entrepreneurs and innovators to invest trade with each other and

build Pan African companies and brand,” she further noted.

The AUC Chairperson’s opinion comes in as a strong backing to the yet to be launched African Union (AU) Passport that will create a favorable condition for free movement of African people within the continent.

This flagship project, first agreed upon in 2014, falls squarely within the framework of Africa’s Agenda 2063 and has the specific aim of facilitating free movement of persons, goods, and services around the continent - in order to foster intra-Africa trade, integration, and socio-economic development.

Rwanda continues to be on the forefront of facilitating the movement of people across the continent. In fact, Rwanda has taken a lead in ensuring easing Intra-Africa travel by relaxing visa restrictions. The travelers access the travel visas at the entry point and this has led the country to be on the right track to achieve the dream of visa-free travel for African citizens within their own continent by 2020.

Amb. Jeannine Kambanda, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation while giving her opening remarks, mentioned that Summit ponders a huge opportunity to popularize the African Union and its agenda 2063 among member states.

She observed that, by the time the AU Summit ends on 18th July, the understanding of the majority of Rwandans about the African Union will completely be different adding that they will have a deeper knowledge of the African Union and its member states.

Amb Kambanda observed that it was vital for African countries to embark on women empowerment and working together as a tool to foster African democratization.

“I, therefore, stand before you as one of the many proud Rwandan women today who have been given the opportunity to serve their country in a leadership capacity. Thanks



to the Leadership of President Paul Kagame for putting woman rights at the center in all we do in Rwanda,”she said.

She added “Human Rights, especially the Rights of women will remain central as we implement Africa’s Agenda 2063 and that is why I believe you choose this theme.”

Journalists wishing to interview the leadership of the AU Commission during the Summit should submit their requests to Mrs Esther Azaa Tankou, Ag. Director of Information and Communication of the AUC, via E-mail: [YambouE@africa-union.org](mailto:YambouE@africa-union.org) / [esthertankou@yahoo.com](mailto:esthertankou@yahoo.com)

#### **Hashtags**

#27thAUSummit

#AUKigali2016

#AUProject2016

#WomenRights

#Agenda2063 / #MyAfrica

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