



DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

PRESS RELEASE N°15/28th AU SUMMIT

The African Union, Mauritius and The African Union Foundation sign a Host Country Agreement for the Inaugural African Economic Platform

Addis Ababa, 31st January 2017: The Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Mr. Erastus Mwencha signed a Host Country Agreement between the African Union Commission (AUC) The Republic of Mauritius, and The African Union Foundation (AUF) for the organisation of the inaugural African Economic Platform.



The host country Mauritius was represented by The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Hon. Seetanah Lutchmeenaraidoo and the AUF was represented Dr. Amany Asfour, Council Member of AUF and President of the Egyptian Business Women Association.

The inaugural African Economic Platform, is scheduled to take place in Port Louis from March 20-22 2017, and will institutionalise a new annual platform for African leaders and create an avenue for dialogue amongst a range of sectors, including the African political leadership, business leaders in the private sector and intellectuals. The Platform will bring together heads of state, business leaders, academics and young Africans to discuss the development of Africa as set out in Agenda 2063. Some of the key themes that will be tackled during the platform are industrialisation, intra-African trade, skills development as well as free movement of people and goods in the continent.

In her welcome remarks during the 28th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma said the African Economic Platform will allow governments to engage the business and academic sectors to close the gap between industry and education systems and that the strengthening of links between all sectors will help to eradicate the skills mismatch, stop graduate unemployment and address the shortages of engineers, agricultural scientists, biologists, geologists, and a host of other skills.

The Deputy Chairperson has been at the forefront of the organisation of the inaugural African Economic Platform. In February 2016, he concluded a three-day official mission to Mauritius and later led a delegation to Botswana in November, where he delivered a keynote speech at the World Federation of Development Finance Institution CEO's Forum further emphasising the importance of this platform.

During the signing ceremony, the Deputy Chairperson thanked the Mauritian government for its commitment to the continent's economic reform by hosting an initiative that is driven by Africans and will provide the policy space for Africans across all sectors to set their own agenda and further promote Africa's integration and development.

Hon Seetanah Lutchmeenaraidoo, said the signing ceremony marked the beginning of a journey towards the implementation of the process of industrialisation and economic transformation as reflected in both Africa's Agenda 2063– The Africa We Want and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. He noted that one of the core objectives of the Platform will be to work towards mobilizing appropriate resources by promoting ease of doing business in Africa, increasing investment attractiveness of the continent and facilitating the implementation of strategies for economic diversification and industrialization. He further extended a warm welcome to all participants who will be attending the inaugural African Economic Platform in March 2017.

Speaking on behalf of the AU Foundation, Dr. Amany Asfour said Africa has a great potential to be the richest continent in the world and that the AU Foundation's role is to transform Africa through innovation by youth and women as part of Agenda 2063 which seeks to attain a powerful and all inclusive Africa. She said the African Economic Platform will prove that Africa has domestic funding and is able to transform African projects without relying on international donations.

For any enquiries:

Ms. Aurelia Mbokazi am@africaunion.org or visit www.africaneconomicplatform.com or <https://au.int/web/en/newsevents/31853/2017-african-economic-platform-mauritius>

For further information:

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: DIC@african-union.org
| Web Site: www.au.int | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

Follow us

Face book: <https://www.facebook.com/AfricanUnionCommission>

Twitter: https://twitter.com/_AfricanUnion

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/AUCommission>