

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: +251 11 551 7700 / +251 11 518 25 58/  
Ext 2558

Website: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int)

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

**Press Release: 260/2015**

## **AU Commission Chairperson meets with President Raúl Castro; wraps off fruitful official to Cuba**

**Havana, Cuba – 4 October 2015:** The African Union Commission (AUC) Chairperson, Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, met with H.E. Raúl Castro, the President of Cuba on Friday 2 October 2015, in Havana, Cuba, during the second lap of her official visits to The Bahamas and Cuba. The AU Commission Chairperson, accompanied by AU Commissioner for Social Affairs, Dr. Mustapha Sidiki Kaloko discussed issues related to deepening collaboration, cooperation and solidarity between the African Union and Cuba.

The AU Commission Chairperson took the opportunity to reiterate Africa's gratitude to Cuba for her continuous support, particularly in the fight against colonialism, apartheid, Ebola and in the training of medical doctors. The Chairperson of the Commission said the recent deployment of 250 Cuban medical doctors to fight against the Ebola Virus Disease in West Africa exemplified the fraternal relationship between Africa and Cuba.

Dr. Dlamini Zuma and President Castro also exchanged on the embargo and the on-going process to normalise relationship between Cuba and the United States of America. The role of the African Union in calling for the lifting of the embargo on Cuba and the release of the Cuban five was equally greatly appreciated. While supporting Presidents Raúl Castro and Barack Obama in the process, Africa will to campaign for the lifting of the sanctions on Cuba.

One of the highlights of the visit was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the AU Commission Chairperson and Cuba's Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs. The main objective of the MoU is to strengthen the solidarity and cooperation in the areas of education and skills training particularly in the areas of health, women empowerment, arts and culture as well as on critical international issues.

These are critical areas of importance, it was emphasised, as Africa begins implementing its Agenda 2063, which the Chairperson presented throughout the visit, which went through 30 September to 4 October 2015.

She held meetings with various State and non-State officials and groups, including: the President of the National Assembly, the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Commerce and Industry, the Secretary General of the Cuban Women's Federation, African Ambassadors Group and members of the Diplomatic Corps.

Visiting the Pedro Kouri Institute for Tropical Medicine, she also met with some of the medical doctors who were deployed to Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone to fight Ebola. She also had very dynamic and fruitful engagements with African students at the Latin American School of Medicine, the Cuban children's theatre and National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba.

She also visited a Memorial Park of Illustrious African, a first of its kind outside the African continent, as well as the Memorial Park of one of Cuba's revolution's hero, Jose Marti, where she paid tribute and placed wreaths.

Exchange visits between Africa and Cuba will ensue as programmes, projects and initiatives as undertaken to unpack the MoU and deepen the relationship.

**Media Queries contact:**

**Jacob Enoh Eben**, Spokesperson of the Chairperson, African Union Commission; +1 202 751 8517; +251 911 201 632, +251 934 996 893; E-mail [EnohebenJ@africa-union.org](mailto:EnohebenJ@africa-union.org)