OPENING STATEMENT DELIVERED BY

H.E. Mr. JEAN LEON NGANDU

CHAIR OF THE AU PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE

CO-CHAIR OF THE SENIOR OFFICIALS’ MEETING

AT THE JOINT TURKEY – AFRICA SENIOR OFFICIALS’ MEETING.

16 DECEMBER 2021

ISTANBUL, TURKEY
Your Excellency, Amb. Sedat Onal, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and Co-Chair of the Joint Senior Officials’ Meeting;

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and Senior Officials’ from AU Member States;

Director Jacques Mukwende, Representing the African Union Commission;

Excellencies, Distinguished Participants;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I would like to begin by thanking the Government and the people of the Republic of Turkey for their generous hospitality and their visible effort exerted in the preparations for this Ministerial Meeting. I also want convey the warm regards from fellow Senior Officials’ of the African continent, who are ably represented by their Representatives in the Bureau of the African Union as well as by those representing the African Regional Economic Communities and the African Union Development Agency (AUDA/NEPAD).

Excellencies;

Ladies and Gentlemen;
The African Union acknowledges the importance of the Africa–Turkey Partnership, especially when this is juxtaposed against the Turkish development trajectory and the opportunity it presents to Africa to benefit from its experience and best practices in a spirit of win-win partnership, mutual interest, mutual respect and value addition.

Allow me to underscore here that Africa needs Turkey as much as Turkey needs Africa. It is my belief that both sides can benefit from each other as we continue to strengthen our partnership especially at a time as this where recovery from the far-reaching effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on our world requires relevant and valuable partnerships.

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

A win-win partnership between Africa and Turkey means, from the African Union’s point of view, that the priority areas of cooperation identified should build on the aspirations and priority areas as elucidated in the AU Agenda 2063 and its First Ten Year Implementation Plan and that our Partnership delivers concrete results.
In this regard and beyond the fruitful dialogue that we have forged over many years of cooperation, the Africa–Turkey Partnership should make the difference in terms of its approach, objectives and deliverables. In order to achieve this, we need to work together to Jointly Plan and design, Jointly implement and Jointly follow-up on our commitments. In the same vein, it is important that we plan together, to ensure that we effectively deliver and work the talk.

We need to make concrete proposals that ensure we attain the partnership attains the aspirations of both sides.

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen;**

I would like to conclude my remarks by once again acknowledging the presence of everyone gathered for this Meeting as we prepare for the Ministerial Meeting tomorrow.

I wish us all successful deliberations.

I thank you.