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**Opening Statement by Dr. Jinmi Adisa, Director Citizens and Diaspora  
Organization Directorate, CIDO, African Union Commission to the 6<sup>th</sup>  
Annual AU-Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU)  
Partnership Forum, Accra, Ghana, 10-12 September 2015**

**Opening Statement by Dr. Jinmi Adisa, Director Citizens and Diaspora Organization Directorate, CIDO, African Union Commission to the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual AU-Organization of African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) Partnership Forum, Accra, Ghana, 10-12 September 2015**

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to this Annual AU-OATUU Partnership Forum. This is the sixth in the series and the event marks the consolidation of this platform as an enduring interface between the premier Organization of the continent and its organized labour constituency. It is vivid evidence that the African Union is a people-centred Union that engages its workers who are the backbone of the development aspirations of the people of our continent.

This engagement is an essential instrument of conversation between African leaders and their people. It is intended to rub minds, share aspirations and find common and appropriate solutions. It is also designed to apportion assignments and responsibilities and to define a commonwealth of efforts and divide the labour of love within it.

The framework of conversations that this partnership Forum nurtures is free, frank and focused. This particular session will continue the conversations initiated last year on Africa's strategic vision of Agenda 2063. While the explicit focus of last year's session dealt with the broader scope of Trade Union aspirations about the Africa We Want, this particular session deliberate on the specifics. The emphasis will be on the first ten Year Implementation Plan period and what should be done within it to make everything else follow appropriately.

Similarly, since this is the year of Women Empowerment within the AU framework, this Forum is designed as gender sensitive. It will receive a presentation regarding Women Empowerment Under Agenda 2063 with side emphasis on the Institutional framework for implementing the AU Gender Policy in this and other related aspects.

As a logical corollary, the intention is to use this Forum to set pace for defining precisely the role of the Labour Movement in the implementation and monitoring of the Agenda 2063 framework.

The Forum will also consider, reflect upon and come up with a policy action framework on Trade Union participation in the Africa-EU partnership program for Africa's development. We will also consider the contributions of the Labour Movement to the development of ECOSOCC as an Organ of the people and examine how to strengthen this contribution to ensure that AU should be people-driven in its concerns, methods, aspirations and policies. In this setting, we will examine commitments that we have made previously, how they have fared and what needs to be done to translate our hopes and desires into effect.

Beyond the scope of the meeting, the framework of enduring partnership speaks to the broader purpose of both the African Union and Africa's Labour Movement. We are committed to working with each other on a continuous and committee basis to deliver on the promise of independence and development for Africa. The Africa We Want is one in which all people of African heritage will come into their own as responsible, development oriented actors creating wealth and living in conditions of dignity within the context of auto-centred development. We understand that there will be problems on the way to achieving this purpose but we shall overcome. As Robert Frost has observed "The woods are lovely, dark and deep but we have promises to keep and mile to go before we sleep. And miles to go before we sleep....."

Finally, I assure you all that whatever conclusions the Forum comes up with will be faithfully transmitted to the leadership of the AU commission and through them to the Executive Organs of the Union so that ultimately you will see them in policy responses.

I thank you all.