

# **STATEMENT**

**BY**

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REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

**AT THE RECEPTION COCKTAIL FOR THE 4<sup>TH</sup> RETREAT OF THE  
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 5<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2016.**

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**Your Excellency, the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr. Nkosazana-Dlamini Zuma,  
The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Chad and Chair of the Executive Council,  
Hon. Ministers and Members of the Executive Council,  
Commissioners of the AU Commission,  
Members of the Permanent Representatives Committee,  
Governor of Nairobi County,  
Government Officials,  
Members of the Diplomatic Corps,  
Invited Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I extend a warm welcome to each one of you here tonight, first to Kenya in general, and Nairobi in particular. It is particularly critical that all of us are convening in Nairobi to participate in the 4<sup>th</sup> Retreat of the African Union Executive Council, which we, as Kenya, are most delighted to host. As we say in Kiswahili, *Karibuni sana*. I assure you of all necessary support from my Ministry to guarantee the smooth running of this African Union Executive Council Retreat that will run for the next two days.

## **Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

In January 2016, Our Heads of State and Government directed the African Union Commission to organize another retreat... *“to allow for in-depth discussion on the paradox of rich Africa, poor Africans, on changing mindset and other relevant issues.”* In the coming two days, we shall engage each other in exploring this paradox in the light of the envisioned Agenda 2063, and the restructuring of the African Union, amongst other issues. Our deliberations and outcomes will have the effect of shaping the future of our continent and individual nations.

The Agenda 2063 as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) recently adopted by the United Nations, give hope for a better world. The onus is henceforth upon us as Africans to determine our destiny, particularly by overturning the paradox of a continent rich with natural resources and a vast and youthful human resource, but whose citizens struggle to make ends meet, with a majority of the population still living below the poverty line, to a continent that is prosperous and peaceful.

As observed in the preamble of the Agenda 2063, our founding fathers of the Organization of African Unity bequeathed us an Africa free from slavery, colonialism and apartheid. It is now our turn, and our responsibility, to find home grown solutions to the challenges confronting our motherland. This is our historical

duty. The essence of this Executive Council Retreat cannot be emphasized enough.

**Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

More will be discussed starting tomorrow at the plenary. Mine tonight is to once again, welcome you all to Nairobi, and to wish you a fruitful and enriching retreat.

Before I close my statement, it is my hope that you will find time to experience our rich culture, cuisine, flora and fauna, as well as to engage with our people – as you all know - Kenyans are warm and hospitable people.

Nairobi, the host city for this retreat, is part of the larger rich heritage that our country holds in trust for humanity. I invite you to visit our National Museum of Kenya, our National Archives, and National Park which is just next to the city, among other historical areas to experience the treasures we manage for all humanity.

Finally, Colleagues, I look forward to our deliberations starting tomorrow, and to an outcome that will determine the way forward in achieving Agenda 2063. It is my great pleasure to invite you to this welcoming cocktail, which is meant to get us ready for the work ahead of us in the coming two days.

**God Bless you all.**