



---

## **AFRICA YOUTH DAY 2017**

***“Africa’s Youth for the Demographic Dividend: #BeTheFutureToday”***

**1 NOVEMBER, 2017**

## ABOUT AFRICA YOUTH DAY (AYD)

the 1<sup>st</sup> of November was proclaimed and instituted on the occasion of the African Youth Charter adoption in the Executive Council Decision of the Banjul Summit in 2006 **Assembly/AU/Dec.591 (XXV)** as the official day for the celebration of African Youth Day.

The purpose of Africa Youth Day is to promote an increased recognition of youth as the main agents for social change and economic growth in all aspects of the African society. Specifically, the 2017 AU theme ***“Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investment in the Youth”***, further highlights the importance of young people as the main contributors for a sustainable development of the African continent through their energy, motivation, and idealism.

In 2017, there is an even bigger need to access youth contribution and participation towards harnessing the demographic dividend, and not merely the actions and development driven by governments and organisations. To this end, the 2017 celebration of African Youth Day, will seek to focus on youth bring the drivers of change and coming to the realisation that the future is now. As referred to in Agenda 2063, Aspiration 6 states that the realisation of tangible actions by 2063, are to also include the insurance that development in Africa is people driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth. It is aspired that by 2063, we will have an Africa that has engaged and empowered youth.

A key priority for the African Union Commission is to frame the demographic dividend discourse to reflect African realities and priorities. This is in line with the mandate of the Decision of the Heads of State and Government at the AU July 2017 Summit which “calls on the AUC to champion the framing and branding of the Demographic Dividend to reflect the African reality, to build ownership of the concept by Africans from the highest levels of Heads of State and Government, Ministers, Parliamentarians, Policy Makers and Youth”. In this regard, and as a strategic activity to frame the DD discourse, the AUC engaged young media professionals to conceptualize a media campaign to popularize the DD among African Youth. The key message of this campaign is **#BeTheFutureToday** which calls on African youth to seize the unique opportunity of the demographic dividend to accelerate deliberate contributions towards Africa’s development.

In line with this, therefore, the theme for the 2017 Africa Youth Day is **“Africa’s Youth for the Demographic Dividend: #BeTheFutureToday”** which aligns with the theme of the year and most importantly, puts an emphasis on action being made by young people themselves towards ensuring that the Demographic Dividend is realised. This also allows young people to take ownership of the Demographic Dividend, and with this

celebration, the African Union seeks to celebrate youth doing great things in their communities and taking initiative to achieve the *Africa we want*.

## OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this celebration will be the popularisation of the “Be the Future Movement” that puts young people at the forefront of African development and the harnessing of the demographic dividend as well as launch the Model African Union Toolkit.

### ***Specifically, this celebration will:***

- Increase awareness on the need to engage young people in debates concerning the progress of the Demographic Dividend;
- Work towards the realisation of a key point of Agenda 2063 which is the inclusion of all African citizens in decision making and in all aspects of development, including social, economic, political and environmental; and
- Accelerate the youth agenda in order to fulfil the 2017 theme and realise the AU roadmap to harnessing the Demographic Dividend through the four pillars: **1) Employment and Entrepreneurship, 2) Education and Skills Development, 3) Health and Wellbeing, and 4) Rights, Governance and Youth Empowerment.**

## EXPECTED OUTPUTS

- Popularise and familiarise the youth with the “**#BeTheFutureToday**” movement;
- Launch Model African Union following a two-day simulation;
- Display youth talent, and action being carried out nationally, regionally, and continentally towards harnessing the Demographic Dividend; and
- Cement the need to make youth voices heard and make them the principal agents of decision making where youth are concerned.

## METHODOLOGY

- The AUC encourages young people to celebrate this day with activities organised in their spaces;
- Member States encouraged to share country level events with us to document and upscale where possible to a continental audience;
- At the Continental Level, the AUC will use this opportunity to popularise the outcome of the Media Strategy to harness and popularise the Demographic Dividend through the hashtag: #BeTheFutureToday;

- Call for submission of work around the theme of young people showcasing the great work they are doing in their communities (photographs or short videos) through the usage of the 2017 theme hashtag; and
- Twitter interaction with young people across the continent through the hashtag.

## **PARTICIPATION**

In celebration of Africa Youth Day, we expect to receive the following participants:

- 36 AU-EU Youth Plug in Initiative Fellows;
- 32 Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung sponsored young people
- 20 GIZ sponsored young people;
- 47 Graduating AUYYVC;
- 100 youth for the Continental Dialogue on Education and Skills;

## **WHO SHOULD CELEBRATE AFRICA YOUTH DAY?**

- Member States, African youth on the continent and in the Diaspora, AU Ministers and Senior Officials of Youth, Sports, and Culture, UN Agencies and Development Partners, Youth Led and Youth Serving Organisations.

Youth across the continent are encouraged to commemorate this day by replicating the continental celebrations in their respective countries and sharing the outcomes with the AUC for compilation and documentation.