



19TH AFRICAN UNION SUMMIT OPENS WITH A CALL FOR UNITY AND SOLIDARITY FOR A STRONG AND PROSPEROUS AFRICA



H.E. Dr. Boni Yayi
President of the Republic of Benin and Chairperson of the African Union



“United and together we are successful” was the message given to the African Union by its Chairperson, Dr. Boni Yayi, President of the Republic of Benin on Sunday 15 July 2012, at the official opening ceremony of the 19th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union (AU) in the plenary hall of the New AU Conference Center in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Assembly meeting is being held under the theme: “Boosting Intra-African Trade”. It will assess the successes and challenges during the last six months, since the 18th Summit.

Chairperson Yayi regretted the inconclusive elections of the leadership of the African Union Commission (AUC) during its last meeting in January, adding that the elections did not paint a very good image for the continental organization. He appealed to his peers to explore all possible avenues during this Summit to find a solution so that a new Chairperson of the AU Commission is elected. “Six months later, we should have the ability to unify the continent through this election”, he noted

President Yayi deplored the deteriorating situation in Mali and the security problems caused by the escalation of the Libyan crisis, which is presenting a challenge to the restoration of border security in the region.

However, the President was positive about the continent’s economic prospects. “Africa is fast becoming a pole of economic growth”, he said. President Yayi

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DR NKOSAZANA DHLAMINI ZUMA THE FIRST WOMAN TO HEAD THE AU COMMISSION



Dr Ping and Dr Zuma met today in the Chairperson's office



Dr Zuma also met Mr Erastus Mwencha

Dr Nkosazana Dhlamini Zuma was, late yesterday, elected by the Assembly of African Union Heads of State and Governments to be the new Chairperson of the AU Commission. Dr Zuma, currently South Africa’s Home Affairs Minister won the election in the fourth round of voting. She becomes the first woman to head the Commission.

ERASTUS MWENCHA RE-ELECTED FOR A NEW MANDATE

In the elections for the Deputy Chairperson for the AUC, incumbent Mr. Erastus Mwencha was re-elected for a new four year mandate, by a landslide. All 50 votes cast were in his favour. He was first elected to the position in 2008.

Today, the Executive Council will proceed to vote for the eight Commissioners of the Commission. The Commissioners will be elected to head the following departments: Peace and Security; Rural Economy and Agriculture Social Affairs; Political Affairs; Economic Affairs; Trade and Industry; Infrastructure and Energy; and Human Resources, Science and Technology. After the election, the Commissioners will be confirmed by the Assembly.



MOU SIGNED BETWEEN AUC AND CAF TO PROMOTE PEACE AND SOCIAL CHANGE



Dr Ping (center) and Mr Hayatou shake hands after signing the agreement while Commissioner Gawanas looks on

The Commission of the African Union and the Confederation of African Football (CAF) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 14 June, to use the universal appeal of football as a platform to advocate and promote social change in Africa, through such initiatives as the “Make Peace Happen Campaign”. Speaking during the signing ceremony, which took place on the sidelines of the 19th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, the Chairperson of the AU Commission, Dr. Jean Ping, thanked CAF for its continued solidarity and commitment to supporting the AU’s efforts in conflict resolution and peace-building on the continent, within the framework of the Make Peace Happen Campaign.

“In Libreville, earlier this year, CAF donated US \$200,000 to the AU towards alleviating the suffering of the victims of the drought in the Horn of Africa,” said Dr. Ping. “I also had the pleasure of joining Presidents Ali Bongo Ondimba of Gabon, Thomas Yayi Boni of Benin and Theodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo of Equatorial Guinea, at the finals of the Orange Africa Cup of Nations, to take the ‘Make Peace Happen’ message to football fans around the continent,” he recalled.

On his part, the President of CAF, Issa Hayatou, reiterated CAF’s continued commitment to supporting the AU’s activities aimed at securing peace and stability on the continent. “We are delighted to be here at the AU headquarters, to formalize our longstanding and cordial relationship,” he said. Speaking during the signing ceremony, the South African Minister for Justice and Constitutional Development, Jeffrey Tamsanqa Radebe, said his Government was ready to work closely with the AU and CAF during the upcoming 29th edition of the Orange Africa Cup Nations, to be held in South Africa in 2013. “As the host, South Africa welcomes this initiative and will provide support where necessary to ensure its success,” he stated.

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explained that this is an opportunity to lift Africa from poverty and help in the efforts to attain the MDGs.

AUC Chairperson emphasizes importance of intra African trade and reports on other activities of the Commission

In his address, Dr. Jean Ping, Chairperson of the AU Commission, recalled the importance and choice of the theme of the 19th AU Summit. He said the summit is an opportunity to sensitize the Heads of State on the importance of boosting intra-African trade, given that intra African trade currently stands at only 10%. He underscored the need to strengthen unity and African solidarity on the continent. “We have to work very closely so as to consolidate the values and vision of the AU”, he emphasized. “United, the AU can play a determining role in the fulfillment of its aspirations”.

Chairperson Ping expressed satisfaction on the resilience of the continent in the face of the global economic crisis. He said peace is very important for the development of Africa, and this explains why the AU is implementing its continental peace and security architecture and post conflict resolutions.

On a different note, Dr. Ping highlighted the other AU development programs including the launch in September 2012, of courses in three of the five pan-African Universities; the implementation of the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA) and the progress in the efforts to ensure food security and nutrition, whereby 32 Member States have joined the Comprehensive African Agriculture program (CAADP).

The Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Jan Eliasson highlights cooperation with the AU

UN Deputy Secretary General Mr. Eliasson highlighted the joint efforts and achievements under UN/AU cooperation. He said the UN has committed itself to work with the AU to help Guinea-Bissau resolve its crisis and ensure an immediate return to constitutional rule. The two organizations are working to address the issue of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. Efforts by both organizations were underlined by the Deputy SG of the UN in fighting poverty, diseases, natural disasters, environmental degradation, conflict and violations of human rights as well as promoting fundamental freedoms. The “Rio+20 conference, he said, moved the world forward on critical issues-including water, energy, food and women’s empowerment”, he underscored.

Three new Heads of State introduced to the summit

On the other hand, three newly elected African Heads of State were introduced and welcomed by their peers during the opening of the Summit. They are: Messrs. Macky Sall, President of Senegal, Motsoahae Thomas Thabane, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho and Mohamed Morsy, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt. His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Emir of Kuwait, was presented as the guest of honour at the 19th AU Summit.

President Sall commits to reduce Presidential terms from 7 to 5 years

President Macky Sall, in his speech, commended the people of Senegal for the confidence entrusted in him by electing him with a 65% majority vote, adding that the “free, fair and transparent” manner in which the elections were conducted showed the maturity of democracy. The President committed himself in front of his peers to reduce the duration of the presidential term from 7 to 5 years, renewable only once. He invited his peers to take part in the “Africities” Summit scheduled for December 2012 in Dakar.

Emir of Kuwait announces financial assistance for the AUC

His Highness the Amir of Kuwait commended Africa for organizing such Summits to discuss crucial issues of the continent, with the aim of advancing the development agenda of the continent and meeting the economic expectations. “There is no doubt that the promotion of intra-African trade represents a major economic force that can only promote strategic partnerships with stakeholders” he noted. Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmed Al-Jaber Al-Sabah announced that his country will provide financial assistance to equip the African Unions new conference center. He announced that Kuwait will host the next Arabo-African summit with a view to reinforce the relationship between the Arab world and Africa.

Lesotho PM calls for strengthening of the AU

The Right Honourable Thabane of Lesotho highlighted the urgent need for Africa to address the issue of poverty, insecurity, and underdevelopment on the continent while promoting intra-African trade as a consolidation factor of peace and good governance. He emphasized the need to strengthen the organization and its organs, calling on the Member States to accept their collective responsibility and adhere to the realization of the AU’s vision of Shared Values and continental integration.

Egyptian President commits to promoting intra African trade

Dr. Mohamed Morsi of Egypt said in his opening remarks that his country is committed to promote trade and investment cooperation in Africa “Promoting intra-African trade has become indispensable for realizing regional economic integration in Africa vis-a-vis the challenges facing our continent within the world economic system” he stressed.

League of Arab State satisfied with partnership with Africa

Mr. Nabil Al-Arabi, Secretary General of the League of Arab States on his part expressed satisfaction with the existing strategic partnership between the AU and the Afro-Arab world in different areas of development.

A minute of silence in memory of the late President Bingu Wa Mutharika was observed before the opening ceremony of the Summit.

The 19th Ordinary Session of the summit of the AU ends today.



AWA ACTION COMMITTEE COMMITS TO ACTIONS TO FIGHT HIV/AIDS, TB AND MALARIA



Halt and Reverse the Burden of HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria by 2015", the Heads of State and Government recommitted themselves to intensifying personal and collective efforts towards the realization of the objectives of AWA in 2012-2015 and agreed on the way forward on Africa's response to the three diseases between now and 2015. They adopted and committed themselves to the following:

The Future Direction of AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) 2012-2015 and the Shared Responsibility and Global Solidarity for Africa's Response to HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria: Roadmap 2012-2015;

The outcome of their Action Committee Meeting as summarized in "Draft Declaration on the Report of AWA Action Committee of Heads of State and Government Meeting" will be presented to the 19th Session of the AU Assembly for endorsement and subsequent dissemination to stakeholders and partners for follow up action; intensifying and facilitating advocacy, and further developing partnerships at all levels. In this regard, they called upon the partners to build on their commendable support for Africa to win the struggle against AIDS, TB and Malaria.

They requested the AU Commission, in collaboration with other AU organs,



Heads of State and Government of the Action Committee of AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) held a breakfast meeting in Addis Ababa on 14 July 2012 where they committed themselves to a number of actions to fulfill the AWA mandate. The meeting was hosted and chaired by the AU Chairperson, Dr. Boni Yayi, President of the Republic of Benin in his capacity as the Chairperson of AWA. AU Commission Chairperson Dr Jean Ping attended the meeting, as did the Commissioner of Social Affairs Advocate Bience Gawanas.

At the breakfast meeting, the Heads of State and Government of AWA Action Committee highlighted its leadership role in mobilization of resources and action as well as accountability. They also examined the strategies and action plans on the future direction of AWA from 2012 to 2015; as well as a Roadmap on Shared



RECs, UN agencies as well as other regional and international organizations and partnerships, to coordinate the dissemination of the outcome of their meetings, follow up on its implementation and report to their annual meeting.

AIDS Watch Africa (AWA) was created by eight Heads of State and Government at the 2001 Special Summit on HIV/AIDS, TB and Other Related infectious Diseases. The objectives of AWA include leadership and ownership of Africa's response to AIDS, TB and Malaria, advocacy for mobilization of action resources, accountability. In 2006 through the leadership of AWA Head of States and Government, the "Abuja Call for Accelerated Action towards Universal Access to HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria Services in Africa by 2015" was adopted.

After a decade of existence, AWA was re-launched in January 2012 by the 18th Session of the AU Assembly as an advocacy, resource mobilization and accountability platform for the response to AIDS, TB and Malaria. This high level platform is spearheaded by the Action Committee comprising Heads of State and Government and the Chairperson of the AU Commission. The other AWA structures include the Consultative Experts Committee and the Secretariat. Regional and international partners participate in the programme and activities of AWA as observers.

Responsibility and Global Solidarity Africa's Response to HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria from 2012 to 2015.

At the end of their deliberations and in line with the AWA slogan: "Renewed Action to

THREE JUDGES OF THE AFRICAN COURT ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES' RIGHTS AND A JUDGE FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE AD HOC TRIBUNAL OF THE AU ELECTED

Three judges of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights have been appointed by the Assembly of the AU. The elected judges for a mandate of 6 years are:

Mr. Gerard Niyungeko, Burundi, Central region

Mr El Hadji Guisse, Senegal, West

Mr Ben Kioko, Kenya, East

The judges were elected during the Executive Council's 21st Session on 13 July. Among the 11 judges of the Court, three seats were vacant due to the expiry of their mandate.

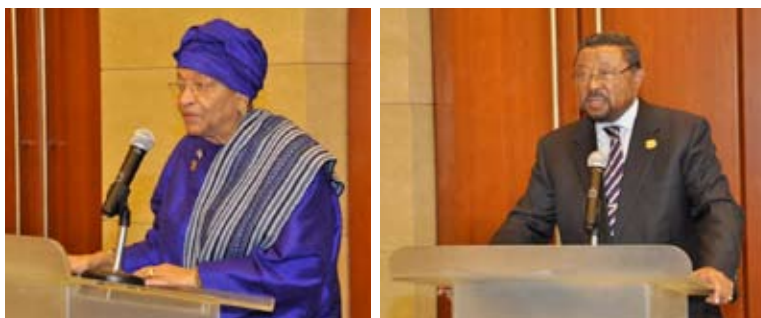
The judges were elected by 51 of 54 Member States of the AU. Mali, Madagascar and Guinea Bissau being under sanction, could not take part in the process.

Their election was submitted to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government for effective nomination.

The Assembly also appointed a judge for the Ad Hoc Administrative Tribunal of the AU. The Tribunal is currently composed of three judges from Malawi, Mali and Mauritania. Mali's seat became vacant as it is suspended from the activities of the Union. Elections for the Tribunal are made according to alphabetical order. Hence, Mauritius is to occupy this seat. A judge should be nominated by Mauritius.



Women, Gender and Development Directorate holds event to popularise gender issues



A luncheon for Heads of State and Governments was organized on 14 July by the African Union Commission (AUC)'s Women, Gender and Development Directorate. Championed by Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of the Republic of Liberia, the lunch aimed at popularizing gender issues to the highest levels of power as well as to gather funds to support the Fund for African Women's focus on agriculture and food security.

2010-2020 has been declared the African Women's Decade (AWD). Its main objective is to "reinvigorate commitments to accelerated implementation of agreed global and regional commitments of gender equality and women's empowerment" through 10 themes. Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, Mrs. Rhoda Peace expressed her satisfaction for agriculture being in the spotlight and the effort to address the specific challenges facing women working in rural areas.

The launching of the AWD along with the launch in 2010 of the African Women's Fund "reaffirm the commitments of the AU Heads of State and Government to support the implementation of the African Women's Decade's overall theme of "Grassroots approach to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment" and they also provide the implementation framework for gender equality and women's empowerment on the continent, said AUC Chairperson Dr. Jean Ping.

Among the officials attending the luncheon were Mr. Khumbo Kachali, Vice-President of Malawi, Mr. Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa and Dr Jean Ping, Chairperson of the AUC.



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MEDIA CORNER *TODAY'S MEDIA BRIEFINGS*

09:00 – 09:30 Honorable Bethel Amadi, President of the Pan-African Parliament (PAP)

Transformation of PAP: from consultative to legislative mandate
New Protocol of PAP

10:00 – 10:30 H.E. Dr. Maxwell M. Mkwazalamba, Commissioner for Economic Affairs

Harmonization of statistics in Africa
Africa's financial institutions
Briefing on the outcome of the G20 Summit
Alternative sources of Funding for the African Union
Status of Integration in Africa
Coordination of the REC's

11:00 – 11:30 Honorable Catherine Dupe-Atoki, Chairperson of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

Human Rights situation in Africa

12:00 – 12:30 H.E. Adv. Bience Philomena Gawanas, Commissioner for Social Affairs

Aids Watch Africa (AWA)
Update on CARMMA
Maternal New Born and Child Health Report-

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS – 14 JULY 2012

EVENTS	TIME	VENUE	SESSION
Nineteenth (19th) Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union	09.00 – 13.00 hrs. Morning session 13.00 - 15.00 hrs: Lunch break 15.00hrs: Afternoon session	Large Conference Hall (NCC)	Closed session
General Assembly - Organization of African First Ladies against HIV/AIDS (OAFLA)	09.00 - 17.00 hrs.	Medium Conference Hall	Opening ceremony is open to the public

