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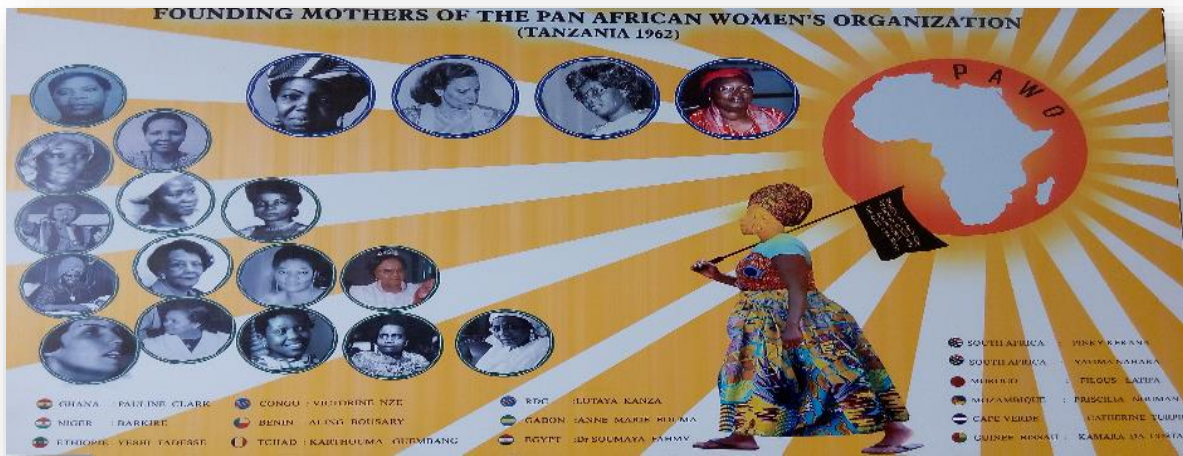
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PRESS RELEASE

AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION COMMEMORATES PAN-AFRICAN WOMEN'S DAY



Conakry, Republic of Guinea, 31 July 2017- The African Union Commission (AUC), in collaboration with the government of Republic of Guinea, celebrated the 2017 Pan African Women's Day under the theme *"Pan-African Women's Organization as a Specialized AU Agency: Vision and Mission"*. The 55th anniversary of the Pan African Women Organization (PAWO), jointly organized by the AUC and government of the Republic of Guinea, it also tribute the late Mrs. Hadja Jeanne Martin CISSE, one of the founding mothers and the first Secretary General of PAWO.

The Minister for Women, Children & Social Action, in the Republic of Guinea, Mrs. Sanaba Kaba, welcomed the AUC delegation and thanked for joining Guinea at this historic event. The AUC delegation was led by Mrs. Mahawa Kaba-Wheeler, Director for Women, Gender & Development (WGDD); and representatives from PAWO; Dr. Bilony Nhamn Natambn Nhasse, Secretary General, Democratic Union of Women, Guinea Bissau and Col. Theophilie Shaanika, Security Advisor for the AU Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security.

H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the AU Commission, on the statement read on his behalf by Mrs. Mahawa, recalled that “this year, the Pan-African Women’s Day celebrations came against the backdrop of the historic decision by the African Heads of State and Government during their 28th AU Summit to grant PAWO the status of a specialized agency of the AU. To celebrate this landmark decision and affirm the role of women in Africa’s development, the AUC unveiled a portrait of the founding mothers of PAWO and launched a historic African women’s sculpture garden project”.

The Chairperson noted that how this commemoration day is important, not only to celebrate the achievements, but to once more mobilize African women in the continent and in the Diaspora to build collective energy around common aspirations for women and girls. “It is an opportunity to define the agenda of this new agency to ensure that it is relevant to the developmental needs of the African women and girls as defined in Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals 2030, he underscored.

“As Africa continues to celebrate the declaration of 2017 as the year of “Harnessing the Demographic Dividends through Investment in Youth”, Pan-African Women’s Day presents opportunities for young people to define their role in promoting the ideals of Pan-Africanism within the context of Agenda 2063 and Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development Goals, he stated.

H.E. Prof. Alpha Conde, President of the Republic of Guinea and Chairperson of the African Union, graced the commemoration day. Addressing participants, he underscored that “Women are the future of Africa, hence we need to ensure they are empowered economically and socially”. ‘Beyond decisions and resolutions women need real solutions and actions’, he urged.

Worth recalling that Pan African Women’s day is observed each year on 31st July to commemorate the first Pan African Women’s Conference held in Dar es Salaam in 1962.

For further information:

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