

**AFRICAN UNION**

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## STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION OF THE AFRICAN UNION ON THE SITUATION IN ZIMBABWE

Addis Ababa, 21 November 2017: The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, welcomes the decision by President Robert Mugabe to step down from his position as Head of State following a lifetime of service to the Zimbabwean nation.

President Mugabe will be remembered as a fearless pan-Africanist liberation fighter, and the father of the independent Zimbabwean nation. Today's decision will go down in history as an act of statesmanship that can only bolster President Mugabe's political legacy.

The African Union recognizes that the Zimbabwean people have expressed their will that there should be a peaceful transfer of power in a manner that secures the democratic future of their country. President Mugabe's decision to resign paves the way for a transition process, owned and led by the sovereign people of Zimbabwe.

Throughout the years, the people of Zimbabwe have demonstrated remarkable resilience and resourcefulness, and commitment to their country. The Chairperson of the Commission is confident that they, together with all their leaders, will remain steadfast in their commitment to fulfill their legitimate aspirations.

The African Union looks forward to Zimbabwe continuing to play a leading role in the affairs of the African continent, as a democratic and prosperous state meeting the aspirations of its people.

The Chairperson of the Commission, recalling the relevant African Union instruments, including the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, pledges the Union's full support to the Zimbabwean people and leaders in the period ahead. In this respect, the African Union will continue to work closely with the Southern African Development Community, the efforts and commitment of which it hails.