



DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

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**Women's Leadership at All Levels Crucial for Implementing Agenda 2063
and the 2030 Agenda**

Addis Ababa, 28 January 2018 – A High Level Breakfast on 'Equal Access of African Women to High Level Positions at the African Union and in the United Nations Systems' was held today, 28 January 2018 organized at the margins of the 30th African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.



The High Level Breakfast which took place at the African Union Headquarters and in the presence of H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission; H.E. Professor Alpha Condé, Chairperson of the African Union; H.E. Mr. Nana Akufo Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana; Heads of State and Government of Member States of the African Union; H.E. Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations; Ministers, Commissioners, Directors, among others, highlighted the importance of addressing gender-specific challenges, encourage Gender equality and women's participation, placement of women in leadership positions at all levels and

recongized and applauded at the highest level the considerable progress made in this regard.

H.E. Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, in his addresse boldly stated that todate, the African Union is the first inter-governmental organization that made parity a reality at higher decision-making levels. Applauding the placement of women in management positions in the Commission, he accounted that between 2013 and 2017 the gender gap reduced in strategic positions and the increase from 29% of women to 45% currently on Director's positions; congnozant of the fact that yet more needs to be done.

Looking forward H.E. Mr. Mahamat said: "To consolidate our effort on parity in our institutions and at Member States level, we have proposed draft decisions under the leadership of President Paul Kagame namely on our parity policy and we count on support of all Heads of State and Government of the AU to support the quotas we have set."

During the meeting Chairperson of the African Union Commission said: "this is the time to renew my commitment to the Network of African Women Leaders and the initiative to launch a Fund to give African women the resources they need to make a real contribution to the economic development and transformation of the continent. This initiatives launched by the African Union Commission in partnership with the United Nations will also serve as a platform to enhance the partnership of our two organizations in political matters and gender related programs."

H.E. Professor Alpha Condé, outgoing Chairperson of the African Union (AU), and President of the Republic of Guinea during his chairmanship in 2017 appointed H.E. Nana Akufo Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana, as Champion on Gender and Development in Africa. Promoting women to high-level positions, the Republic of Guinea under the leadership of H.E. Pr. Alpha Condé, for the first time since its independence welcomed the largest number women in his government to high office, including the Ministry of Economy and Finance; several National Directorates or Autonomous Services.

H.E. Nana Akufo Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana, in his part appreciated the fact that women bring special management and leadership skills such as networking, longterm relationship; sensitivity to issues among others that are beneficial in the global market. As part of his outreach on Gender and Development Initiative for Africa (GADIA) he highlighted the emphasis is on female empowerment in business. He also underlined that there is a need to ensure for puuting in place a monitoring mechanisms to recruit qualified women across geographical locations.

H.E. Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations in his part testified that the African Union has also seen good progress on women's leadership, with gender parity being consistently attained at the level of AU Commissioners. He added that the sustained commitment is reinforced by the appointment of Heads of State as Gender Champions to advance the AU's women's empowerment and gender equality goals. Heading forward, Mr. Guterres underlined that it is the responsibility of leaders to create and implement policies that will clear a pathway for young women all the way to the top. In addition to appointment of women in leadership positions he stressed that work should be done to eliminate bias in appointment bodies and creating conducive working environments for women that are free from harassment and promote standards such as provisions for maternal and paternal leave and similar entitlements.

Sealing his statements with commitment, Mr. Guterres said: “For our organizations to be efficient, impactful and credible, we need to create working environments that demonstrate female leadership, that embrace equality, and that eradicate bias and are inclusive of all staff”.

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