

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: +251 11 551 7700 / +251 11 518 25 58/ Ext 2558

Website: www.au.int

STATEMENT OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION CHAIRPERSON, MOUSSA FAKI MAHAMAT, ON THE CELEBRATION OF THE ADWA VICTORY DAY

Addis Ababa, 2 March 2018: Today marks the 122nd anniversary of the Victory of Adwa. This was the first victory of an African country over colonial forces. As such, this event represented a watershed in the history of the continent, and had worldwide resonance and impact. Adwa was not only an Ethiopian victory but also an African victory and one for all peoples across the world who were, at the time, subjected to colonial domination and discrimination. It gave them further courage and confidence in their fight for independence and dignity. Adwa is an enduring source of pride for the entire continent.

As we join our Ethiopian sisters and brothers in celebrating this momentous victory and paying tribute to the Ethiopian patriots who defeated the invading Italian colonial forces, there are many lessons we can draw from this historic event. The battle of Adwa and its outcome highlight the critical importance of self-reliance, patriotism and selflessness, and unity, irrespective of political, ethnic and other differences. These were the values that animated the Ethiopians who joined hands to defend their motherland and sacrificed their lives for the higher interest of their country, thus securing its sovereignty. These were also the values that drove the subsequent struggles waged across the continent to free it from the yoke of colonial domination and racial discrimination.

At this juncture in the history of the continent, we should rekindle these values and the spirit of our forefathers: from Menelik to Madiba Nelson Mandela, whose centenary is celebrated this year, to the Founding Fathers of the Organization of African Unity.

On this happy occasion, I urge Africans of all walks of life to unite and demonstrate a renewed commitment to pan-Africanism, drive forward the aspirations of our people, and ensure that our continent plays its rightful role in a more just international governance system, bearing in mind the goals set in Agenda 2063.

To our Ethiopian sisters and brothers, I would like to stress that the spirit and patriotism that made the Adwa Victory possible still remain relevant today. With such a proud history and strong resilience, the African Union is confident in Ethiopia's ability to overcome the challenges at hand and emerge stronger for the greater good of its people, the region and the continent as a whole.

I wish all Ethiopians and other African citizens a Happy Adwa Victory Day!