

Women of excellence; African women feted for their relentless liberation struggles and outstanding contribution to development in the continent.



29th September 2018, South Africa; The African Union, is in the process of erecting a historic monument and African women's sculpture garden at its Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as a symbolic gesture for the great

contributions that women of Africa and those in the Diaspora, have made in the liberation struggles against apartheid and colonialism, and the role they continue to play in the development of the Continent.

The African Union Commission Deputy Chairperson Amb. Kwesi Quartey, while presenting the awards to the awardees during the African Women of Excellence Awards in South Africa added that portraits of the founding mothers of Africa and historic African women will also be displayed alongside the current portraits of the founding Fathers of Africa, to demonstrate that women played key roles in the birth of the Organization of African Unity, now the African Union, and in the continued struggles for economic freedom for Africa.

The African Union granted Specialized Agency Status to the Pan-African Women's Organisation (PAWO), Africa's longest women's organization established in 1962, a year before the founding of the Organisation of African Unity now African Union, as a reflection

Further, in January 2018, the Assembly of AU Heads of State and Government adopted a decision on women's quotas, committing to take specific measures by the year 2025, to achieve equal representation of women (50/50) at the African Union Commission, in all positions, and to ensure that 35% of the AU workforce is made up of youth. This decision, reinforces an earlier parity decision that saw the election of the first woman Chairperson of the African Union Commission H.E Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma.

"We believe that in order to have the Africa that we all want, which is prosperous and peaceful, women, who form the majority of citizens, must participate equally, fully and effectively in the affairs of the continent at all levels," Amb Kwesi noted.

The recipients of the African Women of Excellence Award 2018 are;

1. H.E. Mrs Jeannette Kagame, First Lady, Republic of Rwanda
2. H.E. Mrs Samira Bawumi, Second Lady, Republic of Ghana
3. Hon. Baleka Mbete, Speaker, National Assembly, Republic of South Africa

4. H.E. Amb (Dr) Amina Mohamed, Cabinet Secretary for Education, Science, Technology and Innovation, Republic of Kenya
5. Oshunbumi Fernandez-West, CEO, ODUNDE Inc, Philadelphia, USA
6. Clarise Ford-Kulah, Philanthropist, college professor, write and producer, Atlanta Georgia, USA
7. Dr. Toni Luck, educator, scholar, transformational specialist, and political and international economic and business development strategist, African Legacy Trust, South Africa
8. Hon. Mrs Sally Mbanefo (Nee Uwechue), Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs, Indigenous Artworks, Culture and Tourism, Anambra State, Nigeria
9. Dr. Martha Namundjebo-Tilahun, Chairperson, United Africa Group, Namibia

See the full statement of The African Union Commission Deputy Chairperson Amb. Kwesi Quartey below.

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