Press release

The African Union Signs a Memorandum of Understanding with the Pan-African Women’s Organization

ADDIS ABABA, 21 February 2019 – The Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat and Mrs Assetou Koite, president of the Pan African Women Organization signed today a Memorandum of Understanding between the AU and PAWO, thereby operationalizing the later as a Specialized Agency of the AU.

The event follows the decision in January 2017 by the AU Heads of State and Government to grant the status of a Specialized Agency to PAWO.

The Chairperson of the Commission noted that this is a step towards consolidating AU efforts in achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment in the continent, as outlined in Agenda 2063 and other instruments such as the protocol to the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa.

The Chairperson further recalled the Heads of State and Government decision of January 2018 to reach 50/50 gender parity in the AU workforce by 2025. He noted the critical role that women, particularly young women play in society and acknowledged PAWO’s contributions in this regard.
On her part, the President of PAWO, H.E. Mrs Assetou Koite, congratulated the AU Commission and the Chairperson for the continued determination and for remaining a voice for women in Africa.

It should be noted that PAWO is Africa’s first and oldest collective women’s organization, which has contributed to the struggle for the continent’s liberation from colonialism, the elimination of apartheid and the eradication of gender inequalities, discrimination and injustices against women.

Since its establishment in 1962 in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, a year before the founding of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) now AU, PAWO’s mission has been to ensure that women’s concerns are integrated in Africa’s liberation agenda and that women participate, equally, fully and effectively, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the continent. PAWO has played an important role in mobilizing African women on the continent and the Diaspora to rally around collective struggles for a free and prosperous Africa.

For further information:

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