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DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

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Chairperson of the auc formally unveils the 1 million by 2021 initiative at the 2nd pan african youth forum

25 April 2019- Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Under the theme “**Africa unite for youth: Bridging the gap and reaching out to African youth**” the “**1 Million By 2021 Initiative**” was officially launched by the Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat on the 24th of April 2019 at AUC Headquarters in Ethiopia.

Convened by the Bureau of the Chairperson and the Department of Human Resources Science and Technology of the AUC, the 1 Million By 2021 Initiative aims to concretely reach millions of African youth from across the continent with opportunities and interventions in the key areas of Employment, Entrepreneurship, Education and Engagement (4E's), which will accelerate socioeconomic development on the continent.

The initiative launch brought together over 400 young people from across the continent to co-create solutions on the 4Es. Development partners, the private sector, institutions of higher learning and the civil societies were also in attendance to engage with the youth and pledge their support for the initiative.

This initiative seeks to foster new approaches towards addressing the multifaceted challenges confronting the youth on the continent. The expectation is that it will embolden various stakeholders to develop creative ideas and help build an ecosystem of efficiencies across the continent in furtherance of youth development.

Setting the tone for all youth from five regions in the continent and the diaspora at the opening session moderated by Commissioner for Human Resources Science and Technology, H. E. Professor Sarah Anyang Agbor, the AUC Chairperson's special envoy on youth, Ms. Aya Chebbi welcomed all in attendance and reiterated the need for youth inclusion in governance and the creation scalable and sustainable opportunities and interventions across the 4E's. Chebbi reiterated the need for youth to start looking at their “contributions towards the realization of Agenda 2063”. The presentation was followed by an address from the Head of Human Resources and Youth Development Division, Ms. Prudence Ngwenya who presented the case for the initiative thus unpacking the 4E's and the 12 pathways which have been identified as drivers for the 4Es that will facilitate the expansion of opportunities in youth development.

H.E. Chairperson of the AUC, addressed all in attendance thus thanking the youth for their commitment to the launch of the initiative. He said the “youth are no longer just the future but the present and it is about time they are given platforms to express their voices”. Prior to the breakaway session dubbed “*Continental Youth Network Architecture and effective mobilization*”-a group work session moderated by Aya Chebbi, a Pan African Debate was set in motion under the motion “the African Union remains relevant for the youth of Africa”. Speaking on the outcomes of the debate, H. E. Professor Sarah Anyang Agbor thanked the youth for their participation and reiterated that “they are not a demographic liability but an asset to be harnessed for the sustainable development of the continent”

An “Open Space: How to bring youth networks and organizations together at the continental level” was convened and moderated by the Youth envoy preceding the plenary and open question and answer session which marked the end of the day’s activities.

Over the remaining two days of the 2nd Pan African Youth Forum, Co-creation Sessions are set to be underway with keynotes and addresses by technical experts across the 4Es and the “Ra-ayi” session which is a special Youth Corner session structured as a platform for informal conversations among young people on issues that affect them. The discussion to be led by prominent public and business figures Banky Williams and Adebola Williams will centre on the 4E’s and how young people can be at the forefront of the initiative, keep the momentum and ensure accountability until the year 2021.

Notes to the Editor:

- [AGENDA 2063](#) is Africa's blueprint and master plan for transforming Africa into the global powerhouse of the future. It is the continent's strategic framework that aims to deliver on its goal for inclusive and sustainable development and is a concrete manifestation of the pan-African drive for unity, self-determination, freedom, progress and collective prosperity pursued under Pan-Africanism and African Renaissance. Learn more <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview>
- The Youth Division is the division responsible for Africa's Youth Agenda at the African Union Commission. The division is in charge of addressing issues concerning: Youth policy development, Legal frameworks for Youth development, Programmatic frameworks such as the: African Youth Decade Plan of Action (2009–2018) the African Plan of Action for Youth Empowerment (2019-2023), Youth capacity building and enhancing employability skills through the African Union Youth Volunteers Corps (AU-YVC), Partnership building and resource mobilization as well as Promoting Youth participation through activities such as organizing Youth Forums and Celebrating the Africa Youth Day.
- To follow the conversation, use the hashtags [#1mBy2021](#) and [#AfricaUnite4Youth](#) on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram

For any media enquiry and further information, please contact:

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