



## **African Union Commission Chairperson statement at the Vaccine Equity for Africa groundbreaking event with BioNTech**

**H.E. President Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda,**

**H.E. President Nana Akufo Addo, President of Ghana**

**Minister Aissata TALL, Minister of Foreign Affairs on behalf of the  
President Macky Sall President of Senegal and Chair of the African  
Union,**

**Dr Tedros Adhenom, Director General of WHO**

**Prof Dr Ugur SAHIN, CEO of BIONTECH SE**

**Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Friends**

- Today marks a new, vital milestone on our common journey to make vaccine manufacturing on the Continent, a reality. The fact this is happening in Kigali, is no surprise; the city has been the birthplace of many innovative Pan-African initiatives. This is but one. Thank you, President Kagame.

- The Partnership for African Vaccine Manufacturing launched by the African Union in 2021 set Africa on a course to end our Continent's dependence on imported vaccines.

- This was done not only in the urgent context of the Covid-19 pandemic, where Africa was once again last in line, but also alongside the establishment of key Continental initiatives and institutions in recent years: the AfCFTA, AfricaCDC, and the new African Medicines Agency, AMA. Here, I wish to recognise the leadership and support of my brother Dr Tedros.
- This builds on important work initiated more than ten years ago by AUDA-NEPAD on the harmonization of pharma regulation in Africa, which will be taken forward by AMA.
- I therefore want to commend the countries working with BioNTech — Ghana, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa — for moving quickly to create a viable framework for the end-to-end production of mRNA vaccines in Africa. It was the vision and foresight of leaders like President Kagame, President Nana Akuffo Addo, president Cyril Ramaphosa, who is also the AU Champion for Covid-19, and President Macky Sall, current Chair of our Union, that we standing here today
- BioNTech's commitment to work with Africa in this way is remarkable and greatly appreciated.
- This approach complements other efforts at vaccine and pharma resilience underway around our Continent, all of which merit our full support.
- Just a year after the launch of Partnership for African Vaccine Manufacturing, we are breaking ground today. We look forward the first entirely made-in-Africa mRNA vaccines in 2023. We appreciate the support of partners such as the European Union.
- It is of paramount importance that this effort is pan-African, and continues to be. I pledge the continued support of the African Union as this work moves forward.

I thank you.