

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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AU Youth Envoy organizes first AU Youth Town Hall and calls on African Leaders to concretely involve young people in Africa's Development Agenda ahead of the African Union Summit

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – Ahead of the 36th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union (36th AU Summit), The AU Youth Envoy Ms. Chido Mpemba, has actively engaged with youth, Member States, and stakeholders to advocate for the inclusion and empowerment of young people in Africa's development agenda and has continued to call for the ratification and implementation of the [African Youth Charter](#).

On the 12th of February, Ms. Mpemba kicked off the week by participating at the [African Continental Free Trade Area \(AfCFTA\) Youth Advocacy Training](#) co-hosted by Gender Is My Agenda (GIMAC) Youth Caucus, highlighting the importance of youth engagement in the AfCFTA and the need for youth-led advocacy to ensure that the AU trade policy promotes economic development and prosperity for all Africans.

The youth Envoy stated that "...the youth are not just passive recipients of [the] AfCFTA but active agents of change who can contribute to the development of the continent in meaningful ways. [They] are the drivers of innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship, and [their] participation in the implementation of [the] AfCFTA is critical to ensuring that it delivers on its promise of inclusive and sustainable growth for all."

Continuing her efforts to empower and engage young people, Ms. Mpemba will be hosting the inaugural Youth Town Hall Meeting on the 16th of February, with the theme "Harnessing the Demographic Dividend for the Realization of Agenda 2063 and AfCFTA." The event will bring together youth leaders, policymakers, and representatives of Member States to discuss ways to leverage Africa's youthful population to drive the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the AfCFTA, a flagship project of Agenda 2063, for development.

The Townhall is the expression of the highest level of commitment of the African Union and its leadership following The Youth Envoy's call to action at last year's summit to provide a platform for [Africa's youth](#) to "participate in decision-making at local, national, regional, and continental levels of governance," in line with Article 11 (b) of the AU Youth Charter. The Youth Town Hall will be held under the auspices of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E Moussa Faki Mahamat, to engage with the youth on the margins of the 36th AU Summit.

The President of the Republic of Burundi, H.E. Evariste Ndayishimiye is due to attend the Youth Town Hall as a Guest of Honour, followed by a ceremonial deposit the instrument of ratification of the African Youth Charter. Amongst other guests will be The Secretary-General of the Africa Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) Secretariat, H.E. Wamkele Mene.

Through her various engagements, Ms. Mpemba is advocating for the ratification of the African Youth Charter, inter-generational co-leadership and working to ensure that young people have

a seat at the table and are included in the African Union's development agenda. "We are expecting more than 200 youth participants to attend the meeting, for the first Africa Youth Townhall to engage with our African Leaders". The African Union Chairperson's Youth Envoy, Ms. Chido Mpemba is committed to promoting youth empowerment, engagement, and leadership, and calls on all stakeholders to work together to harness the potential of Africa's youth and achieve sustainable and inclusive development for all Africans.

Join the conversation here using #Africayouthlead on twitter and Facebook
Click register to attend <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0sf-iurjovGNxMfrrXcXKTd-r4CKLvE115>

Note to Editor

[The African Youth Charter](#) provides a strategic framework for youth empowerment and development activities at the continental, regional and national levels across Africa. It addresses key issues affecting youth, including employment, sustainable livelihoods, education, skills development, health, youth participation, national youth policy, peace and security, law enforcement, youth in the Diaspora and youth with disabilities. The Charter provides an avenue for effective youth participation in the development process. It defines youths as people between the ages of 15-35 years. It was developed after research was conducted on the state of the African Youth, commissioned by the African Union Commission.

For further information please contact:

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