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Institutionalizing Office of the Youth Envoy reinforces commitment to greater youth participation.

In a significant move towards greater youth participation and empowerment, the African Union (AU) adopted a decision to institutionalize the Office of the Chairperson’s Special Envoy on Youth. The [decision](#) was adopted during the 45th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council convened on the 18th- 19th July 2024 in Accra, Ghana. The decision underscores the AU’s commitment to meaningful youth participation and aligns with the principles enshrined in the [African Youth Charter](#), which recognizes the right of every young person to participate in all spheres of society, including decision-making processes.

Following the adoption of the decision, the AU Commission will assess the financial, legal and structural implications of institutionalization and submit it to the relevant Policy Organs for further consideration and approval of the structure of the office of the Youth Envoy. The institutionalization of the Office of the Youth Envoy signifies a deliberate shift in the AU’s approach to youth engagement. It ensures continuity and effectiveness beyond individual mandates, addressing previous challenges related to capacity and sustainability.

The role of Youth Envoy has been crucial in fostering a stronger connection between the AU and its young constituents. The Chairperson’s Youth Envoy, Ms. Chido Mpemba, underlines the importance of strategically amplifying the reach and impact of the AU’s youth-focused

initiatives, ensuring they resonate with young people on the continent and in the diaspora. "Young people have always been mobilized for advocacy, however, they yearn for more technical engagement, to bring their capabilities and innovation to the forefront and contribute meaningfully to shaping the continent", she noted.

Among the key notable initiatives to engage the youth, the Youth Envoy has established platforms for youth participation in policy-making, such as the [Youth Reference Committee](#) (AU-YRC) where young Africans can voice their concerns and aspirations, directly influencing AU decisions and initiatives. Strategic partnerships, such as those with the Africa Export Import Bank (Afreximbank) and the [Africa Leadership Academy](#) (ALA), have strengthened youth capacity development and facilitated the integration of young talent within the various departments of the AU Commission.

Other key initiatives like the [LeadHer Fellowship](#) and the [Make Africa Digital Campaign](#) (M.A.D) exemplify the proactive approach the Youth Envoy has taken in addressing critical issues affecting African youth. The Youth Envoy's leadership has also extended beyond continental borders, engaging African youth in global multilateral dialogues and contributing to shaping various foreign policies such as the Netherlands' Africa Strategy, the Austria-Africa Strategy, and, most recently, the German Africa Policy Guidelines. The decision to institutionalize the office, following extensive consultations with African youth, builds on these achievements and establishes a lasting platform for direct youth engagement with the AU.

In addition, the Executive Council further took note of the recommendations to review the African Youth Charter to reflect the evolving aspirations of Africa's Youth. In this regard, the Commission will conduct a study and publish a report on the state of implementation of the African Youth Charter since its adoption.

H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, has consistently championed youth empowerment and prioritised the continental youth agenda since establishing the role of Youth Envoy. During the 6th AU Mid-Year Coordination Meeting on the 21st July 2024, the Chairperson emphasized the importance of Africa speaking with a unified voice to transform its global narrative, noting that no one, especially Africa's most significant demographic – the youth, should be left behind.

For more information, Contact :

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