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IOM and African Union Renew Strategic Partnership on Migration Governance in Africa

The African Union (AU) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) have renewed their strategic cooperation to advance migration governance across Africa through a new three-year agreement. Signed on the sidelines of the ninth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD9), the agreement reaffirms both organizations' commitment to ensuring migration contributes to development, stability, and prosperity throughout the continent.



“Africa stands at the brink of a demographic revolution, endowed with the youngest and fastest-growing population in the world. Our vibrant youth are brimming with innovation, dynamism, and a thirst for knowledge, ready to contribute to global progress. Simultaneously, Japan, a beacon of technological advancement and economic prowess, faces unique demographic shifts that necessitate a skilled and diverse workforce to sustain its growth and innovation.” said H.E. Amb. Amma Twum-Amoah, Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development at the AUC. “This partnership with IOM will help us harness mobility for jobs to attain development, peace, and prosperity across the continent.”

The agreement builds upon a collaboration first formalized in 2022 and reflects a common vision to position migration as a catalyst for inclusive growth and sustainable development. It provides a roadmap for coordinated action between IOM and the AU, ensuring that African member states have the tools and support needed to manage mobility in line with continental priorities and global commitments.

“This renewed agreement reflects our shared determination with the African Union to put migration at the heart of Africa’s development agenda,” said IOM Director General Amy Pope. “By strengthening policy frameworks, protecting migrant rights, and investing in human mobility, we can unlock opportunities for millions of people and build resilience. This is not only about shaping inclusive societies in Africa but also about demonstrating how well-governed migration benefits countries of origin, transit, and destination alike.”

The TICAD9 conference, held under the theme “Co-create innovative solutions with Africa” inspired the AU-IOM side event convened along the same event and anchored upon the theme, “Building the Future Together: The Potential of Human Mobility in Connecting African Talent and Japanese Companies,” provided a strategic platform for Africa–Asia engagement. The agreement prioritizes advancing the AU Migration Policy Framework for Africa and its Plan of Action (2018–2030), among other key migration frameworks.

Building on this foundation, key priorities include supporting member states in developing rights-based and gender-sensitive migration policies, promoting regional integration through the implementation of the Free Movement of Persons Protocol, and leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Area. The partnership also aligns with the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, reaffirming both organizations' commitment to protecting migrant's rights.

To translate these commitments into action, IOM, AU and the Japan International Cooperation Agency convened a high-level symposium that brought together African diplomats, Japanese business leaders, and development experts. Discussions emphasized the need to expand labour mobility initiatives that meet skills demands in Japan while creating opportunities for African workers, thereby generating mutual benefits for both regions.

Through participation in the TICAD9 conference, IOM and AU worked with governments, regional bodies, and private sector actors to advance partnerships that strengthen migration governance, foster economic resilience, and encourage greater international cooperation. By renewing this partnership, IOM and the AUC are ensuring that migration remains central to Africa's long-term development agenda, with a focus on protecting people, empowering communities, and building stronger economies.

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