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REMARKS BY H.E. Dr. NKASAZANA DLAMINI ZUMA, CHAIRPERSON
OF THE COMMISSION OF THE AFRICAN UNION ON THE OCCASION
OF 4TH AFRICA – EU SUMMIT

**Wednesday 02 April 2014
Brussels (Belgium)**

H.E. The President of the European Union

H.E. Chairperson of the African Union

H.E. Chairperson of the European Commission

Excellencies Heads of State and Government

Excellences Commissioners

Distinguished Participants

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the African Union Commission, our appreciation to the European Union for hosting this important Summit. We thank the Kingdom of Belgium for the warm hospitality and arrangements to make the Summit a success. The contributions of many others that worked tirelessly in the preparations of this summit are acknowledged and appreciated.

***Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

Let me start, by referring to late President Mandela when he said: *“I have walked a long road to freedom, I have missed steps along the way, but discovered the secret that after climbing the Great Hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb.*

“I’ve taken a moment to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista, to look at the distance I’ve come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom comes responsibilities and I dare not linger. For my long walk is not ended.”

The Africa-EU partnership has come a long way since the first Africa-EU Summit in Cairo in 2000 and we probably missed a few steps together in our partnership. In 2000, Africa was regarded as the 21st century development challenge and a moral scar on the conscience of humanity.

Fourteen years later, Africa is the second fastest growing region in the world, public and private investment in infrastructure is on the increase and there is tangible progress on a number of social indicators, many of them due to our joint efforts.

We witnessed changes to the political landscape of the continent, with democratic elections becoming the norm, demonstrating our collective commitment to promote a political culture based on legitimacy, inclusion and accountability.

Although stubborn pockets of conflicts remain, causing immense suffering and devastation especially for women and children; progress is being made through the African Peace and Security and Governance Architectures. We acknowledge the continual generosity of Europe's contribution towards peace in Africa.

There are however, many more hills to climb.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

To address these challenges, the AU focuses on a set of Pan African priorities, captured by the African Agenda 2063, with elements reflected in the 4th Summit's theme of *People, Prosperity and Peace*.

Firstly, the African people as is the case with the European people are our most valued resource. The health, education, nutrition and general wellbeing of our populations therefore remain critical development priorities, now and into the future.

With a growing and young population, Africa needs a skills revolution and to scale up investments in science, research, technology and innovation. Investing in people also requires the empowerment of women and young people.

For our partnership, this means working together on training and skill development. Given the different demographic trajectories of our two continents (one young and the other ageing), we may have to in the near future share this human resource with you. It is in both our interest that it is a skilled human resource.

The Common African Agricultural Programme, African Mining Vision, African Industrial Development Plan and others frameworks are positioning Africa to harness and beneficiate its vast natural resources, including land, water and forests; minerals and energy and its rich biodiversity and oceanic resources. Europe has great experience on all of these areas, and if we work smartly, coupled with African indigenous knowledge, we can all benefit from this.

Africa must therefore be given the policy space for its farmers and industries to compete fairly. We must address the contradiction that we are being asked to eliminate tariffs in 80% of trade, making African farmers even more vulnerable in the face of so called 'non-trade distorting' domestic support to farmers. This will not only impact on agriculture, but also on our nascent industries in all sectors, and put a halt to African industrialisation and diversification.

Africa needs the policy space to determine for itself what needs to be done with its natural and mineral resources, so that the continent can at last break out of the mould of exporter of raw materials, whilst jobs are being created elsewhere.

Our Pan African priorities furthermore include speeding up infrastructure development, the integration of the continent (including the creation of the Continental Free Trade Area) and improving intra-Africa trade and trade with the world. Our trade agreements must reinforce, rather than undermine the possibility of this African Free Trade Area and the growth of intra-African trade.

There are a number of further sectors cooperation such as infrastructure investment through the African Development Bank's Africa 50 private equity fund. We want European companies to form partnerships with local African businesses and entrepreneurs, to invest in agri-businesses, food-processing, green and blue economies, textile, ICT, manufacturing and other growing areas. We also need to work together to stop the illicit flows of capital from the continent.

We must take forward cooperation in the preservation of African biodiversity and forests, the protection of animal and fauna species, its fishing resources and in addressing the impact of climate change on the continent, in a manner that strengthen African capacities and institutions. This is necessary for humanity, not only for Africans and we must therefore increase capacities to protect our fauna and flora.

Excellencies,

None of the above can materialise and progress without silencing the guns. We must therefore redouble efforts to bring peace in South Sudan, CAR, Mali, Darfur, Somalia and the DRC, and consolidate peace in countries emerging from conflicts.

Africa leaders committed to silence the guns by 2020, by addressing root causes of conflicts, such as trade and dumping of small arms, destabilisation so as to plunder our natural resources, and transnational crime and terrorism. Africa has a duty to build societies that are inclusive, democratic, accountable and tolerant; that respect human rights and manage diversity and ensure that no one is marginalised or excluded.

As we therefore survey the vistas that surround us, we must ensure frank engagements, and strengthen our partnership, based on mutual understanding of each other's challenges, opportunities and aspirations.

I thank you