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**STATEMENT BY**

**THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION (AUC)**

**H.E DR. NKOSAZANA DLAMIN ZUMA,**

**DURING THE EXECUTIVE AND STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS  
OF THE CONFEDERATION OF AFRICAN FOOTBALL (CAF),**

**19 SEPTEMBER, 2014, AT 14:00 PM**

**AUC HEADQUATERS, ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

**H.E Dr. Issa Hayatou, President of the Confederation of African Football (CAF)**

**Distinguished Members of the CAF Executive Committee and Standing Committees**

**Excellencies, Members of the Permanent Representative Council of the AU and of the**

**Excellencies, representatives from the Diplomatic Corps and International Organisations**

**Invited Guests,**

**Representatives from the media,**

**Ladies and gentlemen**

On behalf of the African Union Commission, we are honoured to host the CAF Executive Committee and Standing Committee meetings and warmly welcome you to the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. We hope it will help to further strengthen the relations between our two African institutions.

The relations between the African Union and CAF are historical and important for the entire continent. Our two institutions share common Pan African values, as exemplified by the role that CAF played in the liberation struggle of Africa, in the development of the human potential of Africa through sport and increasingly in the promotion of peace and security.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

CAF and the AU are deeply aware that the common prosperity of the continent and its citizens, are critical to our agenda for peace and human security. Africa is at a point where it faces new and old challenges, like the Ebola crisis, the threat of terrorism and conflicts. At the same time, a number of economic, social and human development indicators are moving

in the right direction. Growth is being sustained at 5% and over, public and private investments in infrastructure across the majority of countries are increasing, we have halted and reversed the spread of the AIDs pandemic, intra-African trade is on the increase, maternal mortality is on the decline and we have more boys and girls in school than ever before in our history.

To sustain the positive trajectory, and decisively break the back of poverty and under-development, to ensure African prosperity, we must ensure faster and deeper political, social and economic transformation. The African Union, the Regional Economic Communities and Member states, as it finalizes its framework for the Africa we want, Agenda 2063, therefore continue to work on a number of key African priorities.

These priorities include investing in people, especially youth and women as our most precious resource; in health, education, science, technology, innovation and research.

It includes transforming and modernizing our agriculture and agro-processing, so as to end hunger and malnutrition, and enable the continent to feed itself and to be a net exporter of food. Woman, who are the majority of the agricultural work force, are also calling for modernization of agriculture, to banish the handheld hoe to the museums.

Our priorities also embrace the need for industrialization and value addition to our natural resources, so that we have inclusive growth and create jobs and economic opportunities for especially Africa's young people. The skilling of our young and the empowerment of women, including through access to capital, land, markets and infrastructure are critical, in all sectors of our economies, including the extractive industries, the green, blue and maritime economies and in infrastructure development and manufacturing.

All of the above means that we have to make decisive progress on the infrastructure backlogs: energy, transport, ICT, water and sanitation, and other social infrastructure. Many of our national development plans,

regional master plans and indeed Agenda 2063 therefore pay special attention to infrastructure development.

Last, but not least, our priorities also include ensuring peace and stability, through good governance, inclusive, caring and tolerant societies and through democratic, accountable, effective and people-centred public institutions.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

The contribution that CAF makes to the development of African football and to youth and community development more broadly, is a critical part of this Pan African drive for the Africa we want. When fans from across the continent cheer on their national and continental teams during the African Cup of Nations, Olympic or World Cup Games, it is an expression of our believe in our common destiny.

Yesterday when I met with the CAF President and Deputies, I said to him that in the coming decades, an African team must win the World Cup, in addition to hosting it again. We talk about Africa rising, we also want to see our football and sports as rising.

We are committed to invest in our people, especially health and education. For the sporting family, and more specifically football, this means promoting mass community and amateur sports that build healthy bodies, as well as the development of professional sport. It also means training our people in the various sports sciences, so that we can indeed produce the excellence we are capable of. The AU Commission division on sports stands ready to work with CAF on these issues.

Sports people also know that without infrastructure, it becomes difficult to do anything. We must therefore add to the Agenda 2063 list of infrastructure, the importance of sports infrastructure, not just big stadiums, but also facilities in all our schools, educational institutions and communities.

We remain steadfast that we will not move forward decisively, unless we empower the continent's youth and women. More is being done across the continent today to promote women's football (and in some of our countries our women's national teams outperform the male teams!). But, we do know that more can be done to invest in getting more girls to play the game, to build their self-confidence and to contribute towards keeping them in school, to reduce teenage parenthood and early marriages. When I said yesterday that African teams must start winning the World Cup, I was therefore also including our women's teams!

The AU and CAF are already cooperating on the Make Peace Happen Campaign, and we have footballers who serve as champions of this campaign. When Africa celebrated the Golden Jubilee of the forming of the OAU/AU last year, our Heads of State and Government pledged that by 2020, we would have silence all the guns on the continent. This is not a goal that can only be done by governments, we need all of African society to work towards this, and we look forward to continue working with CAF and the national associations towards achieving this objective.

Of course ending conflict and violence, and building caring and tolerant societies also apply to sports fans. We noted with concerns the incidents of violence at some sports event, and we add our voices to that of CAF, calling on fans to support their teams with their usual enthusiasm and vigor, but to do so in a peaceful manner.

The AU is working tirelessly to ensure that we end the Ebola crisis in parts of West Africa, through assistance to the countries concerned and by raising public awareness. We know that CAF has and can play a role in this regard, and we welcome all efforts.

Finally, Africa will not move forward unless it is able to raise resources for its development and its institutions. We must also work together on this, and ensure that we all contribute towards the building of a better Africa for all.

**Ladies and Gentlemen, Excellencies,**

In our meeting with the CAF President yesterday, we therefore agreed that CAF and the national associations will make their contributions and set out the aspirations for the Africa they want. The deadline for submission is the end of October, and we look forward to receiving your written submissions. We will incorporate it into the Agenda 2063 framework that will be adopted by the Summit in January 2015.

I wish the CAF Executive Council fruitful deliberations, at the AU Headquarters. This is your home and we look forward to welcome you back.