

**AFRICAN UNION**

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**STATEMENT**

by

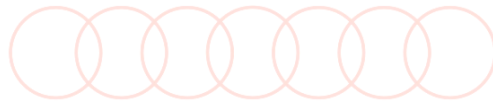
**AUC Chairperson, HE Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma  
Chairperson of the Africa Union Commission**

**to the Opening Session of the  
3<sup>rd</sup> Global Conference on Financing for Development**

**Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) – CR1**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Monday, 13 July, 2015 10:00 – 11:30**



**Your Excellency, Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki Moon**

**Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia and Chair of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Global Conference on Financing for Development, Excellency Hailemariam Desalgne**

**President Robert Gabriel Mugabe of the Republic of Zimbabwe and Chairperson of the African Union**

**Excellencies Heads of State and Government,**

**President of the UN General Assembly, Excellency Minister Sam Kutesa**

**President of the World Bank, Dr. Jim Yong Kim**

**IMF Managing Director, Ms. Christine Lagarde**

**WTO Director General Mr. Roberto Azevêdo**

**Excellencies, Leaders of Delegations and Ministers**

**Excellencies, Leaders of UN Agencies and other Regional and International Organisations**

**Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen**

On behalf of the African Union, a warm welcome to Africa, and to the friendly city of Addis Ababa.

Ten years ago, after he already announced his retirement from active public life, Nelson Mandela came out of retirement, making the following statement:

*Massive poverty and obscene inequality are such terrible scourges of our times - times in which the world boasts breathtaking advances in science, technology, industry and wealth accumulation - that they have to rank alongside slavery and apartheid as social evils.*

*Like slavery and apartheid, poverty is not natural. It is man-made and it can be overcome and eradicated by the actions of human beings.*

It is this realization that drove the global consensus on the Millennium Development Goals, and that brings us together around the Post 2015 development agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals and to this 3<sup>rd</sup> Global Conference on Financing for Development.

Indeed we made progress since the turn of the Millennium and since Mandela made this statement. Millions have been lifted out of poverty (with China leading the way), and we are hard at work to ensure that all children have access to education, that no woman die while giving birth to life, that the scourges of HIV, tuberculosis and malaria no longer become a death sentence to millions, and that all have access to health care, to water, sanitation and clean energy.

At the same, we are far from creating a world free of hunger, disease and want, which is after all what sustainable development is about.

As we therefore gather here today, from all corners of the globe, we have to ensure that we remain focused, on this universal human goal to create this better world for all.

The Africa continent, at the turn of the millennium was regarded as the development challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It too has come a long way. Changes are happening on our continent at all levels: demographics, political, social, environmental and economic.

Africa sees this as a window of opportunity, to set ourselves on a path towards transformation, away from underdevelopment, fragility and marginalization.

Our Agenda 2063, a fifty-year vision for the Africa, therefore prioritise investments in people, in their health, skills, and education; the development of infrastructure; agriculture and agro-processing and transforming African economies through industrialization.

Amongst all these priorities listed, investment in Africa's children and young people - who constitute over 70% of our population - is key.

That is why we move beyond the focus on primary education of the millennium development goals, to also ensure access to secondary, vocational education, and strengthening higher education.

In short, to develop our infrastructure, natural resources, including the blue economy, to industrialise and modernize our agriculture and agro-processing, Africa needs a skills revolution, especially in the sciences, technology, engineering and innovation.

As author and businessman Luke Johnson puts it:

*'... whilst capital might (always) be in short supply, human ingenuity and energy are an infinite resource.'*

Africa must therefore develop this infinite resource, men and women, girls and boys. The empowerment of women and girls for us is therefor not only an issue of rights and participation, but because it makes social and economic sense.

**Excellencies,**

The successful implementation of Agenda 2063, we believe, shall provide an enabling environment and the impetus for the global Post 2015 development agenda, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals.

Resource mobilization and financing are critical to the success of any development agenda. We have over the last few years paid greater attention to domestic resource mobilization, looking at how to stem illicit flows from the continent, the prudent management of public and tax revenues, at remittances, at intra Africa and foreign direct investments, in addition to effective use of development aid.

I trust that advances we made as humanity – in science, technology, innovation, in industry and wealth accumulation – will indeed be used for the common good of all humanity, to eliminate the scourge of poverty and gross inequality.

There has been a lot of emphasis on eliminating extreme poverty, but I have a difficulty.

Africans have been asking me when we talk about extreme poverty, “*are you saying that its ok if we are poor, as long as we are not extremely poor?*” Africa is therefore saying we must eliminate poverty, within the timeframe suggested.

This is the collective responsibility of our generations, and we don’t want to be judged as generations of missed opportunities.

The majority of Least Developed Countries, the majority of whom are in Africa, whilst they must improve their internal revenue collection and domestic resources, they need all our support in addition to their own efforts.

We shall implement our Agenda 2063, so that Africa is described not as the 21<sup>st</sup> development challenge, but as a continent that is integrated, peaceful, people-centred and prosperous. Every cent that will be allocated for this purpose, shall be put to good use.

I thank you and wish the conference fruitful deliberations.

