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Remarks

by

**Amb. John Kayode Shinkaiye,
Chief of Staff, Bureau of the Chairperson,
African Union Commission**

**At the Opening of the Senior Officials Meeting of
the 2nd Africa-India Forum Summit**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
May 20, 2011**

**Your Excellency, Dr. Ruben Maye,
Ambassador of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, and Chair of the
Permanent Representatives' Committee;
Your Excellency, Vice Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of
India, H.E. Amb. Vivek Katju;
Your Excellencies;
Senior Officials;
Distinguished participants;
Ladies and gentlemen;**

I am indeed pleased and honored to address this distinguished audience on the auspicious occasion of the opening of the Senior Officials Meeting of the Second Africa-India Forum Summit. This historic Summit is the climax of the close cooperation and interaction between Africa and India, which has stimulated a rich fabric of close, deep and multi-layered relations, over the years.

I recall with enthusiasm that our cooperation was borne out of a desire to entrench regular dialogue between Africa and India and to reinforce already existing relations. It was this desire that crystallized in the First Forum Summit that was held in New Delhi in April 2008. Undoubtedly, that Summit was a huge success and has recorded great achievements with the implementation of concrete projects and programmes for the benefit of our two peoples.

EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

This Second Forum Summit aims at consolidating and building upon the achievements we have recorded in our cooperation towards and to promote a new thrust in a mutually beneficial relationship.

It is our aspiration that this Summit Forum would add vigor to others already in existence, strengthen cooperation and reinforce our mutual desire to promote multilateralism as an effective paradigm for conducting inter-state relationship.

In this respect, Africa continues to count on the support of its partners, especially India, in its march towards sustainable growth and development and the up-liftment of the lives of its people. It is our belief that this cooperation will continue to provide dividends that would impact on key sectors of our economies, in the areas such as infrastructure, scientific research, innovation and technology, as well as medicine and pharmaceuticals. Trade between Africa and India which is in the region of US\$46 billion can be considerably improved, and has been rising, thanks to increased activities between Africa and India, promoted by the Forum Summit. Nevertheless, there is need to promote value addition to Africa's primary products, which will not only make them to become competitive and marketable, it will encourage Foreign Direct Investment and open up

Credit Lines for African entrepreneurs into the Indian market. It will also greatly increase the volume of trade between the two partners.

EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

Let me say that much work has already been done by the Senior Officials of the two sides in preparing for this meeting. We hope that this meeting will finalize the two expected outcome documents of the Summit, which are the Addis Ababa Declaration and the Framework for Enhanced Cooperation. It is our hope that we will be able to conclude a revised Plan of Action in due course, in order to implement and deliver on the expected outcomes of this Summit.

Before ending, let me use this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation to the Vice Minister Amb. Katju, the Additional Secretary Amb. Gurjit Singh, who we congratulate on his elevation to the new rank, Amb. Bishnoi and the entire staff of the Indian Embassy here and all their Colleagues in New Delhi, with who we have been working to ensure a successful Summit as well as a successful implementation of the Plan of Action we jointly agreed. As we have said repeatedly, the partnership with India has been exemplary, result oriented and mutually beneficial. We express our thanks to our Indian Colleagues for making it so.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the Management of the AU Commission and the Government and People of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for working closely together to host this Forum Summit and to the Indian side for their invaluable role and contributions to all aspects of the preparatory process.

I will not end these brief remarks without underscoring the commitment of the African Union and its Member States in working relentlessly with India, for the full implementation of the outcomes of this Forum Summit. And I use this opportunity to thank the Working Group of the Sub-Committee on Multilateral Cooperation, all the Members of the Sub-Committee and other Member States for their role in ensuring that this Forum Summit is successful. We will count on the cooperation of all of us from both sides for the effective implementation of what is agreed in Addis Ababa.

I thank you for listening.

**African Union Commission
Bureau of the Chairperson
Addis Ababa
20 May 2011**