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**Statement by H. E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma  
Chairperson of the African Union Commission**

**On the Occasion of the Celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary of the Establishment of the  
Organization of African Unity**

**Addis Ababa  
25 May 2013  
Millennium Hall**

**Your Excellency, the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Chairperson of the African Union;**  
**Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government;**  
**Heads of Delegation;**  
**The Secretary General of the United Nations;**  
**Your Excellencies Former Presidents;**  
**Honorable Ministers;**  
**The Executive Secretary of the ECA;**  
**Heads of AU and UN Organs;**  
**Members of the Permanent Representatives Committee;**  
**Distinguished Guests;**  
**Fellow Citizens from the Motherland and in the Diaspora**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is a great honor to welcome Your Excellencies, fellow Africans, the African Diaspora and all present in the city of Addis Ababa to the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Organization of the African Unity (OAU) and now the African Union.

We pay tribute to the pioneers of Pan-Africanism, on the continent and in the Diaspora, and to the Founders of the OAU for their wisdom and foresight to lay the foundations for the unity and solidarity of Africa.

We congratulate all African and Diaspora women, youth, workers, business, professionals, farmers, artists, intellectuals and civil society, for their commitment to the African cause.

We salute the heroines who fought in the struggles against slavery, colonialism and apartheid, who founded the Pan African Women's Organisation in 1962 and who demonstrated in words and action that human rights are indivisible and that the liberation of women is not an act of charity.

We lower our banners as we remember those who made the supreme sacrifice in the struggle for the liberation of Africa, and who restored our dignity.

These early generations embodied the Pan African values of selflessness, solidarity and service to the people, as in the part of the Oath taken by Amilcar Cabral in 1969 when he said:-

*"I swear that I will give my life, all my energy and all my courage, all the capacity that I have... until the day that I die, to the service of my people, of Guinea and Cape Verde... and to the service of the cause of humanity... This is what my work is."*

## **Esteemed Guests and Fellow Africans**

Africa's struggle against colonialism, oppression and apartheid experienced solidarity and international support from all freedom-loving people of the world.

The OAU exhibited the spirit of internationalism as it championed the African cause and supported the struggles of oppressed people in other parts of the world.

We are therefore pleased to celebrate with all our friends from across the globe, and continue to reinforce our solidarity and cooperation.

Today, across the length and breadth of Africa and in capitals of the world, Africa Day is being celebrated. Our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary is a beacon of the spirit of internationalism, solidarity and cooperation.

## **Fellow Africans**

Today we re-dedicate ourselves to the total restoration of our dignity and independence.

We pledge to restore the dignity of the African child, man and woman. We pledge to free ourselves from malnutrition and hunger, war and conflict, ignorance and disease, unemployment and poverty.

We pledge to take our destiny in our own hands, because “power resides in hard work, scientific investigations, in intellectual curiosity, in creative greatness and freedom, in the fullest exploration of our human powers, and in the truest independence.”

We pledge to foster stronger bonds – educational, cultural, political and economic – with the Diaspora.

As we start the journey of the next fifty years, we are clear about the task before us: to educate our populace, and ensure healthy bodies and minds; to modernize and expand Africa’s infrastructure and connect our peoples and countries; to grow our agriculture and agro-businesses so that we can feed ourselves and the world; to use our natural resources to industrialise and grow our shared prosperity; to invest in science, technology, research and innovation as enablers of rapid progress; and finally

to empower women and youth as the drivers of Africa's renaissance.

As we therefore develop Agenda 2063, we call on all Africans and the Diaspora to contribute to this journey, so that Africa takes its destiny into its own hands, so that we become masters of our own fate.

We are proud to be African. In this great task, let us think like men and women of action. And act like men and women of thought.

My Brothers and sisters, this is your time.

This is Africa's time.

Let us seize the moment.

Shukran

Asante sane

Merci beaucoup,

Obrigade

I thank you.