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**Statement by H.E. Dr. Nkozasana Dlamini ZUMA
Chairperson of the African Union Commission
At the 29th NEPAD Heads of State and Government orientation
Committee (HSGOC)**

Addis Ababa, 25 May 2013

Excellency, Haile Mariam DESALEGN, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Chairperson of the African Union

Excellency, Macky SALL, President of the Republic of Senegal and Chairperson of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee

Excellencies, Members of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee

Chief Executive Officer of the NEPAD Agency

Distinguished Heads of Regional Economic Communities and International Organizations

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored to address this breakfast Session of the NEPAD Heads of State and Government Orientation Committee.

I warmly welcome Your Excellencies to the headquarters of the African Union, including the newly-elected members of this high-level Committee.

This 29th NEPAD Meeting is being held as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the OAU and the African Union.

Your Excellencies will agree with me that the theme of our anniversary - **Pan Africanism and African Renaissance** - represents an expression of the shared vision and collective political will of African leaders to make transformation happen.

Your Excellencies will recall when the 2001 Lusaka Summit adopted NEPAD it recognized that *“issues such as the escalating poverty levels, underdevelopment and the continued marginalization of Africa needed a new radical intervention, spearheaded by African leaders.”* As we use this time of celebrations to reflect and plan, we must assess how far we are in implementing this radical intervention.

There is no question that Africa is forging ahead in a positive direction, if we look at such indicators as economic growth, foreign direct investment and public investments by our governments.

And yet, the continental infrastructure deficit remains huge. Africa’s total electricity generated equals that of Spain, even though we have twenty times the people.

Data from 2009 show that only 28% of Africa's population has access to electricity, compared to 70% in other parts of the developing world; and less than 20% of our roads were tarred in the same year.

Our industrial capacity is still extremely limited. Growth of the last decade is still mainly driven by global demand for Africa's minerals, oil and agricultural products; and the number of countries where manufacturing accounts for more than 15% of their GDP are still very few.

We therefore still need radical interventions, as Heads of State and Government pledged in Lusaka. As we develop our 50th Anniversary Declaration and our Agenda 2063, we must consider the interventions required to place Africa on a sustainable and rapid path to prosperity.

This must include much more ambitious plans to connect Africa with modern infrastructure, to connect all our capitals with rail and road; to address our energy, water and ICT needs and to develop our marine and agricultural sectors.

All these issues can only be done if we act together, with a Pan African vision of integrating our economies, promoting Africa-wide businesses and integrating our markets.

Most importantly, Africa cannot expect its development to be carried by others. Taking our destiny in our own hands means mobilizing Africa's domestic resources to drive its development.

Einstein said that we cannot keep on doing the same things, and expect different results.

As we enter the next fifty years, let us be resolute in our sustained efforts to build an integrated, people-centered and prosperous Africa, at peace with itself.

I thank you