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Closing Remarks

By

H.E. Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

**Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic
Republic of Ethiopia and chairperson of the Executive
Council of the African Union**

At

**The Conclusion of the 24th ordinary session of the
Executive Council of the African Union**

29 January 2014

Addis Ababa

Excellencies Ministers,

Excellency Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission,

Distinguished Heads of Delegation,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased that we have come to a timely and successful conclusion of our 24th ordinary session. We had quite a long list of items on our agenda but I am glad that we have been able to finalize our work with speed and efficiency. Of course, this would not have been possible without your support and cooperation and I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all of you.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last year marked the 10th anniversary of CAADP and the theme of our Union for 2014 is “Agriculture and Food Security” to renew our commitment to the transformation of Africa’s Agriculture for shared prosperity and improved livelihoods by harnessing opportunities for inclusive growth and sustainable development. In this regard, we considered the Report of the High Level Meeting on

Partnerships towards Ending Hunger in Africa, which was held on the 29 June 2013, in Addis Ababa and endorsed the Declaration of the High Level Meeting on Ending Hunger in Africa by the year 2025. We have also reaffirmed our commit to achieving this vision of hunger free Africa by 2025 by implementing the Maputo Declaration of July 2003 on Agriculture and Food Security.

During our session, we also considered other wider ranging issues of vital importance to the peace, development and integration agenda of our continent and adopted a number of decisions. What we did in particular was reflect on the state of our union over the past one year and the activities undertaken by the African Union Commission based on its strategic plan as well as the decisions of the policy organs of our Union.

In this regard, we noted with satisfaction the efforts made by the Commission in advancing the objective of our Union including the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the OAU/AU, the adoption of the strategic plan of the Commission, the elaboration of a framework on Agenda 2063, the development of a common African

position on the post-2015 development agenda, the implementation of the African Union Flagship projects and programmes, the enhancement of Africa's strategic partnership with the rest of the world, the promotion of peace and security as well as the consolidation of democratic governance.

However, we recognized the challenges we continue to face in certain areas, particularly with regard to peace and security. Of particular concern to us, in this connection, were the situation in South Sudan and Central Africa Republic. As you are aware, the Peace and Security Council will meet tomorrow at the level of Heads of State and Government to discuss the latest developments in these two countries and chart the way forward.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

But not everything is doom and gloom as far as the peace and security situation in our continent is concerned. We noted the positive developments in Madagascar and the successful conclusion of the transition process and the restoration of constitutional order. Therefore, in accordance with the decision of the 415th meeting of

the Peace and Security Council that lifted the suspension of Madagascar's participation in the activities of the African Union, we welcomed this sisterly country to our fold and congratulated the Malagasy people for the smooth and peaceful conduct of the legislative and presidential elections.

In terms of our partnership with the rest of the world, we have noted the progress made in Africa's various multilateral cooperation. However, we underscored the need to have an evaluation and the global review of Africa's strategic partnerships in the framework of Agenda 2063. We also agreed on the need to have a coherent strategy for our participation and speak with one voice with a view to advancing our common interest and maximize our benefits.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have considered the report of the Commission on the development of the Agenda 2063, which has been crafted as part of the Golden Jubilee celebration of the OAU/AU to guide the development and integration agenda of our continent for the coming

50 years so as to achieve our vision of a peaceful, integrated and prosperous Africa.

We also considered the outcome of our Ministerial Retreat in Bahir Dar and endorsed the proposal for the establishment of a Ministerial Committee to follow up Agenda 2063. I hope the African Union Commission in collaboration with the Ministerial Committee will expedite the remaining work and provide a fully developed framework document on Agenda 2063 during the next African Union Summit in June/July 2014. Let me take this opportunity to reiterate the call to all of you to provide the Commission with inputs so as to enrich and finalize the framework document.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

During our session, we have received the report of the various sectoral meetings, the Ministerial Sub-Committees of the Executive Council as well as other African Union Organs. We have also conducted elections for membership of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union and, once again, on behalf of all of you,

I wish to congratulate the 10 member States for their election representing their respective regions. Furthermore, we have deliberated on the items proposed by member States including the implementation of the integrated African Strategy for the seas and oceans, the extension of the Pan-African E-Network project within the framework of the Africa-India Partnership, the holding of an extraordinary Summit to evaluate the Ouagadougou Declaration and plan of action on employment and the fight against poverty adopted in 2004, the establishment of an African Center for Disease Control and Prevention as well as the adoption of the Encyclopedia Africana Project.

In general, I am sure we should be satisfied with our fruitful and productive deliberations on all the items on our agenda and every one of you deserve a lot of appreciation and thanks for your cooperation and constructive inputs, which has made it possible for us to finalize our work in record time. Personally, I am very grateful to you for assisting me to steer our session to a successful conclusion.

***Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

The past one year of Ethiopia's Chairmanship has indeed been exciting but also challenging for us given the heavy responsibility bestowed upon us. We would like to thank you most sincerely for your trust and confidence and I want to assure you that we have exerted every possible effort to effectively discharge our responsibilities. I hope we have lived up to the expectation of you the member States.

On our part, we are satisfied with the progress that we have made over the past one year in implementing the priorities that we have tried to highlight during our Chairmanship. These include the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the OAU/AU, the elaboration of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the enhancement of Africa's partnership with the rest of the world, the promotion of peace and security and democratic governance as well as building the institutional capacity of the African Union Commission. In this connection, we have worked closely with member States, the African Union Commission and all other relevant stakeholders and

we remain greatly indebted to all for the full support and cooperation that we have received.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finally, I would like to express a special thanks to our Chairperson of the Commission H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and her team for the excellent working relations that we have enjoyed over the past one year. My profound appreciation also goes to the Secretary-General of the Commission Ambassador Jean Mfasoni and his staff for his hard work and diligence in servicing the office of the Chairperson of the Union. Last but not least, I wish to commend the entire staff of the Commission including interpreters, translators and other support staff for facilitating our work.

Let me conclude my remarks by wishing you a pleasant stay in Addis Ababa for the remaining days of our Summit.

I thank you