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**OPENING REMARKS OF HER EXCELLENCY, MRS. FATIMA
HARAM ACYL**

COMMISSIONER FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY

AT THE CHINA-AFRICA

POVERTY REDUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

CONFERENCE

18 NOVEMBER, 2014

H.E Dr. Mulatu Teshome, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

H.E Mr. Si Shujie, Vice Minister of the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development (LGOP), People's Republic of China

H.E Mr. Ahmed Abitew, Minister of Industry, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

H.E Mr Carlos Lopes, UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary, ECA

H.E Mr. Eugene Owusu, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Ethiopia

H.E Mr. Xie Xiaoyan, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Ethiopia

Permanent Representatives of AU Member States

Representatives of Regional Economic Communities

Mr. President, Honourable Ministers, Dear Guests and co-Organizers from China, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr. NKOSAZANA DLAMINI-ZUMA, I have the honour and pleasure to welcome you all to the Africa-China Poverty Reduction and Development Conference, which presents yet another occasion to celebrate the fruitful partnership between Africa and China. The

Theme of our two days' discussion, ***Industrial Development: Cross-Perspectives from China and Africa***, is in line with both the *Program for Strengthening Cooperation on Poverty Reduction between the People's Republic of China and the African Union* signed by His Excellencies Mr. LI KEQIANG, Premier of the State Council of China and Dr. Nkosazana DLAMINI-ZUMA, Chairperson of the African Union Commission on 5th May 2014 in Addis Ababa, as well as the *Outcomes of the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation Beijing Action Plan (2013-2015)*.

Allow me to seize the opportunity to thank the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the International Poverty Reduction Centre in China (IPRCC), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), for co-organizing this reflection in collaboration with the Commission, on how to work together to reduce poverty in our respective countries and in the world in general.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is recognized and acknowledged that no country has been able to reach an acceptable level of socio-economic development without Industrialization. We need only to look at other regions of the world to see how industrialization can significantly contribute to the growth, development and better livelihoods of millions of people. Indeed, as countries industrialize, higher-income industrial jobs are created. China was once at a much lower level of development than Africa today. However, through hard work, sacrifices and pro-industrialization policies, it is now the second largest economy in the world behind the United States. The success of China is quite inspiring, and we Africans are learning from that experience and intend to take more advantage of our privileged partnership with China to progress.

Trade between Africa and China has been growing rapidly, especially in recent years. In 2010, total trade between Africa and China exceeded \$130 billion, and

by 2013, it topped \$210 billion, making China, Africa's biggest trading partner, compared to Africa's trade with EU at US\$ 137 billion and with the US at US\$ 96 billion, although the bulk of the trade is still resource commodities. China's and Africa's economies are interdependent. As China grows economically, there is greater demand for Africa's resources and for cooperation in technology and innovation. Population-wise, the demographic dividend of Africa in the coming years can be realised while the population elsewhere is ageing. From 2000 to 2012, China's imports from Africa grew from 2.47% to 6.23% and exports rose from 2.02% to 4.16%. For Africa, exports to China grew from 3.76% to 18.07% and imports rose from 3.88 % to 14.11%. In addition, trade is diversifying as well in the sectors of agriculture, mining, manufacturing, wholesale and retail, building industry, leasing and business services, finance, scientific research, technology services and geological prospecting, among others. Nowadays, tourism between Africa and China is growing both ways, without mentioning infrastructure development including the AU Headquarters, the tallest structure in Addis Ababa.

Africa-China relations have been deepening politically as well. In 2000, the cooperation between Africa and China was institutionalized through the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC). This instrument of collaboration has deeply contributed to strengthening the strategic partnership between Africa and China. After FOCAC in 2000, FOCAC II in 2003, FOCAC III in 2006, and FOCAC IV in 2009, we are now implementing FOCAC V, finalized in 2012. In the 2013-2015 Action Plan, it is stated that through cooperation in Poverty Reduction Strategies, China will continue to share experience in Poverty Reduction with African countries through Seminars and Training programmes in order to make poverty alleviation efforts more effective and raise capacity for common development. Another promising area of cooperation worth mentioning is the BRICS arrangement. All BRICS countries are members of the WTO and Africa counts on their collective action to bring the negotiations of the Doha Development Agenda to a fair and balanced conclusion

that delivers on development issues and to support Africa's position in those negotiations.

In the past three decades, China has demonstrated its ability to define its own pathway towards development by breaking economic record growth rates through rigorous development planning. China is today the second largest recipient of the world investment capital. Africa is also determined to take its development in its own hands while continuing to benefit from the experience of others. Hence, Agenda 2063 defines the new aspiration for Africa's socio-economic transformation. During this Africa-China conference, there will be an opportunity to discuss how we can work together to realize this aspiration.

On the international arena, Africa is participating actively in the definition of the new international agenda for poverty alleviation: the post-2015 Agenda. We acknowledge that although the Millennium Development Goals have shown some good results in some countries and in some areas, the absence of Industrialization as a critical component of the MDGs was clearly a fundamental omission. Therefore the Common African Position addresses the unfinished business of the MDGs by focusing, among others, on the area of diversification, industrialization and value addition through the strengthening of productive capacity, transformation of primary commodities and the development of value chains across sectors. Investing in improving competitiveness through recognized standards, quality of products and reduction of costs of production is essential as well as human resources and institutional development. Those are some areas for Africa-China cooperation.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Today and tomorrow we will have the opportunity to comment on presentations from eminent researchers. We will interact with experts from Member States on progress achieved, on outstanding challenges and above all on the way forward.

I invite you to focus on sharing of experience and developing a road map for deeper cooperation.

Mr. President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I conclude, let me borrow from Chinese words of wisdom:

If you want one year of prosperity,

grow grain,

If you want ten years of prosperity,

grow trees,

If you want one hundred years of prosperity,

grow people.

I deeply believe that the quality of human capital is one of the key ingredients to achieving African economic transformation. By sharing its experience, China through the IPRCC capacity development cooperation programme can contribute effectively to Africa's emergence.

I wish you a fruitful meeting.

Thank You