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STATEMENT

BY

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**COMMISSIONER FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS,
AFRICAN UNION**

**AT THE FIFTH CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN MINISTERS IN CHARGE
OF INTEGRATION (COMAI V)**

INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL, NAIROBI, KENYA

9 SEPTEMBER 2011

Honourable Wycliffe Ambetsa Oparanya, Minister of State for Planning, National Development and Vision 2030

Honourable Ministers in Charge of Integration

Excellency Abdoulie Janneh, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa and United Nations Under-Secretary General

Your Excellencies Ambassadors

Dr. Edward Sambili, Principal Secretary for Planning, National Development and Vision 2030

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

We are now approaching the end of this very successful 5th Conference of African Ministers in Charge of Integration, which has been taking place in this beautiful and hospitable city of Nairobi, in Kenya, our “home away from home”, in the words of Honourable E. Kalonzo Musyoka, Vice President of the Republic of Kenya and Minister of Home Affairs, in his remarks when he officially opened your Conference.

Your discussions within the last two days have been of extremely high quality, rich and very enlightening. Your recommendations, if adopted by our Heads of State and Government, and implemented by us all, Member States, the Regional Economic Communities, the African Union Commission, and various other stakeholders, should surely result in significant strides being made in the implementation of our integration and development agenda, and thus contribute to the realization of the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community and meeting the objectives of the African Union, as contained in its Constitutive Act .

In discussing the theme of the Conference, for example, you have underlined the interdependence and complementarity between integration and sovereignty and recommended that the notion of sovereignty be reviewed “in light of global realities illustrated by globalization”. Further, you have recommended that Member States be called upon to accelerate the integration process through actions, including encouraging free movement of persons, goods, services and capital, effective implementation of Declarations, Decisions and Legal Instruments adopted within the framework of Africa’s integration process, and developing an effective policy harmonization and coordination framework.

During the Conference, you have also examined the Status of Integration in Africa and recommended, among others, that the African Union Member States be encouraged to streamline integration programmes and projects in their national development plans, and that they accelerate the removal of obstacles to free movement of persons, goods, capital and services. Regarding the Minimum Integration Programme (MIP) Action Plan, you have recommended that the revised Plan be submitted for adoption by the African Union Policy Organs. On the Study on the Quantification of Scenarios on the Rationalization of the RECs, you have recognized, and rightly so, the progress being made by the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Arrangement to create a single Free Trade Area (FTA) and recommended that the other Regional Economic Communities emulate this Arrangement.

My closing remarks will be incomplete if I do not mention that your Conference also benefited from a report on current work of the High Level Panel on Alternative Funding Sources for the African Union. It cannot be over-emphasized that the current system of financing the African Union

dependent on Assessed Contributions of Member States and Partner contributions is not any longer sustainable. The African Union needs simply to identify Alternative Sources of Financing that are reliable, sufficient and sustainable. It is, therefore, my sincere hope that all of us, Member States, the Regional Economic Communities, and other Stakeholders, will support these on-going efforts to identify Alternative Funding Sources for the African Union.

Excellencies

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

In conclusion, on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E. Dr. Jean Ping, and indeed on my own behalf, please allow me to once again thank the Government and People of Kenya for having hosted this important meeting and ensured that it was a great success. I wish to recognize the special role played by Honourable Minister Oparanya; his Principal Secretary, Dr. Edward Sambili; and all staff of the Kenyan Ministry of Planning, National Development and Vision 2030. I also would like to acknowledge the significant contributions made by various other Kenyan Government Ministries and Departments, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Home Affairs; the management and staff of Intercontinental Nairobi; and the hardworking and diligent staff of the African Union Commission, that contributed to the success of this 5th African Union Conference of Ministers in charge of Integration.

Last but not least, I wish to sincerely thank and commend all the Ministers in charge of Integration and the various delegations of African Union

Member States for having honoured us with your presence despite your busy schedules, a clear manifestation of your commitment to the implementation of Africa' Integration and Development Agenda. I also wish to give a special mention to all the Regional and International Organizations for having contributed to the success of this Conference. You can count on the African Union Commission to work closely with you all in the realization of the African Union vision of an "Integrated, Prosperous and Peaceful Africa".

"Bon voyage" to each and every one of you, and may God continue to bless this beautiful and hospitable country and, of course, you all.

I thank you.