



**STATEMENT BY H.E. DR. AISHA L. ABDULLAHI (AMB.)
COMMISSIONER FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS
AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

AT

**THE NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON THE MO FOUNDATION
GOVERNANCE INDICATORS FOR THE REPUBLIC OF
DJIBOUTI**

**DJIBOUTI, DJIBOUTI
2 JULY 2013**

Your Excellency, The Prime Minister of the Republic of Djibouti

Your Excellency, Madam Minister of Justice and Human Rights of the Republic of Djibouti

Your Excellencies, Ministers and Officials of the Government of the Republic of Djibouti

Your Excellency, Mr. Abdullahi Janneh, Member of the Board of Mo Foundation

Excellencies Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Honorable Representatives of IGAD, International and Regional Organizations

Honorable Representatives of the Civil Society Organizations

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a singular honor and a great privilege for me to address this gathering on behalf of the African Union Commission, and I would like to apologize for not being able to be with you from the beginning of the proceedings of this event due to my engagement in another African Union's mission.

At the outset, allow me first to express my gratitude to Government and People of the Republic of Djibouti for the great hospitality and warm welcome extended to me and my delegation since our arrival in this beautiful city of Djibouti. I also wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Honorable Minister of Justice and Human Rights and the Mo Foundation for the invitation extended to me to participate in this National Workshop on the Mo Foundation Governance Indicators of the Republic of Djibouti.

This is my first visit to the Republic of Djibouti, but I am sure it will not be the last. In fact, I am delighted to be in this beautiful city of Djibouti and more so due to the significant contribution by the Republic of Djibouti to the agenda of the African Union, particularly in the area of promotion and protection of human and peoples' rights.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

As you all know, the African Union just began a yearlong celebration of the 10th anniversary since its transformation from the Organization of African Unity and the 50th

anniversary since the establishment of the OAU. It is indeed a transformation from the struggle to liberate the continent and safeguard the independence of African States to a determination to join efforts to work for a united, prosperous and peaceful Africa.

The mandate of the Department of Political Affairs of the African Union Commission includes strengthening governance, consolidating democracy, promoting and protecting human and people's rights, rule of law, constitutionalism and seeking durable solutions to humanitarian affairs. The Department is also leading the efforts of the African Union Commission to address the challenges that face our Continent in the area of good governance, consolidation of democracy, rule of law, constitutionalism and respect for human and people's rights.

Therefore, in 2007 the Department of Political Affairs introduced the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance, which entered into force on 15 February 2012. The Charter aims at deepening the culture of rule of law, strengthening good governance, and promoting human rights in all AU Member States. The charter also reflects the fact that the traditional societies in Africa had very democratic setups. Democracy therefore is not an alien concept that should be forced onto Africans. And indeed Africa is making progress with many States standing out as proud examples with giant strides in the right direction by holding fair and transparent elections on a regular basis.

In the same vein, the Department of Political Affairs introduced the African Governance Architecture (AGA) as the overall political and institutional framework for the promotion of democracy, governance and human rights in Africa. The "AGA", as we fondly call it, provides the framework to promote structural conflict prevention in Africa by promoting democracy and good governance.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is indeed worthy noting that the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG) provides an annual assessment of governance performance in Africa based on 88

indicators drawn from 23 independent international data providers. The IIAG is, therefore, regarded as one of the most comprehensive collection of data on African governance.

The IIAG provides a framework for citizens, public authorities and partners to assess the effective delivery of public goods and services. It is also an instrument for all stakeholders to robustly assess policy outcomes and serves as a means to ensure optimal allocation of resources. Its assessments are envisaged as a tool to assist in governance and provide best practices in terms of responsible management and model for success based on a balanced, equitable and inclusive approach to governance and the outcomes of this exercise as always well received by the African Union Commission.

On another hand, the Africa Governance Architecture (AGA) through its Platform seeks to facilitate implementation, support and compliment efforts by Member States to achieve their commitments under article 3 of the AU Constitutive Act and other relevant AU pronouncements. These commitments permeate various policy pronouncements and instruments at the regional and continental level. These commitments amongst others include: human rights and the rule of law, popular participation, accountability and transparency, judicial framework, democratic institutions, elections, public participation, and service delivery.

The African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance Articles, 44, 45 and 49 obligates the African Union Commission to among others “develop benchmarks for the implementation of the Charter and evaluate compliance by State Parties.” Executive Council Decision on the African Governance Architecture (AGA) and its Platform (EX.CL/Dec.635 (XVIII)) reinforces that mandate as it requires the AUC to develop benchmarks and tools, undertake periodic reviews, coordinate and monitor compliance, foster the exchange of information and lessons learned and assist Member States to implement the Charter, with a view to strengthen, improve and consolidate governance and democracy on the continent.

It is in this context that the Department of Political Affairs, AUC is charged with leading and providing guidance on how the AUC executes that mandate. This includes developing the benchmarking and monitoring instrument for governance assessments by the AU; and consolidating and proposing processes and methods that should be applied in the development of the benchmarks of states' reporting as well as the envisaged African Union Governance Report.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen:

As we are gathering here today to celebrate the job well-done by the government of the Republic of Djibouti in the promotion of democracy and good governance, I wish to take this opportunity to reiterate my personal commitment as well as of my Department to support the efforts of the government of Djibouti by providing all technical and political support in the areas of democracy, governance and the promotion and protection of human rights. No doubt that Djibouti today is progressing in the promotion of good governance in Africa, and to become a model for other African Member States, we really hope that the government of Djibouti will soon ratify and implement the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

Allow me before I conclude to highlight the areas of complementarity between the African Union Governance Report of Africa Governance Architecture (AGA) and the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG):

1. First of all, it is clear that the two mechanisms have a lot to achieve in terms of synergising for good governance. **That is why the Department of Political Affairs and the Mo Ibrahim Foundation are working closely hand-in-hand to promote democracy and good governance on the continent.**
2. The index is carried out based on its adopted definition of governance as the ability of a government to deliver safety and security, rule of law and transparency, participation and human rights, economic opportunities and human development. The AGA on the other hand focuses more on the implantation of various policy pronouncements related to human rights and the rule of law,

popular participation, accountability and transparency, judicial framework, elections and democratic institutions as well as service delivery (Public service and local governance). **Therefore, both assessments provide a balance between the impact of governance policies and reforms on changing (whether positive or negative) human development indices.**

3. The IIAG is a private venture and thus its reports are largely seen as antagonistic and often critical. The AU Governance Report however is based on the commitments of member states to create a mechanism to monitor implementation progress of commitments. **Thus both provide an opportunity of peer review between a mandatory exercise called for by the member states themselves and an independent review by citizens.**
4. The IIAG provides a framework that can be peer reviewed alongside other continental and regional assessments for the development of a State Reporting Guideline for state assessments under the African Charter for Democracy, Elections and Governance. Therefore, providing technical and financial support for the Africa Governance Architecture will be serving two pronged objectives for the Mo Ibrahim Foundation; (a) Is supporting a continental owned process as a commitment to improving democratic governance beyond just assessing the results and (b) AGA provides a perfect source of data that can be resourced and accessed. This can be part of its initiatives to develop new sources of data considering the number of mechanisms under the AGA Platform with mandatory state reporting mandates.

In conclusion, I wish to congratulate the Government and the People of the Republic of Djibouti for successfully undergoing this exercise, and would like to reaffirm my personal commitment and that of my Department to provide all possible technical support to ensure effective implementations of the outcomes and recommendations.

Once again allow me to express my gratitude to President, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Justice and Human Rights, the entire government and people of the

Republic of Djibouti for the hospitality and warm welcome accorded to me and my delegation and I wish you successful deliberations and conclusions.

I thank you