



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

**AT THE CONSTITUTIVE CONFERENCE OF AFRICAN  
POLITICAL PARTIES**

**KHARTOUM, SUDAN  
27 APRIL 2013**

**Your Excellency, Lieutenant General Omar Hassan Ahmad Al-Bashir, President of the Republic of the Sudan and the President of the National Congress**

**Your Excellency, The First Vice President**

**Your Excellency, The Vice President**

**Your Excellency, the Speaker of the National Assembly**

**Your Excellences, Ministers, Governors and Members of the Government of the Republic of the Sudan**

**Honorable Members of the National Assembly**

**Excellences Representatives of the African Political Parties**

**Excellences Members of the Diplomatic Corps,**

**Honorable Representatives of 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 august body on behalf of H.E. Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission who is unable to be present here today at the opening ceremony of the Constitutive Conference of African Political Parties taking place here in Khartoum, Sudan.

At the outset, allow me first to express my gratitude to President of the Republic of the Sudan, his government and the Sudanese people for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation since our arrival in this beautiful city of Khartoum.

I also wish to extend my heartfelt appreciation to H.E. Dr. Nafie Ali Nafie, the Deputy President for the Affairs of the National Congress of the Sudan, as well as the entire staff of the General Secretariat of the party for the invitation extended to the African Union Commission and for their dedication and commitment that made the convening of this meeting a reality.

This is my first visit to the Sudan and I am sure it will not be the last, and I am delighted to be in this beautiful city of Khartoum and more so due to the significant

contribution by the Republic of Sudan to the Pan Africanism and African Renaissance agenda of the African Union, which is the theme and focus of attention in 2013. The people of the Sudan are leading architects of the African unity and integration guided by the African Shared Values and Principles of the African Union.

**Excellences, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:**

The African Union is celebrating 10 years since its transformation from the Organization of African Unity and 50 Years 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.

While there is no doubt that we have made remarkable progress since the OAU/AU was established in 1963, it has not been an easy road. There has been numerous challenges but not insurmountable. Conflicts continue to bedevil our continent as is the case at the moment in the Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of Congo as well as other Member States.

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. And we see the participation in this Consultation as an opportunity to share best practices, practical guidance as well as ideas and strategies on how we can strengthen the promotion of good governance and consolidate democracy on our beloved continent.

The African Union has championed and facilitated the development and adoption of important instruments that pronounce on our African Shared Values. While we share as African peoples common values that underpin our common purpose to live in peace and harmony with each other, I must hasten to admit that I still reflect constantly on whether we have or are doing enough as a continent in addressing challenges affecting our people, in particular in the area of democracy, governance and human rights.

The centre piece of our ability to address the challenges that face our Continent revolve(s) around issues 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.

In the same vein, it is our hope and wishes that this meeting will result in the establishment of a Council for African Political Parties in order to contribute to the advancement of democracy and good governance on the continent as well as to support the AU efforts to ensure full ratification of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

**Excellences, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen:**

Before I conclude, I would like to reaffirm my personal commitment and that of my Department to foster greater collaboration with your proposed Council of African Political Parties in the areas of governance, democracy, human rights and humanitarian affairs. We intend to do this through a more robust and constructive dialogue on a regular basis to assess the progress we are making as a continent on these issues and by facilitating lessons sharing on how we can improve the lives of African peoples.

Once again allow me to express my gratitude to President, the government and the people of Republic of Sudan for their hospitality and warm welcome accorded to me and my delegation and I wish you successful deliberations and conclusions.

I thank you.