

**Remarks by the Representative of the Commission at the
Opening Session of the 4th Africa – Korea Forum
Senior Officials Meeting**

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

6 December 2016

Excellency, **Ambassador Cherif Mahamat**, Chairperson of the African Union Permanent Representatives Committee,

Excellencies, Esteemed Ambassadors and distinguished Members of the **Korean Delegation**,

Excellency, **Ambassador WAHIDE Belay**, Representative of the Government of Ethiopia, host of the 4th Africa – Korea Forum,

Excellencies, Representatives of the African Union Banjul Formula, Representatives of the Permanent Representatives Committee,

AUC representatives,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All protocol observed,

A warm welcome to all participants to the fourth Africa - Korea Senior Official Meeting.

I wish to take this opportunity to specially greet our guests and partner from Korea who travelled so long to be here in this beautiful and peaceful city of Addis Ababa, the capital of Africa.

The African Union Commission is really honored to provide necessary support to ensure a perfect organization and successful holding of the 4th Africa – Korea Forum.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

The Senior Official Meeting has been convened to prepare the work of the 4th Africa-Korea Ministerial Forum scheduled for 7 December 2016, and to ensure that the Forum is held without controversial issues during the Ministerial Conference.

To do so, it will be important for us to critically examine the draft Ministerial documents, which have passed through the Policy Organs of both sides, so as to ensure that the Ministerial Forum is held in the most amiable and conducive manner and finally agree on issues that would promote a mutually beneficial Africa-Korea cooperation.

At this juncture, let me commend all the Members of the Preparatory Committees for the job well done in preparing for this Summit.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Ten years after the launch of the Africa - Korea Forum in 2006 in Seoul at the initiative of Former President Roh Moo-hyun, it is clear that this initiative has strengthened the relationship between African countries and Korea.

The Commission of the African Union recognizes and welcomes the progress made in the bilateral cooperation between African countries and Korea. However, a new dimension needs to be added to the momentum in order to redirect focus on regional and continental projects and programs.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

Fifty years ago, the first thirty-three (33) independent African states gathered here in Addis Ababa, to form the Organization of African Union (OAU) which was united in purpose to accelerate the process of integration that is imperative to the development of the continent. Now the African Union (AU) is looking ahead towards the next fifty years.

On the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of the OAU in May 2013, Africa's political leadership acknowledged its past achievements and challenges and rededicated itself to the Pan African vision of "an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena."

The AU Summit tasked the African Union Commission (AUC), supported by the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) and other African institutions to prepare a 50-year continental agenda through a people-driven process.

Agenda 2063 was developed through an extensive consultative process involving various African stakeholders, including the youth, women, Civil Society Organizations, the Diaspora, African Think Tanks and Research Institutions, etc. and is underscored by the mutual appreciation and responsiveness to African concerns.

The call from the African Union Commission towards all our strategic partners, and we think Korea is part of them, is to join our efforts in a win-win partnership for the implementation of the First Ten Year Implementation Plan of the Agenda 2063 which is already in motion

**Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

The African side has drafted the Addis Ababa Declaration and the Framework for Cooperation for the fourth Africa – Korea Ministerial Forum based on priority areas enshrined in the Agenda 2063 and taking into consideration the Republic of Korea core competences and capabilities.

We expect our partner, Korea to understand the paradigm shift in the African Affairs and to share with us the huge Korean experience in creating conducive environment for economic development and in making possible a skill revolution process in Africa. As we are assembled here, we can jointly put our efforts together and enrich our partnership for shared benefits.

Through our joint consultations today, it is my hope that we arrive at a consensus on these documents, so that they can be presented for favor of consideration at the Ministerial Meeting.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I look forward to the discussions that will be held in this meeting. I wish a great success to our works.

I thank you.