



**SPEECH**

**BY**

**H. E. PROF. SARAH ANYANG AGBOR  
COMMISSIONER,  
HUMAN RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

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**OPENING OF THE ARAB AND AFRICAN YOUTH PLATFORM**

**ASWAN EGYPT**

**Excellences, I stand on existing protocols**

## THE ROLE OF YOUTH IN AFRICA UNION'S AGENDA FOR 2019 AND OUR LONG TERM AGENDA 2063

Agenda 2063 is the Vision of an integrated, prosperous Africa, driven by its own competent and Skilled citizens able to play in the global arena and has 7 Aspirations. The African union is working towards empowering the role of youth at different arenas in the different departmental mandates. Aspiration six of Agenda 2063 is calling to “An Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential offered by people, especially its women and youth and caring for children”. The efforts to support youth empowerment is translated through different decisions in the commission.

The declaration of 2017 as the year of Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth by the AU Heads of State and Government served as a springboard for accelerated action on youth development on the continent. In last few years, the work towards investing in young people to harness Africa's demographic dividend continues to take precedence on the march to The Africa We Want. The African Union's work on youth development is targeted through the four pillars of the Demographic Dividend as identified by the roadmap: Employment and Entrepreneurship, Education and Skills Development, Health and Wellbeing, and Rights, Governance and Youth Empowerment.

Your Excellences, The empowerment of the Youth is essential for the vision of Agenda 2063. Excellences we need to translate strategies to empower our youth, our demographic asset which could also be a demographic bomb if we do not harness our demographic dividend through investments in youth. We need to walk the talks from strategies to implementation and action. How do we cage into your wealth of connection to access the private sector and industries to help the youth with innovations to have Start Ups and Spin Ups? I witnessed the numbers of companies that participated at the World Youth Forum 2018 when I came to represent the Chairperson of AUC H.E Moussa Faki Mahamat, a man with a vision for the total emancipation and empowerment of youth.

As parts of the AU efforts to empower youth and fostering a sense of belonging to our dear continent, the chairperson appointed a Special Youth envoy for youth in the person of Miss Aya Chebbi and inaugurates a Youth Advisory Board in 2018. To engage with them, just as your excellency have exemplified in this conference, in April 24-27, Chairperson of AUC will launch special initiative to focus on youth empowerment aiming to unite the African youth and support young African on four pillars; Education, employment, entrepreneurship and engagement. Moreover there is the Africa Youth Day celebrated annually every first of November as instituted by the Executive Council. The Model African union gives an opportunity

for the African youth to study and familiarize themselves through the simulating of AU decision making processes.

For 2019 the Chairperson have a vision of JUNIOR PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMME to be launched during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Pan African Youth Congress in April 24-27, 2019 , Addis Ababa with the theme; AFRICA UNITE FOR YOUTH-BRIDGING THE GAP AND REACHING THE YOUTH INITIATIVE. We pray you oblige us with your support and expertise to bring in some of the young entrepreneurs to this event and also some of the companies you have here. The April Youth event could be in the spirit of Ubuntu a continuation and joint vision of AU Chairperson and AUC Chairperson because of your dreams and commitment of the youth of Africa and the Africa we want. So that in April these companies can interact with the young African innovators and entrepreneurs to see how they can translate their ideas into marketable good for commercialization. They can participate at the Chairperson's Commitment Summit where we expect financial gurus, Companies and Industries to commit to a common vision to reach out to youth of Africa in four segments: Engagement, Education, Entrepreneurship and Empowerment through mentoring, financial support and technical expertise.

The Continental Education strategy for Africa is implemented through thematic Clusters and the establishment of the 5 Pan African university Institutes ( PAUWES, PAUSTI, PAULESI, PAUGHSS and PAUSS) . African leaders sponsor selected Youth at Masters and PhD levels.

Furthermore there is the African Union Youth Volunteers corps a flagship programme of the AU which recruits, trains and deploys young African Professionals as volunteers for a period of 12 months across the continent. AU-AYVC promotes volunteerism to deepen the status of young people in Africa as key actors in Africa's development targets and goals, enhancing their participation in policy development as well as design and implementation of relevant interventions towards the AU Agenda 2063-The Africa We Want.

The AU-CIEFFA Programme enhances the education of women and girls in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.

The AUC continues to redouble its efforts to create the necessary strategies to boost the labor landscape and promote entrepreneurship among Africa's youth. The July 2017 AU Heads of State and Government Summit established an African Youth Development Fund, and authorized the allocation of at least 1% of the Commission's program budget to the fund. In this regard, the AUC is finalizing the framework for the operationalization of the Youth Development Fund, and internal activities are underway to install the provisions for allocation of resources toward the fund.

Moreover in their drive for concrete actions towards the youth, The African union assembly and member states also adopted the decision to increase the percentage of the employment of young people to 35%. We are working with every department in the commission to lead by example the youth empowerment within the African Union commission.

In 2014, we adopted a ten year Science and Technology and innovation Strategy for Africa, (STISA 2024) as a common platform for the continent to collectively and inclusively deploy STI in all sectors of our socio-economic development. Your Excellency, we request as one of the distinguished and esteemed Champions of C10 for the promotion of ESTI to use the highest political office of the African union to strengthen multi-sectorial, multi-agency coordination of efforts to ensure the concrete implementation of STI.

CESA 2016-24 Thematic clusters have been launched continentally and the Home grown School feeding is one of the clusters. African School Feeding through the Home Grown School Feeding to help all children especially those underprivileged by poverty related factors, particularly girl children to access Education, remain in school and succeed. African School Feeding ensures Zero hunger and supports community development, we have started organizing the Innovating Education Expo to showcase practical, social and technological innovations aimed at enhancing access, quality, relevance and inclusion in education in order to realize the potential for empowerment, employability and inventiveness. The African union Research grants AURG promotes research collaboration and capacitates the youth with competences and skills.

In addition, we also encourage member states to implement the Continental Technical and Vocational Educational Strategy to promote entrepreneurship and the acquisition of skills through investing in technical education and forming a synergy between policy makers, private sector and the youth. This is the SKILLS INTIATIVE FOR AFRICA (SIFA) project. We have youth led programmes to promote for effective political and economic participation and to strengthen their role in the continent

The commission in tackling the most important issues and challenges facing the youth have put in place certain policies and strategies to counter terrorism and illegal migration and unemployment in the departments of Human Resources, Science and Technology, Peace and Security, Political Affairs, Social Affairs, Economy Affairs, Trade And Industry, Infrastructure and Energy and Rural Economy and Agriculture. In our different departmental mandates we are to increase youth participation, achieve the vision of building human capacity, explore

linkage to other projects and programmes implemented on the continent to maximize impact and leverage resources.

I am happy that you are at the center of the AU through your chairmanship because you will definitely bring that expertise and magic to your new position. We are counting on the chairmanship of Egypt to give special support to youth issues especially with such strong expertise and common grounds we see here in this conference.

Your Excellency, we congratulate you and your government for winning the Hosting of the African Space Agency purely on Merit and we hope you will bring your skills and competences to make STI shine for collective cost of AU.

I thank you.