



**STATEMENT BY H.E KWESI QUARTEY
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

ON THE OCCASION OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE 63RD AFRICA UNION DAY

***THEME 19: "THE YEAR OF REFUGEES, RETURN, RETURNEES AND INTERNALLY
DISPLACED PERSONS' TOWARD DURABLE SOLUTIONS FORCED DISPLACEMENT IN
AFRICA"***

**SATURDAY, MAY 25, 2019
AUC MANDELA HALL
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**



Excellences

Distinguished Guest

Ladies and Gentlemen

Every year on May 25, we come together to celebrate the achievement and reflect on the challenges our organization, African Union Members States and indeed all individuals Africans face. It is important that we use the Africa Day 2019 to celebrate our collective achievements and chart a new paths to boldly confront and address our contemporary challenges.

Please allow me first to congratulate and commend all those who are involved in the organization of this excellent programme. It is also great to see several partners and stakeholders being involved in this event.

Today Africa is more confident, dynamic and energetic continent.

Many areas are urbanizing offering opportunities to the youth. Technology and innovation is helping unleash their incredible potentials Governments are taking serious step towards addressing the challenge of climate change. Economies are becoming integrated and major development such as the coming into force of the African Continental Free Trade (ACFTA) will boost economic growth and trade integration. The movement of people within African has become easier.

Forward looking framework such as the Agenda 2063 provide blue print for people-centred governance and development across sectors. The 1969 AOU Refugee Convention and the Kampala Convention on Internally Displaced People (DIPs), whose respective 50th and 10th anniversaries we are marking in 2019, also provide a solid legal regional foundation for action in providing protection, assistance and solutions for one of the most venerable Africans i.e. those who are displaced.

Your Excellencies, Invited Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Despite the aforementioned positive developments, Africa is unfortunately beset by major setbacks. This year's commemoration of the Africa Day comes at a time when the African Union Commission (AUC) and its Members States, Regional Economic



Communities, and the different organs and departments are collaborating to implement activities in relation to one of the most serious challenge of our time i.e. forced displacement.

The AU theme for the year 2019 “Refugees Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solution to Forced Displacement in Africa” is indeed timely.

Let’s us mark the 2019 Africa Day by fully recognizing that displaced persons on the African continent are also Africans and that they deserve equal recognition, protection and solutions for their situation. For Millions, however, this is far from reality.

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, more than 6.4 million refugees and asylum-seekers have fled their countries seeking asylum and refuge in another African country. More than 15.5 Million people are displaced within their countries fleeing conflict, violence, natural disasters and adverse effects of climate change.

Forced displacement is a major challenge of our time, presenting major setback to governance, economic development and political stability. The vast majority of the displaced are women and children. In protracted displaced situations, the youth lose years of education that is crucial for their future.

Your Excellencies, Invited Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Let this day offer us yet another opportunities to rise to the challenges and confront the problem of forced displacement with determination, action-oriented approaches and sense of urgency.

Thank you.