

Opening Remarks

PRC Formal Sitting (17-18 June 2019)

(Excellency, Moussa Faki Mohamed, Chairperson of the African Union Commission)

Excellency, (Deputy Chairperson of the Commission) and honorable Commissioners,

Excellencies, Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives to the African Union,

- 1- It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the inauguration of the 38th Session of the official sitting of the Permanent Representatives Committee of the African Union.
- 2- Our formal sitting today marks the passage of 4 months of the Egyptian Chairmanship of this august house. Four months of sincere collaboration and cooperative spirit among all those who are involved in the proceedings of the Permanent Representative Committee.
- 3- In this context, allow me to share with you some highlights of the work we have accomplished up to date, Since mid-February 2019, we held 14 working sessions of the PRC in addition to two retreats in Cairo and Tunisia>
- 4- 30% of these meetings were dedicated to organizing the house including through engaging with the chairs of the PRC subcommittees, directors of departments of the African Union Commission in addition to renewing the established practice of strong cooperation between the PRC and the PSC.

- 5- 40% of our work during the previous months was also devoted to the preparations for the Niamey Coordination Meeting and the Extraordinary Assembly at which the AFCFTA will be launched, through holding of the two retreats in Cairo and Tunisia under the title “The Road to Niamey” as well as a number of other relevant activities.
- 6- The rest of the sessions (30%) focused on holding discussions with high level guests on topics of relevance to the African continent and as a mean to emphasize the role of the PRC as a platform for engagement with the international community. This included a meeting with the Special Representative of the UNSG to the AU, and the president of the HRC in Geneva. We are currently planning an ambitious program of similar high level engagements starting with the President of the UN General Assembly on 11 July 2019. I am also looking forward to have the next African President of the General Assembly, Professor Tijjani, to speak before the PRC during the upcoming fall.

Excellencies,

- 7- Our current sessions is characterized with a unique nature as it will consider and advise on strategic matters including for the effective implementation of the reform package.
- 8- The PRC will contribute to the planning of the 1st Mid-Year Coordination Meeting and our ambitions that it produces concrete value added to the effective division of labor between AU, RECs and Member States.

- 9- This session is also tasked with preparing for the historic Assembly that will launch the AfCFTA being the hallmark of African continental integration.
- 10- Our meetings are entrusted as well to consider the proposal of the new organizational structure of the African Union Commission with a view to enhancing the efficiency and agility of the African House. I should not miss that our deliberations about the 2020 budget carry great weight, being the last annual budget before the inception of the new structure.
- 11- This distinct and unique responsibilities are added to a myriad of other issues of great importance including the follow up on the work of the peace fund, the implementation of agenda 2063 and the selection 2020 theme of the year, multilateral cooperation and the outcomes of the work of several Specialized Technical Committees and Sub Committees of the PRC.

Excellencies,

- 12- As we convene here today, we will focus our efforts on finalizing the documents for consideration by our Ministers and political leaders and to ensure the success of our upcoming high level events in our sisterly country Niger. I ask all of you to continue to demonstrate the spirit of cooperation and pan-African commitment that has guided us since we started our meetings in collaboration with the Commission including the distinguished DCP that has always honored us by his meaningful presence.

- 13- After Niamey, or as I would like to call “On the way to February 2020” significant work is still ahead of us and we must learn from the lessons of the first four months of this year.
- 14- We need to continue to address the persistent bottlenecks that weaken our delivery system. We are all in agreement that we need to further enhance the sustainability, effectiveness and predictability of our working methods. I am glad that we have already started to work according to relatively stable work programs and consolidated meetings’ calendars as well as stronger monitoring of documentation and follow up measures.
- 15- and to give more emphasis to the theme of the year for 2019, as well as a recurrent focus on other key priority areas.
- 16- Excellencies, dear brothers, I must thank you all, and particularly the Members of the Bureau, the extended Bureau and the Chairs of the Sub Committees, for the support and valuable assistance you have lent to me, which I am confident will be the headline of a successful and productive 38th session of the PRC. I also convey my gratitude, on your behalf, to the commendable efforts of the Secretary General of the Commission and his team as well as the DCMP and the Office of the Legal Counselor in addition to all the Commissioner, directors and departments that have contributed to our work.
- 17- Let’s kick off our work today and get a job well done in an efficient and cooperative manner.

I thank you.

