



OPENING STATEMENT FOR

**H.E. MRS. AMIRA ELFADIL
COMMISSIONER FOR SOCIAL AFFAIRS ON
BEHALF OF H.E. AMINATA CESSOUMA,
COMMISSIONER FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS**

**AT THE 3RD ORDINARY SESSION OF THE
SPECIALISED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE (STC) ON
MIGRATION, REFUGEES AND INTERNALLY
DISPLACED PERSONS (MR&IDPS –STC)**

***Theme: The Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally
Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced
Displacement in Africa.***

**4 NOVEMBER 2019
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

**Honourable Minister and Chairperson of the STC,
Honourable Minsters,
Heads of Delegations
Invited guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

It is my honour and privilege to welcome you to the ministerial segment of the Third Ordinary Session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Migration, Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons. May I take this opportunity to thank you for finding time to attend this very important AU Statutory meeting to provide policy guidance on migration, refugees and IDPs governance in the continent. The importance of this STC cannot be overemphasized. The challenges of irregular migration and forced displacement that we face in Africa is immense. Despite these challenges, positive developments are also taking place including in the area of strengthening the governance architecture on migration, humanitarian issues and displacement in Africa.

This Ordinary Session of the STC is also taking place within the context of the 2019 AU theme of the year, “The Year of Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa.” It is also a time when the continent is making positive steps towards promoting greater integration. Agenda 2063, “The Africa We Want” calls on member states and citizens of Africa to promote

integration as a way of achieving sustainable development and ensuring effective participation of Africa in the globalized world.

Honourable Ministers, Excellences, Distinguished Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Commission has been implementing several activities aimed at realizing the objectives and aims of the AU theme of the year. These activities is aimed at promoting inclusion of refugees and displaced persons, support the capacity of member states to manage migration and respond to humanitarian issues. The activities are also aimed at creating awareness on various migration and humanitarian policy documents in the continent including the Migration Policy Framework for Africa and the conventions on refugees and internally displaced persons and advocate for durable solutions.

Further, the Commission has worked very closely with relevant policy organs of the AU, Member States, Regional Economic Communities, partners and refugees and displaced persons themselves in the implementation of a range of activities relating to the AU theme of the year.

I would like to express my thanks to the members of this STC and indeed to all our partners for their immense contributions which has played a critical role in ensuring the success of the activities. We do appreciate and value the leadership and guidance of this STC.

Honourable Ministers, Excellences, Distinguished Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In respect of the Free Movement Agenda, a flagship programme of the African Union Agenda 2063, 33 Member States of the AU have already signed the Protocol, while 4 have ratified the Protocol. This is an important progress but we need to actively promote greater ratification to ensure that the protocol enters into force. Fifteen (15) ratifications are required for the protocol to come into force.

Over the last several months, the Commission has taken several steps to promote the Protocol. We have registered achievements in collaboration with Member States and with Regional Economic Communities (RECs). It is indeed important for us to appreciate concerns some Member States have on the ratification of the Protocol and jointly find a solution to address them. It is important for the continent to ensure its people and goods and services move freely across our borders to promote socio economic development as aspired in the Agenda 2063.

Honourable Ministers, Excellences, Distinguished Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen

The Commission, together with Governments of Mali, Sudan and the Kingdom of Morocco, are in advanced stage to establish the various migration centres and observatory as directed by the Assembly. I am happy to inform this meeting that we have signed host

agreements with all these governments and we are now at advance stage of putting necessary legal and operational institutional framework to ensure their operational. I am happy to note that the Experts segment of the STC has taken time to look at the statutes and request that this segment of Ministers considers them to enable move forward.

We are also looking forward to strengthen other aspects of migration governance including supporting Member States and RECs in their capacity to manage migration in their jurisdiction. We will continue working together with all partners to ensure that migration and humanitarian issues in the continent are well coordinated and governed.

Honourable Ministers, Excellences, Distinguished Guest, Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Government of Rwanda for their leadership as outgoing Chair of the 3rd Session of the STC. We also appreciate Rwanda for. Finally, I wish to thank the experts for their good work and also commend our AUC team guided by our two directors for facilitating the organization of this Ordinary Session of the STC.

I wish you all the best as you embark on deliberations of this meeting.

I thank you for your kind attention.