

1 MILLION BY 2021 INITIATIVE RESULTS PRE-AU SUMMIT EVENT

Statement by

AFRICAN UNION SPECIAL ENVOY ON YOUTH

MS CHIDO MPEMBA

I acknowledge the presence of:

- His Excellency, President Felix Tshisekedi of the Democratic Republic of Congo
- AUC Chairperson, H.E Moussa Faki Mahamat,
- AUC Deputy Chairperson, Dr Monique Nsanzabangwa
- Africa's youth. All dignitaries, distinguished partners and all stakeholders

We have all heard that Africa has a fast-growing youth population, which is projected to increase exponentially to 1.7 billion in 2030 and 3 billion in 2063. With this knowledge, I believe it is of great importance that this demographic is represented at all levels. Therefore, as part of efforts to ensure this amongst other things concerning the youth, **the AUC Chairperson H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat**, launched the 1 Million by 2021 initiative to inspire investments in African youth across ‘the 4 E’s’: Education, Employment, Entrepreneurship and Engagement. **The 1 Million by 2021 initiative made significant progress, reaching over million young people since the initiative was launched.**

SUCCESS OF THE INITIATIVE

The initiative was meant to catalyze actions in youth development and create at least one million opportunities for education, employment, entrepreneurship, and engagement of youth in Africa by 2021. It also sought to give meaning and contribute to Aspiration 6 of Agenda 2063: **“An Africa whose development is people driven, relying on the potential of women and youth”** by contributing to harnessing the potential of young people in Africa and enabling them to contribute meaningfully and substantively to the continent’s development.

It also provided opportunities for the AUC to validate its theory of change, refine initiatives, strategies, and build strategic partnerships for youth development and engagement. Thus, the two years of the implementation of the initiative was used to establish the desirability and feasibility of youth development and engagement. Additionally, playing an integral role to lay the foundation and set the tone to give room to what is to follow.

Building on the success of the 1 Million by 2021 initiative we hope to leverage on the lessons learned from the 1 Million by 2021 which everyone will get to hear today, in order to make room for something bigger.

I MAKE A CALL TO ACTION FOR STAKEHOLDERS

- To continue building the capacity of youth and avail opportunities through private-public partnerships to deliver on employment, education, entrepreneurship, engagement and health and well-being of youth

FOR PARTNERS

- To share valued partnerships involving engagement, co-creation, and information exchange to create opportunities for young people across the continent.
- And to strengthen partner coordination mechanisms and mutual accountability frameworks

FOR MY FELLOW PEERS, YOUTH

- To demonstrate their innovation, creativity and vibrancy towards providing solutions

HOW WILL YOU LEAD THE CHARGE?

- My office under the leadership of the Chairperson looks forward to taking a direct role and taking charge to continue in driving a mandate that is youth led and youth driven under the successes and lessons learnt from the 1 million campaign.
- I will look to testing new ideas and solutions by involving my peers at every step of the way from the AU member states and taking a bold stance towards attaining our goals.
- Through a listening tour, I commit to engaging with youth organisations, youth transformative groups and young Africans across our continent and in the diaspora with the aim to represent everyone and to tap into all the bright ideas that will propel and accelerate further efforts. I advocate for inclusion of young people with disabilities, in decision making processes. It is important that no one person is left behind. Equally representation at grass root level, inclusion of youth in non-urban and marginalized communities is important in taking our work forward to build the Africa We Want, achieved by setting goals and targets in place, such as we have seen under the 1 Million by 2021 campaign.
- My office will establish sustainable and long -term partnerships to support the youth on the continent
- We will reach out to marginalized youth in urban and rural areas, those living with disabilities and women as a way to ensure they are represented every step of the way and that nothing shall hinder them from acquiring a seat at the table, as we take the work forward.

I thank you....