



WELCOME REMARKS BY HON. MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN CHARGE OF EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

**OCCASION: THE RETREAT OF THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON THE AFRICAN UNION INSTITUTIONAL REFORM**

DATE & VENUE: 8TH JUNE 2023 AT KCC

- **Your Excellency, Mr. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission,**
- **Your Excellency, Ambassador Youssouph Assoumani Mondoha, Chairperson of the Permanent Representatives Committee,**
- **Your Excellency, Dr. Monique Nsanzabaganwa, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission,**
- **Excellencies Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives,**
- **Distinguished Representatives of Member States,**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen!**
- **All protocol observed.**

Good morning.

1. Let me begin by welcoming you to Kigali. The Government and the People of Rwanda are honoured and privileged to be the host of this important Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC) retreat. Thank you for organizing this very important event.

2. As you know, in 2016, H.E Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, was tasked with leading the initiative of the African Union (AU) reforms. The goal of the reform process was to ensure the increased performance of the AU systems in carrying out development initiatives and programs that would accelerate the completion of the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063.
3. His Excellency, the Chairperson of the Commission, Mr. Moussa Faki, has frequently provided updates on how the ongoing Institutional Reform is progressing in various sectors. I want to express my appreciation for the efforts made by him, the Reform Implementation Unit and his whole team at the AU Commission to see the changes we want progressively taking shape.
4. Excellencies, I also express my gratitude for your steadfast support throughout the institutional reform process. Since January 2017, we have made significant progress.
5. May I again appreciate Member States for supporting this positive progress on AU reforms. These are our reforms, and they are for the greater good of reaching our objectives to transform the Union into an institution we want.

Excellencies, Ladies, and Gentlemen,

6. The AU Reform process goes beyond the work of the Commission and the reform unit alone. It is imperative that we strive for the effective functioning of the entire institutional architecture and ensure the Union works better.

7. Among the remaining reform priorities, we must urgently address and endorse the division of labour in implementing the AU priorities. This will foster improvement within the AU structures and enable us to refocus the AU's efforts in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity and comparative advantage.
8. The Unions reliance on external partner funding demands sincere discussions to achieve operational autonomy progressively. Since the Kigali Summit of 2016, AU Member States fully fund the organization's operating budget. However, the continued dependence on external partners for program budget and peacekeeping operations defeats the Johannesburg decision to achieve 75%, and 25% Member States funding. These shortcomings raise questions about our commitment to peacekeeping operations and conflict prevention.
9. In conclusion, I emphasize that the work over the next four (4) days will be demanding, but we can aim to complete the task ahead and produce clear recommendations on the remaining reform priorities.
10. I also take note of the fact that you will be briefed on the progress made on the evaluation of the First Ten Year Implementation Plan and the development of the Second Ten Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063. This evaluation and the subsequent forward looking strategic planning exercise will inform and continue to shape our collective ambitions for the 'Africa we want' which guide implementation at continental, regional and national levels.
11. Once again, I extend a warm welcome to all of you. I wish you to have fruitful deliberations.

Thank you all for your kind attention.