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**H.E. DCP Statement for Africa Day**

**At**

**African Union Commission**

**25 May 2024**

- **His Excellency, Mr. Mesganu Arga, State Minister for Foreign Affairs and Representative of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia**
- **Her Excellency Mrs. Khadijetou Mbareck Fall, Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and Chair of the Permanent Representatives Committee of the African Union**
- **Representatives of the African Union Commission,**
- **Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps**
- **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is with honour that I stand before you in celebration of this year's Africa Day. I stand here on behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, HE. Moussa Faki Mahamat to welcome you here today.

He would have been here but is in the land of one of our founding fathers, Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, commemorating the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a core instrument of the African Union, the Peace and Security Council.

### **Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen**

61 years on, the world looks very different from what it was when the Organisation of African Unity was formed in 1963. Our countries have gained independence, our economies have grown, and we collectively boast of a population of over 1 billion people.

We have much to be proud of. We've achieved one of our major flagships, the ratification of the African Free Trade Area. We officially joined the G20 in 2023 and we are very close to fulfilling our 400 million target for the Peace Fund.

These strides and the shifting trends in the world presents opportunities to harness our collective influence for common causes that will benefit us all. That is what our forefathers and mothers envisioned when they founded the African Union.

Looking forward to the implementation of the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan, a building block towards achieving the seven aspirations of Agenda 2063, I welcome us to particularly focus on education.

As you know, this year, we are amplifying an education fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. An issue that could be not more crucial as statisticians tell us that by 2050, Africa's population will reach close to 2.5 billion. Such a figure would mean that more than 25 percent of the world's population will be African. This means that a considerable amount of the working population will come from our continent.

## **Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen**

This gives us a clear target, from the government to the private sector, to civil society, to the Diaspora, to you and I, as individuals. Let us apply all resources at hand to ensure that such a prospect is not squandered - let us join hands and continue in the work of building the Africa we want.

**I thank you**