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4th International Conference on Public Health in Africa (CPHIA) 2025

Durban, South Africa

22 October 2025

H.E. Amb. Amma Twum-Amoah

**Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social
Development**

AU Commission



**Honourable Dr. Joe Phaahla, Deputy Minister of Health, South Africa,
Honourable Dr. Elijah Muchima, Minister of Health, Zambia,
Honourable Dr. Maha Barakat, Assistant Minister of Health and Life Sciences, United Arab Emirates,
Prof. Mohamed Yakub, Regional Director, WHO AFRO,
My brother Dr. Jean Kaseya, Director General, Africa CDC,
Esteemed International partners,
Distinguished Delegates and friends of Africa,**

It is a privilege to address this distinguished gathering at the 4th International Conference on Public Health in Africa. I bring warm regards from His Excellency Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, who could not be with today, but asked that I convey his full support and appreciation for your leadership.

This convening—co-hosted by Africa CDC and the Government of South Africa—is not simply a technical forum. It is a strategic platform, one that aims to accelerate Africa’s journey toward health sovereignty and to reframe global health governance



with Africa as a co-architect, not a bystander. It captures the truth we can no longer deny: **Africa's health security must rest on African financing, African innovation and African institutions.**

We convene at a time of global crises - climate shocks, economic volatility, declining health financing and persistent inequities in access to health technologies. But, Africa is not waiting. We are acting. We are innovating. We are investing in systems that reflect our true values and vision.

Excellencies,

The African Union has laid out a clear roadmap through Agenda 2063's Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan, the Africa Health Strategy (2016–2030), the AU Digital Transformation Strategy and the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa.



These are not abstract frameworks, they are instruments for coordinated action.

The African Medicines Agency (AMA) is now operational. The Director-General is fully at post in Kigali. AMA is the opportunity to harmonise regulatory systems and frameworks, ensure safe, effective and efficacious locally manufactured medical products reach our populations, irrespective of their geographic location. This is a continental imperative—and a financial one.

Through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), we are unlocking regional value chains and enabling intra-African trade in health commodities. And, through the Africa Leadership Meeting on Investing in Health and its implementation tools, the Health Financing Tracker and the Africa Scorecard, we are strengthening accountability, transparency and progressively increasing investment in domestic health financing.



Honourable Ministers,

Your role is pivotal. Health is not a cost, it is a driver of productivity, stability, sustainable development and inclusive growth. Strategic investment in health systems, primary health care and community health workforce, is not only morally urgent, it is economically sound. Every cedis, rands and sheillings invested in health yields exponential returns in human capital, resilience and peace. These are the indicators we need the most, if Africa is to develop into the “Africa We Want”.

Digital health and artificial intelligence offer us the chance to leapfrog legacy systems. But these technologies must be deployed ethically, inclusively and with robust governance of high level political commitment. Africa’s lead will shape the norms and standards that will define the future of health innovation, globally.



This conveying must also be a catalyst for the reformation of global health architecture that reflect the realities and aspirations of the Global South. Africa is no longer a passive recipient of aid, it is a co-creator of solutions. This requires equitable representation in decision-making bodies, fair financing mechanisms and the dismantling of monopolies that stifle local innovation.

As we approach the G20 Health Ministers' Meeting on 6th November, hosted for the first time on African soil, we must seize the moment to elevate Africa's voice. The G20 Presidency in Africa is not symbolic, it is tactical, its right. It is our opportunity to advocate for sustainable reforms rooted in equity, transparency and solidarity.

Finally, we must embrace an integrated approach that recognises the link between health, peace, development and humanitarian action. In fragile states and conflict zones, access to



health is often the first casualty. Yet, it is precisely in these contexts that health can be a bridge to peace, a bedrock for development, and a foundation for dignity.

Let us leave Durban not only with declarations, but with commitments. Actionable commitments to strengthen primary health care, to invest in our community health workforce, to empower our youth and women and to build a continental health ecosystem that is resilient, sovereign and future-ready.

Africa's path to self-reliance is not a slogan, it is a necessity. It requires strong institutions, coordinated leadership and sustainable investment. Through the collective effort with all partners represented here, we can secure a continent that not only responds to crises but **anticipates, prevents and finances its own resilience.**

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On behalf of the Chairperson of the African Union, I reaffirm our shared commitment to a **healthier, safer and more self-reliant Africa.**

Africa's time is now. Let us rise—together.

I thank you.