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**Closing remarks of the Chairperson of the AU Commission
HE Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma,
At the Closing session of the Joint AU_UNECA Ministerial
Meetings on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and
Integration**

Addis Ababa, 5 April 2016

Checked against delivery

Your Excellency, Chairperson of the Bureau of Finance Ministers
Dr. Carlos Lopes, Executive Secretary of UNECA and my Co-host
Excellencies, Ministers and Central bank Governors
Honourable Guests, Delegates and Officials

It gives me great pleasure to make these closing remarks, following the successful Joint meetings of African Ministers of Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration.

We've had a week of packed meetings, all focused on the central question of our time: how to achieve economic transformation in order to change the lives of African men, women and children, young and old, urban and rural for the better. Hence, our discussions on our critical African priorities – skills, industrialisation, infrastructure development, intra-Africa trade, agriculture and agro-processing.

The wealth of information and the diversity of views and experiences shared, the lessons learned, the commitments undertaken, as well as the political determination garnered during these meetings are extremely useful not just to our individual countries and institutions, but to the entire world as these will facilitate Africa's implementation of both Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As we have so often heard during these meetings, as we implement Agenda 2063, we will be implementing the SDGs.

**Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

It is clear that implementation on a number of the priorities of Agenda 2063, and the approaches discussed in these fora, have started, at country levels, between countries, in the RECs and at continental level. This forum of Ministers is therefore going to be increasingly becoming a platform for sharing experiences, but of course we must do more.

As we therefore renew our implementation efforts, let me emphasis a few things:

Firstly, it is essential for African countries to domesticate Agenda 2063 and its First Ten-Year Implementation Plan with their National Development Plans, beyond the twenty-three countries and RECs that have already started. Of course, as ministers responsible for planning your leadership in this regard is critical.

Secondly, there is a need to speed up the alignment of Agenda 2063 and SDGs common indicators, as well as monitoring and evaluation and reporting frameworks for the two agendas, at all levels at the national, the regional and continental levels, and be the basis for cooperation between all the actors involved in the development process, be they local or external.

The indicators themselves must be easy to monitor, and aligned, so that we don't place an onerous burden of multiple reporting on countries.

Thirdly, the success of both Agenda 2063 and SDGs can only be guaranteed if the implementation processes, the projects and delivery mechanisms include women and the youth. The empowerment of women and the youth are not acts of charity; they are the essential ingredient to success and an imperative for our development.

Fourthly, there is need for a change of mind-set. We need to believe in ourselves, in our capacities and the capacities of our people. It is said that when you believe that you can, you find ways to do it. If you believe that you can't do it, you will see many excuses to confirm why it cannot be done.

So Africa does not lack the resources, Africa does not lack the finance needed to spur its development. It is that Africa is not using its resources effectively: not collecting as much revenue as it should through an efficient and broad tax regimes; bleeding resources through illicit financial flows; and Africa also is not investing its private, pension and sovereign funds in African projects and sectors that can impact positively on development and growth.

It has been widely discussed during these meetings that what is needed in most cases is not even policy reform, but simple administrative improvements and diligent implementation of existing policies. Cases have been cited where these simple administrative changes have doubled revenue collections within very short spaces of time.

Fifthly, the importance of statistics cannot be over emphasised. Good statistics provide good evidence; good evidence provides good analysis, which in turn provides good solutions. Our continent is judged, valued, described and rated on estimates and guesstimates, which are often not even our own estimates. It is true that if we want to know our true worth as countries, as a continent and as a people, whether the Africa we want before 2063 is on track, we must invest in producing our own statistics— accurate, good quality and timely statistics.

Sixthly, we must popularise and communicate at national level, at regional level, in different sectors and the media our programmes and the progress we are making. Only when our people know what we are planning and doing, can they become involved and help shape their continent.

Lastly, but not the least we must implement Africa Agenda 2063 not forgetting African solidarity, our programme must be inform by African solidarity, and the spirit of Pan Africanism, so that indeed, work together, assist one another and develop together. Together, we

must celebrate our successes, and help to address our weaknesses together. This includes pushing ahead on silencing the guns and building democratic and effective governance and institutions.

Let me conclude by once again, commending all of you for the tremendous work that you have done. A special word of thanks to the UNECA for hosting us, for jointly organizing these meetings and for the quality work to ensure that these meetings are a success.

The rich ideas and recommendations made at these meetings are a call to action. Let us rise to the challenge, the responsibility and the confidence that the citizens of Africa and posterity have reposed on us.

Let us implement, implement and implement!

I thank you all!