

# SANKOFA



BATO MALAMU SANKOFA WATA-WATA

January-February 2018 #13



## **AFRICAN CITIZENS** BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE CONTINENT'S DEVELOPMENT



## EDITORIAL

Mr. Amine Idriss Adoum  
*Director - Administration  
and Human Resources  
Management*

Defining the policies of the African Union to promote integration, prosperity and peace within the continent; establishing priorities to build the Africa We Want; adopting annual programs to impact the lives of our fellow citizens... For the thirtieth time, the African Heads of State and Government met in January 2018 to undertake these delicate and crucial tasks for the future of the continent.

Commonly called the African Union Summit, this event saw the participation of 55 Member States. Our leaders met to forge the vision expressed in the Agenda 2063. During these few days, the future of the African continent was put in the spotlight.

It is worth recalling that these meetings would not have taken place without the insight of the organization's founding fathers regarding the needs of the continent. Also, the decisions and orientations would not have been made without the collaboration of the various employees of the African Union. Nearly every personnel of the African Union contributes to the summits' success, from the cleaning staff who prepares the meeting rooms, to the members of the Secretariat General who draft the various working documents, the computer specialists who make sure the tools related to information technology are working properly, and the list goes on.

Many hours were devoted to the preparation of these summits. Women and men have worked beyond their normal duties to ensure a smooth running of the various meetings. Their belief in the future of the continent is the driving force that motivates them to serve in this manner.

This issue pays tribute to all these actors; it does not attempt to list all the participants, but to gently remind that the contribution of these women and men behind the scenes is essential to the development of our continent.

I hope that each of the few profiles presented in this magazine will inspire us with their experience and history. ●

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Infographic: AU Summit key figures	4
2018 African Union Chairperson	5
The Organization's Founding Fathers	6
Key Events	8
Preserving the history of the organization	9
How decisions are made and activities implemented at continental level	10
Implementing arm of the African Union's decisions	12
A Pan-Africanist trough and trough	14
Winning the Fight against Corruption	16
The Summit through the eyes of Yohannes Zirotti and Yohaness Negash	17
Facilitating AU Summits through information technology	20
Ensuring protocol and business etiquette are respected	22
Building the bridges between languages	23
Volunteering during the Summit	24
Showcasing the African Union	25
Satisfying the various tastes of AU Summit audiences	26

**EDITORIAL TEAM:**  
Amine Idriss Adoum  
Patrick Abdoulaye Man'ke  
Andry Rasoanindrainy  
Ange Paterne Assoumou

**TRANSLATION:**  
Daniel Afewerk

**CONTACT:**  
aufamily@africa-union.org  
(251) 11 551 77 00 Ext :4310

"Bato Malamu Sankofa Wata-wata", is a combination of three African languages : Lingala (Bato Malamu - Good people), Asante Twi (Sankofa - return to the good history), and Hausa (Wata-wata - monthly).



# 30<sup>th</sup> African Union Summit

held in January 2018  
in Addis Ababa



With the return of Morocco



# 55 States

represented  
at this Summit

## Also held during this Summit:

# 35<sup>th</sup>

Ordinary Session of the  
**Committee of Permanent Representatives**

# 32<sup>nd</sup>

Ordinary Session of the  
**Executive Council**



**2018 AFRICAN UNION  
CHAIRPERSON**  
H.E. Paul Kagame

**H** E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, is the newly elected Chair of the African Union. He is taking over from H.E. Alpha Conde, President of the Republic of Guinea who has been chairing the Union for the past year 2017. He also leads the African Union reform.

H.E. Paul Kagame was born in October 1957 in Rwanda's Southern Province. His family fled pre-independence ethnic persecution and violence in 1960, crossing into Uganda where Kagame spent thirty years as a refugee. Determined to resist oppressive regimes, as a young man, Paul Kagame joined current Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni and his group of guerilla fighters to launch a war to free Uganda from dictatorship. Under the new government, he served as a senior military officer.

(...)

H.E. Paul Kagame was appointed Vice-President and Minister for Defence in the Government of National Unity on 19 July 1994, and four years later was elected Chairman

of the RPF, a partner in the Government of National Unity. On 22 April 2000 Paul Kagame took the Oath of Office as President of the Republic of Rwanda after being elected by the Transitional National Assembly.

President Kagame has received recognition for his leadership in peace building and reconciliation, development, good governance, promotion of human rights and women's empowerment, and advancement of education and ICT, and is widely sought after to address regional and international audiences on a range of issues including African development, leadership, and the potential of ICT as a dynamic industry as well as an enabler for Africa's socioeconomic transformation. President Kagame currently serves as co-chair along with Prime Minister Jose Luis Zapatero of Spain, of the UNSG's Advisory Group on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and as co-chair along with Carlos Slim of the International Telecommunication Union's (ITU) Broadband Commission.

H.E. Paul Kagame is married to Jeannette Nyiramongi and they have four children. He is a keen tennis player and football fan. ●

*Adapted from the original text at <http://presidency.gov.rw/index.php?id=4>*





## THE ORGANIZATION'S FOUNDING FATHERS



# KEY EVENTS



1963

32 African States met in Addis Ababa – Ethiopia, and agreed to establish the Organization of African Unity (OAU). To commemorate this historic event, May 25 is celebrated as Africa Day.



1990

Through the 1990s, African leaders debated the need to amend the OAU to reflect the challenges of the changing world.

1999

During the Sirte Extraordinary Summit, the OAU Heads of State and Governments issued the Sirte Declaration calling for the establishment of the new African Union. To commemorate this historic event, September 9 is celebrated as African Union Day.



2000

The Lome Summit adopted the Constitutive Act of the Union.

2001

The Lusaka Summit drew the road map for the implementation of the African Union.



2002

The July 2002 Durban Summit launched the 1st Heads of State Summit of the African Union.

2013

2013 marks the 50th anniversary of the Organisation of the African Union.



2015

The African Union Heads of State and Governments adopted the Agenda 2063.



## PRESERVING THE HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATION

Mr. Gebretensay H. Mariam

Audio-Visual Technician and Editor, DIC

Mr. Gebretensay H. Mariam is a living memory of the history of the organization. He claims to be familiar with the major events of the Organization of the African Union, which became in 2002 the African Union.

Mr. Gebretensay built this vast knowledge throughout his 35 years of loyal service to the African Union. He grew tired of not being able to get the necessary spare parts for his audio-visual equipment shop in Addis Ababa, and tried his luck by applying as a Production Technician in 1976. Seven years later, when he has completely forgotten about his application, the Organization recruited him on a short-term contract. Thus began his adventure with the OAU.

Mr. Gebretensay provided the African Union with 28 pieces of equipment that he has brought back from his shop, including cameras, a radio and a reel-to-reel tape. He soon thought of the OAU as his home rather than his workplace. Therefore, he went beyond the work of audio producer and became an archivist and technician in charge of the maintenance of audio-visual equipment. Even today, he is always busy filing the productions he has just recorded, or cleaning and repairing the material in his studio, or learning about AU history in his spare time. Thanks to the special attention he pays to the equipment of "his house", today most of the materials available in the early days are still in good condition. Among other things, he is proud to present how the analogue recorder offered by Russia in 1976 is still in good working condition.

Over 5,600 documents and records are currently archived at the African Union thanks to the work of Mr. Gebretensay. Everything is expertly filed in his studio, from various photos of summits to audio recordings of Heads of States to videos of the signing of the OAU charter on May 25, 1963.

His dream today is to be able to digitize all these pieces of his archive, as he thinks the evolution of technologies would help preserve the organization's history in a more secure way. ●







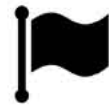
#### 4- Executive Council Ministers of Foreign Affairs

- Prepares the Assembly session agendas and drafts decisions for its consideration
- Elects the Members of the Commission for appointment by the Assembly
- Promotes cooperation and coordination with the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), African Development Bank (AfDB), other African institutions and the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
- Determines policies for cooperation between the AU and Africa's partners
- Considers and makes recommendations to the Assembly on the Commission's structure, functions and statutes
- Ensures the promotion of gender equality in all AU programmes.



#### 5- Assembly Heads of States and Government

- Elects the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC)
- Appoints the AUC Commissioners and determines their functions and terms of office
- Admits new members to the AU
- Adopts the AU budget
- Takes decisions on important AU matters
- Amends the Constitutive Act in conformity with the laid down procedures
- Interprets the Constitutive Act (pending the establishment of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights)
- Approves the structure, functions and regulations of the AU Commission
- Determines the structure, functions, powers, composition and organization of the Executive Council.



#### 3- Permanent Representatives Committee Ambassadors

- Acts as an advisory body to the AU Executive Council
- Prepares its Rules of Procedure and submits them to the Executive Council
- Prepares Executive Council meetings, including the agenda and draft decisions
- Makes recommendations on areas of common interest to Member States particularly on issues on the Executive Council agenda
- Facilitates communication between the African Union Commission (AUC) and Member States' capitals
- Considers the AU's programme and budget as well as the Commission's administrative, budgetary and financial matters, and makes recommendations to the Executive Council
- Considers the Commission's financial report and make recommendations to the Executive Council
- Considers the Board of External Auditors' report and submits written comments to the Executive Council
- Monitors the implementation of the AU budget
- Proposes the composition of AU organ bureaus, ad hoc committees and sub-committees
- Considers matters relating to the AU's programmes and projects, particularly issues relating to the socio-economic development and integration of the continent, and makes recommendations to the Executive Council
- Monitors the implementation of policies, decisions and agreements adopted by the Executive Council
- Participates in the preparation of the AU programme of activities and calendar of meetings; considers any matter assigned to it by the Executive Council; and carries out any other functions that may be assigned to it by the Executive Council.

Coordinates and takes decisions on policies in areas of common interest to Member States

Determines AU's policies, establishes its priorities, adopts and monitors its annual programme

Conducts the day-to-day business of the AU and makes recommendations on areas of common interest

Facilitate regional economic integration between members of the individual regions



#### 1- Member States and Regional Economic Communities African Citizens & Member States

Achieve greater economic integration and implementing activities.



#### 2- AUC, AU Organs, Specialised and Technical Agencies, Bodies and other Institutions, and Special Technical Committees AU Staff

- Ensure the coordination and harmonization of AU projects and programmes
- Ensure the supervision, follow-up and evaluation of the implementation of decisions taken by AU organs
- Submit to the Executive Council, either on its own initiative or at the request of the Executive Council, reports and recommendations on the implementation of the provisions of the Constitutive Act
- Carry out any other functions assigned to them to implement the provisions of the Constitutive Act.

# HOW

DECISIONS ARE MADE  
AND ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTED  
AT CONTINENTAL LEVEL



## IMPLEMENTING ARM OF THE AFRICAN UNION'S DECISIONS

### The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Agency

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is a socio-economic flagship Programme of the African Union (AU). NEPAD's four primary objectives are to eradicate poverty, promote sustainable growth and development, integrate Africa in the world economy and accelerate the empowerment of women.

NEPAD facilitates and coordinates the development of continent-wide programmes and projects, mobilises resources and engages the global community, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and member states in the implementation of these programmes and projects.

The NEPAD Agency replaced the NEPAD Secretariat in 2010 which had coordinated the implementation of NEPAD programmes and projects since 2001.

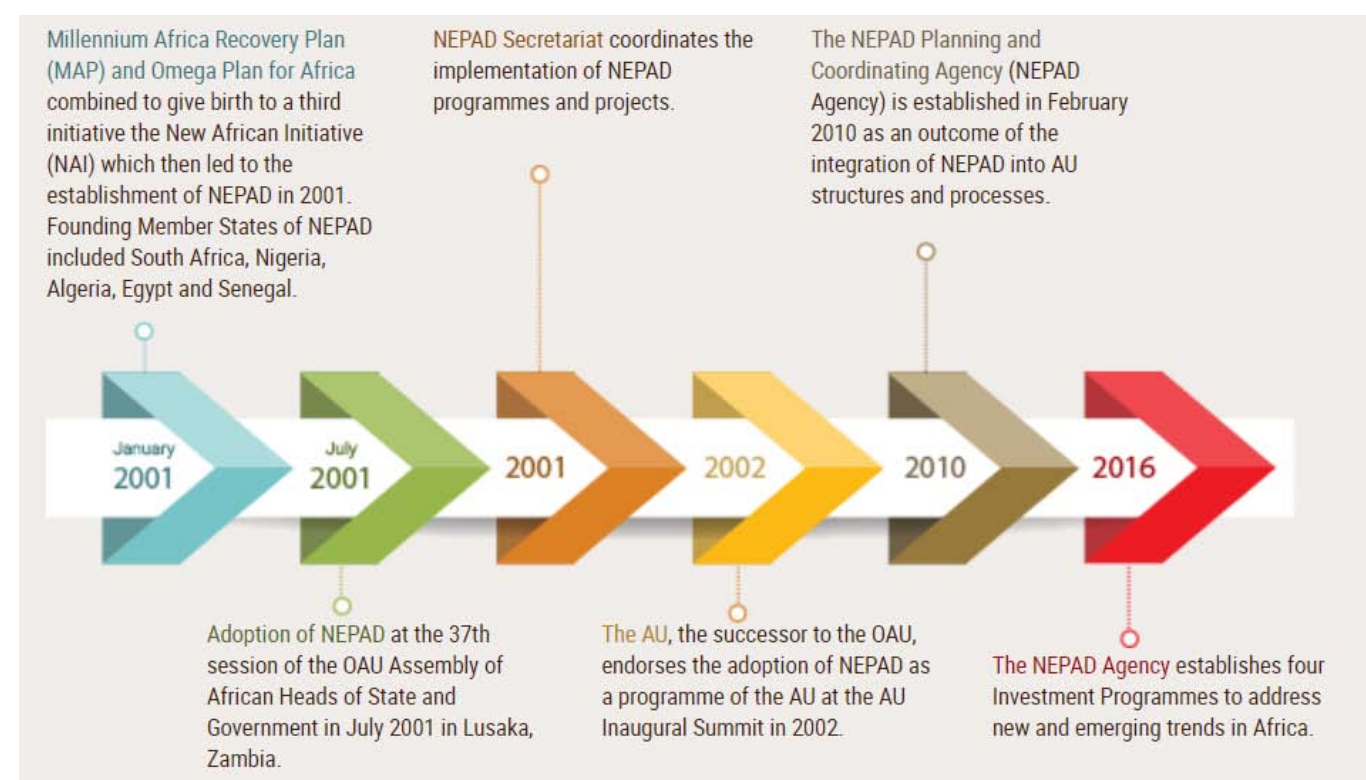
#### Vision

Build an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena

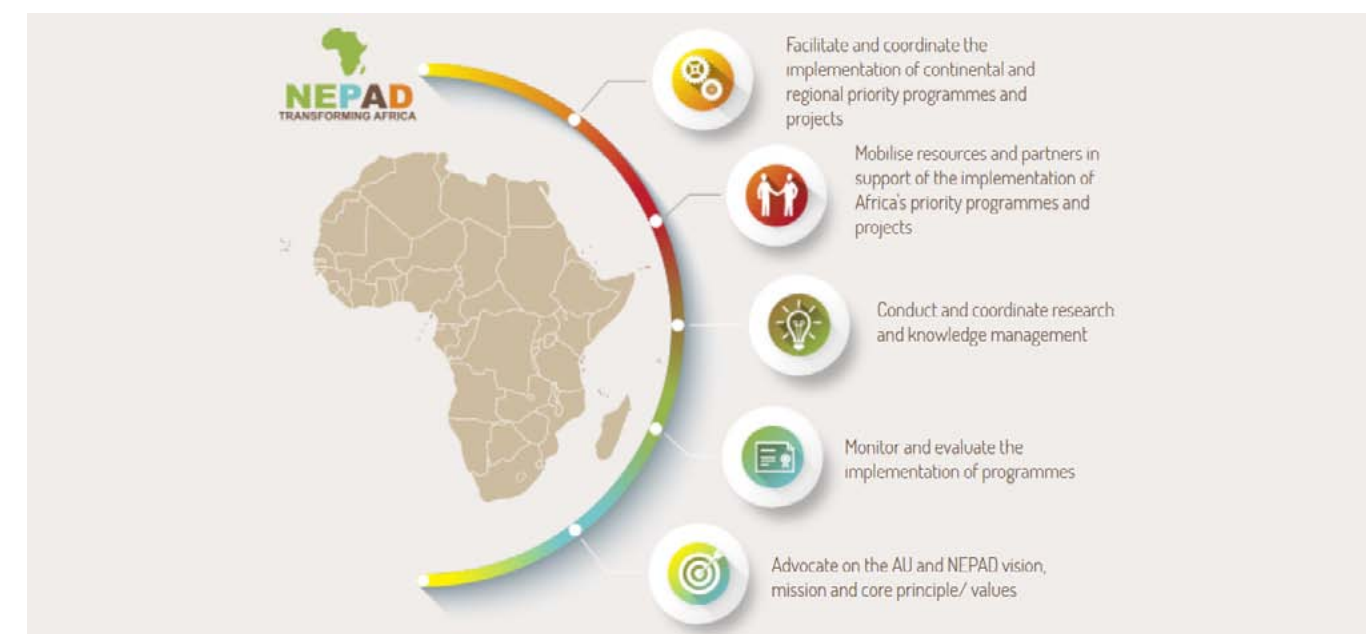
#### Mission

Work with African countries, both individually and collectively towards sustainable growth and development.

#### The NEPAD in a nutshell:



#### The NEPAD Agency's Mandate:



#### The NEPAD Agency's Investment Programmes:



Information gathered from <http://www.nepad.org/content/about-nepad#aboutourwork> and NEPAD in brief brochure



## A PAN-AFRICANIST TROUGH AND TROUGH

**Mr. Patrick Kontor-Kwateng**  
Chief of Administrative Services Unit, AHRM



*Mr. Patrick Kontor-Kwateng is a fervent pan-Africanist. Throughout most of his career, he served the continent's main organization. He left Ghana to join the Organization of the African Union (OAU) in 1991. He started as a bilingual secretary and is now Chief of Administrative Services Unit within the Administration & Human Resources Management Directorate.*

**Mr. Kontor-Kwateng, you spent 27 years serving the continental organization. What motivated and keep motivating you?**

The first reason is my desire to be an active actor in my continent's development. I was working for the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in Ghana when I saw the call for applications for the position of Bilingual Secretary in the OAU. Since it was an opportunity to serve my continent, I applied and got the job.

The second aspect is related to my family situation. I had just got married when I joined the OAU and working within this organization gave us the opportunity to enjoy a good and stable family life. Even though things were not always easy back then, as the country was not stable, we still enjoyed our life in Ethiopia and our family has grown: today I'm the proud father of three children.

**You've undoubtedly seen a lot within the organization. Could you talk about its evolution?**

Back in the OAU time, there were only a few employees. And because of the limited number of staff, we were working as a family; we knew each other, we'd greet each other, and if for instance you saw someone involved in an accident on the

road, you'd stop and ask if they needed assistance. It's not like what we have today. There are so many employees, you meet each other but you don't know who's who.

***"Back in the OAU time, there were only a few employees. And because of the limited number of staff, we were working as a family."***

We have also gone through a lot of reforms. I remember, at one point, the OAU, a Canadian consulting firm, reviewed its structure and all its staff profile. So, each employee had to go through a new one-on-one interview with the consultants. Nobody was sure about who was going to stay. The organization offered 2 choices: either benefit from a package and leave the organization, or go through a new interview and take the risk of not to be confirmed for the position we held by end of the reform and losing the package at the same time. I knew I would sail through so I took the risk, and today I'm still here.

**What experience will you always remember pertaining to this organization?**

I started as a General Service (GS) staff in the OAU. But I had the opportunity to make my way from GS to Chief of Unit. It was a great experience to progress within the organization. At that time, there were opportunities for GS Staff to move to the professional category through competitive exam.

I also remember those difficult early days on my arrival. In 1991, the rebels came into the country, so we had to evacuate all women staff, other spouses and children out of Ethiopia whereas the male personnel had to remain behind. Then, there were explosions in the early morning of June 4. There was also a jail break at the prison which was just nearby. At that time, my office was located in building C and the prison was where the NCC is today. We saw the prisoners running here and there, police officers shooting to scare them, and one bullet even hit the Building B, which also had the library at that time. Three prisoners ran to the AU compound and the police pursued them and shot one of them. Fortunately, he did not die and received some treatment in our clinic. This kind of experience, even though difficult, is hard to forget. In spite of all the confusion, we did not have any problem per se. The rebels, even though looked scary, they were very disciplined.

**In your opinion, how AU staff can get the most out of their experience here?**

At the time of OAU, the conditions of service were not as good as what we have today. But somehow pan-Africanism prevailed. Nowadays, even if pan-Africanism is fostered,

***"At the time of OAU, the conditions of service were not as good as what we have today. But somehow pan-Africanism prevailed."***

I don't know if people have the same mentality anymore. Therefore, I advise those who are coming now to be aware that they have come to work for a continental organization which has clear objectives and goals. If you share the same objective, you'd feel privileged to work here. Don't come just for the sake of the position or the salary.

**To conclude, do you have a message for the AU staff?**

I'll urge the staff to be united in whatever we do and to be focused on the goals and objectives of the organization and the continent in general. Let us not be only engrossed in what we can get for ourselves, but also strive for what we can do for our continent. We should live as one big family in diversity working for the good of the continent and its people. ●



***"Let us not be only engrossed in what we can get for ourselves, but also strive for what we can do for our continent."***





## THEME OF THE YEAR

### Winning the fight against corruption: a Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation

Imagine the funds needed to pay the salaries of African Union's employees for the next 490 years are already secured<sup>1</sup>. Imagine 500 million African citizens who get less than USD 2 per day<sup>2</sup> have the means to live as middle class for four months a year. Imagine education for primary curriculum is already paid for 68 million African children<sup>3</sup> - i.e. more than twice the number of those without access to school in 2017. Each of these hypotheses would have been achievable with the amount of assessed losses due to corruption in Africa in 2004.

In view of these figures, corruption is not only diverting property in favour of a small group of people, it is also preventing our institutions from having the means to function properly in the long run. This practice does not only enrich a few illegally, it also deprives the majority of our fellow citizens of a decent life. Corruption goes beyond stealing public property; it sabotages the future of the next generations.

Aware of the magnitude of the impact this practice has on the development of the continent, the African Union has decided to concentrate its efforts in fighting corruption. Thus, 2018 has been declared the anti-corruption year of Africa with the theme: "Winning the Fight against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation".

Efforts have been made in this respect, such as the establishment of international, regional, sub regional and national instruments to prevent and combat this scourge. The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC), as well as the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS) and the East African Community protocols are among them.

1. Calculation based on figures available at <https://au.int/handbook>  
 2. [www.worldbank.org/en/.../poverty-rising-africa-poverty-report](http://www.worldbank.org/en/.../poverty-rising-africa-poverty-report)  
 3. <https://data.unicef.org/topic/education/primary-education/>

However, the frameworks put in place cannot have a real impact without the empowerment of each African State, entity and citizen. Much remain to be done before corruption recedes. For example, so far, only 39 out of the 55 Member States of the African Union have ratified the AUCPCC.

Thus, the choice of the theme of the year comes at the right time to remind everyone that "anti-corruption begins with each one of us". ●



#### Status of Ratification of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption

To date, 39 Member States have ratified and are State Parties to the Convention: Algeria, Angola, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Kenya, Libya, Lesotho, Liberia, Madagascar, Mali, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Niger, Rwanda, Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

## THE SUMMIT THROUGH THE EYES

### of Mr. Yohaness Zirotti and Mr. Yohaness Negash



1



2

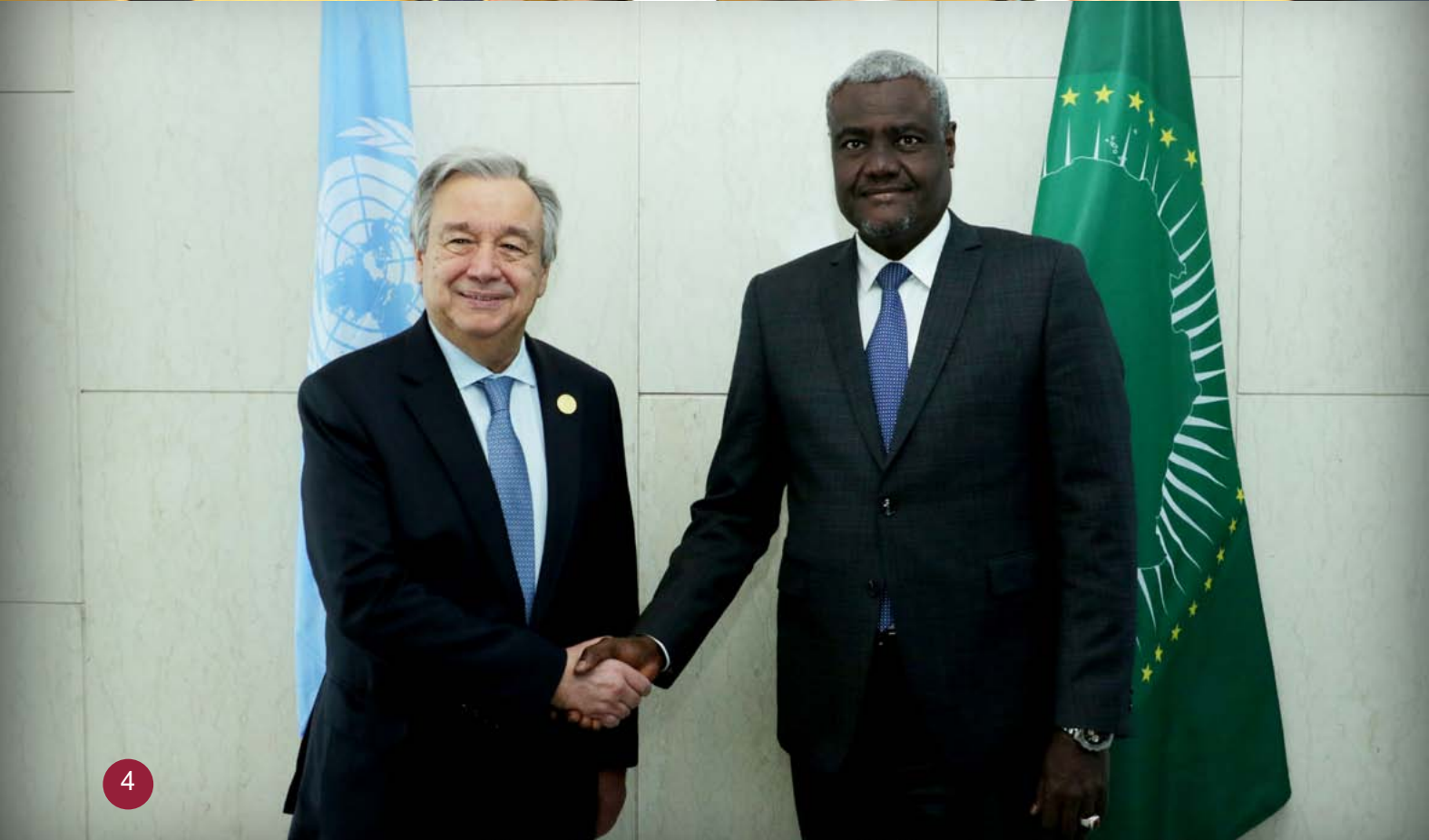
1- H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, AUC Chairperson and Mrs Ebba Kalondo, AUC Spokesperson, joining the meeting room.

2- The AU music group singing the AU anthem.

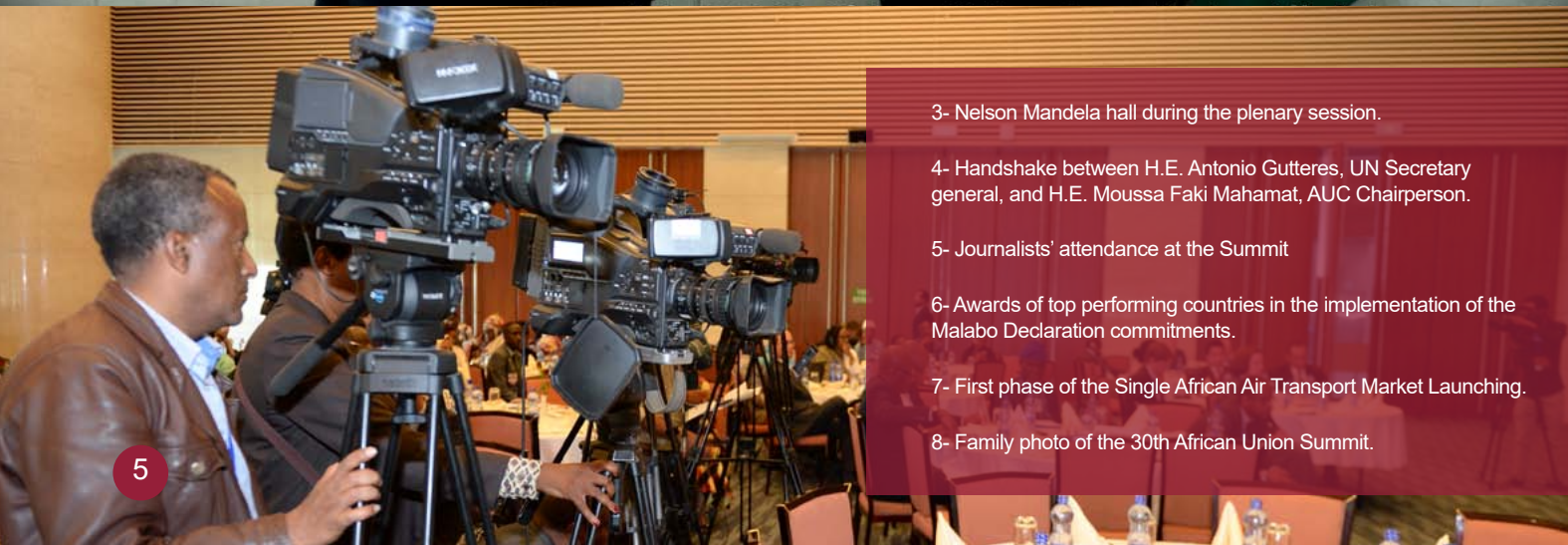




3



4



5

3- Nelson Mandela hall during the plenary session.

4- Handshake between H.E. Antonio Guterres, UN Secretary general, and H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, AUC Chairperson.

5- Journalists' attendance at the Summit

6- Awards of top performing countries in the implementation of the Malabo Declaration commitments.

7- First phase of the Single African Air Transport Market Launching.

8- Family photo of the 30th African Union Summit.



6



7



8





## FACILITATING AU SUMMITS THROUGH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Merga Deressa

Documentation Officer, DCMP

“As a programmer, I am really proud of ConferenceWeb, a workflow management system I have created for the Directorate of Conference Management and Publications (DCMP) of the African Union Commission (AUC). This system aims at facilitating the preparation and the proceedings of AU's meetings and summits.

With the first e-conferencing module of the ConferenceWeb, summit stakeholders are able to access all working documents related to the event. This platform allows participants to access reference documents wherever and whenever they are needed, in English, French, Arabic or Portuguese.

The second module of ConferenceWeb pertains to the smooth preparation of the various meetings. It is possible through the system, for instance, to book a room, request for a translator or ask to print documents. This approach facilitates all the logistics behind the meetings and improves the coordination within the organization.

To date, through ConferenceWeb, more than 21,000 documents are available to our stakeholders for their meetings. So far, the system received more than 1.2 million visits and processed 11,000 meeting requests.

I joined the African Union in 2000. It is a privilege for me to work for the 55 countries on our continent. Through my 17

years of service, AU helped me to be friend and colleagues with many different nationalities. Working within the AU was, and still is, a particular journey.

In my work, I'm trying to strive for 100% paper free/smart meetings so AU's meetings could be totally environmental friendly and cost-effective. A lot of progress has been made on that area since 2016, but much more is yet to come.

I was born in Wollega, in a very remote area called Haro Aga, Jeweja. Luckily, I was adopted and raised in Addis Ababa since the age of 5 by my Sister Dinkinesh Deressa and her husband Col. Bekele Terfa, who is my role model in life.

Since the first day I was introduced to programming courses, I got hooked. So, I went to Addis Ababa University and got my first degree in Library and Information Science, with a minor in Computer Sciences from the faculty of School of Information Studies for Africa (SISA) in 2000. Before working for AU, I taught computer sciences at INTELPRO and used to create applications for a consultancy firm. Then I got my Master's degree in Information Technology through distance learning from Sikkim Manipal University of India in 2010.

I am happy I can use my passion at the African Union to help ensure the smooth running of the various decision-making meetings”.



The e-Conferencing idea started in 2013. It consists of using information technology to easily access working documents during meetings, while being paperless. However, bringing the idea to fruition was a long journey as e-conferencing is not only about developing a system; it's also about having the tools available to all participants to access the system.

Towards the end of the year 2014, with the leadership of DCMP Director, Ms. Nedjat Khellaf, things started to move. The World Bank agreed to buy 1,000 smart devices for AU meeting rooms so that every attendee could have the tools to access the e-conferencing system. On January 2016 the system was launched.

However, it was soon found out the system could not work well over WIFI signals. To address the issue, with the help of Facility Management Unit (FMU) and Management Information System (MIS) Division, internet access through cable is now used in Nelson Mandela Hall and Medium conference. Moreover, DCMP is looking for an additional budget for 2019 to do the same for all the meeting rooms.

Since the launching of e-Conferencing, AU has reduced the usage of paper by 75%.

So far, e-Conferencing got a total of over 52,000 visits for summit documents and more than 18,000 for other meetings.

The followings are available in the e-conferencing:

- All working documents of the AU summit from 2008 to date in 4 languages;
- All Decisions and Declarations of the AU Assembly from 2002 to date in 4 languages;
- All Decisions of Executive Council from 2002 to date in 4 languages;
- All Decisions and Declarations of the OAU Assembly of Heads of States and Governments from 1963 to 2002 in 2 languages;
- All Decisions of OAU Council of Ministers from 1963 to 2002 in 2 languages;
- More than 90 miscellaneous meeting documents. ●





ENSURING PROTOCOL AND BUSINESS ETIQUETTE ARE RESPECTED

Ms. Jacinta Bitutu Kwamboka  
Secretary, Protocol Services

Jacinta is a young Kenyan working for the African Union Protocol Service. The support she and her team provide during Summits is crucial. This includes preparing the arrival of the various delegations to the host country, welcoming guests, and ensuring that the rules of precedence are respected during the event.

Jacinta joined the team 2 years ago. She started as an African Union volunteer, but very soon her personality earned her a contract to become an integral part of the organization's protocol service.

Protocol work requires certain qualities. In the first place, the person must be sociable and understand the needs of others. Given that certain rules of interactions have to be respected, only people who are easy to get along with can efficiently perform the work.

In addition to the nice human side, the person must know how to adapt to different situations. For instance they must know how to calm people whose badges have not been issued on

time or must be firm when some participants try to override protocol rules.

Finally, an adventurous side is required for this work. Getting close to different African leaders and guide them during their stay is not for everyone. It usually takes courage.

Jacinta innately possess these qualities that she associates with certain principles of life to make sure she offers a quality service. *"Time, for example, is the most precious resource in this world. If you do not know how to manage your time, time will manage you and you will never be able to recover it",* she confesses. Likewise, she thinks that *"humility and not arrogance helps you gain more respect and recognition. There is no need to show off. If you are really good at what you do, it will automatically appear through your achievements."*

Thanks to what she is doing at the African Union, Jacinta is on track to fulfill one of her dreams: to be an active member of an organization that works to improve the lives of African citizens. ●

BUILDING THE BRIDGES BETWEEN LANGUAGES

Mr. Walid Aissani  
Translator, DCMF

Walid Aissani is a young talented Algerian multilingual translator working at the African Union's Directorate of Conference Management and Publications. For his young age, he masters three of the African Union working languages, namely Arabic, French and English. As the youngest translator within the AU, Walid feels very proud and privileged to serve the Organization.

Walid first joined the African Union as a Volunteer in charge of translation/interpretation at the Office of the HRST Commissioner. He managed to cope with the new environment in DCMF thanks to his skill set and good knowledge of a broad range of subjects dealt with by the African Union, and to the prevailing enabling working environment.

There, he discovered that the secret of the translation industry is that you don't learn about it in college; you can only learn on the job. Therefore, he had to jump into it, fail at it, figure it out, correct himself, then he learned.

Seeing his father teaching French language has always fascinated him, and Walid considers his father his first mentor and teacher. In translation, he found a sanctuary for him to quench his thirst for languages. *"I have been able to follow my fascination with languages through my subsequent Master studies in Translation, then working in the field of translation industry".*

*"The translator is a fundamental actor in building bridges between languages, cultures, civilizations, and helps connecting people and communicating ideas"*

*"Family is the most sacred and important thing in my life",* says Walid with pride. He considers his family as the first priority and the most important element in his life. It is thanks to their support throughout his life, and his determination after many failures and struggles, that he became the person he is today. Friendship is another important element that he appreciates in his life.

Walid is very passionate about travelling and exploring new places in the world and have an adventurous spirit. He seizes every opportunity at hand to plan for new adventures within Ethiopia and abroad.



He shares his colleagues' feelings on the importance of working at the African Union, as an international organization with a challenging environment, where he can develop his skills, broaden his knowledge and build a strong career, while helping the organization advance its objectives and deliver on its mandate towards achieving the Africa We Want.

*"I feel proud at the end of every meeting when they express their gratitude to translators and interpreters for the well done work".*

During the just ended summit, likewise other AU meetings and activities, he has been working tirelessly behind the scenes with the translation team to produce within established deadlines, quality translation work that meets highest standards of accuracy, and faithfulness to the spirit of the original text. As a youth within the African Union, he strongly believes that the youth are indispensable for the Organization and any other organization, to create a dynamic and strong environment aiming at empowering youth, and preparing them to assume leadership positions in the future.

Walid believes that *"it is not enough to work and hope for the best. Hope does not achieve goals; you should work hard and ensure that everything will go as planned and nothing else".*

*"I would like to further my studies by pursuing a PhD in the future, and discover other paths unlocked by languages",* he concludes. ●



## VOLUNTEERING DURING THE SUMMIT

Ms. Laura Harivola  
Rakotonandrasana

Youth Volunteer, HRST



During the 30th ordinary session of the Assembly of African Heads of State and Government at the African Union, Laura got involved in the organization within the Protocol department. Specifically, she was in charge of welcoming and escorting the VIPs, helping with the organization and preparation of the conference rooms.

Getting the Youth involved in such high-level event strengthens their experience and allows them to develop their network. *“Young people represent the future, they need to be heard, involved and engaged in every step of the decision process for the realization of the Africa We Want”,* says Laura.

*“The society we live in today is an expression of how communication has evolved over time. My passion is to create new communication tools, services and ways to be more productive and efficient”.*

Laura is a Communication Specialist at The David and Lucile Packard Foundation. She is part of the African Union's Youth Volunteer Corps - 7th batch, and wakes up every morning to do what she loves with the desire to inspire and create.

She grew up in Antsiranana (Madagascar) and graduated in Marketing – Communication from the Institut Supérieur de la Communication, des Affaires et du Management (ISCAM) in Antananarivo.

Laura's involvement in extracurricular activities includes music, travel and sports. She was awarded the 2011 Best Volleyball Player of Madagascar. Rather than pursuing a career in sports, Laura decided to focus on her studies and career.

Within the Sub-Saharan team, Laura is the youngest and thus, has limited experience in the sector but is dedicated to learning from her colleagues and seniors, and focuses on effective delivery of all the tasks assigned to her. *“I like doing my work properly, on time, to be a source of inspiration and to suggest new ideas”,* she says. To achieve the common objectives and deliver expected results, Laura has a strong grasp of goals and strives to execute strategy tactically. The vision of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation helps her shape her day-to-day operations. Her greatest satisfaction is to discover her name in the grantees newsletters and/or reports and be recognized for her contributions in the process of designing communication materials.

Years ago, she began her career as a Communication Assistant within a communication agency specialized in event organization. She was involved in developing, implementing and monitoring communication activities, coordinating events, and contacting service providers. She loved it when she could find methods of connecting with other people which allowed her to witness the importance of interacting with others. She discovered the power of communication and wished to gain more international experience before setting up her own business in Madagascar.

Thanks to opportunities in Madagascar and later in Europe, Laura was able to develop and strengthen her professionalism, sense of duty and ability to work under pressure. ●



## SHOWCASING THE AFRICAN UNION

Mr. Henok Ayele Lemma

Senior Publication and Reproduction Officer, DCMP

“I work as a Senior Publication and Reproduction Officer within the Directorate of Conference Management and Publications. For over 10 years, I served the African Union with my team, doing layout, design and printing works. Our workload is at his highest before and during Summits.

Our unit is in charge of designing and printing badges, nameplates, magazines, newsletters, brochures and much more for the summit. As everyone wants to showcase his work during this event, requests for our services increase drastically during this period. Summit is the toughest moment of the year for the printing unit. We also have to manage tight deadlines and last minutes changes. However, I prefer to think of these issues as challenges rather than problems. To me, serving the African Union, especially in tough period, is an opportunity. But getting this chance was a long journey for me.

*“To me, serving the African Union, especially in tough period, is an opportunity”.*

I am coming from an Air force family and was raised with a military discipline. I had the opportunity to follow the normal education curriculum in my hometown and upon successful completion of my elementary and secondary education, I joined the Addis Ababa University.

My tertiary education journey was wide-ranging. After my graduation, I followed a Bachelor then a Master's degree

program in the field of Information in HiLCoE. I also took some courses in programming, networking, layout as well as graphic design at various times and got certificates.

With this knowledge, I started my career as an instructor in various government and private University/Colleges. This experience gave me a chance to teach, guide and support students in their field of expertise. Today, I am very happy to see my previous students working in various institutions, including the AU Commission.

I always dreamed of working in an international and multi-cultural institution. In 2005, this dream came true. I was hired at the recruitment unit of the African Union Commission. At the Administration and Human Resources Management Directorate (AHRM), my tasks included receiving and registering job applications that I got through email, post office, and fax or dropped physically. I was also tasked with preparing the report for these applications.

Although I loved what I was doing, I was not using my full potential. But I applied what my father always advised me: *“Whatever your line of work is, whether you are a manager, technician, clerk or janitor, always work hard, give the best you can and be the best.”*

After two years within the AHRMD, my hard work paid off and I got the opportunity to hold the position of Desktop Publisher in the DCMP Printing Unit in 2007.” ●





## SATISFYING THE VARIOUS TASTES OF AU SUMMIT AUDIENCES

Bake and Brew Coffee Shop

Having been established so recently, the team at Bake & Brew were incredibly delighted to be invited to come and host a #popupshop at the AU Summit. The Summit was a great opportunity to introduce their products to a diverse and well established crowd. It was a truly fascinating occasion with so many coming together from all over the continent, and for Bake & Brew playing a small part in serving them was a true honour. The Summit was so important because it gave them an opportunity to connect and engage with people outside of their natural environment, testing their catering and service capacity. It was truly a landmark moment to serve on such a platform and they look forward to more events and engagements with the African Union as a small business.

Bake & Brew Addis Ababa is a coffee house, eatery and shared space in the heart of the city. It serves a varied selection of healthy foods, freshly roasted coffee and a radically good selection of fresh blended juices and house made iced-teas. The space also hosts some of the city's most creative events such as 'Canvas' - a quarterly art exhibit focused on giving creatives a space to showcase and sell their work. Upstairs, our mezzanine is home to 'The WorkShop' a co-working space for creatives, techies, consultants, start-ups and organizations looking for an offsite meeting space. The space is located on the ground floor of the GG Building, next door to Kings Hotel and opposite IEC Church.

Bake & Brew was established by a dynamic duo, Hellen Kassa and Caleb Meakins, both twenty-something year

old diasporas who returned to Ethiopia from the US and UK, curious and excited about being part of the growth and development of the country. After having both quit their full time jobs in Television and Renewable Energy to explore opportunities in entrepreneurship, the idea for Bake & Brew was born. With the support of friends and family, Bake & Brew raised USD 25,000 through crowdfunding to launch the business. In October of 2017 it opened with the aim of bringing home-style favourite meals with a fresh and healthy twist. It has rapidly become a go-to location for quick healthy selection of soups, salads, sandwiches and a popular brunch menu served all weekend. Bake & Brew has focused on sourcing fresh ingredients and working with young local entrepreneurs to brew freshly roasted coffee.

The vision behind Bake & Brew was to create a space where all kinds of people could come connect, eat well, work, host events and share delightful experiences. The all-day weekend breakfast and brunch menu has proven to be a very popular offering with the French toast, pancakes and waffles becoming a regular order for many. The pastries made up of varied selection of breads, cakes and cookies have also garnered a faithful following. We have also really enjoyed introducing many to less familiar food items like Beetroot Chips, Raspberry Iced Teas, and Falafel Wraps.

Sign up to the newsletter and stay up to date with all the goings-on in the space via the website: [www.bakeandbrewaddis.com](http://www.bakeandbrewaddis.com)





[www.au.int](http://www.au.int)

**African Union Headquarters**

P.O. Box 3243  
Roosevelt Street (Old Airport Area)  
W21K19  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
Tel: (251) 11 551 77 00  
Fax: (251) 11 551 78 44  
[ahrm@africa-union.org](mailto:ahrm@africa-union.org)