

SPEECH OF HIS EXCELLENCY MOUSSA FAKI MAHAMAT, CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION ON THE OCCASION OF ITS FOURTH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT IN MIDRAND, SOUTH AFRICA – 5 NOVEMBER, 2024 Honourable

Honourable Members of the Pan-African Parliament, Esteemed representatives of the African people,

Today, it is with immense respect that I am addressing you Representatives of the peoples, to pay tribute to you commensurate with your high status in the Architecture of our Organisation and to share my thoughts on the state of the African Union, at a time when I am bowing out after two successive terms at the helm of the Commission.

As representatives of the diverse nations and cultures of Africa, this august House is the embodiment of dream of the forefathers to establish a people-centred, citizen-driven Organ.

In its conception, the Pan-African Parliament was envisaged to be the voice of the people within the African Union, as we forge towards the realisation of the vision of a united, integrated and prosperous Africa.

Originally, the Parliament was set to be the bridge that ensures that the decisions of our Continental Organ truly reflect the needs, aspirations, values, and ambitions of our peoples.

This shared vision has guided our Union through triumphs, stumbles and challenges. Together, we have advanced initiatives such as the African Free Trade Agreement that seeks to intensify Intra-African trade. We have also worked steadfastly to address the peace and security challenges of the Continent as we sought to “Silence the guns in Africa”. We have expanded and amplified the voice of Africa in the global arena by holding fast to the collective agreement for “Africa to speak with one voice”. We ensured that Africa be a credible, visible, considered, sought after, indispensable actor on the international scene.

We committed ourselves to have a vision that transcends national borders and individual interests while recognizing that the force of Africa resides in its unity and its commitment to a collective vision embodied in Agenda 2063.

Internally, the Union has carried out significant institutional reforms to improve its governance and financial independence and reshape its operational structures to serve the aspirations of Africa better. These reforms aimed at making the AU more

efficient and transparent. Financial autonomy has been a key pillar of this restructuring, reducing dependency on external funding and ensuring that our priorities remain focused on the unique challenges and opportunities of Africa.

I am cognisant of the fact that there is much to be done in financing and resourcing the PanAfrican Parliament to enable it to perform the mandate for which it was established. As the Union deliberates on its Continental resource mobilisation strategies, the imperative need is to consider an adequate allocation of resources to the Parliament. Equally, the need for the organisational structure of the Parliament to be reformed to enable it to function optimally remains a matter to be fast-tracked by the Union.

Honourable members of Parliament, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Agenda 2063 remains our shared vision for a prosperous, integrated, peaceful Africa. To achieve this, we must prioritise Strategic Partnerships within and beyond our Continent that align with this vision. Agenda 2063 is not just a framework; it is a commitment to transform the lives of Africans. It demands continued dedication and action from all of us, particularly from the PanAfrican Parliament, as custodian of this vision. Your work to integrate Agenda 2063 into national policies and hold Member States accountable, as part of the oversight function of the Parliament, is key to ensuring this vision becomes a reality.

Africa has made massive strides in the global arena. The historic inclusion in the G20 marks a significant geopolitical shift, stressing growing influence of the Continent on the global stage and granting the Continent a voice in critical global discussions on economic policy, debt relief and climate finance. As a full G20 member, the AU now has a platform to influence global economic and diplomatic policies directly. This achievement enables the voice of Africa to be prominent in global discussions and must here assume with responsibility and high-mindedness, a major role in the service of our peoples.

A growing consensus supports the call of Africa for a permanent representation in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Africa seeks more than symbolic recognition. Africa seeks the acknowledgement of the central role of Africa in peace and security worldwide, given the number of conflicts on its Continent. Thanks to the efforts of African leaders and the diplomatic outreach of the Pan-African Parliament, momentum is growing for this historic change.

The future of the AU as a driving force in global affairs is bright. In this context, I call upon the Pan-African Parliament to exercise its institutional power to engage with its Parliamentary counterparts in other Regions of the world to exert pressure

and strengthen other Continental efforts, for greater representation and a stronger voice for Africa in the UN Security Council.

Excellencies, Honourable members of Parliament, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Despite these remarkable achievements, we face significant challenges. One of the most pressing challenges the African Union faces is the waning spirit of Pan-Africanism. In recent years, we have witnessed a rise in a rise of particularisms and communitarianisms within and of egoisms and the trampling of principles and values, outside, almost everywhere in the world. This decline of PanAfricanism undermines the collective vision that has driven the AU since its inception and weakens our faith in our huge intellectual and moral potential and limits the effectiveness of our struggle in all internal and external areas.

Now, more than ever, the work of the Peoples' Parliament is to bridge gaps, foster cooperation and represent the voices of the peoples. Your role is crucial for a new renaissance of Pan-Africanism. The evaluation, It is essential that you continue to defend the Pan-African vision so that it remains alive and relevant for future generations. In my address to your Honourable and central institution on 7 May 2018, in Midrand, at the very beginning of my First term, I had, with faith and confidence, said: I quote:

"In view of the commitment that drives you, it is tempting to wonder what soul instills this faith in you and what force to conquer carries you? In truth, the answer precedes the question: Pan-Africanism"

This question and this answer have since taken on such a strong acuity that they have now become essential.

is needed to uphold our shared values and vision. Through this body, African voices should continue to be heard within AU structures, reflecting the aspirations of our people and countering the forces that threaten to pull us apart. Your continued advocacy is essential to keeping the PanAfrican vision alive and relevant for future generations. Our economic development and integration efforts, exemplified by the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), present opportunities and challenges. The AfCFTA is a cornerstone for economic integration, promising to create jobs, reduce poverty, improve living standards and increase Africa's global competitiveness.

Excellencies, Honourable members of Parliament, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Pan-African Parliament has reached the fullness of its institutional maturity and majority. Through your wisdom and high sense of responsibility, it has successfully overcome its adolescent difficulties. It is, therefore, high time that its transformation from a Consultative Organ to a Parliamentary institution, with full and complete legislative power, be ensured.

As my term as Chairperson of the African Union Commission draws to a close, I would like to express my best wishes for progress, strength and achievements to our Parliament. I am, moreover, convinced that, now on track, the Parliament will work with the other structures of the Union to fulfill the dream of a bright future for Africa.

I thank you for your kind attention.