



JOINT PRESS STATEMENT

SIXTH HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE ON DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE

THEME: ENHANCING YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION IN GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

Johannesburg, 26 November 2017: The African Governance Platform, the institutional mechanism of the African Governance Architecture will convene the Sixth High-Level Dialogue on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance in Africa in **South Africa** on **6 - 8 December, 2017** at **The Capital Menlyn Maine, Pretoria**.

The Dialogue will be held under the theme, ***Enhancing Youth Participation and Representation in Governance in Africa***. It will be hosted by the Government of the Republic of South African and co-convened by African Governance Platform Members domiciled in South Africa – African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD Agency) and Pan African Parliament (PAP).

The Dialogue is held as the African Union celebrates two major milestones in 2017. The African Union Policy Organs dedicated the year to “Harnessing Demographic Dividend through Investment in Youth”. In addition, 2017 marks the Tenth Anniversary of the adoption of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance; Africa’s foremost democratic governance normative instrument. These two milestones, viewed within the prism of the Africa Youth Charter provide an auspicious moment to reflect on the state of youth participation in Africa’s governance agenda.

Within this context, three Regional Youth Consultations have been held in August and September 2017 in Arusha, Tanzania for East and Southern Africa; Abuja, Nigeria for Central and West Africa; and Tunis, Tunisia for North Africa. The Consultations were held under the theme, ***Enhancing Young People’s Meaningful Participation in Electoral Processes in Africa***, and were attended by more than 300 participants, drawn from 47 African Union Member States. In addition, a Gender Pre-Forum to the High Level Dialogue was also held in October 2017 in Lusaka, Zambia, under the theme, ***Building on Progress, Sustaining the Gains: Enhancing Young Women’s participation in Political Processes***.

As a result, the Sixth High Level Dialogue will provide a frank, open and inclusive space for policymakers and practitioners to interrogate policy and practice imperatives for enhancing meaningful youth participation and representation in governance. Specifically, the Dialogue will focus on youth participation and representation in political, economic, social as well as peace and security spheres as provided for in the African Youth Charter.

It is anticipated that the conversations at the Dialogue will contribute to the strategic and programmatic interventions aimed at facilitating the realisation of all the seven Aspiration of the Agenda 2063 – Africa’s Development blue-print. Ultimately, the Dialogue will contribute to the realization of Aspiration 6, which envisions “an Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth and with well cared for children”.

The Sixth High-Level Dialogue will be officially opened by H.E Jacob Zuma, President of the Republic of South Africa. Former Heads of State, H.E John Dramani Mahama (Ghana) and H.E Catherine Samba-Panza (Central African Republic) as well as H.E **Minata** Samate Cessouma, Commissioner for Political Affairs of the African Union Commission will join other high-level dignitaries and selected youth participants from across the continent in an intergenerational and inclusive space to interrogate the theme.

As the conveners of the Sixth High-Level Dialogue, we reaffirm our commitment towards creating platforms for inclusive dialogue as a key enabler for the realisation of The Africa We Want as envisaged in the African Union Agenda 2063.

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