

Talking Points for Amb Rossette Katungye

- I bring you greetings from H.E Mousa Faki Mahmat Chairperson of the African Union Commission and from my Colleague H.E Ambassador Albert Muchanga Commissioner for Trade and Industry of the African Union Commission who couldn't make it to this very important event due to very critical issues taking place this month.
- The year 2015 was a historical one: the United Nations passed the SDGs while the African Union endorsed the Agenda 2063. These two were aligned by the Common African Position on post MDGs that had been adopted by AU Assembly in 2014.
- Again, in 2015 the AU Assembly also launched critical African Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) negotiation with what looked as an ambitious deadline of concluding the negotiations by 2017. Guess what, this has come to pass and last year the fast tracked first phase of negotiations were concluded and on 21st this month in an Extraordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government, to be held in Kigali Rwanda, the AfCFTA will be launched. This is historical and a decisive move by African Leaders given that other Mega Trading Agreements like EU and NAFTA are falling apart. We are

hearing the move by US to impose tariffs on steel and alumina products from some trading partners including Canada and other NAFTA Member states.

- Did you know that NAFTA and Abuja Treaty that establishes that African Economic Community were launched at the same time in 1994? Africa applies a policy of slow but sure. Like we gradually achieved political independence, we will also achieve economic independence through integration. For Africa economic integration is not an option but a MUST.
- This tells us that Africa is redefining its agenda and rewriting its own narrative. It has been at cross roads for such a long time but the road ahead looks much clearer and we are destined to achieve what was envisaged by our forefathers in the Lagos Plan of Action of 1980, Abuja Treaty of 1994 and the Constitutive Act of 2000 etc – self-sufficiency, prosperity, inclusive growth and sustainable development through industrialisation, peace and security and creation of jobs for our growing youth among others
- In order to achieve these global and continental ambitious visions, Africa is determined to use its two key assets: Natural Resources and Human Resources especially the growing youth population majority of whom are women

- So our participation in this great event with such a big and high delegation composed of private sector leaders and experts of the mineral resources sector is an indication that we are seeking to dialogue with all stakeholders along the global supply and value chains of mineral resources especially the private sector in order to have shared and mutual benefits.
- Africa is still virgin and although the two assets (natural and human resources) have been plundered for centuries, we still have undiscovered natural resources as well as unborn youth. We therefore need to exploit our natural resources not only to cater for the next World Agenda (the commodities of the future are not gold and diamond but cobalt, coltan and other rare earth) but also to cater for the current and future African generations.
- Our Africa Mining Vision is just the tool that we will apply to engage with all stakeholders to remove the cloud that hovers over Africa as a high risk for investment (albeit high returns and super profits), a source of raw materials, a home of the highest population living in abject poverty while rich in natural resources, a continent of diseases (ebola, HIV and others yet to come). It will help us to achieve the Africa Union Vision that of **“An Integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in global arena”**.

- Africa prides herself as the only continent still endowed with resources that will spur the forth industrial revolution, for green and blue economies. **(or any other colour for that matter red, yellow orange economies or whatever color the future economists will think of (just for loughs)**
- In the next days starting today, my team of experts and the Private Sector leaders will be explaining to you how we need to partners with you on order to achieve our vision.
Thank you