



COMMUNIQUE ON THE APPOINTMENT OF AN AFRICAN UNION YOUTH ENVOY

Addis Abeba, 1 November 2018: The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, today appointed Ms. Aya Chebbi from Tunisia as his Envoy for the Youth. This appointment is a follow-up to the relevant decisions of the African Union policy organs and part of the continental efforts to harness the demographic dividend, empower young people across Africa, and further mobilize them in pursuit of the aspirations outlined in Agenda 2063.

Ms. Chebbi was selected following an open and rigorous process involving the review of hundreds of applications by a Panel made up of representatives of the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency, Regional Economic Communities and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. She brings with her a proven track record in advocacy and youth mobilization, with a view to effecting positive change. The Chairperson is grateful to Ms. Chebbi for having accepted this assignment. He is confident that, with her profound knowledge of the continent and issues affecting young people, she will advance the interests of African youth in policies and programs aimed at delivering Agenda 2063.

As part of her mandate, and in support of the Commission's efforts, the Youth Envoy will serve as spokesperson of the African youth to the relevant African Union decision-making bodies. She will advocate, and raise awareness on, the implementation of the Demographic Dividend Roadmap, which was adopted by the 2017 African Union Heads of State and Government Summit, and the 2006 African Youth Charter. She will work in close collaboration with nine other members of the Youth Advisory Council designated by the Chairperson of the Commission, taking into account gender and regional representation requirements. She and the Advisory Council will engage with, and be supported by, relevant Departments of the Commission and other African Union entities, as well as youth organisations across the continent.

The Chairperson reaffirms the determination of the Commission to work towards the effective implementation of all African Union instruments relating to the youth. In January 2019, the Commission intends to organize a forum that will mark the formal launching of the activities of the Youth Envoy and the Advisory Council.

Note to Editors

About the Youth Envoy and the Youth Advisory Council

The AU Youth Envoy

Ms. Aya Chebbi is an award-winning Pan-African feminist from Tunisia, whose mission is to connect, empower and mobilise African youth into social change through Pan-Africanism. She is 31 years of age.

Ms. Chebbi holds a degree in International Relations from the Higher Institute of Human Sciences of Tunis and a Master's degree in African Politics from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, where she was a Mo Ibrahim Scholar. She has also taken courses at Columbia University, Tufts University and the University of Denver, in the United States.

She is the founder of multiple platforms, such as the Youth Programme of Holistic Empowerment Mentoring (Y-PHEM), which coaches the next generation to be positive change agents; Afrika Youth Movement (AYM), one of Africa's largest Pan-African youth-led movements; and Afresist, a youth leadership programme and multimedia platform documenting youth work in Africa.

She served on the Board of Directors of the CIVICUS World Alliance for Citizen Participation; the World Refugee Council; and Oxfam Independent Commission on Sexual Misconduct.

The Youth Advisory Council

The Youth Advisory Council is set up to support the work of the African Union Envoy and advise the Chairperson of the Commission on youth issues. The Council includes nine other young people from the five regions of the continent. It will focus on the key areas of participation, advocacy, partnerships and harmonization. It will advocate youth development issues, through championing the work of youth in the African Union. The Council members are as follows:

1. Ms. Petrider Paul – Tanzania;
2. Ms. Monbolade Urhele Pamela – Benin;
3. Ms. Metour Mouini Vanessa – Republic of Congo;
4. Dr. Shakira Choonara – South Africa;
5. Ms. Aminetou Bilal – Mauritania;
6. Mr. Simon Marot Touloug – Uganda;
7. Mr. Serigne Ndiaye – Senegal;
8. Mr. Nair Abakar – Chad; and
9. Mr. Dario Abdula Camal – Mozambique.

About the Selection process of the African Union Youth Envoy

The appointment of a Youth Envoy was recommended by the 2nd Specialized Technical Committee on Youth, Culture and Sports, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in June 2016. A call for applications was published on the African Union website from 23 April to 15 May 2018, inviting young people across the continent to apply through submission of their CVs and an application form. 708 applications were received.

A selection committee was set up, comprising all relevant Departments of the African Union Commission. Preliminary selection criteria included candidates:

- between the ages of 15-35 and who are citizens of African Union Member State;
- who completed at least post-secondary education;
- displaying high leadership skills on youth development issues at regional and continental levels;
- with a track record of high level advocacy for youth development issues at different levels;
- demonstrating skills in resource mobilization and facilitation and initiation of multi-stakeholder dialogues; and
- candidates who are proficient in at least one African Union official language.

Seventeen candidates were shortlisted following the first round. The second round of selections was conducted by a high-level panel comprising representatives of the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Planning and Coordination Agency, Regional Economic Communities and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, which selected four candidates for interview. The successful applicant was selected through grading a weighted average against the criteria outlined above.

About the Demographic Dividend Roadmap

The African Union Demographic Dividend Roadmap is a policy document developed in response to the 2017 African Union Theme of the Year: “***Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth***”. This focus on youth is based on the acknowledgement that young people hold the key to Africa’s desired future. The Demographic Dividend Roadmap is a strategic lens towards achieving the aspirations of Agenda 2063. It outlines four pillars for investments in young people: employment and entrepreneurship, education and skills development, health and wellbeing, and rights, governance and youth empowerment. It further identifies key deliverables under each pillar to accelerate development, and a monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure enabling environments for implementation.

About the African Youth Charter

The African Youth Charter, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in July 2006, is the flagship policy document for youth development on the African continent. It outlines the rights and responsibilities of youth, as well as youth stakeholders, such as Governments, Regional Economic Communities, and the African Union Commission. The Charter has been signed by 42 Member states, 38 of which have ratified it.