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## STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE COMMISSION ON THE AWARDING OF THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE 2018

**Addis Ababa, 5 October 2018:** The African Union Commission Chairperson, Moussa Faki Mahamat, congratulates Dr. Denis Mukwege and the Panzi Hospital he founded more than 20 years ago in Bukavu, Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), to assist women victims of sexual violence, following the decision of the Norwegian Nobel Committee to award him the Nobel Peace Prize 2018. He also congratulates the other Nobel laureate, Nadia Murad.

The Chairperson of the Commission stresses that this decision is a well-deserved recognition of Dr. Mukwege's immense contribution to restoring the dignity of countless women victims of senseless and insidious acts of violence committed in the context of the multiple conflicts plaguing the Eastern part of the DRC. He praised Dr. Mukwege's courage and determination to assist the victims and to work for the respect of human rights, including at the risk of his own life. This Prize is also a victory for all women, in Africa and outside the continent, who are victims of these despicable acts and an encouragement for all those who work to put an end to their suffering and trauma, driven by a spirit of compassion, exemplary solidarity and a high sense of duty to the most vulnerable groups in society. Today, Dr. Mukwege's fight has taken another decisive step, paving the way for further victories.

The Chairperson of the Commission takes this opportunity not only to reiterate the African Union's strong condemnation of all forms of violence and discrimination against women, but also to make an urgent appeal to all Governments of the continent and other stakeholders to mobilize further against these crimes in a manner commensurate with the challenges and tasks at hand. The decision of the Nobel Committee is a powerful exhortation for sustained action by all those who can contribute to this fight. The African Union Commission will spare no efforts in assuming the full share of its commitment in this regard.