

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Press Release No: ____/2026

Date: 17 July 2026

Venue: Kariba, Zimbabwe

AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION COMMEMORATES THE 16TH AFRICAN BORDER DAY AT LAKE KARIBA, ADVANCING PEACEFUL BORDER GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABLE WATER COOPERATION



The African Union Commission (AUC), through the African Union Border Programme (AUBP), in collaboration with the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), commemorated the 16th African Border Day at Lake Kariba, on the border between the Republic of Zambia and the Republic of Zimbabwe, under the theme: "Ensuring Sustainable Water Supply and Safe Sanitation Systems to Achieve the Goals of Agenda 2063."

The commemoration brought together representatives of the Governments of Zambia and Zimbabwe, the African Union Commission, Regional Economic Communities, international organizations, development partners, border management authorities, technical experts, traditional leaders, local authorities and border communities. The event provided a platform to strengthen dialogue on peaceful border governance, sustainable management of transboundary water resources, effective border delimitation and demarcation, and enhanced cross-border cooperation in support of regional integration and sustainable development.

The celebration took place shortly after the successful completion of the first phase of the Lake Kariba water boundary demarcation exercise on 12 July 2026, marking the first-ever demarcation of an international boundary on a lake in Africa. This historic milestone demonstrated the commitment of Zambia and Zimbabwe to resolving boundary matters peacefully through dialogue, technical cooperation and mutual trust, while reinforcing the African Union's vision of transforming borders into bridges of peace, integration and shared prosperity.

Delivering the opening remarks on behalf of H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security of the African Union Commission, Ms. Odejinmi Oyeyemi Helen, Southern Africa Regional Desk Officer, underscored that the commemoration of the 16th African Border Day reflects the African Union's continued commitment to promoting peaceful border governance, strengthening cross-border cooperation and advancing the implementation of the African Union Border Programme in line with Agenda 2063. She emphasized that this year's theme highlights the critical importance of sustainable water supply and safe sanitation systems in promoting peace, resilience and sustainable development in border areas, while reaffirming the need for Member States and

partners to strengthen cooperation in the sustainable management of shared transboundary water resources for the benefit of border communities and future generations.

Delivering remarks during the commemoration, H.E. Ambassador Sönke Siemon, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the Republic of Zambia, reaffirmed Germany's continued partnership with the African Union in advancing peaceful border governance, regional integration and sustainable development across Africa. He noted that the successful boundary demarcation on Lake Kariba demonstrates how cooperation, dialogue and mutual trust can transform shared borders into opportunities for peace and prosperity. He further reiterated Germany's commitment to supporting African-led initiatives through its partnership with the African Union Border Programme.

Speaking on behalf of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Ms. Keisha Livermore, Chief of Mission for IOM Zambia, emphasized that effective border governance plays a critical role in facilitating safe, orderly and regular migration, while strengthening the resilience of border communities. She underscored the importance of partnerships among Member States, the African Union, Regional Economic Communities and development partners in promoting integrated border management and reaffirmed IOM's continued commitment to supporting people-centred border governance that advances regional integration and the aspirations of Agenda 2063.

Speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Secretariat, Mr. W. Chipega, Firearms and Border Security Officer, stressed that border issues that have historically been sources of conflict can be resolved peacefully through dialogue, cooperation and effective border governance. He noted that borders should not be viewed as barriers dividing people but as bridges connecting communities and advancing regional integration. He further reaffirmed SADC's commitment to supporting the objectives of the African Union Border Programme, emphasizing that effective border governance remains essential for peace, security, stability and sustainable development across the continent.

Throughout the commemoration, participants reflected on the importance of implementing the African Union Border Programme, promoting the Niamey Convention, strengthening coordinated border management, and ensuring that shared natural resources contribute to peace rather than conflict. Discussions reaffirmed that sustainable management of transboundary waters requires strong political commitment, technical cooperation, community participation and effective partnerships among Member States and regional institutions.

The commemoration concluded with a renewed commitment by the African Union Commission, Member States, Regional Economic Communities and partners to continue strengthening peaceful border governance, accelerating border delimitation and demarcation, promoting sustainable management of shared water resources, and transforming Africa's borders into bridges of peace, cooperation, integration and sustainable development in line with the aspirations of Agenda 2063.

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