



AFRICAN UNION

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**REMARKS BY
H.E. MOUSSA FAKI MAHAMAT
CHAIRPERSON, AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

**BIONTECH SITE INAUGURATION
18 DECEMBER 2023
KIGALI, RWANDA**

Excellency Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda,

Excellency Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal,

Excellency Nana Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana,

Honourable Mia Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados,

Honourable Ministers,

Excellency Ursula Von Der Leyen, President of the EU Commission,

Dr Akin Adesina, President of the African Development Bank,

Dr Tshidi Moeti, WHO Africa Regional Director,

Dr Jean Kaseya, Director-General of AfricaCDC,

Prof Dr Ugur Sahin, Co-Founder and CEO of BionTech Group,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is an important day for Africa. This facility that we inaugurating today, is a concrete result emanating from strong political will coupled with an efficient partnership.

Let me take this opportunity to commend the Government of Rwanda for its dedication. President Kagame, your leadership and determination as an early advocate together with your peers, have made this dream a reality for all of us. I also wish to

recognise the presence of President Macky Sall of Senegal and President Nana Akufo Addo of Ghana.

I also commend BioNTech for working closely with AU Member States like Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Ghana and others, and with Africa CDC, the AU specialised Agency for public health emergencies.

Excellencies,Ladies and Gentlemen

The Continent is committed to increase the accessibility and quality of needed vaccines and other medicines to be available to all Africans. That is also the purpose of the African Medicines Agency, which has its headquarters here in Kigali.

In this sense, we believe this BioNTech facility and AMA will contribute to our collective vision of a self-reliant Africa.

Creating a high quality regulatory environment and ensuring vaccine independence is key to our future capacity to prepare, respond and better recover from pandemics.

This collaboration will not only ensure the safety and efficacy of African-made vaccines but also goes with our vision for partners to procure and distribute African-made vaccines and medicines in

order to address African public health priorities by ensuring the markets for such products.

And here I want to thank GAVI for its recent one billion US dollar African Vaccine Manufacturing Accelerator fund which will undoubtedly further boost vaccine manufacturing on the Continent.

The World Health Organization, represented here by Dr Tshidi Moeti, The European Union Commission represented by Ursula Von Der Leyen, and Germany by Foreign Minister Baerbock. You have all been key partners. I want to reiterate the African Union's deep gratitude.

Working together to promote vaccine equity for Africa remains our priority. Today's launch is also testament to our vision enshrined in the Partnership for African Vaccine Manufacturing platform set up in 2021 to ensure equitable access to quality healthcare services across the Continent.

This resonates deeply with the spirit of Agenda 2063: where health is not a privilege, but a fundamental human right. It echoes the dream of a unified Africa, trading not just goods, but knowledge, innovation, and healthcare solutions through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Together, let us continue our journey to ensure vaccine independence for Africa and increased access to safe medicine

for all Africans as we build a resilient ecosystem and a healthier future for our Continent.

Thank you!