A Critical Appraisal of African Union (AU) Agenda 2063

Highlights for discussion at Kipchumba Foundation Webinar *A Reflection on African Union (AU) Agenda 2063* on Thursday 27 December 2018, 15:00 GMT – 17:00 GMT

Paul Kipchumba

The AU Agenda 2063 is an ambitious Plan of Action that strives to make 21st century a truly Africa's century. It picks from the aspirations of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) between 1963 and 2013, with this particular plan covering 2013 – 2063 period.

The agenda was adopted by AU heads of state and government in the 24th ordinary session of the assembly of the union in January 2015 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and works on seven (7) aspirations: (1) a prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development; (2) an integrated continent; politically united and based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa's Renaissance; (3) an Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law; (4) a peaceful and secure Africa; (5) an Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics; (6) an Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children; and (7) Africa as a strong, united, resilient, and influential global player and partner.

The Agenda 2063 is structured into five 10-year implementation plans, with the Implementation Plan, 2014-2023, in force and, in most part, aims at infrastructural and transport connectivity, African passport, e-learning, and supporting Regional Economic Communities (RECs). In addition, the agenda stands on a range of daring targets such as migrating to digital TV broadcasting by 2016; establishing a continental free trade area by 2017; abolishing visa requirements for continental travel by 2018; ending all forms of colonialism by 2020; ending all civil wars by 2020; banishing the hand hoe in agriculture by 2025; forming a continental government and institutions by 2030; reaching 50% of intra-Africa trade and 12% of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2045; and attaining 50% gender parity in political and other leadership participation by 2063.

However, the AU is poorly resourced financially and by manpower to enforce the implementation of the aspirations continent-wide, with a greater part of its budget coming from external partners, compromising with AU's ability to stick to the agenda firmly; there are still some AU member states that are not yet independent, such as the Union of the Comoros – the French contested Island of Mayotte; or the Saharawi Republic; complete decolonization of the continent should be a foremost aspiration of the AU; in addition, the AU should focus on educational investment across the continent as a first step, political stability as a second step, and industrialization as a consequent step. High quality education in the continent will resolve most of the challenges faced at present and in future. Otherwise, the formulation, adoption and enforcement of Agenda 2063 will improve living conditions in the continent and generate a momentum towards reaching continental competitiveness.