

**CLOSING STATEMENT BY H.E. ALBERT R. CHIMBINDI,
CHAIRPERSON OF THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE (PRC), ON THE OCCASION OF THE 31ST PRC
ORDINARY SESSION: ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA: 23
JANUARY 2016**

**Excellency Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of
the African Union Commission,**

Esteemed Senior Government Officials here present,

**Excellencies Permanent Representatives of the
Committee,**

**Excellency Mr. Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson of
the African Union Commission,**

Excellencies Commissioners,

Excellencies Heads of the African Union Organs,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me start by expressing my profound gratitude and pleasure that we have come to a timely and successful conclusion of the 31st Session of the Permanent Representatives' Committee (PRC). As the curtain comes down on this meeting, we have to pat

ourselves on the back for the expeditious manner in which we tackled our long agenda. Over the past two days we have had a very enriching and insightful debate on many issues of critical importance to the work of our Union. Our individual and collective determination and commitment helped to achieve results that we have. I want to thank each and everyone of you for your support and cooperation, and for your valuable contributions, and robust participation. I wish to express my profound appreciation to the various presenters for eloquently and comprehensively articulating the issues under their mandates. This helped us to have focused discussions.

Excellencies, Dear Colleagues

Over the past two days, we had the opportunity to look back and reflect on how we have fared in the implementation of the mandates given to us by our Principals, in an honest and frank manner. We also looked at the challenges that we have faced and the ways to overcome them, as we march towards the creation of the Africa we want. There were times when the debates became heated, but the unity of purpose always helped us to find common ground and move forward, together.

Excellencies,

Allow me to recap some of the important issues that we have deliberated on. These, inter-alia, included the review of our partnership with the rest of world and how these should have continental added value; the ongoing restructuring of the African Union Commission and other AU Organs and Agencies to enable us to have a lean, effective and efficient Executive; the financing of our organization in a manner that promotes, protects and safeguards African ownership of the African Agenda, and the streamlining of the methods of work and procedures to make our Organization deliver more with less. We received and deliberated on the reports of Specialized Technical Committees (STCs), the Organs of the Union and several Sub-Committees. We have made observations and recommendations for the consideration of the Policy Organs of the Union.

Excellencies,

The past year of Zimbabwe's Chairmanship has, indeed, been exciting but also challenging. On behalf of the outgoing Bureau of the PRC, which I had the privilege to lead for the past year, I would like to thank you most sincerely for the trust and confidence you reposed in us to make our modest contribution to the achievement of the goals of our Pan African Organization. I want to assure you that we have tried our very best, to effectively discharge our responsibilities. I hope we have lived up to the expectation of all the Member States.

On our part, we are satisfied with the progress that we have made over the past one-year in implementing the priorities of the Union. I want to congratulate the Members of the Bureau, namely the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Niger, Kenya and Mauritania, for the exemplary team spirit, for their dedication and commitment. I shall forever cherish the time that I was privileged and honoured to work with the Members of the outgoing Bureau. To all of you my Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen, I want to express my profound appreciation for your support and solidarity which helped to lighten, an otherwise very

onerous responsibility. I look back with pride over the unqualified support and the availability of each and everyone of you.

Let me also give special thanks to my region, Southern Africa, for their courage and confidence. Ambassadors from my region, very ably led by Her Excellency Ambassador Molefe, our Regional Dean, helped me to settle down and walked with me shoulder to shoulder during this whole journey. I want to say to my region and, of course, to the entire Membership of the Union, thank you for the opportunity given me to lead and chair the PRC, for the past twelve months. I pledge to continue contributing to the work of the PRC and wish to assure my successor of my unqualified support, and solidarity and, also, my full cooperation.

Your Excellencies, Dear Colleagues,

It would be remiss of me, if I concluded without extending special thanks to Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Chairperson of the Commission and the entire team of Commissioners, Directors and other staff for the excellent working relationship that we enjoyed during our Chairmanship. My heartfelt appreciation also goes to the Secretary General of the Commission, Ms. Djeneba Diarra,

and her predecessor Ambassador Jean Mfasoni and all the staff in the Office of the Secretary General, for assistance rendered to the Office of the Chairperson of the Union. Last, but not least, I wish to commend the entire staff of the Commission and give special mention to the interpreters, translators and other support staff for facilitating our work.

I now declare the 31st Ordinary Session of the PRC officially closed.

I thank you.