

PRESS STATEMENT

African Union (AU) Day, Saturday 25th May 2019

Theme: Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa

The theme for this year's AU Day should lead to forging strong ties and fostering international cooperation and partnerships towards creating economic opportunities for the people, especially the African youth to remain on the continent and to contribute their quota towards the development of Africa. Notwithstanding visa restrictions and limitations to free movement of people, goods and services, intra-African trade remains the motor for faster and higher growth and transformational development in the continent. The agenda to transform Africa therefore must place premium on effectualising the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA). This would create sustainable jobs for the youth in Africa.

As Africans begin to move freely to engage in common trade to bring about economic development and empowerment of her people, the barriers of language and communication must be eliminated. We must begin to learn each other's language to actualize the bond and unity that has been the bedrock for the formation of the OAU, now the AU.

Africa today is increasingly embracing a new wave of sustainable development through education and skills revolution underpinned by science, technology and innovation as reflected in the AU's Agenda 2063. With a focus on producing well-educated and empowered Africans, efforts must be intensified to build strong economies and create better opportunities for the African.

The IDEG therefore urges all African leaders to pursue a people-centred and planet-sensitive transformational programme in line with the AU's Agenda 2063, which encapsulates the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Growth (SDGs).

Happy 56th anniversary to the AU,

Long live Africa

Long live Ghana!

Dr. Emmanuel **AKWETey**

(Executive Director, IDEG.)