

Statement at the Pan-African Forum

**Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government,
Distinguished Ministers, Ambassadors, Diplomats and Invited Guests:**

It is a great honor for me to address you all today and welcome you to this new campus of the African Leadership Excellence Academy - or AfLEX as it's called in short.

AfLEX is a recently established premier institution for leadership training, research and policy advise. This vast campus and state of the art facility is envisioned to host Africans from all corners of the continent, who will network, ideate and deliberate upon the direction and destiny of our beloved Africa.

We envision it to be where African leaders, academics and professionals gather to exchange ideas, make decisions and set a continental agenda. It will also serve as an incubator of future leaders where three generations of *exiting*, *existing* and *emerging* leaders can learn from one another. Hence, the establishment of this academy is a testimony of Ethiopia's commitment to sustaining the richness of Pan-Africanism.

At the dawn of a New Year, two momentous occasions loom large in 2023 for Africans. Firstly, this year marks the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Organization of African Unity. And secondly, we also observe the 10th year anniversary of the launching of Agenda 2063. These two milestones capture the spirit of today's Forum: **celebrating the past – envisioning the future.**

As we reflect on our past journey of many achievements and set-backs, and as we navigate a changing world, it is imperative we also dream and define the decades that lie ahead of us. Hence, **Reinvigorating Pan-Africanism for a Changing World** is a critical assignment we must take up in our aspiration to articulate and elevate our African Union.

**Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen:**

Reinvigorating and recalibrating Pan-Africanism requires us to disrupt the status quo and leap into the future. Potentials need to change into products. Our minds need to transform our lands. We need to create clean and green environments.

Pan Africanism should flourish as an idea of cooperative integration, global competitiveness, and peaceful coexistence. African youth and women should share their due space in leadership and development.

We cannot let constructed divides, geographic boundaries and political ideologies hijack our Pan-African ideals.

The crisis in global leadership calls for Africans to step up collectively and think beyond our confines.

The changing world and its yet to be defined order calls for a new brand of leaders that are agenda setters, creative thinkers and solution makers. This is an academy that will raise and shape such African leaders. And such forums are the necessary platform to cultivate a habit of dialoguing into the future.

I wish us all expansive deliberations.

Thank you!

