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P. O. Box 3243, Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA Tel.: Telephone: +251-115- 517 700 Fax: +251-115- 517844  
Website: [www.africa-union.org](http://www.africa-union.org)

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**Remarks on the Launch of Africa Unbound Magazine  
delivered during the 2011 Africa Unbound Symposium: Moving  
Consciously Towards an African Enlightenment Era**

**by**

**His Excellency Dr. Jean Ping  
Chairperson  
African Union Commission**

**UNECA Conference Centre  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
29 April 2011**

**Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

On behalf of the African Union Commission, it gives me great pleasure to address this important launch event of the *Africa Unbound* development platform.

I am delighted to be invited to launch this new initiative and it is a pleasure to be here and to be part of this noble and timely initiative.

In a rapidly growing information technology age, this online magazine offers an accessible medium of expression and exchange, driven by a Movement that aims to launch a new approach to development, based on individual transformation and responsibility. Africa's development challenges should be addressed on many fronts. That's why initiatives - such as this one - are so important. If we pool our ideas, our expertise, our social capital, and the values that we share as a people, we can make genuine progress.

*Africa Unbound's* various engagements and discussion forums are proof that there is a growing awareness and a compelling need, in the face of

ongoing global crises, to rethink current models of governance and mutual coexistence. It is encouraging to note that there are initiatives that acknowledge that Africa's development is not just the responsibility of national governments, or bilateral and multilateral organisations. The development of the continent and the well-being of its people is an issue in which all citizens are stakeholders.

Ideas that have shaped the course of our continent's history have been nurtured right here in Addis Ababa. As you all know, the first step towards building a new vision for the continent was the transformation, in 2002, of the Organization of African Unity, into the African Union. Almost ten years after the articulation of this vision, Africa continues to take stock of its achievements and ongoing challenges, in relation to where it wants to go as a continent. Although many challenges remain, there is evidence that Africa is increasingly speaking with one voice on common issues around economic, social and political development. There are gains on political and socio-economic integration, and there are concerted efforts by the African Union to promote peace, security and stability on the continent.

It is within that framework that we welcome this idea that promises to facilitate transformation and growth within the continent. I have been

informed about the rich and thought-provoking discussions that have taken place since yesterday. The focus on individual responsibility and empowerment is pertinent at this time when it is critical for Africa to harness its full human potential for the development of the continent.

As you move into implementation, it is my belief that you will continue to enrich the concept and refine the strategy to achieve the important goals you have set for this Movement. We are proud to support this Movement and would like to encourage others to do the same.

This launch edition of *Africa Unbound* magazine will no doubt give voice to those who have the will and commitment to build awareness about each individual's responsibility for the continent's transformation.

Finally, I, once again, express my appreciation to *Africa Unbound* for hosting this event and bringing together this eminent group of participants. I wish the workshop a fruitful conclusion and I wish everyone involved all the best in this worthy endeavour.

With these few words, I have the honour to officially launch the Africa Unbound Magazine and I look forward to hearing of its success in engaging Africa's citizens to contribute to the growth of the continent.

I thank you.

**African Union Commission,  
Bureau of the Chairperson,  
29 April 2011**