

AFRICAN UNION

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AFRICAN UNION REPRESENTATIONAL MISSION
TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

1460 WISCONSIN AVE.
TELEPHONE: (202) 342 1102

WASHINGTON DC NW 20007
FAX: (202) 342 1114

PRESS RELEASE

African Union library to receive more than 20,000 books from US charity organisation

Washington DC, September 28, 2018 – The African Union’s drive for literacy development in Africa, has secured the support of *Books For Africa* a US based organisation which collects, sorts out and ships millions of books to all 55 African countries, every year.

Books for Africa, the largest distributor of books to the continent, has partnered with the AU Mission to the USA, to supply 22,000 books on mathematics, science, law, health and other subjects, to coincide with the next AU Summit in Addis Ababa Ethiopia, in January 2019.

From its headquarters in St. Paul, Minnesota, USA, and warehouses in Atlanta, Georgia, *Books For Africa*, a non-profit organisation, has shipped out over forty million books throughout the continent since 1988. The books are all given as donations.

Speaking at a gala event in Minnesota, to mark its 30th anniversary Patrick Plonski, Executive Director of *Books for Africa* said “*We look forward to partnering with the African Union in providing this library on the occasion of the AU Summit in January 2019. This library of 22,000 high-quality books is valued at over \$270,000 and part of a new partnership to advance education in Africa. We are excited to partner with the AU in this new, exciting endeavour.*”

AU Permanent Representative to the USA, Dr Arikana Chihombori-Quao who was guest of honour at the gala dinner, said the donation is a monumental gesture which will have a long-lasting effect on a lot of people on the continent.

“Education through reading is pivotal to the key goals of the AU’s Agenda 2063 because it impacts all aspects of human endeavour. People in Africa, mostly the youth, will continue to

benefit tremendously from the thousands of hard copy and audio books donated by Books for Africa, to whom we are very grateful,” said Dr Chihombori-Quao.

The books will go to the AU library, which will be a vital resource centre for students, researchers and academics, keen on learning more about African and global history, health issues, social and cultural affairs, politics and many other topics.

In fiscal year 2018 alone, the organisation shipped 2.3 million books, and 123 computers and e-readers containing 283,000 digital books, to 29 African countries. More than \$2.2 million was raised last year to ship these books to African students. The 22,000 to be given to the African Union in January next year is the first such arrangement to be followed by the shipment of thousands more books to the continental body, every year.

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Contact

Maureen Nkandu

AU USA Communications

Email: nkandum@africa-union.org

Phone: +1 202 5685718

Website: www.auwashungtondc.org

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Note to Editors

The African Union Mission to the United States of America is situated in Washington DC. Our mission is to Africa and African Diaspora in the United States and the Americas. We work on building, sustaining and nurturing bilateral relations with the United States Government. The AU Mission also works with multilateral institutions including the World Bank, IMF and the private sector, as well as educates and inform Americans about important African issues of mutual interest.