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Press Release N°XX/2016

AU hails Muhammad Ali as true Pan Africanist

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – 6 June 2016: The Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC), Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, has hailed the African-American boxing legend, Muhammad Ali, as a true Pan Africanist. The AU Commission Chairperson described Muhammad Ali, also widely known as, “The Greatest of all time”, while sending her deepest condolences to the family, friends and fans of the fallen giant around the world.

The AU Commission Chairperson said Muhammad Ali was a hugely inspiring figure whose impact, beyond his punches in the boxing ring, generated waves of vibration across diverse populations around the globe. He will be missed the world over, and no less in Africa.

Muhammad Ali’s deep roots and extensive connections with the continent of Africa were unshaken. He never let-go of any single opportunity to re-echo his ancestral link with the “homeland”, as he put it in his own words, upholding Africa as the cradle of civilization.

While fighting against George Foreman in the famous encounter that became known as the “Rumble in the Jungle,” in 1974, in Kinshasa, of former Zaire, Muhammad Ali

reminded the world that, “Original man’s from Africa. All civilizations started in Africa.” He fought for freedom, justice and equality, including for black people, with unreserved energy and full determination. He supported Africa’s fight against colonialism, including the fight against Apartheid in South Africa.

Muhammad Ali gained prominence (aside from boxing) during the American Civil Rights Movement as a result of his resistance to white domination, and was a champion of minority rights. His stance on issues of freedom, injustice, peace and reconciliation earned him the appointment as United Nations Messenger for Peace in 1998.

He was a great son of Africa, who paid numerous visits to countries and met with different leaders of Africa. “Muhammad Ali was larger than life! His passion and compassion will be greatly missed and forever remembered.” Dr. Dlamini Zuma paid tribute to the fallen baobab.

Leaders across the African continent, have joined global voices to pay tribute to the memory and legacy of Muhammad Ali - a clear pointer to the enormous impact Ali had on the people of Africa.

Muhammad Ali died on Friday, 3 June 2016, at the age of 74, in a Scottsdale, Arizona hospital, after being hospitalized for a respiratory illness a day before.

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2016-06-06

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