

African Influencers Unite at the African Union to Reclaim the Narrative on 141 Years Since the Berlin Conference

36 creators sign the Addis Ababa Declaration, urging AU action on free movement and continental unity as Outdated Borders Cost the Continent \$80 Billion.

ETHIOPIA, November 25, 2025
/EINPresswire.com/ -- Addis Ababa, Ethiopia - Marking 141 years since the Berlin Conference, a dark moment when Africa's identity was fractured, African influencers, journalists, content creators, and policymakers gathered at the African Union Headquarters for the High-Level Influencers Forum on Borderless Africa.



Delegates from High-Level Influencers Forum on Borderless Africa at the African Union Headquarters

Held on 14–15 November 2025, the forum paid powerful homage to the resilience of African forefathers and matriarchs who resisted colonial division. In a historic assembly, participants converged to champion a future defined by African unity, regional integration, and the digital modernisation of border controls.

“

Integration is more than policy; it is about people experiencing freedom across their own continent. Influencers have the power to make this real for millions of Africans.”

H.E. Amb. Fred Ngoga, African Union Representative

This was more than a convening; it was a moment to reclaim African identity, challenge artificial borders, and affirm the urgency of shared heritage and collective progress toward a borderless Africa enabled by technology.

H.E. Amb. Fred Ngoga, Senior Advisor for International Partnerships at the African Union Commission,

underscored this in his keynote: “Integration is more than policy; it is about people experiencing

freedom across their own continent. Influencers have the power to make this real for millions of Africans.”

The forum, along with facilitated discussions and workshops, empowered participants to understand the Free Movement Protocol and the barriers Africans face. It highlighted an economic impact assessment from the International Air Transport Association (IATA), which states that Africa risks losing \$80 billion in potential economic gains due to outdated border and visa systems.

Hardi Yakubu, Coordinator of Africans Rising Movement, challenged the continent to move beyond grievance toward action: “We can no longer complain about what the Berlin Conference did 141 years ago when we have the power to undo what 13 men sat down to do. We are asking for things we shouldn’t even be asking for. We must begin to localise the borderless campaign.” He also highlighted the ongoing burden of colonial-era systems: “We no longer want to accept that 141 years after the Berlin Conference, African people must pay dollars to come to Ethiopia, the headquarters of the African Union.”

Armed with their phones, cameras, and pens, 36 influencers, journalists, storytellers and artists from across Africa and the diaspora united to boldly sign the Addis Ababa Influencers Declaration on Borderless Africa. They presented the declaration to H.E. Amb. Robert Afriyie, Ghana’s Ambassador to Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union Commission. Receiving it, he offered resolute encouragement: “Difficulty is not impossibility. Reparations remind us that justice is hard, but never out of reach.”

He urged participants to wield technology purposefully, adding, “The device in your hand once filled an entire room. Use it wisely. Search nonsense, and the algorithm will feed you nonsense.



Influencers presenting declaration to H.E Amb Robert Afriyie



Ghanaian Delegates, Hardi Yakubu, Sompahemaa (Queenmother) Nana Afiba, Four-Time Grammy Nominated Artist Rocky Dawuni and Akosua Shirley from High-Level Influencers Forum on Borderless Africa at the African Union Headquarters

History is not a marathon but a relay. Run your leg with purpose, then pass the baton to the next generation.”

Ambassador Afriyie also reinforced the importance of narrative ownership:

“Africa must tell its own stories through its own lenses. When we own the narrative, we reclaim our power.”

To further strengthen momentum, the Forum announced the creation of the Borderless Africa Fund, which will support advocacy, awareness campaigns, and key Borderless Africa initiatives across the continent.

The committed storytellers pledged to honour the declaration by shaping the African narrative with dignity, rejecting stereotypes, sensationalism, and fear-mongering. They vowed to highlight African achievements, expose injustices hindering freedom of movement, and advocate for people-centred policy reforms across governments and regional bodies.

“Africa has the diversity and creativity to populate millions of new worlds. Yet, our full potential remains unrealised, waiting for us to manifest it,” said Rocky Dawuni, Grammy-nominated Ghanaian musician and humanitarian.

Their vision for a borderless Africa is bold: a continent where every citizen can move, live, and dream freely; where the African passport is universally accepted with visa-free travel guaranteed, air travel is affordable, and intra-African trade thrives. Governments are called upon to embrace integration as the foundation for peace, prosperity, and dignity.

Despite progress, challenges remain. As of 2025, only 32 of the 55 African Union member states have signed the 2018 AU Protocol on Free Movement Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, and a mere four countries, Rwanda, Niger, Mali, and São Tomé and Príncipe, have ratified it. The forum’s united front sends a strong message that this must change.

The two-day High-Level Influencers Forum on Borderless Africa was more than a dialogue; it planted a lasting mark within the African Union, echoing the dream of unity and belonging. It is indeed a reflection of the commitment of the Africans Rising Movement towards free movement in Africa through its flagship campaign, Borderless Africa, and a resounding reassurance of reclaiming the right to movement as a key justice discourse.

To support this vision and help make a borderless Africa a reality, join us by signing the petition available on our website: <https://www.africansrising.org/>

For more information, contact: campaigns@africans-rising.org

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[Assets can be found here.](#)

About Africans Rising

Africans Rising is a Pan-African movement of movements, uniting individuals, communities, and organisations across Africa and the diaspora to advance social justice, human rights, and continental solidarity. The movement amplifies African voices, champions campaigns on issues like reparations, free movement, and gender equality, and empowers citizens to shape policies,

narratives, and creative initiatives that drive Africa's transformation. Through advocacy, storytelling, and grassroots mobilisation, Africans Rising works to ensure that the continent and its people reclaim agency over their future.

<https://www.africansrising.org/>

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