

President Tshisekedi Appoints H.E. Paluku to NEPAD, A position that will Strengthen Africa-U.S. Economic Cooperation

President Tshisekedi Appoints Julien Paluku Kahongya as Personal Representative to NEPAD to Advance African Integration and Strategic U.S.-Africa Cooperation

HUNTERSVILLE, NC, UNITED STATES, May 26, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The President of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), His Excellency Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, has officially designated the Minister of External Trade, Julien Paluku Kahongya, as his Personal Representative to the African Union Development Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD) for the 2026-2028 mandate.



President Felix Tshisekedi and Minister Julien Paluku

This high-level appointment reflects the Democratic Republic of Congo's determination to reinforce its leadership role within African Union institutions and to accelerate regional economic integration, sustainable development, and continental cooperation under the framework of the African Union Agenda 2063. The nomination also strengthens opportunities for strategic engagement between Africa and the United States in areas of economic growth, critical mineral supply chains, infrastructure development, and regional stability.

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H.E. Minister Julien Paluku

As the President's representative to AUDA-NEPAD, Minister Julien Paluku will participate in the agency's steering committee and contribute to advancing regional integration projects aimed at improving intra-African trade,

infrastructure connectivity, industrial transformation, and coordinated economic development

across the continent. His mandate is expected to support the Democratic Republic of Congo's ambition to position itself as a strategic economic gateway in Central Africa while promoting policies that encourage international investment and stronger global partnerships.

Following the announcement of his appointment, Minister Paluku immediately initiated consultations with his technical teams to define an implementation roadmap and establish measurable performance objectives aimed at maximizing the Democratic Republic of Congo's strategic engagement within AUDA-NEPAD initiatives.

The Democratic Republic of Congo must position itself at the center of Africa's economic transformation and regional integration agenda. "The mission will advance development, attract strategic investment, strengthen our role within African institutions, and deepen mutually beneficial partnerships with the international community," Minister Julien Paluku stated.

This appointment further consolidates Minister Paluku's position as a central actor in the Congolese government's economic diplomacy and regional integration strategy while he continues to serve as Minister of External Trade.

The designation also carries significant implications for strengthening cooperation between Africa and the United States. As global demand increases for secure and diversified supply chains, particularly for critical minerals essential to advanced technologies and clean energy industries, the Democratic Republic of Congo occupies an increasingly strategic position in the global economy. Through AUDA-NEPAD, the DRC will contribute to regional frameworks that promote transparent trade, infrastructure modernization, industrial competitiveness, and sustainable economic growth.

The United States has increasingly recognized that Africa's economic development and regional stability are directly linked to global prosperity and international security. By supporting initiatives aligned with AU Agenda 2063, the Democratic Republic of Congo contributes to strengthening resilient supply chains, expanding regional trade markets, reducing economic vulnerabilities that can fuel instability, promoting sustainable infrastructure and energy projects, and enhancing cooperation on governance, peacebuilding, and economic modernization.

Minister Paluku's appointment, therefore, represents not only a major diplomatic and institutional milestone for the Democratic Republic of Congo within the African Union system, but also an important opportunity to deepen U.S.-Africa partnerships based on shared interests in economic security, regional integration, sustainable development, and long-term geopolitical stability.

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo reaffirms its commitment to working closely with African and international partners to accelerate inclusive development, strengthen continental integration, and position Africa as a leading force in the global economy.

About AUDA-NEPAD

The African Union Development Agency–NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD) is the technical body of the African Union responsible for coordinating and implementing regional development priorities and flagship projects under the AU's Agenda 2063 framework. The agency promotes infrastructure development, industrialization, trade integration, food security, and sustainable economic transformation across Africa.

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