

Acceptance speech by H.E Ambassador Albert SHINGIRO, Minister of Foreign Affairs and development cooperation of the Republic of Burundi at the occasion of the Africa 100 most influential persons award

Harare, Zimbabwe, May 30th, 2024

Excellences, dear colleagues,

Excellence Dr. Baroness Paulette Kporo, CEO of the business

Executive group Ltd,

Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen, all protocol respected!

- 1) **At the outset**, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the government and the people of the Republic of Zimbabwe for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to me and my delegation since my arrival in this beautiful city of Harare. I also wish to express my appreciation to the organizers for the exceptional planning of this important event under the theme: **“the people who are driving the African Renaissance”**.
- 2) It is indeed a great honor to be standing before you today as a recipient of this outstanding award: **the Africa 100 most influential persons”**. Frankly speaking, there is no words can express enough how deeply I am grateful for receiving this award. This award gives me confidence in myself and motivates me to work even harder alongside other African leaders from diverse backgrounds to forge a positive and lasting impact on the lives of African people.

- 3) This special occasion marks a significant milestone achievement in my career, from which I am deeply honored. The conferment of this award not only reinforces my self-confidence but also imparts greater responsibility on me to enhance my contributions as diplomat and political leader to make the African continent a better place to live for the current and next generation. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the jury members for distinguishing me among a multitude of qualified nominees.

- 4) **Excellences, colleagues, valued friends**, it is with a profound sense of gratitude that I acknowledge the key role each of you has played in my long journey to success. The guidance, affection and unwavering support I have received were the cornerstones of this significant achievement. As you know, it is very easy for anyone to try different things and start a new journey, but only a few of us are committed to work hardly towards our goals until the end of our journey. Whenever I felt exhausted and had to give up, it was them who motivated me not to give up during challenging times.

- 5) The dream of receiving this award came into reality only because of the motivation and support I received from **H.E Evariste NDAYISHIMIYE**, President of the Republic of Burundi alongside my cherished family, dedicated staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and development cooperation and the noble citizens of Burundi. It is indeed these remarkable individuals who have been my pillars of strength, love and energy. Today, I want to dedicate this wonderful award to them. This Award will forever hold a special place in my heart, serving as a constant reminder that a hard work always pays.

6) Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed friends, in conclusion, let me invite you all to visit my country Burundi, the heart of Africa, heart of drams, a country of milk and honey, a country of one thousand and one hills, a country of one thousand and one opportunities, a land of one thousand and one natural beauties. A nation characterized by the warmth and generosity of its 13 million inhabitants, each offering heartfelt smiles and open arms.

Thank you for kind attention!