

President Paul Kagame on Monday held high-level discussions with top officials from the African Medicines Agency (AMA) aimed at reviewing progress and accelerating the operationalization of the continental body's headquarters in Kigali.

The meeting, which took place at Village Urugwiro, brought together Ambassador Amma Twum-Amoah, the African Union (AU) Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs and Social Development (HHS), and Dr. Delese Mimi Darko, the newly appointed Director-General of AMA.

According to the Office of the President, the talks centered on the agency's preparedness to begin full operations and strategies to strengthen national and regional health regulatory systems across the continent.

The AMA, an organ of the African Union, was created to harmonize and reinforce the regulation of medicines in Africa, ensuring citizens' access to quality, safe, and effective medical products. By coordinating the work of national regulatory authorities, AMA seeks to promote public health while also supporting the growth of the pharmaceutical manufacturing sector across the continent.

Rwanda was chosen to host the AMA headquarters following a decision adopted during a high-level AU meeting in Lusaka, Zambia, in 2022. The host country agreement between the Government of Rwanda and the African Union Commission (AUC) was signed in Kigali on June 10, 2023 — a key legal milestone in establishing the institution. The Kigali headquarters was later inaugurated in November 2024, positioning Rwanda as a strategic hub for continental health regulation.

Dr. Delese Mimi Darko, an accomplished pharmaceutical regulator from Ghana and former Chief Executive Officer of the Food and Drugs Authority (FDA), was appointed as the agency's first Director-General during the Second Conference of State Parties (CoSP) held in Kigali from June 2 to 4, 2025. Her leadership marks an important step in operationalizing the AMA's governance structure.

During Monday's discussions, President Kagame emphasized Africa's need to build robust and self-reliant health systems that can drive innovation and reduce dependency on external medical supplies. He reaffirmed Rwanda's commitment to working closely with the AU and its partners to ensure that AMA becomes fully operational and capable of fulfilling its continental mandate.

"Strong health systems are essential for Africa's resilience and sovereignty.

Establishing the AMA in Kigali is a milestone toward ensuring access to safe and effective medicines for all Africans,” Kagame noted, according to a statement from the Presidency.

The AMA’s mandate extends beyond medicine regulation to supporting African governments in strengthening local pharmaceutical production in line with the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa (PMPA). Its operationalization is expected to boost confidence in African-made medical products and encourage cross-border collaboration among national medicine regulatory authorities.

Monday’s engagement underlined Rwanda’s growing leadership in continental health and innovation initiatives. By hosting the AMA, Rwanda positions itself at the forefront of Africa’s efforts to regulate and produce quality medicines locally — a crucial step toward health security and sustainable development.