Today President Kagame held a one-on-one conversation with Mo Ibrahim, marking the last session after two days of panel discussions focused on public services, good governance and effective leadership in Africa.

President Kagame covered various issues concerning Rwanda and the continent, including his tenure as AU Chairman, AU reforms, the ICC and his personal life among others.

On the ongoing AU reforms, President Kagame said the process was mainly about changing mindsets, efficiency and how Africans did things.

“It is also about financing because the source matters. It’s not proper that we don’t fund our own budget because we can. If it’s somebody else funding, then you do their bidding. 25 countries are already implementing and many more are willing. The formula is predictable and has automaticity around it. Those who haven’t understood are free to engage in a conversation about it. Aid is good, but why should citizens of other countries keep footing your bills on everything? Why don’t you aim to be like them?”

Concerning the Africa free trade agreement signed in Kigali recently, President Kagame stated that this was part of the AU reforms, which comes out of realisation of need.

That 44 countries have seen the significance and some have even ratified it is encouraging. I am very optimistic about the trade agreement.

On the International Criminal Court, ICC, President Kagame said it wasn’t a bad thing to try crimes but the fact that the ICC was more biased on Africa and not the rest of the world eroded the court’s credibility.

“The ICC was initially supposed to cover the whole world but ended up covering only Africa. The Africans being tried committed the crimes with people from elsewhere. Right from its inception I said that the Court would be trying Africans. It’s not bad to try crimes, people have to be accountable. But the concern is in the process and whether justice would be seen to be served.”

Concerning his personal future plans, President Kagame said he had many things planned

“I have many things planned. I will try to be supportive to my successor so that they

can take Rwanda further. I always fall back on my family for comfort, I want some time to myself, and have always wanted to go back to school."

On AU fight against corruption, President Kagame observed that what needs to be done is to insist on accountability and punishing offenders.