In a landmark effort to elevate healthcare standards across the continent, Rwanda has inaugurated the new headquarters for the African Medicines Agency (AMA) in Kigali. During an official ceremony, Rwanda's Minister of Health, Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana, handed over a state-of-the-art, eight-story building to African Union Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs, and Social Development, Minata Samate Cessouma.

This new facility will serve as the AMA's central hub, supporting its mission to enhance the quality, safety, and accessibility of medicines and medical products throughout Africa.

Dr. Nsanzimana emphasized the importance of the AMA in assessing the quality of medicines produced both locally and internationally. "While many countries conduct quality assessments, some lack the necessary capacity, which can result in the distribution of substandard medicines across the continent."

AMA will work closely with national regulatory agencies, including Rwanda's Food and Drugs Authority, to address these challenges. The establishment of the AMA is part of Rwanda's vision to become a central hub for pharmaceutical quality in Africa.

Dr. Nsanzimana noted that the agency would not only enhance local capacity but also attract visitors for conferences, research, and other pharmaceutical activities. "All these efforts will contribute to making Rwanda a center for research and quality in medicines and food on our continent," he added.

Commissioner Cessouma highlighted Rwanda's selection as AMA's headquarters following a competitive process among nine countries in 2022. She remarked, "It is essential that we produce quality medicines to prevent substandard products, aligning with the African Union's agenda that by 2063, the people of this continent will have access to quality healthcare and good health."

The AMA officially commenced operations on November 5, 2021, after countries signed agreements for its establishment. Rwanda ratified the agreement on October 7, 2019, and as of March 2024, 27 African countries have committed to supporting the agency's mission.

At the handover ceremony, attended by government leaders and dignitaries,

Rwanda also provided new vehicles for the agency’s staff to facilitate their daily operations.

This initiative is expected to significantly enhance the production and distribution of quality medicines across Africa, bolstering the continent’s healthcare infrastructure and ensuring better health outcomes for its populations.

Rwanda continues to invest in its pharmaceutical and vaccine manufacturing industries, the establishment of the AMA marks a pivotal step toward achieving its goal of becoming a leading center for health services, research, and quality medicines on the African continent.