

The Rwandan Ministry of Health and the African Union have signed a host agreement for the African Medicines Agency (AMA). This newly launched continental regulatory body for medical products, is set to start its work with its headquarters in Rwanda.

Rwanda was selected to be the host of the agency during the 2022 African Union Executive Council meeting in Lusaka, Zambia.

AMA is a specialised AU agency intended to facilitate the harmonisation of medical products regulation throughout the AU in order to improve access to quality, safe and efficacious medical products on the continent.

Many AU member states including Rwanda ratified the treaty establishing the continental agency and deposited the legal instrument of ratification to the AU Commission.

On Saturday, June 10, Rwanda and the AU signed the host country agreement, an important step in getting the work of AMA started.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Health Minister Dr. Sabin Nsanzimana said the institution will play a key role in building confidence in the quality of health products on the continent, promote cooperation and mutual recognition in regulatory decisions and facilitate the movement of health products.

The agency is tipped to enhance the capacity of state parties to regulate medical products, to improve Africa's access to quality safe, and efficacious medical products.

In a media interview, Minister Nsanzimana noted that the government of Rwanda has already provided space where the agency will operate, and that after the signing of the host agreement, a number of processes are going to follow.

The next steps will include getting leaders for the institution, putting in place facilities like laboratories, and so on.

The AU Commissioner for Health, Humanitarian Affairs, and Social Development, Minata Samate Cessouma, said AMA will hugely contribute to the production of medicine on the continent, and allow it to move across the continent.