

Malawi's President takes over as African Union President

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Malawian President Bingu wa Mutharika has been elected as the president of the African Union, taking over from Libya's Moamer Kadhafi.

The election took place at the AU summit, in Addis Ababa. President Mutharika told the heads of the 53 member states that the time had come for "Africa to develop Africa." Accepting the position as chair of the organisation of 53 African states he said "Africa is not a poor continent, but the African populations are poor when we have actually a lot of natural resources...We have many scientists, engineers, artists, sports champions who are now in western countries contributing to the development of these countries."

Bingu wa Mutharika was re-elected in last May's election in Malawi, with 66 per cent of the vote. Trained as an economist he was previously secretary general of COMESA, the regional trading bloc. He was one of the founders of the United Democratic Front in Malawi in 1993 and later went on to form the Democratic Progressive Party in 2005.