

**DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION**

**MEDIA ADVISORY**

**Africa Day Celebration, 25 May: Virtual Conference on Silencing the Guns in Africa**

***Theme for Africa Day: “Silencing the Guns in the context of the COVID19”***

**WHAT:** The Africa Day Virtual Conference on Silencing the Guns in Africa

**WHEN:** Monday, 25 May 2020

**TIME:** 3.00–6.00 pm East Africa Time

**THEME:** “**Silencing the Guns in the context of the COVID19**”

**WHO:** The Virtual Conference is organized by the Department of Peace and Security of the African Union Commission (AUC), under the Silencing the Guns Initiative

**WHY:** The virtual conference seeks to give impetus to the theme on silencing the guns in Africa, which was launched as the AU theme of the year for 2020. Additionally, it seeks to strengthen collaborative efforts among Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the private sector, to take ownership of the provisions contained in the silencing the guns initiative. The event assigns a prominent role to women and youth, to whom the campaign seeks to protect the most.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE VIRTUAL CONFERENCE:**

The objective of this virtual conference during the celebration of the Africa Day on 25 May include the following:

1. To engage stakeholders towards the development of country-level and sub-regional programmes of action towards silencing the guns in Africa, with particular attention to the current global context;
2. To sensitize and generate interest among African Citizens about the nexus between development and peace;
3. To generate innovate ideas on how Silencing the Guns can be used to move the continent forward, towards a more integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa;
4. To increase visibility on how the African Union’s work relates to the African citizens in reference to Silencing the Guns;

5. To proffer policy and programmatic recommendations to advance the Silencing the Guns agenda.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes are:

1. Commitment to implementable programmatic actions towards silencing the guns on the continent;
2. Increased dialogue among stakeholders (governments, youth, women, private sector and media, among others) on Africa's common destiny;
3. The conclusions will feed into the Upcoming Extraordinary Summit in Johannesburg

### **Notes to the Editor:**

Africa Day is observed annually on 25 May, to commemorate the founding of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) which was created on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The precursor of the African Union (AU). The day provides an opportunity to recite the political and socio-economic achievements of African governments and African citizens. This year's theme for Africa Day "**Silencing the Guns in the context of the COVID19**" corresponds with the African Union theme of the year – 'Silencing the Guns: creating conducive conditions for Africa's development' - to reinforce African Union's efforts to silence the continent's guns - focusing in particular, on addressing the underlying root-causes of conflict and facilitating socio-economic development. However, the year has seen unprecedented changes with the outbreak of the coronavirus disease. In light of this, the Peace and Security Department (PSD) is organizing a three-part multi-stakeholder Africa Day Virtual Conference, focusing on thematic issues related to silencing the guns, to address some of the key developments and challenges in implementing the theme of the year, in the wake of COVID-19.

The virtual conference will be held over a period of three weeks, with a High-Level forum taking place on **Africa Day on May 25**, and subsequent virtual engagements on **June 1 and June 8, 2020**. Silencing the Guns is part of the flagship projects and programmes of Agenda 2063, Africa's blue print for its long-term socio-economic and integrative transformation.

***Journalists are invited to connect and take part in the press conference schedule for Monday, 25 May 2020, at 3.00 p.m. East Africa Time.***

*The Draft Programme is attached.*

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