

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



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DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

MEDIA ADVISORY

CELEBRATION OF THE AFRICAN UNION (AU) DAY, 9 SEPTEMBER 2020

WHAT: VIRTUAL AU STAFF ASSOCIATION PRAYER DAY-AU DAY

WHEN: 9 September 2020

TIME: From 15H00 - 16H30 Addis Ababa time

WHERE: African Union Headquarters', Addis Ababa, Ethiopia - (the virtual please use the link below to join the event:

<https://zoom.us/j/91319079534?pwd=UFihMzFMTGNLaXExdGdCRjdQQW5ZQT09>

Passcode: 916413

Webinar ID: 913 1907 9534

Or iPhone one-tap :

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Webinar ID: 913 1907 9534

International numbers available: <https://zoom.us/j/91319079534?pwd=UFihMzFMTGNLaXExdGdCRjdQQW5ZQT09>

WHO: The prayer Day will be organized by the Staff Association of the African Union Commission (AUC)

Meanwhile, the traditional Message of the Chairperson of the AU Commission, H.E Moussa Faki Mahamat, for the African Union Day, will be distributed and posted on AU website: www.au.int

WHY: The Corona virus pandemic has induced an extraordinary and unprecedented situation and conditions that many have not witnessed in their lifetime. The workplace and work conditions of

Staff have drastically changed. The economies, markets, livelihoods, communities, societies, culture and the practice of religion have all been shattered and altered by the catastrophic health emergency of global concern - the Covid-19 pandemic.

Objective:

The objectives of the Prayer Day are to:

- i. Unite AU Staff across the continent and beyond into a place of prayer during the Covid-19 period;
- ii. Praise the Almighty for protection thus far and offer praises to God for safeguarding AU system in recognition that it has been badly affected;
- iii. Pray for continued protection and healing of Staff and their families that are infected and affected;
- iv. Pray for the strengthening of spiritual, physical and psychosocial aspects of Staff and their families;
- v. Pray for frontline workers at the AU Headquarters and at AU Member States national level; and
- vi. Pray for peace in line with year 2020 AU annual theme: "Silencing the Guns and Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development."

Participants:

The AU Staff Prayer Day is envisaged to involve the AU Systems including the AU Ambassadors in Addis Ababa, Permanent Representative Committee, AU organs, the AU Regional Office, and Liaison Offices across the globe. This includes the AU Regional Offices from the strategic geographical locations outside Africa: |New York, Washington DC, Geneva, Beijing and Brussels.

The officials/guests from various faith groups who will be delivering the prayers according to the programme of the Prayer Day, together with their congregants across the continent and beyond are invited to join the AU Staff Prayer Day.

Background:

The African Union Day is celebrated every 9th of September following the Sirte Declaration of 9. September 1999. On 9th July 2002, some African leaders gathered in Durban, South Africa to launch the African Union (AU), a successor to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) which was created on 25 May 1963 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This was motivated by the urge for the Continental Organisation to unify the fifty-five (55) Member States and accelerate the process of continental integration with the view to

enable Africa to play its rightful role in the global economy, while addressing the multifaceted social, economic and political problems within the continent.

Worth recalling that, the AU Day presents an avenue to celebrate some landmark achievements of the Union on various issues such as peace and security, continental integration, women and youth empowerment, eradication of diseases, inter alia. The celebration is also an opportunity to reflect on the major challenges faced by the continent, the successes of the African Union since 2002, the progress made, and possible solutions to these challenges.

The celebration of the AU Day offers an occasion to promote the African Union and its activities all over the African continent and in the world, through its regional offices and Missions abroad. It is a moment to renew commitments aimed to realize the Africa we want as embedded in Agenda 2063.

Even though the celebration of the AU Day calls for further reflection, notably on the challenges impeding the continental integration and total eradication of poverty as well as pockets of conflict that still exist on our continent, this year, given the prevailing Covid-19 related circumstances that organizations such as the AU are grappling with, the African Union Commission (AUC), through its Staff Association, has organised a Prayer Day. The event will bring together interfaith and interdenominational groups to seek spiritual protection and blessings to the victims of the pandemic. All AU Staff, their families and faith formations to which Staff are attached recognize, that without faith, hope and prayer, the drastic life changing conditions imposed by the corona virus will be difficult to navigate.

According to the program of this event, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson, African Union Commission is expected to deliver an opening speech to mark the AU Prayer Day commemoration.

Attached is the program of the AU Day celebration.

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