

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Date: 20 June 2023

Venue: Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

MEDIA ADVISORY

THE 9th CONTINENTAL AFRICA PUBLIC SERVICE DAY (APSD): “The African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) will require a fit for purpose African Public Administration to succeed”

INVITATION TO THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEDIA

What: The 9th Continental Africa Public Service Day (APSD) under the theme “The African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) will require a fit for purpose African public administration to succeed”

When: 21-23 June 2023

Where: Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

Who: The Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) of the AU Commission (AUC) in collaboration with the Government of the Republic of Zimbabwe

Why:

APSD emanates from the declaration of the first Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Public and Civil Service held in Tangier, Morocco in 1994, the Ministers agreed that 23 June every year should be set aside and dedicated as Africa Public Service Day to “recognize the value and virtue of service to the community”. The Ministers’ declaration was reaffirmed in the Stellenbosch Declaration adopted at the fourth Pan-African Ministers’ Conference held in Stellenbosch, South Africa in 2004. The meeting acknowledged the importance of the APSD initiative as part of the continental strategy to boost public administration programmes, public sector performance and governance. The United Nations adopted and designated 23 June as Public Service Day and has been celebrating the day since 2002, coinciding with the APSD. The 23 June has since become an entrenched strategic event on the calendars of both the African Union (AU) and United Nations (UN). The APSD has since assumed a measure of popularity and is celebrated annually at National level and biannually at continental level.

As per the tradition, the APSD derives its theme from the African Union has designated for the year. The selected theme for 2023 is “Acceleration of Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTA) Implementation”. The centrality of public service and administration in the success of the AfCTA cannot be gainsaid. As the emerging African Integration Agenda, AfCTA will rely on the competence and skill of public servants at national level to achieve its lofty objectives of increasing inter-Africa trade and thereby accelerating economic development among AU member States. In view of the overarching continental theme, it bears reason to reflect on the role of the public sector in energizing regional integration and in this specific case the AfCTA. It is within this consideration that it proposed for the 9th 2023 Continental APSD that the theme is: “The African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) will require a fit for purpose African public administration to succeed”.

Prior to the APSD weeklong celebrations, the Office responsible for Public/ Civil Service will call for entries from Public Service Organizations which will compete in various categories such as:

- a) The Best Managed Organization Award,
- b) The Best Innovation in Service Delivery Award,
- c) The Most Accountable and Transparent Organization Award and
- d) The Best Pavilion Award

Objectives:

The fundamental objective enshrined in the 2023 Continental APSD celebrations is, the provision of due recognition of the working conditions and the quality of men and women who devote their lives to diligently serve the public and provision and delivery of value and quality public service to Africa's citizens. The other equally important consideration is the facilitation of positive interest of citizens from all walks of life in the work of public administration to the end that no one is left behind.

The APSD will serve as a platform for Public and Civil Service to showcase and reward good initiatives and achievements in the public sector. This platform will equally provide an invaluable opportunity for public servants to promote values such as professionalism, accountability, responsiveness, ethics and performance in the delivery of public service.

Expected Outcome:

The celebrations are expected to generate activities to produce multifold, progressive and lasting outcomes. The celebrations will be marked by presentations of topical papers mainly reflecting on the role of the public service and its capacity to perform. These papers will be informed by African experiences and reflect the issues that are germane to the role of the public service in the implementation of the AfCTA, more specifically to increase trade among Africa countries with a view to accelerating economic development.

The main culminating event on June 23 would provide an invaluable podium for African Union Member States and citizens to honor and reward deserving public servants, and a befitting platform to launch new public service initiatives as a watershed in the reconstruction and reform of the African Public Service Sector more especially post Covid-19.

The key focus is on improving public service image, proficiency, ethics, transparency, value, and responsiveness to their citizens. The papers are expected to go a long way in assisting and even reinforcing the need to reposition the public service for better bureaucratic management at regional level.

Participants:

Participants will be drawn from the AU Member States, including organizations active in the sphere of public administration, universities, the private sector, media and other non-state actors.

Media representatives are invited to attend and cover the 9th Continental Africa Public Service Day (APSD)

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