



REMARKS

BY

**H.E. AMB. BANKOLE ADEOYE COMMISSIONER FOR POLITICAL
AFFAIRS, PEACE AND SECURITY, AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

On the occasion of

**THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 2021 CONTINENTAL
CELEBRATION OF AFRICA PUBLIC SERVICE DAY (APSD)**

21 June 2021

Victoria Falls, Republic of Zimbabwe

Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security

(DPAPS)

- Hon. Gen. (Rtd) Dr CONSTANTINO GUVHEYA DOMINIC NYIKADZINO CHIWENGA, Vice-President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, *Guest of Honour*;
- Hon. Prof. Paul. Mavima, Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare of the Republic of Zimbabwe;
- Honourable Richard Moyo, Minister of State for Provincial Affairs;
- Hon. Members of the Parliament of the Republic of Zimbabwe here present;
- Dr. V. Hungwe, Chairman of Zimbabwe Service Commissions
- Remarks by Hon. Senzo Mchunu, Minister for Public Service and Administration, of the Republic of South Africa and Chairperson of the Conference of State parties to the African Charter on Values of Principles of Public Service and Administration,
- Remarks by Hon. Deogratius John Ndejemi, Deputy Minister or President's Office, Public Service Management and Good Governance of Tanzania, and Chairperson of the AU-STC8 Sub Committee on Public Service and Administration
- Hon. Ministers from APSD Champions countries here present;
- Representatives of AAPAM and AMDIN;
- Distinguished Experts;
- Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning!!!

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to be here today as we commemorate the 2021 Continental Africa Public Service Day under the theme, ***“Building the Africa we want, through embracing an ethical culture that underpins purpose driven leadership in the Context of a Crisis”***.

I bring to you a warm greeting from H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission. First and foremost, I would like to extend my profound gratitude to HE. Mr Emmerson Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe for accepting to host this important continental event besides the Covid-19 pandemic.

I also would like to thank the government of Zimbabwe, for the warm welcome extended to us since our arrival as well for the successful organization of the 8th edition of the Continental Commemoration of the Africa Public Service.

We commemorate the 2021 Africa Public Service Day as the continent and indeed the world, is battling with the scourge of the Corona virus.

I am also conscious that the efforts channeled at the national and continental level towards mitigating the effects of the pandemic has affected the most development activities the world over. However, I am pleased that even with the challenges experienced for the better part of this year, we are commemorating this important event of APSD here in Victoria Falls, this amazing city of Zimbabwe.

This pandemic, as you know, harms all sectors in Africa, including public service and administration, local governance, urban development and the decentralization process.

Aware of the cross-cutting dimension of this pandemic, the Commission facilitated the organization of an Extraordinary Bureau meeting of the STC No.8 on the response to Covid19, convened by its Chairperson, on June 10, 2020, by videoconference.

Your Excellency Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Africa Public Service Day is an entrenched strategic event on the African Union (AU) calendar that emanates from the declaration of the first Pan African Conference of Ministers of Public/Civil Service held in Tangier, Morocco in 1994.

The initiative is derived from the collaborative work of the Pan-African Ministers programme to enhance governance and public administration across the continent. The Ministers agreed that June 23 of every year should be celebrated as Africa Public Service Day throughout the continent, hence we are here today.

The objective of the commemoration of Africa Public Service Day is to reflect on provision of an enabling environment and platform for Public Servants to reflect on their achievements, challenges and solutions made in their area of work.

The Africa Public Service Day commemoration is also an opportunity to encourage and motivate Public Servants to continue the good work done whilst coming up with new initiatives and innovations of delivering services to the citizens.

It is also expected through this commemoration, to receive feedback from the citizenry on public services rendered with a view to prepare and focus the public service's interventions for a better future by proposing constructive and impactful changes for the well-being of the broader society.

Your Excellency Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We all know that the onset of COVID-19 has brought to the fore systemic weaknesses in the quality-of-service delivery such as water, sanitation, housing, healthcare and infrastructure in previously underserved communities across Africa.

The efforts to contain the spread of the disease has also highlighted key gaps in capacities, such as manufacturing of face masks, gloves, testing equipment as well as the battle readiness of the public administrative machinery.

There is, therefore, dire need to find a balance between building a capable state and cost cutting measures, which would require innovations to facilitate effective and efficient service delivery and performance in our countries.

In this regard, the Bureau of AU-STC8 in its June 2020 extraordinary meeting adopted a Declaration, calling on AU Member States to: ***'Ensure that the delivery of public services under COVID-19 restrictions at national level are inspired by the principles of Public Service and Administration as enshrined in the provisions of the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration; and to this end, Member States should engage in experience-sharing and lessons-learning on COVID-19 response strategies anchored on effective and efficient public services'***.

Your Excellency Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The fact that the Public Service and Administration machinery has stopped to deliver under the condition of the Corona virus, could also show the willingness of governments for ensuring a good governance is in place at all level.

Good governance is key for effective service delivery and very important for the public service machinery to function well while efficient and effective delivery of basic public services hold the key to our fight against COVID-19 as we pursue the noble aspirations of Agenda 2063- The Africa We Want.

During these three days of celebration, we will explore and share our knowledge and experiences on innovations, and propose sustainable solutions by repositioning the African public administration to meet the expectations of citizens and in particular to contribute effectively to meeting the challenges related to COVID-19.

Participants will also visit the exhibition of innovations by the Member States and take part in the award ceremony to the AU Member States that have exhibited the best projects in public service innovations.

As I conclude, I would like to appeal to AU Member States that have not yet done so, to sign and/or ratify the Charter and implement it.

I would also like to thank our partners, notably, AAPAM and AMDIN who have always accompanied us during APSD celebration.

I wish you a fruitful and happy Africa Public Service Day celebration.