

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Press Release No: 000003456/2021

Date: 9th March 2022

Venue: Midrand, South Africa.

2022 APRM Day Statement

“Towards Strengthening Democracy, Good Governance and Constitutionalism”

On March 9, 2003, 19 years ago, the African Peer Review Mechanism was founded by the NEPAD Heads of State Summit meeting held in Abuja, Nigeria. Now, almost two decades later, the APRM stretches across all AU regions, and includes 42 of the 55 AU Member States in the APRM community, with Burundi as the latest to accede at the 31st APR Forum of Heads of State and Government meeting held on 04 February 2022.

During those years, the APRM has completed country reviews in twenty-four Member States as well as second generation peer reviews in five Member States, and four targeted peer reviews in three member states.

The APRM process has produced a wealth of information, based on broad stakeholder engagement and participation. It has demonstrated itself to be an outstanding African contribution to the establishment and institutionalization of Afrocentric good governance, grounded in participatory arrangements and effective citizenship.

Nevertheless, the recent spate of coups and unconstitutional changes of government that have taken place on our Continent have now, more than ever before, highlighted the continual need for good governance based on the APRM’s principles of good political, economic, social, and corporate governance, democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, and peaceful resolution of conflicts.

This year APRM Day will be celebrated under the theme: *Towards Strengthening Democracy, Good Governance and Constitutionalism*. The vision of the APRM, as encapsulated in the APRM Strategic Plan for 2020-2024 is ‘*A well governed Africa for the Africa we want.*’ The APRM community promotes this vision as well as the APRM principles through its review processes, which are anchored on the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG). The recommendations from APRM reviews are summarised in National Programmes of Action that are harmonised with national medium term strategic frameworks and plans for implementation.

Beyond the APRM process, these values, principles, and recommendations strengthen our democracies and constitutionalism, and require constant maintenance, support, and effort by the AU community, whether at the sub-national, national, or continental levels.

As we have noted in past APRM Day messages, conflict, including coups and unconstitutional changes of government in Africa are rooted in governance deficits, which include mismanagement of diversity, manipulation of constitutions,

marginalization of the youth and mismanagement of natural resources. In this regard, the African Union Peace and Security Council (PSC) has urged all Member States to redouble their efforts and improve their governance systems, and this was echoed in the Africa Governance Report (AGR) 2019 which encouraged Member States of the AU to:

- Ensure signature, ratification and implementation of all relevant instruments for peace, security and stability; and
- Strengthen the Peace and Security Council (PSC) as recommended by the Assembly of the African Union Eleventh Extraordinary Session of November 2018.

In a nutshell, violence, coups, and conflict in Africa are rooted in, and exacerbated by, governance deficits. These are a threat to the realisation of an Africa which is peaceful, progressive and prosperous. The strengthening of democracy and good governance through a focus on the root causes of conflict, as reflected in APRM's country review reports on democratic governance are, therefore, an important source of support for the AU's peace and security agenda and a return to constitutionalism.

HAPPY APRM DAY!

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