



CELEBRATION OF AFRICAN UNION DAY

9 SEPTEMBER 2022

MESSAGE OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

Dear Africans of the Continent and the Diaspora,

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

9 September 1999, a date which recalls the critical questions raised by our Leaders, then meeting in Sirte, Libya, about the level of strategic relevance of the OAU in the face of the upheavals that occurred at that time in geopolitics on a global scale.

Refusing complacency despite the significant victories won over colonialism and the odious system of Apartheid in favour of the liberation of the Continent, our Heads of State and Government, under the impetus of unfailing determination, decided to chart a new path for an Africa open to the horizon of modernity and the collective well-being of the peoples. This was the operational action of the African Union in 2002.

I seize this opportunity to salute the memory of all the Leaders, who have now passed away and to pay tribute to those who are alive, for having ensured this fortunate change.

From the OAU to the AU, break and continuity go hand in hand in a relationship of efficient complementarity, built up to the expectations of the new ambitions of the Continent.

Break in the displacement of the centre of gravity on strategic objectives linked to our determination to speed up the process of Regional Integration. This orientation is stated, through the design and execution of flagship projects, covering all areas of human activity: infrastructure, air transport, digitisation, industrialisation, energy, education and scientific research, university education, agriculture, health, trade, communication, culture, etc.

The inclusion of women and young people in the development process and more broadly in the management of public affairs is for the African Union more than a wish but an exigency.

All these sectors have been covered by the development of Continental strategies articulated in a coherent and dynamic whole project labelled Agenda 2063.

Break also in the reasoned choice of a new *modus operandi* centered on results-based management. In terms of results, the evaluation of the First Decade of the implementation of Agenda 2063 (2013-2022) highlights significant achievements, confirmed, among other things, by the very advanced operationalisation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), the transformation of NEPAD into an African Development Agency, the effective functioning of the Pan African University, etc.

In the list of achievements there is also the integration of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) into the structures of the AU, the granting of the status of Specialised Agencies of the AU to the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) and many others; the establishment of the Africa CDC, the Africa Medicines Agency (AMA) and its commitment to the fight against pandemics, particularly that of COVID-19, the establishment of the Africa Medicines Agency (AMA), the African Humanitarian Agency (AHA), progress in integration efforts, at the level of Regional Economic Communities, the institutional involvement of the private sector as a financial lever, the institutionalised practice of designating Heads of State and Government by the AU Assembly as Champions for themes deemed central to the development of the Continent, and actions carried out within the framework of the fight against all forms of insecurity: political, health, climate and food.

The fight against terrorism on the one hand and against the harmful effects of climate change on the other hand, has become high priorities as their impact on the other development sectors of the Continent is harmful.

One of the main effects of this vigilance is in the decision taken by our Leaders in January 2017 to engage all the organs of our Union in a process of institutional reform, whose implementation, still ongoing, promises in the final analysis, to project a new image of our Continental Organisation, while giving it a revised and corrected content.

The exercise of this capacity for self-criticism was recently brought to its summon by the Current Chairman of the Union, H.E. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, in his speech at the 4th Coordination Meeting between the AU, the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms and Member States, held last July in Lusaka, Zambia.

After dwelling on the burden of external constraints that penalise Africa in its wish to build itself as a Continent of the future because of its immense potential, he refocused on “our shortcomings”.

As regards these shortcomings, H.E. Macky Sall mentioned first the compartmentalisation of the Continent due to a low possibility of mobility of people, goods and services between the Member States of the Union, our low agricultural production capacity and energy insecurity.

It is in the wake of this fact that the Second Implementation Decade of Agenda 2063, which starts in 2023, will unfold. It will revolve around three main objectives: to ensure greater physical connectivity of the Continent through the construction of roads and other communication infrastructures, to establish the conditions for sufficient domestic agricultural production to reduce imports of foodstuffs and build the technical capacities to make the energy transition a success. Mobilising all intellectual, financial and material resources, to attain this triple objective, is a collective challenge that calls upon everyone to be creative, inventive and above all bold.

It is in this respect that I would like to call upon all Africans, from the Continent and from the Diaspora, to join in the collective effort to build "the Africa we want", through a permanent desire to transcend ourselves, which is expressed by the systematic exercise of critical thinking, as the ideal means of access to excellence, whatever the field of activity in which one exercises. With this firm conviction that it is the sum total of small rivers that make big rivers.

Moussa FAKI MAHAMAT