



OPENING REMARKS

BY

**H.E. Ambassador Minata SAMATE CESSOUMA
COMMISSIONER FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS
AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

**ON THE OCCASION OF
THE SOUTH AFRICA NATIONAL CELEBRATION OF AFRICA PUBLIC SERVICE DAY
(APSD)**

THEME:

***“THE ROLE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN BUILDING AND SUSTAINING
PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE AMONG COMMUNITIES”***

23 JUNE 2020

PRETORIA, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



SILENCING THE GUNS:
Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development

- **Honorable Mr. Senzo Mchunu, Minister for Public Service and Administration of the Republic of South Africa;**
- **Honorable Ms. Sindisiwe Chikunga, Deputy Minister for Public Service and Administration of the Republic of South Africa;**
- **Ms. Yoliswa Makhasi, Programme Director;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen;**
- **All Protocols duly observed**

I am honored to join you for the national celebration of Africa Public Service Day by the Republic of South Africa.

I would like to extend my profound gratitude to the government of the Republic of South Africa, through the honourable Minister **Senzo Mchunu**, for inviting me to this webinar.

The South Africa's national Public Service Day, celebrated under the theme "**The role of public administration in building and sustaining peaceful co-existence among communities**", will shed more light on the country's step in building a capable and developmental state as well as a resilient nation. The theme effectively speaks to pillar 4 of African Union's Agenda 2063, "**A peaceful and secure Africa**" as well as the African Union Heads of State and Government's Declaration of 2020 theme, "**Silencing the Guns: Creating conducive conditions for Africa's development**".

Honorable Minister;
Ladies and Gentlemen.

The theme of the 2020 Africa Public Service Day underscores the important role the public sector can play in guarantying peace, stability and security, through the promotion of democratic and participatory governance in Africa.

But the effectiveness of administration in advancing peaceful co-existence among communities will come to naught without the requisite policies that ensure an equal

access to public services, predicated upon gender equality and youth empowerment, among others. Discriminatory practices and unfair treatment will likely create discord among the communities.

To achieve its goals, the public services would require innovations to facilitate effective and efficient service delivery. Innovations will improve performance of public institutions and making them more responsive to public need in our member states.

The citizens have the right to request quality public services but they might know, at the same time, their obligations. It can be difficult because in Africa we still have illiterate people.

Distinguished participants;

We are celebrating the Africa Public Service Day this year under abnormal conditions in which the COVID-19 pandemic is wreaking havoc in our countries.

The onset of COVID-19 has brought to the forefront gaps 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 limitations in countries' capabilities as well as the readiness of the public administrative machinery.

There is, therefore, dire need to find a balance between building a capable state and cost-cutting measures. The AU member states should enhance provision of public services while strengthening institutions of public administration as part of the continental response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this regard, the Bureau of **African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Public Service, Local Government, Urban Development and Decentralization** (AU-STC. No.8) concluded its extraordinary meeting in May 2020, by calling on AU Member States to: "Ensure that the delivery of public services under COVID-19 restrictions at national level are inclusive and inspired by the principles of Public

Service and Administration as enshrined in the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration. 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”.

As I conclude, I would like to reiterate that efficient and effective delivery of basic public services hold the key to our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and our quest to silence the guns in Africa as we pursue the noble aspirations of Agenda 2063-The Africa We Want.

On behalf of H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, I congratulate the Republic of South Africa for organizing today important celebration of Africa Public Service Day.

I wish you a happy Public Service Day.

I thank you for your kind attention.