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## **OPENING REMARKS**

**BY**

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**COMMISSIONER,**

**HUMAN RESOURCES, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

**AT THE ONLINE AFRICAN YOUTH CHARTER HUSTLERS  
ORIENTATION SESSION**

**14 DECEMBER 2020**

**Excellences and colleagues,**

**Our energetic, agile, dynamic, articulate, visionary African Youth,**

**Ladies and gentlemen;**

I am pleased to be here today making remarks on behalf of the AUC at this program marking the orientation session of the African Youth Charter hustlers. I must begin by commending OYE and all of our partners for this significant step forward relative to Youth Development in Africa. Thanks to Ms. Aya Chebbi for keeping the momentum and continuous advocacy for youth mainstreaming at all levels.

Looking back at where we came from with the Africa Youth Charter; from its inception to ratification by member states, I am happy that we are seeing the creation of a structure that will advocate for the implementation of the AYC; this is a significant impact and we take it seriously. Since the inception of the AYC, we have witnessed significant impact across some member states but more is yet to be done and we must say thanks to OYE and all our partners for establishing the AYC hustlers across the continent which we believe will accelerate and alert government and partners to prioritize the AYC and Youth Development in Africa.

In July 2006 at the African Union Head of States and Governments meeting in Banjul, the Gambia, the African Youth Charter was endorsed. The Charter is a political and legal document for youth empowerment; it is a strategic framework that gives direction for youth empowerment and development across the continent and it aims to strengthen, reinforce and consolidate efforts to empower young people through meaningful youth participation and equal partnership in driving Africa's development agenda. As our charter hunters, we look forward to seeing you advocate for all of this.

Following the selection of all of you, I want to encourage you to work towards achieving the objectives of your position as African Youth Charter hustlers. Know the reasons you were selected and work towards achieving it. As you move forward with you advocacy, I want to direct your minds to key objectives of the African Youth Charter:

- The African Youth Charter does not only provide the Governments, Youth, Civil Society and International Partners with a continental framework, which underlines to the rights, duties and freedoms of youth. It also paves the way for the development of national programs and strategic plans for the empowerment of young people.
- It also ensure the constructive involvement of Youth in the development agenda of Africa and their effective participation in the debates and decision

making processes in the development of the continent. The Charter sets a framework to enable policy makers to mainstream Youth issues in all development policies and programs. It thus provides a legal basis for ensuring Youth presence and participation in government structures and forums at national, regional and continental levels

- Thirdly, the Charter provides important guidelines and responsibilities of Member States for the empowerment of Youth in key strategic areas, namely Education and Skills Development, Poverty Eradication and Socio-economic Integration of Youth, Sustainable Livelihoods and Youth Employment, Health, Peace and Security, Law Enforcement, Sustainable Development and Protection of the Environment. It is expected that the execution of these guidelines would not only provide the youth with necessary tools for livelihood but also stem the flow of Africa's most important resource to other parts of the world.
- Finally, the Charter outlines the responsibilities of Youth to their own development and to their countries and continent. In other words, the rights embodied in the Charter are accompanied by responsibilities as well. The Youth cannot expect governments to empower them while they do the opposite by abusing themselves in various ways such as substance abuse. To be able to get maximum benefits from the implementation of the Charter it is expected that youth would also develop and promote the required self-discipline.

In line with the above, I want to encourage you to influence Head of states and Government in your respective Countries to ratify the Charter where they are not ratified and support the process of popularizing the Charter but also play your roles as young people in delivering the right aptitude and attitude that will promote self and continental growth. I also encourage extending your advocacy beyond Government towards development partners to assist African youth in their role as custodians of their own development and to participate fully in citizenship duties towards the socio-economic development of their countries.

Finally, I want to reiterate our commitment as AUC to fulfill our duties towards African youth development and empowerment for the development of the continent and we are in support of this process and look out for the very best.

Merry Christmas and a very happy and a super abundant prosperous new year 2021, let us all continue to work for the growth and development of Africa.

I thank you.