



STATEMENT BY
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DEVELOPMENT
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 6TH AFRICAN WORLD HERITAGE DAY

5TH MAY 2021

The African World Heritage Day was declared by 38th Session of the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in November 2015 to be celebrated on the 05th of May each year. The African World Heritage Day is an opportunity for the continent as well as people around the globe to celebrate Africa's rich and unique cultural and natural heritage.

The celebration of the 06th Edition of the African World Heritage Day under the theme: '**World Heritage as a Lever for the Africa we Want**' is in line with the African Union Theme of the year for 2021: '**Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want**'. I wish to congratulate all heritage practitioners, experts and workers including museum personnel and managers for the celebration of the day for the excellence work their doing on the continent for the promotion, conservation, preservation, profiling and popularization of Africa's rich and unique heritage.

We are all aware and concerned that this celebration is happening at difficult and challenging times in the continent due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and conflicts that are ravaging the African continent which put our rich heritage at risk of destruction.

This celebration can be made more meaningful if it is coupled with reflections on critical, concrete and implementable actions by policy makers, cultural experts, our Member States and all interested parties for enhanced protection and preservation of our heritage including enhance popularization of the African World Heritage Day, development and implementation of legislative frameworks at national, regional and continental levels.

In addition to the World Heritage Convention (1972) whose main feature is the link between the concepts of nature conservation and preservation of cultural property there is need to have tailor made African continental and national instruments for the protection of our heritage given our specific context.

It was through the recognition of this need that the African Union developed continental instruments on the protection of Africa's heritage. The Charter for African Cultural Renaissance of 2006 which entered into force recently has clear provisions on issues related to heritage.

Other continental guiding instruments which are aimed at assisting Member States in the promotion, protection and preservation of heritage include the AU Model Law on the Protection of Cultural Property and Heritage and the Revised African Union Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries.

I wish to use this opportunity to call upon all African citizens, communities and the world at large to join in the celebration of this important day and engage with the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF), our lead institution on the continent on issues related to heritage, to establish synergies and achieve our ultimate goal which is to celebrate and preserve this powerful and important African asset.

Happy African World Heritage Day!
Our Heritage is our most valuable asset and our pride!