Africa Day Message

Fifty-four years ago, the women and men of our Continent embarked on a new era in the quest for a united and stronger Africa. On the strengths of those ideals, the Organisation of the African Unity (OAU) was born.

As we celebrate the 54th anniversary of the OAU, now transformed into the African Union (AU), it is a befitting moment to assess the significant strides that African Countries have made towards achieving the core principles and objectives that are enshrined in the OAU Constitutive Act.

African leaders have adopted a common vision for the development of the Continent and all of its constituents in a holistic and pragmatic manner. This vision is embodied in the Agenda 2063 which clearly states Africa's priority areas to be realised in the next fifty years through a people-driven process.

Peace and Security remains high on the agenda of the African Union with progress being gradually made towards achieving the goal of ending violent conflict on the continent by 2020.

Calls for the participation of women in African society as well as the promotion of gender equality are being meaningfully addressed. Efforts are underway for realising the potential of Africa's youth, and this year AU Heads of State and Government are focussing on the crucial issue of “Harnessing demographic dividend through investments in the Youth”.

The Government of Mauritius firmly believes that the youth are the leaders of tomorrow and as such, it relentlessly pursues comprehensive programmes designed to empower the youth to achieve its full potential. These include a revamp of the education system which aims at providing our youth with values and skills to adapt to changes in an increasingly globalised world.

Africa needs to embrace innovative thinking and develop creative strategies if we want to create a better future for our people on the Continent.

It is with this mindset that, in March this year, Mauritius hosted the inaugural session of the African Economic Platform (AEP), one of the key initiatives under Agenda 2063. The meeting
crystalised the growing partnership between Government, Academia and the Private Sector in Africa.

The hosting of the AEP is in line with our efforts to translate the Mauritius Africa Strategy into concrete actions and also to further our strong ties with mainland Africa.

The Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) is another ambitious initiative that Mauritius has embarked on and the Government is determined to sign the Agreement by the end of 2017. Once fully implemented, the CFTA would offer African countries considerable benefits, and gains would be even higher if trade liberalisation is complemented by trade facilitation measures. The initiative would help diversify and transform the African economy, making Africa less vulnerable to external trade shocks.

It is a matter of pride for all Mauritians that Africa remains steadfastly by the side of the Republic of Mauritius in its legitimate endeavour to complete its decolonisation process and effectively exercise its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia.

On the occasion of the Africa Day, the Government of the Republic of Mauritius would like to reaffirm its commitment to the values of the African Union and its relentless efforts to bring unity, peace and prosperity in Africa.

Long live Africa! Long live the Republic of Mauritius!

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