



**STATEMENT BY**

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**ON THE OCCASION OF THE COMMEMORATION OF THE 2021  
AFRICA HUMAN RIGHTS DAY**

**UNDER THE THEME:  
“AFRICA HUMAN RIGHTS 40 YEARS AFTER THE ADOPTION OF THE  
AFRICAN CHARTER ON HUMAN AND PEOPLES’ RIGHTS”**

**21 OCTOBER 2021**

## **Dear Fellow Africans:**

As we commemorate the 2021 Africa Human Rights Day (AHRD), I would like to begin by wishing you all a **“happy 2021 Africa Human Rights Day”**. I am pleased to convey to all Africans and friends of our dear continent the renewed hope and commitment to the promotion and protection of human and peoples’ rights as enshrined in the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR).

Every year, the Africa Human Rights Day is celebrated on 21 October to mark the entry into force of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (the Charter), the founding treaty of the African human and peoples’ rights system.

This year, the celebration is taking place under the theme **“Africa Human Rights 40 years after the adoption of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights”**. This year’s commemoration is an opportunity to take stock of the four decades journey of the African Charter and to reflect on the current state of human and peoples’ rights in Africa. This year’s Africa Human Rights Day commemoration serves to reaffirm the commitment of all stakeholders, including the States Parties to the Charter, as well as the African civil society on promotion and protection of the rights and freedoms as enshrined in the Charter as basis for the implementation of Agenda 2063 and for building the Africa that we Want.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Commemorating human rights connotes different things to different people globally. For us as Africans, it is a reminder of our past history - the past human rights abuses, including denial of political self-determination through colonization and apartheid and a reflection of ongoing human rights situation with a determination to never again permit a re-occurred human rights violations in our continent. It also means a re-commitment to the values and principles that human rights stand for.

The celebration of this event today is also geared towards promoting sustainable and enduring peace that will pave the way for the development that we all want and deserve as Africans.

As we grapples with the challenges of COVID-19 Pandemic - including human rights violations, poverty, and unemployment amongst others, significant developments are underway in Africa, including the recently adopted and launching of the continental 10-year human rights action plan. This key initiative requires our collective commitment to guarantee its intended impact and sustainability. The African Union and its Member States cannot accomplish this enormous task alone. All hands, including those of civil society, media and private sector, must be on deck for the full realization of the human and peoples’ rights goal. This commitment will not only deepen the culture of human

rights in our continent, it will remain the surest path to Africa's social and political transformative agenda.

As Africa continues to grapple with the challenge of insecurity and underdevelopment, numerous peace initiatives have been launched on the continent. Vast amounts of resources and energies have also been dispensed to craft and promote peace agreements. Therefore, it is time for us all as Africans to re-commit ourselves to the ongoing peacebuilding processes in Africa that will promote the culture of peace, security and respect for human rights on the continent.

To this end, the African Union has resolved to collaborate more with Member States, Regional Economic Communities, private sector, development partners, civil society organizations and the media amongst others, to move ahead with its mission to build a continent that is united, prosperous and peaceful.

On behalf of the African Union Commission, I wish all Africans and friends of Africa a happy 2021 "Africa Human Rights Day".

I thank you.