

**REMARKS BY AMB. CHARLES SSENTONGO, AG.
PERMANENT SECRETARY AND CHIEF OF PROTOCOL
ON THE OCCASION OF THE 62nd ANNIVERSARY
MARKING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE
ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU) NOW THE
AFRICAN UNION (AU).**

The Dean of the Diplomatic Corps

Your Excellencies, Ambassadors and High Commissioners

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On this day, 62 years ago, leaders from across the continent came together in Addis Ababa to form the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), the forerunner of today's African Union. They sowed a seed of unity, liberation, and hope, one that has grown, weathered storms and still stands today. This was a mark of a new drive to promote peace, integration and a truly African approach to the continent's future. Africa Day is intended to celebrate and acknowledge the successes of the OAU (now the AU) from its creation on 25th May, 1963, in the fight against colonialism and apartheid, as well as the

progress that Africa has made, while reflecting upon the common challenges that the continent faces in a global environment.

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

The theme of this year's Africa Day is ***“Revisiting our History, Shaping our Future.”*** The African Union views Africa's history as a source of resilience, and lessons for the future. Africa is rich not only in natural resources but in memory, in struggle and in triumph. We revisit our history not to remain in the past, but to reclaim the power of our story.

Distinguished Guests,

Since the creation of the African Union, initiatives like the African Continental Free Trade Area and the African Union's Agenda 2063, and leadership in renewable energy, have guided the organization towards a future aligned with the challenges of the modern world.

Agenda 2063 is Africa's blueprint and master plan for transforming our continent into the global powerhouse of the future. It is a strategic framework that aims to deliver on its goal for inclusive and sustainable development and is a concrete manifestation of the African spirit of unity, self-determination, freedom, progress and collective prosperity. It envisions a transformed Africa, utilizing its resources and addressing social and economic challenges and is a mark of the re-dedication of Africa towards the attainment of the Pan African Vision of an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens, representing a dynamic force in the international arena and Agenda 2063 is the concrete manifestation of how the continent intends to achieve this vision.

As we celebrate Africa Day, we take stock of all we have achieved together. Whilst we work hard in Africa, we do not work alone. We have seen time and again that Africans are solving their problems. We must bury the cliché of "helpless people" and find African Solutions to African Problems. Let us look towards the future as we continue to work together.

Allow me, on behalf of the Government and people of Uganda, to wish you all a fulfilling Africa Day celebration and a future of deepening our partnerships and collaboration as we move toward a brighter, united Africa.

I Thank you.