

Statement by the Secretary-General of the OACPS, H.E. Mr. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti, on Pan-African Women's Day 2020

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Brussels, 31 July 2020/OACPS: It is indeed my honour today, 31 July 2020, to lead the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) in the commemoration of *Pan African Women's Day*, and the celebration of the 58th anniversary of the Pan-African Women's Organisation (PAWO), the specialised agency of the African Union dedicated to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Pan-African Women's Day acknowledges the efforts of all women across the African continent and from the Diaspora, who contribute to the creation of a better world, especially during this unprecedented global COVID-19 Pandemic. On this day, we acknowledge the critical role that women continue to play in our daily lives and livelihoods, particularly as we aspire to achieve the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5.

The recognition of the integral contribution of women has been a source of inspiration, even more so since commencing my duties as Secretary-General of the OACPS, and has informed the appointment of a gender-balanced Management Team within the OACPS Secretariat. It is therefore imperative to actively enhance women's voices, contributions, and visibility in the shaping of our future development cooperation programmes with our development partners, which aim to reduce poverty, promote entrepreneurship, and sustainable development.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm my, and the OACPS' support of the commitments made by OACPS Heads of State and Government in Nairobi, Kenya at the 9th OACPS Summit, in The *Nairobi Nguvu Ya Pamoja Declaration*, to mainstream gender equality in all policies, and create enhanced opportunities for women to equal pay, decent work and more inclusive participation in our countries' decision-making processes.

I am committed to the continued empowerment of women, the promotion of gender equality and the protection of women's rights, including girls.

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