

DECISION ON THE LAUNCH OF THE THEME OF THE YEAR FOR 2021

The Assembly,

1. **WELCOMES WITH APPRECIATION** the launch of the theme of the year for 2021 as follows: *'Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want'*.
2. **TAKES NOTE** that the theme for 2021 aims at promoting the arts, culture and heritage sector and building a resilient Africa which provides primary health care and social services to all in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic using the creative economy as a tool.
3. **FURTHER TAKES NOTE** of the need to make use of the golden opportunity presented by the year of arts, culture and heritage to move the sector to another level by paying more and concerted attention and efforts to this critical sector which has a great potential to contribute enormously to the continent's economy.
4. **URGES** AU Member States that have not done so to fast track the process of ratification of the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance and the Statute of the African Audio-Visual and Cinema Commission to ensure their entry into force and implementation. **REQUESTS** the Government of Kenya to work closely with the AU Commission in operationalizing the Temporary Secretariat of the African Audio-Visual and Cinema Commission (AACC) and report on progress to the 40th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council.
5. **CALLS UPON** all AU Member States, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), AU Organs, Pan-African Cultural Institutions and development partners to work in collaboration with the African Union Commission in implementing the roadmap of the Concept Note on the theme of the year.
6. **REQUESTS** all AU Member States, UNESCO and Pan-African Cultural Institutions to support the Government of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria and the AUC in the full realization of the Great Museum of Africa (GMA), a Flagship Project of the AU Agenda 2063 and **INVITES** them to participate in the continental launch of the Great Museum of Africa to be held in 2021 as part of the year of arts, culture and heritage.
7. **FURTHER REQUESTS** all Member States and the AU Commission to support and participate in the launching of the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM), the Giza Museum of Cairo.
8. **CALLS UPON** all AU Member States to support and participate in the 2nd Luanda Biennale on a Culture for Peace to be held in Luanda, Angola in 2021, an initiative which is inscribed in the roadmap of the concept note of the AU theme of the year

for 2021, to be organized by the Republic of Angola in collaboration with UNESCO and the AUC.

9. **REQUESTS** the AU Commission to work with Member States to take strong action towards protecting, preserving and promoting heritage sites in Africa and **FURTHER REQUESTS** Member States to provide support to the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) to carry out its programmes in the conservation and protection of the African rich natural and cultural heritage.
10. **REQUESTS** the African Union Commission to include the project on the liberation routes of Southern Africa in the roadmap of the concept note on the theme of the year for 2021 and work with the United Republic of Tanzania for its implementation.
11. **URGES** all Member States to ratify the Statute of the Pan African Intellectual Property Organization (PAIPO) and ratify the Protocol on Intellectual Property Rights in Africa when it is duly completed.
12. **URGES** the African Union Commission to implement the Assembly Decision on making Kiswahili a working language of the Union and to promote Kiswahili as a language of wider communication in Africa.
13. **CALLS UPON** all Member States, UNESCO and Pan African Cultural institutions to support Africa and governments in the organizations of festivals, establishments of galleries and other initiatives aimed at profiling and promoting arts, culture and heritage on the continent and **INVITES** all Member States and RECs to support, and participate in the international arts and culture festival which the Republic of Chad organizes annually.
14. **FURTHER CALLS UPON** all Member States to implement Assembly Decision related to the provision of 1 % of the budget to arts, culture and heritage and the development of the creative economy.
15. **REQUESTS** the African Union Commission to link the theme of the year with deliverables on social economic development and income generation. **FURTHER REQUESTS** the AUC to include the ***African Women Decade on Economic and Financial Inclusion*** as a theme in the road map of the concept note on the theme of the year such that vulnerable groups women in particular are given urgent attention. **RECOGNIZES** the date of 23 April to be observed annually as the Day of the Battle of Cuito Cuanavale;
16. **CALLS** the African Union Commission, in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to inventory the African cultural properties in the museums of foreign states outside of the continent, in order to return in to African Countries of origin.