

MEDIA STATEMENT

Africa Day: TEKANO calls for Pan-Africanism solidarity rooted in unity and freedom

25 May 2018

Attention: Editors

Tuesday 24 May 2022

Tekano - (teh-ka-no) is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to foster dynamic, visionary, values-based, politically informed, and socially conscious leaders, in South Africa and across the African continent. Our vision is inspired by the values of Pan-Africanism. We are upfront about calling out colonialism. We see our task as contributing to decolonisation in our world, challenging structures and systems which reproduce inequities within and between nations compromising the health and welfare of African people.

As an African organisation located in the African country South Africa, we celebrate the spirit of Africa day. Despite the many challenges our continent faces, Africa day is a profound recognition of what African people have built for themselves in a world where Africa's colonialisation by old and new forces continues. It recognises the spirit of African people's resistance, their collective efforts to build past the ravages of old and new capitalisms and colonialisms, and the solidarity that has enabled African nations to make the progress they have made to date. This spirit of no surrender, unity and solidarity remains our single most important source of hope as African peoples.

But Africa remains in a precarious position. The COVID pandemic has shown yet again, how Africa is the last thought even in situations where the continent will carry the heaviest share of the economic and social consequences of the pandemic. As Africans, we watched in horror as the western world divvied up and hogged Covid vaccines with little regard for places like our continent, where 16 percent of the world's population live. We acknowledge the efforts of our leaders to speak for our continent's people in the global race for vaccine access because these are global public goods. But we also call on them to work speedily to find long term solutions that will enable Africa to have less dependence on other nations for its health needs. As Tekano, we join activists and leaders in our continent who are calling for global solidarity to underpin the post-Covid recovery agenda so that our continent's people, welfare, and future is not sacrificed at the altar of western imperialism for what is a global problem.

Today, we celebrate the courage of Africa's people. Their resilience, ingenuity and the leadership that has brought us the gains in development and improvements in health status. We are inspired by the spirit of co-operation that remains since the founding of the Organisation of African Unity (now the African Union) which instituted Africa day. We call on African peoples and leaders to deepen this co-operation and solidarity including policies that address health inequities, and investing in the development of technical capabilities, infrastructure for safeguarding African people's health.

We are deeply concerned by South African government's failure to lead the nation in addressing the problems of Afro-phobia that have led to loss of life and multiple violations targeted at Africans in the country. We condemn the wishy-washy statements and inflammatory utterances of some government leaders which give fodder to opportunists to victimise and violate the rights of African migrants and refugees. The South African government has been part of challenging narrow nationalism and protectionism in the world. The country cannot be hypocritical within its borders.

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