

**Giornata per l'Africa**  
**Conferenza in occasione dell'anniversario**  
**della istituzione dell'Unione Africana**

*Martedì 25 maggio 2021 – ore 15.30/17, via videoconferenza*

**DSG Amina J. Mohammed's video message on the anniversary of the founding of the African Union.**

This year's commemoration of the founding of the African Union comes at a difficult time as we are countering the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences, with its acute impacts on Africa.

I would like to commend the African Union for securing doses of vaccines and reiterate the call to countries with adequate supplies to set aside some for the COVAX Facility, which is the fastest and most equitable way to increase the distribution of vaccines globally.

The COVID-19 pandemic has reversed gains and exposed the vulnerabilities of African countries to external shocks while also providing opportunities for change.

Africa has experienced a slowdown in economic growth with an expected growth just over 3 percent this year – about half the world average. Millions more Africans may tip into poverty, with low access to quality education and healthcare, high and vulnerable employment, especially among young people, limited investment in infrastructure and low resilience to natural disasters. COVID-19 also threatens hard-won gains on women's full, equal, and meaningful participation in all areas of social, economic and political life.

Now more than ever, the UN-AU partnership is crucial. We will continue to support the AU's efforts for peace and security and to create conditions for sustainable growth and development through the Silencing the Guns initiative.

We must seize this moment to address the root causes of conflict, prioritize prevention and implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's Agenda 2063.

I also commend the African Union's efforts to advance the new African Continental Free Trade Area which could lift 30 million people out of extreme poverty by 2035.

I welcome the recent initiative of the G20 and the Paris Club to provide debt suspension to some countries, as well as plans by the International Monetary Fund to provide special drawing rights. While world leaders must continue to support our AU partners, we also call upon African leaders to further their efforts in establishing good governance, fighting corruption and supporting Africa's youth.