

AFRICAN RENAISSANCE AND DIASPORA NETWORK (ARDN) PRESENTS:

2024 AFRICA DAY CELEBRATIONS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Friday, 24 May 2024, 3:00–5:00pm, United Nations Headquarters in New York, United States of America

INTRODUCTION

What is celebrated today as Africa Day was initially African Liberation Day, so named to mark the day when the Organization of African Unity (the OAU) was formed when thirty newly independent nations in Africa came together to sign a groundbreaking charter to be united in an organization and to collectively support the struggles of freedom fighters in South Africa, Angola, Mozambique, and Southern Rhodesia. This meeting took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 25 May 1963 resulting in 25 May being declared Africa Day. In 2002 African Liberation Day was renamed Africa Day.

Today, with all fifty-four countries in Africa becoming independent, in addition in celebrating the creation of the African Union, Africa Day has become an occasion to celebrate the wonderful and diverse cultures of Africa, including its music, art, fashions, unique fabric designs, dance, cuisines, its sporting accomplishments, and technological advancement. Africa Day is celebrated in many capitals around the world.

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE

In observance of the African Union's theme for 2024: Educate an African fit for the 21st Century: Building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa, the 2024 Africa Day Celebration will focus on women in agriculture. A cornerstone of such support is education, specifically, educating women so that they have the knowledge and tools necessary, and educating men to work as allies and equal partners.

Throughout Africa, women provide anywhere from 24% to 56% of labor inputs into crop production for an average of 40% Africa-wide. Many women are smallholder farmers producing food items, and are important contributors to crop production, livestock management, and fisheries. That is on top of harvesting water, cooking, and being the primary caregivers in their families.

According to the World Bank, productivity on women's farms is lower than productivity on men's farms, even though they make up the larger share of farmers. This results from systemic and institutional gender-based discrimination in their countries, societies and communities.

Compared with men, women have limited access to critical agricultural resources such as land, water, seeds and fertilizer, as well as to markets, credit and financial services. This is exacerbated by inequitable laws and customs that often favor male inheritance, and that impede women from ownership of land and property. Women face institutional and cultural barriers that restrict their ability to receive education and training, and to participate in decision-making.

In addition, women face gender-based violence (GBV), in grave violation of their fundamental human rights. GBV in agriculture comes in many forms, including sexual harassment and assault, economic exploitation such as unequal pay for equal work, and physical and emotional abuse. Policies that perpetuate GBV, that inhibit women from making choices about their health and their bodies, impedes women from equal participation in agricultural activities, and the ability of their countries and communities from realizing the benefits of the demographic dividend.

A vibrant and strong agricultural sector is necessary for countries in Africa and the African diaspora, and their people, to thrive in the 21st century. Recognizing and supporting the role and work of women in agriculture is critical for achievement of the sustainable development goals, and Africa agenda 2063. An African fit for the 21st century is one that is willing and able to provide such recognition and support.

AGENDA

In connection with the above, discussion around the 2024 Africa Day Celebrations will focus on the following sustainable development goals:



Sustainable Development Goal #2

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture



Sustainable Development Goal #5

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



Sustainable Development Goal #9

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

The format of the Celebrations will be divided into three distinct sections:

- Interventions by high level representatives from international organizations, government, and the private sector.
- Conversations with the private sector, government, civil society, academia and the international community
- Recognition of selected champions whose efforts have served to advance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa and the diaspora.

OBJECTIVES

- Explore the intersection between women's rights and agriculture.
- Showcase the potential and promise of Africa, and highlight the positive narrative of the continent.
- Recognize developments and advancements in Africa from 1963 to the present.
- Inspire and empower women in leadership in agriculture, as well as related sectors.
- Bring attention to and popularize the SDGs, particularly goals 2 (Zero Hunger), 5 (Gender Equality) and 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), in tandem with Africa Agenda 2063.

- Create and formulate solutions, initiatives and opportunities for achieving a better, more equitable world, where no one is left behind.

CO-ORGANIZERS

Organized by African Renaissance and Diaspora Network (ARDN), under the sponsorship of the Republic of Senegal, and in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat). ARDN also wishes to recognize the strong support of Give Them a Hand Foundation.

RED CARD CAMPAIGN

Women's rights are human rights. In the game of football (soccer), a red card symbolizes a significant infraction of the rules. ARDN Red Card Campaign seeks to mobilize individuals from all sectors of society to commit to giving a red card to all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls.

The Red Card Campaign falls within the framework of the Pathway to Solution's Initiative, an international, multilateral special project for the United Nations, spearheaded by ARDN, to popularize the Sustainable Development Goals, in collaboration with United Nations system entities, the international community, civil society, the private sector, academia, the world of sport and culture and governments.

To sign the Red Card Pledge:

<https://www.redcardpledge.com/>

For more about Pathway to Solutions:

<https://www.ardn.ngo/pathway/>

CONTACT

For more information, please contact Ms. Arlene Katzive, ARDN Director of External Relations, at arlene.katzive@ardn.ngo