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Press release

CoRMSA joins the rest of the African continent in celebrating Africa Day

Johannesburg – May 25 2021, the Consortium for Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (CoRMSA), on behalf of the asylum seekers, refugees and migrants' communities, joins the rest of African continent in celebrating and observing this important day, **"Africa Day."** The annual commemoration marks the 58th anniversary of the founding of the organisation of African Unity(OAU), now African Union (AU), on the 25th of May 1963. The Continental theme for the year 2021 is "Arts, Culture and Heritage - Levers for building the Africa we want." Here in South Africa, the theme for 2021 is "The year of Arts, Culture and Heritage: in the year of Charlotte Maxeke." CoRMSA recognises and acknowledges the two Africa Day themes.

CoRMSA congratulates Africa on its birthday and wishes it a political and economic stability going forward to reduce the number of both forced and voluntary migrants. CoRMSA also believes that a unifying and solidarity call is imperative to all African states in order to build the Africa we all want as Africans. The Africa that unifies and uplifts people of African descent, regardless of one's nationality, race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic group and documentation status. This include a central attention to the recognition of human rights (African Charter on Human and People's rights) and other international conventions and agreements relating to refugees and movement of people within the continent and across the globe which are predominant in establishing and maintaining the spirit and principles of Pan-Africanism as enshrined in the AU's and Regional human rights protection systems. As we mark the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution by Parliament during this month of May 2021, CoRMSA is appreciative of the fact that the Constitution has provided a solid foundation for our democracy and human rights protection for all in the post apartheid regime.

Like the rest of the continent, CoRMSA encourages South Africa to take Africa Day as an opportunity to promote African unity, reflect and address all social ills relating to migration, intensive regional integration, and recommit Africa to a common destiny and goals. Despite the vigorous attempts to promote a unified continent where one is not designated by country of origin or documentation status, these endeavours are undermined by the recurring conflicts within communities such as xenophobic attacks, violence, discrimination and exclusion in access to health care services, education and social security benefits, especially in this Covid-19 pandemic, resulting in the disintegration of the Africans in the African continent.

Having taken its stand to fight for the rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, CoRMSA acknowledges all the grievances of all concerned communities and is committed to promote and protect their rights across the regions and in Africa. Henceforth, it strives to create a community and a continent prevalent of unity, love and tolerance where national differences and documentation status are not used as tools to alienate one another.

In transcending such differences, CoRMSA calls upon all African state governments to take full responsibilities in protecting the human rights of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants in a way that promotes the well-being of everyone in their diversity and advances solidarity, unity, cohesion and cooperation among Africans.

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