

Welcome Remarks

Premier of KwaZulu-Natal H.E. Ambassador Nomusa Dube-Ncube at the 2nd Annual Joint Retreat between the APRM and the AU PSC, Radisson Hotel, Umhlanga Rocks, 14 November 2022

Your Excellency, Amb. Emilia Ndinealo Mkusa, Permanent Representative of Namibia to the African Union and Chair of the PSC for the month of November;

Your Excellencies, Members of the PSC;

Your Excellency, Mama Graca Machel, Chair of ACCORD's Board of Trustees;

Your Excellency, Domitien Ndayizeye, Former President of Burundi
and Chairperson of the AU Panel of the Wise;

Your Excellency, Joyce Banda, Former President of Malawi, and member of SADC Panel of Elders;

Your Excellency, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Former Deputy President of South Africa,
and member of the AU Panel of the Wise;

Your Excellency, Mr Abdoulie Janneh, Vice-Chairperson of the APR Panel of Eminent Persons;

Your Excellency, Prof Eddy Maloka, Chief Executive Officer of the APRM Secretariat;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good Morning!

Programme Director,

I would like to take the opportunity to welcome your distinguished selves back to the City of Durban, and indeed to the Province of KwaZulu-Natal.

As you may be aware, this city, and this province, have a long and proud history of hosting African and world leaders. In 2002, Durban had the honour of hosting the inaugural summit of the Africa Union (AU), a day that lives fondly in the memories of every citizen in this city.

Leaders from across the continent descended upon Durban to witness history as the Organisation of African Unity, founded as a pan-African tool to fight colonialism, was transformed into the African Union as we know it today.

That historic day was 20 years ago, and I am sure there are some people in this room who were too young to remember the launch of the AU, and there are some who were with us on that glorious day!

We are also proud that 10 years after its official launch in this city, in 2012 our province gave Africa its first female Chairperson of the AU Commission in Dr Nkosazana Dlamini - Zuma.

Over the last 20 years the AU has been true to its pan-African origins as it has come to terms with its expanded mandate and worked hard to make the lives of Africans better for all.

It is my belief that over the next 20 years the AU will continue to go from strength to strength, and that we will all look upon an Africa that is thriving, free of conflict and at peace with itself.

It therefore gives me great joy that the PSC and APRM chose Durban as the host city for the inaugural Joint Retreat of these two great mechanisms for peace in Africa, and it gives me even greater joy that you have chosen to come back for the 2nd annual Joint Retreat. What would however give me even greater joy is if you were to return to KwaZulu-Natal next year for the 3rd annual Joint Retreat, and then for many years to come thereafter.

KwaZulu-Natal takes its lead from the national government and the sustained commitment that the South African Government has to the AU project. This sustained commitment is inter alia, reflected in South Africa serving once more as a Member of the PSC, highlighting our readiness to work with other AU Member States to finding solutions to the challenges that Africa faces.

I would like to take this opportunity to assure this august gathering that the province of KwaZulu-Natal is committed to working towards peace in Africa, and that this provincial government is committed to supporting the efforts of the AU PSC and the APRM.

Distinguished participants,

Your arrival in our country comes just a few days after South Africa's successful hosting of the peace talks to the conflict in Ethiopia.

We welcome such a positive outcome and we equally hope that Ethiopia never knows conflict again. The hosting of these recently concluded peace talks is the continuation of our Government's tradition of actively participating in conflict resolution in Africa. South Africa has been involved in mediation and negotiations in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Madagascar, Ivory Coast and others. We are indeed proud to add Ethiopia to that list.

Your presence in our city and province occurs just a day after we commemorated the life of our great statesman, uTata uMadiba, through a lecture delivered at Inkosi Albert Luthuli International Convention Centre by the Prime Minister of Barbados Mia Mottley. Prime Minister Mottley reminded us of the umbilical cord that binds all of us as Africans, including those in Africa's Diaspora, and of the need to strengthen these bonds of friendship, and solidarity for a better world.

Your presence also coincides with the celebrations of ACCORD's 30th anniversary, an organisation that continues to demonstrate the commitment to work for an Africa that is free of conflicts.

Allow me therefore to once more refer to Inkosi Albert Luthuli, when he received the Nobel Peace Prize, he said:

“May the day come soon, when the people of the world will rouse themselves, and together effectively stamp out any threat to peace in whatever quarter of the world it may be found.”

It is my hope that we are able to see this day come, when we are able to stamp out any and all threats to peace in Africa and around the world. It is my belief that occasions such as this one will help push the frontiers of peace.

Forgive me, but I cannot conclude without inviting you to please take some time out from your busy and all-important programme to enjoy the hospitality and tourist attractions that our City, and Province have to offer.

With these few words, I would like to welcome you once again to our province. I wish you successful deliberations and I hope to welcome you back next year for the 3rd Joint Retreat of the AU PSC and the APRM.

I Thank You.