



**CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE FROM
H.E. MR. UHURU MUIGAI KENYATTA, CGH, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF
KENYA AND PRESIDENT-IN-OFFICE OF THE ORGANISATION OF AFRICAN,
CARIBBEAN AND PACIFIC STATES**

It is an honour and a privilege to be President-in-Office of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) on the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the founding of the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States.

Just a few short months ago, we gathered in Nairobi, Kenya to take stock of what we have accomplished and to lay out the next steps in our journey. Since then, we have advanced greatly and we have indeed seen “The Power of Change”. The revised Georgetown Agreement, approved by the Council of Ministers and endorsed by the OACPS Heads of State, has come into force and as a result, the name of the organization has been officially changed to the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States.

Within the Secretariat, we have also seen several changes. As constitutionally required, we now have a new Secretary-General-in-Office, H.E. Mr. Georges Rebelo Pinto Chikoti. On the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the founding of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, despite not-insignificant challenges, Secretary-General Chikoti has started brilliantly to effect a number of changes as dictated in the Nairobi *Nguvu ya Pamoja* Declaration, adopted at the 9th Summit in December 2019.

And while not even on the horizon when we met, the Member States of the OACPS, similarly to other countries worldwide, are engaged in a tremendous

combat against a formidable Corona Virus 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic which threatens to alter the very fabric of our existence. In light of this, on 3rd June 2020, we hosted the 1st Extraordinary Inter-Sessional virtual Summit with leaders of the OACPS and development partners. The objective of the Summit was to create a platform for dialogue on the impact of COVID-19 and exploit possible areas of support to mitigate its effects and devise a plan of action for global solidarity.

The leaders noted that the spread of COVID-19 has led to a devastating human tragedy and responding to this crisis remains a priority in the OACPS region. They underscored the need for OACPS to focus on efforts to ensure the health and safety of their citizens while laying the groundwork for a strong economic recovery. They committed to engaging in a dialogue to improve OACPS preparedness and responsiveness to international pandemics and reaffirmed the utmost importance of collaboration at all levels and across the region to fight against COVID-19 with urgency.

To successfully manage these changes, both seen and unforeseen, it is now, more than ever before, imperative that we work together to ensure “the ACP we want”. An OACPS that values multilateralism and supports sustainable development. On this OACPS Day, let us reflect on the values that have held us together through thick and thin and which will provide the springboard for our brilliant future together.

In keeping with the progression and the change within our organization, OACPS Day, will from now on, be held on the new date of incorporation, 5 April. On this our 45th anniversary, the last time that we will celebrate OACPS Day on this date, I share Kenya’s honour to be part of this tri-continental organization and I wish all our members a happy **OACPS Day 2020**