



Economic Commission for Africa
Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development
Tenth session
Addis Ababa (hybrid), 23–25 April 2024

Item 11 of the provisional agenda*

Consideration and adoption of key messages and the Addis Ababa declaration on the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions to reinforce the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and to eradicate poverty in times of multiple crises

Draft Addis Ababa declaration on the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions to reinforce the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and to eradicate poverty in times of multiple crises

We, African ministers and senior officials responsible for the environment and sustainable development, finance, planning, economic and social development, energy, agriculture and food security, land management, justice and public administration, education, statistics, the digital economy, science and technology, together with heads and members of delegations of parliaments and experts representing Governments and intergovernmental organizations, the private sector, the academic community and civil society,

Gathered online and in person in Addis Ababa from 23 to 25 April 2024 at the tenth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, held under the theme “Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions”,

Expressing appreciation for the attendance at the Forum of the Deputy-Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina Mohammed, the Prime Minister of Uganda, Robinah Nabbanja, and the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Monique Nsanzabaganwa,

Expressing gratitude to the Economic Commission for Africa, together with the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and various entities in the United Nations system, for having organized the Forum, which was marked by fruitful and high-quality discussions on the monitoring and evaluation of the progress achieved towards the attainment in Africa of Sustainable Development Goals 1, on ending poverty in all its forms everywhere, 2, on ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture, 13, on taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, 16, on promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, providing access to justice for all and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels, and 17,

* ECA/RFSD/2024/1/Rev.3.



on strengthening the means of implementation and revitalizing the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, and the corresponding goals of Agenda 2063, with a special focus on its second 10-year implementation plan, the exchange of experiences in the area of sustainable development in Africa and the formulation and adoption of key messages and the Addis Ababa Declaration, aimed at spurring action at the subnational, national, regional and global levels to accelerate the integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the second 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 and at serving as the collective African input to the high-level political forum on sustainable development, to be convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council in New York from 8 to 17 July 2024, and the Summit of the Future, to be held in New York on 22 and 23 September 2024,

Reaffirming the ministerial statement adopted by the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and other outcomes of the fifty-sixth session of the Economic Commission for Africa, held at Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, from 28 February to 5 March 2024,¹ the negotiated outcomes and other decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its twenty-eighth session, held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 30 November to 12 December 2023, the political declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly, held in New York on 18 and 19 September 2023,² the African Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action, adopted at the inaugural Africa Climate Summit, held in Nairobi from 4 to 6 September 2023, and the Moroni Declaration for Ocean and Climate Action in Africa of the Blue Future Ministerial Conference on Blue Economy and Climate Action in Africa, held in Moroni from 12 to 14 June 2023,³

Welcoming the discussions held and decisions adopted at the thirty-seventh ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union, held on 17 and 18 February 2024, on the theme “Educate an African fit for the twenty-first century: building resilient education systems for increased access to inclusive, lifelong, quality, and relevant learning in Africa”,⁴

Reaffirming General Assembly resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, in which the Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals contained therein,

Reaffirming also the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,⁵

Noting with serious concern that, at the halfway point in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Africa is off track for meeting most targets of the Sustainable Development Goals and has even regressed on some, remaining home to 55 per cent of the world’s population living below the poverty line, as noted in the issues paper on fostering recovery and transformation in Africa to reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities, presented at the fifty-fifth session of the Economic Commission for Africa,⁶ and the background report on the sub-theme of no poverty,

¹ E/ECA/CM/56/6.

² General Assembly resolution 78/1, annex.

³ Available at www.uneca.org/eca-events/sites/default/files/resources/documents/sro-ea/blue-future-conference-2023/Declaration%20English.pdf.

⁴ See African Union, “Concept note on education as the AU theme of the year for 2024”, document EX.CL/1476(XLIV)Rev.1.

⁵ General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.

⁶ E/ECA/COE/41/4–E/ECA/CM/55/4.

presented at the tenth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development,⁷

Recalling Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union and Africa's Agenda for Children 2040: Fostering an Africa Fit for Children, of the African Union,

Welcoming the progress made in the implementation of the first 10-year implementation plan and the adoption by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union of the second 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063,

Welcoming also the Summit of the Future as a timely opportunity to consider how to lay the foundations for more effective global cooperation, advance the implementation of global and regional frameworks, including the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, and identify ways to tackle current challenges and potential future threats,

Recognizing the importance of the voices of young people at the Summit of the Future, the consultative processes leading up to the Youth Forum on the Summit of the Future, held on the margins of the Regional Forum, and the common African position on youth,

Welcoming the global digital compact proposed by the Secretary-General in his report entitled “Our Common Agenda”⁸ and looking forward to its adoption at the Summit of the Future and to the intended endeavour at the Summit to define principles, objectives and strategies aimed at realizing an open, free, secure and human-centred digital future,

Emphasizing with serious concern the threats to inclusive, sustainable and resilient growth posed by conflict and instability, inadequate sustainable financing, debt stress, illicit financial flows, profit shifting, climate change, the loss of biodiversity, land degradation and pollution and human rights violations,

Reiterating that the tackling of security challenges and commitment to lasting peace across the continent are prerequisites for the acceleration of efforts to realize the Sustainable Development Goals and to achieve the moonshots of the second 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063,

Expressing concern at the serious challenges that African countries face in accessing climate finance and at the high cost that they pay to mobilize capital from the private sector for investment, despite the multiplicity of climate-related funds to finance climate projects in emerging economies and developing countries and the context in which Africa needs 2.8 trillion United States dollars to implement its nationally determined contributions to climate action⁹ and an additional 1.6 trillion dollars by 2030 to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030,¹⁰

Noting the progress made during the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on climate financing and climate instruments, carbon markets and loss and damage, and also during the dialogue on carbon markets held on the margins of the tenth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development,

⁷ ECA/RFSD/2024/5/Rev.1.

⁸ A/75/982.

⁹ See Sandra Guzmán and others, “The state of climate finance in Africa: climate finance needs of African countries”, Climate Policy Initiative (n.p., 2022).

¹⁰ African Union Commission and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, *Africa's Development Dynamics 2023: Investing in Sustainable Development* (Addis Ababa, African Union Commission: Paris, OECD Publishing, 2023).

Recalling the Special Declaration on Illicit Financial Flows adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the African Union at the twenty-fourth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa on 30 and 31 January 2015,¹¹

Noting trends such as rapid urbanization, the growth of automation, digitalization and artificial intelligence, the increase in the youth population, the emergence of new forms of work, inadequate recognition of and attention to traditional, non-formal social protection schemes and growing inequalities in access to education and social services, all of which have implications for job creation and poverty eradication,

Recognizing the efforts of members of the Economic Commission for Africa and other stakeholders to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and considering the critical role played by young people and women in the transformation of the continent,

Do hereby:

1. *Call upon* the participants at the Summit of the Future to consider and adopt, as part of the planned pact of the future to be delivered at the Summit, the following commitments aligned with the priorities of Africa:

(a) In respect of sustainable development and financing for development:

(i) To ensure the timely reform of the global financial institutions and architecture to make them fit for purpose and able to serve the interests of Africa and developing countries elsewhere in the world;

(ii) To ensure the existence of global financing mechanisms that give African and other developing countries access to adequate and equitable concessional financing and to affordable market-based resources to accelerate sustainable development;

(iii) To advance the efforts of the Secretary-General to close the Sustainable Development Goal financing gap through his proposed Sustainable Development Goal stimulus;¹²

(iv) To reform international tax governance;

(v) To strengthen the international governance of emerging issues, such as the management of the seabed and outer space resources;

(vi) To strengthen, sustain, keep under review and ensure linkages among global, regional, national and local frameworks for sustainable development that are resilient to shocks and to ensure a clear focus on delivering timely, measurable and good-quality outcomes on sustainable development;

(vii) To design, adopt and roll out the use of metrics beyond gross domestic product that recognize and reflect human well-being, ecosystem assets and their health, the role of the informal economy and the environmental destruction caused by certain social and economic activities, and, as a result, rebase the gross domestic product of countries in Africa and other regions of the world, taking into account the value of their natural capital and its ecological services;

¹¹ Assembly/AU/Decl.5.(XXIV).

¹² United Nations, “United Nations Secretary-General’s SDG stimulus to deliver Agenda 2030”, policy brief, February 2023.

- (b) With regard to international peace and security, to double down on efforts to ensure peace, recognizing that it is a prerequisite for security, good governance and development;
- (c) With reference to scientific innovation and digital cooperation:
- (i) To accelerate implementation of the principles of the global digital compact proposed by the Secretary-General and calls to action by bridging the digital divide across Africa, constructing secure and trusted digital ecosystems and prioritizing human development at the core of global digital governance for emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence;
 - (ii) To embrace multi-stakeholder participation as a form of digital governance that safeguards the global interoperable nature of the Internet while fostering innovation;
 - (iii) To place technology and innovation at the core of education and development efforts in Africa and to ensure the inclusive and responsible use of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, to promote job creation, poverty reduction, food security, climate resilience, justice, strong institutions, peace and political stability and to improve the delivery of education and health-care services;
 - (iv) To increase investment in research and development, in order to address current and future development needs, opportunities and challenges, in part by strengthening foresight and strategic planning;
 - (v) To foster essential capacity-building through South-South and triangular digital cooperation, with a view to expediting knowledge development and broadening access to financial resources and research facilities;
- (d) In relation to young people and future generations:
- (i) To capitalize on and reap a demographic dividend from the youth bulge in Africa through such interventions as increasing investment in and empowering all children and young people with affordable, accessible, inclusive, equitable and good-quality health, nutrition and education programmes and services, including the provision of legal identity, lifelong learning and alternatives for sustainable development, the application of digital technologies for education and vocational training;
 - (ii) To engage young people and children in efforts to ensure human rights-based and gender-balanced approaches to the planning, design, implementation and review of and reporting on policies, plans, programmes and financing arrangements for sustainable development;
 - (iii) To strengthen mechanisms for intergenerational interaction, including the exchange of views on sustainability, and the planning and promotion of social and intergenerational equity and just sustainability transitions;
- (e) In the area of transforming global governance:
- (i) To reinvigorate the multilateral system and ensure that Africa and the global South participate more actively and effectively and with a stronger voice in international economic decision-making, standard-setting and global economic governance;

(ii) To foster transparency and accountability, along with multi-stakeholder participation and actions at all levels of government, in decision-making and governance;

(iii) To reinvigorate global economic governance through the comprehensive and expeditious implementation of General Assembly resolution 78/230, on the promotion of inclusive and effective international tax cooperation at the United Nations, in order to boost resource mobilization for countries in the global South to finance inclusive sustainable development;

2. *Urge* members of the Economic Commission for Africa, entities of the United Nations system, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and their partners to redouble efforts to revitalize institutions, policies, plans and programmes and channel finance to rescue the Sustainable Development Goals and accelerate the integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the second 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063, including through the adoption at all levels and by all stakeholders of ambitious and bold solutions and urgent actions, including the following:

(a) To strengthen and ensure evidence-based voluntary national and subnational reviews of the implementation and follow-up of global and regional sustainable development frameworks, so as to enhance their effective adaptation to local settings with the inclusion of context-specific priorities, strengthen wide stakeholder engagement and channel finance and promote accountability for the delivery of measurable sustainable development outcomes;

(b) To strengthen capacities, including by providing tools for the integrated planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting of efforts to fulfil the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and to achieve sustainability;

(c) To develop and promote holistic and innovative approaches to poverty reduction that reflect income, gender, and geographical disparities, social inequalities and exclusion, empower vulnerable groups, reduce vulnerability to poverty and strengthen resilience to future shocks;

(d) To strengthen political commitment and national leadership and revitalize policies, investment, including investments in social sectors, and financial and technological support systems for farmers with a view to driving climate-resilient agricultural transformation, unleashing the power of smallholder farmers and fostering human rights-based approaches to food systems and adequate nutrition;

(e) To leverage the vast market provided by the African Continental Free Trade Area and the global climate agenda with a view to developing industrial and green transition value chains in Africa, revitalizing the agricultural sector, promoting food security, sustainably harnessing the continent's natural resources, including land, forests and minerals, and diversifying its economies;

(f) To scale up and ensure inclusive access to such physical and digital infrastructure as irrigation systems and agro-industrial platforms, with a view to boosting productivity, reducing post-harvest losses and facilitating access to markets, with a specific focus on young farmers, female farmers and agrifood processors;

(g) To fulfil relevant commitments and recommendations set out in the ministerial statement adopted by the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development and other outcomes of the fifty-sixth session of the Economic Commission for Africa, the negotiated outcomes and other decisions of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the political

declaration of the high-level political forum on sustainable development of 2023, the African Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action of the Africa Climate Summit, the Moroni Declaration for Ocean and Climate Action in Africa and the Special Declaration on Illicit Financial Flows of the Heads of States and Government of the African Union;

(h) To implement in an integrated manner such regional frameworks as the African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2032), the African biodiversity strategy and action plan, the Continental Circular Economy Action Plan for Africa, the Africa Blue Economy Strategy,¹³ the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development Programme, the Climate for Development in Africa initiative, the Africa Climate Resilient Investment Facility and the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa;¹⁴

(i) To establish a continental position on and approach to carbon markets in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area;

(j) To develop and implement strategies, approaches and initiatives, such as the policy brief of the Secretary-General entitled “A New Agenda for Peace”,¹⁵ to enhance human rights approaches in economic policymaking, to combat illicit financial flows and conflict and to address their effects on the most vulnerable;

(k) To strengthen government strategies and institutional structures in Africa and across the world designed to combat illicit financial flows, to curb the haemorrhaging of resources and to improve prospects for attaining the Sustainable Development Goals and the goals of Agenda 2063 and its second 10-year implementation plan;

(l) To strengthen governance institutions and the rule of law in order to protect human rights and ensure equal access to justice, including for children;

(m) To increase knowledge, address skills gaps, develop governance frameworks, including appropriate policies at various levels, and invest in systems and infrastructure, including energy and Internet connectivity, with a view to underpinning the development and ensuring the optimal use of artificial intelligence to drive inclusive job creation, poverty reduction and economic growth;

(n) To deepen domestic resource mobilization, to scale up and ensure simplified access to international funding from various sources and to align such funding with financial priorities, with a view to achieving green and sustainable transitions and inclusive, resilient and sustainable development;

(o) To strengthen the capacity to leverage innovative instruments, including debt-for-nature swaps, regional blue bonds, regional carbon and biodiversity credit markets and natural capital accounting, and to mobilize finance to alleviate debt issues and fund sustainable development;

(p) To transform and modernize statistical systems, including by leveraging the potential of big data, data science, the digital revolution and artificial intelligence to close data gaps, strengthening civil registration and vital statistics systems, integrating geospatial data and statistics, enhancing access to good-quality disaggregated data and implementing the high-impact initiative

¹³ See African Union and Inter-African Bureau for Animal Resources, *Africa Blue Economy Strategy* (Nairobi, 2019).

¹⁴ African Union Commission, Economic Commission for Africa and African Development Bank, *Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy in Africa* (Addis Ababa, 2010).

¹⁵ A/77/CRP.1/Add.8.

on the power of data aimed at unlocking the data and statistics dividend,¹⁶ and to track progress and reinforce national policies and plans to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 so as to ensure that no one is left behind;

(q) To scale up support for efforts to ensure the effective implementation of such initiatives as the sustainable debt coalition,¹⁷ voluntary national and local reviews, debt-for-nature swaps, regional carbon and biodiversity markets, capacity-building in relation to green, blue and sustainable bonds, the great blue wall initiative, the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative, the Sustainable Development Goal 7 Initiative for Africa and the African Land Policy Centre, with a view to mobilizing increased green and sustainable finance, significantly accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and achieving measurable outcomes on sustainable development;

(r) To strengthen the engagement and leverage the agency and contribution of relevant stakeholders, including women, young people and children, older persons, indigenous peoples and local communities, persons with disabilities, migrants, civil society, the private sector and the academic community, in sustainable development;

3. *Request* the United Nations resident coordinators and the United Nations country teams, working together with entities throughout the United Nations system at both the global and regional levels, the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and other African multilateral banks, and other partners, to develop and deliver strong, coordinated and targeted support to members of the Economic Commission for Africa with a view to achieving a meaningful and tangible transformation in food systems, civil registration and vital statistics systems, energy access and affordability, digital connectivity and inclusion, education systems, job creation and social protection, and climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution;

4. *Request* the Government of Mauritania to present the key messages and the present declaration on behalf of Africa to the high-level political forum on sustainable development, to be convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council in New York from 8 to 17 July 2024, to the Summit of the Future, to be held in New York on 22 and 23 September 2024, to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its twenty-ninth session, to be held in Baku from 11 to 22 November 2024, and at other relevant global, regional and subregional forums, in order to advocate accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, in particular its second 10-year implementation plan.

¹⁶ Launched in September 2023 at the Sustainable Development Goals Summit.

¹⁷ Initiated by the Ministry of Finance of Egypt during the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, from 6 to 18 November 2022.