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Eleventh session

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Item 8 of the provisional agenda*

Parallel meetings for an in-depth review of progress made, peer-to-peer learning and acceleration measures regarding the sub-themes of the Forum

Information and guidelines for the parallel meetings on the sub-themes of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

I. Date, time and venue

1. The parallel meetings will be held on Thursday, 10 April 2025, from 2.30 to 4.30 p.m., in the parallel meeting rooms indicated in section V.

II. Introduction

2. The eleventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development is being held against a backdrop of slow progress, stagnation and even regression in relation to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, worldwide and in Africa. At the global level, only 16 per cent of the targets under the Goals are on track to be met by 2030, with the remaining 84 per cent showing limited progress or, in some cases, regression.¹ The situation is worse still in Africa, where, at the current rate of progress, only 10 of the 144 measurable targets under the Goals will be achieved by 2030, with up to 106 targets requiring accelerated action and another 28 showing signs of regression.²

3. With only five years left until the 2030 deadline set for the achievement of the Goals, the eleventh session of the Forum and, in particular, each parallel meeting, presents African States and institutions with an opportunity to reflect on and devise transformative measures that will put the region back on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the goals of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union by 2030.

4. All the parallel meetings will be focused on one of the following five sub-themes, each of which is based on one of the five Goals to be considered at the 2025 high-level political forum on sustainable development:

- (a) Good health and well-being (Goal 3);

* ECA/RFSD/2025/1.

¹ Jeffrey D. Sachs, Guillaume Lafortune and Grayson Fuller, *Sustainable Development Report 2024: The SDGs and the UN Summit of the Future* (Dublin, Dublin University Press, 2024).

² Adivhaho Ramaite and Alize le Roux, "Accelerate, extend or abandon? Africa's SDG dilemma", Institute for Security Studies, 12 September 2024.



- (b) Gender equality (Goal 5);
- (c) Decent work and economic growth (Goal 8);
- (d) Life below water (Goal 14);
- (e) Partnerships for the goals of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 (Goal 17).

5. During the parallel meetings, the deliberations will be guided by the theme of the Forum: “Driving job creation and economic growth through sustainable, inclusive, science-based and evidence-based solutions for implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union”. During the discussions, participants will take into account the linkages between the sub-theme in question, on the one hand, and other Sustainable Development Goals and the related goals of Agenda 2063, on the other. They will also take into account the need to achieve balance among the three dimensions of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental – and the principle of leaving no one behind.

6. As such, the parallel meetings will contribute to the achievement of the objectives set out in the concept note of the Forum (ECA/RFSD/2025/4) and the objectives listed in section III.

III. Objectives

7. The objectives of the parallel meetings are:

- (a) To conduct an in-depth review of and facilitate peer-to-peer learning about the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, with particular emphasis on the selected sub-themes;

- (b) To identify and explore innovative and ambitious sustainable, inclusive, science-based, evidence-based and data-driven solutions to dramatically increase economic growth, boost job creation and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063;

- (c) To identify, explore and agree on a set of key messages that offer policy options and other measures to increase economic growth, boost job creation and accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

IV. Guidelines

8. The Chair of the Bureau will designate a member of the Bureau to chair each parallel meeting.

9. The moderator of each parallel meeting will be selected from among the representatives of the entities of the United Nations system and regional organizations that, along with the Economic Commission for Africa, prepared the background reports on each sub-theme.

10. During each parallel meeting, the discussion will be led by a multi-stakeholder panel, each of which will include selected sectoral ministers or other senior policymakers, along with representatives of the private sector, entities of the United Nations system, academia, young people and civil society. For more details, see section V.

11. Each parallel meeting will be informed by a presentation about the background report on the meeting’s sub-theme, which will include suggested key messages on that sub-theme.

12. Participants are expected to discuss and reach a consensus on the key messages to be taken from the parallel meeting, in which sustainable, inclusive, science-based, evidence-based and data-driven solutions to dramatically increase economic growth, boost job creation and accelerate implementation of the selected Sustainable Development Goal (3, 5, 8, 14 or 17) and the related goals of Agenda 2063 should be highlighted. The key messages agreed on during the parallel meeting will inform the consolidated draft key messages to be adopted by the Forum in plenary.

13. The Chair of each parallel meeting will:

(a) Outline the objectives of the parallel meeting, as set out in section III, and introduce the moderator and the panellists;

(b) Yield to the moderator;

(c) Close the parallel meeting.

14. The moderator will:

(a) Call upon a representative of the secretariat or one of the authors of the background report on the sub-theme in question to give a presentation on the report that lasts for no longer than seven minutes, with emphasis on the progress made, and on emerging best practices and sustainable, inclusive, science-based, evidence-based and data-driven solutions to dramatically increase economic growth, boost job creation and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063;

(b) Invite each panellist to speak for no longer than five minutes, focusing on one or more of the following questions:

(i) What progress has been made since the previous review of the selected Sustainable Development Goal and the related goals of Agenda 2063?

(ii) What are the chief emerging challenges to the attainment of the selected Sustainable Development Goal and the related goals of Agenda 2063?

(iii) What sustainable, inclusive, science-based, evidence-based and data-driven solutions could dramatically increase economic growth, boost job creation and accelerate attainment of the selected Sustainable Development Goal and the related goals of Agenda 2063?

(iv) What financial and capacity-development needs must be met, in order to dramatically increase economic growth, boost job creation and accelerate the attainment of the selected Sustainable Development Goal and the related goals of Agenda 2063?

(v) Which priorities should participants in the Second World Summit for Social Development, to be held in Doha in November 2025, adopt in the Summit's outcome document in order to contribute to dramatically increasing economic growth, boosting job creation and accelerating attainment of the selected Sustainable Development Goal and the related goals of Agenda 2063 in Africa?

(c) Spark an interactive discussion among the panellists, with a focus on the questions set out above, to identify sustainable, inclusive, science-based, evidence-based and data-driven solutions to dramatically increase economic growth, boost job creation and accelerate the attainment of the selected Sustainable Development Goal and the related goals of Agenda 2063;

(d) Invite questions and other contributions from the floor and ensure that speakers focus on the main questions listed above;

(e) At the end of the parallel meeting, invite a representative of the secretariat or one of the authors of the background report on the sub-theme in question to share reflections on the key messages agreed upon during the meeting;

(f) Yield to the Chair, who will conclude the meeting.

V. Chairs, moderators, presenters and panellists of the parallel meetings

15. The Chair, moderator, presenter and panellists of the parallel meeting on the sub-theme of good health and well-being will be as follows:

Venue: Xxxxx

Chair: Chair of the Bureau

Moderator: Xxxxx

Presentation: Highlights of the background report on the sub-theme of good health and well-being ([position], [organization], [name] [to be determined])

Panellists:

- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx

General discussion

Reflection on key messages: Xxxxx [to be determined]

16. The Chair, moderator, presenter and panellists of the parallel meeting on the sub-theme of gender equality will be as follows:

Venue: Xxxxx

Chair: Chair of the Bureau

Moderator: Xxxxx

Presentation: Highlights of the background report on the sub-theme of gender equality ([position], [organization], [name] [to be determined])

Panellists:

- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx

General discussion

Reflection on key messages: Xxxxx [to be determined]

17. The Chair, moderator, presenter and panellists of the parallel meeting on the sub-theme of decent work and economic growth will be as follows:

Venue: Xxxxx

Chair: Chair of the Bureau

Moderator: Xxxxx

Presentation: Highlights of the background report on the sub-theme of decent work and economic growth ([position], [organization], [name] [to be determined])

Panellists:

- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx

General discussion**Reflection on key messages:** Xxxxx [to be determined]

18. The Chair, moderator, presenter and panellists of the parallel meeting on the sub-theme of life below water will be as follows:

Venue: Xxxxx

Chair: Chair of the Bureau

Moderator: Xxxxx

Presentation: Highlights of the background report on the sub-theme of life below water ([position], [organization], [name] [to be determined])

Panellists:

- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx

General discussion**Reflection on key messages:** Xxxxx [to be determined]

19. The Chair, moderator, presenter and panellists of the parallel meeting on the sub-theme of partnerships for the goals of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 will be as follows:

Venue: Xxxxx

Chair: Chair of the Bureau

Moderator: Xxxxx

Presentation: Highlights of the background report on the sub-theme of partnerships for the goals of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 ([position], [organization], [name] [to be determined])

Panellists:

- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx
- Xxxxx

General discussion

Reflection on key messages: Xxxxx [to be determined]
