

**Economic Commission for Africa  
Committee of Experts of the Conference of African  
Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development**

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Item 6 (a) of the provisional agenda\*\*

**Statutory issues****Report of the Executive Secretary on the activities of  
the Economic Commission for Africa from March  
2025 to February 2026****I. Introduction**

1. In 2025, the gross domestic product (GDP) of Africa is expected to have grown by 3.9 per cent, a slight improvement on the 3.5 per cent growth recorded in 2024, despite the significant challenges faced by the region during the year.<sup>1</sup> A cascading set of crises originating outside the region continued to affect the economies of Africa during the period under review. These crises included global geopolitical tensions, trade challenges and tighter financial conditions, which led to currency depreciation, high inflation and costly borrowing. Furthermore, above-average levels of drought and flooding resulting from climate change damaged infrastructure and affected agricultural output, with resources being diverted to the emergency responses. This combination of factors meant that, although growth accelerated slightly, it remained insufficient to substantially reduce poverty.

2. Debt distress remained a critical threat. Several African countries grappled with high debt,<sup>2</sup> which limited their fiscal space for development. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) supported members by offering innovative financing solutions and pressed for global debt relief mechanisms.

3. Although political will for the implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area remained high, implementation was slower than hoped. Trading under the Agreement was in its infancy, with many businesses unaware of the opportunities it offered. Infrastructure gaps and non-tariff barriers persisted as obstacles. ECA helped its members to move from developing strategies towards implementing them

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\*\* E/ECA/COE/44/1/Rev.1.

<sup>1</sup> *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2026* (United Nations publication).

<sup>2</sup> At the end of December 2025, the World Bank classified fourteen low-income African countries as being in high debt distress (Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Mozambique, Niger, Sierra Leone, South Sudan and Zambia) and seven others as being in debt distress (Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Malawi, Sao Tome and Principe, Sudan and Zimbabwe). See [www.worldbank.org/en/programs/debt-toolkit/dsa](http://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/debt-toolkit/dsa) (accessed on 9 January 2026).



and trading under the Agreement. It also supported the development of regional value chains.

4. With African countries struggling to ensure that jobs are created quickly enough for the fast-growing young population, industrialization and skills development are urgent priorities. ECA emphasized industrialization, innovation and regional solidarity through integrated markets.

5. In the light of the continent's social and economic challenges, and guided by its medium-term programme framework (2022–2025), the work of ECA spanned the five strategic focus areas and two cross-cutting areas identified before the start of the year. The focus areas were: (a) macroeconomic policies and development financing; (b) regional integration, economic diversification and industrialization; (c) infrastructure development, including energy; (d) technology, innovation and connectivity; and (e) climate action and food security. The cross-cutting areas were data and statistics, and social dimensions (including gender). ECA directly supported 52 of its members by providing them with policy and strategy development, technical assistance, advisory services and capacity-building based on cutting-edge analytical studies. Through its training arm, the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, ECA trained 4,278 government officials, experts and policymakers. ECA also played a significant role in the preparations of African countries for international meetings, including the Group of 20 Summit, the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, the Second World Summit for Social Development, the Second Africa Climate Summit and the thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

6. The main achievements of ECA during the reporting period in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union are presented in the following section. Further information on the types of action taken by the Commission to serve its members is found in the reports on: the assessment of progress on regional integration in Africa (E/ECA/COE/44/5); the follow-up to the resolutions adopted during the fifty-seventh session of the Commission (E/ECA/COE/44/8); United Nations support for the African Union and its African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa's Development programme (E/ECA/COE/44/10); the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (E/ECA/COE/44/15); the implementation of the Awaza Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2024–2034 (E/ECA/COE/44/20); and the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries (E/ECA/COE/44/21).

## **II. Key results achieved**

### **A. Advancement of the development agenda of Africa with a unified voice**

7. The leadership of ECA discussed the priorities of Africa, the challenges that the region faced and actionable solutions for sustainable development in the region on major global and regional platforms. Africa is at a critical juncture, facing converging crises relating to debt, the climate, stunted growth, poverty and inequality. Through its high-level engagements at such forums as the Group of 20 Summit, joint annual meetings and joint spring meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, the Second World Summit for Social Development, the UN Food Systems Summit +4 Stocktaking Moment, and the high-level political forum on sustainable development, ECA

has spoken on behalf of Africa and presented advanced transformative solutions that were aligned with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

8. ECA ensured that African priorities on debt sustainability and development finance were reflected in global outcomes. It supported African finance ministries in articulating an African common position for the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, which fed directly into the Sevilla Commitment outcome document. In the Sevilla Commitment, the Conference recognized the need for a debt reduction mechanism for developing countries, encouraged support for the negotiations on the United Nations Framework Convention on International Cooperation in Tax Matters and commits itself to enhancing access to development finance for Africa.

9. ECA continued to convene the Africa High-level Working Group on Global Financial Architecture to harmonize African inputs into international financial reforms. These efforts resulted in the endorsement of a unified stance on debt reform by the African Union Specialized Technical Committee on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration in November 2025, paving the way for its adoption by the policy organs of the African Union. These efforts also ensured that the voice of Africa was prominent. In the Leaders' Declaration that it issued in November 2025, for example, the Group of 20 reiterated its commitment to debt relief, noted the use of liquidity support, and acknowledged the need for climate-related measures. Together, these outcomes strengthen the position of Africa in global financial governance and debt negotiations. The meetings of the Africa High-level Working Group yielded a coordinated African call for reforms, such as reallocating unused special drawing rights to African development banks and establishing stronger debt resolution mechanisms. The call was conveyed to the Group of 20 and other bodies.

10. At the 2025 high-level political forum on sustainable development, ECA indicated that, although Africa held 60 per cent of global solar potential, less than 3 per cent of global energy investment flowed to the continent, and that more than 600 million people in sub-Saharan Africa lacked electricity. The Executive Secretary, Claver Gatete, called for a new deal on energy finance, innovation and access. Furthermore, he noted that energy was not only a public good, but also "a driver of jobs, industry and transformation". He urged global partners to invest in solar, wind, hydroelectric and geothermal power in Africa.

11. At the Second World Summit for Social Development, the Deputy Executive Secretary (Programme) and Chief Economist of ECA, Hanan Morsy, recalled that, during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the interconnectedness of the economies of the world had been revealed. She pointed to the 70 per cent decline in official development assistance for health in Africa, which meant less funding to address HIV/AIDS and infectious diseases. She argued that countries needed to shift towards investment, mobilizing domestic resource to reduce their reliance on aid; curb illicit financial flows; and leverage regional integration for procurement and manufacturing.

## **B. Macroeconomic stabilization through domestic resource mobilization, capital market deepening and economic governance**

12. ECA directly supported 22 of its members<sup>3</sup> on macroeconomic policy, development finance and economic governance. It provided policy-oriented analyses<sup>4</sup> and hands-on technical assistance and contributed to high-level policy dialogues. Major achievements include improvements to domestic revenue systems (for example, new tax policies), improvements to the measurement of illicit financial flows and capacity-building for capital market development, integrated planning and macromodelling.

13. As a result of technical assistance provided to Ethiopia on tax policy and incentives, the new investment directive issued by the Ethiopian Investment Board in June (Directive No. 1082/2025) included steps to introduce stricter rules on tax exemptions and to make tax expenditures more transparent. To combat illicit financial flows, ECA supported Burkina Faso, Gabon, Nigeria and Senegal in establishing multiagency technical working groups and in applying the methods recommended by the United Nations for quantifying illicit financial flows. Thirty-seven officials from these countries were trained in identifying trade mispricing and in alternative ways of estimating illicit financial flows. The four countries produced preliminary estimates of illicit financial flows to guide their policy responses in order to uphold financial integrity and curtail illicit financial flows. Senegal, for example, announced plans to strengthen customs inspections on gold exports.

14. ECA supported Cameroon, Ghana and Zambia in managing domestic debt and fiscal risks. This support helped the countries to review their institutional frameworks for public debt and contingent liabilities. As a result, Ghana established a fiscal risks unit and Zambia increased transparency in public debt management and improved oversight of borrowing.

15. ECA helped its members to strengthen their capacity to mobilize external and private capital. For example, it provided the Capital Markets Authority of Uganda with specialized training on Islamic finance and sukuk (sharia-compliant) bonds. This resulted in the introduction of new capital market regulations (licensing and partnership rules), making it possible for the country to expand its investor base. It also helped Guinea to secure its first sovereign credit rating, thus improving transparency for investors.

16. As part of its support for members on macromodelling and integrated planning, ECA helped Botswana to design a customized macroeconomic forecasting model to inform its next national development plan, and helped Eritrea to develop its consumer price index and update its national accounts so that it could use the latest data in its macroplanning.

17. ECA helped its members to assess the financial performances of six cities (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania; Kigali, Rwanda; Lusaka, Zambia; Nairobi, Kenya; and Yaoundé, Cameroon). The training in municipal finance provided to city officials led to actionable reforms: revenue targets were increased in Nairobi, revenue leakages were curbed in Lusaka and opportunities to harness municipal bonds were considered in Addis Ababa.

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<sup>3</sup> Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Comoros, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

<sup>4</sup> Economic Commission for Africa, *Economic Report on Africa 2025: Advancing the Implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area – Proposing Transformative Strategic Actions* (Addis Ababa, 2025).

### **C. Accelerated regional integration through the implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area and sustainable industrialization**

18. ECA advanced the regional integration agenda through a wide range of initiatives to support the implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area, facilitate trade and diversify economies. It supported Angola, Botswana, Cabo Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Libya and Seychelles in the development of national strategies for the implementation of the Agreement, bringing the total number of supported members to 45. It strengthened implementation at the national level, fostered regional value chains and sustainable trade, improved trade facilitation and customs cooperation and produced influential policy analysis and tools to guide trade integration. Through such efforts, ECA contributed to tangible outcomes. For example, some countries have operationalized their strategies for the implementation of the Agreement, improving their capacity in trade logistics and joining the members that have started to conduct their trade under the Agreement.

19. ECA supported about 30 of its members with their national strategies for the implementation of the Agreement, including the integration of climate adaptation and green growth into these strategies. It supported Togo, for example, in incorporating new trade protocols into its strategy, conducting an inclusive stakeholder workshop to validate the revision. The training it provided to the national committee for the implementation of the Agreement in Sierra Leone allowed it to strengthen inter-agency coordination and to steer such reforms as simplified export procedures for local firms. Other members of ECA, including the Comoros, Seychelles, Uganda and Zambia, received tailored advisory services to develop practical trade guides and diagnostic studies, which will be useful as they begin to ship goods and services under the Agreement. Currently, about 30 members trade under the guided trade initiative of the Agreement, including Ethiopia, Namibia and Nigeria since 2025.

20. ECA supported 14 of its members in integrating climate- and environment-related considerations into their trade strategies, to make the strategies future proof. It helped them, for example, to develop green supplements to their strategies for the implementation of the Agreement. The supplements contain green value-chain analyses, as well as action plans for the promotion of sustainable trade. The action plans include steps to identify opportunities in renewable-energy value chains and climate-resilient agriculture.

21. In addition, ECA collaborated with the East African Community to deliver an intensive training workshop on authorized economic operator programmes for custom officials of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan and Uganda. Under these programmes, trusted traders can use expedited customs clearance processes. Following the workshop, customs administrations in countries of the East African Community began to streamline the enrolment of authorized economic operators and harmonize their procedures. These steps will reduce cargo dwell times and bolster intraregional commerce.

22. ECA supported its members in integrating trade in services into regional value chains in order to leverage the services economy, which accounts for more than half of the GDP of Africa. In September, it convened an international conference on promoting trade in services and strengthening financial services value chains in Africa. Through peer learning, participants examined ways to boost high-value service sectors under the Agreement. Burkina Faso and Burundi presented newly completed analyses of their financial services sectors

and unveiled action plans to better integrate these sectors into regional value chains. ECA, in cooperation with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, developed the Trade Intelligence and Negotiation Advisor, a user-friendly platform to support negotiators with their data processing and simulations, thus strengthening the capacity of African countries to negotiate and implement the liberalization of trade in services.

23. In partnership with the African Export-Import Bank, ECA launched a project on de-risking investment in Africa. The focus of the project was the development of standards and best practices for special economic zones. Lesotho and Namibia drafted a joint automotive policy framework for the integration of the two countries into the regional value chain of Southern Africa for the automotive sector. Shaped by a high-level policy dialogue on automotive regional value chains, the framework will be used to guide both countries in attracting investment and producing components locally.

24. ECA helped Malawi to finalize its regulations on special economic zones. A meeting to validate the regulations was held in April to enable the operationalization of the country's industrial policy. As a result of these new regulations, Malawi will be able to fast-track new industrial parks. ECA also co-led the mobilization of resources for transboundary industrial zones, including the common agro-industrial park being planned by Zambia and Zimbabwe. ECA worked with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and others to secure financing.

#### **D. Infrastructure development and energy for progress**

25. To help African countries attract investment in sustainable energy, ECA bolstered the regulatory and regional planning capacities of members. ECA worked with the national energy regulator of Mozambique, for example, to design a new method of setting tariffs for power purchase agreements. This method has now been formally adopted, providing transparent pricing for independent power producers.

26. At the subregional level, ECA partnered with the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to craft a policy framework for a just energy transition, in which coal phase-out strategies are aligned with energy access goals. At a consultative meeting of experts held in Windhoek in August 2025, officials from 14 States members of SADC reached a consensus on the main features of the framework and on a road map to be submitted to SADC ministers responsible for energy in 2026. ECA also convened a workshop held in Kigali in June to discuss a continental energy security policy framework. Participants agreed on certain principles for national energy security strategies during the workshop.

27. ECA developed the first continent-wide electric vehicle policy framework, in which it outlined regulatory steps and infrastructure developments to accelerate the adoption of electric vehicles while also addressing urban air quality and transit efficiency. Africa now has a continent-wide policy guide, which is helping such countries as Kenya and South Africa to shape e-mobility incentives and investments.<sup>5</sup>

28. In collaboration with the African Union and the World Health Organization, ECA promoted road safety. Following on from the support it had provided for the fourth Global Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, in Marrakesh, Morocco, it facilitated the adoption of new road safety standards.

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<sup>5</sup> Economic Commission for Africa, African Union and United Nations Environment Programme, "Strategic directions for the development of electric vehicles in Africa: integrating renewable energy, decentralized smart infrastructure, and equitable transition strategies for climate-resilient mobility" (2025).

As a result of the work of ECA, Rwanda opened a motorcycle helmet testing facility that is compliant with UN Regulation No. 22 to improve motorcycle safety; Uganda deployed a national road safety data system to target accident hotspots.

## **E. Promotion of digital transformation and innovation**

29. ECA spearheaded the digital transformation and innovation of Africa through a broad range of initiatives. It supported its members in formulating national digital strategies, modernizing regulatory frameworks and piloting innovative tools across the technology, energy and transport sectors. ECA supported Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mozambique in developing and validating comprehensive national data governance strategies. Each strategy was aligned with the Data Policy Framework and the artificial intelligence strategy of the African Union and was endorsed at high-level workshops, accompanied by implementation road maps and new governance bodies. At the continental level, ECA worked with important partners to convene Africa-wide consultations to forge common positions on digital transformation. These consultations included the African twenty-year review of the World Summit on the Information Society held in Cotonou, Benin, in May 2025 and the fourteenth Africa Internet Governance Forum. The consultations gave rise to the Dar es Salaam Declaration on the African 20-Year Review of the World Summit on the Information Society and the Cotonou Declaration on Accelerating the Digital Transformation of Africa, which reaffirmed the commitment of Africa to inclusive digital policies.

30. ECA piloted digital solutions for transport management, most notably the African Regional Transport Corridor Management System, which is an online platform using satellite data and artificial intelligence to help corridor authorities to monitor road conditions. After it was developed, the system was demonstrated to three major corridor agencies.<sup>6</sup> Once fully operational, the platform is expected to allow trans-African highways to be managed far more efficiently.

31. In October, ECA collaborated with SADC to launch an online trade and investment platform – a one-stop portal designed to provide traders and investors with access market information. To encourage its use, ECA provided government officials, importers and exporters from across Southern Africa with training in the use of the trade data and e-services available on the platform and in the use of the Guided Trade Initiative. Firms in the subregion can now easily find out tariff rates, discover market opportunities and browse technology offers online. Officials are actively promoting the use of the platform.

## **F. Advanced climate action, resilience-building and food security**

32. ECA policy support, technical cooperation and capacity-building in the areas of climate policy and finance, the blue and green economies, land governance and agricultural value chains directly benefited 39 members

33. ECA continued to provide technical backstopping to the African Group of Negotiators for the coordination of pan-African institutions in forging common positions for the thirtieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. This culminated in the adoption of a series of key messages and recommendations

<sup>6</sup> See <https://centralcorridor-tfa.org/>, <https://www.ttcanc.org/northern-corridor-transit-and-transport-agreement> and <https://www.lobitocorridor.org/about>.

at the thirteenth Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa, in Addis Ababa, which fed into global negotiations. The wishes of Africa on climate finance, a just transition and carbon markets were strongly reflected in global climate dialogues, bolstering the continent's negotiating leverage and visibility. In addition, ECA co-hosted the 2025 Green Climate Fund regional dialogue with Africa, on 30 September and 1 October in Addis Ababa. Participants addressed chronic obstacles to climate finance at this event and produced an action plan to streamline project approval and strengthen national readiness.

34. ECA operationalized two subregional carbon credit registries – the Climate Commission for the Sahel Region and the African Island States Climate Commission – to help countries to monetize their climate action. In total, 9 small island developing States and 17 Sahel countries provided data on projects and several pilot transactions were registered to test the systems. These platforms allow African countries to generate and trade high-integrity carbon credits, potentially unlocking new climate-finance streams.

35. In May, ECA and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development hosted a regional dialogue on external financing and climate-resilient development for small island developing States, in Addis Ababa. Policymakers from Cabo Verde, the Comoros, Mauritius, Seychelles and other countries examined such proposals as blue bonds, state-contingent debt instruments and blended finance facilities. ECA contributed to the development and refinement of the national financing road maps of Cabo Verde and the Comoros, as a result of which the two countries initiated steps to explore debt-for-nature swaps.

36. ECA played a central role in the second United Nations Food Systems Summit +4 Stocktaking Moment, held in Addis Ababa in July 2025 (the first to be held in Africa). This was a global gathering to assess the progress made since the United Nations Food Systems Summit in 2021. The leadership of ECA advocated innovative financing and the integration of national agrifood pathways into climate strategies.

37. ECA launched a pilot project to strengthen cross-border agricultural value chains between Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana – with a focus on cocoa and rice – as part of the Common African Agro-Parks Programme of the African Union. After field studies and consultations between the Governments of the two countries, validation workshops were organized in Accra and Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in August 2025. Participants at the workshops validated the study report on assessing cross-border cocoa and rice value chains in Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana along with the recommendation for the adoption of formulated policy options on piloting agro-industrial parks, reforming policies and regulations related to marketing and local processing.

38. In July, ECA convened a high-level regional workshop in Addis Ababa on gender-responsive land governance. Policymakers, traditional leaders and representatives of civil society from across Africa attended the practical training, in which such African Union frameworks as the Framework and Guidelines on Land Policy were used. During the training, participants validated national action plans to strengthen women's land tenure. The workshop was also used to launch the new Regional Platform for Women Parliamentarians on Land Rights and Climate Resilience of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development. Countries agreed to review discriminatory laws on inheritance and land ownership. ECA also jointly organized the sixth Conference on Land Policy in Africa under the theme "Land governance, justice and reparations for Africans and descendants of people of the African diaspora", which increased the evidence base on land reforms. The African Union issued a call to action in which it urged countries to strengthen land rights as a foundation for food security and climate resilience.

## **G. Gender equality and social inclusion**

39. ECA engaged in initiatives to increase gender empowerment, eradicate poverty, strengthen social protection and improve youth employment in Africa. Ghana, Namibia, Senegal, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia completed in-depth social protection and poverty assessments, establishing the analytical foundation for future reforms to support vulnerable people. Training in multidimensional poverty and interregional peer learning improved policymakers' capacity to identify at-risk groups and design crisis-responsive policies.

40. ECA expanded the use of the African Gender and Development Index, incorporating climate and human rights into the technical guidance. With ECA support, four countries (Burundi, Mozambique, South Sudan and Zimbabwe) strengthened their national gender statistics systems by approving new gender monitoring frameworks and indicators.

## **H. Advanced data and statistics for monitoring and evidence-based policymaking**

41. ECA made progress in its mission to strengthen the production, dissemination and use of credible data, statistics and geospatial information across Africa. It supported 18 members of ECA through technical assistance, training and knowledge products. In Togo, for example, its advisory support enabled the national statistical office to finalize the country's inaugural national quality-assurance framework, which was then submitted to parliament for adoption. In Guinea and Sierra Leone, technical guidance from ECA enabled the completion of the transition to the 2008 System of National Accounts, with the introduction of rebased GDP and updated consumer price index series that more accurately reflect current economic systems.

42. ECA assisted countries in harnessing the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework. Burundi, Cameroon, Mali and Rwanda, for example, all developed national action plans in which geospatial information was incorporated into their statistical strategies. The action plans will improve the management of land, climate and population data.

43. ECA greatly emphasized the strengthening of civil registration and vital statistics systems, which are fundamental to legal identity and inclusive development. It supported national stakeholders in Burundi and South Sudan in developing a comprehensive strategic plan for such systems that is aligned with the Africa Programme on Accelerated Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems. These plans set out reforms to digitalize civil registration, improve data quality and ensure that all births and deaths are registered.

44. ECA helped countries to tap into non-traditional data sources to fill critical data gaps and harmonize statistics across Africa. For instance, it provided methodological assistance and tools to the National Institute of Statistics of Cameroon, enabling it to extract value added tax records and calculate a quarterly turnover index that tracks business activity by sector.

## **I. Integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 through United Nations system-wide coherence and collaboration**

45. Through high-level engagements with the three joint African Union-United Nations frameworks, the Regional Collaborative Platform for Africa

and its opportunity and issue-based coalitions and task forces, joint programmes of ECA and the United Nations system, ECA delivered coordinated, results-oriented assistance that strengthened institutional capacities and enhanced policy coherence across the transformative priorities of Africa.<sup>7</sup>

46. In collaboration with the African Development Bank and under the leadership of the African Union Commission, ECA contributed to the finalization of a domestic resource mobilization strategy for the period 2025–2033. In the strategy, domestic financing, innovation and inclusivity are identified as important drivers of self-reliant growth for Africa. The aim of the strategy is to mobilize the \$3.3 trillion of additional financing needed for Africa to achieve the objectives set out in the second 10-year implementation plan (2024–2033) of Agenda 2063.<sup>8</sup> ECA helped to develop domestication tools for the plan, including the *Agenda 2063 Core Indicators Handbook* and the monitoring and evaluation framework. These tools support members of ECA in integrating the implementation plan into their own development plans and improve monitoring and reporting. To accelerate the implementation plan, ECA collaborated with the African Union Commission to convene a high-level event prior to the eleventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, at which resident coordinators, African Union bodies and partners focused on embedding the principle of “two agendas, one plan” in country cooperation frameworks, strengthening the capacities of United Nations country teams and improving alignment, data systems and integrated reporting in the United Nations resident coordinator system.

47. In collaboration with the Department of Global Communications, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and others, ECA organized the Africa Dialogue Series. The theme for 2025 was the same as the annual theme of the African Union: “Justice for Africans and people of African descent through reparations”. The dialogue series, held in May, generated significant outcomes, including a multidimensional narrative on reparatory justice that went beyond the historical framing of the issue, with emphasis on priorities related to the economy, governance and development. Under this reframing, reparations were identified as integral to the redress of structural inequalities and the acceleration of progress on the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. The main outcomes of the deliberations were a call to action for systemic, structural and rights-based reparatory justice that goes beyond financial compensation to address historical, economic, social, cultural and environmental injustices.

48. In March, ECA convened a meeting in Addis Ababa for African youth representatives on the theme “Making the African Continental Free Trade Area work for African young people: opportunities, challenges and the way forward”. The representatives highlighted such challenges as unemployment, climate change and geopolitical tensions and called for innovative and inclusive approaches to trade facilitation, entrepreneurship, education and cross-border cooperation. The African Continental Free Trade Area was highlighted as a pathway for advancing sustainable development, in line with the two agendas. In their call to action, participants urged Governments to preserve regional uniqueness while fostering integration and to increase youth participation in governance. They also called for enhanced mobility, support for innovation via a youth fund and innovation hubs and inclusive policies for marginalized young people.

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<sup>7</sup> For more information on United Nations support for the African Union and its African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for Africa’s Development, see E/ECA/COE/44/10.

<sup>8</sup> African Union, *Decade of Accelerated Implementation: Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan, 2024–2033* (Addis Ababa, 2024).

49. In April 2025, ECA, in collaboration with the Government of Uganda, the African Union Commission, the Pan-African Youth Union and other organizations, jointly convened a children and youth forum on the margins of the eleventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development. The young Africans discussed job creation, youth empowerment and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In the outcome document, the youth delegates, stakeholders and participants called for youth-sensitive universal social protection, affordable childcare, just and equitable climate finance, the formalization of the informal economy, alignment between training and the labour market, intergenerational mentorship and institutionalized youth participation in governance. The Children and Youth Declaration was appended to the Kampala Declaration and was highlighted on 23 July 2025 on Africa Day at the high-level political forum in New York.

## **J. Operational modalities for enhanced delivery of the programme of work**

50. ECA continued to ensure that the delivery of its programme of work was results-oriented and to instil a culture of accountability and learning. It also continued to conduct quarterly accountability and programme performance review meetings chaired by the Executive Secretary to thoroughly review the annual business plan, monitor programme implementation, highlight achievements and challenges and foster interdivisional learning.

51. ECA remained committed to effective and efficient delivery of its programme of work, despite the liquidity shortfalls affecting the entire United Nations system and despite the financial constraints and uncertainty brought about by the UN80 initiative. ECA enhanced efficiency and client satisfaction across human capital services, facilities and other administrative services. It continued to deploy digital tools and improve processes so that such administrative processes as recruitment, procurement and conference services could be tracked in real time.

52. ECA introduced a talent outreach initiative in which it targeted women and persons from underrepresented countries for its vacancies. Through the initiative, it helped to maintain the share of women in professional posts at 46 percent in 2025, from 46 per cent in 2024. ECA also facilitated professional training for all staff with procurement responsibilities to ensure that they obtain at least level-4 certification from the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply.

53. The Publications, Conference and Knowledge Management Division achieved International Organization for Standardization 14001 re-certification for green operations, expanded paperless meeting services through the Paper-Smart platform and ensured the timely provision of multilingual documentation for all major events. The ECA conference facilities were restored and upgraded. Notably, conference rooms 1 and 2 were fully renovated and re-opened, allowing concurrent use of both plenary rooms for the first time since 2022.

54. To offset budget cuts and ensure the sustainability of its work, ECA diversified its donor base and strengthened its collaboration with major African and international partners. It developed an integrated extrabudgetary resource mobilization plan, secured new funding and forged high-profile partnerships.

## **III. Conclusion**

55. Building on its achievements and lessons in 2025, ECA is charting a course for an even greater impact in 2026. It has renewed its commitment to its

five strategic focus areas and two cross-cutting areas. Specifically, it will continue to support macroeconomic management in member countries, stepping up its support for domestic resource mobilization, pushing for reforms in the global debt architecture and advocating fairer international financial institutions in which the needs of Africa are given greater consideration. Regional integration remains high on the agenda, and ECA plans to accelerate its support for the implementation of the Agreement Establishing the Africa Continental Free Trade Area, helping countries to move from strategy-building to increased trade flows. ECA will also promote sustainable industrialization. Furthermore, ECA will work to secure more climate finance for Africa and will support green and blue economy initiatives to ensure that climate action creates jobs and reduces poverty.

56. ECA will further emphasize digital transformation, seeking to lead programmes for digital payments, e-commerce readiness and data governance so that Africa can advance rapidly in the digital era. Strengthening data and statistical systems will also be a priority, to ensure that planning is as effective as possible. ECA will step up its social inclusion efforts, promoting policies for inclusive growth by tackling inequality, expanding social protection and ensuring that women and young people are central to development plans.

57. ECA will continue to integrate such cross-cutting areas as gender, disability inclusion, human rights and environmental sustainability into its operational activities, deliverables and results.

58. ECA will maintain its close cooperation with the African Union and the regional economic communities and will forge new partnerships to mobilize knowledge and funding for development in Africa. The priority of ECA is to provide strategic and actionable solutions to stimulate economic recovery and sustainable growth in Africa. To achieve that aim, it must become the leading think tank, policy adviser and convener in Africa and it must focus on implementation and the achievement of tangible results. ECA wishes to ensure that the gains made in 2025 are sustained and that its members move ever closer to achieving their development aspirations.

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