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United Nations Economic and Social Council

TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE LIVES

Check Against Delivery

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Marie Chatardová, President of ECOSOC
High level Inaugural Event Supporting an Integrated, Prosperous, People-
Centred and Peaceful Africa: Towards the Implementation of Agenda 2063
and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Monday, 16 October 2017

10:00 am to 1:00 pm

ECOSOC Chamber, UNHQ, New York

President of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly
President of the United Nations Security Council for the month of October
Secretary-General of the United Nations
Deputy-Chairperson of the African Union Commission,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to join you today at this inaugural event.

The Economic and Social Council continues to be an active and engaged partner with Africa and its member states. It continues to use its many platforms for in depth discussion of the interlinked sustainable development challenges facing the region. I truly appreciate the opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of the Council to advance poverty eradication, inclusive growth and sustainable development in Africa.

I thank all the co-organizers and commend them for the choice of a very timely and relevant theme. We need to make progress on these fronts if we are to achieve the sustainable development goals in the region.

During the 2017 High Level Political Forum, we concluded that we can overcome poverty and inequality through sustained economic growth and sustainable use of natural resources. Social inclusion and protection is also part of this endeavor.



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It is important to remember that we need to put people first, particularly the Africa's vibrant youth and women as they shoulder a disproportionate burden of poverty, inequality and joblessness.

Let us use this week to further our cooperation so that the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063 can have better synergy and produce better results.

I would like to highlight some of the priorities that bring these two Agendas together.

Promoting infrastructure, including for social services, agriculture and industrial development will be pivotal for Africa's structural transformation. It is indispensable for creating wealth and generating decent jobs as well as ensuring Africa's food and nutrition security.

I also strongly believe that we need to make young people a priority for a more equal world for future generations. That is why we must work together to support Africa's efforts to harness its demographic dividend. With an estimated 11 million young people entering the labour market every year, the AU's focus for 2017 on investing in youth has been so timely.

We have to give young people the opportunities they need through economic and regional integration, which underpins free movement of people and ideas as well as goods across the entire continent.

If we fail, they will become vulnerable to all forms of extremism, violence and conflict, which jeopardizes progress in the peace, security and development.

We need to find ways to ensure that the voices of youth are heard and their participation and leadership on policies that affect them are encouraged.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,





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We also need to pay attention to climate change, as its adverse effects can wipe out all gains and cause displacement and forced migration, especially of young people. Let us build resilience and foster climate smart initiatives.

Realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union Agenda 2063 in an integrated fashion requires meticulous planning and will require adequate resources - financial, human capital, knowledge and knowhow, and technology.

The implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda will enhance traditional as well as new and emerging development partnerships. Mobilizing domestic resources, promoting local and foreign direct investment, fostering public-private partnerships and combatting illicit financial flows will accelerate the integrated implementation of the two agendas.

The Development Cooperation Forum has also become a trusted platform to discuss and showcase trends and progress in Africa's international development cooperation.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Africa is always a key priority of ECOSOC. We always work with all the relevant stakeholders, including in civil society, and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and to highlight the challenges and opportunities in Africa at throughout the work of the Council. In the past year:

- the President of ECOSOC highlighted sustainable infrastructure development and industrialization in Africa, with special event in Africa and in here in New York.
- the ECOSOC Youth Forum and the Development Cooperation Forum held special sessions focused on Africa;



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- and throughout the high-level segment and high-level political forum efforts we made to highlight the concern, challenges and opportunities in Africa.

During my term, our cooperation with Africa will deepen even further, using similar opportunities, including the 2018 Youth Forum and Third Financing for Development Forum that will take place in early 2018. And, in broader terms, the Council is willing to give a voice to the African civil society so that people are heard and that our development efforts truly respond to their needs.

I look forward to our strengthened cooperation towards achieving resilience, sustainability and prosperity in Africa.

I wish you a successful Africa Week.

Thank you.