

UNOSSC DIRECTOR REMARKS

Africa Day at the HLPF

High-level (Ministerial) Meeting and the Official Launch of the Africa Sustainable Development Report 2025

“Advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 through inclusive growth and partnerships, social protection, and decent jobs”

Venue: Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the United Nations
23 July 2025; 1:30 to 4:00 pm (EDT – New York local time /UTC – 4hrs)

3:00 – 4:00 pm **Session 3: Launch of the Africa Sustainable Development Report 2025**

Moderator:

- **Ms. Botho Kebabonye Bayendi**, Director, Office of Strategic Planning and Delivery, African Union Commission

Opening Remarks:

- **Mr. Claver Gatete**, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
- **Ms. Assaita De**, Deputy Director of the Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA), United Nations Development Programme
- **Dr Balgis Osman Elasha**, Chief Climate Change and Green Growth Specialist- AfDB

Overview of the 2025 Africa Sustainable Development Report

- **Ms. Oyebanke Abejirin**, Officer-in-charge, Development Planning Section, Macroeconomics and Governance Division, UN Economic Commission for Africa

High-level Panel Discussion on Supporting the Implementation of SDGs & Agenda 2063

- **H.E. Ms. Justine Kasule Lumumba**, Minister for General Duties, Office of the Prime Minister, Uganda and Chair of the Eleventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development
- **H.E. Mr. Edgar Moyo**, Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, The Republic of Zimbabwe
- **H.E. Amb. Charles Masoya**, Permanent Representative, Botswana
- **Ms. Dima Al-Khatib**, Director, UN Office for South-South Cooperation
- **Ms. Stessy Lorraine Keize**, President, Africa Youth and Adolescent Network (AfriYAN), Burundi
- **Ms. Naomi Nwokolo**, Executive Director, Global Compact Country Network Nigeria

Interactive Discussion

- Q & A with the audience

3:55 – 4:00 pm: Closing Remarks

- **H.E. Amb. Fatima Kyari Mohammed**, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations

Moderator Question for UNOSSC: Harnessing Multistakeholder South-South Cooperation to Drive Africa's Transformation is key.

- What strategic roles can the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and UN Partners play in achieving Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063?
- What can be done to broaden opportunities and channels for greater South-South Cooperation in support of African member states?

5 - 7 Minutes/660 - 950 (Proposed)

~8.5 Minutes/~ 1180 Words (Current text)

(Direct response to the Moderator)

Multistakeholder South-South cooperation is crucial to the transformation of Africa in both the global 2030 Agenda and the AU Agenda 2063. As the entity entrusted with the mandate to elevate, facilitate and support South-South cooperation within and beyond the UN, UNOSSC and its development partners are playing a significant role in leveraging this cooperation modality to advance both agendas in support of African Member States.

Thank you for raising this for our collective reflection today. With five years left for Agenda 2030 and the second Ten-Year Plan of Agenda 2063 underway,¹ the **Africa Sustainable Development Report 2025** points to the multiple and interconnected crises compounding existing vulnerabilities across the continent.

And with fewer than 10% of measurable SDG targets on track, South-South and triangular cooperation are more crucial than ever.²

Excellencies, Colleagues, South-South Cooperation was born at a time of similar turbulence, and our recently launched 2025 Report is spot-on in raising “solidarity” through South-South cooperation as an imperative.

As early as 1978, the Buenos Aires Plan of Action recognized that the international system was in flux, calling for a new economic order that reflected the evolving realities and aspirations of the Global South. That message remains just as urgent today.³

South-South cooperation, therefore --- from inception --- is about addressing tectonic, multidimensional shifts, and its entire record

¹ The Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 was launched/started in 2024 (for the period 2024-2033).

² The preceding sessions will speak on these, particularly the presentation of the 2025 Report in this session.

³ Paras 1-14 (“Introduction”) of BAPA: <https://unsouthsouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Buenos-Aires-Plan-of-Action-1978.pdf>

illustrates the potential of this cooperation modality to **pave the way forward through solidarity and strengthened multilateralism.**

UNOSSC and the UN System have a central role to play in support of developing countries to better harness South-South and triangular cooperation and tap into Southern-led action and solutions in the development trajectories.

Let me share just a few ways in how we do this in the context of Africa.

FIRST, South-South and triangular cooperation can enable and facilitate strategic, context-specific support to build crucial capacities.

- Africa is rich in natural resources but needs stronger capacities to harness them for priorities like debt and fiscal sustainability. Investing in infrastructure, skills, and jobs, especially for its growing youth—can drive national and regional prosperity by implementing ambitious frameworks like the AfCFTA. **South-South and triangular cooperation can play a vital role in building the capacities needed to realize this potential.**
- Context-specific, demand-driven knowledge exchange is central to South-South and triangular cooperation and consequently, UNOSSC devotes a lot of attention—to develop and strengthening SS&TrC capacities within the UN system and among Member States to drive locally led development ⁴
- We have also developed tools and grown networks to support these efforts, and I invite you to visit our **South-South Galaxy for hundreds of examples of solutions from the Global South and access to potential partners.** And through the **UN Interagency Mechanism for South-South Cooperation** the collective assets of the UN System for country and regional support are leveraged, ensuring greater coherence.

SECOND, Through intergovernmental mechanisms such as the UN High-Level Committee on South-South Cooperation -the highest- policy making body on

⁴ <https://unsouthsouth.org/our-work/capacity-development/>

SSC in the UN and in which UNOSSC is Secretariat to, Member States get to inform decisions that can steer support and investments towards Africa through SS&TrC.

- **Given the geopolitical shifts, South-South and triangular cooperation anchored in intergovernmental solidarity is even more crucial.** In 2024 for example, with UNOSSC championing, we saw the inclusion of SS&TrC in 39 resolutions, declarations and outcome documents, which is a 44% increase from the 27 we recorded in 2023.⁵⁵
- The recent **Fourth Conference on Financing for Development** underscored how Global South solidarity is shaping key development decisions. It also marked stronger engagement from Emerging Development Partners—countries that have transitioned from aid recipients to development partners. UNOSSC, in collaboration with Member States and development partners, championed SS&TrC resulting in new commitments for their advancement.
- I personally emerged from FfD4 with greater hope than when I arrived --- there was broader embrace of the self-defined priorities of the global South, greater readiness for Southern-sensitive reforms, and wider array of potential partnerships for the global South.

THIRD, through close collaboration with UN regional entities, UNOSSC can help drive strategic, catalytic support, including cross-regional SS&TrC to advance regional priorities.

- We must elevate proven Southern-led solutions, making them accessible and scalable where they can have real impact. This isn't only about funding—it's also about building the capacity to access, adapt, and implement catalytic innovations.

⁵⁵ This is from the 2024 UNDP Administrator Report on SSC prepared by IUSAT/UNOSSC (for release at the 22nd HLC)

- This responds in part to the second part of our Moderator's question: What we can do to broaden channels for greater SS&TrC in support of African member states?
- In addition to the two service pillars I shared above, UNOSSC is entrusted by Member States to manage Trust Funds that support SS&TrC initiatives. In the era of declining official development assistance (from 3.4% in 2006 to 2.1% in 2023, with major donors, announcing further cuts, as UNECA has pointed out),⁶ funding catalytic efforts, goes a long way --- especially when delivered through a cooperation modality that champions mutual benefits and poses no burdens.
- **The India-UN and the India-Brasil-South Africa (IBSA) Funds for example, have supported 32 projects in African LDCs, with a total budget of \$29.8M** focused on enhancing agricultural capacities and value addition and increasing access to digital finance, among others.
- The **recently launched Triangular Funding Window** is broadening partner scope with the inclusion of Northern partners, the private sector and development cooperation entities.
- The **South-South Solutions Lab** is channeling support to innovative approaches from the global South, with a focus on efforts targeting youth and women.

Excellencies, Colleagues, as I conclude, **we must consolidate our collective strengths, starting with a more coordinated and systematic approach to SS&TrC, especially across and within regions.** This is crucial for countries facing the greatest constraints, such LDCs, which account for 80% of the region's development financing gap, as highlighted in the 2025 Report.

And as we head LLDC3, it is vital to sustain momentum in support of these countries and particularly in Africa, home to half of the world's LLDCs. **We**

⁶ <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/stories/eca-urges-unified-african-stance-amid-debt-crisis-and-donor-retreat>

invite you to join the Ministerial Dialogue on South-South Cooperation we are co-hosting with UN-OHRLLS at LLDC3 to help galvanize action.

With much of South-South cooperation in Africa being at the national level, the gap at regional level needs addressing. **Strengthening regional mechanisms to facilitate and scale context-specific solutions is both necessary and urgent and today's engagement is a step forward.**

Excellencies, Colleagues, SS&TrC are rising and for good reason. Built on principles of solidarity and shared ownership, they are reshaping development cooperation to meet today's global realities, while reflecting the increasing leadership and aspirations of the Global South on the world stage.

Through these evolving global contexts and new realities, we stand in ready to work more closely with you to ***realize the vision of “an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens.”***⁷

Thank you.

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<https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview#:~:text=As%20an%20affirmation%20of%20their,Nkosazana%20Dlamini%20Zuma.&text=Agenda%202063%20encapsulates%20not%20only,rapid%20transformation%20of%20the%20continent>