



**VIDEO SCRIPT FOR H.E. MR. VOLKAN BOZKIR
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
High-level Meeting, “AU Silencing the Guns Initiative - The Role of
Illicit Financial Flows in Fuelling Instability in Africa”
10 December 2020**

Distinguished Delegates,

Excellencies,

Thank you for the opportunity to address this important event today.

The cooperation between the United Nations and regional and sub-regional organizations is crucial to address our joint challenges. Regional and sub-regional organizations like the African Union play pivotal role in the advancement of peace and security, human rights and development.

The Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, signed in 2017, as well as the AU-UN Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, provide a solid foundation for a predictable, systematic and strategic partnership between both organisations.

Excellencies,



Illicit Financial Flow's (IFF) continue to account for substantial resource leakages in developing countries. The UN's Trade and Development Agency, UNCTAD, estimates that almost 90 billion US dollars, or 3.7% of Africa's gross domestic product, leaves the continent in the form of illicit capital. As a point of reference this is nearly as much as the combined official development assistance and foreign direct investment received by African countries. Almost as much stolen money is being taken out of the continent as is being sent in.

And the impact is huge. IFFs divert resources from education, health, infrastructure. They have limited and, in some cases, crippled the ability of developing countries to mobilize domestic resources towards longer-term development goals.

This has been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has highlighted governments limitations to marshal their budgetary resources in times of crisis.

Therefore, it is imperative to not only understand the patterns of the IFFs but also to collectively identify solutions and implement existing agreements.



We must do more to fulfil our commitment to address IFFs as outlined in the 2030 Agenda. Without a change, we will fail to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

Financial accountability, transparency and integrity systems can help countries prevent the drain of important and limited resources.

Excellencies,

The United Nations General Assembly acknowledges that to combat illicit financial flows a range of actions are required, including deterring, detecting, preventing and countering such flows in source, transit and destination countries.

As President of the ‘parliament of humanity’, I call on countries to scale up the level of cooperation to curb illicit financial flows and recover the proceeds of crime; to develop effective tools and create a policy environment for combating illicit financial flows, in accordance with the existing relevant international frameworks.

During the 75th session, I will organize a Special Session of the General Assembly on Corruption in coordination with the UN Office of Drugs and Crime. This will be an important opportunity to take stock and find systemic solutions to tackle this complex issue.



Excellencies,

As the UN75 Declaration makes clear, the three pillars of the United Nations, peace and security, sustainable development and human rights are equally important, interrelated, and interdependent. One cannot progress without the others.

Enhancing peace and security, whether through disarmament or other means, will contribute to sustainable developments gains, as recognized in Article 26 of the UN Charter. And as security issues disproportionately affect the most vulnerable, addressing them can have an enormous positive impact on the people's lives who are most in need of assistance.

I welcome the steps taken to address Africa's traditional security challenges, such as the deployment of robust peace support operations that have improved protections of vulnerable populations, reduced violence and terrorism and created the conditions for meaningful political processes and sustainable peace and development.

Excellencies,



Today, Africa continues to remain a priority focus for the UN Peacebuilding Architecture. Peacebuilding and sustaining peace in Africa require strengthened capacity to address the root causes of conflict in all its forms. In this regard, it is important that the Peacebuilding Commission, which has played a unique role in mobilizing support to address the complex and multidimensional challenges of Africa, uses its broad representative base to foster agreement among its members on actions to address external factors that undermine sustaining peace in Africa, such as soliciting and facilitating corruption and illicit financial flows.

Development of capacities and institutions that enable post-conflict countries in Africa to raise their own revenues should also be given due attention in the discussions of the UN peacebuilding architecture. Incorporating regional approaches into the work of PBC, including by strengthening its partnership with the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, sub-regional organisations in Africa and African civil society, must be prioritised.

Excellencies,

I thank you for the opportunity to speak today and I wish you all the best in your panel discussions. I look forward meeting together again and thank you once more for inviting me to address this important meeting.



Thank you.