

UNITED NATIONS  NATIONS UNIES

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL

**5th MID-YEAR COORDINATION MEETING OF THE AFRICAN
UNION, REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES AND
REGIONAL MECHANISMS**

Nairobi, 16 July 2023

Your Excellency, President Ruto, our warmly welcoming host

**Your Excellency, President of the Union of Comoros and
Chairperson of the African Union**

**Your Excellency, Chairperson of the Commission of the
African Union**

Excellencies,

Distinguished guests,

**It is a great honour to join you at the 5th Mid-Year
Coordination Meeting of the African Union, the Regional
Economic Communities and the Regional Mechanisms.**

**I want to thank the Government of Kenya for the cordial
welcome and the African Union for inviting me to share some
reflections.**

**This year's meeting provides us with a unique
opportunity to find common ground in shaping and
implementing Africa's narrative to meet the ambitions of
Agenda 2063 and the aspirations of the people of Africa.**

Excellencies,

Our world continues to face unprecedented crises from the socio-economic impacts of Covid-19, a climate emergency and the knock-on effects of the war in Ukraine. None of us needs reminding that Africa played no part in creating any of these challenges. Unmet commitments by the international community to financing, climate action and adequate humanitarian responses have further aggravated the obstacles to the efforts made by Africa and its leaders to implement Agenda 2063.

Meanwhile, renewed conflict and extremist terrorism are wreaking havoc across the continent, resulting in lost decades of development and millions of displaced persons and refugees. These calamities are leaving a generation of our young people, especially women, with the anxiety of a tortured present and a deeply uncertain future.

Let me salute you – that as African leaders, against this challenging global and continental backdrop, you continue tirelessly, day after day, here and abroad, to make the powerful case for Africa. Africa as the new horizon of possibility and as the source of solutions for its own

challenges and those of the planet. Excellencies, you have our complete solidarity.

In just one important demonstration of this solidarity, the Secretary-General continues to call to the G20 for meaningful climate action to end the addiction to fossil fuels in order to address the imperative of a 1.5-degree world. He also continues to call loudly for an SDG stimulus tackling debt distress and increasing fiscal space through the reallocation of additional SDRs to the African Development Bank Initiative and the reform of the current global financial architecture, which is morally bankrupt.

Excellencies,

If African solutions to African challenges and opportunities are to be more than a slogan, we must have a still more insistent voice in the G20 and unified action by African leaders to disrupt the unacceptable status quo. We applaud the strong voices of President Ruto, President Macky Sall and President Rhamaphosa at the recent Summit for a New Global Financial Pact in Paris.

You are here today to discuss the African Union reforms, the second 10-year plan, governance, and the work of the regional economic communities and mechanisms. As you do so, you will need to ensure your cohesive voice and common positions come together to shape the upcoming G20 meeting, UN General Assembly and the SDG Summit, the Climate Action Summit, the Commemoration of the UN Declaration on Human Rights at 75, the World Bank/IMF Fall Meetings on Reform and the Paris Climate Stocktaking at COP28.

The United Nations remains committed to accompanying the Continent as it navigates these international rough waters and through these milestone Summits.

Finally, allow me to end with a plea to you all as an African mother of six and grandmother of four. The Continent faces a moment of reckoning when the world appears to have taken its gaze off Africa. We may appear down, but we are far from out. And as our leaders, we continue to count on you to forge a path towards delivering our vision for Africa enshrined in Agenda 2063.

Excellencies,

This will not happen unless you stand united, with no light between you, determined to live up to the courage of your convictions. It is this unity that must draw from the depths of our turbulent history, shared values and a sense of common purpose.

Ultimately, excellencies, it is Africa's very dignity that is at stake for us and future generations.

In the words of the late Kwame Nkrumah, who inspired Agenda 2063...I quote, "We in Africa, who are pressing now for unity, are deeply conscious of the validity of our purpose. We need the strength of our combined numbers to protect ourselves from the very real dangers of colonization returning in disguised forms."

Thank you, and I wish you a productive meeting.

Assante Sane

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