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Talking points

Chairperson of the African Union Commission, HE Dr.
Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma

to the 4th General Assembly of the African Forum of Former
Heads of State and Government

Addis Ababa, 2 April 2016

Your Excellency, President Joachim Chissano, Chairperson of the Africa Forum of HoSG

Excellencies, Former Heads of State and Government and Members of the Forum

Dr. Carlos Lopes, UNUSG and Executive Secretary of the UNECA

Your Excellency, Mr. John Tesha, Executive Director of the Africa Forum

Ladies and Gentlemen

It is as always a pleasure to participate this august forum of Former Heads of State and Government and Regional institutions, and to welcome you to Addis Ababa., the African capital

Your theme for this session of the Forum General Assembly, *“Strengthening the governance of Africa’s mineral resources, and combating illicit resource flows from the continent towards the effective implementation of Agenda 2063, the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”*, which builds on the issues discussed at the 2015 Session of the Forum, when we briefed Your Excellencies on Agenda 2063 and the theme year with its focus on Women.

Before I say a few words on this theme for this year, I would like to play a short video clip of a TEDX talk by a young African, to help illustrate what young people feel the importance of your theme:

Clip of Mallence Bart Williams (Sierra Leone) TEDX talk
(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x-GpATPEYWQ>)

END OF CLIP

This is an idea of what young Africans think about our resources, about how we sell it, about aid.

This talk by this young Sierra Leonian raises a number of issues that are relevant to your theme and to Agenda 2063 and the SDG's.

One of the things that we continue to fail to do, is beneficiation and we are told that some countries are de-industrialising. To diversify our economies, utilising our resources better, contributing towards determining the prices of our commodities, and create the much-needed jobs.

But what are the constraints to this idea?

During last year's engagement, Your Excellencies stressed the importance of capacities for the implementation of Agenda 2063. Since May 2015, the ACBF completed their study on the capacity and skills needs, and is vindication of the importance that Agenda 2063 attached to investments in human development, and an African skills revolution.

Because we can manage our mineral resources, unless we have geologists, mining engineers, and other such skills critical to the extractive sectors. We will continue to not only fail to account for the

revenues from our extractive sectors, but also fail to beneficiate and add value, and therefore industrialise the continent.

A very cursory review showed that in 2013, only 13 African countries had Universities (19 in total) offering Mining engineering degrees¹, and yet we are producers of over 60 minerals and metal products, with over 24 countries that have oil and gas². It is not surprising that we cant account for our minerals, since the engineers and technicians in the mining, oil and gas companies are not ours.

The ACBF study showed that apart from the fact that we still have less than 16% of our youth population with access to further and higher education, over 90% of our graduates are still in the social sciences, and the shortage of engineers and engineering technicians, as well as agricultural scientists run into the millions. This is also the case with chemical, railway, aeronautic and other engineering sectors, critical to our development.

This is therefore one of the critical issues that we want to discuss with business and the academic sector, as well as the Africa Forum early June this year, when we will convene the first Africa Economic Platform with HOSG and these two sectors. The only African that has changed this, in their universities 70% are in the sciences and engineering.

¹ South Africa (4), Egypt (3), Zambia, Morocco and Zimbabwe (2 each), whilst Nigeria, Ghana, Algeria, Tanzania,

² Compare this to other regions, such as Asia where India alone has eleven (11) universities offering mining engineering degrees, or Europe has 38 universities, including seven mining engineering schools in France, and three in Belgium; or North America where the US and Canada between them have over 24 institutions offering mining engineering; Australia has 9 universities; and South America with twenty two universities offering mining degrees (.

Infrastructure is a second critical priority, and many more countries are putting more of their domestic resources into infrastructure development.

We are also working on the African Integrated High Speed Rail project with the Chinese. It is 30-50 year project that must lead towards connecting all African capitals and commercial centres through high speed rail, using the latest technologies in rail, which has the same potential to help Africa leapfrog development as has happened with ICT, and is happening with renewable energy.

Apart from the focus on transport infrastructure to help drive intra-Africa trade and tourism, as nodes for economic development zones, we are also focussing on research and development, and capacities for such a network – including the myriad of skills and local content required for such a network.

We are looking at the same model as Airbus, though assembled in Toulouse in France, parts are produced in many different EU countries. The same model can be used for the AIHSRP, where different countries produce different aspects.

The AU Summit in January 2016 also took an important decision on the Free Movement of People, as key to integration and the *raison d'être* of the AU.

The AU summit will introduce the AU passports to HOSG and other categories such as your selves, as well as to urge Member states to introduce a 30-day visa on arrival in all African states for all African citizens. We shall report to the Summit in July on this, but apart from those that has been trailblazers such as Rwanda, Seychelles and

Mauritius, Ghana has also followed suit after the Summit, which already has visas on arrival for all Africans. We urge this Forum and Your Excellencies to also help us to champion this, an initiative critical to facilitating and encourage intra-African trade and investments, as well as tourism. With a growing middle class, we must encourage intra - Africa tourism

Agenda 2063 and SDGs

Implementation of Agenda 2063 has therefore started, over 23 countries have already started with their domestication. It builds on the foundations of the Lagos Plan of Action, the Abuja Treaty and NEPAD, as well as other continental frameworks.

We are also working with our international partners, to ensure that we have a common approach to the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Given the work that we have done on the Common African Positions on the SDG, there is over 90% convergence between the two frameworks, and we are therefore developing joint indicators and a common monitoring and evaluation framework.

Key to this is the African Data Revolution that Your Excellencies also considered in your meeting last year. African Statisticians Generals are playing a critical role in driving this process, and they are arguing strongly for the use of technology to enable the continent to leapfrog its data revolution.

The focus on the Extractive industries is welcomed, because the Executive Council with Foreign Ministers at its Mek'elle Retreat in January this year, discussed in detail the paradox of a mineral and

resource rich Africa, and with poor Africans. The retreat reflected on ***'the Africa we have, and the Africa we want'*** and why we are unable to break out of this cycle.

The Mek'ele retreat did not conclude its discussion, and next month we will convene again to take forward this discussion and hopefully help to inform the Summit on this issue. We welcome inputs from Your Excellencies on this matter.

Domestic resource mobilisation

In line with your theme, we believe that domestic resource mobilisation should become the mainstay of our development. If we don't pay for our development, those who pay will direct it, in a manner that benefit them.

The work done on illicit financial flows by President Mbeki is critical to this. We must therefore do all in our power to harness the resources that we have, including stemming illicit flows from the continent. In addition, we also need to look at other domestic funds including pension and insurance funds, the private equity market, and improving public revenue collection, expenditure and accounting.

The financial sector, including development finance institutions such as the AfDB and regional banks such as ECOWAS Bank, the PT bank, DBSA, etc, play an important role and we must help to strengthen them, including through African investments. Our sovereign wealth, foreign reserves, pension funds, are invested outside of the continent, so that they are invested in the continent, earning a higher return.

In a similar vein, innovative financing arrangements such as the African Risk Capacity agency that helps countries to build resilience against

extreme weather conditions through early warning systems, finance and contingency plans must be promoted. Indeed, the ARC mutual insurance company has already demonstrated its capacity as it disbursed significant pay-outs in 2015 and thereby allowing African member states which were covered against drought, to protect the most vulnerable populations.

Moreover, the ARC approach is completely African led and driven, since Member states pay a contribution out of their own budgets. With the ARC, we are demonstrating a will to take charge of our own destiny.

In conclusion, 2016 is the Year of Human rights with special focus on Women. We appreciate the role that members of the Forum continues to play in our peace and conflict resolution processes, in elections monitoring and promoting good governance, in advocating for a non-sexist Africa and more generally in the transformation of the continent.

We appreciate your wisdom and counsel, your Pan Africanism and your tireless work towards the development of our continent.

I also like to thank Carlos to make it possible to have the Forum once a year, and since we should do our part, I will donate 200,000 USD from the Chairperson's budget to the Forum.

I wish the 4th Assembly all success, enjoy our time in this African capital and look forward to the outcomes of its deliberations.