



ECOSOCC
Economic Social & Cultural Council

**The voice of the
African Citizenry**

**Statement of H.E Ambassador Selma Malika Haddadi,
Deputy Chairperson of AUC at the Opening Ceremony
of the Africa-China People-to-People Dialogue**

08 MAY 2025, LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

**LUSAKA INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION CENTRE
(LICC CIELA RESORTS)**



- Your Excellency Dr. W.K. Mutale Nalumango, Vice President of the Republic of Zambia
- Honorable Mulambo Haimbe, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation
- The Presiding Officer & leadership of ECOSOCC
- Mr. Li Jun, Vice President of CNIE and head of the Chinese delegation
- Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates and Friends

Good morning

It is a great honor and pleasure to address you today on this landmark inaugural Africa-China People-to-People Dialogue. I would have much wished to be in the midst of you all in Lusaka but I am constrained with competing schedules at the Commission.

On behalf of the African Union Commission, allow me to reiterate our profound gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Zambia not only for hosting the ECOSOCC Secretariat since 2019 but also for your unwavering support to ECOSOCC over the past years. Your continued commitment has enabled the organ to reposition itself as one of the most vibrant AU organs. ***Thank you, Zambia,***

It is truly heartening to witness ECOSOCC renewing its ties with the China NGO Network for International Exchanges. I am pleased to see the evolution of this growing partnership, which has now culminated in the launch of the Inaugural Africa-China People to People Dialogue. This marks the beginning of many new opportunities that lie ahead.

On this, allow me to commend ECOSOCC for its determination and commitment in organizing an event of this caliber. Bringing together such a huge number of high-level delegations from China along with dozens of international delegates from the civil society and business communities together is a powerful start to develop a fruitful partnership.

Today's dialogue is a testament to the enduring bonds between Africa and China; bonds that have been forged through longstanding multifaceted partnership.



Africa and China share a history of mutual respect, solidarity, and collaboration. From the Bandung Conference to the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), our partnership has strengthened and anchored in the principles of equality, solidarity, shared prosperity, and a common vision for a more just and better global order.

When African and Chinese civil societies come together, they unleash a powerful force for transformative change. By uniting grassroots organizations, youth movements, cultural leaders, incubators, innovators as well as academia, we cultivate deeper mutual understanding and co-create solutions to shared challenges, from climate resilience to digital inclusion. This people-centered partnership strengthens the foundation of Africa-China relations, ensuring that cooperation is not just about governments or institutions, but also about the relationships between people. It drives tangible progress that uplifts communities and builds bridges of trust for generations to come.

The true strength of our ties lies in the connections between our people; entrepreneurs, artists, scientists, and civil society leaders who bridge cultures, innovate together, and turn challenges into opportunities.

Let us use this Dialogue to deepen understanding, amplify youth and women's voices, and explore new avenues for collaboration in education, science, technology, innovation, culture, and sustainable development. As the African Union's Agenda 2063 reminds us: 'The Africa We Want' is one of unity, prosperity, and global solidarity and China is a vital partner in this journey.

Together, we can build a future where Africa and China thrive side by side, guided by the spirit of Ubuntu and the ancient Chinese wisdom: 'When brothers are of the same mind, they can cut through metal.'

I wish you fruitful deliberations and I eagerly look forward for the 2nd edition of the Dialogue in 2026.

Thank you