

Keynote Address
The Strategic Consultations on the Theme
“Towards Enhanced Synergy and Alignment between Agenda 2063 and FOCAC”
Beijing, 2nd December 2025

Excellencies,

- Representative of the People’s Republic of China,
- Permanent Representative of the African Union,
- Co-Chair of the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation,
- Dean of the African Diplomatic Corps in China,
- Excellences les Ambassadeurs
- United Nations Resident Coordinator,

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, dear colleagues,

Allow me, on behalf of the CoS of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, to express our profound gratitude for your presence at these strategic consultations devoted to the implementation of the Beijing Action Plan 2025–2027 and to the strengthened alignment between the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and the commitments undertaken within the Forum on China–Africa Cooperation-FOCAC.

Our thanks go in particular to the African Union Permanent Mission in Beijing and to the Group of African Ambassadors for their tireless efforts in organizing and mobilizing for this important gathering.

Excellencies,

Our meeting takes place at a pivotal moment in Africa–China relations. The Ninth Ministerial Conference and Fourth Beijing Summit of FOCAC have adopted a new Action Plan for 2025–2027, together with H.E. President Xi Jinping’s Ten Partnership Actions for China–Africa cooperation, which coincide with the launch of the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063 for the period 2024–2033.

This convergence of timelines and priorities offers a historic opportunity to move from parallel commitments to truly coordinated implementation, firmly anchored in African priorities and assessed through concrete results for our peoples.

Agenda 2063 remains our strategic compass for an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and playing an influential role on the global stage. The China frameworks, for their part, set out the main areas of cooperation in the political, economic, social, security, infrastructure, and strong support to the African Continental Free Trade Area-AfCFTA.

Excellencies,

The implementation of the First Ten-Year Plan of Agenda 2063 has provided us with valuable lessons. Significant progress has been achieved in infrastructure development, macroeconomic discipline, regional integration, governance and peace consolidation, as well as in the roll-out of flagship initiatives such as the AfCFTA and the PIDA.

At the same time, this first decade has also revealed persistent challenges: insufficient financing, limited local value addition, fragmentation of interventions, coordination and monitoring mechanisms that are not yet fully harmonized between African frameworks and external cooperation instruments, including FOCAC.

In response to these challenges, the African Union has developed an integrated framework for coordination, monitoring and evaluation of Agenda 2063, aimed at harmonizing indicators and reporting mechanisms at continental level.

One of the key objectives of our work here is to ensure that the follow-up mechanisms of the Beijing Action Plan and the Ten Partnership Actions are aligned with this continental framework, so that our partnership is assessed on the basis of tangible results, in a spirit of transparency, mutual accountability and shared responsibility.

Three guiding principles should inform our reflections and decisions during these consultations:

First, institutional coherence: the African institutional architecture – including the African Union Commission, AUDA-NEPAD, the AfCFTA Secretariat, the AfricaCDC, the Regional Economic Communities and African financial institutions – must be at the heart of the planning and implementation of cooperation with China. By firmly anchoring FOCAC initiatives in these structures, we will reduce duplication, improve complementarity and maximize impact.

Second, effective implementation and evaluation: it is no longer sufficient to multiply announcements; we must ensure that commitments are translated into concrete achievements, measured against relevant indicators and tracked over time. Aligning African monitoring instruments with FOCAC reporting mechanisms will be essential to capture the real impact of our partnership on industrialization, jobs, food security, peace and the green transition.

Third, African ownership and shared responsibility: experience has shown that programs yield lasting results when they are rooted in national and regional priorities defined by Africans themselves and supported by partners acting in a spirit of mutual respect. Our ambition is to reinforce African leadership in setting priorities, coordinating interventions and monitoring implementation, while valuing China's technical and financial contributions as a catalyst for the continent's transformation.

Excellencies,

The work of this strategic meeting is structured around several key thematic pillars. We will first take stock of the lessons learned from the first decade of Agenda 2063, identifying what has worked, the enabling factors behind the progress made, and the areas where adjustments are required. We will then examine the main sectoral priorities for aligning Agenda 2063, the Beijing Action Plan and the Ten Partnership Actions: industrialization and regional value chains; cross-border infrastructure and connectivity; energy and digital transformation; human capital, peace and security; health and resilience.

On the economic and trade front, the decision to grant 100-percent tariff-free access to the Chinese market for eligible African countries opens a window of opportunity that we must collectively turn into concrete benefits. This will require strengthening our production and processing capacities, deepening regional value chains, upgrading quality standards and logistics infrastructure, and doing so in synergy with the AfCFTA, AUDA-NEPAD and other continental frameworks.

In terms of infrastructure and connectivity, the implementation of major projects – including the 30 projects announced in the context of China–Africa cooperation – must be fully aligned with the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA), with priority given to cross-border projects that simultaneously strengthen regional integration and intra-African trade. Likewise, enhanced energy cooperation, particularly in the field of renewable energy, should contribute to energy security and the creation of green jobs.

Cooperation in the areas of digital transformation, research, innovation and skills development is equally decisive. It should enable Africa to build an integrated continental digital market, to reinforce its technological sovereignty and to empower its youth to be a driving force in the knowledge economy. In the same vein, cooperation in health, through institutions such as Africa CDC and the AMA (African Medicines Agency), as well as support to peace and security mechanisms, must contribute to more resilient and stable societies.

The question of financial resources remains a central issue. Estimates indicate that the continent will require more than 155 billion dollars, only in terms of infrastructure without taking into account other important areas such as education, health and security, and this for every year if Africa wants to meet its development objectives.

Meeting this challenge will depend on increased domestic resource mobilization, innovative use of African financial instruments – such as pan-African payment systems and continental investment funds – and a more structured cooperation with our most important partners such as the Chinese financial institutions, grounded in principles of transparency, debt sustainability and local value creation.

Excellencies,

Allow me to highlight one final pillar in our relations with China, without which no lasting alignment will be possible: it is above all a question of the coherence and solidarity of African actors and more particularly here in Beijing.

In this regard, I can confirm that the unique initiative launched by H.E. Ambassador Sarjoh to bring together this group of African actors is likely to give more depth and acceleration to the programs agreed with China.

With you, Excellencies, members of the group of the African ambassadors accredited in Beijing, the AU Permanent Mission forms a strong diplomatic ecosystem in connection with a strategic partner like China and which should serve as a model for our permanent missions in other countries.

By speaking with one voice and coordinating our messages, positions and initiatives, we will strengthen Africa's credibility and our collective ability to advance our priorities within the FOCAC framework.

A key expected outcome of our meeting is therefore the identification of concrete and regular mechanisms for consultation to ensure continuous follow-up of our commitments and coordinated preparation for upcoming FOCAC milestones.

We also aim to agree on a consolidated lessons-learned report, an operational roadmap for aligning Agenda 2063, the Beijing Action Plan and the Ten Partnership Actions, and precise recommendations to reinforce coordination between the African actors.

Excellences, chers collègues,

Pour conclure, permettez-moi de lancer un appel solennel à l'action. Les textes ont été adoptés, les cadres existent, les engagements ont été pris. Ce qui déterminera désormais la crédibilité de notre partenariat, ce ne sont pas nos déclarations, mais notre capacité collective à transformer ces engagements en améliorations mesurables.

Faisons donc en sorte que cette réunion ne soit pas un simple exercice de réflexion, mais un véritable tournant : le moment où nous passons résolument de projets fragmentés à des systèmes coordonnés ; d'une collection d'initiatives isolées à une architecture de partenariat cohérente, au service de l'Agenda 2063 et de développement de l'Afrique.

Nous sommes réunis aujourd'hui en famille africaine, et nous comptons sur vos observations et propositions. Les collègues ici présents, représentants les différents départements et organes de l'Union qui œuvrent chaque jour à la mise en œuvre des projets de l'Agenda 2063, apporteront des éclairages supplémentaires à nos échanges.

Que chacune et chacun, dans son domaine de responsabilité, contribue à formuler des propositions à la fois ambitieuses et réalistes et à prendre des engagements clairs pour leur mise en œuvre et leur suivi.

Je vous remercie de votre aimable attention et vous souhaite des délibérations fructueuses et constructives.