



Statement

By

Mr. Maged A. Abdelaziz

Under-Secretary-General and

Special Adviser on Africa

Africa Week 2016

High-Level Inaugural Event:

***“Strengthening Partnerships for Inclusive Sustainable
Development, Good Governance, Peace and Stability in
Africa”***

Monday, 10 October 2016, 10:00am-1:00pm

New York/UNHQ – ECOSOC Chamber

Please check against delivery

Excellency, Mr. Peter Thomson, President of the 71st Session of the General Assembly,

Excellency, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the pleasure to welcome you all to this High-Level Inaugural Event for Africa Week 2016.

Today's event marks the 7th year that the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa has organized Africa Week, in partnership with the Economic Commission for Africa, the Department of Public Information, the African Union and its Permanent Observer Mission in New York, the NEPAD Agency, the African Peer Review Mechanism and the Regional Economic Communities.

Since its inception, Africa Week has grown to be a major platform for the discussion of issues of great importance for the continent. As a reflection of the people-centered approach that has become a cornerstone for both the UN and the African Union, the Week features the participation not only of Member States, but also of civil society, academia, private sector and the African diaspora.

This year, Africa Week continues that legacy at an important moment in which African countries are embarking on the implementation of two historic and complementary agendas: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's transformative Agenda 2063 and its First 10-Year Implementation Plan.

African countries have already taken steps to deliver on the ambitious goals and aspirations of both agendas within accelerated timeframes. For example, they have committed to "Silence the guns by 2020" and, towards that end, have pledged to continue – in close cooperation with the United Nations – to strengthen the African Peace

and Security Architecture. They have committed to strengthen regional integration by increasing investment in infrastructure development and allowing free movement of people, goods and services throughout the continent, with the aim of establishing an African Free Trade Area. They have also pledged to strengthen the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and the African Governance Architecture, affirming their commitment to embracing democratic norms as a means for ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Africa cannot do all of this alone.

The enormity of the ambitions contained in both Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, coupled with the accelerated timelines set for their achievement, requires a new partnership approach in support of Africa's efforts.

In this context, Africa Week 2016 is being held under the overarching theme ***“Strengthening Partnerships for Inclusive Sustainable Development, Good Governance, Peace and Stability in Africa”***.

The Week will provide an excellent opportunity to lay the foundation, at an early stage, for greater synergy, coordination and complementarity amongst the many stakeholders in Africa’s sustainable development.

Both Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda emphasize partnerships as key to successful implementation. The First 10-Year Implementation Plan for Agenda 2063 stresses the need to maximize partnerships, particularly in the areas of resource mobilization, technology transfer, and capacity building. Similarly, Goal 17 of the 2030 Agenda emphasizes a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development as critical for the achievement of its goals.

While Africa has taken the lead in its own development path, the continent has emphasised the twin principles of “African ownership and international partnership”. In this context, the continent has forged partnerships with a number of bilateral and multilateral stakeholders. As the global perspective shifts, however, these partnerships will need to be refocused, revitalized and, in some instances, redirected in order to maximize their impact in delivering the goals set out in the new global and regional agendas.

Allow me to highlight three specific areas that present key opportunities for strengthening partnerships:

The first is the critical need for multi-stakeholder partnerships to mobilize sufficient, predictable and timely financial resources for Africa’s development. Based on UNCTAD’s estimates, at least \$600 billion will be needed each year to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa, an amount that equates to roughly one-third of Africa’s gross national income.

In the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda, countries agreed to finance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by streamlining different sources of financing. Consequently, most African countries have stepped up their efforts in domestic resource mobilization by improving their tax collection and closing loopholes for tax evasion, tax avoidance and illicit financial flows. Efforts are also underway to mobilize private financial resources and to attract more investments; to create public-private partnerships to develop infrastructure; to leverage African pension funds for development; and to capitalize on remittances from the diaspora, among others.

Traditional partnerships also need to be strengthened, with enhanced collaboration for domestic and international resource mobilization. As traditional partners have reaffirmed their commitments in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, strong partnerships are also necessary to monitor the implementation of these commitments as well as their effective use in financing Africa's development.

With respect to Africa's new and emerging partnerships, efforts need to be made by all stakeholders to forge new partnerships and to match, if not exceed, the substantial financial commitments made by new and emerging partners such as China, India, and Brazil - all while shifting the focus of these partnerships from concentrating mostly on bilateral cooperation to gradually supporting regional institutions that are mandated to implement Agenda 2063 and to funding its priority cross-regional projects such as the Integrated High Speed Train Network and the African E-University.

The second partnership concern to be addressed is the need for greater synergy between national, regional and global approaches to Africa's development. African countries are increasingly faced with threats that extend beyond national and continental borders, such as climate change, terrorism, small arms proliferation, criminal networks, illicit financial outflows and deadly epidemics. All these issues remind us that our approach to Africa's development must cover national, regional and global dimensions.

This is the best reflection of what is stipulated in Aspiration 2 of Agenda 2063, which envisions “An integrated continent, politically united, based on the ideals of Pan-Africanism and the vision of Africa’s Renaissance”, as well as in Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda, which seeks to “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, to provide justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”.

Realizing these goals requires partnerships to focus on global and regional initiatives that offer practical interventions and measures to overcome the obstacles to good governance, peace, security and development. The African Union has already strengthened its structures at the national, sub-regional and regional levels towards the implementation of Agenda 2063. The United Nations is working diligently to strengthen its coordination with those structures to implement the 2030 Agenda, so as to avoid duplication of efforts and unnecessary loss of financial resources.

The last point I want to highlight is the need for strong partnerships to take into account the nexus between good governance, peace, security and development. Existing partnerships tend to focus on one or the other aspect without necessarily taking into account the influence of the others. It is important to underscore that lack of good governance, absence of rule of law and feelings of marginalization, exclusion or neglect can lead to mass frustrations, outbursts of violence, instability and possibly to terrorism and/or violent extremism. Such instability will have adverse impact on sustainable development as it paralyzes national institutions, hampers delivery of basic services and dampens critical private sector confidence to invest in African economies.

Finally, I want to emphasize that overcoming the challenges Africa faces will require us to form strong bonds and mechanisms for coherent collective actions. With the participation of Africa's major partners – traditional, new and emerging – the high-level discussions that take place throughout the week will highlight lessons learned and provide an opportunity for Africa and its partners to craft

complementarity between their implementation plans, clarify each other's mandates and to identify areas where existing partnerships need to be strengthened and refocused.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As this marks the final Africa Week of his tenure, allow me, on behalf of all co-organizers, to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his unwavering support for Africa throughout his two terms.

Over the past decade, he has made Africa and its priorities a central focus of the United Nations' work. His ongoing efforts have helped to strengthen the UN's partnerships with the African Union, the Regional Economic Communities, the NEPAD Agency, the APRM and other continental institutions across a wide spectrum of development, peace and security concerns.

He successfully led the efforts towards the recent strengthening of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, to support Africa in the midst of the landmark intergovernmental processes that led to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and he has always ensured that African concerns were reflected and addressed. These are but a few examples of his strong support for Africa and his important legacy of UN-Africa cooperation that will continue to grow in the decades to come.