

A Presentation to CCD-VIII by H.E Bouchaib Eloumni, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Morocco to AU and ECA and Representing the Chair of the Bureau of the fifth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development.

Key messages and the Marrakech Declaration adopted at the fifth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, Held in Marrakech, Morocco, 16-18 April 2019 and Update on 2019 HLPF.

Ethiopia 28 to 30 August 2019

Excellencies, Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. On behalf of the Chair and members of the Bureau of the fifth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, it is my great pleasure to present to you the salient key messages and elements of the Marrakech Declaration adopted at the fifth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development.
2. The fifth session of the Regional Forum was hosted by the Government of the Kingdom of Morocco under the high patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, in Marrakech, Morocco, from 16 to 18 April 2019. It was organized by the Economic Commission for Africa and the wider United Nations system, in collaboration with the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank.
3. Our Regional Forum conducted a follow-up and review of progress made in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union.
4. The theme of the Regional Forum was *“Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”* and focused on select Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for the High-level Political Forum together with the corresponding goals of Agenda 2063.
5. The fifth session of the Regional Forum was of particular significance to this Conference. This is because the Forum undertook in-depth review of SDG 13 and focused on *scaling up climate action* as one of the subthemes.
6. The Regional Forum adopted policy recommendations for Africa in the form of key messages and the Marrakech Declaration on Sustainable Development in Africa. These constituted the input of the African region to the 2019 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) and the upcoming Summit meeting on the SDGs to be held next month on 24 to 25 in New York.
7. On behalf of the Bureau of the fifth session of the Regional Forum, I would like to reiterate my gratitude to the Economic Commission for Africa and the United Nations system, together with the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank, for supporting African countries to articulate our priorities and unified voice, and for the continued support provided to member States to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. The following are the salient key messages and elements of the Marrakech declaration:

Regarding progress made:

9. Four years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and midway into the First Ten-Year

Implementation Plan of Agenda 2063, the following progress is notable on the sub-themes deliberated on by the Regional Forum:

(a) African countries have adopted the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area. This Agreement provides enormous opportunities for revenue mobilization and promoting inclusive growth including the empowerment of marginalized and vulnerable groups;

(b) Overall, governance in Africa continues on an upward trajectory. Improvements are being made regarding the rule of law, participation, rights, and transparency and accountability;

(c) 35 of the member States in the region have completed their Voluntary National Reviews, which are vital in stimulating action.

(d) ***The following progress is notable on climate action:***

- The African Group of Negotiators on climate change have worked diligently to ensure that Africa speaks with one voice in the global negotiations on climate change.
- All African countries have signed the Paris Agreement and 48 of them have already ratified it and set ambitious nationally determined contributions to climate action.
- African countries require approximately \$3 trillion of conditional and unconditional financing.
- By submitting ambitious nationally determined contributions, African countries are sending a strong signal that although the continent has contributed the smallest amount to climate change, it is ready to stand with the rest of the world in addressing its impacts.

Despite the progress highlighted, African countries face substantial challenges that must be addressed to pave way for the dramatic increase in the pace and scale of implementation.

10. These challenges include the following:

(a) The average economic growth levels for African countries in 2018 of 3.2 per cent are below those needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals;

(b) To get on track to achieve the Goals, Africa needs to triple its 2018 gross domestic product (GDP) per capita growth of 0.6 per cent, which is too low to mitigate to any significant extent the high levels of poverty and inequality;

(c) To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, Africa needs to meet incremental financing needs estimated at between \$614 billion and \$638 billion per year;

(d) ***Some of the key challenges regarding climate action are the following:***

- Climate change is a “threat multiplier” and its adverse impact are growing and affecting the region as demonstrated by example of the severe damage caused by Tropical Cyclone Idai in Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe this year.
- The investment needed for implementation of the nationally determined contributions by African countries is well beyond what can be provided from limited public resources.
- There is a severe lack of data for tracking Sustainable Development Goal 13 indicators, development of early warning systems and provision of climate response measures.

Ambitious and urgent action is therefore needed to achieve the SDGs and the goals of Agenda 2063 in Africa.

11. Such actions include the following:

(a) National efforts and the mobilization of global support must be intensified, in particular for the least developed countries, small island developing States, and countries in or emerging from conflict that are facing major challenges in implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063;

(b) Efforts should also be intensified to strengthen the alignment of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 with national development strategies, plans, budget allocations, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and bilateral and multilateral development cooperation frameworks;

(c) It is crucial for countries of the region to implement business reforms promoting and unlocking greater private sector investment, which is vital for the generation of additional revenue and the creation of jobs;

(d) To realize the potential offered by migration in reducing inequalities, actions are urgently required to strengthen arrangements at all levels to implement the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration;

(e) African countries are called upon to ratify and implement the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area and thus develop national plans and strategies to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the Agreement to mobilize revenue, enhance productivity and achieve inclusive growth;

(f) African countries and their partners need to invest in building appropriate technical competencies and institutions and creating the necessary environment to encourage youth innovation and optimally tap the dividends offered by technology advancement, to support the implementation of the two agendas.

(g) Africa also calls for the establishment of a solidarity fund for statistical development to support African countries in the collection, management and use of the necessary statistical data and statistics for compelling and evidence-based policy design, implementation, monitoring and reporting.

(h) ***To scale up climate action the following measures are needed:***

- Developed countries should support African countries with the means of implementation including capacity development, technology transfer and financing, in particular meeting the post-2020 minimum climate finance goal of \$100 billion annually.
- The adoption of the rulebook for the Paris Agreement on climate change during the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties requires a demonstrable shift from commitments of intent to fulfilments in spurring tangible actions on climate change.
- African countries are encouraged to set aside dedicated resources to institutionalize and support the African group of negotiators on climate change to ensure its sustainability and independence in African aspirations and expectations in the global climate discourse processes.
- Because adaptation and resilience are of utmost importance to Africa, countries are urged to review their nationally determined contributions ensuring synergy and coherence with national development plans and policies, national adaptation plans and disaster risk reduction policies, together with alignment with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.
- Governments are encouraged to promote public-private partnerships, and South–South and triangular cooperation and to strengthen the capacity of an appropriate existing institution to lead comprehensive responses to climate change challenges across the economy and in

liaison with the regional efforts and support systems.

- Countries are encouraged to take urgent measures at the local, national and regional levels to address climate-induced human insecurities affecting the continent, including internal displacements, pastoral conflicts and food insecurity.

12. *The Chair of Bureau Presented Africa's inputs to the HLPF in July this year and together with Bureau Members participated in many events to highlight Africa's priorities.*

13. *During the HLPF, member states and other stakeholders deliberated and stressed the need, among other action areas, for the following:*

- (i) Urgent and transformative actions to implement the 2030 Agenda given the slow pace of implementation.
- (ii) Tackling the growing and unacceptable levels of inequality within and between countries.
- (iii) Combating climate change as cross cutting challenge that could derail progress across all the goal.
- (iv) Strengthening the capacity and engagement of diverse stakeholders, particularly the youth.
- (v) Mobilisation of finance and strengthening statistical systems to support implementation.
- (vi) Strengthening voluntary national review and promoting Voluntary Local Review of implementation of the SDGs. In this regard, African countries yet to do so should offer themselves for Voluntary National Review during the 2020 HLPF.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, to conclude,

14. The Regional Forum invites member States and development partners to consider the key messages and the Marrakech Declaration, and the outcomes of the 2019 HLPF to inform actions to accelerate progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063.

15. *I therefore call upon you to examine the key messages with a view to taking them forward through the outcome of this Conference. The full text of the key messages and the Marrakech Declaration have been circulated.*

I thank you for your kind attention.