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Economic Commission for Africa
Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development
Seventh session
Brazzaville (online), 1–4 March 2021

Item 3(b) of the provisional agenda*

Organizational matters: adoption of the agenda and programme of work

Annotated provisional agenda

1. Opening of the session

1. The opening of the seventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development will be moderated by the Director of the Technology, Climate Change, and Natural Resources Management Division of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Jean-Paul Adam. The outgoing Chair of the Bureau of the sixth session of the Regional Forum, the representative of Zimbabwe, will preside.

2. Statements will be delivered by the following: Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, Vera Songwe; the outgoing Chair of the Bureau of the Regional Forum; a representative of the African Development Bank; a representative of the African Union Commission; the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, Amina Mohammed; the President of the Economic and Social Council; and invited Heads of States and Government. The President of the Congo will open the session and deliver the keynote address.

2. High-level panel on transformative action and investment to better build forward from the COVID-19 crisis towards a resilient and green Africa to achieve the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063

Documentation

ECA/RFSD/2021/4 Concept note for the seventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

ECA/RFSD/2021/INF/4 Guidelines for the high-level panel

3. The high-level panel discussion will set the tone for the Regional Forum. It will be a dialogue among high-level policymakers and eminent persons focused on the theme of the Forum. The objective of the dialogue is to provide high-level guidance and generate innovative and transformative actions and

* ECA/RFSD/2021/1/Rev.1.



workable solutions that will contribute to efforts to build forward better from the COVID-19 crisis towards a resilient and green Africa to achieve the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

4. The panel will have a chair and moderator, along with high-profile policymakers and eminent persons from various backgrounds that are related to the theme and sub-themes of the Regional Forum, and who possess vast knowledge of and experience with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Based on selected questions posed by the moderator, the panellists will engage in an interactive discussion. Following the dialogue among the panellists, the moderator will invite members of the audience to pose follow-up questions and to make other relevant contributions from the floor.

3. Organizational matters

(a) Election of the Bureau

5. The outgoing Chair of the Bureau will conduct the elections of the members of the Bureau for the seventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development. Before the elections, the Chair will invite the secretariat to provide a brief overview of the history and role of the Bureau. The incoming Bureau will comprise five members (the Chair, three Vice-Chairs and the Rapporteur), who will be elected on the basis of equitable geographical representation. Following the elections, consultations among the heads of delegations will take place on the specific member States to represent their respective subregions, and the composition of the incoming Bureau will be announced. The newly elected Bureau members will be invited to assume their seats at the podium.

(b) Adoption of the agenda and programme of work

Documentation

ECA/RFSD/2021/1	Provisional agenda
ECA/RFSD/2021/2	Annotated provisional agenda
ECA/RFSD/2021/3	Provisional programme of work

6. The Regional Forum will be invited to consider and adopt the agenda and the programme of work, subject to any amendments deemed necessary.

4. Progress report on implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, and tackling the COVID-19 crisis at the regional and subregional levels

Documentation

ECA/RFSD/2021/14	Summary of the 2020 Africa Sustainable Development Report: towards recovery and sustainable development in the decade of action
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7. The focus of agenda item 4 will be on the evidence of progress made in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 at the regional and subregional levels in the light of the COVID-19 crisis. There will be presentations by the secretariat, followed by discussions on two topics:

- (a) Highlights of the Africa sustainable development report 2021;
- (b) Highlights of the continental report on implementation of Agenda 2063.

8. Before opening the floor for discussion, the Chair will invite representatives of the five subregions to share their perspectives on the follow-up to and the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 in the context of the COVID-19 crisis.

5. Plenary round-table panel on meeting data and statistics needs for evidence-based, inclusive and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, and to achieve the goals of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development in Africa

Documentation

ECA/RFSD/2021/INF/2 Information and guidelines for the plenary round-table panel on data and statistics

9. This round-table panel will address the importance and the status of availability, access and application of accurate data and statistics for evidence-based implementation of and reporting on the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. The panellists will highlight the increasingly urgent need for approaches, policy options and investments to generate timely and accurate data to achieve an inclusive and sustainable recovery in line with the goals of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, and to build forward better from the COVID-19 crisis.

6. Plenary round-table panels on strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 at the national and subnational levels: voluntary national and local reviews of progress made, tools, approaches, lessons learned and the way forward to accelerate implementation

Documentation

ECA/RFSD/2021/INF/1 Voluntary national reviews and responding to the COVID-19 crisis

ECA/RFSD/2021/INF/3 Voluntary local reviews and responding to the COVID-19 crisis

(a) Voluntary national reviews and responses to the COVID-19 crisis

10. This round-table panel is designed to facilitate learning by highlighting solutions and good practices, and exchanging experiences and lessons learned from voluntary national reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Panellists will also share insights relating to the challenges of conducting such reviews in the era of COVID-19 and the role of the reviews in ensuring a sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and in strengthening implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Among the matters to be highlighted during the discussion are the outcomes of the pre-event on voluntary national reviews. The discussion will be led by a panel comprising selected policymakers and senior experts from the countries involved in voluntary national reviews in 2019, 2020 and 2021, and from other countries in Africa that are front-runners in the implementation of Agenda 2063. Major groups and the donor community will also have representatives on the panel. It is anticipated that the panellists will outline compelling solutions; share their views, experiences and lessons learned; and identify actions and other measures to build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic and enhance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

(b) Voluntary local reviews and responding to the COVID-19 crisis

11. This round-table panel is designed to showcase and exchange the experiences of cities and other subnational local governments with voluntary local reviews and the contribution of such reviews to implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 at the local level, strengthening voluntary national reviews and bolstering action to better implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. The discussion will be led by a panel comprising selected policymakers and senior experts from cities and other subnational entities that are conducting voluntary local reviews, and from countries that are involved in the voluntary national reviews.

7. Parallel meetings for an in-depth review of progress made and peer learning on the sub-themes of the Regional Forum

Documentation

ECA/RFSD/2021/INF/5 Information and guidelines for the parallel meetings on the sub-themes of the Regional Forum

ECA/RFSD/2021/5 Background report on the sub-theme of no poverty

ECA/RFSD/2021/6 Background report on the sub-theme of zero hunger

ECA/RFSD/2021/7 Background report on the sub-theme of good health and well-being

ECA/RFSD/2021/8 Background report on the sub-theme of decent work and economic growth

ECA/RFSD/2021/9 Background report on the sub-theme of reduced inequalities

ECA/RFSD/2021/10 Background report on the sub-theme of responsible consumption and production

ECA/RFSD/2021/11 Background report on the sub-theme of climate action

ECA/RFSD/2021/12 Background report on the sub-theme of peace, justice and strong institutions

ECA/RFSD/2021/13 Background report on the sub-theme of partnerships

12. Meetings on the sub-themes of the Forum will be held in parallel as follows:

- (a) Parallel meeting on the sub-theme of no poverty;
- (b) Parallel meeting on the sub-theme of zero hunger;
- (c) Parallel meeting on the sub-theme of good health and well-being;
- (d) Parallel meeting on the sub-theme of decent work and economic growth;
- (e) Parallel meeting on the sub-theme of reduced inequalities;
- (f) Parallel meeting on the sub-theme of responsible consumption and production;
- (g) Parallel meeting on the sub-theme of climate action;
- (h) Parallel meeting on the sub-theme of peace, justice and strong institutions;
- (i) Parallel meeting on the sub-theme of partnerships.

13. The aim of the parallel meetings is to review in depth and facilitate peer learning on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063, with a special emphasis on the selected sub-themes and in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. Participants will identify and articulate policy options and other measures for building forward better and accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

14. The parallel meetings will be open to all participants in the Regional Forum, who may join any of the parallel meetings.

15. The parallel meetings will be co-chaired by a designated representative of the Bureau and one representative of either the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank or the regional directors of United Nations entities.

16. The discussants at each meeting will comprise representatives of selected countries, regional and subregional organizations, and agencies of the United Nations system. Before beginning their discussions, the participants in each parallel meeting will designate a rapporteur, who will be entrusted with reporting to the Regional Forum in the plenary.

17. At each parallel meeting, the order of business will be as follows:

(a) The secretariat will give a short presentation of no more than five minutes, highlighting the status of implementation, challenges, opportunities and linkages among the goals, and emerging actions and levers for accelerating progress towards the achievement of the goals under each sub-theme;

(b) A panel discussion will be conducted after the presentation. Each discussant will speak for no more than seven minutes, in order to ensure that time is available for contributions from the floor;

(c) A general discussion will follow, with a view to reaching agreement on key issues and a list of key messages on the sub-theme.

18. At the end, the participants in each parallel meeting will produce and submit a report on the issues discussed, along with key messages, including policy options and other measures for building forward better from the COVID-19 crisis and accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Those reports will be the basis for the key messages on the sub-themes of the Regional Forum.

8. Plenary round-table panel on leveraging science, technology, innovation and digital transformation for a resilient and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, and to achieve the goals of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development in Africa

19. This round-table panel will address the importance and the status of availability, access and application of science, technology and innovation for implementation of and reporting on the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. The panellists will highlight the increasingly urgent need for approaches, policy options and investments to leverage science, technology and innovation to build forward better from the COVID-19 crisis to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In this connection, the panel will discuss the outcomes of the third Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation in Africa.

9. Regional dialogue: African food systems

20. The regional dialogue on African food systems will examine drivers that shape the future pathway of African food systems, highlighting complexity,

challenges and opportunities; pinpointing the importance of regionally coordinated actions; and formulating actionable measures towards accelerating food systems transformation.

10. Presentations and discussions on sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 crisis and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063

(a) Presentation by the major groups and other stakeholders

21. Under this sub-item, a presentation will be followed by a discussion featuring perspectives from civil society, the private sector and academia on building forward better from the COVID-19 crisis and achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. Also to be discussed under this sub-item are the outcomes of the preparatory and capacity-development workshop for major groups and other stakeholders in the Africa region.

(b) Support delivery modalities of the United Nations development system

22. This sub-item will feature a presentation and discussions on the role of and ongoing interventions by entities of the United Nations development system, including through opportunity and issue-based coalitions, to support member States, regional economic communities and the African Union Commission, with a view to building forward better from the COVID-19 crisis and achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

(c) Country level perspective and regional strategy to support the United Nations decade of action and delivery for sustainable development in Africa

23. Under this sub-item, two presentations and discussions will offer a country level perspective on how the United Nations country team is providing integrated support to a member State, and a regional level perspective on a strategy/road map to support the United Nations decade of action and delivery for sustainable development in Africa.

11. Consideration and adoption of key messages

24. For the consideration of the seventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, the Rapporteur of the Bureau will present the key messages of the Forum, updated by the secretariat under the guidance of the chairs of the parallel meetings. The key messages represent the collective input by the Africa region to the 2021 meeting of the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

Documentation

ECA/RFSD/2021/16 Draft summary report and key messages of the seventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

12. Theme, dates and venue of the eighth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development

25. The secretariat will present proposals on the theme, dates and venue of the eighth session of the Regional Forum for consideration by the participants.

13. Other matters

26. The Regional Forum may wish to consider any other matters that are brought to its attention.

14. Closing of the session

27. The Chair of the Bureau of the seventh session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development will summarize the main outcomes of the deliberations. Closing remarks will follow by Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, Vera Songwe. The Chair will then conclude the proceedings and declare the seventh session closed.
