



PREFACE



It is only through economic cooperation and coordination of effort that African States can hope to maintain and strengthen their independence while ensuring the rapid progress of their peoples.

In order to achieve this common goal of strength through progress, it becomes necessary for us to abandon once and for all petty differences and artificial barriers that tend to perpetuate a state of division and confusion between our countries.

Emperor Haile Selassie
(Sixth session of the Economic Commission for Africa, 20 February 1964).

Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life. While poverty persists, there is no true freedom. The steps that are needed from the developed nations are clear: the first is ensuring trade justice.

Nelson Mandela (London, 3 February 2005).

During the past six decades, there have been many developments on the continent and a shift from a doctrine of political liberation through one of self-determination to a pan-African economic agenda uniting all the children of African soil.

Since its inception, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) has been fortunate to be at the forefront of efforts to support Africa's development agenda; from the establishment of the Organization of African Unity to the creation of the African Development Bank, and more recently, the transformation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development to the African Agency for Development.

From Cape Town to Cairo and Djibouti to Dakar, Africans have felt the impact of the Commission's contribution to: the development of long-term planning processes at the dawn of Africa's independence; Africa's harmonized trade and infrastructure agenda; gender equality; statistical development; the climate debate; the science innovation and technology agenda; and its resolute rejection of the structural adjustments policies.

In this new decade, we are called upon to accompany the continent on the journey from the Millennium Development Goals, which was crafted by one of Africa's own sons turned Secretary-General of the United Nations and global statesman, Mr. Kofi Annan, to the Sustainable Development Goals on "leaving no one behind" and the African Union's Agenda 2063 on building the *Africa We Want*.

This booklet takes you through our privileged story made possible through the confidence of our continental leaders, the hospitality of our host country, and the trust of young men and women who have shaped our thinking, challenged our views and inspired us to keep in step with an Africa that is *inclusive, free, integrated and just*.

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