

# ECA Quarterly Newsletter

OCT - DEC



## CORPORATE OVERVIEW:

*The fourth quarter of 2025 marked a period of intensified global engagement, strategic partnerships, and policy leadership for the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA). Against a backdrop of mounting debt pressures, climate shocks, and accelerating digital transformation, ECA continued to advance Africa's priorities through evidence-based policy support, consensus-building, and global advocacy. From high-level engagements at the G20, IMF-World Bank Annual Meetings, and Nordic-Africa dialogues, to landmark institutional moments such as UN80 celebrations and strengthened partnerships with the African Union and Member States, ECA reinforced its role as a trusted partner and thought leader for Africa's economic transformation.*

**Nordic-Africa Climate Dialogue: From Ambition to Action.** During the quarter, the Executive Secretary participated in the high-level event **"Accelerating Nordic Ambition to Mobilise Climate Action,"** broadcasted from Helsinki and convened by the Nordic Development Fund and partners. The dialogue brought together Nordic political leaders, climate scientists, development financiers, and multilateral institutions to explore how Nordic leadership can be scaled up to deliver tangible climate outcomes globally, particularly in Africa.

In his opening remarks, the Executive Secretary underscored that Africa's climate vulnerability is not a reflection of inaction, but of structural financing gaps,

data asymmetries, and limited access to green technologies. He emphasized that Nordic countries are uniquely positioned to help close these gaps by pairing ambition with delivery, and solidarity with systems change. He outlined a **three-pillar framework for Nordic–Africa collaboration**, calling on Nordic partners to:

**First**, champion reform of the global financial architecture so that climate-vulnerable countries can access affordable, predictable, and long-term financing at scale. Without such reform, climate ambition in Africa will remain constrained by debt pressures and high capital costs.

**Second**, deepen partnerships on climate science, data, and meteorology to close Africa's research and information gaps. Strengthening climate data systems is essential to improve early warning, resilience planning, and evidence-based policymaking areas where Nordic institutions have globally recognised expertise.

**Third**, accelerate the transfer of green technologies and innovation, particularly in renewable energy and circular economy solutions, to support regional value chains under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Linking climate action to industrialisation and trade, he noted, is critical to ensuring that adaptation and mitigation efforts also generate jobs, value addition, and shared prosperity.

As the Executive Secretary noted, *“Nordic countries can bring their pioneering innovations in renewable energy and circular economy to Africa. This can accelerate regional value chains and turn the AfCFTA into a driver of tangible prosperity.”*

The dialogue reinforced ECA's strategic approach to climate action: one that moves beyond projects to systems, beyond pledges to partnerships, and beyond vulnerability narratives to opportunity-driven transformation. It also reaffirmed the importance of equitable, long-term Nordic–Africa cooperation in translating climate ambition into measurable economic and social gains.

At the **34th Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)** and the **11th Africa Think Tank Summit** in Addis Ababa, Executive Secretary **Claver Gatete** delivered a clear message: **Africa's future must be financed, owned, and delivered by Africans themselves.**

Under the theme *“From Taxation to Action: Bridging Policy and Implementation in Public Financial Management,”* the ES reaffirmed **ECA's strategic partnership with ACBF** to strengthen capable, credible, and trusted institutions that can turn fiscal policy into tangible development outcomes.

“No one will fund Africa's future better than Africa itself,” the Executive Secretary emphasized, calling for a decisive shift from policy ambition to implementation impact. He urged African governments to **transform taxation into action** by investing in:

- **Digital tax systems** to broaden the revenue base;
- **Smarter, results-oriented budgeting** aligned with national priorities; and
- **Transparent public procurement** to ensure accountability and value for money.

Highlighting the urgency of reform, the ES warned that **over 20 African countries are already in, or at high risk of, debt distress**, with debt servicing in many cases exceeding spending on health and education. Without stronger domestic resource mobilization and effective public financial management, Africa risks perpetuating a cycle of fiscal vulnerability.

Addressing policymakers, think tanks, and development partners, the Executive Secretary underscored the critical role of **African think tanks** in bridging evidence and decision-making, noting that sound research must directly inform fiscal choices, institutional reform, and long-term economic resilience.

Through its collaboration with ACBF, ECA continues to champion **home-grown solutions**, reinforcing Africa's capacity to design, finance, and deliver its own development agenda, grounded in accountability, implementation, and results.

## IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings: Reforming the Global Financial Architecture

On the margins of the IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings in Washington, D.C., Executive Secretary Claver Gatete joined African Ministers of Finance and global leaders to advance a common message: Africa must have a decisive voice in shaping the global financial system.

Speaking at the IMF Headquarters, the Executive Secretary called for urgent reform of the global financial architecture, emphasizing that existing systems are no longer fit for purpose in a world marked by climate shocks, rising debt vulnerabilities, and widening development gaps. “Africa's voice must be reflected in decisions that shape the global economy,” he stressed, underscoring that the continent is not seeking exceptions, but fairness, inclusion, and credibility in global financial governance.

The ES highlighted Africa's readiness to contribute to global solutions, noting that meaningful reform must unlock affordable financing, risk-sharing mechanisms, and capital flows that support long-term development rather than deepen fiscal stress. He reiterated that a reformed system must better reflect today's global realities, where Africa is central to growth, climate resilience, and future markets.

In engagements with partners and institutions, the Executive Secretary also emphasized the importance of domestic resource mobilization and capital market development as pillars of Africa's financial resilience. He reaffirmed ECA's support to member States in strengthening fiscal frameworks, deepening local capital markets, improving creditworthiness, and advancing pathways toward investment-grade status.

These discussions reinforced a central message from Washington: Africa is ready to be part of the solution, but global systems must evolve to match ambition with access, and reform with real opportunity.

## UN80 Celebrations: Reflecting, Renewing, and Reaffirming Multilateralism from Africa Hall

The Economic Commission for Africa marked the 80th Anniversary of the United Nations with a high-level commemoration at Africa Hall, the historic cradle of African unity and ECA's home for more than six decades. The celebration offered a moment of reflection on the UN's legacy, while renewing commitments to reform, equity, and effective multilateralism in a rapidly changing world.

In his remarks, Executive Secretary Claver Gatete paid tribute to the enduring partnership between the United Nations, Ethiopia, and Africa, emphasizing the pivotal role of Africa Hall in global diplomacy. "At UN80, we reflect and renew, honouring the UN's enduring partnership with Ethiopia and Africa. We pay tribute to the women and men of the United Nations whose dedication brings the Charter's vision to life every day," he stated.

Marking the anniversary from Africa Hall carried deep symbolic significance. As the birthplace of the Organization of African Unity and a pillar of African multilateral engagement, the venue underscored Africa's longstanding contribution to global cooperation. The Executive Secretary highlighted that 80 years of the UN is not only a milestone, but also a mandate to do better, calling for renewed commitment to equity, reform, and respect for sovereignty. **Read his full statement here** : <https://www.uneca.org/stories/remarks-by-the-executive-secretary%2C-mr.-claver-gatete-on-the-occasion-of-united-nations-at>

The celebration brought together senior African and UN leadership, reinforcing the importance of collective action. H.E. Berhanu Tsegaye, State Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, urged stronger international support for peace, development, and justice, noting that multilateralism must evolve to meet today's complex global challenges.

Echoing this message, H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, reaffirmed that the African Union and the United Nations are sister institutions, bound by shared values and a common responsibility to deliver on Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The commemoration also featured a UN Day flag-raising ceremony at ECA, attended by senior officials including the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Dr. Aboubacar Kampo, symbolizing unity, continuity, and renewed resolve.

As the UN enters its ninth decade, the UN80 celebrations at Africa Hall reaffirmed a central message: Africa remains at the heart of multilateralism, committed to shaping a more just, inclusive, and resilient global order, together with the United Nations. **Watch the celebration here:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j51sUxTbTU>



## The 2025 Conference on Land Policy in Africa (CLPA)

The conference convened policymakers, experts, civil society, and development partners to confront one of Africa's most enduring and sensitive challenges: land governance, justice, and historical redress. Organized by ECA in collaboration with continental partners, the Conference provided a critical platform to examine how land policy can drive equity, economic transformation, and social cohesion.

Opening the Conference, Executive Secretary Claver Gatete underscored that land is not merely a technical or administrative issue, but a deeply political and historical one, intertwined with questions of justice, identity, and development. He emphasized that unresolved land injustices continue to fuel inequality, conflict, and exclusion across the continent, particularly for women, youth, and marginalized communities.

The Executive Secretary highlighted that calls for justice and reparations must be grounded in credible institutions, evidence-based policy, and inclusive dialogue. He noted that effective land governance is central to Africa's structural transformation, supporting food security, climate resilience, urbanization, and sustainable investment, while also addressing historical grievances rooted in colonial dispossession and unequal land systems.

Throughout the Conference, participants explored pathways to strengthen land administration systems, harmonize land policies with climate and development agendas, and ensure that land reforms translate into tangible benefits for communities. Discussions also emphasized the importance of secure land tenure, transparent land markets, and gender-responsive land policies as foundations for inclusive growth.

CLPA 2025 reaffirmed ECA's commitment to supporting African countries in advancing fair, accountable, and forward-looking land governance frameworks. As Africa navigates demographic growth, climate pressures, and rapid urbanization, the Conference underscored a shared understanding: equitable land policy is not optional it is essential to peace, prosperity, and justice across the continent. **Learn more about this event here:** <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/clpa2025>



## At the G20 South Africa Leaders' Summit in Johannesburg

Executive Secretary Claver Gatete delivered a clear and compelling message: global prosperity cannot be sustained if one-fifth of humanity is left behind. He emphasized that the continent is not seeking special treatment, but fair access to finance, fair treatment in global markets, and fair opportunity to rise. The Executive Secretary called on **G20 leaders to move from commitments to action**, highlighting three urgent priorities: the establishment of a credible and coordinated debt-resolution mechanism; scaled-up investment in Africa's productive sectors through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA); and stronger G20 support for cross-border infrastructure and value addition. With the right policy and financing tools, he stressed, Africa can drive job creation, industrialization, and shared global prosperity.

Representing the United Nations Secretary-General, the Executive Secretary also participated in a high-level dialogue on Energy Challenges and Opportunities in Southern Africa, where he underscored the urgency of unlocking new financing models for the energy transition. He noted that while governments are under severe debt pressure, private capital can play a transformative role, provided persistent perceptions of risk are addressed. Africa, he emphasized, remains one of the world's most promising investment frontiers.

Drawing on concrete regional examples, he highlighted North Africa's rapid progress in renewable energy, with Morocco and Egypt leading in solar and wind deployment; the Nigeria-Morocco Gas Pipeline as a pillar of regional energy security; and the East African Power Pool as proof that shared energy markets can strengthen resilience. He also pointed to structural challenges, noting that while countries such as Angola and Mozambique often generate surplus power, limited transmission infrastructure and weak interconnections prevent efficient power trading across borders.

These messages were reinforced during high-level engagements surrounding **the AU-EU Summit and the African Special Economic Zones (SEZs) Annual Meeting 2025 in Luanda**, where the Executive Secretary accompanied the Secretary-General and African leaders to advance Africa's agenda on trade, investment, and regional integration. Addressing the SEZs Annual Meeting, he emphasized that industrialization is not a choice for Africa, it is an urgent imperative.

He highlighted successful SEZ models, from Tanger Med to Luanda-Bengo, as evidence that reliable infrastructure, sound governance, and skilled human capital can anchor global value chains and generate thousands of quality jobs. To sustain this momentum, he stressed that SEZs must evolve beyond isolated production zones into integrated ecosystems of innovation, aligned with the AfCFTA, supported by strong institutions, and powered by Africa's youth. Such an approach, he noted, is central to unlocking sustainable industrial investment and accelerating Africa's green industrial transformation. **Full SEZ statement here :** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/statement-by-mr.-claver-gatete-at-the-african-special-economic-zones-annual-meeting-2025>



## CLOSING THE YEAR WITH STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS FOR AFRICA'S CLIMATE LEADERSHIP

The year concluded with a significant milestone as the **Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)** and the **Government of Ethiopia** signed a **Memorandum of Cooperation** to support preparations for **COP32**. The agreement reflects a shared commitment to advancing an African-led climate agenda grounded in **evidence, technical expertise, and practical solutions**.

Through this partnership, ECA will provide analytical support, policy advice, and convening power to help ensure that Africa's priorities: climate finance, adaptation, resilience, and sustainable development, are firmly anchored in the COP32 process. The collaboration underscores Ethiopia's leadership and ECA's role as a trusted partner in shaping climate outcomes that respond to the continent's realities while contributing to global climate action.

This agreement closes the year on a strong note, reinforcing ECA's mandate to translate multilateral commitments into concrete outcomes and to support African countries in shaping global processes that affect their future.

In the final quarter of the year, ECA's Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist, **Hanan Morsy**, continued to position the Commission at the centre of critical global and continental policy debates shaping Africa's economic future. Through high-level engagements across Africa and globally, her interventions consistently emphasised the links between sound macroeconomic policy, social

investment, financial reform, and inclusive growth. From health financing and global financial architecture reform to migration, education, and debt sustainability, DES Morsy advanced Africa's priorities with clarity, evidence, and strategic purpose.

**At the 8th African Union Specialized Technical Committee (AU STC) on Finance, Monetary Affairs, Economic Planning and Integration**, Deputy Executive Secretary Hanan Morsy, delivered opening remarks at the Experts Segment, framing health financing as both a development imperative and a macroeconomic priority.

She underscored that Africa's health security rests on strong economic foundations, calling for boosted domestic resource mobilisation, decisive action to curb illicit financial flows, and the strategic use of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to support local pharmaceutical manufacturing and reduce dependence on external supply chains.

DES Morsy emphasized that investing in health delivers high economic returns, noting that every dollar invested in health in Africa yields an estimated four-dollar return, through improved productivity, resilience, and long-term growth. In a shifting geo-economic landscape, she stressed that sustainable health systems are essential to safeguarding Africa's development gains and advancing the continent's ambitions under Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Her intervention reinforced ECA's commitment to supporting African countries in closing the health financing gap through sound fiscal policy, regional integration, and evidence-based economic strategies.

**Read her opening remarks here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/au-stc-ministerial-segment-bridging-africa%E2%80%99s-health-financing-gap-in-a-changing-geo-economic>

On the margins of **the IMF–World Bank Annual Meetings 2025**, ECA's Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist, Hanan Morsy, briefed the Africa Ministerial High-Level Working Group on Global



Financial Architecture Reform, helping consolidate a unified African position ahead of the G20.

She outlined recent progress on reform efforts while urging Ministers to convert persistent global challenges into opportunities by accelerating the shift from aid to investment, deepening regional integration, crowding in private capital, and strengthening domestic resource mobilisation. DES Morsy emphasised the need for continued reforms across the IMF, World Bank and Multilateral Development Banks, including more affordable financing through enhanced access to the PRGT and RST, reforms to SDR allocations, improvements in MDB capital adequacy frameworks, and stronger mechanisms to address sovereign debt vulnerabilities. She also underscored the importance of greater African voice and representation in global financial decision-making.

DES Morsy further contributed to a high-level panel on "**Mobilizing the Private Sector for Jobs**," convened by the Nkafu Policy Institute, where she highlighted the central role of a supportive business environment, better-aligned incentives, regional value chains, and skills and vocational training in driving job creation and supporting the growth of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

Her engagements reinforced ECA's role as a key convener and policy partner in shaping reforms that deliver inclusive growth, resilience, and decent jobs for Africa.

**Social Summit Doha: Investing in People as an Economic Imperative:** During the Second World Summit on Social Development in Doha, Deputy Executive Secretary Morsy, highlighted the central role of human mobility, education, and skills in driving inclusive global growth.

She underscored the economic contribution of the world's 304 million migrants, who represent 3.7 per cent of the global population yet generate nearly 10 per cent of global GDP, emphasising that migration, when well governed, is a powerful engine of development. Turning to Africa, DES Morsy noted that remittances reached USD 100 billion in 2024, accounting for 5.1 per cent of GDP and now surpassing official development assistance and foreign direct investment as the continent's largest external financing source. She called for policies that unlock the transformative

potential of remittances for investment, resilience, and social protection.

She also delivered a **strong call to action on education**, urging increased investment in learning systems, the advancement of girls' education, and the strategic use of technology and partnerships to equip young people with skills aligned to evolving labour markets. As she emphasised, education is not only an economic investment but "the great equaliser of opportunity", essential to building productive economies and cohesive societies.

Her engagement at the Summit reaffirmed ECA's commitment to people-centred development strategies that link social progress with economic transformation. **Read her opening remarks here :** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/opening-remarks-by-ms.-hanan-morsy-at-the-second-world-summit-on-social-development> **And read more about the social summit here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/world-summit-on-social-development-stakeholders-stress-education-overhaul-to-avert-global->

**At the Kiel-CEPR African Economic Development Conference,** Deputy Executive Secretary Hanan Morsy, outlined urgent priorities for strengthening the global financial system in support of Africa's development.

Speaking on a high-level policy panel convened by the Kiel Institute for the World Economy and CEPR, she called for reforms to multilateral development banks (MDBs) to enhance their capacity, efficiency, and responsiveness to development needs. Her intervention highlighted the importance of regulatory recalibration of risk-weighting frameworks, improved data on infrastructure finance, and the rechanneling of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) through MDBs to unlock greater affordable financing for developing economies.

DES Morsy also highlighted the achievements of **South Africa's G20 Presidency in building consensus on debt relief and international financial architecture reform**, including support through the Africa Expert Panel, the Africa Engagement Framework, and Compact with Africa 2.0. She emphasised that continued partnership, particularly with countries such as Germany, will be critical to translating momentum into concrete outcomes.

Across these engagements, DES Morsy's leadership reinforced a central message: **Africa's economic transformation will be driven not by isolated policy fixes, but by integrated reforms that place people, resilience, and opportunity at the core of development strategies.** By championing reforms to the global financial system, advocating for sustainable health and social investments, and promoting policies that unlock private sector dynamism and skills

development, she underscored ECA's role as a trusted policy partner to African Member States.

As the year concluded, these efforts helped consolidate Africa's collective voice on global platforms while advancing practical solutions to long-standing development challenges, laying a strong foundation for the Commission's work in the year ahead.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM ACROSS ECA'S KEY ACTIVITIES

### Macroeconomic, Finance and Governance

- ECA, in collaboration with i-Capital Africa, convened a high-level training in Addis Ababa to strengthen Ethiopia's capacity on market access, private-sector financing, and investment partnerships. Bringing together regulators, financial institutions, and private-sector leaders, the workshop focused on practical tools, from blended finance and risk-sharing instruments to public-private partnerships, to help mobilize private capital and support the development of Ethiopia's emerging capital-market ecosystem. **More here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/eca-and-i-capital-africa-strengthen-ethiopia%E2%80%99s-capacity-on-market-access-and-private-sector>
- The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), ECA, and UNDP Africa welcomed recent credit rating upgrades for several African countries, noting they reflect improved macroeconomic stability and policy reforms. Analysts highlighted that higher ratings could lower borrowing costs, attract investment, and strengthen confidence in African markets. **Learn more here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/aprm%2C-eca%2C-and-undp-africa-welcome-credit-rating-upgrades-for-african-countries>

### Technology and Innovation

- ECA convened experts to explore how **frontier technologies and innovation** can accelerate Africa's socioeconomic transformation and

strengthen regional integration. Participants discussed strategic pathways to harness technologies such as AI, blockchain, and digital platforms to improve governance, enhance service delivery, and support value chains across sectors. The event underscored the importance of building innovation ecosystems, investing in digital skills, and creating regulatory frameworks that enable African countries to lead. **More here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/experts-to-advance-frontier-technologies-and-innovation-to-boost-africa%E2%80%99s-regional>

- ECA and ACADYS joined forces to champion the use of **artificial intelligence** for sustainable financial systems across Africa. The initiative brought together experts to discuss ways AI can enhance financial inclusion, improve risk assessment, and support decision-making in public and private finance. Participants highlighted how data-driven tools and predictive analytics can unlock new opportunities, strengthen resilience, and accelerate Africa's economic transformation.



Learn more here : <https://www.uneca.org/stories/from-innovation-to-impact-eca-and-acadys-champion-ai-for-africa%E2%80%99s-sustainable-financial>

- ECA participated in the **Luanda Infrastructure Finance Summit**, where regional leaders, financiers, and development partners explored solutions to Africa's persistent infrastructure funding gaps. Discussions highlighted the need to scale up innovative financing tools, strengthen public-private partnerships, and align investment with regional priorities. **More here** : <https://www.uneca.org/stories/luanda-infrastructure-finance-summit-tackles-funding-gaps-and-the-need-to-accelerate>
- Burundi took a significant step in strengthening its data ecosystem by validating its **National Data Governance Strategy**, aimed at improving data quality, accessibility, and use for policymaking. The initiative reflects a broader recognition that robust data systems are essential for evidence-based decision-making, development planning, and monitoring progress toward national priorities. By enhancing data governance frameworks, Burundi is positioning itself to better support economic transformation, improve service delivery, and foster greater digital inclusion across sectors. **Learn more here** : <https://www.uneca.org/stories/burundi-validates-national-data-governance-strategy>
- ECA officially handed over the **National Data Governance Strategy** to the Government of the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**, marking a key milestone in strengthening the country's data ecosystem. The strategy is designed to improve data quality, accessibility, and use across public institutions, enhancing evidence-based policy, planning, and service delivery. This handover reinforces ECA's support for robust national data systems that enable better development outcomes and help countries monitor progress toward national and global

priorities. **Learn more here** : <https://www.uneca.org/stories/eca-officially-hands-over-the-national-data-governance-strategy-to-the-government-of-the-drc>

- ECA and **Google** strengthened their partnership with the launch of the **Regional Data Commons for Africa**, a collaborative platform designed to enhance data sharing, accessibility, and analytics across the continent. The initiative will support policymakers, researchers, and development practitioners with secure and interoperable data infrastructure, bolstering evidence-based decision-making, innovation, and regional integration. This collaboration reinforces ECA's commitment to advancing **data-driven development** and empowering African countries with the tools needed to harness the full potential of their data ecosystems. **Read about it here**:<https://www.uneca.org/stories/eca-and-google-deepen-strategic-collaboration-launch-of-the-regional-data-commons-for-africa>
- African teams made remarkable strides at the **Robot Olympiad in Singapore**, with a record **15 countries participating** in the global competition. Young innovators showcased creativity and technical skill, reinforcing Africa's emerging strength in robotics, STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education, and youth-led innovation. Their participation highlights the continent's growing talent pipeline and the importance of investing in science and technology as drivers of sustainable development. **Read about it here** : <https://www.uneca.org/stories/african-robotics-makes-strides-at-robot-olympiad-in-singapore%2C-with-a-record-15-countries>

## Climate Resilience

- At **Africa Day at COP30**, **Cosmas Ochieng**, Director of ECA's Climate Change, Food Security and Natural Resources Division, called for **action**,

**not promises**, on climate finance. Highlighting that Africa loses up to 5% of GDP to climate impacts, he emphasized that climate investment is not a burden but the highest-return growth opportunity of our time. HE reaffirmed Africa's readiness to lead as a provider of climate solutions. Leveraging its minerals, land, and forests to build inclusive green economies. He stressed that global climate finance must be fair, predictable, and aligned with Africa's priorities to unlock this potential and deliver sustainable prosperity. **More here**: <https://www.uneca.org/stories/africa-day-at-cop30-delivering-sustainable-financing-for-africa%E2%80%99s-green-transformation> and find out more about the **2025 COP Key messages here** : <https://www.uneca.org/stories/africa-day-at-cop30-key-messages>

- The Regional Workshop on the **Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement** took place in Addis Ababa, bringing together over 100 representatives from governments, regional organizations, scientific institutions and civil society across the Indian Ocean, Gulf of Aden, Red Sea and Benguela Current Convention regions. Organized by UNDOALOS in cooperation with ECA and IUCN ESARO, with support from the European Union, the workshop strengthened technical understanding and regional cooperation as countries prepare for the Agreement's entry into force. Opening the workshop, Cosmas Milton Ochieng, Director of ECA's Climate Change,

Food Security and Natural Resources Division, underscored that the BBNJ Agreement is not only a conservation milestone but a strategic economic instrument to enhance Africa's competitiveness while safeguarding ocean resources for future generations. **Take a look at our post on this here** : [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/united-nations-economic-commission-for-africa\\_bbnj-activity-7402668790141919233-0sol?utm\\_source=share&utm\\_medium=member\\_desktop&rcm=ACoAAB-3hgEB1ExzrbQKrqm7GYNdvtQSnQEdH08](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/united-nations-economic-commission-for-africa_bbnj-activity-7402668790141919233-0sol?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAAB-3hgEB1ExzrbQKrqm7GYNdvtQSnQEdH08)

- Cabo Verde officially launched a **National Financial Strategy for Climate Investment**, a framework designed to attract and channel funding toward climate resilience and sustainable development priorities. The strategy outlines mechanisms to crowd in private capital, strengthen public financial management, and align national budgeting with climate goals. It also emphasises the importance of enhanced data, risk-sharing tools, and innovative financing instruments to secure long-term investment. This initiative reflects Cabo Verde's proactive approach in building climate-responsive financial systems that foster economic stability and sustainable growth. **More here**: <https://www.uneca.org/stories/cabo-verde-launches-financial-strategy-to-secure-climate-investment>
- A new analysis reveals that the **Western Indian Ocean** region confronts a maritime security financing gap estimated at **\$1.14 billion**, driven by rising threats such as piracy, illegal fishing, and transnational crime. These challenges not only undermine regional stability but also threaten economic activities and coastal communities' livelihoods. Strengthening coordinated responses and sustainable financing mechanisms for maritime security is critical to safeguarding trade routes, protecting marine resources, and supporting broader development goals in the region. **Read about it here** : <https://www.uneca.org/stories/western-indian-ocean-faces-%241.14-billion-maritime-security-threat>



## Regional Integration and Trade

- ECA, alongside key partners, initiated a programme to strengthen digital trade capacity for governments and the private sector across Africa. The initiative focuses on enhancing national institutions' ability to design and implement digital trade frameworks, improve regulatory environments, and support private-sector actors in navigating the digital economy. By building skills, tools, and knowledge around digital trade, the collaboration aims to unlock new opportunities for cross-border e-commerce, competitiveness, and inclusive participation in the global digital marketplace. **Find out more here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/eca-and-partners-to-strengthen-digital-trade-capacity-for-governments-and-the-private-sector>
- Cabo Verde is advancing a **green economic transformation** aligned with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) through strategic collaboration with the United Nations system. With joint support from ECA and partners, the country is integrating climate-smart policies, sustainable trade frameworks, and investment-ready reforms to enhance competitiveness while supporting environmental resilience. The initiative highlights how AfCFTA-aligned green pathways can unlock new market opportunities, attract climate finance, and drive inclusive growth for small island developing states. **Learn more here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/cabo-verde-charts-a-green-path-under-the-afcfta-through-joint-un-support>
- Togo, with technical support from ECA and UNDP, has updated its strategy for implementing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to better align with national development priorities and regional integration goals. The revised framework strengthens trade facilitation, market access, and competitiveness, while enhancing institutional capacity to seize AfCFTA opportunities. This collaborative effort underscores the importance of tailored policy support and coordinated partnerships in helping African countries maximize the benefits of continental trade and inclusive economic growth.

**More info here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/togo-revises-afcfta-strategy-with-support-from-eca-and-undp>

- African negotiators and stakeholders assembled in Chavannes-de-Bogis to strengthen a unified, development-oriented approach in global trade discussions. The meeting focused on aligning African priorities ahead of key World Trade Organization (WTO) processes, ensuring that trade rules support structural transformation, industrialization, and inclusive growth. Participants emphasised the importance of coordinated policy positions, stronger technical capacity, and African leadership in shaping global trade norms that reflect the continent's development needs. **Learn more here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/african-group-convenes-in-chavannes-de-bogis-to-advance-a-strong-development-centered>

## Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division (GPSPD)

- ECA supported a policy dialogue in Kenya focused on enhancing reintegration frameworks for **returning women migrant workers**, addressing vulnerabilities they face upon return. The discussions emphasized improving access to social protection, skills development, and economic opportunities to help women fully participate in local labour markets. The initiative highlights the importance of gender-responsive migration policies that support safe migration pathways, empower women economically, and strengthen national and community resilience. **Learn more here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/paving-the-way-for-returning-women-migrant-workers-in-kenya>
- ECA supported efforts in **Harare, Zimbabwe** to develop **bankable urban projects** aimed at boosting economic resilience and attracting sustainable investment. By bringing together government officials, financiers, and development partners, stakeholders explored project preparation, financing mechanisms, and the role of public-private partnerships in addressing urban

infrastructure needs. The initiative underscores the importance of well-structured, investment-ready urban projects in driving job creation, improving service delivery, and enhancing overall economic stability. **more here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/harare-strengthens-economic-resilience-with-bankable-urban-projects>

- Hundreds of millions across Africa still lack legal identification, leaving migrants and stateless persons excluded from education, healthcare, and justice. A five-day workshop in Harare, organized by ECA with the AUC, IOM, and IGAD, reviewed findings from Uganda, Ethiopia, and South Sudan and introduced a new Good Legal Identity Toolkit to strengthen inclusion. ECA's Christian Oldiges called legal ID "a foundation for inclusive development," while experts urged cross-border cooperation and rights protection. With less than five years to meet SDG 16.9 (legal identity for all), delegates agreed that solutions must tackle both policy and legal barriers, not just technical gaps. **Read about it here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/millions-of-migrants-across-africa-remain-undocumented-as-id-systems-struggle-to-keep-pace>
- At the High-Level Social Protection Forum, the Chief Director of Kenya's Ministry of Finance delivered a compelling welcome address that underscored the importance of robust social protection systems in fostering economic resilience and inclusive growth. The address highlighted the need for sustainable financing, coordinated policy frameworks, and multi-stakeholder engagement to expand coverage and protect vulnerable populations. This engagement reflects a shared commitment among African policymakers to prioritize social safety nets as a foundation for equitable development. **Learn more here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/welcome-address-by-ministry-of-finance-chief-director-at-the-high-level-social-protection>
- 16 Days of Activism 2025: UNiTE to End Digital Violence**  
As Africa marks the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, ECA's digital campaign focused on confronting the growing threat of digital violence against women and girls. From



online harassment and doxxing to deepfake abuse and non-consensual image sharing, technology-enabled violence is undermining women's rights, participation, and well-being across digital spaces. Under the theme "UNiTE to End Digital Violence Against All Women and Girls," the campaign elevated survivor-centred narratives, strengthened evidence-based advocacy, and reinforced digital safety as a core pillar of gender equality and human rights. ECA reaffirmed its commitment to shaping safer, more inclusive digital ecosystems where African women and girls can participate freely, confidently, and without fear. **Read our blog post on it here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/%5Bblog%5D-unite-to-end-digital-violence-against-women-and-girls-%23-noexcuse>

## SRO SOUTHERN AFRICA

- Angola has taken a significant step toward **continental economic integration** by adopting a revised strategy to fully align with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). With support from ECA, the initiative strengthens the country's trade policy framework, enhances market access, and improves competitiveness in regional markets. This strategic move underscores Angola's commitment to maximizing the benefits of AfCFTA, boosting intra-African trade, fostering

industrial development, and creating inclusive economic opportunities across sectors. **More here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/angola-takes-an-important-step-toward-continental-trade-integration-under-the-afcfta>

- ECA joined national and regional partners in **Eswatini** for a high-profile public lecture and the launch of the **2025 Economic Report on Africa**, spotlighting key economic trends, policy priorities, and opportunities for sustainable growth. The event brought together government officials, private sector actors, and civil society to discuss findings from the Report and explore evidence-based strategies for enhancing resilience, promoting inclusive development, and strengthening integration across African economies. The engagement reinforced the importance of informed policy dialogue and data-driven decision-making in shaping Africa's economic future. **Find out more:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/eswatini-hosts-public-lecture-and-launch-of-the-2025-economic-report-on-africa%2C-spotlighting>
- In Eswatini, ECA supported an Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting focused on advancing intra-regional trade across Africa. The gathering brought together trade officials, experts and stakeholders to identify policy solutions and practical steps for deepening economic integration, harmonizing trade regulations, and strengthening value chain linkages within the region. Discussions highlighted the role of evidence-based strategies and cooperative frameworks in overcoming trade barriers and enhancing Africa's collective competitiveness under the AfCFTA. **More here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/kingdom-of-eswatini-hosts-an-ad-hoc-expert-group-meeting-%28aegm%29-to-advance-intra-regional>
- ECA underscored the importance of integrating small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) into Africa's automotive value chains to promote inclusive industrialization and job creation. Recognizing the sector's potential to drive economic transformation, the Commission highlighted the need for targeted policies that enhance SME access to finance, technology, skills

and regional markets. Strengthening linkages between local firms and larger regional players, particularly under the AfCFTA, can help unlock competitiveness, foster innovation, and expand intra-African trade in automotive parts and services. **More here :** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/eca-calls-for-stronger-sme-integration-in-africa%E2%80%99s-automotive-value-chains>

## SRO CENTRAL AFRICA

- Driving Structural Transformation in Central Africa**  
ECA underscored the importance of **sustainable financing** as a catalyst for structural transformation in Central Africa. At a regional forum, policymakers and development partners discussed innovative financing strategies, strengthened public finances, and enhanced regional cooperation to support economic diversification and resilience. **Learn more here :** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/driving-structural-transformation-eca-champions-sustainable-financing-for-central-africa%E2%80%99s>
- ECA highlighted how **data-driven planning** is helping chart a new future for tourism in **São Tomé and Príncipe**, focusing on sustainable development and economic diversification. By strengthening tourism statistics and evidence-based policy, the initiative aims to improve investment planning, enhance destination competitiveness, and support community-led growth. The effort underscores the role of robust data systems in unlocking the potential of tourism as a driver of jobs, inclusive growth, and resilience for small island economies. **More here :** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/new-era-for-tourism-in-s%C3%A3o-tom%C3%A9-and-pr%C3%ADncipe-data-drives-sustainable-development>
- ECA and **Danida** joined forces to support **small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs)** as key drivers of economic transformation in the Central African Republic. Through targeted capacity-building, access to finance initiatives, and partnership strengthening, the intervention aims to enhance SME competitiveness and integration



into regional value chains. The effort underscores the importance of empowering local businesses to generate jobs, stimulate inclusive growth, and strengthen resilience in fragile economic settings. **Find out more here :** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/empowering-smes-to-transform-the-economy-of-central-african-republic-eca-and-danida-put>

- Yaoundé Breakthrough Supports Financial Integration in Central Africa**  
In Yaoundé, ECA and regional partners achieved a major milestone toward financial integration in Central Africa, as countries adopted a “common language” for cross-border financial operations and began building a regional financial bridge. The initiative focused on harmonizing regulations, fostering dialogue among central banks and finance ministries, and strengthening the shared frameworks that enable smoother, more efficient financial flows. This breakthrough is expected to enhance regional cooperation, reduce transaction costs, and support deeper economic integration and stability across the Central African region. **More here :** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/yaound%C3%A9-breakthrough-central-africa-builds>

[financial-bridge-and-adopts-%22common-language%22-to](https://www.uneca.org/stories/financial-bridge-and-adopts-%22common-language%22-to)

## SRO NORTH AFRICA

- A new analysis highlights that North African economies must accelerate their transition toward climate-smart growth to preserve economic stability and create sustainable jobs. The report emphasises that climate change impacts, such as heat stress, water scarcity, and extreme weather, pose significant risks to productivity and livelihoods across the region. To unlock resilient growth, countries are called to adopt integrated climate policies, strengthen clean energy deployment, and align economic planning with climate goals. This strategic shift is essential for safeguarding future prosperity and fostering inclusive development in North Africa. **More here:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/climate-change-to-preserve-its-economies%2C-create-sustainable-jobs%2C-north-africa-must-switch>
- ECA spotlighted persistent challenges in domestic resource mobilization (DRM), underscoring that limited tax bases, inefficient revenue systems, and weak compliance continue to constrain African countries' ability to fund development priorities. The analysis highlighted the need for innovative tax policy, improved revenue administration, digitalization of tax systems, and stronger efforts to curb illicit financial flows. Strengthening DRM, the report notes, is essential for expanding fiscal space, reducing reliance on external financing, and driving sustainable, homegrown development across the continent. **Read about it here :** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/financing-development-eca-sheds-spotlight-on-challenges-of-effective-domestic-resource>

## SRO WEST AFRICA

- A regional workshop convened African countries to strengthen policy frameworks and collaborative approaches on remittances and diaspora engagement. Participants shared best practices to enhance financial inclusion, reduce transaction costs, and leverage diaspora-linked investments for national development priorities. The workshop emphasized the strategic role that remittances play as a stable source of external finance, and the importance of cohesive policies that maximize their developmental impact across the continent. **More here** : <https://www.uneca.org/stories/regional-workshop-brings-together-african-countries-to-advance-remittances-and-diaspora>

## SRO EAST AFRICA

- Comoros is advancing digital innovation to strengthen food security and agricultural development, leveraging new technologies to improve data collection, market access, and production efficiency. With support from ECA and partners, stakeholders are integrating digital tools to empower smallholder farmers, enhance value chains, and improve

resilience to climate and economic shocks. This initiative underscores the potential of digital solutions to accelerate inclusive growth, unlock agricultural productivity, and support sustainable development across the island nation.

**More here** : <https://www.uneca.org/stories/comoros-embraces-digital-innovation-to-boost-food-security-and-agricultural-development>

## IDEP

- Senegal has launched an initiative to localize the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), strengthening the connection between national priorities and community-level implementation. With support from ECA and partners, the strategy aims to improve data systems, enhance planning processes, and empower local authorities to drive inclusive development. By aligning local actions with global goals, Senegal is working to ensure that progress on the SDGs delivers concrete benefits for citizens across regions and communities. **Learn more here** : <https://www.uneca.org/stories/senegal-embarks-on-localising-the-sdgs-for-greater-2C-local-development-impact>

## Knowledge Generation

In the last quarter of the year, ECA produced the following key publications.


- [Rocking the Boat: The Socio-Economic Impact of Maritime Threats in the Western Indian Ocean](#)
- [Optimizing the Implementation in Central Africa of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area: Lessons from the Guided Trade Initiative](#)
- [Unlocking the potential of the blue economy in Central Africa](#)


**Find more publications here:** <https://www.uneca.org/?q=publications> and the **ECA Institutional Repository here:** <https://www.uneca.org/knowledge-services-section/institutional-repository>

## LOOKING AHEAD - SOME KEY EVENTS:

 [Africa Business Forum 2026](#)  
**16 February, 2026 > 17 February, 2026**  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

 Learn more here: <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/africa-business-forum-2026>






 [Fifty-eighth session of the Economic Commission for Africa: Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development](#)  
**28 March, 2026 > 3 April, 2026**

 Learn more here: <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/cfm2026>

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