



United Nations  
Economic Commission for Africa

**Remarks by**

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At the

**Ad-hoc Expert Group Meeting on Enabling Measures for  
an Inclusive Green Economy in Africa**

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Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

**Distinguished experts,  
Dear Colleagues,  
Ladies and gentlemen,**

On behalf of Carlos Lopes, the UN Under-Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa of the United Nations (ECA), it is my great honour to welcome you to ECA, and to this Ad-hoc Expert Group Meeting on “Enabling Measures for an Inclusive Green Economy in Africa”. The meeting is being organized by the Special Initiatives Division of the Commission through its Green Economy and Natural Resources Section (GENRS).

Indeed both the Division and the Section were established in March 2013 as an integral part of the restructured Commission. The main objective of GENRS is to contribute to the body of knowledge and enhance understanding on the implications of the inclusive green economy paradigm for Africa’s transformation. The intent is to inform the formulation and implementation of policies to achieve an inclusive green transformation and realize optimal benefits from Africa’s key natural resources and related sectors. This draft report on “Enabling Measures for an Inclusive Green Economy in Africa” is complemented by two other reports on; Tools and Methodologies for Integrated Assessment of Inclusive Green Economy Policies, and Inclusive Green Economy and Structural Transformation in Africa. These will also be subjected to this form of external peer review, later this year, and in April 2015, respectively.

The preparation of the report, which is the subject of your meeting today has benefited from the productive collaboration between ECA and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). I would therefore like to express our gratitude to UNEP through its representative to this meeting for the fruitful collaboration we have enjoyed over the years. The same goes for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), another sister UN Agency and a valued partner in supporting Africa’s development agenda.

We would also like to extend our warm welcome and thanks to colleagues from the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the African Union Commission (AUC) for your continued commitment to supporting Africa’s quest for sustainable development within the framework of the Tripartite Secretariat. Allow me also to express our profound gratitude to you distinguished experts for taking time off your busy schedules to come and share your knowledge on this very important topic that constituted one of the themes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in Rio de Janeiro, in Brazil, in 2012.

This meeting has been organised to provide a platform for experts to deliberate on, and enrich the draft report on enabling measures for an inclusive green economy in Africa. The task before you therefore is to systematically examine the report, identify gaps, provide inputs, propose revisions and make recommendations towards finalizing the report. We are delighted that in this meeting, there are experts in fields relevant to all the chapters of the report. I am confident that you will effectively bring to bear your multidisciplinary expertise towards ensuring that the objectives and expected outcomes of the meeting are met in the most efficient manner.

## **Distinguished Experts, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

You will recall that Agenda 21 identified among other things, finance; technology; institutions; capacity building; trade and international cooperation as critical means of implementing sustainable development. This was reaffirmed by the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, the Monterrey Consensus, the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, and more recently, Rio+20. Given that an inclusive green economy is a vehicle to achieving sustainable development, these means of implementation or enablers, are also relevant to driving the transition, particularly in Africa.

I would like to believe that a minimum set of enabling measures are required to facilitate the implementation of green economy policies. The green economy transition is all about finding the right balance for African countries to decouple economic growth from social exclusion and excessive and increasing resource use and pollution, including carbon emissions. Key to promoting an inclusive green economy in the context of Africa's structural transformation is access to, and deployment of high productivity, efficient and clean technologies. Financial resources are also required to catalyse diversified industrial development and to drive innovation and technology development, so are institutional strengthening and policy shifts.

A picture is now emerging of the resources required to implement green economy. For example, \$25 trillion is expected to be invested between now and 2035 in renewable energy and low carbon technologies worldwide. What is clear however is that while the mobilization of domestic resources is a must, for most developing countries, this will not be enough to meet all the financing requirements for the transition to a green economy. The region should therefore be supported to implement measures to facilitate the transition that would otherwise be unattainable either because of cost or other impediments.

## **Distinguished Experts, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The transition to a green economy provides an opportunity for Africa to focus on key sectors, which could have the greatest impact on economic development and poverty eradication due to their environment and social linkages. There are challenges to implementing the necessary measures, some of which will be highlighted during the presentations. At the same time, opportunities abound to not only address some of the challenges, but to bring to bear other measures that could facilitate a smooth transition.

In the course of this meeting, you will hear presentations, and will engage in preliminary discussions on various aspects of the report. Subsequently, you will go into breakout groups for an in-depth scrutinization of the report. I hope that through your interactions with the presenters and with one another, you will be able to among other things, distil policy recommendations that could help sharpen the key messages of the report. The breakout session will be crucial for deepening your interactions to effectively respond to the specific tasks assigned, and other issues that you may deem important towards producing a good quality report, and informing future research in this area.

**Finally,**

**Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,**

I would like to assure you that ECA remains committed to strengthening its collaboration with all partners, including African regional and sub-regional organizations, and sister UN agencies to support countries achieve a smooth transition.

In concluding, I would like to reiterate my thanks to you all for honouring our invitation, and wish you a successful meeting, and pleasant stay in Addis Ababa.

**I thank you all for your kind attention.**