



General Assembly

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Official Records

President: Mr. Bozkir (Turkey)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Konfourou (Mali), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda items 13 (continued) and 66

2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa

Note by the Secretary-General (A/75/854)

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

(a) New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

Report of the Secretary-General (A/75/918)

Note by the Secretariat (A/75/964)

(b) Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa

Report of the Secretary-General (A/75/917)

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Gambia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. Yabou (Gambia): Today's debate on African development is very timely, given the unprecedented challenges facing the continent in preserving development gains and charting a path towards inclusive recovery and sustainable development. This

debate must be held as it was before during the main part of the work of the General Assembly in order to reflect the priority accorded to Africa's development by the United Nations.

Our discussion today is informed by the analysis contained in the various reports of the Secretary-General on Africa's development, including the report entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: eighteenth consolidated progress report on implementation and international support" (A/75/918); the report on the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/75/917); and the biennial report on the review of the implementation of commitments made towards Africa's development (to be issued in August; see A/75/964).

Collectively, those reports provide a comprehensive overview of the challenges and opportunities that African countries face in advancing the implementation of the global and continental development agendas. They include concrete recommendations for accelerating actions across the economic, social and environmental pillars of sustainable development within the framework of the decade of action.

I would like to welcome the new approach of the reports and their enhanced use of data to underpin an analysis that underscores that African countries are ready to successfully lead on their path towards sustainable development. The new approach should furthermore be reinforced by a strategic orientation that clearly indicates targets, timelines and indicators of achievements, as contained in the benchmarks of

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the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, against which the contributions of partners for the development of Africa will be measured and evaluated.

For example, the reports recognize the considerable progress that has been made in critical development areas of the New Partnership, such as infrastructure development. The Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa has resulted in an increase in funding by African countries of more than 40 per cent and represents nearly two fifths of the total financial commitment to the infrastructure sector on the continent.

They also showcase that, despite limited physical space and capacity constraints, African countries have money to deliver a strong response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, with the support of the United Nations development system and the African Union (AU). The AU launched the COVID-19 Response Fund aimed at mobilizing \$450 million to address the social, economic and humanitarian impact of the pandemic and established a task force, which has promoted coordination with the United Nations and the African States Members. However, those efforts might end up being fruitless if the inequalities among countries and regions with regard to access and the distribution of vaccines are not urgently addressed.

The vaccine divide is no longer a threat; it is a reality that has reached an unacceptable level. So far, only about 0.78 per cent of the vaccines administered globally have been administered in Africa — 20 million out of 1.2 billion vaccines administered across the world — despite the fact that the continent represents 16 per cent of the world's population. The COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility continues to be the main instrument for ensuring equitable access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines in Africa, but it cannot be the only one.

It is necessary to shift our mindset from a framework in which rich developed nations produce vaccines and donate them to developing countries to another in which developing countries receive the necessary support to produce their own vaccines. That is the difference between dependence and ownership. In that regard, it is important to take this opportunity to strengthen the capacities of African countries to produce vaccines in the continent, including through the support of the international community, the operationalization of the

African Medicines Agency and the implementation of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa.

Furthermore, the pandemic has exposed existing fragilities and vulnerabilities and disrupted economic activities and employment, causing a sharp reduction in revenue. Africa's gross domestic product (GDP) growth fell to an estimated -3.4 per cent in 2020, interrupting 27 years of sustained economic growth (see A/75/918, para.42). Against that background, recovery will not be possible unless we adopt a new narrative that promotes a paradigm shift to prioritize key areas that will give African countries ownership over their resources and development.

Such a paradigm shift request prioritizing income distribution as well as economic growth, which has been prioritized during the past 50 years. Without income distribution, there will be no sustainable development. That means placing human capital at the centre of policymaking in Africa. It implies moving from a backward approach of assistance for social policies to forward-looking human capital policies that prioritize education, health, nutrition and job creation, among others.

That is what is needed in order to build resilient societies. In that regard, it is important to promote a global debate around the issues of health, democracy and social protection in Africa. That emerging focus on human capital will also be key to maximizing the positive impact of the operationalization of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA) to consolidate regional integration, boost industrialization and accelerate structural transformation in Africa.

According to the World Bank, the lifting of tariffs within the framework of the AFCFTA could potentially increase Africa's GDP to \$3.4 trillion by 2040. Therefore, the implementation of the AFCFTA will result in not only increased economic growth but also the enhanced distribution of income and opportunities. That paradigm shift also needs to be applied to international development cooperation, including through efforts to improve access to finance and promote debt sustainability, as well as to combat illicit financial flows, in order to support the mobilization of domestic resources.

As the report of the Secretary-General shows, the share of official development assistance (ODA) in Africa's total external inflows declined more than 40 per cent from 2000 to 2004 and stood at 18 per cent

in 2017. Notwithstanding, ODA continues to play a very important transformative role in Africa's sustainable development when targeted at strengthening governance and institutional development in Africa and supporting countries in mobilizing domestic resources.

As underscored by the Secretary-General's report, tax revenue in African countries could exponentially increase if illicit financial flows were corked. Promoting international tax cooperation and addressing illicit financial flows should be a priority in order to mobilize the resources needed to achieve sustainable development in Africa.

The report on the promotion of peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/75/917) provides an important analysis of how the delivery of public services impacts peace and stability in the continent, including by analysing important issues, such as access to services, inequalities and exclusion. Vulnerable groups, in particular women, girls and members of remote communities, have been severely affected by poor public service delivery.

In conclusion, as we work to achieve a peaceful and secure Africa, it is important to continue to address the underlying causes of conflict, including by increasing the capacities of institutions at the national, regional and subregional levels in order to be more effective, efficient and responsive to the needs of the population.

Collective efforts are required to accelerate progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the goals and targets of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, including the Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative, as well as strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in formulating joint responses to existing and emerging threats to peace, security and development in the continent.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Guinea, who will speak on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr. Diallo (Guinea): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

At the outset, I would like to express our appreciation for the valuable analysis, information and policy recommendations contained in the reports of the Secretary-General (A/75/917 and A/75/918), which contribute to the debate on critical issues for Africa's sustainable development. Amid the coronavirus

disease (COVID-19) pandemic, African countries are making extreme efforts to contain and overcome the repercussions of the global health crisis, which has presented unprecedented challenges for the Continent.

Despite progress registered in recent years, the COVID-19 crisis has directly affected Africa's ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Ranging from food insecurity, extreme poverty, unemployment and vulnerabilities to climate change, the African continent is facing new and emerging challenges that ultimately impede advancements in achieving sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental dimensions.

In reference to the items being discussed today, the COVID-19 pandemic has emerged as a serious additional challenge to malaria responses and the delivery of essential health services worldwide. Since the early days of the pandemic, we have raised concerns that lockdowns and other COVID-19 restrictions could lead to major disruptions of essential services for the prevention, detection and treatment of malaria. The World Health Organization has been leading a cross-partner effort to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 in malaria-affected countries.

Despite the success in reducing malaria-incidence rates, much work remains to be done, as many African countries continue to experience challenges in rolling back malaria, consequently falling short of national and international targets. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development highlights the international community's commitment to eliminate malaria, which constitutes a major challenge for sustainable development.

In that context, the Group reiterates the need for the United Nations system to assist in upgrading health systems and ensuring equitable access to health services, as the health and well-being of the population lie at the heart of inclusive and sustainable development. We recognize that there is an urgent need to make more effective use of the tools currently available for the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of malaria, particularly in high-burden settings.

Gaps in the coverage of proven interventions should be found and filled. There is also a critical need to strengthen malaria surveillance and data quality in all malaria-endemic regions. Reliable health information is essential for developing sound strategic plans; ensuring that resources are targeted efficiently and equitably; and measuring the impact of interventions.

In order to achieve better results and ensure that successes are sustained, the Group is of the view that it is important to increasingly adopt a holistic approach anchored in the Sustainable Development Goals. A multisectoral approach to malaria control that builds on synergies with other development priorities will be needed in order to optimize malaria interventions, tackle inequities and address the broader determinants of disease.

Despite the lack of adequate resources, African countries have strengthened their commitments and actions in the socioeconomic development framework and continue to take the necessary actions and make the required efforts to achieve a sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. In that regard, it is very important to highlight the crucial role played by African countries' initiatives in transforming the development agenda through the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

The Group believes that at the current juncture, Africa requires further support on its development path, including through United Nations-African Union partnerships for Africa as a key development tool for accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 2063 Agenda: The Africa We Want and enhancing their complementarities and synergies. The Group also re-emphasizes the critical role of official development assistance (ODA) and foreign direct investment, which remain major sources of financing for development in Africa.

The Group would therefore like to reiterate that the fulfilment of all ODA commitments remains crucial, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of ODA/gross national income (GNI) to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to least developed countries. We urge those who have not fulfilled their commitments to step up efforts to reach the ODA targets.

While we recognize the tremendous efforts that were made in mobilizing funds for the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator and the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility by all contributors, the existing funding gaps remain a matter of great concern. The Group would like to call on all its partners to support vaccine production in Africa and support equitable, fair and affordable access to COVID-19 vaccines. In the current crisis, what we need is increased commitment, further

actions and earnest solidarity for an inclusive and resilient recovery for all.

Lastly, the Group recalls that African countries have taken numerous and significant steps to address peace and security challenges at the national and regional levels. Despite the progress in the areas of security, the international community and partners must continue to support activities and initiatives in order to strengthen African efforts to address the continent's peace and security. In order to prevent and resolve conflict at the earliest stage, the Group stresses the need for the United Nations system to support the efforts of African countries to achieve sustainable and durable peace in Africa.

Mr. Thomas (United Kingdom): I would like to make a statement today briefly on agenda item 13 and the note of the Secretary-General submitted thereunder (A/75/854).

The United Kingdom remains concerned about high levels of malaria cases and deaths. To put it simply, progress has levelled off. While some countries are nearing elimination, others are falling further behind. We are pleased that the revised Global Technical Strategy for Malaria 2016–2030 champions a health-system-strengthening approach to tackle malaria. Strengthening health systems is the only way to boost programme integration, enhance country ownership and avoid inefficient and fragile silos, which together will deliver more sustainable results for malaria.

The United Kingdom is proud to be a major malaria donor, which is core at the core of our ambition to end the preventable deaths of mothers, newborns and children badly affected by the disease. We know that every malaria-endemic country has a unique malaria situation and that every penny counts. We support the use of targeted approaches in which the smart use of data helps leaders select the right mix of interventions for their area. Using the right tools in the right place at the right time will make the global malaria response more efficient and effective. It could even slow down the rate of drug and insecticide resistance.

In conclusion, we know what we need to do. The revised Global Technical Strategy gives us a good path forward. The United Kingdom remains committed to working with partners in that regard to play its part.

Mr. Ragutthalli (India): We align our statement with the statement delivered by the representative of Guinea on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The strong and deep solidarity and partnership between India and Africa reflects the bonding of the Global South, which has been forged over several centuries. Long-standing trade and diaspora links across the Indian Ocean, a shared colonial past, Mahatma Gandhi's 21 years in South Africa, his struggle for Indian independence, its influence on Africa's own independence movements and, in recent times, our common development challenges have been the foundation of India-Africa relations.

As Africa marches on its road towards implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, India has emerged as a close friend and strategic partner of Africa. In 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi enunciated the 10 guiding principles of India's engagement with Africa and mentioned that Africa will be at the top of India's priorities. He made clear that we will work closely with African countries in line with their own national priorities in a manner that unlocks their potential and does not constrain them by imposing unreasonable conditionalities.

We seek to further our close engagement on a range of issues, including digital cooperation, business, trade, agriculture, the empowerment of young people, climate change and the blue economy. India's own quest for reforms within global institutions, particularly within the United Nations, will be incomplete without an equal place for Africa, and we continue to support the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

India has developed a robust and close development partnership with Africa through its concessional lines of credit, valued at nearly \$12 billion. We recently opened new diplomatic missions in 18 countries in Africa. More than digital pathways and brick-and-mortar projects, India's association with Africa is about the human touch and facilitating the capacities of the people of Africa, particularly young people.

For more than half a century, India's flagship initiative — the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme — has offered training and skill development to countries from Africa. In the past five years, we have provided 50,000 training slots aimed at building capacity in various sectors. Thousands of African students continue to study in India on their own.

Through the Pan-African e-Network Project, we are also connecting premier Indian educational institutions with African educational institutions and providing tele-education and telemedicine, with scholarships.

Today India is one of the largest trade, investment and development partners of Africa, where some of the fastest-growing economies are located. India offers a market for African commodities and products and duty-free access to the products of the least developed countries of Africa. India-Africa trade is robust and reached \$66.7 billion during 2019–2020, while cumulative investment is valued at \$54 billion.

The African continent receives nearly 20 per cent of our pharmaceuticals and those medicines helped turn the tide on diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria, which once posed a threat to Africa's future. During the coronavirus disease pandemic, India supplied medicines, vaccines and health-related equipment to 42 African countries. We are also working in partnership with South Africa and others in the World Trade Organization to address the challenges of the accessibility and affordability of vaccines.

Amid the pandemic, India joined other nations of the Group of 20 in announcing the Debt Service Suspension Initiative, which allowed several African countries to suspend debt service payment due in 2020. We call on all friends and partners to come together in this hour of need so that we can build back a more resilient and stronger Africa.

The International Solar Alliance, initiated by India, aims to bring together countries to provide a collective response to obstacles to the massive deployment of solar energy in terms of technology, financing and capacity. It is gratifying that 38 African nations have joined the Alliance and together we will combat climate change.

On the path forward, prosperity and peace remain the theme of our partnership. We continue to be one of the largest contributors to United Nations peacekeeping missions in Africa, which have played an important role in bringing peace and stability to the African continent. The underlying philosophy of India's partnership with Africa is to empower Africa for a future that is founded on the principles of inclusiveness, sustainability, peace, prosperity, dignity and respect for one and all. African priorities will guide our initiatives.

Mr. Mabhongo (South Africa): At the outset, South Africa aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

We welcome the Secretary-General's report on the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/75/917) and we eagerly await the release of the fourth biennial report on the review of the implementation of commitments made towards Africa's development (to be issued in August; see A/75/964).

The Secretary-General's report clearly shows that while Africa continues to make tremendous progress along the rocky path to achieving peace and stability, much work remains to be done. It provides alarming data, showing a clear upward trend of active conflicts, instability and conflict incidents across the continent over the past five years.

The report also provides an informative analysis of the potential role of weak or failed public service planning and delivery, as a source of instability and a potential driver or trigger of conflict. It illuminates, once again, the nexus between peace, security and development, which cannot be overemphasized, and the urgent need to accelerate development and service delivery to all peoples of Africa.

One of the most pressing and immediate concerns for African countries with regard to training, capacity and resources to address other challenges towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want is the ongoing fight against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, as well as its wide-ranging multidimensional consequences. We echo calls for global solidarity in ensuring equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines for Africa, including through their production on the African continent. African countries must be provided with maximum support to overcome this immediate blow so as to be able to turn their full attention to other challenges.

As the delegation of India has indicated, at the World Trade Organization, South Africa and India have been lobbying for a COVID-19-specific waiver from the Agreement on the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. We urge other countries to continue showing support for that important initiative. It aims to address a structural barrier and therefore does not conflict with COVAX and other initiatives. The structural barrier is the fact that vaccines are

currently being manufactured and produced in only a few geographical locations. The pandemic will not subside until it is eliminated in all countries. What is needed, therefore, is access to vaccines for all countries and peoples who need them, as the Director-General of the World Health Organization keeps reminding us.

The role of the African Union Development Agency and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is critical. As the African continent's first homegrown development agency, in whose birthing South Africa played a proud role, NEPAD is an example of African-led solutions to African challenges. Its broad mandate for the achievement of Agenda 2063, which is closely aligned with Agenda 2030, promises to assist in creating a new chapter of hope for the continent. It is already making impressive progress in that regard. It will, however, require maximum levels of support to achieve its important goals. We call on all partners to continue offering their valued support to the African Union Development Agency.

At this point, allow me to also express South Africa's strong support to the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, under the capable leadership of our dear sister, Under-Secretary-General Cristina Duarte. The Office continues to play an extremely valuable role in advancing the interests of Africa within the United Nations, in line with its mandate. We reaffirm that South Africa will remain a close and supportive partner of Ms. Duarte and her team in that important work.

We echo the calls made in the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China for the international community to meet its development commitments, including targets for official development assistance. We strongly support and call for the extension and deepening of all measures designed to offer debt relief to African countries.

We also call for partners to work to enhance measures to offer financing and financial resources to African countries through concessional loans and other measures, as well as to foster conditions internationally for the expansion of foreign direct investment.

In addition, we wish to highlight the importance of the work towards eradicating illicit financial flows, which continue to rob the African continent of vast amounts of resources that could be clearly used for the development of our countries.

In conclusion, let me state that we are pleased to note that those and many other important issues for Africa are reflected in the two most recent resolutions adopted on NEPAD and the causes of conflict in Africa (resolutions 74/301 and 74/302), updates of which are under negotiation. We sincerely hope that the critical issues for Africa highlighted in the draft resolutions to be submitted will enjoy consensus and will be adopted by the whole Assembly, and that Africa's valued partners will show flexibility in resolving the sometimes merely terminological differences that tend to overshadow the core messages and core context of such draft resolutions.

Mr. Dai Bing (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Guinea on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Africa's peace and development are vital to lasting world peace and common prosperity. In recent years, the momentum of solidarity and cooperation among African countries has continued to grow. The African Continental Free Trade Area has been formally established and considerable progress has been made in advancing integration efforts.

At the same time, African countries continue to face grave challenges in the areas of peace, stability and development. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has severely affected the economic and social development of all countries, thereby making it difficult to resolve problems such as extreme poverty, armed conflict and food insecurity.

The international community must increase its inputs and provide more support to African countries, especially those affected by conflict. It must commit to working with African countries to fight the pandemic, eliminate the root causes of conflict, promote continuous progress in the New Partnership for Africa's Development and help Africa achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

I would like to make the following points. First, we should assist Africa in fighting the pandemic. The international community must ensure the accessibility and affordability of vaccines in Africa; provide greater assistance to Africa in the form of pandemic-prevention supplies, medicines, funding and technology in order to effectively strengthen Africa's public health capacity-building and its prevention and control system. It should

also bridge the immunization gap and strive to build a global community of health for all.

Secondly, it is important to support Africa's independent development. The international community should respect the development paths of African countries based on their national contexts; support the processes of industrialization and modernization in Africa; and enhance the independent development and innovation capabilities of African countries. Developed countries should fulfil their international obligations by taking concrete measures in areas such as development assistance, debt relief and technology transfer.

Thirdly, it is crucial to maintain peace and stability in Africa. The international community should prioritize the realization of peace and security in Africa; support African countries in solving African problems in African ways; advance the processes of political settlement and peaceful reconciliation; and help Africa improve its capabilities in the areas of peacekeeping and counter-terrorism and maintaining stability.

Efforts should be made to promote economic growth and social development in Africa. The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, such as in the area of poverty reduction, should be accelerated to eradicate the root causes of conflict. We should resolutely oppose any unreasonable interference by external forces in order to avoid an escalation of confrontation and conflict.

China has always been a staunch supporter of Africa's fight against the pandemic; an active participant in its development and revitalization; and a strong defender of its peace and stability. The Chinese Government has provided multiple shipments of emergency supplies and medical assistance to African countries to fight the pandemic and provided COVID-19 vaccines to more than 30 African countries in need. We started the construction of the headquarters of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention ahead of schedule.

We fully implemented the Group of 20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative by reaching agreements or consensus on debt suspension with 16 African countries. China has also cancelled the interest-free loans of 15 African countries, due at the end of 2020, in the framework of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation. China has been Africa's largest trading partner for the twelfth consecutive year. Progress continues to be made in our cooperation on the Belt and

Road Initiative. More than 2,000 Chinese peacekeepers secure peace in Africa. At the end of this year, China and Africa will jointly host another Forum on China–Africa Cooperation to continue the cooperation between the two sides.

China and Africa jointly launched the Initiative on Partnership for Africa's Development. We call on the international community to increase its support to Africa in areas such as fighting the pandemic, post-pandemic recovery, trade and investment, debt relief, food security, poverty reduction, climate change

and industrialization. We encourage more countries and international organizations, especially Africa's traditional partners, to join this initiative in order to build strong synergies in support of Africa's development.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker in the debate on these items. The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 13 and agenda item 66 and sub-items (a) and (b).

The meeting rose at 10.50 a.m.