

# 8<sup>TH</sup> AFRICAN LEADERSHIP FORUM



REALISING SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN AFRICA:  
PROGRESS AND WAY FORWARD

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7-8 APRIL, 2025  
**KAMPALA, UGANDA**

STATEMENT OF THE FORUM







The Institute of African Leadership for Sustainable Development, commonly known as UONGOZI Institute, is a regional leadership development hub operating under the Office of the President of the United Republic of Tanzania. Established in 2010 by the Governments of Tanzania and Finland, the Institute is dedicated to inspiring and equipping African leaders to deliver inclusive and sustainable solutions for their nations and the wider continent.


It applies a holistic and mutually reinforcing approach to capacity development which recognises that leadership competencies are developed through a continuous, lifelong learning process. Its two strategic pillars – leadership and sustainable development – are addressed through four main areas: executive education, policy dialogues, action-oriented research, and technical support. Its clientele includes organisations as well as individuals from the public sector, private sector, and civil society.


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# STATEMENT OF THE FORUM

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## 8th African Leadership Forum

Realising Sustainable  
Development Goals in Africa:  
Progress and Way Forward

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The eighth African Leadership Forum (ALF) was held in Kampala, Uganda, from 7 – 8 April 2025, under the theme *“Realising sustainable development goals in Africa: progress and way forward”*. The forum was convened by H.E. Dr. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, ALF Patron and fourth President of the United Republic of Tanzania, and H.E. Hailemariam Dessalegn Boshe, former Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. It was organised as a key event preceding the UNECA’s Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, which was held in the same venue from 9 – 11 April 2025. The organisation of the event was managed by UONGOZI Institute.

The forum was officiated by H.E. Gen. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda.

The delegates of the forum included H.E. Dr. Mohamed Moncef Marzouki, Former President of the Republic of Tunisia; H.E. Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma, Former President of the Republic of Sierra Leone; Rt. Hon. Robinah Nabbanja, Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda and Leader of Government Business in Parliament; H.E. Gilbert Balibaseka Bukenya; Former Vice President of Uganda; Rt. Hon. Sam Kuteesa; Former Minister for Foreign Affairs for the Republic of Uganda; Rt. Hon. Ruhakana Rugunda, Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda; Rt. Hon. Amama Mbabazi; Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Uganda; Dr. Claver Gatete, Executive Secretary of United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA); and Dr. Antonio Pedro, Deputy Executive Secretary of UNECA.

Other delegates are distinguished leaders in government, business, academia and civil society from all parts of the continent.

Similar to previous forums, this year’s ALF was organised over a day-and-a-half period with an opening plenary and four closed thematic sessions. The keynote presentation was delivered by Mr. Mafa Chipeta, Former FAO representative to Ethiopia, the African Union and UNECA, and FAO Subregional Coordinator for Eastern Africa. The closed sessions covered: (i) poverty eradication and economic growth, (ii) health and well-being, (iii) education and skills development, and (iv) environmental sustainability and climate action. The presenters were, respectively, Mr. Gilead Teri, Executive Director of Tanzania Investment Centre; Ms. Christine Musisi, Executive Director and Founder of Inuka Ongoza Afrika; Amb. Ombeni Sefue, Former Chief Secretary of the United Republic of Tanzania; and Prof. Chukwumerije Okereke; Professor of Global Climate Governance and Public Policy, University of Bristol – School of Policy Studies.

The forum sought to provide a space to reflect on progress, identify gaps, and reaffirm commitments to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Africa. The key objectives were to:

- i** Discuss the current status of SDG implementation in African countries;
- ii** Identify key challenges and bottlenecks hindering progress;
- iii** Formulate actionable strategies to overcome barriers to SDG achievement;
- iv** Foster regional collaboration and knowledge-sharing among African nations; and
- v** Develop innovative solutions and partnerships to drive sustainable development.

#### **The forum recognised:**

That Africa has made significant progress in some of the development goals but faces challenges that may hinder the timely achievement of all the SDGs. Overall, only about 12% of the SDG targets are on track across Africa, more than 50% are showing insufficient or stagnating progress and some goals are regressing, especially in areas like health and wellbeing, hunger, climate vulnerability, and peace/security.

That key challenges include (i) financing gap whereby Africa needs over US\$1.3 trillion annually to meet SDG targets but mobilises far less, (ii) ongoing instability in a number of regions, and (iii) climate shocks that impact food security, infrastructure, and livelihoods.

That the conventional wisdom that demands a holistic approach to deal with Agenda 2030/AU Agenda 2063, since everything is interconnected, has not worked for Africa, as resources tend to be spread too thinly with not much by way of impacts.

That Africa's post-independence development has lacked transformation, largely on account of:

- i** Politically unstable nations/states;
- ii** Political mismanagement, in part for reason of lack of appropriate political structures;
- iii** Restrictions on the private sector;
- iv** Privation of value addition in its exports;
- v** Balkanisation of economies; and
- vi** Infrastructure deficit.

That Africa has generally implemented not what is developmentally best but what the development partner countries are willing to fund, opening itself to manipulation and misdirection.

That Africa is largely ignored on the global arena because of its negligible contribution, bearing approximately only 2% - 3% in many parameters of the global economy.

That by continuing to export raw materials for beneficiation abroad, Africa effectively donates value and jobs to the rest of the world.

That Africa's education outcomes remain below the trajectory towards SDG 4 targets, mostly due to inadequate funding that constrains infrastructure, teacher training, and poor school retention and completion rates for all pupil/student categories.

That climate change is real and is affecting Africa, and addressing its impacts is an immediate necessity.

**To accelerate the implementation of SDGs on the continent, the forum adopted the following recommendations:**

To give precedence to prioritisation in planning and focus resources and energy on a few catalytic interventions that promote economic growth, while not entirely ignoring all else, in order to mitigate risks arising from inadequate funding for implementation of SDGs.

To accord priority to the development of domestic, regional and continental markets even as consideration is given to exporting beyond the continent.

To strive and increase Africa's share in key global indicators, in order to effectively advocate for its interests on the global arena.

To hold investment in improving productivity in agriculture, which employs a large majority of the population in all African countries; critical economic infrastructure for accelerated growth and human capital – particularly education and health services – as prerequisites for the continent to maximise developmental impacts of public actions.

To push value addition and processing of its raw produce, the export of which has trapped Africa into low-value, high-volume, low-return trade.

To proactively engage with, guide and support the private sector in Africa to more effectively contribute to national and continental development efforts.

To expand investment in preventive health care, especially mental health, especially for the youth. To improve the quality of investment in education by adopting innovative financing, address non-fee costs, leverage technology, improve teacher qualification, align the system with job market needs, emphasise Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), and aim to produce job creators rather than job seekers.

To inculcate the Nyerere philosophy on education in our young graduates: *"Those who receive this privilege [education] have a duty to return to their communities and serve them. Education is not for self-advancement but for service."*

To foster a coordinated and unified position, led by a better-enabled African Union Commission, in international climate-related negotiations, allowing Africa to more effectively safeguard its interests. To the extent possible, involve indigenous civil society organisations in voicing Africa's position.

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