

SPEECH BY AU-SARO REGIONAL DELEGATE,

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Honorable Minister,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen

All protocol observed

Good Morning.

1. Allow me to add my words of welcome to all of you to this 24th Intergovernmental Committee of Expert (ICE) of Southern Africa organized by ECA Sub Regional Office for Southern Africa (SRO-SA).
2. It gives me great pleasure and honor to address you at this opening session on behalf of the African Union Commission's Chairperson, His Excellency MOUSSA FAKI MAHAMAT.
3. I would like to express my appreciation to the ECA for the ongoing technical support and collaboration and for the invitation to participate in this annual meeting of member States of Southern Africa.

4. Let me express my deep appreciation to the Government of Mauritius for the excellent hospitality and facilities being made available to us. We thus remain forever grateful for the excellent African hospitality.

Distinguished Delegates

5. Annually, The ICE provides a platform for dialogue and engagement among member States' senior policy makers, regional economic communities (REC's), regional and international organizations, academia, professional organizations and civil society on pertinent regional development issues. Allow me, therefore, at the onset, to commend the ECA for continuing to provide such an invaluable platform and for continuing to remind us on the importance of ***Blue Economy***.
6. You will all concur that the ICE provides an opportunity for our region to think through collectively and creatively on strategies and programs for regional transformation. The technical support from the ECA Office in Southern Africa remains an anchor of our development efforts in the region.

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

7. The topic of this week meetings is very important and crucial for the future of our Continent. The subject selected by ECA-SAR ***Blue Economy, Inclusive Industrialization and Economic Development in Southern Africa*** is not only made at the right time but it is also at the opportune time.
8. No matter what technical or scientific words we use to describe our African economies, we can agree that our economies are still based on harvesting and selling raw materials. Some countries are doing well such as Botswana with Diamond, Angola with Oil and Zambia with copper. I could mention

other countries across the continent that are doing even more whilst others are not doing well at all.

9. But it is important to note that these successes are intrinsically limited. The growth of our states will have an end and if not well prepared, this end will be painful and catastrophic. The end of our business model **"Harvesting and selling Raw Products"** is certain but experts cannot just indicate precisely the exact period. This end is certain simply because the quantity of raw materials is limited. Some countries started already to feel the impact of the **SCAR..CITY** of their raw materials. Our current economic system is limited and unsustainable because our resources are limited and not sustainable.
10. As way forward, some experts have proposed that, like other countries, we should quickly industrialize and make our first revolution, then the second and the third. Some other more ambitious experts even have proposed that we jump directly to the fourth revolution. Forgetting that, as the construction of a house having several floors, each revolution has served as a solid step to the next one.
11. We can be inspired by other nations and regions, learn and acquire experience from them but Africa must focus on its own path, on its own strengths and realities. Our evolution towards Blue Economy is an ambitious but achievable adventure.
12. It moves us from an economy of harvests from limited resources to an economy of harvesting unlimited resources if we organize ourselves well. With the exploitation of unlimited resources come also sustainable financial means. But to approach this revolution we must completely change our perspective:
13. The Blue Economy upsets our perspective geography: the size of the African continent is no longer 30.37 million square kilometers but closer to 50 million square kilometers either our 4 island states that often mistakenly

consider themselves small states must discover that they are giants in this new world.

14. We must prepare together and in solidarity for real change. We all know it, even though we have trouble putting it into practice. We should really understand that it is through our solidarity, our union that our strength, our common prosperity, international respect and economic development will be born.
15. The ancient and present history of our continent shows us that centrist nationalist evolution is also limited and always plays into the hands of forces outside the continent. We have a common vision, common plans, common directions, we still need to reinforce our real will and desire to actually put them into practice. And this desire is called the spirit of Pan-Africanism.

Honorable Minister, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

16. It is important to take note that the Blue Economy really open the doors for industrialization and economy development. Like the role play by charcoal and steam engine for the first industrial revolution or oil and electricity for the second, the exploitation of the ocean potentialities can lead us to our economic revolution. The potential of oceans, lakes, rivers is unlimited.
 - From the industrialization of our future oceans aquafarming for fishes and seafood's to the exploration of the closer and deeper oceans;
 - From the reinforcement of our ports to the development of regional and continental maritime transport to link our ports for the Africa Intra trade.

- From the tourism, cruise, luxury tourism to the conservation of our aquatic bio-diversity for the benefit of the entire world, a vibrant pharmaceutical, chemical and cosmetics industries

.....**what we can do with this blue economy is endless.**

17. We know also that international Energy Agency estimates that ocean renewable energy has the power potential sufficient to provide up to 400% of global current energy. In 2010 the annual economic values of Maritimes related activities reached 1.5 trillion euros and it is estimate to 2.5 trillion euros in 2020. Just for information, the Africa nominal GDP was 2.2 Trillion USD in 2017

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18. With your permission, allow me to focus my attention briefly on the **Africa we want** as articulated through our **Agenda 2063 and its 10 years implementation plan**. As you are aware, the Agenda 2063 Framework Document and its Popular Version was adopted by the 24th Ordinary Session of AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in January 2015.

And the First 10 year Implementation Plan, developed in an equally fully consultative manner, was approved by the meeting of the AU Policy Organs in June 2015 and adopted by the Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly in Johannesburg, South Africa in the same year.

19. The vision of Agenda 2063, **the Africa we want**, is “**An Integrated, Prosperous and Peaceful Africa, Driven by its own citizens and representing a Dynamic force in International arena**”. If you add

Democracy, good governance and strong cultural identity, we have the 7 key aspirations of Agenda 2063.

20. Agenda 2063 and its 10 years implementation Plan is fully aligned with UN SDGs, ADB 5 high priorities and Africa Integrated Maritime Strategy. For the first time of our history we have a common development agenda and all our programs are aligned. African union consider the Blue Economy as a real opportunity for our present and future development. This is why this topic is highly present in Agenda 2063.
21. Our vision for what we want to achieve for our blue Economy is well known. For African union the Blue Economy in the "NEW FRONTIER OF AFRICAN RENAISSANCE"
22. Through the **Aspiration 1, a prosperous Africa**, Members States have decided to approve and to implement the goals number 6 and 7: With the **goal 6**, they are advocating for a usage of the **Ocean/Blue Economy to accelerate economic growth**. This goal can be achieved by implementing two main activities: One, Marine Resources and Energy development and two Port Operations and Marine Transport. As we all know, more than 90% of the goods imported by our continent come by sea and more than 95% of our exportation use the same mode. Our ports are strategic for our own development and survival. We need to really develop their capabilities and performances. With the approach of the implementation of the Continental Free Trade Area and the Tripartite Free Trade, we all know that our internal roads and railways to connect our different countries are not fully operational and efficient, we need to encourage and support the creation and the

development of national and regional marine transport to connect our goods through ports.

23. Concerning the goal 7: **Environmentally sustainable climate resilient economies and communities**, the African member States have decided one to protect and promote the **Bio-diversity, conservation and sustainable natural resource management**. Two, to implement **Water Security** plans for the current and next generation, Three to work on **Climate resilience and Natural Disasters and preparedness** and finally to develop and promote **renewable energy**.
24. All these programs on Blue Economy illustrate our strong desire for transformation and should be embraced at the national and regional level. It is thus important that Agenda 2063 is mainstreamed at regional and national levels.

Honorable Minister, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

25. We have a clear vision and plans for this blue economy. But to translate this vision in Hope of success and a Direction to be taken by all of us, we need a group of leaders. Naturally our Islands Member states like Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius or Seychelles can lead the entire continent. Because, in the context of the Blue economy, geographically, these 2 last countries for example cease to be small continental states but African Giant states. The current size of Mauritius is 1865 Km² but the blue Mauritius size is 1,9 million Km², more than the size of locked land like Chad, Niger, Mali, Ethiopia, Zambia, South Sudan... same new reality for Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros

26. Let us remind ourselves that it is just United Kingdom who started the first revolution and it was adopted by all other western countries. The second revolution was just initiated by USA and Germany and it was expended to others nations and the third revolution started in America and Japan and it was ramified to the others industrialized countries.
27. We don't need the whole continent or the whole region to move at the same time, we need a group of leaders to show us the direction and to guide all of us. And having 50% of SADC Member states fully connected with oceans, this region can really be the leader of the continent on the industrial revolution that the Blue Economy can bring to us.

Honorable Minister, Distinguished Experts, Ladies and Gentlemen

28. As I conclude, let me re-emphasize that for Agenda 2063 to become a reality, the Member States and the Regional Economic communities have a vital and capital role to play as implementing bodies. Without your commitment and your engagement to make this happen, our dream for the Africa Renaissance, will remain a dream.
29. African Union is confident that the deliberations of this session of the ICE will provide additional and pertinent direction for the development and the implementation of strategy and roadmap to seize the opportunities offer by the Blue Economy. We all know the vast opportunities offered by the Blue Economy and how this new area of development can really boost our industrialization and our economy. With all our current national, regional and continental challenges, we cannot afford another missed development opportunity hence the need to domesticate and implement systematically our common decision and development frameworks.

30. Our final success depend strongly on our real desire to work together. And let us always remind ourselves that in this world, nations try always to group themselves with the objective to be stronger, independent, and influential and being able to protect their interest. European Union is a group of States who try to work and move together; USA is a federation of different states, and Brazil and Russia also. Africa can really make the difference, if we decided to come as one.

I wish you fruitful deliberations

Thank you for your kind attention