

Anglais

Réunion : Dialogue extraordinaire de haut niveau

Date : 20 juillet 2022

Durée : 8'05 (129 mots/mn)

Orateur : Président de l'ECOSOC

Difficulté : niveau 3

Introduction : Le Président de l'ECOSOC (le Conseil économique et social de l'Organisation des Nations Unies) prend la parole en juillet 2022 au cours d'un dialogue de haut niveau consacré à l'Afrique comme priorité de l'ONU. Il intervient à l'ouverture de ce dialogue, dont il est l'hôte avec le Président de l'Assemblée Générale de l'ONU. Il évoque le développement économique de l'Afrique et son financement, notamment en lien avec les changements climatiques. Veuillez noter qu'il mentionne l'aide publique au développement, en anglais « Official Development Assistance (ODA) ». Je répète, « Official development assistance », « aide publique au développement, ou APD ».

Éléments à fournir (vocabulaire) :

Official Development Assistance (ODA)	Aide publique au développement (APD)
---------------------------------------	--------------------------------------

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I also join the President of the General Assembly in warmly welcoming you all to this Special High-Level Dialogue on *“The Africa We Want: Reconfirming the Development of Africa as a Priority of the United Nations System,”* which I am co-hosting together with the President of the General Assembly.

Together with the President of the General Assembly, as he indicated, we convened this Special High-Level Dialogue to place the sustainable development of Africa at the heart of the work of the United Nations, and to use the opportunity of these troubled times to reconfirm the development of Africa as a priority of the United Nations system.

Indeed, Africa and its special needs has already been at the centre of the work of the United Nations since the founding of this Organization in 1945.

From decolonization and attainment of independence and promoting sustainable development in the continent to assisting establish lasting peace and security, the UN is today still present on the ground supporting the nexus between development, human rights and peace and security in Africa.

Today’s Special High-Level Dialogue -- which brings us all together to reconfirm the development of Africa as a priority of the UN System – is therefore both timely and relevant.

For the past decade and a half, Africa has been facing a series of significant and multifaceted external shocks exacerbating the challenges confronting the continent.

Furthermore, these systemic risks have been further intensified by global shocks and pandemics such as recently the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact of the war in Ukraine.

The pandemic has led to the worst economic recession in half a century across Africa, with real GDP contracting by 3% in 2020 coming on the back of a rapid debt build-up.

The war in Ukraine, on its part, has dampened projections of Africa's GDP growth by a further 0.7% and inflation is forecast to rise by an extra 2.2% in 2022, negatively impacting the lives and livelihoods of Africa's most vulnerable populations.

These multiple crises have amplified the urgent need to rebalance the global economy, and to reduce reliance on a handful of countries for food and energy security as well as the global supply chains.

We need collective action and international solidarity to address the looming threat of food insecurity and famine, particularly on the continent of Africa. We also need to work together to address the impacts of the Ukraine war on energy and the economy.

Excellencies,

As I have been advocating in all my engagements during ECOSOC Presidency, the silver lining here is that there is an unprecedented opportunity for Africa to step up to these challenges, speed up its industrialization and economic diversification, and integrate itself further upstream in the global supply chains through increased value addition at source.

To add to my optimism, for the first time in a generation, in recent years Africa has displayed the collective decisive measures and leadership required to surmount these challenges and to take this destiny in its own hands.

Excellencies,

Let me now take a moment to focus my remarks on the themes of our Special High-Level Dialogue.

First, on financing for development, in particular domestic resource mobilization, Africa's investment needs to achieve the SDGs were estimated at 200 billion per annum prior to the crises and the financing gap has now increased by an additional 145 billion due to the pandemic.

As the Continent faces this challenge with increased debt, inflationary pressures and reduced fiscal space, the lasting solution can only come from within the continent -- but it also requires international solidarity and support.

External financing, such as Official Development Assistance (ODA), which has consistently fallen short of commitments, and stop-gap measures address only the

short-term issues and were focused on treating the symptoms rather than the underlying causes of the problem.

Moreover, in failing to put in place medium to long term measures to safeguard debt service and sustainability for African Member States, the international community is about to miss a historic opportunity in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Behind every crisis is an opportunity, and we must be united in our resolve to turn all crises into opportunities.

As I have repeatedly argued, we need to shift our mindset in approaching Africa's financing for development. Africa is already financing its own development predominantly from its own resources with domestic resources, including tax revenue and savings accounting to over two thirds of Africa's total financial resources.

Therefore, the real question here is how to increase not only the quality, but also the quantity of these resources -- in order to create and preserve the policy space for the reforms and transformation that is needed in Africa.

Second, on climate change, Africa is home to 17% of the world's population, but has historically contributed around 3.8% to global carbon emissions.

However, the continent is extremely vulnerable to the impacts of global warming in the form of more extreme weather, heatwaves, droughts, crop failures and hunger, which leads in turn to further pressures in access to resources and also results in a vicious cycle of further conflicts and unrest with negative spillovers to the rest of the world.

The forthcoming COP 27, also dubbed the 'African COP,' to be hosted by Egypt in November, is a critical opportunity to address this imbalance.

Among the many opportunities at hand are investments in climate resilient crops -- that are more tolerant to heat and require less rain -- to break Africa's dependence on food imports and help rebalance the world's economy as well as investments in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, the blue economy, and digital transformations that would yield transformative results.

I would like to end my remarks by focusing on the empowerment of women and of the African youth in the continent.

Investments in human capital and capacity-building are critical to ensure that every African citizen has the opportunity to earn a fair income, live a healthy life, and contribute to society.

Given the imperative for Africa to harness its demographic dividend, such investments to empower the continent's youth and women will yield lasting results to leave no-one behind and to make "*The Africa We Want*" a reality.

I thank you, Mr President.