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Statutory issues: report of the Executive Secretary on the
activities of the Economic Commission for Africa from
March 2024 to February 2025

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I. Introduction

1. At the start of 2024, African economies were expected to achieve only modest economic growth during the following 12-month period owing to multiple ongoing crises and headwinds, including geopolitical tensions, climate-related challenges, tight global financial conditions and elevated debt levels. Significant inflationary pressures and currency depreciations contributed to macroeconomic instability, further limiting growth, while high borrowing and debt servicing costs further curtailed investment and economic expansion. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs estimates that the African economy grew by 3.4 per cent in 2024, a slight improvement over the 3.3 per cent registered in 2023.¹ However, in terms of gross domestic product per capita, growth remained below 1 per cent per year, reflecting the subdued economic performance of African economies.

2. Access to affordable development financing remains a significant challenge. Debt overhangs continue to prevent many Governments and businesses in Africa from securing loans at reasonable interest rates in global capital markets. In addition, lower tax revenues and substantial development and social spending needs have placed considerable strain on many African countries, adversely affecting their credit ratings. The continent's development financing gap remains quite substantial, necessitating the mobilization of innovative domestic and international financing mechanisms.

3. The increasing frequency and severity of climate-induced events are undermining infrastructure and livelihoods, posing significant risks to the economic prospects of the continent. By 2024, an estimated 476 million people in Africa, equivalent to almost half the continent's population, were expected to be living in poverty.² Limited economic opportunities at home, in particular for young people, are driving many to seek better prospects abroad.

* E/ECA/COE/43/1.

¹ *World Economic Situation and Prospects 2024 and 2025* (United Nations publication, 2024 and 2025).

² See E/ECA/COE/42/4/Rev.1.



4. In the light of the continent's socioeconomic challenges, and guided by its medium-term programme framework (2022–2025), ECA identified five strategic focus areas and two cross-cutting themes for 2024 and beyond to foster economic growth, promote macrofinancial stability, advance regional integration and accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union. The focus areas were: (a) macroeconomic policies and development financing; (b) regional integration, economic diversification and industrialization; (c) infrastructure development, including energy; (d) technology, innovation and connectivity; and (e) climate action and food security. The cross-cutting themes were data and statistics and social dimensions. ECA has, moreover, specifically promoted digital transformation, supported the modernization of statistical systems and the use of innovative statistical tools, and enhanced the capacity of Governments in areas including public sector management, development planning and risk management. The Commission also played a pivotal role in preparations across Africa for the Summit of the Future, held in New York in September 2024, and facilitated the deliberations on the African Youth Declaration on the Summit of the Future.

5. The principal achievements of the Commission during the reporting period in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 are presented in the following section. The report on the follow-up to the resolutions adopted during the fifty-sixth session of the Commission (E/ECA/COE/43/8) provides additional information on the actions taken by ECA to address the challenges and needs of its members during the period under review.

II. Key results achieved

A. Fostering macroeconomic stability through improved public and private finance and good economic governance

6. Fiscal management challenges, poorly designed tax policies and high levels of public debt continue to undermine the capacity of African countries to invest in crucial development projects. ECA supported efforts by its members to improve domestic resource mobilization by enhancing their tax administration mechanisms and debt management capacity. Those efforts were aimed at expanding financial markets, building investor confidence and mobilizing long-term financial support.

7. ECA organized a number of capacity-building workshops and peer learning sessions, leveraging South-South cooperation to deepen understanding among policymakers and tax experts of domestic debt management and tax administration, respectively. In North Africa, ECA supported capacity-building initiatives for tax experts in three of its members (Egypt, Libya and Mauritania) to strengthen their capacity to uncover illegal activity in the area of taxation. In addition, ECA continued its efforts to address illicit financial flows by convening a workshop in Addis Ababa in June 2024, at which more than 500 participants shared their knowledge of emerging trends and issues affecting implementation of integrated national financing frameworks. The participants in the workshop also formulated action plans to guide implementation of critical reforms in the areas of taxation, public expenditure and debt management.

8. As part of efforts to improve economic governance, ECA supported training programmes for policymakers on measuring tax expenditure. ECA also developed a tax expenditure measurement methodology and piloted its adoption in 10 of its members. Two members of ECA (Benin and Zambia)

subsequently developed action plans to strengthen tax administration mechanisms and improve efficiency in public spending.

9. In order for African countries to fully exploit the continent's demographic dividend, it is crucial to ensure that demographic considerations are taken into account in national budgets and in initiatives to accelerate implementation of the African Union Roadmap on Harnessing the Demographic Dividend through Investments in Youth. To that end, ECA supported efforts by Burkina Faso and the Niger to design and adopt a demographic-sensitive budgeting approach in budgetary and economic planning for the period 2025–2027. ECA also provided technical assistance to its members to strengthen local government capacities in a number of cities, including Addis Ababa, Lusaka and Nairobi, with a particular focus on fiscal assessments and policy integration measures to support financial sustainability and advance the modernization of African cities.

10. ECA contributed to fostering a dynamic, resilient and sustainable financial ecosystem across the African continent. It supported its members in assessing the feasibility of measures to deepen capital markets with a view to broadening access to diverse financial instruments to support development. ECA provided assistance to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Republic of Tanzania to address gaps in their legal and regulatory frameworks and strengthen capital markets. Financing for infrastructure investments was further enhanced through the provision of technical support to those countries. That support included feasibility studies for credit guarantee facilities and alternative financing options, such as debt-for-nature swaps.

11. ECA continued to support efforts by its members to obtain fair and accurate sovereign credit ratings and held a number of expert group meetings and training sessions for relevant experts and policymakers in order to provide countries with the knowledge and tools necessary to navigate the complexities of the sovereign credit rating process.

12. ECA continued to coordinate the activities of the African High-level Working Group on the Global Financial Architecture, established to develop proposals for global financial reform and to amplify the African voice in global forums. During the reporting period, ECA convened four meetings of the Working Group, during which participants discussed the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Resilience and Sustainability Trust, a new IMF agenda for green development, a new agenda for market access and the Bretton Woods at 80 initiative. The proposals put forward by the Working Group have received attention and influenced discussions in various global forums.

B. Strengthening effective development planning, monitoring and reporting for sustainable development

13. Many African countries face challenges in planning, implementing and monitoring development strategies owing to limited capacity, a lack of reliable data and weak information systems. Those issues have resulted in the misalignment of macroeconomic policies and broader development goals, hindering optimal resource allocation and public spending efficiency. ECA supported efforts by its members to develop and update national development plans and build the capacity of policymakers to monitor development plan implementation. Specifically, ECA provided technical assistance to facilitate the drafting of national development plans by the Gambia, Liberia and South Africa. ECA also supported the alignment of the national development plan of Malawi with its budgeting framework and that country's efforts to strengthen its monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to improve the tracking of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

14. During the reporting period, 29 training activities were delivered by the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning on various themes relating to public sector management, benefiting 2,570 officials from 46 African countries. Those training activities were focused on economic management and development planning, including: trade analysis and negotiation; mineral supply chain management; fiscal policy and budgeting; risk management and development planning; climate change and carbon-market readiness; and gender-responsive economic policy management.

C. Advancing the implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area and sustainable industrialization

15. The Commission aims to enhance regional cooperation and integration among States in Africa, where economies vary significantly in terms of their resources and levels of development. Although many African countries remain heavily reliant on exports of primary commodities, including minerals, crude oil and agricultural commodities, intra-African trade remains low, accounting for only 17 per cent of total exports. The continent's exports often lack value addition, positioning Africa as a supplier of low-value goods and an importer of high-value industrial products. In that context, ECA supported four of its members (Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Liberia and Morocco) in the formulation of national strategies on the African Continental Free Trade Area, bringing the total number of strategies developed with ECA support to 35 since the establishment of the Free Trade Area in 2018. In addition, ECA supported efforts by its members to implement their national strategies by building the capacities of policymakers and national committees on African Continental Free Trade Area protocols and promoting the development of regional value chains. In March 2024, for example, ECA held training sessions in Bujumbura and Kigali for national committees and private sector stakeholders in Burundi and Rwanda, respectively, with the aim of enhancing their understanding of Free Trade Area protocols.

16. African economies are endowed with abundant natural resources, including minerals, oil, timber and agricultural land. Leveraging those resources to spur development remains challenging, however, owing to the absence of valuation frameworks, reliable data and sufficient institutional capacity. In Central Africa, for example, members of ECA face difficulties in integrating natural capital into national accounts and reducing their reliance on raw materials. During the reporting period, the Commission supported Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea in creating an enabling environment for economic diversification, which included the development of national strategies on the African Continental Free Trade Area and the organization of training sessions on trade rules to accelerate strategy implementation. ECA also provided technical support to two regional economic communities, namely the Arab Maghreb Union and the Economic Community of Central African States, to assist in the formulation of subregional strategies on the African Continental Free Trade Area aimed at fostering economic diversification and subregional integration.

17. ECA supported Lesotho and Zambia in aligning their national industrialization policies with continental and subregional strategies. To strengthen the capacity of its members to formulate sustainable policies on trade, investment and industrialization, ECA also provided assistance to 19 of its members, namely Algeria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Djibouti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, the Gambia, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo, Tunisia, Zambia

and Zimbabwe, to support efforts by those countries to develop green supplements to their strategies on the African Continental Free Trade Area.

18. Micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises play a crucial role in economic development, employment creation and poverty reduction. Those enterprises face significant obstacles, however, including limited access to finance, complex regulatory frameworks, limited market access and skills gaps. In the reporting period, ECA contributed to strengthening the growth potential, competitiveness and sustainability of those enterprises. In Morocco, the Commission supported the design and implementation of a programme aimed at enhancing the export and digital capabilities of small and medium-sized enterprises through training and the provision of advisory services. In Seychelles, ECA supported efforts to expand market access for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises operating in the blue and circular economies. In Southern Africa, ECA worked to strengthen the capacity of policymakers in trade negotiations and improve the competitiveness of micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises.

19. Regional integration, essential for creating jobs through economies of scale, market expansion, industrial diversification and enhanced competitiveness, continues to be hindered by restrictive economic policies, trade barriers and market fragmentation. Industrialization drives economic growth, fosters development and facilitates trade, with special economic zones serving as an important policy tool in that endeavour. During the reporting period, ECA continued to support the establishment of a joint special economic zone between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Zambia to facilitate the manufacture of batteries and electric vehicles by those countries. The Commission completed a study, funded by the African Export-Import Bank, that established the project parameters and confirmed its financial and environmental feasibility, laying the groundwork for the establishment of the special economic zone.

D. Infrastructure development and energy security

20. During the reporting period, ECA provided technical support to its members to enhance the energy sector policy environment and encourage private sector investment in that sector. The Government of Kenya enacted the Energy (Electricity Market, Bulk Supply and Open Access) Regulations, 2024, while a regulatory review of the electricity market was launched in Madagascar. At the continental level, African Heads of State and Government, meeting at the thirty-seventh ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in Addis Ababa in February 2024, adopted a continental regulatory framework to attract private sector investment in the energy sector. Developed in collaboration with ECA, the framework is aimed at supporting efforts by African Governments to establish effective regulatory mechanisms with a view to mobilizing additional investments in the energy sector.

21. To support implementation of the Yamoussoukro Declaration on a New Africa Air Transport Policy, ECA produced guidelines and recommendations on air transport liberalization to inform policy decisions by its members. ECA also supported efforts to digitalize transport systems and develop an African regional transport corridor management system, in line with Gearing up for a decade of action and delivery for sustainable development: political declaration of the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, which will enable members of ECA to monitor critical links of the Northern Corridor, the Central Corridor and the Lamu Port-South Sudan-Ethiopia-Transport Corridor.

22. ECA also convened workshops and dialogues on the energy transition and green economy financing for policymakers. In February 2024, ECA, in collaboration with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development,

provided training to 56 participants, including 21 women, from 24 institutions in Zambia to deepen their understanding of how public-private partnerships can foster infrastructure development. Also in February 2024, ECA convened a virtual high-level policy dialogue that brought together 73 senior representatives, including 30 women, from the public and private sectors and civil society in Southern Africa to share their views and experiences of critical issues and policy options for financing the transition to green economic growth in Africa.

E. Strengthening climate action and ensuring food security

23. The rich natural resources of Africa are crucial for economic development, with green and blue economic models offering pathways to economic growth while preserving the continent's natural resources. Nonetheless, the continent remains highly vulnerable to the repercussions of climate change, including extreme weather events, desertification and loss of biodiversity, all of which threaten to undermine socioeconomic development. Moreover, weak governance, environmental degradation and the unsustainable exploitation of resources risk derailing efforts by African States to achieve their socioeconomic goals. According to data contained in *Africa – Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2023: Statistics and Trends*, a joint publication of ECA, the African Union Commission, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations and the World Food Programme, food insecurity in Africa has increased notably since the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. In 2022, an estimated 526 million people were moderately food-insecure, while approximately 342 million people were severely food-insecure. Furthermore, nearly 282 million people in Africa (nearly 20 percent of the population) were undernourished in 2022, an increase of 57 million people since the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, Africa is unlikely to meet the food security and nutrition targets of Sustainable Development Goal 2 and will fail to achieve the target of ending hunger and all forms of malnutrition in Africa by 2025, articulated in the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods. In that context, ECA continued to assist its members in advancing climate action and improving food security.

24. The tenth session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development was convened by ECA in Addis Ababa in April 2024. Outcomes of the Forum included the Addis Ababa Declaration on the Effective Delivery of Sustainable, Resilient and Innovative Solutions to Reinforce the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and to Eradicate Poverty in Times of Multiple Crises (ECA/RFS/2024/12), which served as the collective input of Africa to the high-level political forum on sustainable development, held in July 2024, and the Summit of the Future, held in September 2024.

25. ECA issued a policy brief on the costs and benefits of greening the African aviation industry through the imposition of carbon taxes, with the aim of supporting implementation of the African Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action, in which African Heads of State and Government called for measures to be taken to green the aviation industry. In collaboration with the Congo Basin Climate Commission, ECA published a study entitled *Mapping Carbon and Forest Certification, and Related Economic Benefits to Investors in the Transition to Net Zero: Examples from the Countries Participating in the Congo Basin Blue Fund* with the aim of providing guidance to Governments on effective ways to mobilize investments in climate mitigation, ecosystem conservation and other environmental initiatives. Following the conclusion of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, ECA assisted Liberia, Namibia and Zimbabwe in the

development of their nationally determined contributions, due to be submitted in 2025.

26. In the area of food security, ECA continued to provide technical support to Zambia and Zimbabwe to facilitate the development of dairy and maize value chains. ECA also issued a report on the policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks in those two countries supporting dairy and maize value chain development.

27. ECA supported its members in harnessing the potential of the blue economy and tourism sector to drive economic growth and inclusive development. It supported efforts by the East African Community to conduct a situational analysis of the blue and circular economies with a view to developing a blue economy strategy at the regional economic community level. It also provided technical assistance to Djibouti, Ethiopia and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development to facilitate the development of policy frameworks and strategies for the tourism sector.

F. Harnessing technology and innovation and expanding connectivity for socioeconomic development

28. Although digital transformation is essential for inclusive and sustainable development, many African countries lack the necessary infrastructure to support green technologies and sustainable socioeconomic practices. ECA sought to bolster the capacity of its members to deploy innovative technologies and build the digital skills of policymakers, women and young people. In Botswana, ECA supported the use of smart agriculture technologies in small stock farming to improve efficiency and competitiveness. In addition, it developed a performance dashboard for the Government of Botswana to help it track foreign policy commitments. ECA also facilitated the development of a draft national digital identity strategy and a draft digital transformation strategy for the Gambia.

29. In April 2024, ECA organized the African Regional Science, Technology and Innovation Bootcamp, which was attended by 106 entrepreneurs, innovators, regulators and policymakers from members of ECA with the aim of enhancing their knowledge of technological skills and supporting business development. Also in April, ECA convened the sixth African Science, Technology and Innovation Forum to facilitate discussions on innovative solutions for sustainable development and poverty reduction in Africa. At the Forum, which was attended by representatives of 29 members of ECA, 31 recommendations were adopted, which were then shared at the ninth multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals, held in New York in May 2024.

G. Modernizing statistical systems

30. The Commission aims to enhance the availability and use of reliable data, including geospatial information, in order to facilitate evidence-based decision-making in Africa. Many African countries face challenges in collecting and disseminating high-quality data owing to resource constraints, the use of outdated technology and inadequate training of personnel, all of which can give rise to data gaps, inconsistencies with international data standards and discrepancies among national and international statistics.

31. ECA provided technical support to Angola and Mali to enhance their capacity to develop integrated geospatial information frameworks with a view to strengthening policy formulation and decision-making. In collaboration with the World Food Programme, ECA supported efforts by Madagascar to bolster

its geospatial analytical capacity in order to assess the energy-food security nexus and improve food security through energy investments. At the continental level, ECA developed a centralized geospatial repository for African urban areas to support evidence-based planning.

32. ECA supported national statistical offices in Botswana, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Senegal, Togo, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe in strengthening the capacity of statisticians in data quality assurance and the use of Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange tools to facilitate Sustainable Development Goal reporting through the Open SDG platform.

33. As part of its efforts to support the modernization of official statistics collection and dissemination mechanisms, ECA assisted its members in strengthening the data coverage of national accounts. In that connection, ECA assisted Djibouti, Ethiopia and Sao Tome and Principe in the development of Tourism Satellite Accounts to measure the performance and economic impact of tourism. The Commission also supported efforts by its members to make optimal use of the economic contributions of migrants in national development efforts and, in January 2024, organized a knowledge-sharing workshop, attended by representatives of Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Mauritania, Senegal and Zimbabwe, to facilitate discussions on how diaspora contributions can be leveraged to promote national development.

34. ECA facilitated knowledge-sharing among its members and supported the skills development of government officials in areas that included data science, artificial intelligence and Sustainable Development Goal reporting. Notably, ECA, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and three regional statistical training centres, helped 48 students from national statistical systems to obtain master's degrees in agricultural statistics between 2022 and 2024, while 27 officials undertook an e-learning course on environmental-economic accounting in March and April 2024.

35. To strengthen civil registration and vital statistics systems, which provide crucial data for planning and policymaking, ECA organized a training course in Nairobi in March and April 2024 on civil registration and vital statistics inequality assessments. The course was attended by 24 statisticians, including 10 women, from 12 members of ECA that had conducted population censuses under the 2020 round that included questions pertaining to civil registration.

H. Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment

36. The Commission aims to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa by addressing the factors that impede access by women and girls to technology, including economic constraints, infrastructure gaps, discriminatory cultural norms and literacy levels among women and girls that are often lower than those among men and boys. The failure of many African countries to adopt robust regulatory frameworks also hinders women's economic participation. ECA supported efforts by its members to mainstream gender equality in national policy frameworks and deepen understanding among policymakers of the digital economy in order to encourage the economic participation of women. In that connection, ECA provided technical support to the Government of Ethiopia to ensure that gender issues were taken into account in the formulation of the national migration policy and also supported gender mainstreaming in the national care policy of Kenya and the fourth national development plan of Uganda.

I. Accelerating the integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 through United Nations system-wide coherence and collaboration

37. The Commission contributed to the implementation by its members of the second 10-year implementation plan (2024–2033) of Agenda 2063. Specifically, it helped to develop a theory of change to guide implementation, in which emphasis was placed on collective planning, prioritization and the importance of major elements, including domestication strategies, implementation pathways and enablers for success.

38. ECA supported the organization of the eighth United Nations-African Union annual conference, a meeting between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, which was held in Addis Ababa on 21 October 2024. The participants focused on peace, security and development challenges and reviewed a number of joint initiatives, including the Joint United Nations-African Union Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security and the African Union-United Nations Framework for the Implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda. Participants at the Conference emphasized, *inter alia*, the need for international financial architecture reforms to support sustainable development and address the financial challenges faced by African countries.

39. ECA also facilitated the convening of two high-level strategic dialogues between the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the first in May and the second in October 2024. The participants took stock of progress achieved in the development of new mechanisms to strengthen engagement between the African Union and the United Nations in support of implementation of the two agendas, and progress achieved in the operationalization of “college-to-college” meetings between heads of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and Commissioners of the African Union. In that context, “college-to-college” meetings were inaugurated on economic development, tourism, trade, industry and minerals; education, science, technology and innovation; agriculture, rural affairs, the blue economy and a sustainable environment; and health, humanitarian affairs and social development.

40. In collaboration with the Pan African Youth Union, the African Union Commission and the United Nations Development Programme, ECA convened an African youth consultative forum on the Summit of the Future in Addis Ababa in April 2024. The consultative forum was held with the aim of amplifying young African voices to ensure that the interests of young people were taken into account in the outcomes of the Summit of the Future. It brought together youth representatives of civil society organizations and national and subregional youth councils in addition to young influencers, and participants adopted a common position, enshrined in the African Youth Declaration on the Summit of the Future, in which they addressed five thematic areas, namely sustainable development and financing for development; international peace and security; science, technology, innovation and digital cooperation; young people and future generations; and transforming global governance.

41. The African Youth Declaration was presented at the African youth side event at the Summit of the Future, held in New York in September 2024. The side event, held on the theme “Our world, our future: African youth and the Summit of the Future”, was co-organized by members of ECA, under the leadership of Malawi and with the support of Nigeria, ECA, the Pan African Youth Union, the African Union Commission, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and the United Nations Department of Global Communications. Participants at the side event adopted an outcome document in which they set out a series of recommendations and a

call to action. A task force, chaired by the African Union Specialized Technical Committee for Youth, Culture and Sports, was established to draw up a comprehensive road map for the participation of young people in the implementation of the outcome document in African States.

42. In May 2024, the Commission partnered with the Department of Global Communications and the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa in organizing the annual Africa Dialogue Series on the theme “Education through science, technology and innovation: towards the Africa we want” – a theme in line with the African Union Commission theme for 2024, namely, “Educate and skill Africa for the twenty-first century”. Discussions centred on the need to increase domestic resource mobilization and address structural challenges, including access to electricity and Internet services. The main outcomes of the Dialogue Series included proposals for scaling up digital education initiatives and improving the efficiency of tax systems to support educational reform. Participants also stressed the need to establish supportive policies and regulations that promoted educational equity and inclusion, including policies and regulations providing schools with high-speed Internet connectivity, improving access to digital devices, creating e-learning platforms and ensuring access by schools and students to high-quality digital educational resources.

43. ECA, as a member of the joint secretariat of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Africa, convened a dialogue in Addis Ababa in April 2024 on carbon markets and development. The dialogue, which was attended by United Nations regional directors, resident coordinators and other important stakeholders, provided critical insights into the potential and limitations of carbon markets, in particular in Africa. The main outcomes included a common position on optimizing carbon markets for revenue generation and on climate action and finance. Participants in the dialogue recommended that States should align carbon taxes with national objectives, strengthen legal frameworks, foster global partnerships and enhance public-private cooperation. Following the dialogue, ECA provided technical assistance to Mozambique to facilitate the development of a national carbon market strategy.

44. Through the Regional Collaborative Platform for Africa, ECA facilitated dialogue and sought to build trust with Burkina Faso, Mali and the Niger, paving the way for enhanced collaboration between the United Nations and the Governments of those three member States. With the support of United Nations regional offices, the Niger drafted a concept note on the implementation of joint transformative programmes, in line with national priorities and a set of guiding principles. Similar concept notes are being developed by the Governments of Burkina Faso and Mali. It is anticipated that joint integrated programmes will be implemented in 2025, as agreed by the United Nations and the three States concerned.

J. Operational modalities for enhanced delivery of the programme of work

45. A fit-for-purpose ECA, underpinned by its capable staff, vision and best practices, successfully delivered on its programme of work by generating credible knowledge and policy advice. ECA also leveraged its convening power to build consensus and attain results while upholding principles of accountability and operational effectiveness.

46. To improve programme management in order to enhance the delivery of its annual programme of work, the Strategic Planning, Oversight and Results Division of ECA trained ECA staff members, including those in senior leadership positions in results-based management, with the aim of deepening a culture of accountability and learning within the Commission.

47. Faced with a reduction in the financial resources available to support its operations, the Commission revamped its extrabudgetary business model and sought to mobilize additional finance by strengthening established partnerships and forging new ones. To facilitate the development of integrated extrabudgetary programme proposals, ECA developed a standard operating procedure for extrabudgetary programme design, appraisal and approval.

48. The digitalization of internal processes has streamlined the recruitment, procurement, financial and administrative services of the Commission. In that context, ECA launched an internal Division of Administration portal to facilitate efficient information flows and strengthen decision-making with a view to improving the delivery of the Commission's programmes. Use of the portal has led to process improvements in all areas of programme support, including human resources, supply chain and facilities, and, by improving data collection, has facilitated the monitoring of financial and administrative operations in real time.

49. ECA launched two internal digital tools, namely the procurement tracking tool and the recruitment performance management system 2.0. Use of the procurement management tool has streamlined the procurement process and is used to monitor and manage the lifecycle of procurement requests within the Commission. It provides visibility of all procurement requests, activities and stages, generates reports on the performance of stakeholders and highlights areas where improvements are required. The recruitment performance management system 2.0 supports efficient recruitment processes, allows real-time tracking and provides for centralized data storage. Application of the two tools is improving both timelines and efficiency and enhancing organizational performance.

50. The inauguration of the recently renovated Africa Hall took place in October 2024, marking a new chapter in the Hall's storied history. The renovation of the Hall was carried out in order to modernize its facilities and improve its technological capabilities, security and overall functionality, in line with global standards and established best practices. The renovation included upgrades to architectural features, the preservation of cultural heritage, technological upgrades and the installation of modern security systems, making Africa Hall a first class conference facility.

III. Conclusion

51. Overlapping crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, increasing debt burdens and the impact of climate change have all exacerbated the significant and multifaceted challenges facing Africa. To address those challenges, African countries must formulate innovative strategies that provide a range of policy options, facilitate policy implementation and strengthen African institutions. As African countries pursue recovery from multiple shocks, ECA remains committed to assisting its members, supporting the African Union and the continent's regional economic communities, and collaborating with intergovernmental organizations and other development partners to promote socioeconomic recovery and sustained growth. ECA has a critical role to play through its think tank, convening and operational functions in providing innovative and pragmatic solutions to boost economic growth, promote macrofinancial stability, advance regional integration and accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

52. By promoting sound development planning, facilitating the development of prudent macro-level and sectoral policies and supporting the emergence of robust African institutions, ECA will endeavour to address the sense of

uncertainty that continues to affect Africa and bolster the macroeconomic resilience of African States, supporting growth and fostering macrofinancial stability. Bolstering intra-Africa trade and regional integration will facilitate market access and the emergence of economies of scale, advancing industrialization and economic diversification. African countries require: adequate financing; access to sufficient energy; the right infrastructure mix, including digital technologies; agricultural and food systems that are resilient to external shocks; and the adoption of mitigation measures to reduce the impact of climate change.

53. In 2025, the Commission will deepen its interventions in the five strategic focus areas and two cross-cutting themes. It will continue to support its members in macroeconomic management and facilitate the identification and adoption of innovative financing tools and economic governance instruments to boost domestic resource mobilization. It will also work to accelerate implementation of the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area and promote sustainable industrialization and economic diversification. ECA will also seek to mobilize investments in climate action in order to enhance the resilience of African economies, promote the circular economy, harness the potential of the green and blue economies and eradicate poverty. The Commission will expand its role in spearheading digital transformation, strengthening data and statistical systems, and promoting social inclusion and inclusive growth. Working through the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, ECA will also engage with policymakers and other stakeholders by organizing training courses and peer learning exercises on relevant topics.

54. ECA will continue its close cooperation with the African Union and will build on its existing strategic partnerships with regional and subregional organizations, including African regional economic communities, central banks, universities, think tanks and other research institutions, and civil society and private sector organizations. It will also forge new partnerships to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

55. The Commission will continue to integrate cross-cutting issues, including gender, disability inclusion, human rights and environmental sustainability, in its operational activities and deliverables, as appropriate. It will ensure that a gender perspective is reflected in its programme of work and, in line with the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy, will pursue the implementation of measures to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in programme design, implementation and evaluation.