

ECA Quarterly Newsletter

SEPT - DEC



CORPORATE OVERVIEW:

This edition of the ECA Bulletin highlights key achievements and activities from September to December 2024, showcasing ECA's efforts in consensus building, advocacy, and knowledge generation. From the reopening of Africa Hall to high-level dialogues on regional value chains and sustainable development, the activities in the last quarter of the year underscored ECA's pivotal role in advancing Africa's development agenda.

The Economic Commission for Africa proudly celebrated the reopening of Africa Hall, a venue steeped in history and symbolism for the continent. After seven years of meticulous renovations, the hall now boasts state-of-the-art technology, a modern visitors' center, and a permanent

exhibition honoring its legacy as a beacon of African unity and collaboration. The reopening ceremony, led by the Executive Secretary, was strategically timed ahead of UN Day, and was graced by dignitaries, member states, and development partners. These included Ethiopia's Prime Minister, Abiy Ahmed, the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, and the Deputy Secretary General, Amina Mohammed; the AUC Chairperson, Moussa Faki, and the Chair of the Africa Hall Advisory Board, Ambassador Charles Karamba. This event highlighted the Hall's renewed role as a space for fostering dialogue, driving development, and inspiring future generations. More: <https://www.uneca.org/africa-hall>



Africa's Leadership on Regional Value Chains (RVCs): The high-level dialogue on regional value chains, where ECA Executive Secretary Claver Gatete emphasized the importance of scaling up regional value chains in agriculture, energy, and critical minerals, took place during the COMESA summit held in Bujumbura, Burundi, on 31 October 2024. This pivotal gathering brought together policymakers, industry leaders, and development partners to deliberate on actionable strategies for harnessing Africa's vast natural resources to drive industrialization, economic diversification, and sustainable employment creation. In his address, Mr. Gatete highlighted the necessity for African nations to broaden their regional value chains as a step towards forging a more unified economy. He stated, «This requires not only removing all the barriers to intra-African trade but also creating incentives for greater cross-border investment.» **More:** <https://www.uneca.org/stories/eca%27s-gatete-urges-african-leaders-to-strengthen-regional-value-chains-for-economic#:~:text=Gatete%20emphasized%20the%20necessity%20for,border%20investment%2C%E2%80%9D%20he%20said>.

At the 79th United Nations General Assembly in September 2024, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) focused on key issues affecting the continent, with a strong emphasis on involving youth in global discussions. One of the highlights was the African Youth at the Summit of the Future session on September 20, co-organized with African Member States, the African Union, and the Pan-African Youth Union. This session aimed to amplify youth voices in global policy discussions, emphasizing their critical role in shaping Africa's future and addressing the continent's challenges. On the same day, a high-level dialogue on Establishing an African Credit Rating Agency was held, discussing the growing importance of such an agency for Africa's economic development. ECA Executive Secretary Claver Gatete participated in a discussion at the SDG Media Zone, alongside other leaders, on Domestic Resource Mobilization for Africa's Development. This conversation highlighted how mobilizing domestic resources could be a game-changer for Africa's development. Gatete also took part in the UN Global Compact Forum on September 23, where pressing issues such as SDG acceleration, sustainable finance, and digital transformation were discussed. The forum focused on the opportunities and challenges for the private sector in advancing sustainability and achieving the SDGs. These events underscored Africa's priorities and the critical role of youth-driven solutions in shaping global policy. **More:** <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/stories/eca-un-general-assembly-and-summit-future-roundup>

The ECA at the Summit of the Future highlighted the importance of global cooperation in addressing emerging challenges such as climate change, poverty, and inequality. The summit, held in September 2024, focused on fostering trust and modernizing global governance structures. Key outcomes include the adoption of the Pact for the Future, featuring a Global Digital Compact and a Declaration on Future Generations. The ECA's participation emphasised Africa's role in shaping these discussions, with a special focus on youth-driven solutions. **For more details, please visit the [ECA Summit of the Future page](#).**

Mr. Claver Gatete's opening statement at **the International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development 2024** focused on the urgent need for a just and inclusive energy transition. He highlighted the challenges of climate change, financial imbalances, and Africa's limited participation in global clean energy investments. Gatete stressed that Africa's vast renewable resources and critical minerals offer significant opportunities for economic growth and job creation. He called for actionable strategies, stronger governance, and increased investments to ensure a sustainable and equitable energy transition for the continent. **For more details, read the [full statement here](#).**

Mr. Gatete concluded the year with recognition by the New African Magazine saying he was honoured to be in the great company of the 2024 Most Influential Africans under the Public Policy Category. He noted that ECA remains committed to Africa's transformation agenda and appreciates the media's critical role in shaping the Continent's narrative. **Read more here:** <https://100.newafricanmagazine.com> including his opinion piece on fast-tracking the SDGs at breakneck speed.





Deputy Executive Secretary and Chief Economist Hanan Morsy ended her engagements in 2024 with a prestigious 2024 award in recognition of her outstanding contributions to economics and her dedication to advancing global development. **More:**<https://iea-world.org/fellowship-and-prizes/fellowships/>

An ECA delegation, led by Deputy Executive Secretary Hanan Morsy participated in the first Sherpa Meeting under South Africa's G20 Presidency in Johannesburg. During the first Finance and Central Bank Deputies Meeting under [South Africa's G20](#) presidency, she addressed four sessions, calling for collective actions for the African Continent. She highlighted the importance of monitoring and reporting on the G20 MDB Roadmap, operationalising SDR rechanneling to MDBs, ensuring an ambitious ADF17 replenishment; overhauling the G20 Common Framework; reforming SDR allocations and quota formulas; and enhancing regulation and oversight of credit.

She also stressed bridging the financial inclusion gap by leveraging digital transformation, improving financial literacy and regulations to empower women and MSMEs, advancing cross-border payment systems, and strengthening policies on #crypto assets during discussions on Financial Sector Issues and Financial Inclusion.

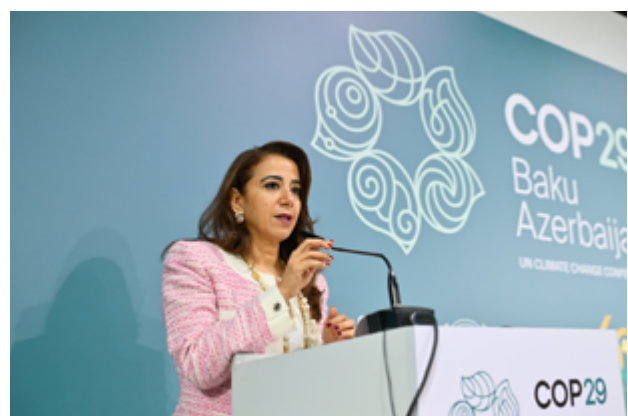
On Sustainable Finance, she underscored considering vulnerability in access to concessional finance, adopting climate-resilient debt clauses, crowding in the private sector, diversifying funding sources to scale up adaptation finance and developing high-integrity carbon markets.

The DES also addressed the 'Reimagining Credit Rating Agencies for African Priorities' event, highlighting that

Africa deserves credit ratings that genuinely reflect its potential and on-ground realities. She said that it's time for a system that values local insights and supports African growth. Explore this crucial conversation—watch the full discussion here: <https://bit.ly/3O2XwQ5>

At COP 29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, citing Nelson Mandela's words, Ms. Morsy said "There is no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way it treats its children," and stressed the need for child-centred climate action and noted, from climate-resilient schools to green job opportunities, we must equip our youth to lead. More stories on ECA at COP 29 here: <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/COP29>

At the joint ECA, AfDB and UNDP 2024 African Economic Conference held in Botswana, Ms. Morsy underscored Africa's huge potential to lead the green transition, stressing the importance of recalibrating the current system to better serve the needs of African countries and also consider their vulnerability due to the changing nature of shocks. She reiterated the need for multilateral development banks to reconsider the requirements for concessional financing and to include vulnerabilities, so that when a middle-income country is hit by climate shocks, they have access to concessional financing. More: <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/aec2024>





Deputy Executive Secretary for Programme Support, Mr, Antonio Pedro led the preparations for the inauguration of the renovated Africa Hall. During a side event that launched the Africa Hall book, he said the inauguration of the renovated Africa Hall reminds us of our leaders' journey in 1963 towards a self-determined Africa. "We honor the contributions of Emperor Haile Selassie and Architect, Arturo Mezzèdimi, whose legacies continue to inspire resilience hope. He expressed heartfelt appreciation to Dr. Marcello Mezzèdimi, the Africa Hall Architect's grandson for "bringing the extraordinary book to life. It beautifully captures the rich history of AfricaHall, serving as a monument to our past and a beacon for the future." More on the Africa Hall inauguration: <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/inauguration-africa-hall>

Mr. Pedro also delivered a keynote at the OSAA launch of the Special Issue of the African Journal of Sustainable Development, titled, "Redefining African Futures: The State, Resilience, and Pathways to Progress," on 19 September 2024.

At a critical energy transition minerals meeting and emphasised that Africa needs to create a competitive mineral resources development environment which allows it to ride the wave of mineral prices as technological developments, including those that create substitutes, are moving fast. He also stressed that a just and fair exploitation of minerals will generate sustainable jobs, diversify economies, and dramatically boost revenues which can support development and transformation.

Earlier, Mr. Pedro had addressed African Media attending a training session titled Africa's Progress on the 2030 Agenda: Challenges and Opportunities Ahead and stressed the importance of a nuanced narrative on Africa's development priorities. He encouraged them to follow the story and unearth the solutions and actions that lead to the survival of the individuals and communities we live in as this is part of ensuring the youth and children born today, can inherit a world that they can live in beyond 2063.

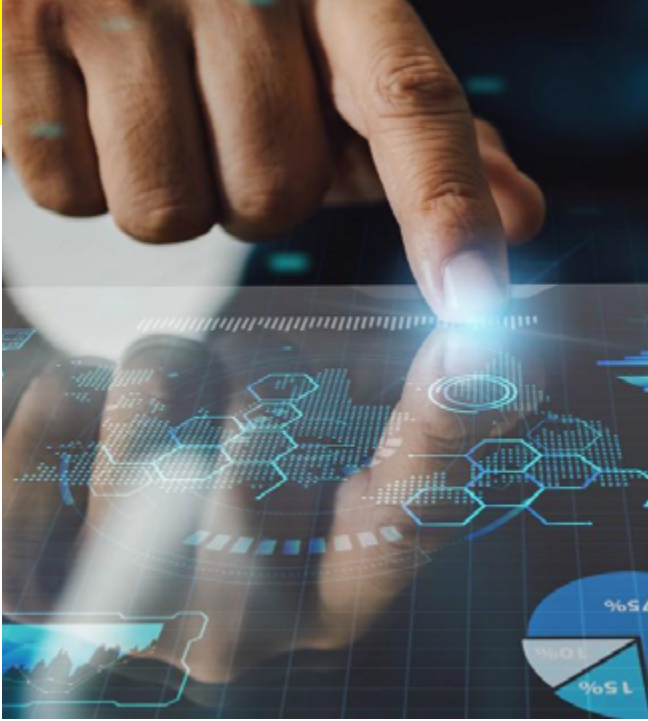
HIGHLIGHTS FROM ACROSS ECA'S KEY ACTIVITIES:

Macroeconomic Policy

- **High-Level Dialogue on Debt and Financing:** ECA facilitated discussions with member states on strategies to address Africa's rising debt crisis and secure sustainable financing. The event held in Addis Ababa on November 17, 2024, highlighted the rising debt burden in Africa's Least Developed Countries (LDCs), which is severely affecting funding for sustainable development, particularly in health and education. Experts discussed the need for improved debt management, fiscal consolidation, and enhanced domestic resource mobilization to ensure long-term financial stability. The session also addressed the challenges LDCs face in financing the SDGs and the importance of strengthening public debt sustainability frameworks. **More:** <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/stories/rising-debt-burden-africas-least-developed-countries-eroding-funding-sustainable>
- **The African Economic Conference 2024 (AEC 2024)**, held in Gaborone, Botswana, from November 23-25, focused on «Securing Africa's Economic Future Amidst Rising Uncertainty.» The event brought together experts to explore key issues such as the impacts of global and regional uncertainty, resilience-building strategies, innovative development financing, and the role of technology in fostering economic growth. It provided a platform for researchers and policymakers to discuss solutions for Africa's sustainable development amid challenges like economic volatility and climate change. **AEC is organized by the ECA, AfDB and UNDP. More :** <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/aec2024>

Technology and Innovation

- **The South and East Africa Digital Governance (SEADGov) Forum**, held on September 30 and October 1, 2024, in Pretoria, focused on leveraging digital governance to promote sustainable development in the region. The event brought together government officials, experts, and stakeholders to discuss the challenges and opportunities in digital governance, emphasizing the need for strategic planning, infrastructure development, and human capacity building. It aimed to foster regional cooperation and accelerate digital transformation for more inclusive societies. <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/seadgov2024>
- On December 9, 2024, experts gathered for a workshop to explore how **digital technology can enhance road safety across Africa**. Organized by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the International Road Federation (IRF), the event focused on leveraging emerging technologies like AI to improve road safety management systems, which are currently hindered by manual processes. Participants discussed how digital solutions could reduce road fatalities and support the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety (2021-2030). More details can be found [here](#).



Africa's Youth Central to Africa's Future

- **The «Empowering Africa's Future» youth dialogue, held during AEC 2024 in Gaborone, Botswana,** explored how technology and innovation can drive Africa's economic growth. Experts emphasized the role of youth in shaping the continent's future through digital skills, entrepreneurship, and sustainable practices. Discussions focused on bridging education with industry needs, promoting inclusivity, and fostering regional cooperation to ensure that technology benefits all sectors of society. The dialogue aimed to empower young Africans as leaders of tomorrow's economic transformation. For more details, visit [here](#)
- **Young innovators from Ethiopia and Tanzania showcased their creativity and problem-solving skills in the national finals of the World Robot Olympiad (WRO) 2024.** Held in both countries, the competitions highlighted eco-friendly robotics solutions addressing sustainability challenges. The event, part of a broader initiative to boost digital skills among African youth, saw Ethiopia's Kotebe STEM Center win first place with their multipurpose robot, while Tanzania's Azania Secondary School emerged victorious with a fire-fighting robot. These winners will represent their countries at the global WRO finals in Turkey. More details can be found [here](#).

Climate Resilience

- On October 24, 2024, an expert meeting in Mexico City emphasized the need for **innovative financing to address climate change and promote sustainable development.** Representatives from various UN economic commissions discussed mechanisms like debt swaps, blended finance, and green bonds to mobilize resources in developing countries. The session focused on how these financial tools can support Africa's resource-based industrialization while addressing the triple crisis of economic instability, climate change, and social inequality. For more details, visit [here](#).
- **The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** explored the potential of debt-for-nature swaps as a groundbreaking solution for financing climate action. This innovative mechanism would allow the country to reduce its public debt while investing in sustainable development projects such as forest conservation and green energy. The initiative aligns with DRC's broader goal of leveraging its natural resources for green industrialization and climate resilience. For more details, visit [here](#).
- **At COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan,** experts gathered to discuss innovative solutions for sustainable financing, focusing on how developing countries can access climate finance amidst fiscal constraints. The event highlighted instruments like sustainability-linked bonds, debt-for-adaptation swaps, and concessional funding. Key speakers, including finance ministers and climate leaders, emphasized the importance of aligning fiscal management with climate resilience. Successful examples from countries like Egypt, Rwanda, and Seychelles were shared. The discussions underscored the need for collective action and collaboration to overcome financing challenges. More details can be found [here](#).

Regional Integration and Trade

- Experts gathered in Addis Ababa for the second meeting on the 11th Edition of Assessing Regional Integration in Africa (ARIA XI). The event focused on advancing Africa's integration agenda, with discussions centered on the formation of a continental Customs Union and Common Market, as outlined in the AfCFTA Agreement. The ARIA XI report explores the role of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in this process and the challenges and opportunities for deeper integration across the continent. For more details, visit [here](#).
- Burkina Faso recently benefited from the third phase of a technical assistance project aimed at strengthening financial services value chains. This phase, which included a validation workshop held in December 2024, focused on improving the country's capacity to integrate financial services into regional and global value chains under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The project, supported by the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), aims to boost trade in services and foster sustainable economic growth. For more details, visit [here](#).
- The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) hosted a regional workshop in Addis Ababa to introduce the African Continental Input-Output Table (AfCIOT), a cutting-edge data tool designed to boost intra-African trade. The workshop aimed to enhance understanding of trade dynamics, identify opportunities for cross-border value chains, and improve policy decisions under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The tool helps countries assess the impact of trade agreements on economic growth, investment, and employment. **For more details, visit [here](#).**

Social Policy

- Experts gathered in Kampala for a workshop focused on improving migration statistics and promoting «good legal identity» for migrants in the East and Horn of Africa. The event, part of a joint AUC-ECA project, aimed to enhance migration governance and legal identity frameworks in Ethiopia, Uganda, and South Sudan. Discussions centered on addressing challenges at the intersection of migration and identity, with a focus

on ensuring migrants' access to essential services and preventing statelessness. **More details can be found [here](#).**

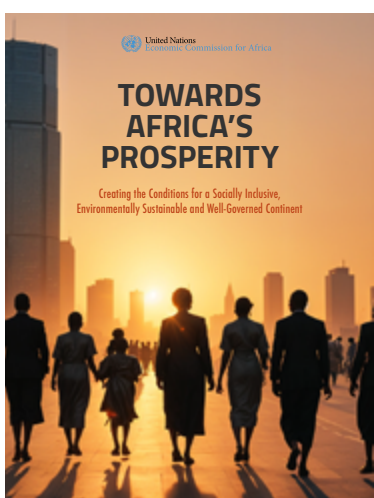
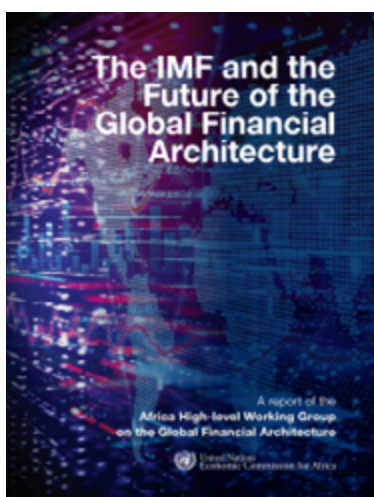
- **The Africa Urban Forum**, held in Addis Ababa from September 4-6, 2024, brought together stakeholders to explore sustainable urban development pathways for African cities. Discussions focused on the challenges posed by rapid urbanization, including infrastructure gaps, climate vulnerabilities, and socio-economic inequalities. Experts highlighted the need for innovative financing, regional integration, and technology to build resilient, inclusive cities. The forum aimed to develop actionable strategies aligned with Africa's Agenda 2063 for transformative urban growth. For more details, visit [here](#).

Gender

- The **69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69)**, on the Review and Appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action took place in November in Addis Ababa preceded by the Africa Pre-CSW69 on Beijing +30 Consultation. Hanan Morsy, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), delivered opening remarks focusing on Africa's progress in gender equality. While acknowledging advancements in education and health, she highlighted persistent challenges, including economic inequality and gender-based violence. Morsy emphasized the need for stronger implementation of gender policies, increased resources, and bridging the digital divide to achieve sustainable gender equality. **For more details, visit [here](#).**
- **The Africa Gender Index 2023 Analytical Report**, released in November 2024, reveals progress in gender equality across the continent, but highlights that gender parity is still far from being fully achieved. While improvements were seen in education and social sectors, with women now surpassing men in graduation rates, economic and political representation remains a significant challenge. The report calls for targeted actions in education, leadership quotas, and addressing gender norms to accelerate progress. **For more details, visit [here](#).**

KNOWLEDGE GENERATION

In the last quarter of the year, ECA produced the following key publications.



- The 2024 Africa Sustainable Development Report, presented during the HLPF, highlighted the urgent need for scaled-up financing to address multiple crises and accelerate the implementation of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda. [Download the Report](#)
- **A report of the Africa High-level Working Group on the Global Financial Architecture** The IMF and the Future of the Global Financial Architecture comes as part of the work of the High-level Working Group on the Global Financial Architecture. The working group was set up to design and champion proposals to reform the global financial architecture and to strengthen Africa's voice in discussions on this issue. Part of its work is encapsulated in this report—prepared by ECA in consultation with African Ministers of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development; the African Union; and the African Development Bank—to propose a new work agenda for the IMF to respond more capably to the challenges that low- and middle-income countries are facing. Download the report here: <https://www.uneca.org/the-imf-and-the-future-of-the-global-financial-architecture>
- **Climate change and migration in Africa:** The report represents a comprehensive analysis of the linkages between climate change and migration in Africa. Emphasis is given to the importance of recognizing the interlinkages between environmental and migration issues, with a view to undertaking comprehensive and multidimensional assessments that can feed into the design and development of sustainable and actionable policies across Africa. Download the report: <https://www.uneca.org/african-migration-report>
- **Towards Africa's prosperity: Creating the Conditions for a Socially Inclusive, Environmentally Sustainable and Well-Governed Continent** :This report is organized around four themes. Chapter 1 describes Africa's economic and social conditions in 2022. Chapter 2 offers a comprehensive definition of the economic, political and social dimensions of a prosperity in which everyone on the continent can realize their full potential in an environment of peace and security. Download the report here: <https://www.uneca.org/towards-africa%27s-prosperity>
- **Policy Brief for African Decision Makers: Understanding the Carbon Market Landscape: Article 6 of the Paris Agreement Explained** (frequently asked questions) [Download: https://repository.uneca.org/handle/10855/50246](https://repository.uneca.org/handle/10855/50246)

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EVENTS:

- A Validation Workshop for the African and Indian Ocean Islands Circular Economy Action Plan (CEAP) will be held from January 27-28, 2025, in Mauritius, aiming to refine strategies for promoting a circular economy across the region. https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/CEAP_Validation_Workshop
- The Africa Business Forum 2025 will take place on February 17, 2025, at the United Nations Conference Center in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, focusing on advancing Africa's business landscape. <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/africa-business-forum-2025>
- The Fifty-seventh session of the Economic Commission for Africa will be held from March 12-18, 2025, in Addis Ababa, bringing together African ministers to discuss finance, planning, and economic development. <https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/cfm2025>

ECA'S SUSTAINABLE AFRICA PODCAST SERIES:

From ECA's key events, we bring the human narrative to the themes we work on and speak to stakeholders, celebrities and more who are contributing to sustainable development.

Check out our Sustainable Africa Podcast Series on the ECA YouTube Channel here: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcfKplk33JTj-luNiXoTbUQfpatEVXjKt>

