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PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

GLOBAL AFRICA FORUM 2025

***Africa's Response to Tariff Wars:
Building a Prosperous, Integrated Continent Beyond Aid***



*A High-Level Dialogue on How AfCFTA Member States Position Themselves
Collectively in Today's Changing Global Trade Dynamics*

22 September 2025 | Dentons, New York, USA

Executive Summary

Convened under the theme ***“Africa’s Response to Tariff Wars: Building a Prosperous, Integrated Continent Beyond Aid,”*** the Global Africa Forum 2025 served as a critical high-level dialogue for shaping a collective African position in the face of rising global protectionism and shifting trade dynamics. Held in New York on September 22, 2025, the forum brought together government officials from Africa, senior USA government officials, heads of institutions, private sector leaders, and prominent figures from Global Africa. The forum called for an accelerated and robust implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as the continent’s most strategic response to external economic pressures. Participants identified the current global climate not as a threat, but as a historic wake-up call and opportunity to pivot from aid dependency to self-sustaining, trade-led prosperity. The discussions underscored the urgent need to mobilise Africa’s vast internal resources, including its projected 1.7 billion-strong consumer market and its growing middle class.

The key outcomes and action points emerging from the dialogue included the following: A unanimous call to move beyond tariffs and urgently address non-tariff barriers, harmonise customs procedures, and scale digital trade platforms like the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS) to enable the free movement of goods and services; A commitment to drive industrialisation by building regional value chains, particularly in agro-processing, critical minerals, and green industries, and to develop a pipeline of bankable, cross-border infrastructure projects for presentation to global investors; A strategic push to re-energise US-Africa relations to be more trade-focused, aligning US strategic priorities with Africa’s economic integration agenda to foster mutually beneficial investment and partnership; A formalised framework to harness the financial power and intellectual capital of the over 200-million-strong Global African diaspora as essential partners in building the ‘Africa We Want’.

In a significant operational outcome, the Africa Prosperity Network (APN) was mandated to advocate for the establishment of a private sector-driven AfCFTA Monitoring Task Force. This body will be crucial for tracking progress, measuring private sector engagement, and ensuring accountability in the continent’s monumental shift towards an integrated and self-reliant economic growth. The forum concluded with a resolute commitment to transform dialogue into decisive action, ensuring that the AfCFTA becomes the engine for a prosperous, integrated Africa.

Acknowledgement

The Africa Prosperity Network (APN) extends its most profound appreciation to all individuals and institutions whose unwavering support and contributions were instrumental to the success of the 2025 Global Africa Forum (GAF). Our deepest gratitude is reserved for our foundational strategic partners: Rebranding Africa, the Africa-America Institute (AAI), and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat for their immense support towards the forum.

The success of an endeavour of this scale would not have been possible without the generous and steadfast support of our sponsors. We extend our sincere appreciation to Devtraco and Golden Coast Developers, whose belief in our mission catalyzed the forum's operational capabilities. Equal thanks are due to Fabrimetal, Africa Legal Associates (ALA), and Africa Law Practice International (ALPi), whose commitment was indispensable. Their investment demonstrates a powerful vote of confidence in Africa's economic potential and underscores the critical role of the private sector and professional services in building the infrastructure necessary for sustainable prosperity.

Beyond institutional support, the intellectual vitality of the forum was generated by the distinguished speakers, panellists, and moderators who graced our stages. APN conveys its sincere thanks for the intellectual depth, critical insights, and expert analysis that enriched every session. The spirited and constructive engagement from all participants, who travelled from across the globe to contribute, created a dynamic environment for knowledge exchange and network building. It was your collective wisdom, diverse perspectives, and passionate dialogue that transformed the forum from a mere conference into a genuine catalyst for new ideas and collaborations.

Finally, to all attendees, dignitaries, and partners, your presence and active participation were the cornerstone of the Global Africa Forum 2025. Each conversation, each connection made, has contributed to strengthening the vibrant tapestry of the Global Africa community we are building together. The Africa Prosperity Network looks forward to continuing these vital partnerships as we work collectively to translate the forum's outcomes into tangible actions that will deliver shared prosperity for generations to come.

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Preamble

Preamble

1. In an era defined by global tariff wars and rising protectionism, traditional supply chains are being disrupted, and the spectre of “donor fatigue” threatens to diminish vital flows of traditional aid. This confluence of external pressures exposes the profound vulnerability of economies reliant on volatile commodity markets. Yet, within this challenge lies a historic opportunity for Africa to forge a new path of self-reliance and assert its position within the changing dynamics of global trade. The continent stands at a pivotal crossroads, where the imperative to act is matched only by the potential for transformative growth. Central to seizing this moment is the decisive acceleration of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). With the power to unite a market of over 1.5 billion people, the AfCFTA represents the most ambitious economic integration project of our time, aiming to create a unified market by cutting tariffs and investing in cross-border infrastructure. However, the stark reality is that intra-African trade languishes at a mere 15-18%, a figure far below other major region. We possess the collective capacity to increase this beyond 40% by 2040, but such progress is contingent upon our unwavering commitment to do what needs to be done.
2. To harness this potential, we must collectively design and implement alternative trade strategies and unified negotiation tactics to navigate a fractured global landscape. Our objectives are clear: we must mobilise the disposable incomes of Africa and Global Africa’s estimated 400 million-strong middle class, boost innovation in e-commerce and fintech, and drive industrialisation through local value addition in sectors from agro-processing to electric vehicle batteries. Crucially, we must remove non-tariff barriers, harmonise customs, and scale digital trade platforms to ensure the free movement of people, goods, and services. This transformation cannot be achieved by governments alone; it requires the direct involvement of the private sector and global investors who believe in the prospects of Africa’s single market. Projections show Africa’s consumer base reaching 1.73 billion by 2030, with spending hitting \$2.5 trillion, representing the world’s fastest-growing consumer base. Furthermore, we must actively engage the over 200 million Global Africans in the diaspora, harnessing their financial and intellectual contributions to build the ‘Africa We Want’ and re-energise key international relations to be more trade-focused.
3. This year’s Global Africa Forum 2025, under the theme ***“Africa’s Response to Tariff Wars: Building a Prosperous, Integrated Continent Beyond Aid,”*** sought to drive a fundamental shift from aid dependency to a new era of trade-led prosperity. This necessitates the establishment of a robust, private sector-driven mechanism to monitor progress and measure engagement under the AfCFTA framework. Advocating for such accountability, we can ensure that our efforts are directed toward tangible results, sustained by integrated regional value chains that insulate our economies from external shocks and empower our communities.

Global disruptions are Africa's wake-up call to achieve "Africa Beyond Aid." We must urgently accelerate the AfCFTA's implementation by tackling infrastructure gaps, deploying climate-resilient and digital trade solutions, and presenting bankable, cross-border projects for investment. We must agitate the consciousness of our people and partners alike, for it is through collective will and strategic collaboration that we will rewrite Africa's economic future and unlock the unparalleled opportunity before us.



Opening Remarks

4. In her opening address at the third Global Africa Forum in New York, Nana Adjoa Hackman, Executive Director of the Africa Prosperity Network (APN), warmly welcomed attendees and invoked the legacy of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah. She recalled his belief that Africa's greatness hinges on its unity, a conviction that underpins the APN's mission. Hackman explained that the network was founded by Gabby Asare Otchere-Darko in 2020, coinciding with the launch of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). She outlined the APN's core objective: to drive Africa's economic transformation by fostering a single, integrated market. This vision, she stressed, requires urgent collaboration between the private sector and political leaders, which the APN facilitates through initiatives like the Africa Prosperity Dialogues in Ghana and high-level meetings alongside AU summits. Hackman stated that the Forum's 2025 theme, "Africa's Response to Tariff Wars: Building a Prosperous, Integrated Continent Beyond Aid," was a direct response to critical challenges, such as the end of AGOA trade benefits, which now subjects African goods to a minimum 15% US tariff. She presented this as a wake-up call for the continent to shift from raw material exports to industrialisation and increased intra-African trade, which has already grown by over 12% in 2024. The discussion priorities for the forum included replacing aid with investment, doubling intra-African trade, rethinking US-Africa relations towards trade, and more directly engaging the diaspora. She emphasised that global disruptions make immediate action essential, suggesting that collective investment could help close the continent's \$100 billion annual infrastructure gap. Finally, Hackman made a direct appeal to the African diaspora, affirming that Africa's rise is inextricably linked to their own dignity and prosperity. She highlighted Africa's demographic and economic potential, including a consumer market set to reach \$2.5 trillion by 2030, as a compelling reason for them to invest their skills and resources. She concluded by announcing the launch of the Africa Prosperity Dialogues 2026 in the US and urged everyone to attend the main event in Accra in February 2026. She expressed her firm belief that by pooling their resources and will, Africa and its global family can build the prosperous, integrated continent they deserve.



5. Mohamed M. Abou El Enein, the Chairman and Founder of Cleopatra Group, expressed his profound pride in the growing international awareness of Africa's potential. He stated that Africa was in his blood and brain, and he was encouraged by the serious attention now being paid to the continent by developed nations, a topic he had discussed in meetings worldwide. He noted with satisfaction that African leaders, institutions, and business communities were now approaching the continent's potential with a new vision and mindset, which was the central focus of the current gathering. Drawing on his extensive experience across multiple sectors, he acknowledged the concerns within Africa regarding recent US trade policy changes under President Trump, specifically their potential impact on exports. However, after studying the numbers, he asserted that the effect was minimal, as Africa's exports to the US represented less than one percent of the total. He argued that this demonstrated Africa's inherent strength and vast potential, emphasising the need to shift from a model of foreign aid to one of "win-win" investment. He stressed that it was crucial for



the continent to present a united front, proposing the creation of an "Africa Club for Finance" to negotiate special terms for the continent and to manage its valuable raw materials more strategically, ensuring they were priced according to their true value. To achieve this, Abou El Enein called for a new investment map for Africa, supported by encouraging legislation and special financing terms to attract foreign investors who would bring knowledge and know-how. He believed this would allow Africa to add value to its own raw materials, develop the skills of its youth, and eventually export finished products to the global market. Concluding his remarks, he expressed his pride in being African and apologised for his early departure, explaining that he had to attend a very important meeting at the United Nations concerning the declaration of the Palestinian states. He thanked the audience and expressed his hope that the next meeting would be held in Egypt.

6. From United States Representative, Congresswoman Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick began by outlining her roles on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, explaining that she served as the ranking member on the Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa and was also a member of the Subcommittee on Africa. She stated that she was proud to serve on both to provide a perspective of Africa as a single continent, criticising the common practice of dividing it as "ridiculous" and noting that this definition was currently being redefined. She emphasised to her colleagues that this shift required more than lip service, particularly challenging the often-repeated goal of moving U.S.-Africa relations "from aid to trade." She warned of the contradictory and damaging implications of simultaneously promoting trade while imposing tariffs, which she argued could break down relationships and have negative consequences. The Congresswoman detailed her efforts in Congress to foster policies that would allow for a long-thriving and competitive relationship with Africa. She mentioned leading a letter to Senator Rubio and other colleagues stressing the critical importance of extending the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which she described as a mutually beneficial policy that had created jobs both in the United States and in Africa. She countered the notion that "Africa is the future," insisting instead that "Africa is today, and it is now." She also pointed to the potential of leveraging billions of dollars in remittances sent to Africa from the U.S. as capital for investment and business growth, noting a growing recognition among Americans that Africa presents immediate economic opportunities. Finally, Cherfilus-McCormick expressed pride in the collaborative effort to redefine a respectful and mutually beneficial policy towards Africa, one that would help the continent rise to its rightful global economic position through its resources and talent. She assured the audience they had a "partner and a fighter in Congress" and invited them to reach out to her office. In her role as chairwoman of the Global Energy Conference, she highlighted a new focus on partnerships in Africa that went beyond extraction to include processing, job creation, and maximising growth. She concluded by framing a new competitive posture for the U.S., not by telling African nations to avoid China, but by demonstrating that America is a better partner.



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Africa's Response to the Trade Wars

Africa's Response to the Trade Wars



7. The discussion, centered on the topic: Building a Prosperous Continent Beyond Aid: Africa's Response to the Trade Wars was moderated by Johanna Leblanc of Adomi Advisory Group and featured insights from senior leaders across continental institutions, finance, and policy. These included: Amine Iddriss Adoum the Director, Infrastructure, Industrialisation, Trade & Economy, AUDA-NEPAD; Ibrahima Saidou-Giumba, CEO, Partnership for Digital Access in Africa (PDAA); Amany Asfour, President, Africa Business Council; Zurina Saban, General Counsel and Corporate Secretary, Africa 50; Joyce Bawa Mogtari, Special Aide to the President of Ghana and Thierno-Habib Hann - CEO, Shelter Afrique Development Bank. The central theme was leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) as a strategic response to global protectionism and a catalyst for endogenous growth, with a focus on finance, digital trade, governance, and diaspora engagement.
8. The session opened with a stark analysis of the challenge. Dr. Amany Asfour (Africa Business Council) outlined a three-pillar framework for building the trust necessary for the AfCFTA's success: private sector empowerment (including SMEs, women, and youth), policy advocacy for regulatory harmonisation, and a concerted focus on value-added production. The panel strongly advocated for local content policies, such as allocating 40% of government procurement to African businesses, and establishing independent, fair dispute resolution mechanisms to assure investors of the agreement's credibility. Panelists noted that while global tariff wars disrupt traditional supply chains, Africa's continued reliance on raw commodity exports leaves it profoundly vulnerable. With intra-African trade stagnating at a mere 15-18%, compared to Europe's 60% and ASEAN's 25%, the continent's economies remain susceptible to external shocks and fluctuating demand. This vulnerability is exacerbated by "donor fatigue," which threatens to reduce traditional aid flows. The panel agreed that the status quo is unsustainable and that a paradigm shift from aid dependency to trade-led prosperity is not just preferable but imperative for continental survival and growth.



9. The session identified high intra-African transaction costs (30-40% above global benchmarks) as a major barrier. Ms. Vymala Thuron (Shelter Afrique Development Bank) underscored the urgent need to make finance flow differently by scaling solutions like the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS) and tailored fintech innovations. The panel stressed that such solutions must be customised to Africa's unique DNA, keeping financial traffic local and addressing challenges like currency volatility and regulatory harmonisation to truly unclog the arteries of trade. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) was identified as the most powerful tool for this transformation. However, the discussion moved beyond tariff reduction, focusing on the critical non-tariff barriers that stifle integration. The panel cited estimates that addressing these barriers such as cumbersome customs procedures, incompatible standards, and poor transport links could boost intra-African trade by over 50%, potentially elevating it beyond 40% of total trade by 2040. The imperative is to shift from seeing the AfCFTA as a policy framework to treating it as a practical, operational reality on the ground, requiring coordinated investment in hard and soft infrastructure. Beyond financial and digital systems, the discussion highlighted critical physical and procedural impediments. Mr. Adoum pointed to the proven success of One-Stop Border Posts (OSBPs), which have reduced truck clearance times from hours to minutes at key borders, as a model for continent-wide trade facilitation. The panel concluded that replicating and scaling such physical infrastructure and bureaucratic simplifications is as vital as any policy agreement for enabling the free flow of goods.



10. A significant portion of the dialogue was devoted to financing and industrialisation. A critical consensus emerged on the need for fundamental macroeconomic reforms to unlock domestic capital. Mr. Amine Iddriss Adoum (AUDA-NEPAD) argued that Africa's central banks must evolve beyond singular inflation-targeting mandates, which often merely adjust to imported inflation. The panel highlighted that without policies encouraging domestic savings and productive investment, the continent will remain dependent on external capital. While remittances exceed \$90 billion annually, they primarily support consumption; the challenge is to create regulatory environments that channel these flows into industrialisation and productive investments. Noting that Africa captures a minimal share of the global value in its key exports: for example, less than 10% of the \$200 billion global chocolate market despite supplying 70% of the world's cocoa, the call for local value addition was urgent. Investment must be directed towards agro-processing, mineral beneficiation, and manufacturing, turning Africa from an exporter of raw materials into a trader of finished goods, thereby insulating itself from global commodity price volatility.



11. The digital economy was highlighted as a great enabler and equaliser. Mr. Ibrahima Saidou-Giumba (PDAA), advocated for a continent-wide, synergistic approach, a "carpooling" model to avoid fragmentation. The panel emphasised leveraging digitalisation to leapfrog developmental gaps, particularly in healthcare and education, by creating unified economic platforms. Key to this is prioritising strategic infrastructure, like shared data centres based on comparative advantage, and adopting a future-forward, deregulatory stance to empower the continent's youth rather than stifling innovation with outdated frameworks. The panel presented compelling data, stating that scaling digital trade platforms and achieving universal internet access could add over \$180 billion to Africa's GDP by the end of the decade. The successful rollout of the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS) was celebrated as a key milestone, with the panel urging for its rapid scaling to eliminate the \$5 billion annual cost of currency conversions in intra-African trade and to empower SMEs and fintech innovators.



12. From a legal perspective, Ms. Joyce Bawah Mogtari (Special Aide to the President of Ghana) highlighted that investor confidence hinges on judicial consistency and fairness. The panel noted a persistent trend where commercial agreements designate arbitration forums outside Africa, signalling a lack of trust in local systems. A key recommendation was for AfCFTA state parties to actively harmonise investment laws, build specialised judicial capacity for trade disputes, and demonstrate political will by honouring contracts across administrative changes to create a predictable business climate. Further, the panel unanimously called for a paradigm shift in engaging the African diaspora from viewing them primarily as remitters to recognising them as strategic partners in development. Proposals included creating dedicated investment platforms with bankable projects in sectors like infrastructure, technology, and real estate, and leveraging diaspora expertise through knowledge transfer programmes, such as telemedicine networks staffed by African doctors abroad.



13. The panel issued a collective call to action. The response to global trade wars is not isolationism but deeper, smarter internal integration. This requires a whole-of-Africa approach: governments must urgently harmonise policies and accelerate ratification of AfCFTA protocols; financial institutions must de-risk and fund bankable, cross-border infrastructure projects; and the private sector must drive innovation and invest in regional value chains; deep macroeconomic reforms, smart digital integration, reliable payment systems, trustworthy governance, and a strategic partnership with the diaspora. Doing so, Africa will not merely respond to global dynamics but will actively reshape them, leveraging its projected consumer market of 1.7 billion people with a combined spending power of \$2.5 trillion by 2030 to build a self-reliant and prosperous continent. A recurring and forceful theme was the need for concrete action to reverse the raw material export model. Using the cocoa industry as a stark example—where Africa exports \$5.7 billion in beans but imports finished chocolate from a \$217 billion global market, the panel argued that true sovereignty requires a relentless focus on building branding, marketing, and industrial capabilities within Africa. This shift from rhetoric to execution in industrial policy was deemed non-negotiable.



Official Launch of Africa Prosperity Dialogues (APD) 2026

Official launch of Africa Prosperity Dialogues (APD) 2026



14. The fourth edition of the all-important Africa Prosperity Dialogues (APD 2025) was launched at the Forum. Under the theme: Kwaku-Nhyira, noted that the launch of the Africa Prosperity Dialogue (APD) 2026 would be conducted by an all-female group, a deliberate choice following a panel where women had significant speaking time. She then invited the Executive Director of the Africa Prosperity Network, Nana Adjoa Hackman, Presidential Aide Joyce Bawah Mogtari, and Director Nkiru Balonwu to the stage. Joyce Bawah Mogtari subsequently announced the launch, declaring that the Africa Prosperity Dialogue 2026 would take place in Accra from February 4th to 6th, 2026. She revealed the theme would be **“Empowering SMEs, women and youth in Africa's single markets: Collaborate. Innovate. Trade.”** The announcement concluded with an invitation for attendees, especially diaspora investors, to participate in the event.





Open Conversation Session

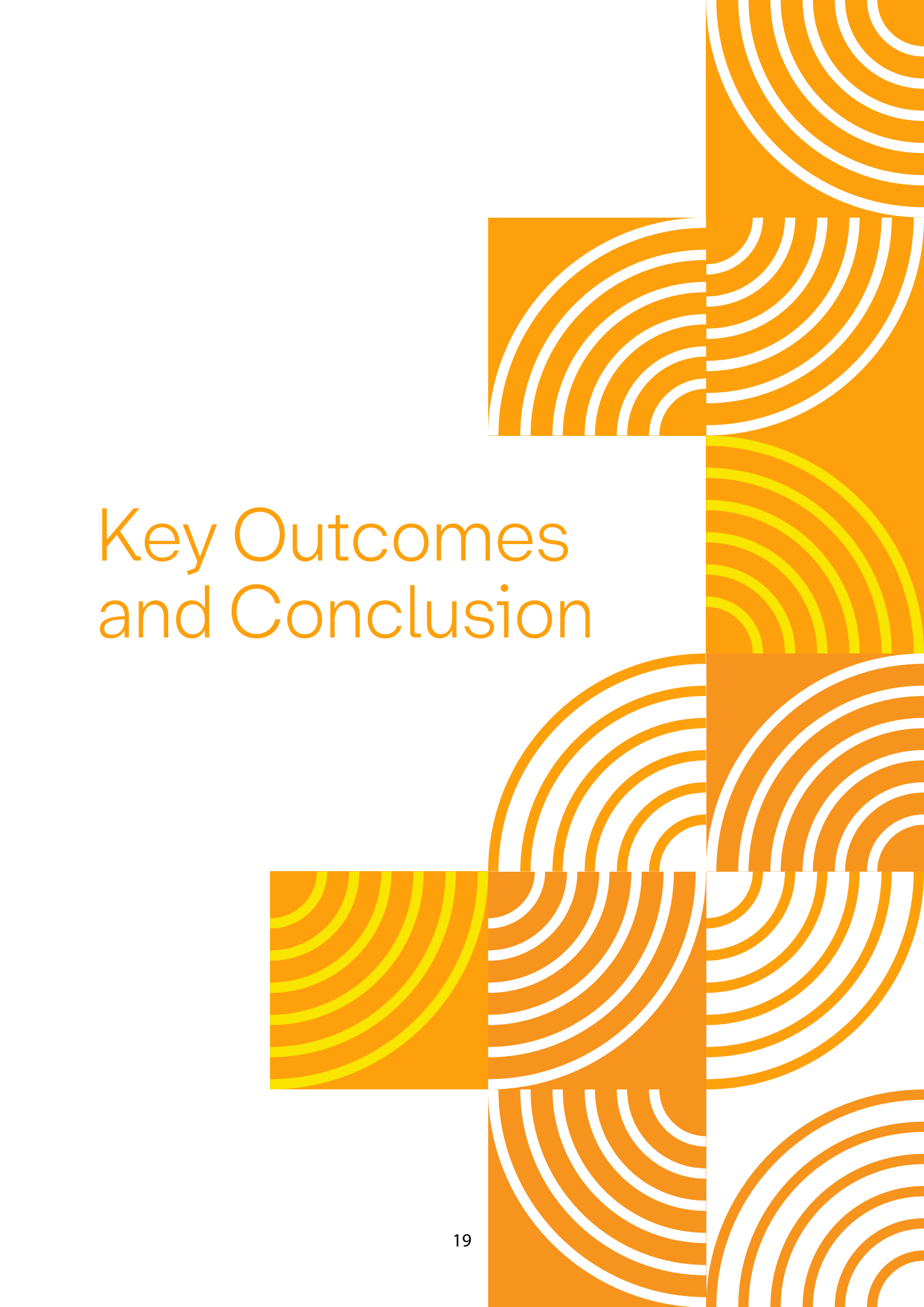
Open Conversation Session



15. The open conversation convened under the topic ***From Vision to Action: Building Prosperity Through Trade, Innovation and Community***, initiated a dynamic and solutions-oriented dialogue focused on translating the vision of an integrated Africa into tangible action. Facilitated by Kwaku Nhyira Addo of Asaase Radio, the session featured lead discussants from the diaspora, investment, and cultural sectors including: Marc Morial, President & CEO, National Urban League; Barkue Tubman-Zawolo, Chief Community Officer, Essence Ventures; Terry Afram, Managing Director, Bridge Partners; Daniel Barankin, CEO, 6ix Inc; and Efua Dougan, Principal Consultant/MD, DS Consortium. The conversation moved beyond identifying challenges to proposing innovative, community-driven strategies for navigating global headwinds and financing Africa's self-reliant future. The discussion yielded a consensus that Africa's prosperity is intrinsically linked to its ability to harness the potential of its youth and its global diaspora, moving beyond rhetorical commitments to actionable strategies.
16. The session began by addressing the reality of global protectionism. The discussants agreed that tariff wars, while disruptive, present a unique opportunity for Africa to look inward and activate its own market. With intra-African trade languishing below 18%, the panel emphasised that a collective response is not optional but essential for survival. They proposed a unified African negotiation bloc, leveraging the AfCFTA's framework of 1.5 billion people, to negotiate favorable terms with global partners and resist being pulled into bilateral disputes that undermine continental solidarity. A central and provocative theme was the concept of financing Africa beyond aid. Global Africa in the forum highlighted that the "A-Dollar-A-Day" vision was a powerful call to action for the Global African diaspora. The proposition is that if just 10 million of the estimated 200 million people of African descent abroad committed \$1 per day, it would mobilise over \$3.6 billion annually for a dedicated fund focused on bankable, cross-border infrastructure projects. This fund, potentially sponsored by the AU, would symbolise a shift from charity to strategic investment, allowing diaspora capital to build tangible wealth and connectivity across the continent.

17. The discussion then turned to the engines of industrialisation, identifying fintech and green industries as critical multipliers for the AfCFTA. Terry Afram of Bridge Partners highlighted that digital trade platforms could reduce the cost of intra-African commerce by up to 15%, while green industrialisation in sectors like EV batteries from critical minerals and renewable energy could unlock a market worth over \$1 trillion by 2030. The imperative is to create enabling environments for startups to scale and to ensure that Africa's vast mineral wealth is processed on African soil, capturing maximum value and creating jobs. In response to external challenges like U.S. tariff wars, the forum stressed that Africa's primary focus must be on internal strengthening. Participants argued that diversifying partnerships beyond traditional Western allies is possible only if the continent achieves macroeconomic stability. Key recommendations included the urgent need for African nations to implement sound monetary and fiscal policies to control inflation, stabilise currencies, and explore innovative financial tools like a continental digital currency to facilitate intra-African trade.
18. The power of culture and narrative was underscored as a vital, often underutilised, tool for mobilisation. Barkue Tubman-Zawolo of Essence Ventures argued that to galvanise the diaspora, Africa must lead with its cultural strength and tell its own story of opportunity. Citing the global influence of Afrobeats and African cinema, which generate billions of impressions and millions in revenue, the panel called for a strategic partnership between cultural ambassadors and policymakers to reframe the continent's image from one of need to one of innovation, growth, and unparalleled opportunity, thereby attracting investment and talent. A powerful outcome was the emphasis on narrative control. The forum concluded that the story of Africa must be told by Africans themselves to counter mainstream media stereotypes. This involves supporting African storytellers in film, media, and digital content creation to showcase the continent's diversity, successes, and real-life experiences. Authentic storytelling was identified as a crucial tool for changing perceptions, fostering pride, and attracting equitable partnerships.
19. The session culminated in a clear set of practical steps. To convert remittances which exceeded \$100 billion to sub-Saharan Africa in 2024 from consumption into investment, the panel advocated for creating diaspora-targeted investment vehicles like infrastructure bonds and venture capital funds. Efua Dougan of DS Consortium stressed the need for transparent governance and clear project pipelines to build trust. The unanimous call to action was for the immediate establishment of a task force, comprising diaspora leaders and financiers, to operationalise the "A-Dollar-A-Day" vision and create a seamless digital platform for the Global African community to invest directly in the AfCFTA's future, turning collective vision into transformative action. The conversation around the diaspora evolved from viewing it solely as a source of remittances to recognising it as a reservoir of capital, skills, and political influence. It was agreed that a concerted effort is needed to educate the diaspora on mechanisms like the AfCFTA and to create de-risked, bankable investment opportunities. Furthermore, the forum highlighted the need for the diaspora to leverage its political capital in host countries, such as the United States, to advocate for foreign policies that benefit the African continent. The Forum culminated in a call for a definitive paradigm shift from a dependency on aid to a focus on trade and self-sufficient economic models. Participants urged African leaders to take ownership of the continent's resources and engagement frameworks, ensuring that partnerships are structured on terms of mutual benefit and respect. This shift is seen as the cornerstone of achieving true economic sovereignty.

20. A dominant theme was the critical gap in structured mentorship. Participants argued that while there is frequent talk of youth inclusion, there is a failure to create pipelines for knowledge transfer. It was emphasised that leaders have a responsibility to actively mentor the next generation, providing not only guidance but also access to networks and opportunities. The forum concluded that without deliberate mentorship programmes, the energy and innovation of youth remain untapped, and the cycle of inexperience continues. The forum directly addressed the issue of tokenism, where youth participation is often a symbolic gesture rather than a substantive inclusion. Young participants expressed frustration at being absent from high-level discussions about their own future, noting that their perspectives are often filtered through an older generation's lens. The outcome was a clear recommendation to integrate young Africans such as entrepreneurs, economists, and innovators—as expert participants and panelists in forums, ensuring their voices directly shape policy and investment discussions.
21. A significant barrier identified was the perceptual divide between Africans on the continent and those in the diaspora, often fueled by historical stereotypes and a lack of exposure. The outcome was a call for intentional bridge-building through increased travel, cultural exchanges, and storytelling that highlights shared identities and common goals. It was asserted that overcoming this dichotomy is a prerequisite for building a unified "Global Africa" community capable of collective action. The forum strongly advocated for elevating women to more leadership roles in both the public and private sectors. It was posited that women inherently lead with a community-focused and nurturing approach, which is essential for inclusive and sustainable development. The outcome was a recommendation to actively promote and legislate for greater female participation in decision-making processes, recognising this as a strategic imperative for achieving holistic growth.

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Key Outcomes and Conclusion

Key Outcomes and Conclusion

22. The Forum successfully translated broad challenges into specific, actionable recommendations. Key outcomes highlighted the need for structured mentorship, the creation of authentic spaces for youth participation, a strategic shift from aid to trade, and the power of storytelling to reshape continental narratives. The central takeaway is that Africa's prosperity hinges on its ability to authentically integrate its youth, strategically engage its diaspora, and assert its economic agency. Further, there was unanimous call to move beyond tariffs and urgently address non-tariff barriers, harmonise customs procedures, and scale digital trade platforms like the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS) to enable the free movement of goods and services; A commitment to drive industrialisation by building regional value chains, particularly in agro-processing, critical minerals, and green industries, and to develop a pipeline of bankable, cross-border infrastructure projects for presentation to global investors; A strategic push to re-energise US-Africa relations to be more trade-focused. The announcement of the 2026 Africa Prosperity Dialogues theme, "Empowering SMEs, women and youth in Africa's single markets," was noted as a direct response to these outcomes, setting a clear agenda for continued collaboration and implementation. The forum closed with a commitment to move from dialogue to concrete action, underpinned by the principle of "Each one, teach one."





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