

South-South cooperation and statistics at the heart of African priorities

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New York, 17 July 2019 (ECA): The Chair of the Bureau of the 5th Session of the African Regional Forum for Sustainable Development (ARFSD) and Secretary of State for Sustainable Development of the Kingdom of Morocco Nezha El Ouafi, addressed the High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) and presented the main conclusions of the Marrakech Declaration this week in New York.

"African countries wish to consolidate South-South cooperation, share their experiences in addressing the multiple and complex challenges they are facing. They seek to build partnerships and multi-stakeholder action programs at the regional and sub-regional levels in order to achieve the development needed to ensure no one is left behind," said El Ouafi.

The ARFSD Chair echoed Africa's call for the creation of a solidarity fund for stronger statistics within the region in order to strengthen countries' capacity to design and implement fact-based policies and better monitor their implementation.

El Ouafi thanked the ECA Executive Secretary Vera Songwe for her leadership and support to African countries in implementing Agenda 2030 (SDG). She expressed her gratitude to ECA, the entire UN system, the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank for supporting African countries in formulating their priorities and advocating for the implementation of both Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063.

The High-Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development (HLPF) is the main global, UN platform for the monitoring of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. This year's edition of HLPF is being held from 9 to 18 July 2019 on the theme, "Empowering people and ensuring inclusion and equality".

The African Regional Forum for Sustainable Development (ARFSD) was held on 16-18 April 2019 in Marrakech (Morocco) on the same theme. ARFSD provided countries and development organizations with an opportunity to identify the progress made in the implementation of Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063, the many challenges that slow down Africa's development and how to face them.

Key ARFSD recommendations include intensifying national and global mobilization for the implementation of Agenda 2030 and 2063, implementing the Global Compact for safe, orderly and regular migration and implementing integrated processes for resource mobilization, budgeting and development planning.

In addition, countries agreed on the need to intensify efforts to fight corruption and illicit financial flows and to ratify and implement the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) and design national strategies and plans to improve productivity and achieve inclusive growth.

Finally, ARFSD stressed the need to make education more inclusive as well as the need for an environment that encourages young people to innovate in support of Agenda 2030 and 2063.

While climate change is already threatening to destroy 80 million jobs worldwide according to the International Labor Organization, Africa continues to suffer from delays in SDG implementation, mainly due to the lack of funding and limited access to data crucially needed for the design and implementation of policies adapted to the region's needs.

More on the High Level Political Forum <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>

More on the ARFSD that was held in Marrakech earlier this year <https://www.uneca.org/arfsd2019>

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