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Industrial development in Africa can help achieve better world for all, says Ban



Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon

20 November 2010 – [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon today underlined the need to increase international cooperation to unleash Africa's potential, saying that the continent's development can contribute to a better world for all.

With the continuing global economic crisis reducing demand for African exports, constricting foreign aid, and hindering the flow of remittances, Mr. Ban noted that Africa's share of the weakened global economy remains “disproportionately low.”

In a [message](#) marking Africa Industrialization Day, whose theme this year is “Competitive industries for the development of Africa,” he stressed the need to increase international cooperation in order to “unleash the continent's potential.”

“We know that processing Africa's agricultural and mineral resource will yield higher-value products that can help integrate the continent into the global economy,” he said. “Our collective challenge is to assist Africa in building capacity to do this.”

Mr. Ban emphasized the United Nations Industrial Development Organization's (UNIDO) support for the African Union's plan for the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa but noted that success will depend on African countries and their partners.

Pointing to the widespread difficulties caused by the global economic crisis, the Secretary-General observed that poverty and instability can “reverberate far and wide” and urged greater support for Africa's push towards “a greener and more prosperous future.”

“A sustainable approach to industrial development in Africa can help uplift societies, protect the environment, and contribute to a better world for all,” he said.

The heads of the African Union Commission, the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and UNIDO issued a [joint statement](#) on Friday, in which they urged the creation of “competitive industries, as a way for promoting Africa's development.”

They noted that, in recent years, many African countries have undertaken comprehensive policy reforms, aimed at creating a conducive policy environment for industrialization and development in general.

While prudent policies are critical for development, “they on their own do not present sufficient condition for stimulating a strategic and sustainable development process. Instead, a multitude of other conditions must also be met,” they stated.

Meanwhile, at a [press conference](#) in New York on Friday, UNIDO's Representative to the UN, George Assaf, told journalists that the theme of this year's Day goes “right into the heart” of the agency's mandate.

“Africa needs to integrate more efficiently into international markets,” said Mr. Assaf. “Africa needs to accelerate economic growth.”

In 1989, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 20 November Africa Industrialization Day with the intent to mobilize the commitment of the international community to the industrialization of Africa.

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