

## 5TH AFRICA: OPEN FOR BUSINESS SUMMIT: WOMEN OF AFRICA & THE DIASPORA, & THE FIGHT FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

Thursday, 21 September 2023, 11:00 am to 1:30 pm, New York Time, 630 2nd Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Guest of Honour for the African Continent: Hon. Nomusa Dube-Ncube, Premier of KwaZulu-Natal, Republic of South Africa

Guest of Honour for the Diaspora: Hon. Reta Jo Lewis President and Chair of the Board of Directors, Export-Import Bank of the United States

### INTRODUCTION

Africa is a continent of hope and promise, blessed with an abundance of human and natural resources and possessing myriad unique cultures, customs and traditions. Africa, as a crucible for innovation and growth in business, trade and development, has the potential to be at the forefront of a paradigm shift – business models that provide a solid return on investments, sustainably, while safeguarding our planet and people, upholding human dignity, and respecting the rule of law.

2023 marks the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), which promised that “[a]ll human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights,” and recognized the human right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of one’s self and one’s family. However, the climate crisis, and responses to it, have the potential to profoundly affect the enjoyment of these and other rights described in the UDHR. Therefore, embodied in the commitment towards human rights are duties to mitigate the harmful effects of climate change on the exercise of human rights, and to ensure that efforts to address climate change do not result in human rights violations.

Women and girls in Africa and of African descent are often cast into the role of primary stewards of the health and well-being of their families. They also constitute a major part of the informal economy of their countries. Already disproportionately burdened by systemic and patriarchal norms, the leadership and participation of women and girls in climate change adaptation and mitigation and disaster risk reduction need to be acknowledged, guaranteed and strengthened by governments, the private sector and other stakeholders.

### AGENDA

Africa Open for Business is a forum which provides an opportunity to explore how business should be done and

labor opportunities should be created in Africa, including its diaspora, and for diverse stakeholders to share perspectives. This includes the ideas, experiences and initiatives of the private sector, high level representatives from international organizations, governments, civil society, art and culture, and academia.

Additionally, with the African diaspora as the sixth region of Africa, the Summit serves as a platform for creating an enabling environment for discourse between those inside and outside the continent.

Africa: Open for Business: *Women of Africa & the Diaspora, & the Fight for Climate Change* focuses on the private sector’s intersection with Gender Equality and Climate Change. Within this framework, the Summit hopes to serve as an entry-point towards creating and sustaining multilateral partnerships.



#### Sustainable Development Goal #5

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



#### Sustainable Development Goal #9

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation



#### Sustainable Development Goal #13

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts



#### Sustainable Development Goal #17

Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

The format of the Summit will be divided into three distinct sections:

- Interventions by high level representatives from international organizations, government, and the private sector.
- Conversations with the private sector, government, civil society, academia and the international community
- Recognition of selected champions whose efforts have served to advance the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Africa and the diaspora.

### OBJECTIVES

- Explore the intersection between women’s rights, which are human rights, and the climate.
- Showcase the potential and promise of Africa, and highlight the positive narrative of the continent.
- Illustrate innovative public-private sector partnerships for achievement of the SDGs.
- Inspire and empower women in leadership in the private sector, as well as other sectors of society.
- Explore and develop cross-sector and cross-border partnerships for sustainable business and development.
- Bring attention to and popularize the SDGs, particularly goals 5 (Gender Equality), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), 13 (Climate Action) and 17 (Partnership for the Goals), in tandem with Africa Agenda 2063.
- Create and formulate solutions, initiatives and opportunities for achieving a better, more equitable world, through and with the support of business.

### OUTCOME

The Summit is intended to serve as the beginning of the dialogue and not the end. It is hoped that the relationships built and the connections reinforced,

amongst participants, through the Summit will lead to the development of opportunities for better business and a better world. It is also hoped that commitments made at the Summit will encourage stronger representation of women in leadership positions in the private sector and other societal sectors, and equitable opportunities for women and girls in a world that is bracing itself in the shadow of climate change.

### CO-ORGANIZERS AND SPONSORS

Organized by African Renaissance and Diaspora Network (ARDN) in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Africa Bureau of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN Habitat).

The Summit is generously sponsored by Ethiopian Airlines, Lipa Later Group, Global Council for Investment in Africa, Crevit Mulier & Co, A Boy and His Dream Foundation, and Drs. Ravi MJ and Little Mahendra

### PATHWAY TO SOLUTIONS

Africa: Open for Business falls within the framework of the Pathway to Solutions Initiative, an international, multilateral special project for the United Nations, spearheaded by ARDN, to popularize the Sustainable Development Goals, in collaboration with various United Nations system entities, the international community, civil society, the private sector, academia, the world of sport and culture and governments.

For more about Pathway to Solutions:

<https://www.ardn.ngo/pathway/>

### CONTACT

For more information, please contact Ms. Arlene Katzive, ARDN Director of External Relations, at [arlene.katzive@ardn.ngo](mailto:arlene.katzive@ardn.ngo)