

Regional Agenda

Milestones

25 Years of the World Economic Forum in Africa

Cape Town, South Africa 3-5 June 2015





Introduction

World Economic Forum meetings are convened so that leaders can come together to discuss the challenges affecting the global, regional and industry agendas, discern solutions and catalyse collective action in the spirit of public-private cooperation. The occasion of the 25th meeting of the World Economic Forum on Africa allows us not only to do this, but also to look back on the many milestones that have been achieved since 1990.

By learning lessons from past, and bringing together the greatest minds of the present, the Forum is committed to acting as Africa's trusted partner in transformation as it faces the challenges that will shape its future.

A Partnership for Transformation: 1990-2000



Forum on Southern Africa – October 1990

The World Economic Forum's first Africa meeting takes place in Geneva, featuring a multistakeholder cast of participants from business, government and civil society, including many ANC leaders. The success of the meeting launched a global roadshow – led by Barend du Plessis, then Finance Minister, and Thabo Mbeki of the ANC – to gain international support for South Africa's future. This was the first time that the entire South African political spectrum was united behind a common cause.

Forum on Southern Africa – October 1991

The second Geneva Meeting on Southern Africa takes place under the theme "Opportunities for Growth and Development in a Southern Africa in Transition".

Witness to South Africa's Transition – 1992

South African President F. W. de Klerk meets with Nelson Mandela and Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 1992 in Davos, Switzerland. This was their first joint public appearance outside South Africa and a milestone in the country's political transition. Mandela chose Davos to make his first speech on South Africa's economic future under the ANC and credited the occasion with inspiring his reversal of ANC policy on nationalization of the mining industry.

Southern Africa Forum – May 1993

The World Economic Forum holds the first Africa meeting in Cape Town, South Africa. This was the first visit to South Africa for many Southern African Development Community heads of state.

Global Leaders of Tomorrow – 1993-2003

The Forum launches a new community in response to a perceived need for a new approach to global leadership. Selected for the inaugural class in 1993 was South African politician Cyril Ramaphosa, current Deputy President of South Africa. The community ran successfully through 2003, during which time many notable African leaders were honoured, including Patrice Motsepe, Founder and Executive Chairman, African Rainbow Minerals, a Co-Chair of the World Economic Forum on Africa 2015; and Winnie Byanyima, Executive Director, Oxfam International, who served as co-chair at the Forum's Annual Meeting 2015 in Davos.

Southern Africa Economic Summit – June 1994

First Southern Africa Economic Summit in Cape Town, coinciding with the emergence of the first democratically-elected Government of National Unity in South Africa. Heads of government participating include Nelson Mandela of South Africa, Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, and Ali Hassan Mwinyi of Tanzania.



Southern Africa Economic Summit – May 1995

Southern Africa Economic Summit takes place in Johannesburg in the wake of the peace agreement in Angola.

Southern Africa Economic Summit – 22-24 May 1996

Under the theme “Towards a Business-Friendly Environment”, the Southern Africa Economic Summit returns to Cape Town. A South African task force was created as an advisory body to the Forum with the main objective to assist the South African public-private sector in marketing itself and to provide assistance, where possible, to SADC.

Southern Africa Economic Summit – 21 May 1997

The Southern Africa Economic Summit is held for the first time outside South Africa, in Harare, Zimbabwe, under the theme “A New Growth Opportunity”. Nelson Mandela delivered a special address.

Southern Africa Economic Summit – 17-19 May 1998

The Southern Africa Economic Summit is held in Windhoek, Namibia, under the theme “Southern Africa Priorities for Global Competitiveness in the 21st Century”. The first *Africa Competitiveness Report* is launched at this summit.

Global Compact – June 1999

At the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 1999 in Davos, United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan announces the Global Compact initiative to give “a human face to the global market”.

Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) – January 2000

At the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2000, World Health Organization Director-General Gro Harlem Brundtland announces the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI). This was the Forum’s 30th Annual Meeting. For the first time, a US President in office, Bill Clinton, came to Davos, where he was joined by UK Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Southern Africa Economic Summit – June 2000

Held in Durban, the summit aimed to give economic impetus into the African Renaissance concept and pursue regional integration priorities. Among the participants were Presidents Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and Joaquim Chissano of Mozambique, Vice-President George Saitoti of Kenya, and delegations from Uganda, Ghana and Nigeria.

Building Communities for Change: 2001-2010



Social Entrepreneurs in Africa – 2001

Then-First Lady Zanele Mbeki of South Africa joins the founding board of the Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurship. Among the inaugural class of Schwab Foundation Social Entrepreneurs selected in 2002 was Kenyan-based KickStart International and, between 2003 and 2006, several more highly acclaimed African social enterprises joined the network, including Riders for Health, Lifeline Energy, the Mobility Aid Center, CAMFED, and more. Zanele Mbeki remains an active board member to this day.

New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) – June 2002

At the Africa Economic Summit held in Durban in June 2002, the focus is to examine the role of business in the New Partnership for Africa's Development. Some 150 global and regional companies doing business in Africa sign the Business Endorsement of NEPAD. Thereafter, the business community is represented by the NEPAD Business Group.

Africa Economic Summit – 11-13 June 2003

The Africa Economic Summit takes place in Durban, South Africa, and turns a spotlight on the business challenges of Africa's own plan, the New Economic Plan for African Development (NEPAD).

Africa Economic Summit – 2-4 June 2004

The Africa Economic Summit is held in Maputo, Mozambique, under the theme "Aspirations over Africa's Future". In 2004, the Forum also publishes the book *South Africa at 10* to celebrate a decade of democracy in South Africa.

Launch of the Forum of Young Global Leaders – January 2005

A new community, the Forum of Young Global Leaders, is launched, with 16 Africans included in the inaugural class. Five of these go on to take part in the Forum's Africa Economic Summit in 2005.

Global Plan to Stop Tuberculosis – 25-29 January 2006

The Global Plan to Stop Tuberculosis (2006-2015) is launched by Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates and UK Chancellor of the Exchequer Gordon Brown at the Forum's Annual Meeting. The project – a coalition of over 400 organizations – aimed to treat 50 million people and prevent 14 million tuberculosis deaths worldwide over a 10-year period.

Business Alliance Against Chronic Hunger – 25-29 January 2006

Also announced in Davos the same year is the Business Alliance Against Chronic Hunger. With government and civil society partners, the Alliance's aim was to deliver scalable, market-based solutions to the persistent problem of hunger in Kenya.

Investment Climate Facility for Africa – June 2006

During the World Economic Forum on Africa in Cape Town, the Investment Climate Facility for Africa is launched as a public-private partnership trust focused on removing barriers to private investment in Africa.

Investing in Africa's Agriculture – 14 June 2007

Kofi Annan launches the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) with support from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation at the World Economic Forum on Africa in Cape Town. The announcement is made in a plenary session on Investing in Growth. AGRA was singularly recognized as an effective public-private partnership for improving smallholder farming in the G8 in 2008 and 2009.



Social Entrepreneur of the Year South Africa – 2007

A South African country competition for Social Entrepreneur of the Year is created with the support of E&Y. Each year a new award winner joins the Schwab Foundation network, which today has grown to over 70 social enterprises that have significant operations across African countries.

Africa Enterprise Challenge Fund (AECF) – 13 June 2007

Launched in Cape Town during the World Economic Forum on Africa, the Fund awards grants and repayable grants to companies to improve incomes of smallholder farmers and the rural poor. The fund is established as a special partnership initiative of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA).

World Economic Forum on Africa – 4-6 June 2008

Under the theme, “Capitalizing on Opportunity”, African leaders at the 18th World Economic Forum on Africa focus on raising the quality of leadership and education to capitalize fully on the growing opportunities available, thanks to strong economic growth and the significant decrease in conflict.

Deworm the World – 2009

An initiative by four World Economic Forum Young Global Leaders – Michael Kremer, Kristin Forbes, Sriram Raghavan and Esther Duflo – is launched in Africa, aimed at providing anti-parasite medicine to students in Kenya. The initiative grew rapidly, earning praise from the development community for its effectiveness and support from the government of Kenya, allowing it to reach millions of school-age children. In 2013-2014, Deworm the World was able to treat 37 million people in India and Kenya, and in 2015 launched a programme to treat children in Ethiopia.

A New Principled Economy – January 2010

At the 40th World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in 2010, Bill and Melinda Gates, Co-Chairs of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Founding Partners of the GAVI Alliance, pledge \$10 billion to vaccinate over 8 million children in the next decade. A large percentage of these funds were directed towards vaccinating African children.

Supporting Small-Scale Farmers – January 2010

Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete launches an investment blueprint at the World Economic Forum’s Annual Meeting, showing how to achieve a green revolution in East Africa by promoting “clusters” of profitable agribusinesses that incorporate small-scale farmers. At the launch, USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah announces a \$2 million investment into the corridor’s \$50 million Catalytic Fund.

World Economic Forum on Africa – 5-7 May 2010

The 20th World Economic Forum on Africa is held outside Southern Africa for the first time, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, under the theme “Rethinking Africa’s Growth Strategy”. The meeting convenes 13 African heads of state and over 1,000 participants from 85 countries. It also marks the first time that the Young Global Leaders choose Africa as the host region for their Annual Summit.

From Ideas to Action: 2011-2015



World Economic Forum on Africa – 4-6 May 2011

The 21st World Economic Forum on Africa, held in Cape Town, sees a number of important milestones reached. The Grow Africa initiative is co-founded by the African Union Commission, the NEPAD Agency and the World Economic Forum as an African-owned, country-led, market-based and inclusive approach to accelerating investment in sustainable growth in African agriculture.

South African Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa and Peter Brabeck-Letmathe, Chairman of Nestlé and Chairman of the Water Resources Group, a public-private partnership supported by the Forum and the International Finance Corporation, announce a Declaration of Partnership, recognizing the critical role that water plays as a catalyst for economic growth and social development.

The meeting also saw the launch of the YGL Dangote Fellowship to support the participation of African YGLs at World Economic Forum events, as well as the first time sessions were webcast on the Forum's public website.

World Economic Forum on Africa – 9-11 May 2012

In Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, the World Economic Forum, in partnership with the African Development Bank, the African Union Commission and NEPAD, launch the *Africa Strategic Infrastructure Initiative* – a project aimed at supporting infrastructure development in Africa and accelerating the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA).

World Economic Forum on Africa – 8-10 May 2013

In parallel with the meeting in Cape Town, the Forum's Global Shapers Community holds its first Shape Africa event, bringing together Shapers from city hubs across Africa and further afield. Launched in 2011, the community expanded rapidly in Africa, establishing at least one hub in every country by 2013. Today, the number of hubs active in sub-Saharan Africa exceeds 80.

World Economic Forum on Africa – 7-9 May 2014

The World Economic Forum on Africa is held in Abuja, Nigeria, under the theme "Forging Inclusive Growth, Creating Jobs", marking the first time it is held in West Africa. At the meeting, the World Economic Forum and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) launch an initiative to help developing countries speed up economic growth through private-sector financing by expanding the pool of foreign and domestic capital available for sectors including infrastructure, agriculture and energy.

Also at the meeting, Nigerian business leaders join forces with the UN Special Envoy on Global Education Gordon Brown to launch a \$20 million Safe Schools Initiative aimed at creating safer learning environments in the country.



Sustainable Energy for Africa – January 2015

The African Energy Leaders Group (AELG), a multistakeholder advocacy group that aims to address Africa’s power deficiency, is launched during the Forum’s Annual Meeting 2015 in Davos. The AELG’s first move is to create a working group of African leaders including Tony Elumelu, Aliko Dangote, President of the African Development Bank Donald Kaberuka, Prime Minister Daniel Kablan Duncan of Côte d’Ivoire and President John Mahama of Ghana.

World Economic Forum on Africa – 3-5 June 2015

The 25th World Economic Forum on Africa is held in Cape Town under the theme, “Then and Now: Reimagining Africa’s Future”. Convening over 1,250 participants from business, politics, civil society, academia and the media, the meeting is the largest ever held in Africa by the World Economic Forum, with the highest ever representation from the Forum’s Strategic Partner community, as well as the largest number of young and women participants demonstrating unprecedented levels of support for driving Africa’s transformation through public-private cooperation.

The meeting will see a number of high-level initiatives gain further traction. This includes Grow Africa, which since its launch has unlocked over \$10 billion in investment commitments across 12 countries, created 58,000 jobs and provided direct assistance to 8.6 million smallholder farmers. It also includes the Africa Strategic Infrastructure Initiative, where lessons learned are being deployed to help accelerate 23 cornerstone projects valued at \$9.7 billion in an international Central Corridor programme spanning Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The 2015 meeting will be the largest ever in terms of participants, indicating unprecedented levels of commitment for achieving Africa’s transformation through public-private cooperation.



COMMITTED TO
IMPROVING THE STATE
OF THE WORLD

The World Economic Forum is an international institution committed to improving the state of the world through public-private cooperation in the spirit of global citizenship. It engages with business, political, academic and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

Incorporated as a not-for-profit foundation in 1971 and headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, the Forum is independent, impartial and not tied to any interests. It cooperates closely with all leading international organizations.

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