

Pan African Parliament President's Speech at The Third Pan African Summit

Your Excellency the president of the Republic of Kenya, Hon. Dr. William Ruto;

Your Excellency Moussa Faki, Chair of African Union Commission, who is represented by HE Josefa Sacko, African Union Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development Blue economy and Sustainable development;

Honourable Speakers from National and Regional Parliaments present here today;

Dr. Mithika Mwenda, Executive Director, Pan Africa Climate Justice Alliance and the Co-host of this Summit

My colleagues in the Bureau of the Pan African Parliament;

Honorable members representing National Assemblies, Regional Parliaments and individual parliamentary Networks both in Africa and beyond;

Our friends from Governments, Intergovernmental Institutions, civil society and other Groups;

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;

I'm delighted, with palpable humility, to welcome you at Pan African Parliament.

This is the third time since 2009 parliamentarians across the African continent are meeting to deliberate, share perspective and chart the way forward regarding the most pressing issue of our time – climate change.

We meet every watershed moment in international dialogue on climate change; in 2009, the world attention was focused on Copenhagen's COP15, when the global community was stuck on what a post-Kyoto climate change regime would look. Your memories should be fresh on COP21 in Paris, which birthed the Paris Agreement and the Nationally Determined Contributions, which have redefined our interactions on climate action. Ahead of Paris in 2015, we gathered in Nairobi, hosted by the National Assembly of Kenya,

where we defined our collective agenda, which have guided our actions today. May I refer you to the report of the 2nd Summit in Nairobi which has been shared in your folders.

We are yet at another watershed moment. After painstakingly rallying ourselves for the adoption of the Paris Agreement, it was the time to settle down and implement the commitments which each Party had undertaken as their share fair of the burden of action to halt climate change impacts on people, society and economies across the World.

Seven years after this historic Agreement, the Global Stock moment will inform us on whether we are on the right track or not. As Parliamentarians, we are concerned about the disconnect that exists between the policy frameworks we adopt, and their implementation. If we have been remaining faithful to all the decisions passed in COPs and other related processes, we should not be talking about the failure of policies!

That is why, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, this year's theme, “ **A continent at Crossroads – Graceful just transition**”, should give us a moment of pause and reflection, in interrogating ourselves on whether it makes sense to make countless decisions, declarations and commitments that just remain in Paper.

This, you will agree with me, is what brings us at the cross-roads.

- The cross-roads of development, and the crossroads of balancing the same with the desire to combat climate crisis.
- The crossroads of remaining in the current unsustainable modes of production and consumption, which has led us to where we are now, and adopting new development pathways that may have an impact on our current growth paths, but direct us towards zero-carbon future – and bequeath a habitable future to the generations to come.
- The crossroads of abandoning the vast fossil fuel resources underneath our soils, and the crossroads of exploiting the resources to power our people out of energy poverty and hunger.

The IPCC released yet another synthesis report in March this year painting a pale outlook of the future of Africa as the world continues on the trajectory of carbon-intensive development and especially in the developed world where GHGs emissions have been increasing dramatically over the years.

The sixth Assessment Report of the UN Body warns that human activities, principally through emissions of greenhouse gases, have unequivocally caused global warming, with global surface temperature reaching 1.1°C above 1850–1900 in 2011–2020.

The report notes that climate change effects have caused damages to lives and livelihoods, and that the most vulnerable communities who are least responsible for climate change continue to be disproportionately affected and these communities are largely in Africa.

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen, this stark reality forms part of the basis for this Summit, which as per our decade practice, is convened by PAP in partnership with PACJA to serve as a platform for Honourable members to engage in a conversation that would provide insights useful for graceful just transition and NDCs implementation responsive to African development aspirations and economic realities. We are proud that this is the utmost platform in international dialogue on climate change which provides MPs Legislators in the continent a recognition as critical Actors in international climate policy processes.

We aim at galvanizing a critical mass of stakeholders capable of catalysing broad support for pro-poor, just, equitable, locally-led and science-based decisions in NDCs implementation and overall climate action. This summit therefore provides a platform for parliamentarians to robustly engage with experts, practitioners and leaders drawn from diverse backgrounds to internalize key persuasions in international dialogue processes especially focusing on the desired outcomes of COP 28 and Global Stock take processes.

We will endeavor to equip the parliamentarians in the continent with capacities to engage critically in international conversations on climate change and enhance their skills in catalyzing climate change policy processes in the continent.

We do not see this Summit in isolation, but rather, consider it as one of the major sectoral-thematic events leading to the Africa Climate Change Summit hosted by HE President Ruto and the African Union. To this end, the outcome of the Summit will feed into Africa Climate Summit, as well as other critical moments such as United Nations General Assembly and COP28.

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen, at the seat of AU Body designed to spearhead Legislative work by the African Union on behalf of African people, I wish to reiterate PAP's commitment to this partnership. The collaborative effort with us and PACJA, which has endured for the past decade, illustrates a mutually-beneficial partnership that can defy the perceptions and catalyse transformative change in the society. We will build on the effort of 2009, 2015 and the intervening period to make our collaboration contribute positively to our motherland. I welcome other partners, both parliamentary and non-parliamentary, to join us in this endeavour.

As I conclude, I want to confess that I'm humbled and at the same time touched by the great minds decorating this Summit – Africa, indeed, has inexhaustible human resource which can be harnessed to solve our myriad of problems, such as this 21st century challenge, climate change. I have no doubt that the outcome of the Summit will leave an indelible mark in the continent's journey in pursuit of climate justice for us all, and the generations to come.

I thank you all!