


**CHAIR'S SUMMARY**

The Nordic-African Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in Oslo on 19–20 November 2026. Ministers and high-level representatives from 30 African and five Nordic countries met under the theme *Dialogue in an era of uncertainty. United for a prosperous future.* The participants emphasised the value of open dialogue and closer engagement between African and Nordic countries as a basis for mutual understanding and joint action.

Participants reaffirmed the crucial importance of respect for international law and an effective multilateral system, with the United Nations at its core. They also highlighted opportunities to deepen cooperation in areas including trade and investment, sustainable job creation, the green transition and emerging technologies.

***Promoting sustainable growth and economic cooperation***

Participants placed job creation at the heart of Nordic-African economic cooperation, recognising trade, investment and private sector development as drivers of sustainable growth, particularly for a rapidly growing young population. Amid geopolitical uncertainty, deeper economic ties can strengthen resilience, diversify markets and create mutually beneficial opportunities. Participants highlighted the importance of a strong multilateral trading system and WTO reform to support trade, development and economic cooperation, as discussed during the ministerial conference in Yaoundé. Stronger intra-African trade and regional integration, including through implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, can expand markets and opportunities for African and Nordic businesses.

Participants highlighted opportunities for closer cooperation in energy, sustainable critical-mineral value chains and digital transformation. Reliable and affordable energy, stronger grids and regional power trade can support industrialisation, energy security and the green transition. Partnerships should ensure African countries capture more value through local processing and industrial development, while promoting technology transfer, skills development and circular economy solutions. Affordable connectivity, secure and resilient digital infrastructure, and stronger digital skills can support innovation, entrepreneurship and more inclusive economic participation.

Participants emphasised the importance of effective international climate cooperation and opportunities for closer Nordic–African partnerships on renewable energy, green business solutions, climate finance and adaptation. COP32 in Addis Ababa in 2027 will

provide an important platform to advance these shared priorities. Participants also recognised the vital role the oceans play in regulating the climate and supporting food security, livelihoods and economic prosperity. Closer climate and ocean cooperation can help address the climate crisis while creating business opportunities and supporting sustainable growth.

Mobilising investment at the scale required will depend on predictable regulatory frameworks, effective institutions and access to affordable finance. Participants also emphasised the need to bridge the gap between available capital and investment-ready projects, including through risk-sharing instruments and partnerships with local investors and businesses. Participants also stressed that reducing the cost of capital and addressing the gap between perceived and actual risk are essential to unlock investment that supports local businesses and job creation.

Participants emphasised that future Nordic-African economic partnerships should be increasingly characterised by mutually beneficial trade, investment, technology and knowledge partnerships that support growth and local value creation.

***Shared interests in an era of geopolitical uncertainty***

Participants reaffirmed their shared interest in preserving a multilateral system that is fair and grounded in the Charter of the United Nations and the universal application of international law. At a time of increasing geopolitical fragmentation and rivalry, participants stressed the need to protect, respect and enable international law to remain an effective foundation for the sovereignty, security and prosperity of all states. Double standards and selective adherence to these principles risk undermining confidence in the multilateral system and weakening the basis for cooperation across regions.

Participants underlined the need for substantial reform of the United Nations and other global governance institutions to better reflect 21st-century political and economic realities and respond to all regions' priorities. Reforms of the international financial architecture must include more effective debt relief mechanisms. A new Secretary-General for the UN offers an opportunity for bolder reforms beyond UN80, and there was broad agreement to support the new leadership. Security Council reforms, including African representation and the use of veto, and strengthening the UN's unique mediation and peacebuilding efforts was emphasised by most delegations both days. Participants expressed strong support for the ICC which is being actively undermined. Participants

also highlighted the important role of the African Union and regional organisations such as SADC, EAC and ECOWAS – with continued Nordic partnerships – in advancing regional cooperation and addressing shared challenges.

International cooperation on taxation and economic inequality was highlighted as areas where the multilateral system can deliver concrete results. Participants welcomed negotiations on the UN Framework Convention on Tax as an opportunity to, when broadly adopted, improve the effectiveness and inclusivity of the international tax system, foster trade and investments, improve domestic resource mobilisation and combat tax evasion and avoidance. Participants also discussed efforts to establish an international scientific panel on economic inequality to strengthen the evidence base for policymaking. There are strong links between tax and economic inequality, and both issues require broad cross-regional engagement to develop solutions at the national and international level that ensure legitimacy and support across different regions.

Participants highlighted the potential for African and Nordic countries to deepen cooperation in multilateral forums, while maintaining an open dialogue including where perspectives differ. In an increasingly fragmented international environment, cross-regional cooperation can help to build broader coalitions, bridge divisions and promote practical solutions to shared challenges. Participants expressed their commitment to identifying areas where common interests can be translated into joint action.

***Partnership for transformative use of Artificial Intelligence***

Participants discussed how AI can be used to advance sustainable development, including through research, education, healthcare, agriculture and public services. They emphasised the importance of ensuring that its benefits are widely shared, both within and between countries. Stronger domestic capabilities, digital infrastructure, computing capacity and skills can enable African and Nordic countries to harness AI, reduce technological dependencies and make informed choices about its development and use.

Participants stressed that AI must remain under human direction, oversight and control, and its development and use must be in line with international law and human rights. Responsible and trustworthy use of AI requires accountability, protection of personal data and effective safeguards, including independent evaluation, risk assessment and reporting of serious incidents. In this context, reference was made to the Finnish-Norwegian *Call for Control of Frontier AI Models*, which calls for stronger safety

measures and international coordination to manage emerging AI-related risks related to frontier models.

African and Nordic countries share an interest in inclusive international cooperation that allows all countries to help shape global AI governance, including through the United Nations. Participants highlighted opportunities for practical African-Nordic partnerships to strengthen capacity, support equitable access and translate principles for responsible AI into tangible results. Building on the 20th annual meeting of Internet Governance Forum in Oslo, the 21st annual meeting in Nairobi in December will provide a useful opportunity of further advancing these discussions.

***Looking ahead***

In an era of uncertainty, participants reaffirmed the value of the Nordic-African Foreign Ministers' Meeting as a forum for open dialogue, mutual understanding and practical cooperation. They expressed a shared interest in addressing some of the most pressing issues of our time, including climate change, AI and the need to ensure a fair and inclusive multilateral system. Participants have committed to building on the momentum of the meeting in order to strengthen bilateral and multilateral partnerships and translate these shared interests into joint action. Participants welcomed Ghana as host of the next Nordic-African Foreign Ministers' Meeting and are looking forward to continuing the constructive dialogue. Successful business forums are seen as a key part of these meetings. Several participants reflected on the possibility for a concrete roadmap with concrete milestones and scorecard system for the forum's work going forward. "Thinking outside the box", "the UN being the greatest achievement of human kind", and "normalising difficult conversations" were among memorable quotes.

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