



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

High-Level Conference **Shaping** the Future with Africa: Young Entrepreneurship as Key to a Just Transition

Speakers Booklet



Speakers

Welcome and Opening

Svenja Schulze

Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development

Ms. Schulze first joined the Federal Cabinet when she became Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety in March 2018. Since December 2021, she has been Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development. Before joining the Federal Government, she served as Minister for Innovation, Science and Research of the state government of North Rhine-Westphalia. Prior to that Ms. Schulze worked as business consultant with a focus on the public sector.

She holds a Master in German studies and political sciences from the University of Bochum.



Mavis Owusu-Gyamfi

Executive Vice-President, African Center for Economic Transformation

Mavis Owusu-Gyamfi is Executive Vice-President at the African Center for Economic Transformation. ACET is an African Think Tank focused on supporting countries to develop and implement sustainable growth strategies. Prior to that, Mavis was Director of Investments at Power of Nutrition, where she helped to grow the portfolio in Africa and Asia. Her other roles include Director of Programme Policy and Quality for Save the Children UK and twelve years as a private sector specialist at the UK's Department of International Development. Her last role at DFID was as a Deputy Director and Head of Profession for Private Sector Development cadre. Mavis is a Desmond Tutu Leadership Fellow with an MPhil from the University of Sussex.





Speakers

Keynote Statement

Kola Aina

Founding Partner, Ventures Platform

Kola Aina is an experienced investor, insightful non-executive director, and company chair who is passionate about supporting the growth of startups. He has a proven track record of success in leading investments in over 70 companies across Africa, India, and the US. He was also the founder and former CEO of Emerging Platforms, a leading enterprise software provider in West Africa. Kola actively participates in mentoring programs such as XL Africa, the World Bank Accelerator, and Google Launchpad Accelerator. He is also a member of the Young Presidents' Organization (YPO) and a fellow of the Aspen Institute USA (ALIWA). Kola holds a degree in Electrical Engineering and a Master in Business Administration specialized in Finance.





Speakers

Panel Discussion

H.E. Dr. Rania A. Al-Mashat

Minister of International Cooperation, Egypt

Dr. Rania Al Mashat has been Egypt's Minister of International Cooperation since December 2019 and has previously served as the first female Minister of Tourism. Al-Mashat enjoys more than 20 years of international experience in central banking, financial systems, monetary policy frameworks, sustainable development, climate finance, and international cooperation policies and strategies. Her previous roles at the IMF, working with governments in the Middle East & Central Asia, Africa and Asia, expanded her expertise of development systems and structural reforms in developing and emerging economies.

Al-Mashat received her PhD and MA in Economics from the University of Maryland, College Park, USA, and BA in Economics from the American University in Cairo (AUC).



Dr. Akinwumi A. Adesina

President, African Development Bank Group

Dr. Akinwumi A. Adesina was elected President of the African Development Bank Group in 2015, and re-elected in 2020. He previously served as Nigeria's Minister of Agriculture.

Dr. Adesina is an alumnus of the University of Ife (now Obafemi Awolowo University), Nigeria, and Purdue University, USA, from where he obtained a PhD in Agricultural Economics.

Dr. Adesina is a 2017 World Food Prize Laureate, and recipient of several international and national honors, as well as several honorary doctorates from universities in the US, Africa, and Canada.

As President of the African Development Bank Group, Dr. Adesina is spearheading an acceleration of Africa's development. Under his leadership, the African Development Bank Group increased its share capital from \$93 billion to \$208 billion in 2019.





Speakers

Panel Discussion

Lacina Koné

Director General and CEO, Smart Africa

Mr. Koné is the Director General and Chief Executive Officer of Smart Africa having joined the organisation in March 2019. He oversees the process of defining and advancing Africa's digital agenda and has overseen the development of continental blue-prints for Africa on Digital Identity, ICT Start-ups and Innovation Ecosystems, Smart Villages and the definition of Africa's Smart Broadband 2025 Strategy in addition to advancing additional key continental initiatives.

In recognition for this work, Mr. Koné has been recognized in 2021 as 12th among the 50 personalities advancing Africa's digital transformation and recently ranked number 3 among the 10 Africa digital trendsetters in the 2022 Jeune Afrique technology ranking.



Audrey S-Darko

Founder and CEO, Sabon Sake, Ghana

Audrey S-Darko is the founder and lead at Sabon Sake, a climate tech company at the nexus of regenerative agriculture and carbon finance. Her mission is to improve the economic wellbeing of farmers and accelerate their transition towards climate resilient farming and food systems in a climate changing world. In contributing immensely to the provision and equipping of communities in Ghana and beyond through access to regenerative soil solutions and climate finance, she wants to increase ability among farmers to tackle climate change. Mrs. S-Darko and Sabon Sake are on a relentless quest to restore mine impacted and degraded farmlands across the continent to improve food security, building and scaling collective climate impact around sustainable land use in collaboration with climate committed organizations.





Speakers

Panel Discussion

Mariatheresa Kadushi

Founder and CEO, Mobile Afya, Tanzania

Mariatheresa Kadushi is a Tanzanian health-tech innovator working to connect people with the healthcare they need, in languages they understand and technologies they can access. She is founder and CEO of Mobile Afya an innovation-driven startup working to provide health information and virtual medical access in local and native languages. The ultimate objective at Mobile Afya is to impact the health and well-being of Africans by harnessing the power of mobile technology as an enabler. Mrs. Kadushi is a recipient of IVLP - a state fellowship for emerging African leaders under the US Department of State, an NTDs youth champion, and a YALI alumna. She has gained her leadership experience in technology companies in Africa, while also participating in country-level initiatives that reform communities and support small businesses, corporations and investors operating in East Africa.



Birgit Pickel

Director-General Africa, BMZ

Birgit Pickel has more than 20 years of experience in international cooperation, including more than 12 years in management positions. Her regional focus is on Africa with profound expertise in global health, pandemic preparedness, feminist development policy and civil society. Previous to her current position she was Director for Global Health, Pandemic Preparedness and One Health at BMZ. In that position she was member of the Boards of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and of the Global Financing Facility, and Chair of the Supervisory Board of the Legacy Landscapes Fund. Birgit Pickel lived and worked in the USA, South Africa and Zambia. She holds a Master in Political Science and a postgraduate certificate in Development Studies.





Speakers

Moderator

Conny Czymoch

Ms. Czymoch is an experienced international moderator, presenter, facilitator and media coach, who is passionate about gathering and communicating on solutions for the future of humanity and life on this planet.

Her core topics comprise sustainability, climate action, biodiversity preservation, reaching the global goals, resource efficiency, food and agriculture, transport and mobility, development cooperation, the labour market, international supply chains, corporate responsibility, human rights and human trafficking.

With her longstanding journalistic career in print, radio and TV, Conny today moderates international conferences, live on stage or virtually, in English and/or in German.

Conny has also been a media and presentation coach for the last 25 years.

