

UNSTOPPABLE  
**AFRICA**  
GLOBAL AFRICA BUSINESS INITIATIVE

NEW YORK, **25-26 SEPT 2024**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**SHAPING GLOBAL  
AMBITIONS FOR  
AGENDA 2063**

Organized By:



**United Nations**  
Global Compact





Partners



GABI Circle



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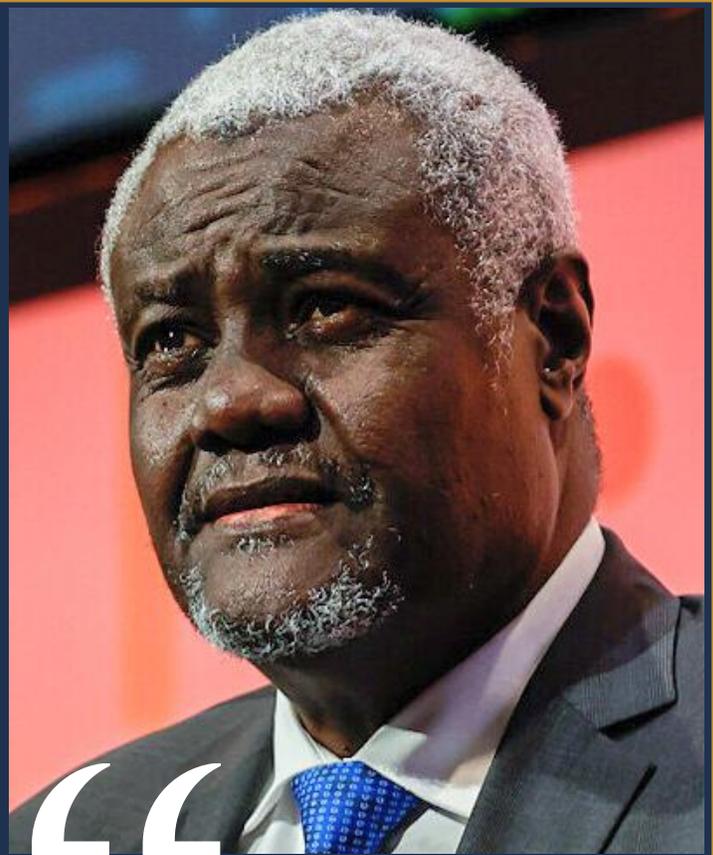


For more information and interest in partnering with the Global Africa Business Initiative (GABI), contact [gabi@unglobalcompact.org](mailto:gabi@unglobalcompact.org)



“We are joining forces around the critical theme, Unstoppable Africa. This theme reminds us of the importance of strengthening partnerships to amplify progress and prosperity on the continent and around the world. Unstoppable Africa needs our unstoppable efforts, to spur development for all, to ensure just and equitable transitions in critical areas like renewable energy, food system, education, and digital transformation, to make meaningful reforms to the global financial architecture so all countries get the support they need and deserve and to boost African jobs and economic prosperity through historic initiatives like the African Continental Free Trade Area. I thank the African Union for its leadership and all of you for your collaborations as we work as one to ensure that Africa’s future is one of peace, prosperity and opportunity for all.”

**H.E. Antonio Guterres**  
United Nations Secretary-General and  
Board Chair of the UN Global Compact



“The Unstoppable Africa forum is far more than a gathering of minds, it represents a bold vision of the role that Africa must play in shaping a sustainable global future for all of us. From its rich and diverse cultures to its vast landscapes and the resilience of its people, Africa’s story is one of determination, progress, and unwavering hope. Africa is a continent of economic opportunities and must claim its ambition to drive innovative solutions and contribute to solving the world’s most pressing challenges. Africa’s strength doesn’t just lie in its story, innovation, or natural resources, it lies in its people. Africa’s youth are a beacon of hope, and with its young and dynamic population, Africa is positioned to be a global leader now and in the future... Unstoppable Africa will engage with critical ideas shaping the future of Africa and the world in general.”

**H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat**  
African Union Commission Chairperson



"Today, Africa's promise is clearer than ever, we have seen what is possible. Africa is not participating in global conversations, Africa is leading them. As the world confronts challenges, Africa offers solutions, whether in energy transitions, digital transformation, or inclusive trade, GABI is our platform to own this potential, explore how Africa can continue to drive global progress."

**Amina J. Mohammed**  
United Nations Deputy Secretary-General



"We have a portfolio of just under one billion that we are investing in Africa. Over 50 percent of that is equity, and are primarily focused on climate infrastructure, adaptation, mitigation programs, digital infrastructure and transformation, and food security."

**Diana Layfield**  
Chair, British International Investments (BII)



"We are working with colleagues and friends around the world to provide more credit guarantees, more predictability in the environment, more local currency and ways to derisk investment on the continent. Time is of the essence and we need to move aggressively for the integration of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area."

**Makhtar Diop**  
Managing Director of the International Finance Corporation (IFC)



"You cannot expect a continent that has been the least responsible for the climate change matters that we face today to be responsible financially for carrying the burden of what the global North has done."

**Linda Mabhena-Olagunju**  
Founder & CEO - DLO Energy Resources Group (Pty) Ltd

"The biggest and most compelling opportunity in Africa and one of the most compelling globally is the unlock of the digital economy for the continent because it takes everyone along."

**Michael Miebach**  
CEO, Mastercard



"Africa is an incredibly special place... it gives you this perspective of the problems that actually exist in the world, and like this, the drive to try to solve them."

**Eng. Sara Sabry**  
Africa's First Female Astronaut



"I think the greatest investment in Africa is in agriculture and critical minerals, and when you talk of solid minerals, we have not even scratched the surface. All we need to do is just to make sure that we process our minerals rather than exporting the raw materials because we do not really add value or create jobs when we export the raw materials."

**Alh. Aliko Dangote**  
Founder and President/Chief Executive  
Dangote Group



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# Executive Summary

**In 2022, under the leadership of United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina J.**

**Mohammed, the inaugural Unstoppable Africa was launched as the flagship event of the Global Africa Business Initiative (GABI).** This high-level convening emphasized Africa's business ecosystem, showcasing opportunities in sectors such as energy, technology, finance, fashion and agriculture.

Coordinated by the United Nations Global Compact on behalf of the UN system – GABI has made significant strides in highlighting and advancing Africa's vast potential not only as an investment destination but also with its youthful population and wealth in critical minerals and clean energy sources, it is a continent offering solutions for the globe.

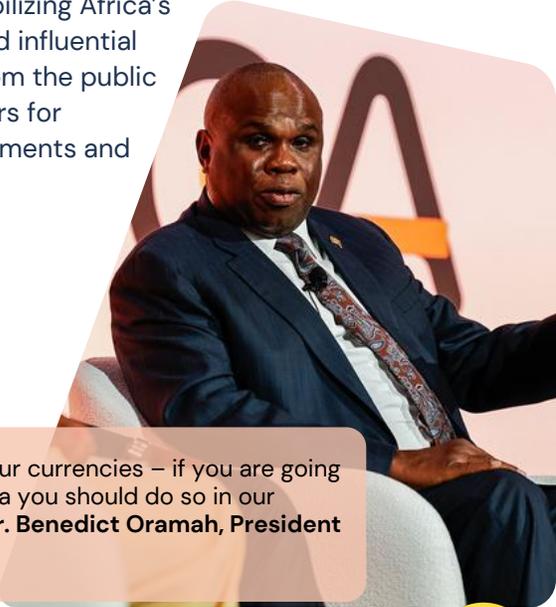
Over the last three years, Unstoppable Africa has become a powerful platform that mobilizes chief executive officers, global investors, industry leaders, philanthropy, academia, and heads of government. The event fosters collaboration, transforming commitments and actions into business solutions that address not only Africa's challenges but also contribute to solving the world's most pressing issues.

In 2023, GABI continued to build on its early momentum, presenting Africa's economic viability and showcasing growth across multiple sectors. Celebrating the 60th anniversary of the African Union, Unstoppable Africa 2023 emphasized that GDP growth on the continent outpaced the global average and there was a notable surge in foreign direct investment. Key announcements, like Ghana's \$550 billion Energy Transition and Investment Plan and the Democratic Republic of Congo's focus on electric vehicles, underscored the continent's readiness for a sustainable future. Other initiatives, such as the launch of the *timbuktoo* initiative by UNDP and the partnership between Google and the African Development Bank (AfDB) to establish a coding center in Africa, aim to leverage the continent's burgeoning youth demographic.

These efforts focus on equipping young people with critical skills in technology and innovation, empowering them to drive economic growth and participate actively in the global digital economy.

**In 2024, Unstoppable Africa was once again co-convened by the United Nations Global Compact and the African Union. It was held from 25 to 26 September on the margins of the High-Level Week of the United Nations General Assembly – where it showcased Africa's capacity to address global challenges through strategic investments and partnerships.** By emphasizing inclusive opportunities in business and trade, digital innovation, and sustainable energy solutions, Unstoppable Africa 2024 reinforced the continent's pivotal role in shaping a prosperous global future.

This year, Unstoppable Africa took place alongside the United Nations General Assembly's Summit of the Future, a "once-in-a-generation opportunity" to strengthen global governance for the benefit of present and future generations. During the Summit which served as a platform for transformative discussions, world leaders adopted the Pact for the Future and its annexes: the Global Digital Compact and Declaration on Future Generations. At Unstoppable Africa, the focus was on mobilizing Africa's most dynamic and influential changemakers from the public and private sectors for solutions, commitments and actions.



"Domesticate our currencies – if you are going to trade in Africa you should do so in our currencies" – **Dr. Benedict Oramah, President Afreximbank**

With 119 Speakers from across the globe speaking over two days, Unstoppable Africa 2024 captured some key messages which speaks to the direction of travel for the Global Africa Business Initiative in terms of strategic focus and impact.

- The time for planning is done! **Now it is time for action.**
- There is an increased need for **advocacy** to promote an enabling business environment and political willpower. GABI is such a platform to do this and will do so.
- **Financing** is key! Be it for climate action or food systems, innovative ways to de-risk and make finance available for projects on the continent is a priority, especially for SMEs.
- More emphasis needs to be placed on **scalability** through partnerships and collaboration. With a mix of new and traditional ways to meet Africa's needs.
- The GABI platform must build on its **convening power, private sector, Government and multilateral partnerships** to drive impact for the Continent both on and off the continent.

There is no doubt that the Unstoppable Africa event has captured the imagination of the African private sector and global private sector with interests in Africa. The growth in the number of attendees and caliber of high-level participants speaks to this growth and the opportunities the platform presents to amplify and accelerate Africa's unstoppable business, trade and investment opportunities, for Africa and the world.

Below are some key figures:

- **4000+ participants** (1,545 in person, 2,531 online)
- **6 Heads of State, Governments & Vice Presidents** (Barbados, Côte D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Netherlands & Poland)
- **600+ Global private sector players**, top business leaders, sports, music & creative icons
- **119 Speakers** from around the world
- **14 Government Ministers from 13 countries** (Angola, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Kenya, KSA, Rwanda, Togo, UAE, UK, Zambia) and three Local government officials

As Africa secures its permanent seat at the G20, with South Africa assuming the presidency, and expands its role in the enlarged BRICS Plus through the inclusion of Egypt and Ethiopia, the continent is poised to play an even more critical role on the global stage. With the right investments, strategic partnerships, and opportunities, Africa can harness its abundant human capital and resource wealth to become a driving force for global economic growth. Platforms like Unstoppable Africa serve as a vital springboard, enabling the continent to amplify its business and trade opportunities and to cement its position as a premier global investment destination.

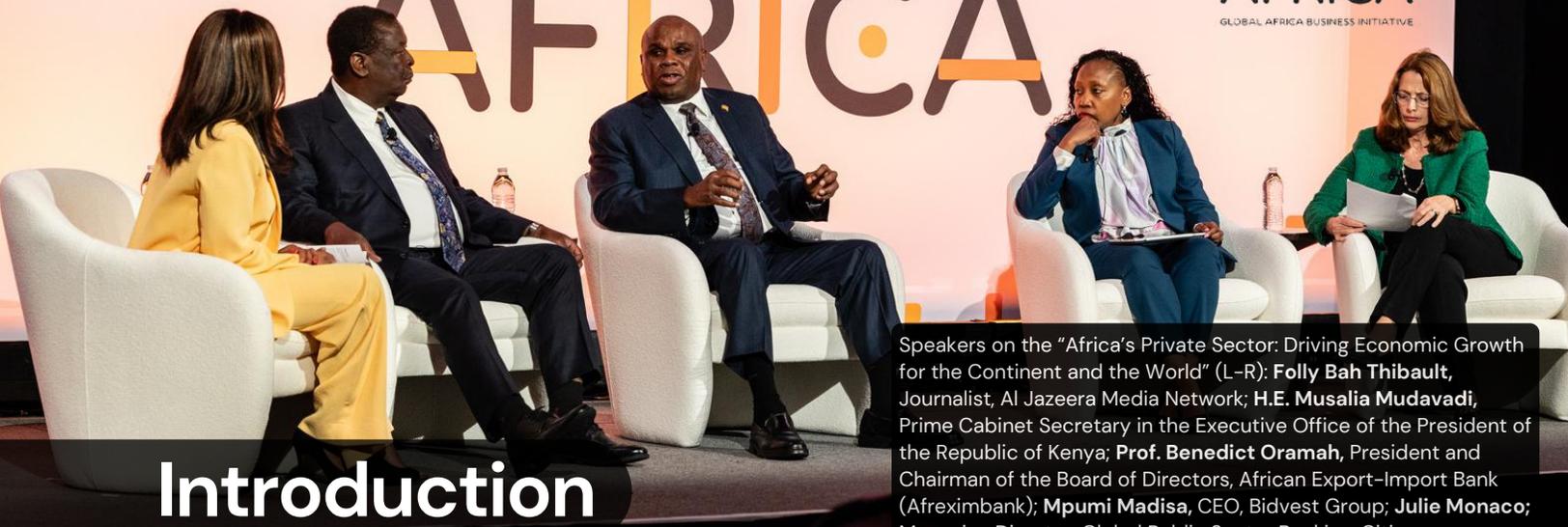
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## Introduction

Speakers on the "Africa's Private Sector: Driving Economic Growth for the Continent and the World" (L-R): **Folly Bah Thibault**, Journalist, Al Jazeera Media Network; **H.E. Musalia Mudavadi**, Prime Cabinet Secretary in the Executive Office of the President of the Republic of Kenya; **Prof. Benedict Oramah**, President and Chairman of the Board of Directors, African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank); **Mpumi Madisa**, CEO, Bidvest Group; **Julie Monaco**, Managing Director, Global Public Sector Banking, Citi

The Global Africa Business Initiative (GABI) was established to position Africa as a cornerstone of global economic transformation by amplifying Africa's unstoppable business, trade, and investment opportunities while also encouraging innovative partnerships and conveying high-impact initiatives that align with the aspirations of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2063—the African Union's blueprint for inclusive and sustainable development. Guided by this vision, Unstoppable Africa 2024 embraced the theme "Shaping Global Ambitions for Agenda 2063."

### Main Forum Highlights

Over the course of two days, Unstoppable Africa 2024 focused on delving deeper into GABI's core thematic areas: Energy Access and Energy Transition, Inclusive Growth and Trade, Digital Transformation, Creatives Industries, and Sports.

**Energy Access and Transition:** Exploring strategies for expanding renewable energy generation, improving energy access and efficiency, and ensuring a just transition away from fossil fuels.

**Inclusive Growth and Trade:** Fostering inclusive economic development that attracts investment and creates jobs, while boosting intra-African trade.

**Digital Transformation:** Leveraging Africa's youthful population and rapid technological adoption to leapfrog traditional development models, bridge the digital divide, promote financial inclusion, and foster innovation. As well as upskilling African youth and providing startups on the continent with resources and mentorships they need to succeed.

**Creative Industries:** Harnessing the power of Africa's vibrant fashion, film, music and entertainment industries not only as a source of cultural expression but also as an economic driver that delivers jobs, tourism, and builds the Africa brand. And to reverse the extractive nature of the current business models of these industries.

**Sports:** Communicating the need for and the clear viability of modern sports infrastructure and continental leagues to boost economic growth, social cohesion, cultural diplomacy, and enhance community engagement across Africa.

# Energy Access and Energy Transitions

The Energy Sessions at Unstoppable Africa 2024 discussed Africa as The Solution for Clean Energy. The Power to the People – Mission 300 and Opportunities in African Green Energy session, provided a comprehensive overview of the collaborative efforts required to achieve Mission 300's goal of providing clean energy access to 300 million Africans by 2030.

## Key points raised during this panel session included:

- Importance of robust public-private partnerships (PPPs) that are inclusive, well-structured, and aligned with long-term development goals.
- Stronger policy frameworks and access to blended finance to drive the scale required for the Mission 300 goal.
- Highlighted initiatives in Togo, Mauritania, and Ghana, where distributed renewable energy solutions, such as mini-grids, are making significant strides in expanding energy access to rural and underserved communities.
- Vital role of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Africa's energy transition and the importance of empowering these enterprises by bridging gaps in finance and climate action knowledge
- Innovative financing and value chain localization as key drivers of sustainable energy growth. Mr. Richard Nelson of Power Africa shared success stories of reducing regulatory barriers and facilitating financing for off-grid companies, reinforcing the private sector's role in advancing energy access.

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Fireside Chat (L-R): Anna Bjerde, Managing Director, World Bank Group in conversation with Damilola Ogunbiyi, CEO and Special Representative of the UN Secretary General for Sustainable Energy for All, and Co-Chair of UN-Energy

## Spotlight on Announcement:

### Mission 300

The World Bank Group, African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Rockefeller Foundation re-introduced Mission 300 on the Unstoppable Africa Mainstage. Mission 300 is an ambitious effort to connect at least 300 million people in Africa with electricity access by 2030. The initiative will provide sustainable energy solutions, drive economic growth, improve the lives of millions, and drive progress towards global energy access goals on the continent.

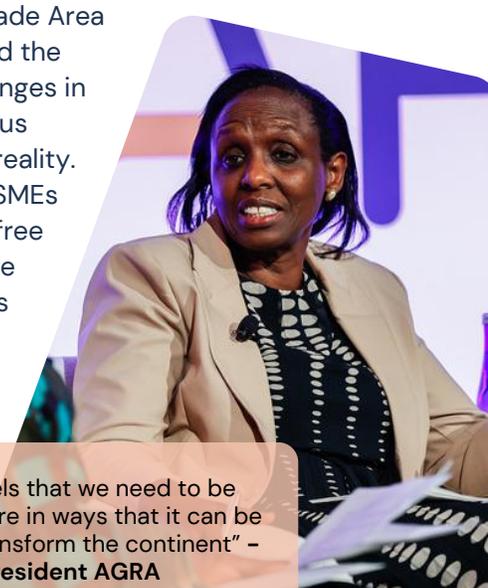
# Inclusive Growth and Trade

The sessions around Inclusive Growth and Trade discussed several topics themed around Africa as The Investment Destination, importance of eliminating Africa's prejudice premium and finally what is needed for the unlocking of Africa's full economic potential, with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) being the critical enabler for championing intra-African trade, harmonizing trade policies, and creating a single market for the continent.

## Some key takeaways include:

- The need for Africa to reshape its financial narrative, starting with the creation of a new, inclusive financing model tailored to Africa's unique challenges.
- The importance of concessional financing, attracting private investment, and bolstering domestic resource mobilization to accelerate the continent's growth.
- The importance of the role of African institutions in leading the charge, urging a shift in how risk is perceived globally, and calling for innovative financial solutions to de-risk projects and unlock long-term investments.

- The session on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) highlighted the progress and challenges in making this ambitious trade agreement a reality.
- The importance of SMEs and facilitating the free movement of people were emphasized as key enablers of economic integration.



"We have all the models that we need to be able to scale agriculture in ways that it can be the sector that will transform the continent" –  
**Dr. Agnes Kalibata, President AGRA**

By aligning with the aspirations of Agenda 2063, Unstoppable Africa shapes global ambitions, providing a platform to advocate for policies that promote trade liberalization, investment in infrastructure, and the empowerment of women and youth in economic activities, ensuring that Africa's growth trajectory is both inclusive and transformative for the continent and the world.



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Speakers on the panel session "Which Way AfCFTA?: The Big Questions on the Biggest Trade Area in the World" (L-R): **David Pilling**, Africa Editor, Financial Times; **H.E. Minister Olushogun Adjadi Bakari**, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Benin; **British A. Robinson**, Coordinator, Prosper Africa; **H.E. Wamkele Mene**, Secretary-General of the AfCFTA Secretariat; **Igor van den Essen**, Regional Managing Director Africa & Europe, APM Terminals SA

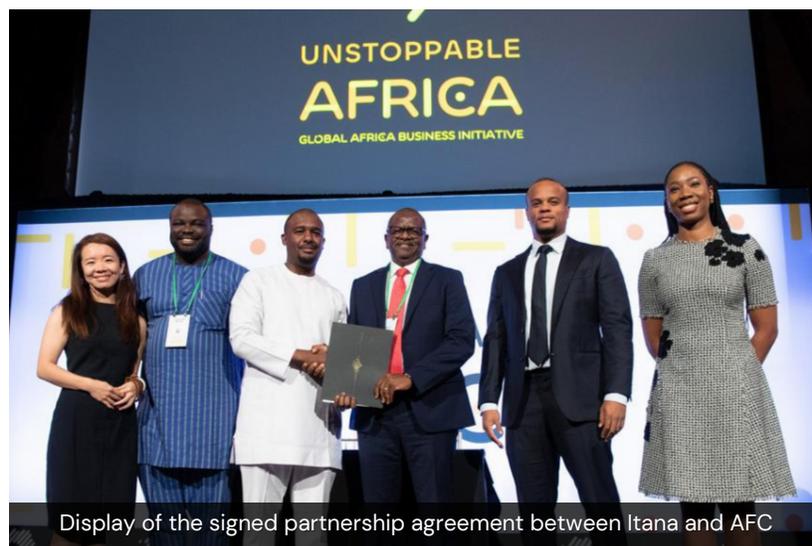
# Digital Transformation

Digital transformation is pivotal for Africa's economic growth, social development, and global competitiveness, serving as a catalyst for achieving the African Union's Agenda 2063. With over 60% of the continent's population under 25 and a rapidly expanding digital ecosystem, Africa has a unique opportunity to harness innovation and technology to leapfrog development challenges. The sessions for this thematic area focused on the opportunities for Africa's Digital Revolution.

With support from partners, the sessions delved into:

- Addressing the African Union's efforts to create a digitally-empowered Africa that thrives in a global digital economy, driving forward the aspirations of Agenda 2063 for a prosperous and technology-driven continent.
- Discussing actionable solutions for closing Africa's digital divide, propelling its digital revolution, and leveraging technology for sustainable development.
- Highlighting the urgency of addressing barriers such as limited digital infrastructure, high data costs, and inadequate device penetration, while leveraging strategic partnerships to bridge these gaps.
- Emphasizing Africa's potential as a global technology leader, the session focused on multi-stakeholder collaborations to achieve transformative outcomes.

- Exploring the transformative potential of artificial intelligence (AI) in solving real-world challenges across Africa.
- Aligning AI development with Africa's unique needs while ensuring its equitable benefits reach marginalized communities.
- Harmonizing AI governance policies and promoting local talent development to position Africa as a leader in responsible AI innovation.
- Call for multi-stakeholder efforts to ensure AI solutions are impactful, inclusive, and address Africa's most pressing challenges.



Display of the signed partnership agreement between Itana and AFC

## Spotlight on Announcement:

### Updates on UNDP's timbuktoo Initiative

UNDP's timbuktoo Initiative – progress made since its launch in 2023 and further commitments to youth empowerment through upskilling and digitalization.

## Spotlight on Announcement:

### Launch of Itana

Itana is Africa's first Digital Economic Zone where global and Pan-African companies can incorporate online, operate remotely, and access the African talent pool and market. Itana signed a joint development agreement with Africa Finance Corporation (AFC) in which AFC would commit up to \$100 million in the first phase of Itana's development.

# Creative Industries

The creative industries in Africa are a dynamic driver of economic growth, cultural diplomacy, and social cohesion, with music, arts, films, and fashion leading the charge. These sectors not only celebrate Africa's rich heritage but also position the continent as a global powerhouse of innovation and talent.

The Creative Industries sessions at Unstoppable Africa 2024 illuminated the transformative power of Africa's cultural assets—music, arts, films, and fashion—in reshaping the continent's global image and driving economic growth.

## Key takeaways:

- The need for strategic investments in infrastructure, intellectual property protection, and artist and designer development to unlock the economic and social potential of these industries.
- The critical role of education and partnerships in promoting a thriving creative ecosystem that empowers Africa's talent to compete on the global stage while maintaining cultural authenticity.

- Greater collaboration among governments, private investors, and international platforms to build infrastructure that supports local creators and amplifies their voices.
- Importance of increased investment from the African diaspora and global consumers through conscious consumerism—supporting brands that prioritize sustainability cultural authenticity.



If we are not more intentional about telling our own stories, then at the end of the day, the story that is being told has been left to someone else to tell." – **Mo Abudu, CEO EbonyLife Group**

Unstoppable Africa maintains its position as the premier platform to showcase these developments and highlight the creative industries transformative impact.



Speakers on the panel session "Designing the Future: How to Make African Fashion Unstoppable" (L-R): **Tania Habimana**, Host, Startup Caps on CNBC Africa; **Wandia Gichuru**, Founder & CEO, Vivo Fashion Group; **Armando Cabral**, Designer, Armando Cabral; **Nykhor Paul**, International Fashion Model, Activist & Health Coach; **Danielle Kwateng**, Executive Editor, Teen Vogue

# Sports

Sports play a pivotal role in Africa's cultural and economic landscape, offering immense potential for both growth and global recognition. The recently concluded African Cup of Nations (AFCON) exemplifies Africa's sports prominence, attracting millions of viewers worldwide and showcasing the continent's talent and resilience. Beyond entertainment, such continental sporting events can serve as powerful platforms for economic impact, including tourism, infrastructure development, and brand partnerships. To maximize long-term value, Africa must focus on retaining revenue within the continent by investing in local sports infrastructure, encouraging partnerships with global sponsors, and leveraging the power of digital media to expand viewership and fan engagement.

These above points were central to the sports session at Unstoppable Africa 2024.

The panel discussions highlighted some key points.

- The transformative impact of the NBA's investment in the Basketball Africa League (BAL) on Africa's economic and social development.
- The importance of government and strategic partnerships in creating infrastructure such as sports arenas that serve as catalysts for broader development. The conversation also explored how technology, including mobile platforms and streaming, is democratizing sports access and creating new revenue opportunities.

## Spotlight on Announcement:

### Launch of Queen of the Continent Foundation

Chiney Ogwumike, a professional WNBA basketball player, launched the *Queens of the Continent Foundation* with the mission to create winning opportunities for young women in Africa and the diaspora.

## Spotlight on Announcement:

### NBA Africa Startup Accelerator Award

Claire Akamanzi, CEO of NBA Africa, awarded Festival Coins as the winner of the NBA Africa Startup Accelerator Award for its innovative online ticketing platform (Tix Africa)



Speakers on the panel session "How Sport Can be Africa's Great Global Business Connector" (L-R): **Omar Ben Yedder**, Publisher, IC Publications; **Clare Akamanzi**, CEO, NBA Africa; **Selim Bora**, Chairman, SUMMA International Construction Inc.; **Joakim Noah**, NBA Legend; Ambassador, Basketball Africa League



## Official Side Events

Cross-section of participants at the UNDP timbuktoo Innovation side event held at Convene

In addition to the main stage of Unstoppable Africa which focused on plenary style sessions and in-depth panel discussions, for the first time Unstoppable Africa introduced the concept of an official side event program. The aim of the side event program was to give GABI partners the opportunity to **co-curate with GABI** and to bring more **interactive activations** to the event. **Activations that showcased the successes, solutions and opportunities.** This programming was concurrent and these sessions delved into thematic discussions aligned with GABI's 2024 priorities.

Below is a list of partners who activated and the topics of their sessions.

- **Session curated by Safaricom:** AFRICA'S DIGITAL REVOLUTION: Inclusive Digital Transformation: Unlocking Shared Value Partnerships for Africa. The session focused on advancing digital inclusion and transformation to drive sustainable growth, address societal challenges, and create shared value for refugees and host communities across Africa.
- **Session curated by Climate Champions and the UNGC Africa Business Leaders Coalition (ABLC):** VOICES FROM AFRICAN BUSINESS ON CLIMATE ACTION: What African businesses need in Race to Zero and Race to Resilience hosted by the ABLC and the Climate Champions Team. The session focused on amplifying the voices of African businesses in the Race to Zero and Race to Resilience, addressing their needs and expectations for effective climate action, particularly in energy transition and policy coordination, aligning with COP29 priorities.
- **Session curated by YouTube/Google:** AFRICA CREATIVITY FOR THE WORLD: Africa's Creative Economy: A Spotlight on YouTube Creators. The session focused on highlighting Africa's creative economy through the stories of leading YouTube creators, showcasing their influence, audience growth, and sustainable business development within the digital ecosystem.
- **Session curated by Africa Hub and Networks:** AFRICA, THE SOLUTION FOR CLEAN ENERGY: Driving Sustainable Impacts With Digital and Energy Transition Solutions

- **Session curated by UNDP's timbuktoo Initiative:** AFRICA'S DIGITAL REVOLUTION: timbuktoo Innovation. The session focused on showcasing UNDP's timbuktoo Initiative, a transformative effort to strengthen Africa's startup ecosystem by mobilizing \$1 billion over a decade, fostering innovation across tech verticals like CreativeTech, HealthTech, and Agritech, and creating economic opportunities for millions across the continent.
- **Session curated by the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank):** INCLUSIVE GROWTH AND TRADE: Documenting Africa's Covid-19 Response Book Launch and soft premiere of the Docu-Series: Riding the Storm: The Untold Story of Africa's Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. The session focused on the launch of the book *Riding the Storm: The Untold Story of Africa's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic* and the soft premiere of an accompanying docu-series, highlighting Africa's collaborative efforts during the pandemic and addressing vaccine inequity through initiatives like AVAT.
- **National Center for Vegetation Cover Development and Combatting Desertification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:** UNCCD COP16 Riyadh 2024 Activation Booth
- **Session curated by UNAIDS & Partners:** AFRICA'S DIGITAL REVOLUTION: Guaranteed Futures: Digital skills and digital opportunities for girls and women in Africa. on advancing digital inclusion to equip girls and young women with vital knowledge and tools to improve sexual and reproductive health, reduce HIV vulnerabilities, and promote informed decision-making for healthier futures. This session focused on advancing digital inclusion to equip girls and young women with vital knowledge and tools to improve SRHR, reduce HIV vulnerabilities, and promote informed decision-making for healthier futures.
- **Session curated by Google:** AFRICA'S DIGITAL REVOLUTION: AI Sprinters KOF Workshop. The session focused on equipping African policymakers with insights into AI and cloud technologies, leveraging the Google AI Sprinters Framework to explore their potential for driving social and economic development while addressing governance, data protection, and responsible AI adoption through African case studies and hands-on demos.



Cross-section of participants at the ABLC and Climate Champions Team side event on *Voices from African Business on Climate Action: What African businesses need in Race-to-Zero and Race-to-Resilience*

Participants at the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia UNCCD COP16 Riyadh 2024 activation booth (National Center for Vegetation Cover Development and Combatting Desertification)



Participants at the Safaricom side event on *Inclusive Digital Transformation: Unlocking Shared Value Partnerships for Africa*, held at Convene

Participants at the UNDP timbuktoo Innovation side event on *Inclusive Digital Transformation: Unlocking Shared Value Partnerships for Africa*



Participants at the Africa Hub and Networks session on *Driving Sustainable Impacts with Digital and Energy Transition Solutions*

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## Reporting on Progress

Speakers on the "The Panel of the Future: Solutions for Igniting Africa's Digital Revolution" (L-R): **George Asamani**, Managing Director, Sub-Saharan Africa, Project Management Institute; **H.E. Paula Ingabire**, Minister of ICT & Innovation, Rwanda; **Peter Ndegwa**, CEO, Safaricom; **Doreen Bogdan-Martin**, Secretary-General, International Telecommunications Union; **Cheick Camara**, Vice President & Managing Director, ServiceNow Africa

The second edition of Unstoppable Africa took center stage during the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA78), convening from September 21–22, 2023, at the Westin Hotel in New York City. The event attracted a diverse audience of over 1,500 in-person participants, including seven Heads of State—representing Barbados, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Kenya, Poland, and Senegal—alongside more than 1,700 individuals who joined via virtual livestream.

This flagship event served as a testament to the transformative vision of the Global Africa Business Initiative (GABI), providing a platform for leaders, innovators, and stakeholders to collaborate on advancing Africa's development. GABI's partners unveiled a series of impactful announcements and commitments aimed at accelerating the continent's economic progress. These initiatives focused on fostering value creation and retention, driving digital upskilling and job creation, and expanding inclusive economic opportunities, particularly for women across Africa.

Notable progress achieved through these initiatives includes:

### **International Trade Center (ITC) extended invitations to businesses to join the SheTrades Network:**

The SheTrades Network is ITC's flagship women and trade programme working to create the right conditions and capacities for women to trade. In Africa, SheTrades has facilitated the establishment of a network of 156 women's business associations and built their capacity to advocate for more inclusive trade under the Africa Continent Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). So far, ITC has partnered with local institutions to establish 7 SheTrades Hubs in the region, including Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, South Africa, and The Gambia. The Hubs offer women entrepreneurs knowledge, skills, and platforms to tap into market and investment opportunities. The SheTrades Network has already impacted the lives of more than 200,000 women entrepreneurs since its inception in 2015.

### **The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) introduction of the timbuktoo Africa Innovation Fund:**

The UNDP unveiled the groundbreaking Timbuktoo initiative at Unstoppable Africa 2024, followed by its official launch at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, in January 2024. This high-profile launch, attended by African leaders and global stakeholders, established a strong foundation for the initiative. President Paul Kagame of Rwanda committed to establishing the Timbuktoo Africa Innovation Fund, while Ghana's President Nana Akufo-Addo highlighted the importance of creating enabling environments for young Africans to develop innovative businesses, signaling Ghana's intention to support the initiative. The foundation was formally registered in Kigali as a Common Benefit Foundation, partnering Rwanda's Agaciro Development Fund with key players in Africa's innovation and private sectors, including AfriLabs and AfroChampions.

By mid-2024, the Timbuktoo Innovation Fund gained significant operational momentum with the establishment of its HQ Service Center in Kigali and the launch of its first tech hub in Lagos, Nigeria, focused on FinTech. The initiative aims to expand these tech hubs across the continent, beginning with Nigeria, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Ghana, South Africa, and Zambia. The Lagos Hub received over 800 applications, selecting 42 startups for a boot camp offering mentorship, resources, and investment opportunities. Each hub is designed to support approximately 120 startups or 300 founders annually, considering that most startups consist of teams of two to three founders. Collectively, the eight planned hubs are projected to support nearly 1,000 startups or 2,400 founders each year, driving innovation and entrepreneurship across Africa.

Additionally, the Timbuktoo Innovation Fund invested \$22 million to establish 26 University Innovation Pods (UniPods) across leading technical universities in Africa. These UniPods have already strengthened local innovation ecosystems, empowering youth to transform ideas into prototypes that contribute to the growth of Timbuktoo Hubs, marking a significant milestone in Africa's journey toward sustainable innovation and economic development.

### **Sustainable Energy for All (SEforALL) and the Government of the Republic of Ghana's ambitious USD 550 billion Energy Transition and Investment Plan for net-zero emissions and 400,000 jobs by 2060:**

His Excellency Nana Akufo-Addo, President of Ghana, unveiled the country's *Energy Transition and Investment Plan*, a strategic framework aimed at achieving net-zero energy-related carbon emissions by 2060. This ambitious plan outlines a comprehensive approach to deploying low-carbon solutions across critical sectors such as oil and gas, industry, transport, cooking, and power. Designed to address the dual goals of combating climate change and driving economic development, the plan also serves as a tool to engage global investors and attract financing for sustainable growth opportunities within Ghana's economy.

The initiative has already seen tangible progress across several key projects. In e-mobility, programs such as the *50 Electric Bus (eBus) Project* and the *Electric 2- and 3-Wheeler Project* are advancing electrified transit solutions in major cities like Kumasi, Accra, and Tamale. The government has commenced efforts to electrify communities including the development of the *Base-Load Power and Agroforestry Project*, which combines renewable energy generation with ecological restoration, and the *Universal Energy Facility (UEF) Window*, aimed at improving energy access for island communities. Furthermore, strategic partnerships with multilateral institutions focused on securing catalytic funding to expand energy access and drive projects such as sustainable electrification for rural health facilities are also ongoing. These initiatives collectively position Ghana as a leader in sustainable energy innovation and economic transformation.

"Africa must take its place at the table. It absolutely must... forums like the Global African Business Initiative are so critical because they shape policies, investments, decisions that will define the future of not just Africa, but global economies." - **Sanda Ojiambo, CEO & Executive Director of the UN Global Compact**



# Building Government Partnerships

25th – 26th September 2024



(L-R) H.E. Faisal Al Ibrahim; Minister of Economy and Planning of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; H.E. Andrzej Duda, President of Poland



H.E. Mia Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados



H.E. Paula Ingabire, Minister of ICT & Innovation, Republic of Rwanda



H.E. Felix Mutati, Minister of Technology and Science, Republic of Zambia



H.E. Cina Lawson, Minister of Digital Economy & Digital Transformation, Republic of Togo



H.E. Frank Tayali, Minister of Transport and Logistics, Republic of Zambia



H.E. Ms. Emma Theofelus, Minister of Information, Communication and Technology, Republic of Namibia



H.E. Ricardo Viegas D'Abreu, Minister of Transport, Republic of Angola

# Day 1

25th September 2024



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Speakers on the panel session "Power to the People: Mission 300 and opportunities in African green energy" (L-R): **Richard Nelson**, Coordinator, Power Africa; Dr. **Victoria Kwakwa**, Regional Vice President Eastern and Southern Africa, World Bank Group



Speakers on the panel session "Eliminating Africa's 'Prejudice Premium': A Risk vs Perception Reality Check" (L-R): **Ibrahima Cheikh Diong**, Former UN Assistant Secretary-General and Former Director General - African Risk Capacity Group; **Cristina Duarte**, United Nations Under-Secretary-General, Special Adviser on Africa; **Sameh Shenouda**, Executive Director and Chief Investment Officer, Africa Finance Corporation; **Abebe Selassie**, Director of the African Department; International Monetary Fund (IMF); **Alain Ebobissé**, CEO, Africa 50



Speakers on the panel session "Africa's Private Sector: Driving economic growth for the continent and the world" (L-R): **Mpumi Madia**, CEO of Bidvest Group; **Julie Monaco**, Global Head of Public Sector Banking, Citi



Speakers on the panel session "Here Comes the Sun, the Wind and the Waves: Africa's clean energy revolution is here" (L-R): **Terje Pilskog**, CEO, Scatec; **Solange Ribeiro**, Vice President, Neoenergia; Vice Chair of the Board, United Nations Global Compact & Chairman of the Board of Directors, National Operator of the Brazilian Electric System (ONS)



**Bolaji Balogun**, CEO of Chapel Hill Denham



**Hassanein Hiridjee**, CEO of Axian Group; **Qahir Dhanani**, Managing Director & Partner BCG; **Martin Ochien'g**, CEO of Sasini during the ABLC side event at Convene



Speakers on the panel "Africa as THE Investment Destination" (L-R): **Dr. Acha Leke**, Senior Partner, Chairman McKinsey & Company Africa; **Makhtar Diop**, Managing Director of the International Finance Corporation (IFC); **Diana Layfield**, Chair, British International Investments; **Tidjane Thiam**, Executive Chairman, Freedom Acquisition; **Runa Alam**, Co-Founding Partner & CEO, Development Partners International (DPI); **Michael Miebach**, CEO, MasterCard



**Brad Smith**, Vice Chair & President, Microsoft



Speakers on the panel session "The 'Africa Youth Fix' for a World in Crisis" (L-R): **Larry Madowo**, International Correspondent, CNN; **Chidi Blyden**, Deputy CEO, Millennium Challenge Corporation; **H.E. Chido Cleopatra Mpemba**, African Union Chairperson's Special Envoy on Youth, African Union Commission; **Wawira Njiru**, Founder & CEO, Food 4 Education; **Iyinoluwa Aboyeji**, CEO & Founding Partner, Future Africa



**Arpadarai**, Climate Change High-level Champion for COP29, United Nations

# Day 2

26th September 2024



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**Kendra Gaither**, President of the U.S.-Africa Business Center, U.S. Chamber of Commerce



Speakers on the panel session "Powering Progress: A Private Sector Approach To Help Africa Close The Climate Finance Gap" (L-R): **Sanda Ojiambo**, Assistant Secretary-General & CEO of the United Nations Global Compact; **Hassanein Hiridjee**, CEO, Axian; **Yvonne Ike**, Managing Director, Head of Sub-Saharan Africa (Ex-RSA), Bank of America; **Phumzile Langeni**, Chair, Afropulse Group / Non-Executive Director of DP World Group; **Dr. James Mwangi**, Group Managing Director, CEO Equity Group Holdings Executive Chairman, Equity Group Foundation



Speakers on the panel session "The Unstoppable Rise of Afrobeats and Amapiano: What's in it for Africa?" (L-R): **Alex Okosi**, Managing Director Africa, Google; **Olivier Laouchez**, Executive Chairman - Trace; **Fotemah Mba**, Head of Artiste & Repertoire For Cinq Music, CEO of Jump Africa; **Meklit Hadero**, Ethiopian-American Vocalist, Songwriter, & Composer, Cultural Strategist + Founder of Movement: Music and Migration, Remixed



**H.E. Amb. Albert M. Muchanga**, Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals, African Union Commission



**Strive Masiyiwa**, Founder & Executive Chairman, Econet Group (Cassava Technologies & Econet Wireless), Co-Founder, Higherlife Foundation



Speakers on the panel session "Africa Accelerates: Tooling-Up Our Next Generation of Global TechStars" (L-R): **Mohamed Kheir**, Co-founder, Objectively Good Media; **H.E. Prof. Yemi Osinbajo**, Guardian, timbuktoo Initiative and Immediate Past Vice President of Nigeria; **Ahunna Eziakowa**, Assistant Secretary-General & Director, UNDP Africa Bureau



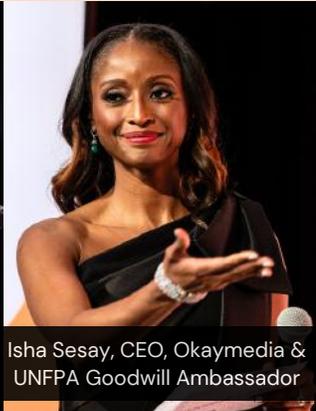
**John G. Coumantaros**, Chairperson of Flour Mills of Nigeria

# Youth Voice, Sports & Creatives

25th - 26th September 2024



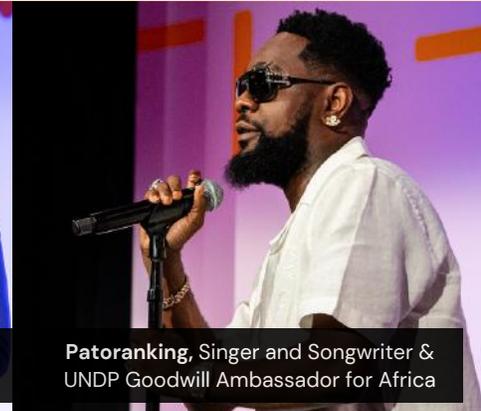
**Fally Ipupa**, Congolese Musician & Dancer



**Isha Sesay**, CEO, Okaymedia & UNFPA Goodwill Ambassador



**Faouzi Annajah**, Founder & CEO, NamX



**Patoranking**, Singer and Songwriter & UNDP Goodwill Ambassador for Africa



Models from the Fashion Show curated by award-winning designer, **Laduma Ngxokolo**, Founder, MaXhosa



L-R: **Sofiyat Ibrahim**, Creator, Odditty LLC; being interviewed in the Content Studio by **Omose Ighodaro**, Journalist, Founder of AfroVibes



(L-R): **Addy Awofisayo**; Head of Music, Africa - Google / YouTube with Influencers **Hellah Sidibe**, Runner/Content Creator, Hellahgood Group; **Winta Zesu**, Content Creator; **Fisayo Fosudo**, Visual Storyteller and YouTuber, VOQAL Media; **Sofiat Ibrahim**, Creator, Odditty LLC



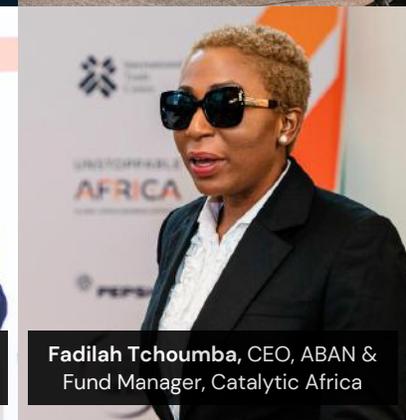
Speakers on the panel "Unstoppable Africans: Sports" (L-R): **Chiney Ogwumike**, Professional Basketball Player, Los Angeles Sparks, WNBA; **Masai Ujiri**; President of the Toronto Raptors



**Joachim Valot**, Co-Founder & CEO, CYTO



**Ludovic Nkoth**, Artist - Ludovic Nkoth Studios



**Fadilah Tchoumba**, CEO, ABAN & Fund Manager, Catalytic Africa



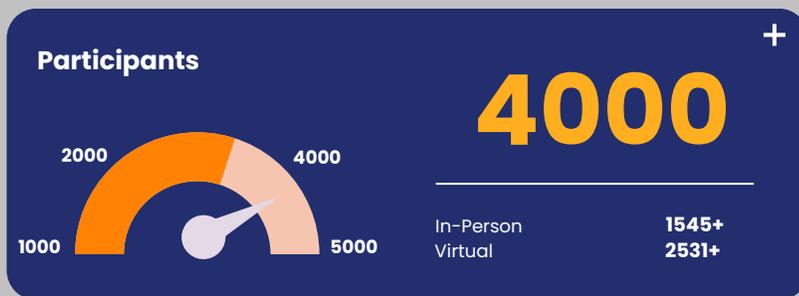
**Wambui Kamiru Collymore**, Artist

# Our Reach/ KPI Dashboard

## Communications

Reach	Video	Engagement	Interviews	Media
<b>38.1M</b> Social Media Engagement	<b>981K</b> Views	<b>5K</b> New Followers	<b>40</b> Interviews in GABI Content Studio	<b>29</b> Journalists

## Audience



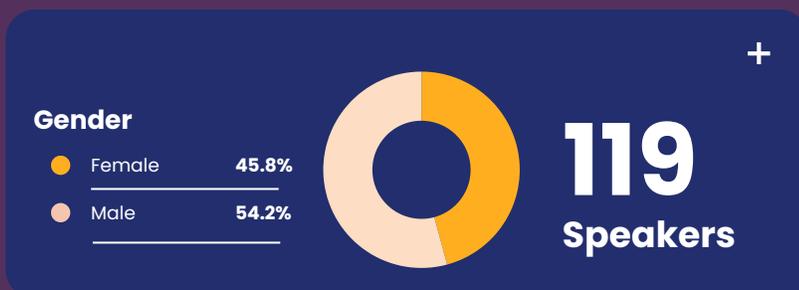
### Stats

6 Heads of State & Vice-Presidents

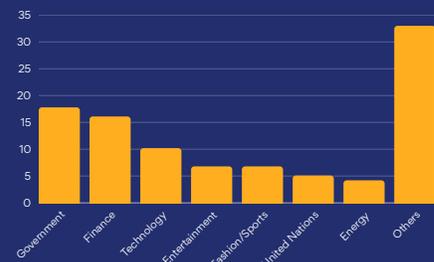
13 Ministers from 14 Countries

600+ Global private sector leaders

## Speaker Metrics



### Industry



# Other Activities in 2024

## GABI Conversations

On 16–17 May 2024, GABI participated in a UN Global Compact roundtable conversation at the Africa CEO Forum in Kigali, Rwanda. The theme of the discussion was “**Youth and Digital Transformation – The Key to Africa’s Inclusive Economic Prosperity**”. The event was well attended by African CEOs and policymakers and key messages from the event centered around leveraging the GABI platform to advocate the African Governments and policymakers on the need for legal and regulatory frameworks and policies around AI, and championing in 2025 and beyond AI integration in Africa and the development of the infrastructures needed to support AI technologies.



## GABI and the African Union Exchange of Letters of Intent (LoI)

GABI solidified its relationship with the African Union during a ceremonial exchange of Letters of Intent (LOI) for a strategic partnership with the African Union Commission (AUC). Held on the margins of the **Sixth African Union Mid-Year Coordination Meeting** on July 20, 2024, in Accra, Ghana. This partnership was formalized through the exchange of the LOI between H.E. Ambassador Albert Muchanga, Commissioner for Economic Development, Tourism, Trade, Industry, Mining (ETTİM), African Union Commission and Assistant Secretary-General Sanda Ojiambo, CEO of the UN Global Compact in the presence of H.E. Fatima Kyari Mohammed, Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations; Mr. Charles Abani, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations in Ghana and Prof. Benedict Okey Oramah, the President and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank).

The exchange represented the convergence of the shared ambition to collectively promote sustainable growth, business and trade opportunities, drive digital transformation, and influence global and regional policies impacting Africa through institutional partnerships.





# Looking Forward: GABI 2025 Priorities

Building on the success of Unstoppable Africa 2024, GABI's forward-looking strategy for 2025 focuses on deepening impact through **partnership, collaboration, innovation, and expanded engagement** on key action pathways critical to Africa's sustainable development. These pathways namely **Energy, Trade, Digital Transformation, Health, Education, Food Systems, and Fashion & Creatives** remain at the heart of GABI's agenda to catalyze actionable solutions and foster strategic partnerships.

## Leveraging the Annual Convening

Unstoppable Africa 2025 will serve as the centerpiece of the year's activities, drawing global and regional stakeholders to deliberate on actionable frameworks. This flagship event will build on prior successes, ensuring continuity while introducing strategic approaches to addressing challenges and opportunities within the African continent.

## GABI Bridges

In the course of the year, GABI will host two to three GABI Bridges on the African continent. These targeted engagements will provide a platform for topic-specific and focused discussions and will build up towards the flagship forum in September.

By integrating with these regionally embedded Bridges, GABI aims to foster year-round dialogue, ensuring stakeholders are connected not just at the annual convening but throughout the year.

## Expanding Collaborative Pathways

In 2025, GABI will continue to strengthen its partnerships with organizations committed to Africa's transformation, leveraging both existing and new alliances to amplify its impact. We will explore action pathways in areas related to the themes and priorities of GABI, and bring together businesses and policymakers to solve for challenges or advance momentum on related business, trade, investment opportunities.

## Defining GABI's Success

GABI is committed to driving measurable impact across its platform by implementing a comprehensive framework to track progress on partnerships, monitor key announcements, and evaluate the outcomes of the initiatives it supports. By leveraging data-driven insights and stakeholder feedback, GABI ensures that its efforts are not only impactful but also aligned with its mission to catalyze transformative change across Africa.



# Key Quotes



“For those on the economic side, I think we just need to figure out what is in their way; remove the barriers that are preventing us from thriving and we will do the rest ourselves.”

**Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**  
Director-General, the World Trade Organization

“NDCs are an integral part of a country’s industrial policy, we have to know what does a country want to achieve, how are they going to achieve it and what are the incentives. We have to be strong in how we lobby governments”

**Martin Ochien'g**  
Group Managing Director & CEO, Sasini PLC



“Continue telling the African narrative, because at the end of the day, history shall be written by Africans. Because now, for the first time ever, you have the tools and services to actually enable you to own your narrative. Unlike before, when the African story was being written by others.”

**Charles Murito**  
Regional Director, Sub Saharan Africa, Government Affairs & Public Policy, Google



“55 Countries unifying on every and anything is quite complex. But let’s start with regionalizing. East Africa has a lot of things that we can tap into immediately, West Africa as well, then the SADC region. And then we all come together in larger clusters.”

**Yvonne Ike**  
Managing Director & Head, Sub-Saharan Africa (Ex-RSA), Bank of America



“When you look at the continent, and you look at how smart our youth is, they’re learning through non-traditional pathways... they will be unstoppable if given the right platform.”

**Kate Kallot**  
Founder & Chief Executive Officer, Amini

“The future of Africa’s young people is in Africa growing well and putting its resources behind its demographic assets and turning that into a workforce of the world that can also be a big entrepreneurship zone for the world ”

**Dr. Akinwumi Adesina**  
President, African Development Bank (AfDB)





# UNSTOPPABLE AFRICA

GLOBAL AFRICA BUSINESS INITIATIVE

## SAVE THE DATE

21-22 SEPTEMBER 2025

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•  
Join us for dynamic conversations with private sector leaders and changemakers igniting solutions, catalyzing investments and driving actions. From trade and energy to digital transformation, the creative industry and sport, Africa is Unstoppable.

•  
Delivering a new era of international cooperation for a more peaceful, just and sustainable world for all.

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### ABOUT THE GLOBAL AFRICA BUSINESS INITIATIVE (GABI)

Launched in September 2022, GABI is the premier private sector-led global platform that galvanizes African and global leaders from various sectors to amplify and accelerate Africa's unstoppable business, trade, and investment opportunities, for Africa and the world.

GABI is built upon three pillars— to convene the African private sector and global stakeholders to amplify and accelerate opportunities in and for Africa; to connect and showcase Africa's private sector to potential partners, businesses, and investors across the world; and to catalyze and promote collaboration amongst sectors and industries to drive sustainable and inclusive business, trade and investment for Africa and the world.

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Organized By:



**United Nations**  
Global Compact

Designed by:  
Adeboye Adesoye