

HIS EXCELLENCY TIEMOKO MEYLIET KONE

Vice President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire

- His Holiness Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople,
- Madam Minister, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates,
- The President of the Institut Français des Relations Internationales and the World Policy Conference,
- Ministers,
- Distinguished guests,
- Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to take part in the 17th World Policy Conference here in Abu Dhabi.

I would like to thank Noura Al Kaabi, Minister, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates, as well as the Emirati authorities, for their assistance in organizing this large-scale event.

Madam Minister, please transmit warm greetings from His Excellency Alassane Ouattara, President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, to His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the United Arab Emirates.

Lastly, I would like to thank Thierry de Montbrial, President of the Institut Français des Relations Internationales, for once again inviting Côte d'Ivoire to the World Policy Conference. This unique forum for economic and geostrategic reflection gives decision-makers, researchers and opinion leaders from around the world a platform to exchange views on the state of the world, share ideas and offer solutions for a better future.

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

This year's World Policy Conference takes place in a particularly critical global context. The myriad security, economic and political challenges facing the world require collective awareness and urgent, concerted action.

On the security front, increasingly recurring geopolitical tensions are fueling armed conflict in several regions. Violent clashes threaten to drag certain parts of the globe into an uncontrollable downward spiral, seriously jeopardizing peace and stability.

The scourge of terrorism is exacerbating the situation, especially in regions like the Sahel, where the gains achieved after years of effort are in jeopardy.

On the economic front, recurring financial crises, as well as extraneous shocks, are rocking the global economy, with a particularly harmful effect on developing countries. This turbulence is discouraging investments, increasing inequality and undermining socioeconomic stability.

The devastating effects of climate change are compounding these crises. Prolonged droughts, destructive floods and extreme heat waves leave no part of the world unscathed. These phenomena pose a major threat to the safety of people and property and are creating new refugees every year.

Unfortunately, the hopes placed on major international climate conferences such as COPs remain largely unfulfilled. The commitments made, particularly in terms of green financing for the least developed countries, fall short of enabling a fair and equitable ecological transition.

At the same time, the world is facing an unprecedented technological revolution, with artificial intelligence holding out the promise of major advances but posing major risks if safeguards are not quickly put into place.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This challenging international environment is jeopardizing development efforts worldwide. Countries are struggling to meet the Sustainable Development Goals, the SDGs, which have been adopted as a universal roadmap. According to a 2023 United Nations report, more than 80% of the SDGs are behind schedule, and there is little chance that they will be met by 2030.

The consequences for the world's populations are alarming. Millions of people are still living in extreme precarity. The situation is even worse in sub-Saharan Africa, where poverty, youth unemployment and lack of infrastructure continue to hinder development.

On the economic front, the post-pandemic recovery remains fragile and prospects in several regions are still insufficient to meet people's growing needs and expectations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Despite an international context marked by major challenges and numerous uncertainties, Côte d'Ivoire has managed to stay the course of economic growth thanks to the leadership of the President of the Republic, His Excellency Alassane Ouattara.

Under his aegis, sustained efforts have been made to accelerate the structural transformation of the national economy, with the aim of lifting Côte d'Ivoire into the group of upper-middle income countries by 2030.

Since 2011, three successive National Development Plans have served as a strategic framework to guide the reforms and investments required for this transformation. They have led to ambitious structural reforms and massive investments to provide Côte d'Ivoire with modern, competitive infrastructure in key sectors of its economy.

These efforts have helped to revitalize the country's economy and boost its average annual growth rate to around 8% over the past decade.

Côte d'Ivoire's performance is also based on the confidence of its development partners and the dynamism of the private sector, which plays a key role in diversifying and modernizing the economy. The investment rate, below 9% in 2011, surpassed 25% in 2023.

Your excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

While progress can be made at national level, it nevertheless remains clear that the current challenges confronting the world require inclusive and ambitious global responses.

That was the goal of the Summit of the Future, held in conjunction with the 2024 United Nations General Assembly, which addressed the main issues and challenges facing the world's future.

Aware of the magnitude of the action required, Africa has adopted the African Union's Agenda 2063. This framework focuses on strategic priorities such as economic resilience, structural transformation, improved governance, human capital development, matching skills to labor market needs and financing

flagship development projects. The President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, His Excellency Alassane Ouattara, has been appointed champion to oversee the Agenda's implementation.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is another key pillar in the implementation of the continent's strategic development vision. This project, a fundamental lever for strengthening regional economic integration, will revitalize intraregional trade, stimulate local industries and promote inclusive growth across the continent.

Ladies and gentlemen,

For African initiatives to reach their full potential and foster the continent's emergence, certain global issues must be addressed more effectively at global level.

Firstly, it is imperative to resolve the crucial issue of development financing by mobilizing resources tailored to the growing needs of developing economies.

An in-depth overhaul of the international financial architecture, as discussed at the Summit of the Future, could play a vital role in achieving this goal.

Likewise, the commitments made at COP to finance climate action must be implemented as soon as possible to help African economies adapt to the growing impact of climate change and accelerate their ecological transition.

Lastly, none of these efforts will succeed without a special focus on youth, especially in Africa, which has some of the world's fastest demographic growth. Young people, an invaluable reservoir of talent and innovation, must be at the heart of our priorities, with an emphasis on education, training and employment, to make them a driving force for transformation.

Your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

We have a collective duty to turn global challenges into opportunities, to build a more inclusive, sustainable and prosperous future. By joining forces, we can lay the groundwork for a more consensual world for present and future generations.

To do that, instruments of dialogue and international cooperation, such as this conference, must fully play their part in fostering strong partnerships and implementing concrete commitments so that together we can create a fairer future for all.

I therefore salute the World Policy Conference as an ideal opportunity to engage in constructive exchanges on these major challenges and identify concrete solutions to solve them.

I would like to conclude on this note and once again thank Thierry de Montbrial for giving the world's leaders the opportunity to exchange views on the challenges to humanity's prosperity.

Thank you.