News Release

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THE STATE OF THE WORLD

Greater Mobility in Africa Will Aid Development

10 May 2013

Oliver Cann, Associate Director, Media Relations, Tel.: +41 (0) 79 799 3405; E-mail: oliver.cann@weforum.org

- Inclusive growth and regional integration will help to build the continent
- Women and youth must be at the centre of transformation
- For more information about the World Economic Forum on Africa, please visit: http://wef.ch/africa13

Cape Town, South Africa, 10 May 2013 – Connecting the continent through infrastructure development and removing bottlenecks to greater mobility of people will allow Africans to work together towards the common goal of developing their continent, participants at the World Economic Forum on Africa heard today.

Panellists in a plenary session entitled Africa 2063: From Fragility to Stability said that the difficulty of moving goods and people around the continent is a brake on growth.

Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya, emphasized the benefits of regional integration for job creation and greater trade, saying the interconnectedness of countries is integral to their future growth. **Abdelkader Bensalah**, President, Council of the Nation, Algeria, said regional infrastructure programmes are underway to link North Africa with sub-Saharan Africa. Although insecurity in the region has stalled work on these projects, they are nevertheless the realization of a long-held dream by policy planners.

Kenyatta said that it is important that growth is inclusive if the continent is to realize its potential over the next 50 years: " Economic growth that is not felt by the majority of the nation is not growth at all. Once ownership is there, sustainability is there. "

The panel emphasized the importance of investing in people, highlighted as a key resource for Africa. **Bineta Diop**, Chair of the Executive Board, Femmes Africa Solidarité, Switzerland, said that investment in people is not just about investing in the youth, but also in women, who make up more than half of Africa ' s population. Although 80% of Africa ' s farmers are women, they still lack title to land in most of the continent, she said. " We need to put women as well as youth at the centre of transformation in Africa. " High numbers of young people are a challenge for future policy-makers, but also a major opportunity as they provide innovation and creativity that can drive the creation of successful businesses across the continent.

An Africa that is at peace with itself was highlighted as a key ingredient for success over the next 50 years. This does not mean that differences between peoples and countries should be swept aside, but rather that they should be respected and managed. Good governance underpinned by robust and resilient political systems is also important to building the continent, as is the encouragement of private-sector enterprise, particularly at the level of small and medium-sized industries, which are the true engines of inclusive growth.

Growing levels of urbanization are a major opportunity for business and will change the way people live, work and interact with each other. **Arif M. Naqvi**, Founder and Group Chief Executive, The Abraaj Group, United Arab Emirates; and Co-Chair of the World Economic Forum on Africa, said social media is going to become more important as a tool not just for communication, but also for improving governance and breaking hierarchies that

place themselves above citizens.

Skills development is crucial for building Africa over the next 50 years and, by that time, should no longer be one of the key issues constraining African development, said **Frannie Léautier**, Executive Secretary, The African Capacity Building Foundation, Zimbabwe; a Co-Chair of the World Economic Forum on Africa.

Anders Borg, Minister of Finance of Sweden, said that it is possible for a country to transform itself within 50 years, suggesting that the ways to do this include ensuring economic and political openness, export-oriented policies, deregulation of markets, agricultural transformation and structural change to build higher levels of industry and manufacturing. This will allow countries to move up the global value chain. " It is not by being perfect that you grow; it is by continually reforming yourself, " he said.

He said European pension funds, currently experiencing low rates of return, could look at the possibility of investing in transformational infrastructure providing the right conditions, including regulatory reforms, are in place.

With the support of the Government of South Africa, the World Economic Forum on Africa is being held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 8 to 10 May. Over 1,000 participants from more than 80 countries are taking part. Under the theme Delivering on Africa ' s Promise, the meeting ' s agenda will integrate three pillars: Accelerating Economic Diversification; Boosting Strategic Infrastructure; and Unlocking Africa ' s Talent.

The Co-Chairs of the World Economic Forum on Africa are Frans van Houten, Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board of Management and the Executive Committee, Royal Philips Electronics, Netherland; Mo Ibrahim, Chairman, Mo Ibrahim Foundation, United Kingdom; Mustafa Vehbi Koç, Chairman of the Board, Koç Holding, Turkey; Frannie Léautier, Executive Secretary, The African Capacity Building Foundation, Zimbabwe; and Arif M. Naqvi, Founder and Group Chief Executive, Abraaj Group, United Arab Emirates.

Notes to Editors

More information is available at http://wef.ch/africa13
View the best photographs from the Annual Meeting on Flickr at http://wef.ch/africa13pix
Watch live webcasts of sessions at http://wef.ch/live
Watch video-on-demand, opinions and analysis of key sessions at http://wef.ch/africa13insights
Become a fan of the Forum on Facebook at http://wef.ch/facebook

Follow tweets from participants on our **twitter list** at https://twitter.com/davos/wefafrica

Follow the Forum on Twitter at http://wef.ch/twitter and http://wef.ch/livetweet (hashtag #WEF)

Read the Forum:Blog at http://wef.ch/blog

Follow the Forum on Google+ at http://wef.ch/gplus

The Forum Media App is available here http://wef.ch/publicapps

The World Economic Forum is an international institution committed to improving the state of the world through public-private cooperation in the spirit of global citizenship. It engages with business, political, academic and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

Incorporated as a not-for-profit foundation in 1971 and headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, the Forum is independent, impartial and not tied to any interests. It cooperates closely with all leading international organizations (www.weforum.org).

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM
World Economic Forum, 91-93 route de la Capite, CH-1223 Cologny/Geneva
Tel. +41 (0)22 869 1212, Fax +41 (0)22 786 2744, http://www.weforum.org