



## **STATEMENT**

**BY**

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STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

**AT THE EXTRAORDINARY CONFERENCE OF THE  
AFRICAN POLITICAL ALLIANCE (APA)**

**LOMÉ, REPUBLIC OF TOGO**

**3<sup>RD</sup> JULY 2026**

**THEME: "AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST CRISIS:  
IMPACTS, CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIC RESPONSES"**

- **YOUR EXCELLENCY, PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE TOGOLESE REPUBLIC,**
- **YOUR EXCELLENCIES, HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT,**
- **YOUR EXCELLENCIES, MINISTERS AND HEADS OF DELEGATION,**
- **YOUR EXCELLENCY, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA,**
- **YOUR EXCELLENCY, COMMISSIONER OF THE AFRICAN UNION,**
- **YOUR EXCELLENCIES, AMBASSADORS, HEADS OF DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR MISSIONS,**
- **REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS,**
- **DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**
- **GOOD MORNING.**

1. It is a great honour to address this Extraordinary Conference of the African Political Alliance in my capacity as Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government.
2. At the outset, I express my sincere appreciation to my brother, **His Excellency President Faure Gnassingbé**, the Government and people of the Republic of Togo for their warm hospitality and for convening this timely Conference.
3. I also commend **President Gnassingbé** for his vision in establishing the **African Political Alliance (APA)** as a platform for dialogue, cooperation and collective African action.
4. At a time of increasing geopolitical uncertainty, Africa must strengthen its ability to consult, coordinate and advance its common interests with unity, strategic purpose and confidence.

- 5.** This Conference reflects our shared determination to shape Africa's response to global challenges through African leadership and solidarity.

### **EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

- 6.** We meet at a defining moment in international affairs.
- 7.** The crisis in the Middle East is a stark reminder that, in today's interconnected world, no region is insulated from the consequences of conflict.
- 8.** Events unfolding thousands of kilometres away are affecting food prices, energy markets, global supply chains, investment flows and economic stability across our continent.

9. However, one conviction should guide our deliberations today: **No external crisis can define Africa's future. Only Africa can define Africa's future.**
10. **We must therefore choose to be architects, not spectators, of our own destiny.**
11. Before considering the implications of this crisis for our continent, we must acknowledge the immense human suffering it has caused.
12. Countless innocent lives have been lost, families displaced and communities devastated.
13. **Africa therefore reaffirms its unwavering commitment to peace, dialogue, respect for international law and the peaceful settlement of disputes.**

**14.** We support all genuine efforts towards a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in accordance with the **Charter of the United Nations and its relevant resolutions.**

**EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

**15.** Permit me to speak briefly from the experience of my own country.

**16.** Sierra Leone understands the devastating cost of conflict.

**17.** We rebuilt our nation through reconciliation, inclusive dialogue and the solidarity of our African brothers and sisters.

**18.** That experience has taught us that lasting peace is secured not by military means alone, **but through trust, reconciliation, inclusive governance and genuine political will.**

- 19.** Our purpose today is not to take sides in geopolitical rivalries.
- 20.** Rather, it is to assess, with clarity and strategic foresight, what this crisis means for Africa's peace, security and development, while contributing constructively to international efforts to restore stability.
- 21.** In that spirit, I warmly welcome the distinguished representatives from the Middle East who are with us today.
- 22.** Africa values its longstanding partnerships across the region and shares a common interest in seeing peace restored, commerce protected and dialogue prevail over confrontation.

## **EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

- 23.** The consequences of this crisis for Africa are both real and immediate.
- 24.** Disruptions to major shipping routes have increased transport costs and placed additional pressure on supply chains.
- 25.** Volatility in global energy markets continues to drive up fuel and electricity prices, while rising food costs and agricultural input prices threaten food security across many of our countries.
- 26.** Investor confidence, humanitarian financing and economic recovery are likewise being tested by forces beyond our control.
- 27. Every global crisis tests Africa's resilience and unity.**

- 28. Our greatest protection against external uncertainty is resilience built from within.**
- 29.** This moment should therefore accelerate, not delay, our transformation into a stronger, more self-reliant and more competitive continent.
- 30.** The question before us is not only how Africa responds to this crisis, **but how we use this moment to build a more resilient, prosperous and strategically autonomous future.**

### **EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

- 31.** Allow me to outline what I believe should be Africa's strategic response.
- 32.** Our response must be guided not by short-term reactions, but **by a long-term vision for resilience, prosperity and strategic autonomy.**

- 33. First, we must build greater economic sovereignty.**
- 34.** For far too long, Africa has exported raw materials while importing finished products at far greater cost.
- 35.** This model has constrained industrial growth, limited job creation and prolonged economic dependence.
- 36.** The time has come for Africa's abundant natural resources to drive African industrialisation.
- 37.** We must strengthen regional manufacturing, deepen continental value chains and accelerate the full implementation of the **African Continental Free Trade Area.**

- 38.** As the world undergoes a profound technological transformation, **Africa possesses many of the critical minerals essential to the green and digital economies.**
- 39.** The era in which Africa exports its wealth while importing its prosperity must come to an end.
- 40. Second, we must strengthen Africa's resilience against external shocks.**
- 41.** No continent blessed with Africa's vast agricultural potential and abundant renewable energy resources should remain vulnerable to recurring disruptions in global food and energy markets.
- 42.** We must modernise agriculture, invest in climate-smart farming, expand renewable energy, strengthen regional power interconnections, build resilient supply chains, deepen our financial systems, promote local currency settlements in

intra-African trade and reduce our exposure to external economic shocks.

**43. These investments are not only economic priorities; they are essential to our sovereignty, stability and sustainable development.**

**44. Third, we must invest in peace, strong institutions and our people.**

**45. Peace remains the foundation upon which sustainable development is built.**

**46.** Africa must continue strengthening preventive diplomacy, early warning systems and mediation mechanisms while safeguarding democratic governance and constitutional order.

- 47.** At the same time, **the Fourth Industrial Revolution is reshaping the global economy at unprecedented speed.**
- 48.** Artificial intelligence, digital technologies and innovation are transforming every sector of society.
- 49.** Africa must therefore invest boldly in education, digital infrastructure, research, entrepreneurship and skills development so that **our young people become innovators, creators and leaders in the global economy.**

## **EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

- 50.** The narrative about Africa continues to evolve.
- 51.** Our continent is no longer viewed solely through the lens of its challenges.

- 52. Africa is increasingly recognised as a strategic actor in global affairs** — endowed with abundant natural resources, dynamic markets, immense human capital and the world's youngest population.
- 53.** To realise this immense potential, however, **we must continue to speak with greater unity and strategic purpose.**
- 54. Our influence is greatest when our voices are united, and our interests are advanced collectively.**
- 55.** In that spirit, the international governance architecture must also evolve to reflect contemporary realities.

- 56.** We therefore **reaffirm Africa's longstanding call for meaningful reform of the United Nations Security Council, consistent with the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.**
- 57.** A continent that is home to nearly one-fifth of humanity deserves representation that reflects its global significance.
- 58. The African Political Alliance has an important role to play** in strengthening strategic dialogue and political coordination in close partnership with the **African Union** and our **Regional Economic Communities.**
- 59. As Chairman of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government, I reaffirm our Community's unwavering commitment to advancing peace, regional integration, democratic governance and sustainable development.**

**60.** For five decades, ECOWAS has demonstrated that dialogue, mediation and regional solidarity remain indispensable pillars of lasting peace and prosperity in West Africa.

**EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

**61.** Allow me to **conclude with two practical proposals for our collective consideration.**

**62. First,** let us establish, through the **African Political Alliance, working closely with the African Union and our Regional Economic Communities, a standing African mechanism for geopolitical risk assessment and early warning.**

- 63.** Africa must strengthen its capacity to anticipate emerging global risks, assess their implications for our continent and coordinate timely, collective responses.
- 64. Second, let us develop a common African position on the Middle East crisis,** reflecting our shared commitment to peace, dialogue, respect for international law and effective multilateral cooperation.
- 65. Speaking with one coherent African voice** will strengthen our influence in the United Nations and in every international forum where decisions affecting our continent are made.
- 66.** Let Lomé be remembered not only for the quality of our deliberations, but for the decisions we take and the partnerships we strengthen.

## EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

- 67.** The world is changing before our eyes.
- 68.** The question is not whether change will come. **The question is whether Africa will shape that change or be shaped by it.**
- 69.** History will remember not only the crises that confronted us, but **whether we had the wisdom to anticipate them, the courage to confront them and the unity to transform them into opportunities for future generations.**
- 70.** I began with one conviction, and I conclude with the same conviction: **No external crisis can define Africa's future. Only Africa can define Africa's future.**

**71. If we stand together in purpose, speak with one voice and act with shared determination, Africa will not wait for the future — Africa will help shape it.**

**72. I wish you all fruitful deliberations.**

**73. May God bless our beloved continent and its peoples.**

**THANK YOU.**