

## **OPEN LETTER ON BEHALF OF FORMER AFRICAN LEADERS**

25 May 2021

Across the globe, communities are experiencing setbacks caused by Covid-19 that are rolling back economic and social progress. Parts of the developing world were already affected by rising poverty, greater gender inequality and climate change that threaten the livelihoods and prosperity of low and middle-income nations. For the foreseeable future, the pandemic's repercussions will be widely felt by ordinary citizens who already face a multitude of obstacles in these countries.

The issues facing Africa and the developing world are best addressed with coordinated action, grounded experience and practical insight. An equitable and inclusive development plan that prides itself on a green revolution is the best way forward.

The African Union has formally endorsed Dr. Arkebe Oqubay as the sole African candidate running for the position of Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO).

With its agency and reach, UNIDO will have a vital role in the global effort to combat the issues at hand, making it an increasingly important partner to the public and private sectors moving forward. It is paramount that UNIDO is reenergised by a Director General with drive, experience and a clear vision for the organisation's future.

With Africa's population set to double by 2040, the continent will be a huge factor in how inclusive and sustainable industrial development benefits everyone in the developed and developing worlds.

Dr. Arkebe Oqubay has for the last 30 years championed green industrial transformation both as an international academic and as a development policymaker. As founding Chair of the Board of the Industrial Parks Development Corporation and Mayor of Addis Ababa, his work has revitalised cities, promoted investment and catalysed positive change for ordinary people. With an emphasis on green transformation and gender equality, he hopes to shape a new way forward for UNIDO as a forum for knowledge exchange, innovation and advancement between member states. The success of a post-pandemic recovery will rely on instilling resilience into every aspect of industrial development to mitigate risk at the nation level, and reinstate faith in multilateral action.

It is only those who truly understand the challenges developing countries face who can pave the way forward towards a development agenda that benefits everyone. UNIDO requires a Director General who is prepared to look critically at itself and help it pursue its purpose as an enabler of transformational change.

In Dr. Arkebe Oqubay, we believe that his credentials make him the only viable candidate with a substantial track record that would see him successfully execute the position of UNIDO's Director General.

Signed on 25 May 2021



Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of Nigeria



Jakaya Kikwete, Former President of Tanzania



John Kufuor, Former President of Ghana



Joyce Banda, Former President of Malawi



Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Former President of Liberia



Raila Odinga, Former Prime Minister of Kenya



Thabo Mbeki, Former President of South Africa



Moussa Mara, Former Prime Minister of Mali



Joaquim Chissano, Former President of Mozambique



Hailemariam Desalegn, Former Prime Minister of Ethiopia



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Aminata Touré'.

Aminata Touré, Former Prime Minister of Senegal



John Mahama, Former President of Ghana



Ernest Bai Koroma, Former President of Sierra Leone