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AFRICA RISE
YOUTH INDABA

Africa Rise Youth Indaba

22 May 2025

Radisson Hotel & Convention
Centre, O.R. Tambo Airport



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Theme:

“Policy to Prosperity: Redefining Africa’s Youth Development Architecture”

**Radisson Hotel & Convention Centre
O.R. Tambo Airport, Johannesburg, South Africa**

**Format: Closed-Door Roundtable | Youth leaders
and Ministers**

Time	Agenda	Speakers
07:00 - 08:00	Arrival & Registration	All Delegates
08:00 - 08:10	National Anthem & Prayer	Led by Dr Zoe Mngqibisa
08:10 - 08:20	Welcome Remarks	MC: Amb Nicolatte Matuku President of WTAJ
08:20 - 08:25	ARYI: Mission and Vision	Chairperson of ARYI Amb Fikile Hlatshwayo
08:25 - 08:35	From Policy to Profit: Why Youth Inclusion Must Anchor Every Corporate Strategy?	Founder and CEO of Akani Retirement Fund Administrators & Owner of Radisson Hotel OR Tambo: Mr Zamani Letjane
08:35 - 08:45	Opening Address: Empowering Youth to Lead, Innovate, and Transform the Continent	HON Sindisiwe Chikunga Minister of Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities
08:45 - 08:55	LEKGOTLA AI – Creating 100 Million Jobs	MaxiAI by Maximum Group Slaven Gajovic
08:55 - 09:00	Live Performance	Poet - Ms Luthando Jojo



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Time	Agenda
09:00 - 09:45	<p>Plenary 1: The Policy–Reality Disconnect</p> <p>Focus: Why progressive policies often fail? Lessons across sectors (tourism, education, digital economy, climate action).</p> <p>Speakers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• President Africa Tourism Board: Dr Cuthbert Ncube• Co – Chair of ARYL: Mr Chris Seagateng• President of MAAT Afrikan: Ms Thembi Mayayisi• President SAYTN: Mr Kagiso Ngwenya <p>Overall participation: All delegates</p>
09:45 - 10:00	<p>Tea Break & Networking</p>
10:00 - 10:45	<p>Plenary 2: Youth Economic Exclusion and Labour Market Frictions</p> <p>Focus: Youth unemployment, barriers to start-ups, green jobs, digital skilling gaps. Speakers:</p> <p>Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Director PYEI: Ms Mapaseka Setlhodi• Head NYDA: Ms Sebolaisi Pheeha• Youth Commissioner GFOC: Amb Andrew Du Preez <p>Overall participation: All delegates</p>



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Time

Agenda

10:45 - 11:30

Plenary 3: Accountability for Youth Development: Who Must Deliver?

Focus: Governance bottlenecks, strengthening monitoring systems, and youth-led scorecards

Speakers:

- President HOA (VUT): Mr Sipho Nkosi
- Head Business SAYOF: Mr Tshepo Magoma
- Deputy Chair SABYA: Ms Margret Molefe

Overall participation: All delegates

11:30 - 11:45

Live Performance

DSB Academy

ARYI: Fire Side Chat

11:45 - 12:30

Ms Zinhle Mdletye
Ms Siphilile Mbhamali
Mr Zac Biyela

SEDLA, Maximum Group,
Wiltons, SACC, GFOC,
Radisson OR Tambo

12:30 - 13:00

Keynote Address:
Dr Mathews Phosa

1994 - 2025: Evolution of South
Africa's Youth Policy for
Inclusive Development

13:00 - 14:00

Lunch

Networking / Entertainment



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Time	Agenda	
14:00 - 15:45	Plenary 4: Africa's Developmental Agenda: Youth Ownership of Agenda 2063 and SDGs Focus: Localizing Agenda 2063 pillars through national youth actions	
Speakers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• President AELA Academy: Ms Bertha Sithole• Co – Chair RSA Y20: Mr Moeketsi Koahela• Deputy President SAYTN: Ms Tiisetso Tsoeleng	
	Overall participation: All delegates	
15:45 - 16:15	Recap of Plenaries by Co-Chair ARYI: Ms Naledi Maime and in Conversation with Hon Minister Chikunga	
16:15 - 16:30	Closing Remarks & Vote of Thanks	Head of ARYI: Ms Sandra Clark
16:30 – 18:00	Cocktail: “Exclusive Cheese & Wine Tasting” Ngethe and Zaza Legacy Live Performance by Simply Benjamin, Zinhle, and VUT	

“To every delegate, you did not just attend. You ignited a legacy for a powerful African youth leadership movement. Together, we rise.”

Ambassador Fikile Hlatshwayo



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YOUTH IN DATA**

Summary of Plenaries

Session	Title	Description
Plenary 1	The Policy–Reality Disconnect	A deep dive into why youth-centered policies often fail on the ground, and how to redesign implementation strategies for real impact.
Plenary 2	Youth Economic Exclusion and Labour Market Frictions	Exploring youth unemployment, informal sector vulnerabilities, and proposing solutions for integrating youth into Africa’s labour markets and future economies.
Plenary 3	Accountability for Youth Development: Who Must Deliver?	Civil society, youth leaders, and scholars discuss the accountability of governments, parliaments, and development partners in delivering youth outcomes.
Plenary 4	Africa’s Developmental Agenda: Youth Ownership of Agenda 2063 and SDGs	Positioning African youth as active drivers and co-owners of continental development visions.



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Africa Rise Youth Indaba 2025

JOHANNESBURG: DRAFT YOUTH POLICY COMMITMENT CHARTER AND DECLARATION

Adopted in Johannesburg, South Africa, 22 May 2025

PREAMBLE

We, the youth of Africa, together with government ministers, development partners, private sector leaders, civil society organizations, scholars, and diplomats, gathered at the inaugural Africa Rise Youth Indaba 2025 (ARYI 2025) under the theme:

Policy to Prosperity: Redefining Africa's Youth Development Architecture

Recognizing that:

- Africa is home to the largest and fastest-growing youth population in the world, representing an unmatched opportunity for economic, social, and political transformation,
- Despite numerous youth development policies, the persistent gap between policy commitments and actual outcomes continues to hinder youth empowerment, and
- The African Union Agenda 2063, the United Nations Youth 2030 Strategy, and the European Union Youth Strategy call for immediate, inclusive, and sustained youth-driven action.

We reaffirm that the success of Africa's development agenda hinges on the full and active participation of its young people, and the establishment of systems that ensure their voices shape, lead, and sustain change.

OUR VISION

We envision an Africa where every young person, regardless of background, gender, geography, or status, is fully empowered to lead, innovate, create, participate, and prosper.

OUR COMMITMENTS



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In pursuit of this vision, we collectively commit to the following actions:

1. Strengthen Policy Implementation and Accountability

- Ensure all youth policies and programs are equipped with clear timelines, adequate resources, measurable indicators, and transparent monitoring frameworks.
- Establish national and continental Youth Policy Accountability Platforms, led by youth networks and independent observers.

2. Drive Economic Empowerment and Innovation

- Create inclusive ecosystems for youth entrepreneurship, innovation, and decent job creation, especially within green economies, creative industries, digital transformation, and agri-tech.
- Operationalize the ARYI Innovation Fund 2025 to seed and scale youth-led enterprises.

3. Guarantee Meaningful Civic and Political Participation

- Institutionalize mechanisms for youth co-creation of national policies, public budgets, governance processes, peacebuilding efforts, and electoral reforms.
- Establish or strengthen National Youth Coordinating Mechanisms (NYCMs) across all African states.

4. Champion Inclusivity and Diversity

- Center the leadership and inclusion of young women, rural youth, youth with disabilities, indigenous youth, and marginalized communities across all youth development actions.
- Mandate gender parity in youth leadership structures at all levels.

5. Align Youth Action with Continental and Global Development Agendas

- Integrate Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into national youth policies, youth budgeting frameworks, and monitoring systems.
- Build intergenerational solidarity to achieve these goals collaboratively.

6. Invest in Youth Mental Health, Education, and Well-being

- Prioritize youth-centered reforms in education systems to align with future skills.
- Implement comprehensive mental health, nutrition, and well-being support systems for young people, particularly during transitions to adulthood and employment.



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TOGETHER WE RISE

OUR IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

We resolve to:

- Launch a Youth Development Accountability Tracker monitored jointly by youth, governments, and development partners, reporting annually.
- Convene an annual Africa Youth Policy Impact Forum to evaluate progress.
- Scale the Agenda 2063 Youth Challenge solutions across the continent.
- Mobilize at least \$10 million new investment through the ARYI INNOVATION FUND by 2027.

OUR CALL TO ACTION

We call on:

- Governments to prioritize youth in all national development plans and budgets.
- The African Union to strengthen continental accountability on youth action through enhanced reporting mechanisms.
- Development Partners to invest directly in youth-led solutions, not just youth-focused programs.
- Private Sector to unlock opportunities for youth employment, investment, and leadership.
- Civil Society and Academia to support youth knowledge generation, civic engagement, and innovation.

TOPICAL ISSUES FOR SPEAKERS TO COVER

- Youth unemployment and underemployment
- Youth-led green and digital economies
- Civic participation and accountability
- Education reforms and future skills for Africa
- Youth health and mental well-being policies
- Gender and youth inclusivity (women, rural youth, marginalized groups)
- Innovation financing for youth projects (investment, credit access)
- Youth in peacebuilding and governance



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INCLUSIVITY TARGETS

- Youth Leaders: Africa-wide, rural, urban, entrepreneurs, activists
- Government: Youth Ministers, Parliamentarians, National Youth Councils
- Development Partners: UNDP, AfDB, UNICEF, EU
- Embassies: US, China, Germany, France, African regional missions
- Civil Society: YALI, Youth Movements, NGOs
- Private Sector: Investors, Start-up Incubators, Multinationals
- Academia: Youth Scholars, Think Tanks, Policy Researchers
- Media: Africa 54, SABC, CNN Africa, BBC Africa

DELIVERABLES AT THE END

- ARYI 2025 Outcome Declaration (signed commitments)
- Policy Gap Tracker (monitoring delivery)
- Agenda 2063 Youth Solutions Showcase Report
- Innovation Fund Launch and Seed Fund Pledges

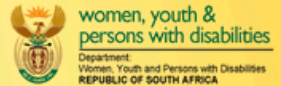
CONCLUSION

- We stand united.
- We stand ready.
- We demand action, not promises.
- We will lead, partner, and hold each other accountable for The Africa We Want, and for the generations yet unborn.

***“Our deepest gratitude to each one of you who made the Africa Rise Youth Indaba a powerful force of HOPE and CHANGE. Your belief in this youth movement and the unity we witnessed today, you did not just attend, you ignited a LEGACY for the powerful AFRICAN youth leadership that will move our continent forward.”
Together, we rise!***

- Ambassador Fikile Hlatshwayo

Our Partners



info@africariseyouthindaba.org.za



www.africariseyouthindaba.org.za