

Congo electric vehicle adoption

Welcome to the United Nations

The Acting Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Mr. Antonio Pedro, attended the High-Level Political Forum at the UN headquarters in New York in July. The forum focused on post-pandemic recovery and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Africa Renewal's Kingsley Ighobor interviewed Mr. Pedro on various aspects of Africa's development.

In Part 1 of the interview, Mr. Pedro discussed strategies to expedite SDG implementation, green industrialization and the vast potential of solar energy and electric vehicle battery precursors on the continent. These are excerpts from the interview:

Well, every country is off track. But we [Africa] are equally saying that there are opportunities to achieve the SDGs and realise Africa's Agenda 2063. Africa possesses abundant natural resources whose value could significantly contribute to the transitions that are key to accomplishing both agendas while advancing towards net-zero climate targets.

We have the African Continental Free Trade Area agreement (AfCFTA), which strengthens the business fundamentals of a large market of 1.4 billion people.

Climate action is critical, and Africa is at the centre of the solutions to achieving net-zero, given our natural resources, opportunities for carbon sequestration, and so on.

So, it is about recognizing that we need a "business unusual" approach to rescue the SDGs, identifying the opportunities, and articulating clear pathways to deliver results.

At the mid-point to 2030, only approximately 12 per cent of the 140 SDG targets are on track, while around 30 per cent have shown no progress, or have regressed below the 2015 baseline. Does Africa stand a chance if the stars were to align?

Absolutely. And it's really about aligning the stars. It is changing the paradigm.

At the UN, we have identified six SDG transformations. Exploring the interlinkages between the SDGs is part of this paradigm shift: moving from a sectorial approach, that is SDG-by-SDG, and instead, looking at the interlinkages where poverty, climate action, and development of sustained livelihoods are part and parcel of



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the same continuum.

The whole-of-government approach; bringing together different stakeholders -- the private sector, civil society organizations, and others-- to contribute to those opportunities. It is having clarity about the direction, the opportunities, and the system-wide coherence necessary to deliver at the required speed and scale.

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