



The Youth Assembly
at the United Nations

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Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Joseph Nyantakyi, and I'm here today to address the critical question: **Can African nations achieve sustainable development without relying on foreign aid?** My answer is a resounding yes, but this requires a fundamental shift in our approach and a concerted effort to address key challenges.

To begin with:

I believe that sustainable development in Africa is not only possible without heavy reliance on foreign aid, but it is, in fact, essential for long-term prosperity. Foreign aid, while sometimes helpful in crisis situations, often creates dependencies that can stifle local innovation and hinder the development of robust, self-sustaining economies.

Ghana, like many African nations, faces significant challenges in achieving sustainable development. These include:

Limited access to Quality education and skills development:

A lack of skilled labor limits productivity and hampers economic diversification. This is particularly true in technological fields where a skilled workforce is crucial for innovation and competitiveness.

Inadequate infrastructure:

Poor infrastructure, particularly in energy, transportation, and communication, increases the cost of doing business and limits economic opportunities, especially in rural areas. Reliable and affordable energy access is especially critical.

Governance and corruption:

Weak governance structures and corruption divert resources away from essential services and hinder investment. Building strong, transparent, and accountable institutions is paramount.

These challenges are not insurmountable. Research consistently shows a strong correlation between good governance, effective infrastructure, and human capital development, and economic growth. For example, the World Bank's numerous reports highlight the positive impact of investments in education and infrastructure on GDP growth in developing economies.

Proposals for Solutions:

To foster self-reliant growth, we must prioritize:

Investing in human capital:

This goes beyond basic education. It necessitates a focus on STEM education, vocational training, and entrepreneurship development. We need to cultivate a workforce equipped with the skills necessary to navigate a rapidly changing global economy.

Developing robust infrastructure: Strategic investments in infrastructure, particularly in renewable energy, digital technologies, and transportation, are essential to reduce costs and unlock economic opportunities. Public-private partnerships can play a vital role in mobilizing resources and expertise.

Strengthening governance and promoting transparency:

Good governance and anti-corruption measures are crucial to build trust, attract investment, and ensure that resources are used efficiently and effectively. This requires a multi-pronged approach involving legislative reforms, institutional strengthening, and citizen engagement.

Conclusion:

Achieving sustainable development without over-reliance on foreign aid is not only possible but is vital for Africa's long-term prosperity. By strategically investing in human capital, developing robust infrastructure, and strengthening governance, we can unlock the continent's immense potential and build self-reliant economies capable of driving sustainable and inclusive growth. I urge all stakeholders – governments, businesses, and civil society – to collaborate in this crucial endeavor. Thank you.