



Tackling Illicit Financial Flows for Sustainable Development in Africa



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“Illicit financial flows are multidimensional and transnational in character. Like the concept of migration, they have countries of origin and destination, and there are several transit locations. The whole process of mitigating illicit financial flows, therefore, cuts across several jurisdictions. These jurisdictions may protect fake charitable organizations, facilitate money-laundering, warehouse disguised corporations and conceal anonymous trust accounts. Ironically, the fact remains that the funds involved often come from jurisdictions with scarce resources for development financing, depleted foreign reserves, drastic reduction in collectable revenue, tax underpayment or evasion and poor investment in-flows.”

His Excellency Muhammadu Buhari

President of Nigeria

“Illicit financial flows and corruption are inhibiting African development by draining foreign exchange, reducing domestic resources, stifling trade and macroeconomic stability and worsening poverty and inequality. These illicit flows rob Africa and its people of their prospects, undermining transparency and accountability and eroding trust in African institutions. Faced with high capital flight, tax avoidance and a marked dependence on corporate income taxes, African Governments face significant constraints to widening their tax base. The UNCTAD *Economic Development in Africa Report 2020* shows that the large financing gap for the Sustainable Development Goals cannot be closed solely through government revenues. Tackling illicit financial flows, however, will open the door to releasing much needed investments in education, health and productive sectors. African Governments – in concert with Africa’s private sector actors – should take the lead in strengthening stolen asset recovery, setting new standards for avoiding illicit flows and committing to more concerted actions to combat the negative impact of illicit financial flows on African economies.”

Mukhisa Kituyi

Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference
on Trade and Development

Economic Development in Africa Report 2020

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Note

Country-level detailed figures are available on request to the UNCTAD secretariat.

Any references to dollars (\$) are to United States dollars.

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