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## African Nations Urged to Strengthen Continental Economic Strategies



Towards One African Market

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ADDIS ABABA, Feb. 11 (Xinhua)– United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)

Executive Secretary Claver Gatete on Wednesday urged African countries to mobilize

development financing more efficiently and deepen continental market integration to navigate

global economic uncertainties.

Addressing the opening session of the 48th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the

African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa, Gatete said African foreign ministers are meeting amid “a time of profound economic transition,” marked by slowing global growth, trade tensions, and restructured supply chains.

He noted that industrial strategies, geopolitical competition, and control over critical resources are reshaping the global economy. Rising capital costs, declining development assistance, climate change, and security challenges further compound the continent’s pressures.

Gatete stressed that Africa’s traditional reliance on external partners—exporting raw commodities, importing manufactured goods, and depending on concessional finance—is no longer sustainable. “Our development must increasingly be organized around our own continental economic system,” he said.

To strengthen Africa’s resilience, Gatete outlined five priorities: mobilizing and managing development finance more effectively; investing in integrated productive infrastructure; boosting regional value chains under the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement; deepening continental market integration; and leveraging technology and data as economic infrastructure.

The Executive Council session, attended by foreign ministers from AU member states during the 39th AU Summit, is held under the AU’s 2026 theme: “Assuring Sustainable Water Availability and

Safe Sanitation Systems to Achieve the Goals of Agenda 2063.”

Gatete emphasized that Africa must harness its natural resources and regional cooperation to secure sustainable and self-reliant economic growth in an increasingly complex global landscape.