



BACKGROUND GUIDE

AFRICAN UNION

DPSIMUN '26

[CONFERENCE THEME]

“Radical Resilience: Engineering Stability in an Age of Volatility”

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COMMITTEE

AFRICAN UNION

Contents

1.1	Welcome Message	2
1.2	Chair Messages	3
1.3	General Overview	4
1.4	Mitigating Political Instability and Corruption in Africa	5
1.4.1	Background Information	5
1.4.2	Historical Context	6
1.4.3	Current Situation	7-8
1.4.4	Subtopics	9
1.4.4.1	Weak Demographic Institutions	9
1.4.4.2	Over Dependency on Natural Resources	9
1.4.4.3	Foreign Resource Exploitation	9
1.4.4.4	Constitutional Manipulation and Executive Overreach	9
1.4.5	Questions a Resolution Must Answer	10
1.4.6	Useful Sites and Documents	11
1.4.7	Glossary	11
1.5	Adressing Youth Unemployment and Innovation for a Stable Africa	12
1.5.1	Background Information	12
1.5.2	Historical Context	13
1.5.3	Current Situation	14
1.5.4	Subtopics	15
1.5.4.1	Technical, Vocational and Digital Skills Learning	15
1.5.4.2	Job Creation Through Industrialization and the Digital Economy	15
1.5.4.3	Not applicable	15
1.5.4.4	Not applicable	15
1.5.5	Questions a Resolution Must Answer	16
1.5.6	Useful Sites and Documents	17
1.5.7	Glossary	17

1.1 Welcome Message

Honorable delegates,

it is with great pride that DPSI welcomes you to the 2026 Model United Nations Conference, this stimulating experience will be an amazing opportunity to showcase and improve your public speaking, research analysis, teamwork, problem solving skills, alongside deepening your awareness of global issues

Welcome to the African Union committee! Myself likewise my co-chair are super excited to have you all here, and we are looking forward to seeing some strong debates, interesting ideas, and of course, a little chaos . Come prepared, stay respectful, and most importantly, have fun! Let's make this committee one to remember.

1.3 General Overview

Officially launched in 2002, the African Union is a continental body of 55 member states across Africa and a successor to the Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

The fundamental principles of the African Union are based on the need for cooperation and unification of the African states to elevate Africa's growth and economic development and to support these outcomes across the continent.

The African Union implements change through a structured framework in which state leaders define policies, and principal decision-making organs such as Executive Council and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government execute continental integration and development plans.

During the DPSI MUN committee, the core aims of the African Union will be to collaborate with relevant international policies and implement measures aligned with

this MUN's theme: Engineering Stability in an age of volatility. Delegates will be required to participate in structured debates and collaborate with other nations to write and pass resolution papers.

The committee will be led by the theme of the DPSI MUN as well as the vision of the African Union - "An Integrated, Prosperous and Peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena."

MITIGATING POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND CORRUPTION IN AFRICA

| Background Information

Political instability and corruption are two issues that are often connected. Political instability can take the form of coups, disputed elections, election-related violence, civil conflict, or unconstitutional changes of government. Corruption can include bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, misuse of public funds, and using political power for personal benefit.

The effects of these issues go beyond politics. When governments are unstable or public resources are not properly managed, ordinary citizens can be affected through limited access to quality education, healthcare, infrastructure, jobs, and other essential services. Corruption can also reduce trust in government and increase inequality, while political instability can make it even harder for institutions to function effectively.

The African Union has recognised the importance of tackling these challenges through initiatives such as agenda 2063 and the African charter on democracy, elections and governance. These frameworks focus on building peaceful, democratic, accountable, and well-governed African states. However, it is important to recognise that Africa is not facing one single political situation. Every member state has its own history and challenges, meaning that effective solutions must be realistic, sustainable, and suited to the different circumstances of African countries.

Historical Context

To understand why political instability and corruption continue to affect parts of Africa today, we need to look at the continent's history. Most African countries gained independence during the 1950s and 1960s after years of colonial rule. However, independence came with many challenges. Newly independent countries had to build their own governments and institutions while dealing with borders, political systems, and divisions that had largely been shaped during the colonial period.

In the years after independence, a number of African countries experienced military coups, civil wars, authoritarian leadership, and political conflicts. The Cold War also influenced politics across the continent, with outside powers supporting different governments and political groups. These conflicts made it harder for some countries to develop strong and stable political institutions.

At the same time, weak institutions and limited accountability created opportunities for corruption to grow. In some cases, public resources were misused, political positions were used for personal or political gain, and citizens had little power to hold leaders accountable. Although Africa has made major progress since independence, the effects of some of these historical challenges can still be seen in the political and economic situations of certain countries today.

| Current Situation

Africa is currently facing serious challenges with political instability and corruption, which continue to deeply affect the socio-economic development and overall peace of many countries across the continent. In recent years, there has been a concerning resurgence of coups and unconstitutional changes of government (UCGs), particularly in the Sahel and West Africa. Nations such as Mali, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Niger, Sudan, and Gabon have all experienced military takeovers, marking a regression in the democratic gains made over the past three decades. These military interventions are frequently fueled and exacerbated by lingering security threats, widespread socio-economic hardship, and severe public dissatisfaction with elected leadership.

Alongside military insurgencies, institutional corruption, weakened judiciaries, disputed electoral processes, and a fundamental lack of official accountability have contributed to a growing crisis of legitimacy and deep-seated distrust between citizens and their governments. Systemic corruption drains critical public resources away from essential infrastructure, healthcare, and education, further exacerbating poverty, youth unemployment, and social inequality. Moreover, the practice of constitutional manipulation including the removal of presidential term limits and the erosion of judicial independence functions as a form of "silent coup" that stifles opposition, limits civic space, and systematically disenfranchises voters.

Current Situation - Continued

Although the African Union (AU) has established robust institutional tools and normative policy frameworks to combat these threats most notably the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance (ACDEG), the Lomé Declaration, and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) effective enforcement remains a major obstacle. While the AU's Peace and Security Council (PSC) consistently enforces sanctions and suspends state membership following military takeovers, these reactive measures often fail to prevent coups or compel military authorities to hand back power to civilian leadership. Furthermore, inconsistent application of sanctions, geopolitical fragmentation, and a strict adherence to national sovereignty over early intervention have created enforcement loopholes.

As the African Union, our focus must extend beyond merely managing political crises and imposing sanctions after democratic norms are broken. We must actively confront the underlying structural drivers of instability by strengthening independent electoral commissions, protecting civic space, reinforcing anti-corruption institutions, and guaranteeing civil rights. Restoring citizens faith in democratic governance requires that democracy delivers tangible economic benefits, equitable justice, and genuine political representation. Ensuring long-term continental stability depends on transforming these binding treaties into active, enforceable commitments at national and regional levels.

Subtopics

1.4.4.1 Weak Demographic Institutions

Weak institutions cause continental instability. Executive overreach and chronic underfunding degrade judicial bodies and electoral commissions, destroying the rule of law. When administrative irregularities corrupt elections, citizens lose faith in peaceful democratic reform. This legitimacy crisis shrinks civic space, fosters distrust, and creates dangerous political vacuums that invite civil unrest, authoritarian rule, and military takeovers.

1.4.4.2 Over Dependency on Natural Resources

Vast natural wealth fuels instability through the "resource curse." Heavy reliance on primary commodity exports leaves economies vulnerable to price shocks and inflation. This centralizes wealth, encouraging state capture where elites prioritize capturing resource revenues over funding public services. Consequently, resource concentration breeds corruption, suppresses economic diversification, and drives conflict among factions competing for resource control.

1.4.4.3 Foreign Resource Exploitation

Foreign extraction deepens instability through uneven economic exchanges and environmental damage. Foreign entities use unfair contracts to extract raw materials cheaply, keeping high-value processing abroad. Tax evasion and opaque licensing strip host nations of crucial revenue. Furthermore, aggressive extraction causes environmental destruction and local displacement, while foreign backers often support repressive regimes to protect commercial interests.

1.4.4.4 Constitutional Manipulation and Executive Overreach

Political instability deepens when leaders manipulate constitutions to consolidate power and extend term limits. By weakening judicial independence, silencing media, and marginalizing opposition parties, ruling elites orchestrate "silent coups" that destroy democratic checks and balances. This subversion of constitutional order erodes public faith in legal institutions, restricts civic freedom, and increasingly leaves popular uprisings or military intervention as the only avenues for political change.

Questions a Resolution Must Answer

- 1** How can the AU help African countries prevent coups, election violence, and other forms of political instability?
- 2** How can technology be used to make governments more transparent and reduce corruption?
- 3** How can African countries make their leaders and public institutions more accountable for corruption?
- 4** How can African countries work together to recover money and resources lost through corruption?
- 5** How can African countries safeguard civic space, protect investigative journalists, and support independent civil society organizations acting as critical watchdogs against state corruption?
- 6** How can the African Union and regional economic communities (RECs) reform national security sectors to prevent military involvement in civilian politics and align armed forces with democratic oversight?

Useful Sites and Documents

Un Data

[Un data](#)

[UNESCO]

[UNESCO](#)

[World Bank]

[World Bank](#)

[Glossary]

[Public Funds] - *Money controlled by the government for public services and development.*

[Youth Empowerment] - *Giving young people skills and opportunities to shape their futures.*

[Peacebuilding] - *Efforts to create and maintain long-term peace and stability*

[Entrepreneurship] - *Starting and developing a business.*

[Electoral Violence] - *Violence or threats connected to elections.*

[Innovation] - *Creating new ideas, products, or solutions.*

ADDRESSING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND INNOVATION FOR A STABLE AFRICA

Background Information

Africa's youth unemployment crisis stems from specific structural shifts over recent decades. Following independence, governments relied on public-sector hiring to absorb workers, but late-20th-century fiscal restructuring forced hiring freezes before a dynamic private sector could develop. Simultaneously, education systems remained anchored in theoretical, colonial-era models rather than evolving to teach practical technical and digital skills. Subsequent economic growth concentrated in capital-intensive extractive industries like oil and mining, which boosted GDP figures but failed to build labor-intensive manufacturing or agribusiness sectors.

Today, these structural legacies intersect with an unprecedented demographic transition, as over 60% of Sub-Saharan Africa is under age 25. Roughly 10 to 12 million young people enter the labor market annually to compete for fewer than 3 million formal jobs. This severe mismatch forces millions into low-productivity informal work, driving brain drain, stifling innovation, and increasing regional instability. Meanwhile, small and medium enterprises—the primary engine for job creation—face restricted credit, heavy regulation, and major infrastructure deficits.

Addressing this compounded challenge requires targeted policy interventions to convert idle human capital into economic output. Governments must modernize education by prioritizing vocational and digital training while partnering with private firms for mandatory apprenticeships. To unlock the private sector, policymakers should establish state-backed credit guarantees and simplify registration for youth-led enterprises. Finally, strategic investments must focus on localized agribusiness processing and digital infrastructure while leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Area to help young entrepreneurs scale across borders. Turning this population wave into an economic driver remains a critical macroeconomic priority.

Historical Context

In the late 20th century, as newly independent African nations sought to build sovereign economies, many relied heavily on expanding state bureaucracies and public enterprises to absorb the emerging entry-level workforce. However, rapid population growth quickly outstripped government capacity. When structural adjustment programs and economic crises hit the continent in the 1980s and 1990s, governments were forced to implement severe fiscal austerity, freeze public-sector hiring, and privatize state enterprises. This sudden contraction occurred before a robust private sector had taken root to absorb displaced workers, leaving an expanding cohort of young citizens without clear pathways into formal employment.

As the late 20th century transitioned into the 21st, this structural job shortage was severely compounded by a widening technological divide. The rapid acceleration of the global digital economy fundamentally altered employer demands, shifting labor requirements toward digital literacy, specialized technical trades, and adaptive problem-solving skills. However, regional education and vocational systems remained largely frozen in colonial-era instructional frameworks that prioritized rote learning and administrative skills over market-aligned technical training.

Consequently, a severe skill mismatch emerged: millions of young Africans graduated with academic qualifications for industries that no longer had capacity, while high-growth emerging sectors faced acute shortages of locally skilled talent.

Current Situation

Today, Africa stands at a pivotal demographic juncture as its youth cohort rapidly scales toward half a billion individuals. Rather than being absorbed into expanding economic sectors, roughly 10 to 12 million young people enter the continent's labor market each year to compete for fewer than 3 million formal wage jobs.

This widening labor deficit means that headline unemployment figures tell only part of the story; nearly 90% of working youth are absorbed into the informal economy, engaged in low-productivity, precarious survival activities with minimal social protections or avenues for upward mobility.

This persistent imbalance severely strains national economies, forcing governments to allocate scarce public revenues toward social safety nets and crisis management rather than foundational infrastructure or innovation. Unlocking this bottleneck remains the central socioeconomic challenge for the continent, as millions of energetic, educated young citizens are sidelined from driving regional productivity.

Until structural reforms expand formal job creation, this dynamic will continue to fuel domestic brain drain, depress household living standards, and threaten political and macroeconomic stability across the region.

Subtopics

1.5.4.1 Technical, Vocational and Digital Skills Learning

Technical, vocational, and digital learning bridges the gap between education and employment. Traditional academic systems often fail to provide market-relevant skills, leaving youth unprepared for modern economies.

Expanding access to practical vocational training, ICT literacy, and digital skill programs empowers young people, increases employability, drives innovation, and facilitates the transition from precarious informal work into sustainable, high-productivity careers

1.5.4.2 Job Creation Through Industrialization and the Digital Economy

Expanding local manufacturing, processing, and digital infrastructure is vital for large-scale job creation. Industrialization transitions economies away from raw commodity exports toward higher-value goods, while the growing digital economy unlocks new opportunities in tech, e-commerce, and services.

Together, these sectors diversify national markets, absorb entry-level labor, and generate sustainable, formal employment for a growing youth demographic.

Questions a Resolution Must Answer

- 1 How can African countries create more jobs and opportunities for their growing youth population?
- 2 How can education and skills training better prepare young Africans for the jobs of the future?
- 3 How can the AU support young entrepreneurs by giving them better access to funding, technology, and mentorship?
- 4 How can innovation and technology be used to reduce youth unemployment and create a more stable Africa?

[Useful Sites and Documents]

[African Union]

<https://au.int/en>

[UNDP Africa]

[UNDP africa](#)

[African development bank]

[African development bank](#)

[African Review Peer mechanism]

[African review peer mechanism](#)

[Our World In Data]

[world in data](#)

[World Bank Data]

[World bank data](#)

[International Labour Organization]

[International Labour organization](#)

[Glossary]

[Political Instability] - *Frequent political conflict, government changes, or violence.*

[Corruption] - *Misuse of power or public resources for personal gain*
placeholder

[Governance]- *How a country is managed and decisions are made.*

[Accountability] - *Leaders being responsible for their actions and decisions.*

[Transparency] - *Making government actions and information open to the public*

[Coup d'état] - *The unconstitutional removal of a government, often by force.*