Africa’s Trade and Governance Agenda in a changing global Environment

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We are making certain Assumptions....

- That recent global crises require new African & global responses
- In a manner that will allow Africa to respond & act collectively
- Do we have the institutions & procedures to do so?
- In respect of which crises should Africa respond?
  - War in Ukraine
  - Climate Change
  - Pandemics
- What can we learn from collective responses elsewhere? EU & NATO
- Under what conditions will sovereign States act collectively?

How would collective African policy responses achieve?
Sovereignty and a Collective Voice

• African nations treasure their Sovereignty
• Historical reasons and factual conditions why this is so
• But sovereignty has serious implications for collective action
• And for unlocking Africa’s potential
• What does sovereignty mean for us?
• Sovereignty can keep Politicians in power with hands in the till
• It is an act of sovereignty to conclude binding Agreements
• If the AU is Africa’s collective voice, then there are limitations re what can be done
• We preach solidarity but as sovereign states
  We only litigate about borders
What have we done traditionally?

- Who are “We”?
- We pushed for decolonization, dignity and political independence
- In our own sovereign states
- Then we embraced Non-Alignment....
- Till the Berlin Wall came down
- We founded the OAU & AU but with 8 RECs and overlapping membership
- We adopted the Abuja Treaty for the AEC
- UN and WTO membership
- Doha Development Round
- A seat on the Security council
- China became an important trading partner & Investor in infrastructure
What lessons to be learned from AfCFTA & Climate Strategy?

• **Member-driven** efforts mean sovereignty is re-stated
• Consensus decision-making
• We discovered our own *acquis* but did not define it
• Is AfCFTA an institutional framework for continental value chains?
• What does this mean?
• There are serious problems at home
• RECs demand joint action --- how much of this for AfCFTA?
• Climate Change Strategy comprehensive but institutional framework
• On Climate change we are united .... That we are not to be blamed.
• How far does this take us?
The war in Ukraine

- A red line has been crossed ... and matters could become worse
- Western & NATO responses different this time
- West sees this as a global crisis
- EU acts collectively because they have sacrificed sovereignty
- ....and needs energy
- West says it is not possible to remain non-aligned
- Even if we invoke our sovereign right to do so
- China has its own agenda – the global order is a Western design
- Can some African nations benefit from this crisis?
- Will Africa become strategically more important? Cobalt example.