



2017 Ibrahim Governance Weekend

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Marrakech, Morocco



SOUS LE HAUT PATRONAGE DE SA MAJESTÉ LE ROI MOHAMMED VI

PRESS RELEASE

Africa's future depends on its ability to meet the expectations of its young people, Mo Ibrahim Foundation report underlines

A compilation of data and insights will inform discussions during the 2017 Ibrahim Forum 'Africa at a Tipping Point' on 8 April in Marrakech, Morocco.

LONDON, 28 March 2017 – The Mo Ibrahim Foundation's 2017 Forum Report *Africa at a Tipping Point* finds the continent still making progress, but faced with a real risk of falling back. The future will depend, more than anything else, on Africa's ability to harness the energy and meet the expectations of its young people.

Among the key opportunities and threats:

- Today, 60% of the continent population is already under 25 years of age. By 2050, Africa will be home to 452 million people under the age of 25. Their drive, ambition and potential provide African countries with an extraordinary asset. But this demographic dividend is at risk of being squandered.
- Too many young Africans feel devoid of economic prospects and robbed of any say on the future of their own continent.
- The commodity cycle may have fuelled GDP growth for many African countries but it has created almost no jobs. Over the last ten years, while Africa's real GDP has grown at an annual average of 4.5%, youth unemployment levels have remained high. Despite being the second-largest African economy, South Africa is not able to provide jobs for more than half of its youth population.
- Young people have spent more years in school but few have been effectively equipped with the skills the economy needs. Despite having some of the most educated populations, with gross enrolment ratios in tertiary education over 30%, Egypt and Tunisia also have some of the highest youth unemployment rates on the continent, greater than 30%.
- "Free and fair" elections have indeed multiplied over the last decade, but voter turnout is declining and scepticism about elected representatives is growing, especially among the young people.
- Disenchantment with democracy and lack of economic opportunity form a "toxic brew", bound to strengthen the appeal of migration and violent extremism.

- Terrorism has become a well-organised multi-billion dollar criminal enterprise with growing control over the drugs trade, people trafficking and other parts of the black market. The jobs, status, income and feeling of “belonging” it seemingly offers to young people cut off from the mainstream economy may be more attractive than the ideology itself.

Mo Ibrahim, Chair of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, said: “The energy and ambition of Africa’s young people is our greatest resource and best hope for strengthening our continent’s progress. But their expectations could turn into frustration and anger unless they find a job and get a chance to influence their own future. Africa stands at a tipping point. The decisions taken now will decide whether our continent continues to rise or falls back. More than ever, wise leadership and sound governance are key.”

Ahead of the 2017 Ibrahim Forum, which is part of the Foundation’s Annual [Governance Weekend](#), the report sets the stage for high-level discussions between leaders from the public and private arenas, as well as influential partners based outside the continent. Based on this analysis, the Forum will address three priority areas that require leadership and sound governance:

- The appeal of violent extremism and migration
- The risk of a democratic recession
- The need for an inclusive economic growth

Among the speakers are:

- **Akinwumi Adesina**, President, African Development Bank
- **Kofi Annan**, former Secretary-General of the United Nations
- **Youssef Amrani**, Minister-Delegate for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
- **Abdoulie Bathily**, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Central Africa
- **Aliko Dangote**, President and CEO, Dangote Group
- **Moulay Hafid El Alamy**, Minister of Industry, Trade, & New Technologies, Morocco
- **Jean-Marie Guehenno**, President and CEO, International Crisis Group
- **Sello Hatang**, CEO, Nelson Mandela Foundation
- **Mo Ibrahim**, Founder and Chair, Mo Ibrahim Foundation
- **Martin Kobler**, Head of United Nations Support Mission in Libya
- **Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**, Senior Advisor, Lazard
- **Amina J. Mohammed**, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations
- **Mark Malloch-Brown**, Chair, Commission on Business and Sustainable Development
- **Paul Polman**, CEO, Unilever
- **Lamido Sanusi**, Emir of Kano Emirate

Moderators:

- **Abdelmalek Alaoui**, Founder and CEO, Guepard Group
- **Zeinab Badawi**, Presenter, BBC HardTalk
- **Jendayi Fraser**, President and CEO of 50 Ventures, LLC

Read the full report: mo.ibrahim.foundation/forum/downloads/

Media Registration

Local and international media are welcome to register and attend the Ibrahim Governance Weekend. Registration and media accreditation is now open at mo.ibrahim.foundation/igw-register

For more information, please contact Sophie Masipa, masipa.s@moibrahimfoundation.org, or Hallie Detrick, Hallie.detrick@portland-communications.com.

All the events will also be available to view via live webcast, details of which can be found below.

We encourage you to follow the live feed and discussions on Twitter by using **#MIFMaroc**, or following [@Mo_IbrahimFdn](https://twitter.com/Mo_IbrahimFdn)

Live webcast

Watch: mo.ibrahim.foundation/annual-event/

Embed on your own website: `<iframe width="560" height="315" src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/Cu6xKlyOnu4?rel=0" frameborder="0" allowfullscreen></iframe>`

Notes to Editors:

Mo Ibrahim Foundation

The Mo Ibrahim Foundation was established in 2006 with a focus on the critical importance of leadership and governance in Africa. By providing tools to support progress in leadership and governance, the Foundation aims to promote meaningful change on the continent.

The Foundation, which is a non-grant making organisation, focuses on defining, assessing and enhancing governance and leadership in Africa through four main initiatives:

- Ibrahim Index of African Governance
- Ibrahim Prize for Achievement in African Leadership
- Ibrahim Forum
- Ibrahim Fellowships and Scholarships

Ibrahim Governance Weekend

The Ibrahim Governance Weekend is the flagship event of the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, held every year in a different African hub. This three-day event convenes prominent African and Africa-focused political and business leaders, representatives from civil society, multilateral and regional institutions as well as Africa's major international partners to identify specific policy challenges and discuss priorities for action. The conversation is extended to a wider audience through music, art and sport at major public events, showcasing some of Africa's brightest talent.

Ibrahim Forum

Established in 2010, the Ibrahim Forum is a high-level discussion forum tackling issues of critical importance to Africa. The Forum convenes prominent African political and business leaders,

representatives from civil society, multilateral and regional institutions as well as Africa's major international partners to identify specific policy challenges and priorities for action. Previous Forums have dealt with: African Urban Dynamics (2015), Africa in the next 50 years (2013), African Youth (2012), African Agriculture (2011) and African Regional Economic Integration (2010). Data and research on Forum issues are compiled by the Foundation as the basis for informed and constructive debate.