

Talk of African renaissance ‘misplaced and premature,’ Eritrea tells UN Assembly

23 September 2017 – Africa remains the most marginalized of all continents, and therefore talk of an ‘African Renaissance’ and of ‘fastest growing economies’ is misplaced and premature, Eritrea’s top foreign affairs official told the United Nations General Assembly today.

“We should not flatter ourselves, or allow others to flatter us,” said Minister for Foreign Affairs Osman Saleh Mohammed at the Assembly’s annual high-level debate.

“Africa remains a producer and small-bit exporter of primary products. It retains minimum revenue from this export, with foreign companies getting the lion’s share,” he added.

He noted that processing of primary products, value-addition, industrialization, technology development barely exist. African economies, physical and social infrastructure, institutional and governance structures, peace and security architectures remain undeveloped.

Yet, Africa boasts tremendous human and natural resources; indeed, over 60 per cent of global natural resources lie in Africa.

Mr. Mohammed said that people can speak of Africa taking its rightful place in the world, only when Africa’s economies, the quality of its infrastructure, the standards of its health and educational institutions, the level of its artistic, scientific and technological products, the effectiveness of its institutions and enterprises, and more importantly the quality of life of its citizens, reflect more accurately its great potential.

Eritrea – a young nation, strategically located and with significant human and natural resources – is laying the ground for broad-based and sustainable economic development, and has also embarked on a massive, water and soil conservation, as well as an afforestation program, as part of its comprehensive plan to enhance the environment and fight climate change.

“Eritrea is confident it will meet the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) ahead of time,” he said.

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