

## Ninth Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa

### *Towards a just transition that delivers jobs, prosperity and climate resilience in Africa: leveraging the green and blue economy*

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#### CONCEPT NOTE

#### **SIDE-EVENT: 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021**

Launch of the ECA Anthology of Short Stories titled: *Beans without Korkor and other stories*

And

A conversation with writers: *Can Storytelling inspire alternative futures?*

**Introduction:** For over 15 months, COVID-19 has presented enormous challenges to African countries in their efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) due to the devastating impact of the global pandemic on people, livelihoods and the economies that sustain them. Africans are thus tackling a multiplicity of challenges that are compounded by the impact of climate change. A post-covid recovery must tackle these twin challenges by engaging stakeholders on how a just transition can deliver jobs and prosperity and leverage on the opportunities presented in the green and blue economy.

In this regard, the ECA's Championing the Decade of Action initiative has over the pandemic period, engaged young African writers, by offering them a space to reflect on these challenges through a number of activities, including an SDGs short story competition. In this respect, the Short Stories Anthology is born out of the idea that the implementation of the SDGs would benefit from a different kind of interrogation – one that would open the space for young creative writers to mine such issues through fiction. The initiative is aligned with aspiration 5 of the African Union's Agenda 2063 which promotes "Africa's rich heritage and culture to ensure that the creative arts are major contributors to Africa's growth and transformation."

Implemented in the African Union *year of arts, culture and heritage*, which also happens to be one marked by the spectre of a global pandemic, the Anthology of Short Stories competition has offered a unique space, rarely accorded in the UN system, for creative writers to explore the width and breadth of the issues that permeate the complexities of our time. The results are found in the collection of stories titled **Beans without Korkor?** written by writers aged 17 to 35 from across the African continent. They include some stories that have been translated into English by the authors. Among the writers are entrepreneurs, students, artists, bloggers, and development practitioners from: *Burundi, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi,*

*Mali, Madagascar, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. The winner of the*

Additionally, during the Pandemic, the Centre for Energy Ethics at the University of St Andrew in collaboration the Centre for Climate Change and sustainability studies in Ghana, launched a climate fiction competition called 'Africa@2050' that required writers to imagine the climate futures of the continent in 2050.

The side event will be held in the afternoon of 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021 (Cape Verde Time) and will focus on the following:

- Launch of the Anthology of Short Stories titled: **Beans without Korkor ? and other stories.**
- An introduction to the Africa@2050 initiative
- A conversation with writers on their experience writing Stories to Inspire alternative futures

**Session Objective:** The ultimate objective of this session is to provide visibility to the work of the writers, increase understanding of the conference theme among creatives and discuss the role literary arts can play to accelerate action in this Decade.

**Meeting Platform Link: TBC**

**Proposed Programme:**

**Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes**

1 Minute intro and housekeeping

5 Minutes: Opening remarks: ECA (TCND)

6 Minutes: Short overview of the Short Stories initiative and introducing the winning writer and special mentions: (A reading from the winning story)

6 Minutes: Short overview of the Africa@2050 initiative and introducing the winning writers (A reading from the winning story) – *Pauline Destree*

*30-45* minutes discussion session with the writers (questions to the writers)

*10 minutes (perspectives from the judges)*

2-minute conclusion and vote of thanks