**Second Intergenerational Dialogue Forum on Peace and Security as a catalyst to the Implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area.**

**Key Takeaways:**

**Youth and Climate Justice:**

* Recognizing the urgency of climate change, particularly for the younger generation, is paramount. Achieving just transitions that balance economic growth with the dignity of informal labor is central to ensuring social justice.

**Leveraging Human Resources:**

* Unleashing the economic potential of both domestic and foreign human resources stands as a linchpin for effecting structural transformation and combatting unemployment, key goals in Africa's development agenda.

**Challenges of Unique Land Borders:**

* The distinctiveness of Africa's land borders presents challenges for trade integration. Empowering youth to actively engage in political processes is crucial to surmounting these hurdles and fostering regional cohesion.

**Agricultural Sector and SMEs:**

* The agricultural sector holds immense promise for economic growth, especially within the framework of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Professionalizing the sector and simplifying bureaucratic processes related to health and education will be pivotal in unlocking this potential.

**Advocacy and Youth Participation:**

* Advocacy and meaningful youth participation are the linchpins of successfully implementing the African continental free trade area. Ensuring policies are localized and domesticated empowers communities to actively engage with trade policies.

**Renewable Energy and Climate Resilience:**

* Africa is poised to lead the world in renewable energy. However, the adverse impacts of climate change pose significant challenges. Striking a balance between the opportunities presented by green jobs and the reality of fossil fuel dependency is critical.

**Blue Economy and Infrastructure Development:**

* The blue economy, encompassing maritime and coastal resources, presents a wealth of opportunities. Mainstreaming blue economy principles into implementation plans, coupled with strategic investments in infrastructure, forms a cornerstone of sustainable economic development.

**Peace and Security for Economic Growth:**

* Peace is the bedrock of economic development. Youth play a pivotal role in maintaining peace. Governments should work towards harmonizing tariffs and reducing non-tariff barriers to facilitate smooth trade.

**Technology and Innovation for Trade:**

* Embracing technology and innovation is imperative for seamless trade facilitation. Striking a balance between access and safety, coupled with leveraging digital platforms for conflict reporting and innovative solutions, is paramount for robust connectivity and data-driven insights.

**Skill Building and Economic Advancements:**

* Equipping the youth with necessary skills, fostering economic advancements, and enhancing coordination among regional economic communities are vital for translating the promise of trade agreements into tangible benefits.

**Climate Change and Access to Resources:**

* Effectively addressing climate change and ensuring equitable access to resources are non-negotiable for sustainable development. Policies must prioritize climate finance, sustainable forest management, and conflict reduction strategies.

**Empowering Youth through Technology:**

* Recognizing technology as a double-edged sword for youth, it is crucial to strike a balance between access and safety. Leveraging digital platforms for conflict reporting and deploying innovative tech solutions are central to empowering youth as agents of positive change.

**Localizing Solutions and Green Technologies:**

* Fostering homegrown solutions and embracing green technologies are vital for achieving sustainable development. By localizing agendas and adopting eco-friendly technologies, we harness the potential of our own resources.

**Meaningful Education and Public-Private Partnerships:**

* Meaningful education, buttressed by strong public-private partnerships, forms the bedrock of economic growth. Integrating traditional and modern business practices through innovation ensures a dynamic and resilient economic landscape.

**Call to Action:**

**We, the young people of Africa, united in our commitment to drive positive change and spearhead sustainable development initiatives under the** **African Continental Free Trade Area, hereby share the following recommendations to harness our potential and create a prosperous future for our continent:**

**Youth-Led Climate Action:**

* We appeal to RECS for the establishment of youth-led climate action groups within Regional Economic Communities (RECs), organizing workshops, training sessions, and awareness campaigns on climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies.

**Youth Entrepreneurship Programs:**

* We advocate for RECs to launch entrepreneurship programs targeting young people, providing seed funding, mentorship, and business development support to young entrepreneurs in key sectors.

**Trade Facilitation Workshops:**

* We urge RECs to organize workshops on trade facilitation and cross-border cooperation, bringing together youth entrepreneurs, policymakers, and industry experts to discuss challenges and opportunities in trade.

**Agricultural Innovation Hubs:**

* We appeal for RECs to establish innovation hubs focusing on agriculture and agribusiness, offering training, resources, and networking opportunities for youth interested in agricultural ventures.

**Youth Advocacy Platforms:**

* We rally for RECs to create platforms for youth advocacy and policy engagement, organizing forums, conferences, and dialogues where young people can voice their opinions on trade-related policies.

**Blue Economy Incubators:**

* We appeal for RECs to support in setting up of incubators for blue economy ventures and innovations, aiding young innovators in developing sustainable solutions for maritime and coastal industries.

**Peacebuilding Initiatives:**

* We appeal for RECs to launch peacebuilding initiatives involving youth, facilitating peace dialogues, conflict resolution training, and community-building projects led by young leaders**.**

**Digital Skills Training:**

* We advocate for RECs to provide training in digital skills and technology application, offering coding bootcamps, cybersecurity workshops, and e-commerce training for youth entrepreneurs.

**Innovation Challenges:**

* We urge RECs for the organization of innovation challenges to address specific trade-related issues, hosting competitions encouraging young innovators to develop tech solutions for cross-border trade barriers.

**Green Technology Demonstrations:**

* We urge RECs to promote showcasing of green technologies and sustainable practices, organizing exhibitions and field demonstrations highlighting renewable energy solutions and eco-friendly production methods.

**Market Access Support:**

* We urge RECs to facilitate access to regional and international markets for youth-led enterprises, providing trade mission opportunities, market research, and export readiness training.

**Capacity Building for Conflict Resolution:**

* We urge RECs for the provision of training in conflict resolution and peacebuilding skills, conducting workshops on mediation, negotiation, and community-building for youth leaders in conflict-prone areas.

**Partnerships with Educational Institutions:**

* We urge RECs to forge partnerships with universities and technical colleges, collaborating with educational institutions to develop curricula focused on blue economy, green technologies, and trade-related skills.

**Promotion of Financial Literacy:**

* We appeal to RECs to promote financial literacy and access to financing options for youth entrepreneurs, conducting workshops on budgeting, access to capital, and financial management for young business owners.

**Empowering Youth Participation:**

* We urge REC's and member state governments to implement initiatives aimed at breaking down invisible barriers that hinder our active engagement in the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement.
* We appeal to REC's and member state governments to prioritize the translation of the agreement into local languages to ensure widespread accessibility and understanding.
* We call on REC's and member state governments to support and promote awareness campaigns that educate and engage our peers and communities about the benefits and opportunities offered by the agreement.

**Economic Empowerment:**

* We urge REC's and member state governments to establish and enhance mentorship programs that provide aspiring entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in the field of trade.
* We appeal to REC's and member state governments to implement inclusive policies and actions that engage member states and developed nations in supporting our economic endeavors under the agreement.
* We urge REC's and member state governments to strengthen access to finance and establish financial hubs that will serve as catalysts for economic growth and development.

**Advocacy and Policy Influence:**

* We urge REC's and member state governments to empower National Youth Councils, enabling them to effectively advocate for youth interests and concerns in the context of the agreement.
* We appeal to REC's and member state governments to recognize the critical role of awareness and understanding in addressing barriers to peace and security, and we are dedicated to advocating for increased focus on these issues.
* We urge REC's and member state governments to champion advocacy and research initiatives that lead to unified policies and strategies across member states, fostering a harmonized approach to the agreement's implementation.

**Incorporating Tradition and Technology:**

* We urge REC's and member state governments to support initiatives that harness the wealth of traditional and indigenous knowledge, merging it seamlessly with modern technology for a holistic approach to development.
* We appeal to REC's and member state governments to ensure gender considerations are mainstreamed throughout the agreement's implementation, ensuring equal opportunities and benefits for all.

**Information Dissemination and Collaboration:**

* We urge REC's and member state governments to utilize diverse channels for information dissemination, including technology-driven platforms, to ensure widespread understanding and engagement.
* We appeal to REC's and member state governments to collaborate closely with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), meticulously mapping and documenting their involvement in a comprehensive database. Together, let's forge a path towards a prosperous, inclusive, and equitable Africa through the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement.

**We, the youth of Africa, stand united in our determination to shape a sustainable future for our continent. We call upon governments, regional bodies, and stakeholders to support and implement these recommendations, recognizing the pivotal role of youth in driving Africa's socio-economic development and prosperity.**