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Physics for Sustainable Development in Africa

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More than 60 years after independence, almost all African countries are still trying to achieve economic development. Several action plans to achieve this goal have been adopted and all of them stressed the need to put science and technology in the service of development by reinforcing the autonomous capacity of our countries in this field. From the Monrovia Strategy in 1979, the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) for the economic development of Africa [1980-2000] to the Consolidated Plan of Action (CPA) which consists of three inter linked pillars: capacity building, knowledge production and technological innovation, African countries are trying to advance education, science and technology, and human capital development in the continent. The current AU Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024 (STISA-2024) places STI at the epicentre of Africa's social and economic development within the long-term AU Agenda 2063. Through the implementation of STISA-2024, science, technology, and innovation are expected to impact critical sectors including agriculture, energy, environment, health, infrastructure, mining, security, and water, among others. This strategy is designed to respond to the need of transforming Africa into a Knowledge-based and Innovation-led Society. The fact is that Africa is changing, economic, social and infrastructural progress is visible, but at what pace and under what conditions, which raises questions about the strategic choices facing African decision-makers in a world where the knowledge economy dominates. In this presentation, we try to give some thoughts on the role that Physics could play in the achievement of Africa's sustainable development goals. The focus will be on the potential contribution of Physics to achieving the objectives of the Agenda 2063 flagship projects.

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