

President Paul Kagame met with United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) chief Claver Gatete on Friday as Rwanda looks to sustain economic growth and advance long-term development plans.

The two discussed Rwanda's development path and its sustainable development goals during a meeting at Village Urugwiro in Kigali, according to the Office of the President.

The meeting comes after Rwanda recorded 10% economic growth in the first quarter of 2026, with gross domestic product rising to Rwf6.345 trillion from Rwf5.276 trillion in the same period a year earlier, data from the National Institute of Statistics of Rwanda shows.

The figures reflect growth across an economy that has increasingly focused on agriculture, services, investment and regional trade.

Gatete, who became UNECA's executive secretary in 2023, has previously highlighted areas where the commission could work with Rwanda on projects intended to increase production and expand trade.

In 2024, he said UNECA was prepared to support Rwanda's Gako Beef project, which is intended to process meat for the domestic market and for export.

The commission also committed to working with Rwanda on the Gabiro Agribusiness Hub, an agricultural development project covering about 16,000 hectares.

Trade and transport have been another area of cooperation. Rwanda and UNECA have discussed the proposed Akagera Navigation project, which would facilitate the movement of goods by water towards Kagitumba, a major border point between Rwanda and Uganda.

The latest meeting also comes as African governments face pressure to strengthen domestic production, increase intra-African trade and reduce reliance on external markets and financing.

UNECA, headquartered in Addis Ababa, was established in 1958 to promote economic and social development and regional integration across Africa. It works with governments on economic policies and development strategies and maintains offices in several African countries, including Rwanda.

Gatete previously served in Rwanda's government, including as minister of finance and economic planning, before taking the UNECA post.