Why Tunisia's former prime minister is optimistic about Africa's future

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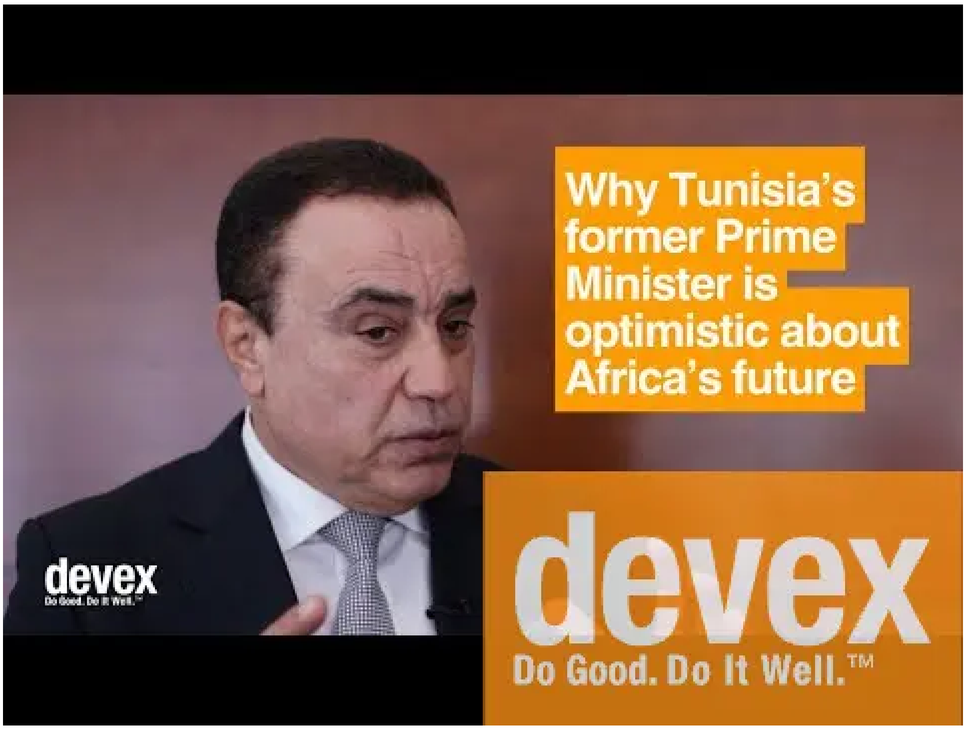

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Former Tunisian Prime Minister Mehdi Jomaa says Africa's young population and human capital hold the key to turning its economic challenges into opportunities — but only if leaders can strengthen governance and build strategic partnerships.

By Rumbi Chakamba // 27 October 2025

Over a decade after serving as Tunisia's prime minister, Mehdi Jomaa remains optimistic about Africa's economic prospects. Speaking at the Pro Content Studio of Devex Impact House on the sidelines of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund annual meetings, Jomaa said the continent's challenges — from job creation to governance — are matched by immense opportunities driven by its youthful population and growing talent base. “Africa is one of the biggest potential of opportunities for the future,” he said. “We have the biggest demographic growth, the biggest need — and the gap compared to the developed country is enormous, but it means that offers many opportunities.” Jomaa said Africa’s path to prosperity hinges on improved governance and a clear long-term vision. With a young generation and growing demand for goods, education, and technology, he believes the continent can become a major market and innovation hub. But he called for deeper collaboration between Africa and the global north, noting that Europe’s financing and technical expertise, for example, could complement Africa’s demographic strength and natural resources. “In Europe, you have the knowledge and know-how, the capacity of financing, but a different demography. And in Africa, we have all these needs,” he said. “It’s big and huge opportunities. We need flows of money. We need flows of knowledge. We need flows in the other direction as well — of resources.” Reflecting on Tunisia’s own experience, Jomaa credited his country’s investment in human capital as a foundation for resilience. “In Tunisia, we believe in the human capital. We don’t have oil. We don’t have gas,” he said. “We chose not to invest in military or any other sectors. We invested in building the capacity in human resources.” He added that this focus remains the key to unlocking Africa’s potential amid global technological shifts such as artificial intelligence.