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## DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Press Release N°338/2016

### 15th AGOA Forum holds successfully



**Washington D.C, USA – 26 September 2016** - The African Union Commission delegation to the 15th AGOA Forum held on 26th September 2016 at the US State Department in Washington D.C. was led by H.E. Mr. Erastus Mwencha, Deputy Chairperson, assisted by H.E. Mrs. Fatima Haram Acyl, Commissioner for Trade and Industry, the AU Mission in Washington and the AUC Department of Trade and Industry. The Forum was preceded by a two-day meeting of the Civil Society, Private Sector and Women Entrepreneurs on 22-23 September and by an African Consultative Group meeting on 24-25 September at experts' and Ministerial levels respectively. The theme of the Forum was **“Maximizing US-Africa Trade and Investment; AGOA and Beyond”**

The Deputy Chairperson and the Commissioner for Trade and Industry were speakers at various events during the forum. The African Union Mission to the USA worked closely with the US Department of State, the Office of the US Trade Representative, and the African

Ambassadors' Group's Economic Development Committee in preparing the agenda of the Forum and the involvement of African stakeholders.

The African Consultative Group meeting enabled the Ministers to table an African position with regard to AGOA implementation over the next nine years as well as on the issue of post-AGOA basing their discussions on the US Report titled "Beyond AGOA: Looking to the future of the U.S. - Africa Trade and Investment", issued by the US on September 21, 2016, on the occasion of the 2nd US-Africa Business Forum. The common position was reflected in a set of key recommendations for the implementation of AGOA directed to African governments at the national and sub-regional level, African regional institutions, African private sector, the US government and US private sector. In addition, the Ministers issued recommendations on the US-Africa trade and investment relationship beyond AGOA, which was a key theme of the Forum. Those recommendations were read out to and discussed with the US side.

Essentially, the African side was of the view that any future agreements with the US should ensure support to Africa's regional integration agenda and enhance diversification, industrialization and productive capacities. The Ministers considered the US Report as a start of a conversation on trade and investment relationship beyond AGOA. They highlighted some of the issues of concern to them from the Report and informed the US side that the Report will be studied further with a view to developing a position that is in line with Agenda 2063 and its objective to industrialize. In this regard, the Ministers decided to set up an AU Task Force to develop Africa's strategy for future trade and investment relationship with the US.

The AGOA Forum is an annual event that alternates between Sub-Saharan Africa and the United States. The 16th AGOA Forum of 2017 will be hosted by the Republic of Togo.



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