



**10th Anniversary
African Union Private Sector Forum**



Draft Concept Note

10th African Union Private Sector Forum

9-11 May 2018

Cairo, Egypt

Theme: Made in Africa towards realizing Africa's economic Transformation and achieving Agenda 2063

I. Introduction

Even though the global economy has progressed significantly in the last few spans away from the industrial revolution, which transformed many of the world's developed countries, there's still much optimism derived from the notion that manufacturing will play a key transformative role in developing countries in Africa today.

However, according to a new research paper from US think tank, Center for Global Development, factories in Africa were almost always more expensive to start and run. Looking at overall costs, small African firms were 39% more expensive than comparative firms elsewhere while medium and large firms were around 50% more expensive.

Africa still lags behind in the development of infrastructure namely; transport networks and stable electricity in many poor African countries plus low levels of education. For example, with just two out of five people having access to electricity, electrifying the continent is a top priority for Africa. Grand scale and distributed small-scale renewable energy sources along with intelligent energy management systems that reduce consumption can guarantee energy security for Africa in a sustainable way. We need to explore digitization of developing African on and off-grid renewable energy infrastructure and find ways to digitalizing technologies and artificial intelligence which could maximize energy distribution and efficiency for the continent.

Therefore Africa needs to carefully design industrial policy" to "possibly accelerate its potential for manufacturing and rapid industrialization."

In the vision of the Africa's Agenda **2063** The Africa we want, is a **Prosperous, Powerful, Peaceful, Integrated, Intellectual and Inclusive**. it is crucial to have real Economic growth and prosperity with real economic transformation with a social dimension that will ensure not only all basic needs but **Quality of life of our African people**

Although Africa is the richest naturally endowed continent on Earth, it still remains the poorest of them all. Why? The Continent's natural resources are poorly managed with total absence of value addition and exploited by foreign firms at the detriment of local communities especially women and Youth and African private Sector mainly MSMEs. To deliver on Africa's transformation promise, the continent needs to add more value to its natural resources within its own borders, promote locally manufactured products within and outside its borders as a means to create more robust, diversified and sustainable economic growth. Improving infrastructure, in particular, the supply of reliable and affordable electricity, will be crucial to realizing sustainable **Economic Transformation and Agenda 2063** growth.

In addition the economic transformation should focus on developing Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) as the back bone of the Economy in Africa and building the capacity and empowering all human resources through Education and capacity Building including women and youth using Science and Technology to ensure the empowerment of the private sector and the informal sector which also contributes greatly in the economic growth of Africa.

Considering the critical role that the private sector is expected to play in the Africa's Transformation and implementation of Agenda 2063, in particular its contribution to poverty reduction through investment and employment creation, the AU Commission organizes an annual African Private Sector Forum. This initiative is in line with the AU Executive Council Abuja Decision Number **EX/CL/Dec.183 (VI)**, which institutionalized the African Union Private Sector Forum.

The Forum is a key instrument of interface and partnership between the African Union policy makers and the private sector. The Forum also acts as a vehicle for empowering the African Private Sector through advocacy, sharing business and market information and skills.

In light of the foregoing, the African Union Commission plans to organize the 10th Africa Private Sector Forum **on 09-11 May 2018 in Cairo, Egypt** under the Theme: ***Made in Africa towards realizing Africa's economic Transformation and achieving Agenda 2063.***

II. Structure & Content

The 10th AU Private Sector Forum is a three day event. It will feature plenary sessions, a startup pitch and closing session. B2B, B2G and G2G interaction stands will be available throughout the event, where companies including women and youth entrepreneurs can demonstrate their technologies and explore partnerships with other companies and governments.

Plenary and closing sessions will host domain specific presentations, panel discussions and will dive deep into the use of digital technologies in the sectors of focus, particularly products made in Africa. They will also highlight the necessary strategic partnerships and enabling environment to successfully implement economic transformation in the chosen sectors. Finally, there will be opening and closing Keynote remarks, and general presentations with an overview of the topics of the theme and conclude on the event.

III. Objectives of the forum

The main objective of the 10th Africa Private Sector Forum is to enhance Africa Private Sector's role as a driver of Africa's transformation and achieving Agenda 2063 aspirations.

The specific objectives of the forum will be:

- Provide a platform for policymakers and private sector high-level participants to articulate concrete proposals on how the African Private sector could play its role in contributing in Africa's transformation;
- Frame concrete policy options and actions of private sector engagement for meeting Africa's contemporary challenges on inclusive and sustainable growth during the next decade and beyond;
- Promote dialogue on economic development issues, between policy makers, specialized development and financial institutions, civil societies, private sectors, researchers, and professional organizations;
- Enhance the engagement of the private sector in the continental effort to achieve food security and rural poverty eradication in Africa;
- Explore ways of catalyzing the role of the private sector towards the creation of the Continental Free Trade Area based on the experience and structures of existing RECs;
- Give Made in Africa Awards to the best African performing Manufacturers;
- Contribute to improving Africa's investment and business climate by supporting governments' efforts to strengthen the laws, policies, tax systems, rights, regulations and procedures that govern business, as they nurture not just their domestic private sectors, but also those of other regions;
- Provide recommendations on the economic development challenges in Africa for consideration by the next Ordinary session of the AU Summit.

IV. Key issues

Key issues to be discussed during the Forum will be focusing on:

- Value addition of the raw materials and upgrading the value chain towards increased productivity;
- Promotion of Made in Africa products through awards of African manufacturers

- Supporting women and Youth Empowerment and empowering the African private sector to manage Africa's Natural resources and promote Industrialization;
- Promotion of Entrepreneurship as the driver for economic growth and creation of jobs.
- Promotion and sharing best practices and experiences on new technologies for different areas to promote production and industrialization.
- Promote Sectorial approach of manufacturing in the educational, health, hospitality and agricultural sectors,

Similarly, with a view to creating better conditions for human security, business enterprises can make a difference especially in post-conflict setting, where basic infrastructure and livelihoods have been destroyed. Business can provide the necessary technical and financial input to jump-start the economy by replacing destroyed infrastructure, providing job opportunities and investing in the economy. The private sector could engage in the educational, health, hospitality and agricultural sectors, providing alternative avenues for training, employment and loan facilities for the youth. Once basic needs are met, the social structure of a conflict-afflicted society can be slowly rebuilt.

The AU's vision of 'an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the global arena' can only be realised with the full participation of all stakeholders. The public sector must work hand in hand with the private sector to attain the high rates of economic growth on a sustainable basis, remains a key factor in addressing the problem of poverty and underdevelopment

Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the Private Sector Forum

The 10th Anniversary of the African Union Private Sector Forum will be celebrated during the event. The following will take place:

- March at the foot of the pyramids with Signs Made In Africa in 4 languages
- Media Coverage for the Anniversary
- Give away for Made in Africa Awards

Made in Africa Awards

- Celebrating the best Performing African Manufacturers
- 3 Manufacturers per region will be nominated

Criteria for nomination

- A private sector company in the field of Manufacturing for over 10 Years Sustainable and continuing Innovation and investment in research and development
- Contributed to the increase of job employment for women and Youth
- Contributed to Community Development

V. Participation

The Forum is expected to attract more than 200 high-level participants from the following:

- African Business people
- Private sector organizations
- Chambers of Commerce
- Business Councils
- Union of Industries
- Manufacturers Associations
- Financial Institutions
- Women and Youth Entrepreneurs
- African SMEs
- Corporates
- Organizations Supporting SMEs
- Regional and International Organizations
- African Union Organs
- RECs (Regional Economic Communities)
- UN Agencies
- Financial Institutions
- African Development Bank
- African Export and Import Bank (Afriexim)
- Trade and Development Bank

VI. Contacts

For more details on the Forum, kindly contact:

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VII. Visibility and communication

The Forum will have an official website hosted by the African Union. Other means available shall also be used to widely promote and popularize its objectives and purpose, including brochures, posters, leaflets, social Media, etc...-

VIII. WORKING LANGUAGES OF THE FORUM

The working languages of the Forum are: English, French and Arabic.