INTRODUCTION
One of the most prominent features of the global trading landscape in recent years has been the worldwide proliferation of bilateral and regional trade agreements. Africa is no exception to this pattern and African governments have embarked on various business integration processes with the aim of opening up regional markets and creating new opportunities for intra-regional trade and industrial development on the African continent.
In this framework, African Economic Zones (EZ) has prepared an Economic Zones dedicated session to be organized during the Africa Integration Week, under the theme: “The Role of Economic Zones in supporting African Trade and Business Integration”.
The panel will involve international experts and AEZO C-level executives to conduct fruitful debates and discussions to highlight the role of Economic Zones in Africa as a catalyst for African Trade and Business Integration.
The session bring together CEOs, Managing Directors, and Senior executives representing African EZ, Investment Promotion Agencies, Chambers of Commerce and other organizations in charge of the development, management, and promotion of EZ across the continent.

OBJECTIVE
The panel seeks to explore challenges and opportunities of implementing Economic Zones as a trigger for sustainable regional integration in the continent. This is a particularly important subject in the context of Africa Integration Day.

ISSUES TO BE ADRESSED
- Role of African Economic Zones (EZ) in improving regional Trade flows across the continent
- Role of Economic Zones to support Intra-African Trade
- Economic Zones as a trigger for business integration and industrial linkages
- Contribution of EZ to Economic diversification and structural transformation in Africa.

ATTENDEES
- Representatives of AEZO members
- Investment promotion agencies, Industrial and Investment associations, and Chambers of commerce and industries
- All audience participating in the commemoration of the Africa Integration Day.
### AGENDA AND EXPERTS

#### KEYNOTE REMARKS | 15 Minutes
- H.E AMB. ALBERT M. MUCHANGA, Commissioner for Trade and Industry | African Union Commission (AUC)
- Mr Ahmed Bennis, Secretary General | Africa Economic Zones Organization (AEZO)

#### PANEL DISCUSSION | 80 Minutes

**Moderator**
- Ms Cynthia Gnassingbe Essonam, Secretary General | Togo Invest Corporation

**Panelists**
- Ms Edlam Abera Yemeru, Chief, Urbanization Section | UNECA
- Ms Mena Hassan, Trade Policy and Trade Facilitation Expert | WTO
- Ms Terfa Ashwa, Internation Trade Consultant | ITC
- Mr Michael Schmidt, Investment and Technology Promotion Expert | UNIDO
- Mr Poul Hansen, Chief of Trade Facilitation Section | UNCTAD
- Mr Gokhan Akinci, Technical Lead, IFC Advisory, Services: EFI VPU, IFC | World Bank Group

#### CONCLUSION & Q&A | 30 Minutes