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Event: Third Ordinary Session of the Specialised Technical Committee for Trade, Industry and Minerals

Proposed Theme:

Deepening economic integration through interconnected and competitive product value chains based on local commodities.

Venue: Virtual

Proposed Dates: 31st August 2021 to 3rd September 2021

DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE

Introduction

The African Union Commission (AUC) Department of Economic Development, Trade, Industry and Mining is organising the 3th Ordinary Session of the Specialised Technical Committee for Trade, Industry and Minerals (STC-TIM), to be held from 31st August 2021 to 3rd September 2021, virtually. The STC-TIM is a regular event that is held every two years with the last ordinary session having been held in January 2019.

The STC-TIM is the Policy Organ responsible for oversight on policy projects and programs in the areas of Trade, Industry and Mineral Resources and reporting on them to the Assembly through the Executive Council. In addition to evaluating the implementation of decisions taken by various Organs of the Union in the areas of Trade, Industry, tourism and Mining, the STC-TIM also has the responsibility of supervision and ensuring successful implementation of projects and programs in these four areas.

Background and Context of the 3rd STC-TIM Meeting

Before the Covid-19 Pandemic hit the continent, many African economies had been pursuing reforms aimed at integrating into the world economy and were as a result experiencing substantial economic growth. This growth has primarily been supported by commodity exports. Transforming Africa from a raw materials exporter to a producer of market-competitive value added products will require the continent to integrate into regional and global value chains and promote horizontal and vertical diversification anchored in value addition, innovative approaches and local content development.

Only a massive industrialisation effort will enable Africa to eradicate poverty, provide job opportunities to millions of young people and achieve sustainable development. The STC-TIM will at its third meeting consider several issues related to Africa's Industrialisation initiatives and programs with a view to accelerating the continent's process of economic transformation.

Objectives of the 3rd STC-TIM Meeting

The main objective of the third meeting of the STC-TIM is to consider for adoption the draft African Commodity Strategy and its Action Plan, the draft Africa Quality Policy the Africa Minerals Development Centre (AMDC) Business Plan, the African Minerals and Energy Resources Classification and Management System (AMREC), the draft African Fashion Industry Value Chain and Pan African Fashion Initiative Strategy and the Study on Financing industrialisation. The draft African Commodity Strategy is one of the flagship projects under the African Union (AU)'s Agenda 2063. It is also an integral component for the successful outcomes of the Boosting Intra-African Trade (BIAT) Action Plan.

The Africa Quality Policy (AQP) will lay a foundation for the development of a quality culture across all AU Member States thus ensuring safer and high-quality production of market competitive goods and services. The AQP will support implementation of the AfCFTA through facilitation of continental cooperation in standards harmonisation, and elimination of technical barriers to trade (TBTs) and other non-tariff barriers (NTBs) to trade.

The Africa Minerals Development Centre (AMDC) Business Plan, the African Minerals and Energy Resources Classification and Management System (AMREC) will orient Africa's exploitation of its natural resources towards local value addition whilst moving away from the exportation of minerals in their raw form.

Webinar

The issues being presented to Ministers at the 3rd STC-TIM meeting all relate to the pursuit of deeper continental economic integration which will greatly assist Africa in mitigating the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic. A stronger and more integrated Africa will also be better able to resist negative socio-economic impacts of externally induced economic shocks such as were observed during the financial crisis of 2008. For this reason, a 90-minute panel discussion on the theme: **“Deepening economic integration through interconnected and competitive product value chains based on local commodities”**, is also being organised and will take place on the day of the Ministerial meeting. A high level panel of experts on economic integration has been assembled for the webinar.

Objectives of the 3rd STC-TIM Meeting

The specific objectives of the third meeting of the STC-TIM are to consider for adoption:

1. the Draft African Commodity Strategy and its Action Plan;
2. the Draft Africa Quality Policy;
3. the Africa Minerals Development Centre (AMDC) Business Plan;
4. the African Minerals and Energy Resources Classification and Management System (AMREC);
5. the draft African Fashion Industry Value Chain and Pan African Fashion Initiative Strategy; and
6. The Study on Financing industrialisation.

The meeting will also receive a general update on the other activities of the Department of Economic Development, Trade, Industry and Mining (ETIM).

Expected Outcomes

The third meeting of the STC-TIM is expected to have the following outcomes:

1. Recommendations for the formulation of draft Decisions for the AU Assembly with respect to the African Commodity Strategy and its Action Plan, the Africa Quality Policy and the African Fashion Industry Value Chain & Pan African Fashion Initiative Strategy;
2. Ministerial Declaration of the STC-TIM with respect to the Africa Minerals Development Centre (AMDC) Business Plan, the African Minerals and Energy Resources Classification and Management System (AMREC), and the Study on Financing Industrialisation; and
3. Strategic guidance for the ETIM's work programs and projects in the area of Trade, Industry, Tourism, Investment and Minerals for the next two years, up to 2023.

Participation

The Meeting will be attended by:

1. African Union's Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for Trade, Industry and Minerals;
2. Representatives of AU Regional Economic Communities (RECs), African Union institutions and other AUC Departments, and
3. International Development and Technical Cooperation Partners including AfDB, AFREXIMBANK, EU, GIZ, ITC, PAQI, PTB, UNCTAD, UNDP, UNECA and UNIDO.

Format of the Extra-Ordinary STC-TIM

1. 31 August to 2nd September 2021: Meeting of the Senior Officials STC-TIM; and
2. 3rd September 2021: Meeting of Ministers STC-TIM

Information

The following staff can be contacted for further information relating to this Meeting:

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