



Directorate of Information and Communication

MEDIA ADVISORY**INFORMAL MEETING OF AFRICAN UNION MINISTERS OF TRADE**

What: Informal Meeting of the African Union Ministers of Trade (AMOT) immediately followed by a **Press Briefing at 10:30 AM, Briefing Room1**

Who: African Union Ministers of Trade, the Group of African Ambassadors in Geneva (focal points and coordinators), the AU Permanent Mission in Geneva, Senior Trade Officials from Member of States, WTO experts and technical advisors, representatives of the Regional Economic Communities, and Experts from UNECA.

The Press Briefing will be conducted by **Honorable Okechukwu Enelamah, Minister of Trade and Industry of Nigeria and Chair of the African Union Ministers of Trade (AMOT), H.E. Mrs. Susana Malcorra, Chair of the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference and H.E. Amb. Albert M. Muchanga, Commissioner for Trade and Industry, African Union Commission.**

When: 18 September 2017 at 09:00 AM – Press Briefing at 10:30 AM, Briefing Room1

Where: African Union Headquarters, Medium Conference Hall

Objective: The main objectives of the Ministerial Meeting are to:

- take stock of recent developments in the negotiations at the WTO since the Geneva Retreat of the African Group of Ambassadors and Experts held on July 6-7, 2017;
- discuss and formulate common positions on current issues of offensive and defensive interest to Africa as well as new issues, with a view to guide African negotiators in their final preparations leading to the WTO MC-11; and
- reflect on the overall strategy Africa should adopt in the WTO multilateral trading system in order to achieve its structural transformation in the context of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. It is anticipated that the proceedings of the Meeting will form the basis for a draft declaration to be considered during the upcoming extraordinary Meeting of the Specialized Technical Committee on Trade, Industry, and Minerals tentatively scheduled from 26th October to 06th November, 2017.

Background: During the 3rd Meeting of African Union Ministers of Trade (AMOT) held on June 15-16, 2017 in Niamey, Niger, Trade Ministers, received a presentation on World Trade Organization (WTO) issues. Ministers deliberated on a number of trade and trade related issues of interest to Africa in the Doha Development Agenda at the WTO such as agriculture, cotton, fisheries as well as “new issues” relating to facilitation in areas of trade in services, investment and e-commerce, in preparation for the upcoming 11th WTO Ministerial Conference (WTO-MC11) scheduled for December 2017 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. During that same Meeting, the need for Africa to adequately prepare for the WTO MC-11 and the need to speak with one voice on agriculture, fisheries, trade facilitation and the new issues e.g. e-commerce, was emphasized. Member States were also urged to strengthen their representation in Geneva to effectively participate in trade negotiations and invited Member States to participate at the retreat scheduled for 6-7 July 2017 in Geneva as part of the preparations for WTO-MC11. In light of the issues discussed, AU Ministers of Trade agreed to hold a dedicated meeting to enable Africa to adequately prepare for the WTO MC11. Trade Ministers also welcomed the offer by the Republic of South Africa, in its capacity as the current Chair of the WTO General Council, to host an informal meeting of African Union Ministers to prepare a common African position for the Conference in Buenos Aires.

Media representatives are invited to cover the Opening Session of the Meeting and cover the Press Briefing at 10:30 AM.

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