

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

Media Advisory

COMMEMORATION OF THE 1ST EVER AFRICA INTEGRATION DAY

INVITATION TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEDIA

What: The Commemoration of the Africa Integration Day will be commemorated under the theme: ***COVID-19: The Road ahead for African Trade, Economic Integration and Growth***

When: Tuesday 7th July 2020

Time: Opening ceremony: 11:00am-11:30am

Press briefing: 18:00 - 18:30

Where: Digital platform events – Zoom virtual webinars

Link: Register in advance for this webinar:

https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_IBJ6VMqiSEGmKMqBPXH0JQ

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

Who: Organized by the African Union Commission through its departments of Trade and Industry & Department of Economic Affairs.

Objectives: The main objectives of the Africa Integration Day are to:

- Celebrate the progress made in the implementation of the African Integration Agenda including the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and its achievement, that is expected to increase Intra-African trade and investment thus generate economic growth and create more job opportunities for millions of Africans, and provide opportunities for women and youth entrepreneurs.
- Disseminate and popularise the importance and challenges of regional integration in Africa including the status of Regional Integration in Africa and the progress made in AfCFTA and create a new positive mindset both on the Continent and in the Diaspora.
- Galvanise and mobilise Africans within the Continent and abroad around the subsequent steps towards the accelerated and full operationalization of the ideals and objectives envisioned in the eventual realization of the Establishment of the African Economic Community as envisaged in the Abuja Treaty.

- Enhance inclusiveness and inclusivity of Africa integration process and agenda with a view to achieving the Continent's structural transformation and inclusive sustainable economic development as outlined in "*Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*".

Participants: Africa Integration Day is for all Africans, including African Union Member States and those in the Diaspora, and especially the African youth, who represent 65% of its population and whose number is forecast to increase by 42% by 2030 and double from current levels by 2055 according to the United Nations Fund for Population Activities. The African private sector, African financial institutions, Academic and Research Institutions, Business Leaders and Captains of Industry, African Policy and Law Makers from AfCFTA State Parties, AUC staff and officials, representatives from the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), UN agencies, African Civil Society Organizations and Think Tanks, among others will also participate in the various panel sessions.

Main partners include: RECs, AfroChampions Initiative, AeTrade Group, African Development Bank (AFDB), Africa Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank), African Economic Zones Organisation (AEZO), Pan-African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PACCI), AUDA-NEPAD, African Energy Commission, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), UNWomen and Trade Law Centre (TRALAC).

Background: Africa's journey towards an integrated continent is closely linked to its Leaders' vision of a strong and united continent following its fragmentation during the second Conference of Berlin in 1884. Even as African countries were preparing to accede to national sovereignty, there was a recognition that as newcomers in the international system, their strength and survival lay in their unity. As Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, then President of the Republic of Ghana and one of the Founding Fathers of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) forcefully put in a monumental piece, "Africa Must Unite." African Leaders' aspiration, vision and commitment to continental integration led to the creation of the OAU in 1963. Soon after the creation of the OAU, African Leaders embarked on several initiatives and adopted several key instruments to realize the integration of the Continent noting that integration was a prerequisite for the economic emancipation of Africa. The Agreement Establishing the AfCFTA, which entered into force on 30 May 2019, aims to significantly accelerate growth of Intra-Africa trade and use trade more effectively as an engine of growth and sustainable development by doubling intra-Africa trade, strengthening Africa's common voice and policy space in global trade negotiations. It is a flagship programme of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. It will be a tool to boost intra-Africa trade and provide opportunities for industry, manufactures, small and medium sized enterprises, youth and women.

During the launch of the operational phase of the AfCFTA in Niamey, Niger on 7 July 2019, AU Heads of States and Government decided that 7 July of each year be designated as "*the Africa Integration Day*" without it being a holiday to commemorate the operationalisation of the AfCFTA Agreement and popularise economic integration across the Continent as a lever of inclusive sustainable development.

Journalists are invited to cover the official inaugural session and the press briefing on Tuesday 7th July 2020 starting at 11:00am and 18:00 respectively.

Media Contacts:

Mr. Patient Atcho, Department of Trade and Industry of the AUC, Tel: +251 929335250, Email: atchop@africa-union.org

Mr. Molalet Tsedeke, Directorate of Information and Communication of the AUC, Tel: 0911-630631; Email: molalett@africa-union.org;

For further information please contact:

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: DIC@african-union.org |

Website: www.au.africa | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia Follow Us: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#)