

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Date: 6 September 2024

Venue: Windhoek, Namibia

MEDIA ADVISORY

THE 3rd AFRICAN UNION SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES ANNUAL FORUM

INVITATION TO THE MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES

What: The 3rd African Union Small and Medium Enterprises Annual Forum

Theme: *“Fostering Financial Empowerment and Educational Innovation for African Startups & MSMEs”*

Highlights for Media:

The opening ceremony will feature keynote addresses from distinguished speakers, including:

- H.E. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Vice President, Republic of Namibia
- Hon. Lucia Ipumbi, Minister of Industrialisation & Trade, Namibia
- Amb. Albert Muchanga, Commissioner for ETTIM, African Union Commission
- Pamela Hamilton Coke, Executive Director, International Trade Center.

These leaders will set the tone for the forum, highlighting the importance of MSMEs in Africa's economic landscape and the need for innovative solutions to support their growth.

When: September 9-13, 2024, starting from 8:00 am (GMT+2).

Where: Windhoek Country Club Resort, Windhoek, Namibia

Who:

The African Union Commission Department of Economic Development, Tourism, Trade, Industry, Mining (ETTİM) in partnership with the Government of the Republic of Namibia.

Why: The establishment of the Africa Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Annual Forum is in line with the African Union Small and Medium Enterprises Strategy.

This was adopted, in January 2019, by the Second Specialized Technical Committee on Trade, Industry and Minerals and endorsed by the [32nd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union in February 2019](#), as a continental framework on the development of these important segments of enterprise development across Africa.

Recognizing the vital role that MSMEs play in driving economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction, the forum serves as a platform for stakeholders to collaborate, share insights, and develop strategies to support the growth and development of MSMEs.

Since its inception, the forum has brought together over 500 industry leaders, policymakers, and small businesses to foster innovation, enhance capacity, and promote sustainable development.

Expected Outcomes:

The AU MSME Forum aims to:

1. Enhance the capacity of MSMEs through targeted training sessions.
2. Establish a platform for policymakers and the private sector to interact, share knowledge, and formulate innovative proposals to bridge the financial gap for MSMEs and startups in Africa.

3. Facilitate regional and continental collaboration between private sectors, public institutions, and financial entities to support MSMEs.

Participant: The African Union MSME Forum is anticipated to host between 300 and 400 delegates from across Africa.

The attendees will include a diverse group of stakeholders such as African small business owners, directors of MSME development agencies from African Union member states, investors, policymakers, and development partners, among others.

This diverse representation ensures a comprehensive discussion on the challenges and opportunities facing MSMEs in Africa, fostering collaboration and the sharing of valuable insights.

Media representatives are invited to cover the 3rd African Union Small and Medium Enterprises Annual Forum from 9-13 September 2024.

For further information, kindly contact:

Ms. Bulelwa Nkosi | Department for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals, African Union Commission | E-mail: nkosib@africa-union.org

For media inquiries, please contact:

Ms. Janet Faith Adhiambo Ochieng | Communications Officer-Agenda 2063 | African Union Commission | Email: ochiengj@africa-union.org | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia |

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

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