

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Media Advisory

Venue: Addis Ababa

Date: 12th June 2025

OPENING OF THE AFRICAN UNION 4TH MSME FORUM **INVITATION TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEDIA**

What: The African Union Commission, through its Department of Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals, will convene the fourth Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) Forum. This follows three earlier editions: the first held in Cairo, Egypt in June 2022 during International MSME Day; the second in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2023; and the third in Windhoek, Namibia in 2024. The 2025 Forum will be hosted by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The Forum continues to serve as a platform to assess the state of MSME development across the continent and strengthen collaboration between governments, private sector, and development partners.

When: 23rd June 2025, 8:30AM to 02:30PM

Where: State House Banquet Hall, Presidential Villa, Abuja, Nigeria.

Who: MSME Stakeholder, Small Businesses, Financial Institutions, Development Partners, Representatives from Private Sector, Chambers of Commerce, Representatives of Regional Economic Communities.

OBJECTIVE:

The 4th AU MSME Forum is designed to bring together policymakers, financial institutions, development partners, and entrepreneurs to assess the current state of MSMEs in Africa, share practical strategies for improving access to finance, market opportunities, and digital tools, and align national and continental policies for MSME development. The Forum also aims to support women and youth-led enterprises, promote regional integration through AfCFTA, and highlight models for scaling affordable financing and improving the business environment for MSMEs.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- Promote digital transformation by enhancing MSMEs' capacity to leverage digital technologies for operational efficiency, market reach, and competitiveness.
- Improve market access by facilitating MSMEs' entry into intra-African and global markets through frameworks like the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA),
- Supports sustainable development by empowering MSMEs to drive economic growth and job creation, promoting innovation and entrepreneurship to foster a more inclusive and resilient economy.

EXPECTED OUTCOME:

- MSMEs are expected to gain practical knowledge and skills in digital technologies, enabling them to improve their operational efficiency and market reach.
- To provide evidence-based solutions on how entrepreneurs can access funding among other barriers.
- To showcase investment-ready SMEs to the African entrepreneurial ecosystem.

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