

AFRICAN UNION

الاتحاد الأفريقي



UNION AFRICAINE

UNIÃO AFRICANA

---

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia P. O. Box 3243 Telephone: +251 11 551 7700 / +251 11 518 25 58/  
Ext 2558

Website: [www.au.int](http://www.au.int)

---

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

**Press Release N. 151/2014**

## **Commissioner Fatima Haram Acyl stresses the need to accelerate Africa's industrialisation for the realization of the Agenda 2063**



**Addis Ababa, 15 July 2014** - The Commissioner for Trade and Industry, Mrs. Fatima Haram Acyl had this week an interview with Cotton Africa Magazine. She mainly raised Africa's dire need to accelerate industrialization in order to address the huge unemployment that is facing Africa especially for the rising population of the youth.

The Commissioner pointed out that the achievement of the African in the past 50 years has not been complete due to the absence of economic independence. She considers that irrespective of the fact that Africa is endowed with both human and natural resources, the dependency of donor funding and concessional loans from multinational institutions and other wealthier nations continue to derails Africa's full independence. Answering a question on the Agenda 2063, she explained that the African Union Commission through a wide consultative process has been engaged in defining the Agenda 2063 which envisions Africa's socio-economic transformation, inclusive growth and sustainable development. She reiterated that the mandate of the Trade and Industry department is derived from the continental initiatives and frameworks that are central to the continental development agenda such as the Plan of Action for Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa (AIDA), the boosting of intra-African trade and the realization of the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA). The ultimate objective, she said, is to create employment and wealth especially for the young people and contribute towards inclusive growth and sustainable development.

On the issue of the key challenges facing the industrialization effort in Africa, Mrs. Fatima stressed that Africa is not only under industrialized but it has been de-industrializing. “It is pretty backward in terms of industrialisation. One of the factors that hinder industrialisation in Africa is lack of productive capacities and technological capabilities and proper infrastructure, however, this should not be seen in isolation of other key factors including; lack of political will at national level to implement continental initiatives; lack of key skills, lack of data that can inform the decision; lack of coherence policy framework that decides the industrialisation through a bottom–up, value chain approach, innovation, incentives for Intellectual Property Rights and investment attraction”, she said. The Commissioner also highlighted the focus of the department of Trade and Industry saying the focus of the department is to promote commodity based Industrialisation using raw materials. She noted that Africa has been at the heart of industrialisation for hundred years but unfortunately, there has never been any benefit derived from this Africa-global engagement due to trading in raw unprocessed commodities and natural resources including the trade in human labour.

“For the past three decades, a number of Industrialisation initiatives were developed but never implemented. These include the first and second Industrial Development Decades for Africa from 1980 – 2000 which did not yield any fruitful benefits”, she emphasized. She added that “The new leadership at the AUC spearheaded by the Chairperson Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and trickling down to the commissioners and directors is determined to change the way things were done in the past”.

Currently there are two important initiatives on industry which were adopted by the Heads of State and Governments that are being implemented by the Department of Trade and Industry. They are : the Action Plan for Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa (AIDA) and the African Mining Vision (AMV). According to Commissioner Fatima, these two programs take into consideration the earlier initiatives “Africa Productive Capacity Initiative” and draw from lessons learnt on past initiatives particularly to ensure the involvement of the private sector and key sectoral association.

Comparing the current level of Africa’s industrialisation with the rest of the world, the Commissioner insisted that the AUC believes in the establishment or promotion of regional and continental value chains in strategic commodities both agro-based industries and the minerals sector. “This is the only way the skilled and high end employment especially for our young people and women can be created. It is wealth creation along the value chains.. “This will promote economic growth that is sustainable and will contribute to the socio-economic transformation as envisioned under Agenda 2063”, she concluded.

*FDM/EAT*

**For further information**, please contact the Department of Trade and Industry, **focal person:**  
Frank Dixon Mugenyi, Senior Industry Officer – **Email:** [MugenyiF@africa-union.org](mailto:MugenyiF@africa-union.org)