

**Directorate of Information and Communication****MEDIA ADVISORY****HIGH LEVEL AFRICAN TRADE COMMITTEE (HATC) MEETING
29 JANUARY 2015**

What: Opening of High Level African Trade Committee (HATC) Meeting.

Who: Heads of States and Governments of the African Union Member states

When: 29 January 2015 from 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Where: African Union Headquarters, Small Conference Hall 1

Background:

The Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union adopted, during its 18th Ordinary Session in January 2012, the decision to establish a Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) by the indicative date of 2017. It also endorsed an Action Plan for Boosting Intra-Africa Trade (BIAT) as well as a CFTA/BIAT Architecture that includes the High-Level African Trade Committee (HATC) made up of Heads of State and Government (Chairs of the RECs). The HATC is to play a facilitating role and unlock any blockages that might arise in the process of implementing the CFTA/BIAT agenda. These historic AU Summit decisions of January 2012 are aimed at fast tracking and deepening Africa's market integration and using it as an effective instrument for the attainment of rapid and inclusive economic growth and development.

The HATC, comprising of Heads of State (Chairpersons of the RECs) was mandated by the Summit to provide a facilitating role and unblock any blockages that might arise in the process of implementing the CFTA/BIAT agenda.

Objectives:

The HATC meeting is to review and discuss the recommendations of the Ministers of Trade on intra-African trade, Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), World Trade Organization (WTO) issues, EPA and AGOA among others and give strategic guidance to the Commission on the way forward, particularly in the light of mega trade deals being concluded in the world. In particular, the HATC will review progress towards the launch of the Continental Free Trade Area Negotiations at the next AU Summit. H.E President John Dramani Mahama, of Ghana, will chair the meeting.

Media representatives are invited to cover the Opening ceremony and the Press briefing.

Interview requests to AUC Leadership should be addressed to Mrs. Esther Azaa Tankou, Directorate of Information and Communication, Tel: +251911361185; e-mail: yamboue@africa-union.org

For further information:

Directorate of Information and Communication | African Union Commission | E-mail: DIC@african-union.org | Web Site: www.au.int | Addis Ababa | Ethiopia

Follow us

Face book: <https://www.facebook.com/AfricanUnionCommission>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AfricanUnion>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/AUCommission>