

## DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

**Every stakeholder including the private sector, civil society, research institutions and the media has an important role to play in advancing industrialization in Africa**



**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: 25<sup>th</sup> September 2019**, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) of the African Union Commission (AUC) in collaboration with the AUC Directorate of Information and Communication (DIC) and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) – AU office, convened a Media Orientation workshop on Africa's industrialization on 25<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019 to capacitate the media to report competently on

industrialization. Running under the theme “Building Media Awareness on Accelerated Industrial Development for Africa (AIDA) and related strategies: Industrial Policy Literacy Capacity Building Session for Business/ Economic Journalists”, the orientation workshop is part of awareness activities towards the Africa Industrialization Week, which will be held on 18<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2019.

The three-day Media Orientation workshop was attended by 30 business journalists identified from the five geographic regions of the continent. The participants which were carefully, and deliberately chosen from social media, electronic media, print, bloggers, among others, from both international media groups, independent practitioners, and the Diaspora, provides a balanced high profile skills set that will enrich the training, and knowledge exchange.

Mr. Rongai Chizema, Chief Technical Advisor & Head of Implementation and Coordination Unit (ICU) within the Department of Trade and Industry at the AUC unpacked some of the key concepts of industrialization, and defined industrialization as the process by which traditionally non-industrial sectors (such as agriculture, education, health) of an economy become increasingly similar to the manufacturing sector of the economy.

Mr. Chizema emphasized that the centrality of industrialization towards building self-reliance and self-sufficiency in Africa has been acknowledged since the 1980s with the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) 1980-2000. For example, one of the aspirations of Agenda 2063, is that every African should enjoy rising income by at least 30% with an inclusive and sustainable industrialization as the linchpin to achieving this goal continent.

He believes that journalists remain the fourth arm of Governments and an important channel to communicate with the continent and beyond on Africa's industrialization agenda, yet in practice, the role of the media in economic development is sometimes overlooked. As such, it is critical for the continent to take advantage of its media to tell its "own story." Mr. Chizema also reinforced that it is time to re-orient the thinking in the continent, and begin to marshal the collective pan-African resource capacity, and deliver a sustainable and inclusive Industrialization path-way for Africa.

In her keynote address, Mrs. Esther Azaa Yambou Tankou, Head of Information Division,



Department of Information and Communication at the AUC underscored that if audiences are not accustomed to digest a diversity of relevant information, there is a risk that messages are either underestimated or not understood. With a lack of diversity and richness in reporting, we become used to talking about a very limited number of topics. She lauded the significance of the media in bridging this challenge, by ensuring adequate visibility for the Department's programmes, hence the decision by the Department to convene the Media Awareness Session.

"In the media sector, it is arguably more difficult to report on economic and financial issues than ribbon cutting ceremonies. A lack of understanding and expertise can hamper economic, political and social issues reporting. Journalists should therefore, have an aptitude to be researched and analytics - oriented." Mrs. Tankou stated.

Other distinguished speakers such as H.E. Ms. Barabara Schaefer, Head of German Development Cooperation, German Embassy and Mr. Kennedy Letlhogela, Gesellschaft

für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), agreed that the training seminar can go a long way in capacitating the media on industrialization as well develop an appetite for journalists to cover industrialization issues.

The Media Orientation workshop – the first to be held by the Department of Trade and Industry, recognizes the significance of building the industrial and development literacy capacity of journalists to drive any meaningful social, political and economic transformation in the Continent. This is in realization that well-prepared journalists are better placed to report objectively on developmental issues.

The Media Orientation workshop on Africa’s industrialization concluded with a call that media students and graduates should embrace a more dynamic reporting approach — and for that to happen, editors also need to take on the changes in society, and citizens’ expectations. These observations are quite relevant to the present day dynamic in journalism, and can strengthen our cooperation and coordination towards the continent’s Vision as explained in Agenda 2063, which is also commonly known as “The Africa We Want”.

(article link)

### **Note to Editor**

**Agenda 2063** is a strategic framework for the socio-economic transformation of the continent for next 50 years. It’s builds on, and seeks to accelerate the implementation of past and existing continental initiatives for growth and sustainable development. <https://au.int/en/documents/20141012/key-documents-agenda2063>

The central guiding industrialization framework is the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa (**AIDA**), an initiative mainly to allow integration of industrialization in national development policies especially in poverty alleviation strategies and Development and implementation of an industrial policy with priority accorded to maximizing the use of local productive capacities and inputs, adding value to and local processing of the abundant natural resources of the country, and to the development of small-scale and rural industries, including the informal sectors well as intermediate and capital goods industries with high linkages to other sectors of the economy as potential sources of employment creation.

### **Mandate of the DTI:**

The Industry Division in the Department of Trade and Industry of the African Union Commission is mandated to formulate, implement and harmonize industrial development policies on the continent. The Division, works with different stakeholders including the Private Sector, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), Member States (MS), civil society, industry policy and research think tanks and development partners.

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