



## DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

Press Release No: /2020

Date: 20 Nov 2020

**Venue: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia – Virtual: 20 November, 2020:** The commemoration of Africa Industrialisation Week kicked off on Monday, 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2020, virtually. The week was commemorated under the theme: ***Inclusive and Sustainable Industrialisation in the AfCFTA Era***. The weeklong event was organized by the African Union Commission (AUC), AUDA-NEPAD, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the AfroChampions Initiative. The culmination of the Week was on Friday, 20<sup>th</sup> November, 2020, the Africa Industrialization Day, which was set aside by the Heads of State and Government at the 25<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1989.

The opening ceremony of the week was held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 with a number of speeches. It was officially opened by H.E. Amb. Albert Muchanga, AUC Commissioner for Trade and Industry. In his speech, he noted that partnerships are key to leveraging synergies if the continent is to move forward in terms of its industrialization. He also noted the importance of member states in taking a leading role in the continent's industrialisation agenda if advancements in technological capabilities for industrialization are to take root in Africa.

Speaking at the same event, H.E Mr LI Yong, Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) noted that the AfCFTA could help mitigate the effects of COVID-19 in Africa, especially in the areas of pharmaceutical and food production. UNIDO is ready to support the continent through the Programme for Country Partnership (PCP) especially in the growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

The executive secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, H.E. Dr. Vera Songwe, noted that this was the best time for Africa to move forward in terms of industrialisation and ensure that it creates jobs for the youth. She noted that the continent needs to create up to 170 million jobs between now and 2030 and, given the current pandemic, there is need to identify new sectors that can create these jobs.

H.E Mr. Wamkele Mene, Secretary General of the AfCFTA, in his address, noted that the AfCFTA is the second fastest instrument that has been ratified under the African Union with 54 countries signing the agreement so far. He called on member states to work together and make sure that there is space and opportunity for all irrespective of the differences in countries level of productive capacities, industrial base, and market opportunities.

Speaking on behalf of the private sector, Mr. Paul Gomez of the AfroChampions noted that the major challenge for Africa has been implementation of its different frameworks. He called on all partners to move towards an implementable agenda in establishing the nexus between trade and industrialization. He further noted that the Afrochampions is partnering with AUC and other institutions to push for the role of private sectors in industrialization of the continent. Among other initiatives, the Afrochampions proposed a 1 trillion dollar-framework that was approved the Heads of state and Government which will mobilize resources towards implementation of the AfCFTA putting in place investment enablers.

Highlights from the week include the successfully delivery of twenty-five webinars which covered a range of topics including: Regional Value Chains Development (agro, Mining, Fashion, Automotive);; NEXUS between Industrialisation and AfCFTA; Benchmarking Africa's Industrialisation; Pharmaceutical Production in Africa; Quality Infrastructure for Sustainable Industrialization in Africa; Industrial Property Rights; SME development in Africa's Industrial Sector; Private Sector Roundtable; and Making the 4IR work for Africa. The weeklong event also launched numerous initiatives including the African Trade Exchange (ATEX), an e-commerce platform designed to facilitate cross-border trade and an introduction to the newly formed private sector initiative African Business Council. The Africa Korea Business Forum and the ECOWAS start-ups Forum were held at the AIW2020. The event attracted participants from among others the public and private sector; development partners; the civil society, UN Agencies and development financing organizations.

The AIW2020 culminated in a high-level closing ceremony which was dubbed as a “pre-Summit event” in anticipation of the AU Summit on Industrialisation and Economic Diversification set to take place in November 2021. In his welcoming remarks, H.E Albert Muchanga, Commissioner for Trade and Industry noted that there are two momentous situations in the commemoration of AIW2020. The first being the COVID-19 Pandemic which has disrupted health systems as well as global supply chains, bringing in massive damages to economies; the second being the eminent start of trading of the AfCFTA. The rolling out the AfCFTA will create a conducive environment for the development of regional value and supply chains as well as enhanced intra-African trade in manufactured goods. He noted that both the COVID-19 Pandemic and the AfCFTA create the imperative need for Africa to change, adapt, recover, grow, and thereafter, institute resilience.

Speaking at the same event, H.E Pamela Coke-Hamilton, the newly appointed Executive Director of the International Trade Centre (ITC), highlighted that the AfCFTA will act as an insurance policy against future crises and as such, the AfCFTA process should be used to reimagine industrialisation for Africa from 2021 and beyond. Ms. Coke-Hamilton emphasised that *Made in Africa* must also mean '*Buy in Africa*' and '*Invest in Africa*' and noted that MSMEs must be at the heart of any industrialisation policy with a focus on women and youth led businesses

President and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the African Export-Import Bank, H.E Prof. Benedict Obama presented that Africa has the potential to build a 250-billion-dollar

manufacturing industry, which can increase manufacturing value-added significantly from current low levels. To succeed, Prof. OR amah noted that it would be key for African development institutions to work together to harmonise their respective industrial development strategies programmes. He proposed the creation of an Africa Development Finance Institutions Industrialisation working group, to lead and coordinate resource mobilisation for the development of the continent's manufacturing sector.

The Director-General UNIDO, H.E LI, Yong presented that for the AfCFTA to be successful, deliberate efforts to address structural transformation and industrialization are required. In this regard, policies should also be geared towards strengthening links between trade and industrial strategies and policies, developing industrial infrastructure, promoting regional value chains, upgrading digital capacities, enhancing productive and trade capacities, promoting green industry and circular economies, and developing and upgrading industrial skills. He echoed the sentiments of speakers before that partnerships would be key to the advancement of Africa's industrialisation, highlighting UNIDO's Programme for Country Partnership (PCP) which brings various stakeholders together to mobilize funds and leverage large-scale additional investments for infrastructure, industry and innovation, as well as knowledge expertise and technology to support sectors with high growth potential in order to achieve a greater development impact.

The event saw the participation of H.E. Andre Rajoelina, President of the Republic of Madagascar who observed that industrialization and self-sufficiency are key to attaining the Agenda 2063 and the SDGs in 2030. Madagascar will try to produce everything that the country needs in its pursuit to attain self-sufficiency. They are working on ensuring creating a favourable investment climate in the country. They are also working on a pharmaceutical plant that will produce medicine using local inputs.

He also touched on the problem of famine where he noted that it affects the future of Africa especially as children are the most affected. He proposed that such challenges require perennial solutions including development of factories that respond to country specific challenges. He further noted that his country will continue supporting the local population to feed themselves. He concluded with an observation that Africa has potential to become a major power as it is a young continent, and the private sector is key to attaining this.

Mr. Edem Adzogenu, co-Chair of Executive Council of the AfroChampions Initiative representing H.E. Olusegun Obasanjo, Former President of the Republic of Nigeria emphasised the need for public-private partnerships (PPPs) to ensure Africa's self-reliance to cushion against an uncertain future. AfroChampions is promoting a PPP which will be manifested in the AfroChampions – African Union 1 trillion-dollar framework which seeks to attract 1 trillion worth of investments within the next 10 years. From 2021, the framework will be given the necessary attention to ensure that it supports industrialisation projects on the continent.

The event also served to recognise and honour H.E. Mahamadou Issoufou, President of the Republic of Niger for his contribution to the advancement of Africa's industrialisation.

President Issoufou indicated that he was honoured to receive the award in his double capacity as Champion of industrialisation on one hand as Leader of AfCFTA. He indicated that it was an even greater honour as it came at a time when his term of office was coming to a close, following the upcoming elections in December 2020.

H.E. President Issoufou dedicated the award to the African youth that are ready to take forward initiatives happening on the continent.

Reflecting on the theme for the AIW2020, President Issoufou highlighted two key words – inclusive and sustainable, presenting that efforts to build Africa into the next biggest manufacturing centre in the world should not leave anyone behind and industrialisation must serve and benefit all including the future generations. For sustainable and inclusive development, it is important to have a big market and quality products and thus doing away with the system left after decolonization of fragmented markets and trade barriers. This highlights the importance of having the AfCFTA, which will create a single market of 1.3 billion people.

H.E. President Issoufou presented numerous areas for Africa to focus on in its industrialization drive. He emphasised the importance of harmonisation of rules of origin, policies on standardisation and quality infrastructure in Africa's industrialisation which will be key to adopting the Made in Africa brand name. Africa should also take advantage of the fourth industrial revolution, using technological innovations in the development of skills and industrial design. In addition, President Issoufou highlighted the need for infrastructure development, PPPs, reduction in the costs of transport and electricity and a strategy for MSMEs to facilitate the process of industrial development on the continent. He called on all African states to ratify the AfCFTA that will enable the continent attract investment and speed up the continent's recovery process. The President congratulated the AUC and partners on the successful AIW2020 and reiterated the appeal to the AU for the organisation of a Summit on Industrialisation and Economic Diversification that Niger will be happy to host in 2021

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