

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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African Union and Government of Niger confirm readiness to convene AU Summit on Industrialization and Economic Diversification

Preparations are underway to convene Africa's Summit on Industrialization and Economic Diversification, scheduled to be held on the 19th to the 24th of November 2021 in Niamey, Niger. The Summit is touted as yet another opportunity for the African continent to provide high-level political support to drive a globally competitive Africa-industrialization program through public-private alliances, at the national, regional and continental levels, and through policy coherence, coordination and investment financing. The Summit will be convened as part of the week-long activities of the "Africa Industrialization Week", commemorated annually by the African Union on the 20th of November. It is also timely to accelerate the process of industrialization and economic diversification in Africa, in the context of the entry into force and the start of trading under the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

In separate meetings held with the technical evaluation and assessment team from the African Union Commission, H.E. Monsieur Gado Sabo Moctar, Minister of Trade, Industry and Young Entrepreneurs and H.E. Madame Ousseini Hadizatou Yacouba, Minister of Mining of the Republic of Niger, extended the reassurances and commitment of H.E. Mr. Mohamed Bazoum, President of the Republic of Niger and Leader of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), to host the Summit in Niger. The ministers expressed the readiness and capacity of the country to host the Summit on Industrialization and Economic Diversification, recalling the successful hosting of the African Union's 12th Extraordinary Summit of Heads of State and Government in July 2019. The Ministers also noted the importance of the Summit, making reference to the nexus between Africa's industrialization and the full implementation of the AfCFTA, as deliberate efforts by the continent, to realize the mutually reinforcing synergy between the two, and to achieve the Aspirations of [Agenda 2063](#).

On his part, Mr. Hussein Hassan Hussein, the Head of Industry, Innovation and mining Division in the AU Commission Economic Development, Trade, Industry and Mining Department (ETIM) expressed optimism in the trajectory of the industrial development on the continent, noting that the sustainability of the success of the AfCFTA must be supported by the ability of the continent to industrialize, and to add value to their primary commodities and diversify the economy of member states. He added, "with massive industrialization, Africa has the ability to eradicate poverty, provide job opportunities to millions of young people and achieve sustainable development, and that is why the upcoming summit is key for the continent to speak in one voice on how we will enhance Africa's industrialization initiatives and programs to accelerate the continent's process of economic transformation. The COVID-19 pandemic has equally

been a stark reminder on the need to build a strong and resilient economy to withstand future shocks.”

A technical evaluation and assessment team from the African Union Commission concluded their five-day evaluation mission- September 27th to October 1st, 2021- in Niamey, where they engaged in several preparatory activities with the Government of Niger ahead of the Summit. The team assessed among others, the infrastructure and technological capacities, and the preparedness of the host country to convene the Summit in line with the prevention and containment measures of the COVID-19 pandemic. The team also discussed the Host Agreement for the Summit.

Africa’s Summit on Industrialization and Economic Diversification comes at an opportune time for the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, to provide high political advocacy and policy guidance on the [African Commodity Strategy](#) and its Action Plan. The Strategy was recently adopted by the African Ministers in charge of Trade, Industry and Minerals, convening under the 3rd [Specialized Technical Committee](#) on Trade, Industry and Minerals in September 2021. The African Commodity Strategy is one of the flagship projects of Africa’s Agenda 2063. Additionally, industrial expansion is timely as Africa looks to enhance its pharmaceutical manufacturing capacities following the adverse realities experienced during the pandemic.

The Summit will also be an opportunity to rally reinforce the regional integration of the continent through for the strengthening of the development of regional industrial value chains towards the creation of employment and entrepreneurial opportunities for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises for youth and women. Further, it will showcase the advancements made in Africa’s industrialization and best practices from the continent, creating platform for a coherent cooperation and knowledge exchange among stakeholders, and to promote the implementation of AU continental frameworks such as; the [Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa](#) (AIDA); the [Africa Mining Vision](#) (AMV), the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) Strategy; the [Boosting Intra-African Trade strategy](#) (BIAT); the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA); the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the UN General Assembly’s Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III) in the context of Agenda 2063.

AU Partners, among others, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) were present and extended technical and financial support towards the summit.

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