

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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African Special Economic Zones: Engine for Resilience and Accelerator for Sustainable Industrial Value Chains Development.

The African Union (AU) and the Africa Economic Zones Organization (AEZO) are organizing the 5th African Union Symposium on Special Economic Zones, and the 7th edition of the AEZO Annual Meeting from November 30th to December 2nd, 2022, in Abuja – Nigeria, convened under the theme: “African Special Economic Zones: Engine for Resilience and Accelerator for Sustainable Industrial Value Chains Development.”

This year’s edition paves the way for the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Special Economic Zones scheme in Nigeria and will bring together over 400 participants representing government officials, ministers, heads of international organizations, eminent experts, academia, policy makers, financial institutions and representatives from Economic Zones and Investment Promotion Agencies.

African Special Economic Zones are considered as one of the main instruments that stimulate economic reforms, promote quality Foreign direct investments (FDIs), and accelerate industrialization across the continent. According to the African Economic Zones Outlook ([Edition 2021](#)), more than 200 SEZs are operational in Africa while 73 projects have been announced for completion in 47 countries. The land dedicated to SEZs is nearly 150,000 hectares while over \$2.6 billion has been mobilized in investments dedicated to agro-processing, manufacturing and services.

The AEZO Annual Meeting and the 5th AU Symposium on SEZs will provide guidance on cross cutting issues related to the contribution of SEZs in accelerating sustainable

industrial value chain development. This is also aligned to Africa's [Agenda 2063: Aspiration 1](#): A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development.

The event is organized in partnership with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ) along with the contribution of local partners as the Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority (NEPZA), the Nigeria Economic Zones Association (NEZA) and the Oil and Gas Free Zones Authority (OGFZA).

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