

## INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Media Advisory No:

Date: 01 September 2023

Venue: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

### **2nd Annual Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises Forum.** **“Start-up Acts: Fostering Development and Innovation in Africa.”**

**What:** The African Union led by the department of Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals Department (ETTİM) is organizing the second Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) Forum under the theme "Start-up Acts: An Instrument to Foster Development and Innovation in Africa".

**When:** 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> September 2023. 9.30 AM EAT.

**Where:** African Union Headquarters, Nelson Mandela Hall.

**Who:** The five-day event will host High Level sessions and thematic panel sessions. The opening High Level session will be addressed by:

- H.E Amb. Albert Muchanga, Commissioner of the Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry, and Minerals (ETTİM) of the African Union Commission (AUC)
- Mr. Innocent Iyalla Harry, President of the All African Association for Small and Medium Enterprises (AAASME)
- Prof Amb. Kheswar Jankee, President, of the World Association for Small and Medium Enterprises (WASME)
- Dr. Amany Asfour, President of Africa Business Council (AfBC)
- Mr. Patrick Dupont, Head of Political Section, European Union Delegation to the African Union
- Dr. Matthias Naab, Director of the Regional Service Centre for Africa, United Nations Development Program (UNDP)
- Ms. Fatou Haidara, Managing Director and Director General's Special Representative for Africa, United Nations industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
- Ms. Pamela Hamilton Coke, Executive Director - International Trade Centre (ITC)

### **Background information.**

The Annual Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises Forum is one of the initiatives to support the implementation of the African Union Small Medium Enterprises strategy. Start-up Acts can significantly improve private sector development and consequently, economic development as they provide a framework and business environment that is predictable and makes it easier for start-ups to operate.

The Acts include an amalgamation of policies intended to serve as incentives for young people to start a venture, investors to put their money into promising companies, and other ecosystem actors to lend their support where it's needed.

Tunisia and Senegal are the two first movers in this arena on the continent with their Acts adopted in 2018 and 2019 respectively. These policies are part of broader government strategies to position their countries as innovation hubs by leveraging an emerging tech ecosystem to improve economic development.

The AU MSME Annual Forum seeks to promote, upskill, and strategize for a better, more inclusive African SME sector to realize Africa's Industrialization in the context of the integrated market. Over the five days, the forum will seek to, among others:

- Promote policies for the development and growth of MSMEs in Africa;
- Support the development of MSMEs through inclusive market and value chain development;
- Provide MSME technical support through various training in e-Commerce, Digital Marketing, Financing, Quality infrastructure, and Standards, among others.

Learn more about the event and the agenda programme [here](#).

**For further information, please contact:**

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