

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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Venue: Malabo, Equatorial Guinea.

The AU Member States have convened in Malabo to boost competitiveness and sustainable development in Trade, Tourism, Industry, and Minerals sectors.



Malabo, Equatorial Guinea- May 15th, 2024: The African Union Commission Department of Economic Development, Trade Tourism, Industry and Minerals has Officially Commenced the Senior Officials Session of the 4th Ordinary Session of Specialized Technical Committee for Trade, Tourism, Industry, and Minerals scheduled from 13th to 17th May 2024, in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea. This pivotal event marks a significant milestone in promoting economic growth and cooperation among AU Member States.

The Senior Official Session which runs from May 13th to May 15th brought together African Ministries of Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals and other Participants including Experts and Ambassadors from AU Organs and Specialized Institutions and Agencies, the Regional Economic Communities (RECs), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), African Development Bank (AfDB), the International Trade Center (ITC), the United Nation for Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Afreximbank, as well as International Development and Technical Cooperation Partners to deliberate on strategies and initiatives focusing on **"Enhancing Africa's Trade Competitiveness through Tourism, Industrial and Mineral Resources Development"** (for this paragraph take it from the report to list all the participants, also list the members states)

In his Opening remark **H.E Amb. Albert Muchanga**, Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals welcomed participants to the beautiful city of Equatorial Guinea and to the fourth Specialized Technical Committee Meeting. He expressed his appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea for hosting the meeting. He pointed out that the sectors of Trade, Industry, Tourism and Minerals are key to the development of the continent. He noted that COVID-19 and the war in Ukraine disrupted global supply chains leading to energy and food insecurity, as well as high inflation rates.

He further pointed out that it is important the continent builds domestic economic resilience through Africa's domestic market, which is anchored on the AfCFTA. He called on African countries to work together to be a strong player in the global market.

In the same vein, **Madam Felicidad Nze Nguema**, the Director General of Commerce, Administration of Agreements and Treaties during her opening statement that "Trade Competitiveness and the development of the Industrial, Tourism and Mineral Resources sectors in Africa, are key to improving the sustainable development of our economies, taking into consideration the negative impacts on the African economy arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. To this end, trade factors within the framework are essential on the implementation of the AfCFTA", She encouraged Member States to continue to examine what Trade, Industrial and Tourism policies they can implement within their countries to boost trade competitiveness with a view to achieving the aspiration of the AU Agenda 2063".

As a host country, the commitment of Equatorial Guinea to advancing regional cooperation and economic development underscores its determination to contribute the achievement of the African Union's Agenda 2063 objectives, which seek to transform Africa into a prosperous, integrated and peaceful continent.

Key topics on the agenda includes consideration, of the Draft Revised Rules of Procedure of the STC and its Sub-Committees on Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals; the Draft African Union Green Minerals Strategy; the Draft African Union E-Commerce Strategy; the African Trade Observatory progress report, the AU SME Strategy Progress report; the Draft AU Stakeholder Engagement Manual for Trade Policy Making in Africa, as well as Confirmation of the Africa Quality Policy Council. By focusing on these priority areas, the session requested for actionable recommendations, policies, and programs that foster economic diversification, job creation and value addition across various sectors in Africa.

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