INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

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CONNECTING AFRICA'S MSMES: AFRICAN UNION TO HOST THE 4TH MSME FORUM IN ABUJA, NIGERIA

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 13 June 2025 – The African Union Commission is pleased to announce the 4th African Union Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Forum, taking place from 23rd to 27th June 2025 in Abuja, Nigeria.

Organized by the Department for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry, and Minerals (ETTIM) of the African Union Commission, and hosted by the **Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria,** the Forum will bring together key stakeholders from across the continent to accelerate the development of Africa's MSME sector.

The Forum, held under the theme:

"Building Resilient MSMEs through Digital Innovation, Market Access & Affordable Financing for Africa," will serve as a high-level platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collaboration.

Forum Highlights:

- **Official Opening Ceremony at the Nigerian Presidential Villa (State House Banquet Hall):** The Forum will be officially opened by high level delegates from the AU

- **MSME Product Exhibition:** MSMEs from across Africa will showcase innovative goods and services, highlighting the diversity and potential of the continent's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

- **Capacity Building & Training Sessions:** Practical workshops and expert-led sessions will equip MSMEs with knowledge and tools on finance, digital transformation, standards, and sustainability.

- **Signing of the MoU with Africa Guarantee Fund (AGF):** The African Union (AU) and the Africa Guarantee Fund (AGF) will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to enhance access to affordable finance, knowledge, mentorship, and networking opportunities for MSMEs, enabling them to grow and compete in both local and international markets.

- **Policy Dialogues & Side Events:** Key side events will bring together policymakers, development partners, private sector leaders, and youth innovators to explore partnerships and co-create solutions for MSME growth.

- **Pitching Competition:** Selected African MSMEs and startups will compete in a live pitching session before a panel of experts. Winning pitches will receive funding opportunities, mentorship, and visibility.

- **MSME Awards Ceremony:** Outstanding MSMEs from across Africa will be recognized for excellence in innovation and sustainability.

Forum Objectives:

- **Promote Digital Transformation:** Strengthen the capacity of MSMEs to adopt digital tools for growth and competitiveness.

- **Improve Market Access:** Facilitate MSMEs' entry into intra-African and global markets, leveraging the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)**.

- **Enhance Access to Finance:** Tackle barriers to affordable and inclusive financing mechanisms for MSMEs.

- **Drive Sustainable Development:** Empower small businesses as engines of innovation, inclusive economic growth, and job creation across Africa.

The Forum is a key platform under Agenda 2063, aimed at accelerating inclusive economic transformation in Africa. Through dialogue, networking, and policy exchange, the event seeks to create enabling environments for MSMEs to thrive as drivers of job creation, innovation, and intra-African trade.

For more information, please contact:

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