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STATEMENT BY
THE COMMISSIONER FOR TRADE AND INDUSTRY,
H.E. MRS. Fatima HARAM ACYL

FOR THE

5TH CAMI BUREAU MEETING

Nairobi, Kenya,

13 February, 2013

**Honorable Ministers, Members of the Bureau,
Representatives of Regional Economic Communities,
Representatives of International Organizations
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

On behalf of Her Excellency Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the Commission of the African Union, I would like to welcome you all to this 5th Bureau Meeting of the AU Conference of African Ministers of Industry (CAMI).

Let me first of all thank the Kenyan Government for accepting to host this 5th Bureau meeting, for the warm welcome and facilities granted to us for a successful meeting. Allow me to also express my sincere appreciation to our development partners, namely, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and the African Development Bank (AfDB) for their continued support to our common goal of achieving an industrialized Africa.

Distinguished Members of the Bureau

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the last CAMI Bureau meeting held in Vienna, we have collaborated with UNIDO and UNECA to organize for the first time on the premises of the African Union Headquarters, the African Industrialization Day on the theme of the AU Summit of 2012,

“Boosting Intra-African Trade”. We thank our Member States and the private sector from East and Central Africa for responding to our invitation at such short notice, to reflect with us on the prospects and challenges of Industrialization on our continent.

Advocacy on Industrialization for Africa’s sustainable development has reached an important level. As many of you are aware, a Joint Conference of AU and UNECA Ministers of Finance and Planning will meet next month under the theme of Industrialization. It will be an opportunity to continue to advocate for Member States to invest in their industrialization agenda, especially at a time when we are preparing for the Post-2015 agenda, which should include development indicators that are linked to job creation, skills development, tertiary and technical education in order to spur innovation and economic growth from the youthful population of our continent. In this regard, we are extremely proud to learn that Kenya and other countries in East Africa are leading in the ICT revolution such as mobile banking, mobile lending and savings, linking people in the urban and rural areas and indeed across generations. We commend your efforts towards regional integration, evidenced by the importance that you attach to regional industrial policy. Your success story and others’ milestones and achievements can be shared for the benefit of the continent. At the end of the day, the mandate that Heads of State and Government have given to the Ministers of Industry is to forge ahead with the implementation of the Accelerated Industrialization Strategy for Africa. It is a momentous task, but my belief is that Rome was not built in one day. We need your personal commitment to make progress on mobilizing resources for the implementation of AIDA.

Excellencies

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

It has come to my attention during the short period that I have been with the Commission that there are efforts being made to implement AIDA. Our partners UNECA and UNIDO are all making important contributions amongst other agencies, under the leadership of RECs and Member States. A concrete example of a successful pilot project is the Investment Monitoring Platform, which was implemented in 19 countries, in different regions. This project deserves to be highlighted because it provides the embryo of the African Trade Observatory that will enable us to track trade and investment flows in a timely manner based on information gathered by the private sector. It is a project that has been embraced by some of the RECs, such as COMESA, ECOWAS and others. However, the main constraint is the mobilization of sufficient funding to allow all RECs to participate and benefit from the initiative. This is a low hanging fruit that can be harvested if we join hands and decide to act in concert.

As the Commission, our main challenge is our ability to coordinate and monitor the impact of these collective actions, due to limited human resource capacity. That is why the establishment of the Implementation Coordination Unit is a goal that is close to my heart because it will inspire confidence that we are now ready to move forward. We are optimistic that this gap will be addressed during 2013 as it is indeed one of our priorities.

Excellencies

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

Our meeting today is indeed very important and timely. As you are aware, the 20th Ordinary Session of CAMI has been scheduled for the second week of June 2013, in Nairobi, under the theme “Accelerating Industrialization for Africa within the post 2015 Development Agenda”. It is therefore opportune for us to pave the way to a successful CAMI-20 by discussing strategies that will overcome the challenges facing the implementation of AIDA. We have agreed that resources can be mobilized from different sources. Our belief is that we must make haste slowly. We must be absolutely confident that we have prepared well and that we are putting our best foot forward in our resources mobilization. One of the key questions in this regard is to also reflect on the sustainability issue. It may be possible to fund technical expertise on a short-term basis, which may be good, but we need to build the institutional capacity in the medium and long term. We should also craft an agenda for CAMI-20 that is compelling for your colleagues to attend. We need high level participation and commitment in order to make a difference, as we know it is finally Africa’s turn.

Excellencies

The Year 2013 is a special year for Africa. We will celebrate 50 years of the OAU/AU and in this regard there will be a moment of reflection on the development path we have taken so far, and consider how we can move forward to deliver tangible and visible results. We are fortunate that the work of industry is concrete, where a factory goes up,

people get jobs, goods flow across borders and wealth is created. We believe that a united Africa, a prosperous Africa, which is at peace with itself and its neighbours is our common vision as a Union.

I look forward to fruitful deliberations during the course of this meeting.

Thank you for your attention.