



STATEMENT BY

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**AFRICAN UNION COMMISSIONER FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT,
TRADE, TOURISM, INDUSTRY AND MINIERALS**

**DELIVERED AT THE
SIGNING CEREMONY OF THE HOST AGREEMENT OF THE AFRICAN
UNION SUMMIT ON INDUSTRIALIZATION AND ECONOMIC
DIVERSIFICATION**

IN

NIAMEY NIGER

APRIL 2ND 2022,

Honourable Gourouza Magagi Salamatou, Minister of Industry and Youth Entrepreneurship;

Honourable Mohamed Saidil Moctar, Minister Adviser to His Excellency the President of the Republic of Niger and Director General of ANEC;

Distinguished strategic partners from the African Development Bank; Islamic International Trade Finance Corporation; AUD-NEPAD; United Nations Industrial Development Organization; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and Afro-Champions Initiative;

Your Excellency Ambassador Zakaria Maigu, Permanent Representative of Niger to the African Union;

My team from the African Union Commission;

The Team in Niger;

Distinguished Members of the Audience.

I greet each and every one of you.

I also earnestly thank you for your presence at this occasion taking us one step further in the hosting of the African Union Summit on Industrialization and economic diversification by the Republic of Niger.

I would further like to reaffirm our appreciation for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to us since our arrival in this beautiful city.

We shall, as ever, leave with a treasured experience.

We are having the signing ceremony in the wonderful premises of ANEC.

In this respect, I would like to praise Director General Moctar and his team for this elegant structure that will provide a highly conducive environment for the various programme activities of the African Union Summit on Industrialization and economic diversification when it convenes in November this year.

Strategic collaboration is key to the success of any endeavor.

In this vein, I would also like to record my deep appreciation to our strategic partners in the preparations for the African Union Summit on Industrialization and Economic Diversification, namely: the African Development Bank; Islamic International Trade Finance Corporation; AUDA-NEPAD; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa; United Nations Industrial Development Organization and Afro-Champions Initiative.

We hope, in the near future as our preparations roll out, to be joined by the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), Africa Solidarity Fund and the African Business Council.

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Dr. Moussa Faki Mahamat is in full support of the African Union Summit on Industrialization and Economic Diversification.

Several times, he has assured me that he will do everything possible to ensure that the African Union Summit on Industrialization and Economic Diversification is the success that it should be.

I also had the opportunity to make a courtesy call on His Excellency Mr. Mohamed BAZOUM, President of the Republic of Niger. He equally assured me of both his commitment as well as the commitment of the People and Government of Niger to work towards a successful Summit.

That we have restarted the preparation early in the year is a good sign that we are all committed to this outcome.

The COVID-19 Pandemic last year dictated postponement of this Summit. This time round, I am confident we shall go ahead to have a physical Summit.

Africa deserves nothing less than a successful outcome of the African Union Summit on Industrialization and Economic Diversification.

Just as the economic future of Africa lies in deeper continental economic integration, it also depends on structural transformation.

This is because industrialization and economic diversification are key elements of that structural transformation.

In the context of Agenda 2063, structural transformation means diversifying the sources of economic growth and sustainable development in a way that promotes higher productivity, resulting in sustained and inclusive economic growth.

It also means supporting the development of industries that increase the impact of the existing sources of comparative advantage and enhance Africa's global competitive position.

In a world of inter-dependence, competitiveness is key to ensuring that one fully benefits from the processes of inter-dependence.

Through industrialization and economic diversification, Africa will position herself to be competitive in the global market place.

We shall in this connection work on an outcome document that opens new possibilities for the accelerated industrialization and economic diversification of Africa.

Key elements of the outcome will be anchored on: upgrading skills by aligning education with the actual needs of the labour market; mobilizing financial resources for Africa's structural transformation; building soft and hard infrastructure including energy, for Africa's economic transformation; promoting commodity-based industrialization for inclusive growth and sustainable development; deepening continental economic integration; harnessing the opportunities offered by the Fourth Industrial Revolution; and, among others, establishing internal capabilities in Research and Development.

Key to Africa promoting commodity-based industrialization will be the development of regional and continental value chains which we are working on at various levels, and in some cases, in collaboration with the private sector. It is for this reason that we are incorporating the African Business Council in the preparatory process.

The private sector is a source of key resources required for Africa's industrialization and economic diversification, such as finance and innovation.

We are fully aware that there will be challenges as we move towards November 2022 when the African Union Summit on Industrialization and Economic Diversification convenes.

We should in this respect all remain fully attuned to the possibility of the challenges and position ourselves to respond to them on time and in full, moving the preparatory process forward.

We have before us, a great objective of ensuring a successful outcome of the African Union Summit on Industrialization and economic diversification. Let us meet that objective.

Our mission in this connection is to change Africa from a commodity producer and exporter of industry and products and services.

It is a complex undertaking but our passion to achieve is ferocious.

Let us harness that passion.

We can succeed.

We shall succeed.

I end here and thank you all for your kind attention.