

Africa Industrialization Day

Journée de l'Industrialisation de l'Afrique

يوم التصنيع في أفريقيا

20 November

Director General
Opening Speech

AFRICAN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT:

A PRE-CONDITION FOR AN EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE
CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA (CFTA)

التنمية الصناعية الأفريقية:

شرط مسبق لإقامة منطقة تجارة
حرة فعالة ومستدامة على
النطاق القاري

DÉVELOPPEMENT INDUSTRIEL AFRICAIN:

UNE CONDITION PRÉALABLE POUR UNE ZONE DE
LIBRE-ECHANGE CONTINENTAL (ZLEC)
EFFICACE ET DURABLE



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION



AFRICAN UNION



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year's Africa Industrialization Day plays a special role in promoting the acceleration of inclusive and sustainable industrial development in Africa.

Indeed, more than ever, the necessity for Africa to industrialize is being stressed at various international forums. These range from the United Nations General Assembly's proclamation of the "Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa", to the African Union's Agenda 2063, the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on Africa's Development, and last year's G20 Summit. All these forums prioritize industrialization in Africa in their programmes.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also acknowledges the critical role of industrialization in supporting countries, which are on the path to becoming emerging economies. This is most directly recognized in Sustainable Development Goal 9 on infrastructure, industrialization and innovation, and also through the catalysing effect of inclusive and sustainable industrial development on the other goals.

The theme of this year's Africa Industrialization Day is "*African industrial development: a pre-condition for an effective and sustainable Continental Free Trade Area*". Today's meeting promotes Africa's transformation by supporting diversification and modernization of production structures, free movement of business, persons and investments, facilitation regimes, market access, better resource allocation and spatial inclusion. Africa's Continental Free Trade Area is expected to bring considerable benefits to the continent and an enlarged integrated market of 54 countries impacting on around one billion people.

Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we discuss Africa's Continental Free Trade Area, it is imperative to consider how we can develop and enhance intra-African trade in manufactured goods. Enhancing such trade requires accelerating industrialization and promoting regional value chains. We need to keep building African industrial productive capacities, promote technological transfer, and enhance the capability of institutions to develop and implement evidence-based policies. It is also imperative to be strategic and prioritize industrial sectors where Africa has comparative advantages and growth potential, particularly in agro-industry, mining, and tourism.

Recognizing the scale of the actions needed, UNIDO – with its long-standing expertise in supporting countries to achieve inclusive and sustainable industrial development – stands ready to contribute. Our organization already supports actions to improve the competitiveness of enterprises, to mobilize investments, and to facilitate access to appropriate technologies for developing countries. It also supports the development of local productive capacities, promotes quality and standards, as well as the upgrading and restructuring of industrial enterprises, among others. As such, UNIDO is a critical partner to enforce and operationalize the Continental Free Trade Area policies that will lead to the materialization of a sound intra-African trade framework.

Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are gathered here today to promote Africa's industrialization, to discuss best practices, and to bring to light innovative solutions for the continent and its people to further integrate in the global trade system. We want to “optimize the use of Africa's resources for the benefits of all Africans” in accordance with the African Union's Agenda 2063.

UNIDO looks forward to supporting all endeavours that will enhance inclusive and sustainable industrial development in Africa.

Let me now conclude by wishing you all an excellent day celebrating the 2017 Africa Industrialization Day.

Thank you for your attention.