



## SIDE EVENT

### Youth inclusiveness in driving the implementation agenda of fiscal policy, trade and investment through digital innovation in Africa

#### Background

The recently signed African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement portends numerous upsides in engendering trade and bridging regional integration across the continent. Key factors that will support the successful implementation of the agreement are the involvement of young people on the continent and leveraging the enormous innovation in digital technology. As Africa has 167 million Internet users and a predominately young population, it is essential to develop an inclusive plan for intra-African trade and digital services.

The increasing Internet penetration rate and reduction in the cost of internet-enabled mobile devices has stimulated growth in the number of youth-run digital businesses across various sectors of the African economy, contributing to an increase in the gross domestic product (GDP) and a reduction in unemployment.

To leverage the opportunities presented by AfCFTA and most importantly, to understand the implications of regional expansion of youth-run businesses, it has become pertinent to organize this side event to discuss and explore collaboration among young business leaders on the continent in a bid to further promote the implementation of Agenda 2063 through trade liberalization.

#### Objective

The main objective of the side event is to offer a platform for stakeholders to discuss the inherent opportunities for young people conducting business across the continent by leveraging the potential offered by AfCFTA to expand into other African countries and through digital innovation. This would also include opportunity spotting – spotting opportunities for collaboration and expansion of youth-run businesses on the continent and communicating the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), African Union and various Government policy statements on the implementation of the AfCFTA agreement to private sector operations.

#### Expected outcomes

- Provide specific recommendations on the implementation of the AfCFTA agreement related to the inclusion of young people and enhancing the business environment;
- Demonstration of the potential of youth-run digital businesses and their potential contribution to economic development and a reduction in youth unemployment;
- Advocate stakeholder involvement in the implementation of the AfCFTA agreement by ECA and the African Union.

## Target audience

- Officials from ministries of finance, economic planning and industry
- ECA staff members
- Youth entrepreneurs
- Investors
- Civil society and the private sector
- Policymakers

## Venue, date and time

- Palmeraie Room, Palmeraie Golf Palace, Marrakech, Morocco
- 24 March 2019, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

## For further information, please contact

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