

Rabat to host Continental Trade Forum

Rabat, 27-31 October

Rabat, 20 October 2015 (ECA) - From 27 to 31 October 2015, Rabat (Morocco) will host the **Sixth North Africa Development Forum**, under the theme “**North Africa and Continental Free Trade Agreements**”.

The Economic Commission for Africa and the WTO Chair of the Mohammed V University are organizing this event in partnership with *Laboratoire d'Économie Appliquée au Développement* (LEAD, Toulon University). The Forum will bring together decision makers, private sector representatives, academics, journalists and PHD students from across North Africa and the Mediterranean region.

In this sixth edition, the Forum will seek to promote accelerated trade between North African countries, and between the North of Africa and the continent's other regions, by raising participants' awareness of Africa's free trade agreements (both existing and under negotiation), of the roles they can play in negotiation and decision processes as well as the needs and objectives of other stakeholders.

It will also include an international colloquium on the “**WTO 20 years after, African Integration and Major Regional Trade Agreements**”, in which academics from Africa and the Mediterranean region will discuss trade agreement issues and exchange on potential benefits from the setting-up of an African free trade zone.

The North Africa Development Forum is taking place 20 years after the Marrakech Agreement came into force and led to the WTO's creation. It is also happening shortly after the launch, last June, of negotiations for the setting-up of Africa's Continental Free Trade Zone (CFTA). This initiative is expected to give birth to a one-billion-consumer common market, stimulate trade within Africa, become a strategic base for Africa's effective integration into the global economy and boost growth by stimulating industrialization, production, competitiveness and infrastructure connections.

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Events:

- *Sixth North Africa Development Forum: “North Africa and Continental Free Trade Agreements”.* Open to the public starting from 28 October 2015 at 9.00 a.m. at Hotel Tour Hassan, Rabat.
- *International colloquium on “WTO 20 years after, African integration and major regional trade agreements”:* Open to the public starting from 29 October à 9h at the Souissi Legal, Economic and Social Science Faculty, Rabat.

For more information, please visit www.uneca.org or contact:

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