

First meeting
Working Group to follow up on the recommendations.
of the "Africa in Focus" Conference
Monday 5th of June 2023
EBA Premises

The First meeting of the joint working group to follow up on the recommendations. of the "Africa in Focus" Conference has been held at EBA on the 5th of June 2023, the meeting was co-chaired by H.E. Dr. Mohamadou Labarang Ambassador of Cameroon & Dean of African Ambassadors Group and Dr. Sherif El Gably EBA Board Member and Chairman of Africa Committee, and attended by :-

- H.E. Mr. Akoulafoua-M'voula Celestin Jean Paul - Ambassador of Congo
- H.E. Gen Obed Boamah Akwa - Ambassador of Ghana
- H.E. Mr Alfred Gakuba Kalisa - Ambassador of Rwanda
- Dr. Edou Mvelle - Second Commercial Counselor - Embassy of Cameroon in Egypt
- H.E. Amb. Ahmed Hamdy Bakr - Deputy Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs for Central African Affairs
- Minister Plenipotentiary Ali Basha - Head of Africa Department - Egyptian Commercial Service
- Dr. Khaled Milad Rezik - Africa Department - Egyptian Commercial Service
- Dr. Mohamed Youssef - Executive Director - Egyptian Businessmen's Association (EBA)
- Mrs. Dalia Youssef - Division Director International Relations & Membership Affairs Egyptian Businessmen's Association (EBA)

The Role of the Work Force

- To develop realistic solutions and innovative ideas to meet the challenges that limit the ability to exploit the capabilities available in the continent.
- To develop intra African cooperation through maximizing the use of the tools provided by Afriexim bank.
- To actively promote business participation in regional integrations, investment, and global trade
- To facilitate the growth of strong business synergies, the development of business opportunities, business alliances
- To provide a link and facilitate dialogue between the business community and other interest groups and other organs of the African Market.

- To Work on Advocating the task force recommendations in Africa and influence decisions at the highest levels of policy decision makers in the continent.
- To provide a friendly and comprehensive platform of information about all African countries including: (general data - market intelligence reports - opportunities (export – import – joint ventures) – tenders – transportation and access to ports – logistics and supply chain
- Technical capacity development and Industry collaboration
- Ensure the strengthening of linkages and cooperation among chambers of commerce and Other Business Organizations among the African continent.

During the discussions, it was agreed on the following points:

1. As information is Power and due to the lack of data on African countries' potentials and capabilities, the work group has agreed on the importance of having access to an integrated and comprehensive data base that is compatible with the requirements of the business community in the African countries such as (market trends, export potentials, preferential tariffs, export and import statistics , transportation routes, and logistical issues,...) we can explore the following platforms already available :-

- **African Trade Observatory (ATO)** which is a free single-entry point for trade intelligence in Africa, it is led by the African Union (AU) and implemented by the International Trade Center (ITC)
- **MANSA** which is a due diligence paid platform created by AFRIEXIM Bank
- **Communicate and coordinate with The Pan African Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PACCI) in order to get acquainted to their data base and see if it covers the needs and requirement of the business community.**

(PACCI) is an independent, non-profit and non-partisan organization established in 2009 to serve Africa's business by promoting public policies that will foster continental economic integration, competitiveness, and sustainable growth. With more than 50 national chambers of commerce acting as its local focal point, PACCI is the largest business association in Africa, and the continent's most influential. The chamber is recognized by the African Union (AU)

It was also proposed to have a special window (free of charge) for SMEs and Business Support Organizations

2. Banking and Finance:

- Open branches of Egyptian banks in African countries to engage in financing various trade and investment operations,
 - Investment and Exports Insurance and risk guarantee
 - Pan African Payment system (PAPSS) between the central banks
 - Access to Finance and how to facilitate the opening of credit lines especially for SMEs.
 - Holding workshops with AfDB and Afriexim and other major regional banks to explore the tools they offer for the African business community.
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3. **AfCFTA** (how can the private sector be involved in the smooth and quick implementation of the agreement since it has been 2 years since its inception and still not well utilized and widely implemented)
- Communicate with H.E. Mr. Wamkele Mene Secretary General AfCFTA Secretariat of **to form a “Think Tank” of renowned African businesspeople to discuss challenges and propose solutions**)
 - Discuss **Non-Tariff Barriers** (for instance the facilitation of movement for products and people especially businesspeople)
4. It was proposed to hold an **“African Pharmaceuticals and Drug Trading Conference”** with the presence of the ambassadors of African Countries and Dr. Tamer Essam the chairman of the Egyptian Drug Authority , to discuss the registration problems and how can the Egyptian drugs penetrate the African market directly not through third parties as the Egyptian drugs are of high quality and cheap in price in addition to the proximity nevertheless Egypt’s share from the African imports of drugs is million US dollars compare to an overall importation of billion US dollars.