



Expert Group Meeting

*Harnessing the potential of the AfCFTA: the catalytic role of economic diversification and innovative digital technologies*

Rabat, 19-20 November 2024

**Link:** [https://crm-sro-na.uneca.org/egm-on-harnessing-the-potential-of-the-afcfta?utm\\_campaign=EGM%20Potential%20AfCFTA%202024&utm\\_source=ad\\_hoc\\_invite](https://crm-sro-na.uneca.org/egm-on-harnessing-the-potential-of-the-afcfta?utm_campaign=EGM%20Potential%20AfCFTA%202024&utm_source=ad_hoc_invite)

Provisional programme of work

**Tuesday, 19 November**

2.00 – 2.15 p.m.

**Introduction of the EGM Sessions**

- Mrs. Ngoné Diop, Director, SRO-WA
- Mr. Adam Elhiraika, Director, SRO-NA

2.15 – 3.45 p.m.

**Session 1: Status and challenges of AfCFTA implementation**

**Moderator: Mr. Nabil Boubrahimi, Trade expert**

- Status and progress of the implementation of AfCFTA at the continental level (Mr. Hamadou Karidio and Mr. Zakaria Laghzaoui, AfCFTA Secretariat) and in North and West Africa (Amadou Diouf/Aziz Jaid, ECA)
- Challenges and opportunities for leveraging regional strengths and collaborations (Mrs. Mahlet Girma, African Trade Policy Center, ECA)
- **Discussions**

3.45 – 4.00 p.m.

*Health break*

4.00 – 5.30 p.m.

**Session 2: Exploiting innovative digital technologies to promote intra-regional trade**

**Moderator: Mr. Selasi Koffi Ackom – CEO International Trade and Finance, Office of the President, Ghana**

- Digital infrastructure and connectivity in North and West Africa (Mr. Mactar Seck, ECA Technology, Innovation, Connectivity, and Infrastructure Division)
- Digital technologies and trade facilitation (Mr. Adel Ben Yousef, Professor, University of Nice Sophia Antipolis)
- Mr. Zakaria Fahim, President of Hub Africa (Private sector)
- **Discussions**

**Wednesday, 20 November**

9.00 – 10.30 a.m.

**Session 3: Trade and economic diversification strategies for sustainable growth**

**Moderator: Ms. Soumaya Iraqui Houssaini, Chief of Section “Employment, and skills for balanced development”, UNECA**

- Challenges and policy options to promote economic diversification and the development of regional value chains (Prof. Abdoulaye Seck, Université Cheikh Anta Diop, Senegal)
- AfCFTA and the economic inclusion of women and youth (Mr. Isiyaka Sabo, Regional Team Leader Inclusive Growth, UNDP-Regional Service Centre Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia)
- Mrs Latifa Bouabdalaoui, General Director, Islamic Trade Development Center, TBC
- **Discussions**

10.30 – 11.30 a.m.

*Health break*

11.30 – 12.30 a.m.

- **Review of the EGM recommendations**

- **Closing of the experts group meeting**