

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

--

**MESSAGE ON AFRICA INDUSTRIALIZATION DAY**  
**20 November 2017**

Industrialization is a primary driver of economic growth and job creation, and will be pivotal in efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Africa Union's Agenda 2063.

This year's Africa Industrialization Day highlights the links between industrial development and Africa's moves towards establishing a Continental Free Trade Area.

These are mutually supportive endeavours. Strategic investments in cross-border infrastructure will advance both trade and industrial capacity. Promoting green technologies and low-carbon solutions can create compelling opportunities for increased commerce and industrialization alike.

Small and medium enterprises, which already contribute 80 per cent of the continent's Gross Domestic Product and support 90 per cent of all jobs, will remain key actors. Governments, business and civil society will need to forge partnerships to spur innovation and create incentives to power sustainable growth.

It will also be critical to unleash the capacities of Africa's young people and to strengthen African institutions. Both the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 recognize these imperatives.

On Africa Industrialization Day, I reaffirm the continued strong commitment of the United Nations to support Africa's industrialization, the implementation of a continental free trade agreement, and the building of inclusive, resilient, peaceful and prosperous societies for all.