

AfrICANDO 2017 - US Africa Trade & Investment Conference /Trade Show



Communiqué

***“Supply Chain Development and Competitiveness under AGOA: Making AGOA
Work for SME’s in the Handicraft, Beverage, Ethnic Food and Spice Industries”***

September 20 – 23, 2017

Betty T. Ferguson Complex, Miami Gardens, Florida

AfrICANDO 2017 - A US - Africa Trade and Investment Conference/Trade Show brought together more than 200 leaders from government, civil society, chambers of commerce, and the private sector from throughout Africa, the Caribbean and the United States. The objective of this year’s event was to address supply chain development, trade policy, trade security, logistics/transportation, and other relevant issues in an effort to identify the challenges and obstacles to small, and medium enterprises’(SMEs’) competitiveness in the US markets under AGOA.

The 4-day event included a dinner, and tour of several points of interest, including the Africa Trade Development Center (ATDC)/ Miami Free Zone; workshops; a tradeshow, and a marketplace; reception/fashion show; and competition among export ready companies from AGOA eligible countries exhibiting during the tradeshow.

Opening Session

The conference began with welcome remarks by Fred Oladeinde, President, The Foundation for Democracy in Africa (FDA). Mr. Oladeinde thanked delegates for their resilience and commitment to expansion of US-Africa trade and economic cooperation. He also thanked South Florida’s leadership, namely, the Honorable Dennis C. Moss; Senator Javier Souto; Dr. Emilio T. Gonzalez, Aviation Director, Miami International Airport (MIA); Juan Kuryla, Director PortMiami; William Talbert, CEO, Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau (GMCVB); the Honorable Dale V.C Holness, Commissioner Broward County; Glenn Wiltshire, Deputy Director, Port Everglades; as well as, Patricia Secke, and the Africa Femmes Performantes, Inc.; AWEK Kenya, Guinea, and West Africa Chapters; Kenya Women in Business Sacco Cooperative (KEWOBS); the Nigerian American Chamber of Commerce (NACC) and each participant for attending AfrICANDO 2017, in spite of Hurricane Irma, and its aftermath. Then, Mr. Oladeinde invited everyone to stand and join him for a moment of silence/prayer for the victims of Hurricane Irma.

Mr. Oladeinde continued his remarks by stating that Congress’ passage of AGOA to 2025, and the Trump Administration’s commitment to Africa, as noted by U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Lighthizer during the 16th AGOA Forum in Lomé, Togo, FDA has a renewed commitment to the implementation of recommendations presented by Civil Society to the Ministerial Session of the Forum. Mr. Oladeinde further remarked that through our Africa Trade Development Center (ATDC), and our partnership with Miami Dade County, we will be working with SMEs throughout Sub-Saharan Africa to enhance their competitiveness, and strengthen the supply chain for AGOA eligible products in the United States and other lucrative markets in the Western Hemisphere.

“As a signal of our commitment, and with the assistance of our partners, and affiliate organizations, we will be selecting up to ten clusters of export ready companies displaying their products during

AfrICANDO 2017 to receive purchase orders from ATDC to import their products for distribution in the US., here, in Miami Gardens, tomorrow.”

Mr. Oladeinde concluded his opening remarks by welcoming C.D. Glin, President and CEO, US African Development Foundation (USADF), and the keynote speaker for the opening session, for his leadership and supporting inclusive development across Sub-Saharan Africa by providing micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) with the catalytic investment, management, marketing, mentorship, and monitoring and evaluation required to scale up their enterprises and thrive.

His remarks were followed by Dr. Gershwin Blyden, Chairman of the Board of Directors, FDA. Dr. Blyden welcomed everyone to the event. In the course of his remarks, he commented on the quality and the evolution of African products gaining access to the United States, Caribbean and Latin American marketplace, and remarked that the market should be ready to embrace the products coming from Africa.

Commissioner Dennis C. Moss, Chairman, Trade and Tourism, Miami Dade County followed Dr. Blyden. Commissioner Moss stated that “Whether you are currently doing international business or looking to do business in the future, this (AfrICANDO) is a great opportunity to network with experts in the field”. “AGOA offers tangible incentives for African countries to continue their efforts to open their economies and build free markets, I believe that we are uniquely positioned for this economic opportunity.”

Dr. Emilio T. Gonzalez, Aviation Director, Miami International Airport (MIA), highlighted MIA’s readiness to do business with Sub Saharan Africa. He mentioned that MIA is well on its way to becoming one of two airports in the world, certified as “Pharma Hubs”; which denotes excellence in pharmaceutical logistics and strongly committed to welcoming direct flights from Africa as the Gateway to the Western Hemisphere and the closest airport to points in West Africa in the United States.

Glen Wiltshire, Deputy Director, Port Everglades underscored Port Everglades’ commitment to US-Africa trade and economic cooperation from a regional approach. Mr. Wiltshire stated that Port Everglades is working in collaboration with all of the ports in South Florida to reduce the logistical and transportation impediments to US-Africa trade. He also shared Port Everglades’ capabilities with participants, and expressed the Port’s readiness to support ATDC’s efforts to make South Florida the Gateway to Africa.

Juan Kuryla, Director, PortMiami, noted that PortMiami is the Gateway to the America’s and Cruise Capital of the World, and expressed PortMiami’s commitment to becoming the Gateway for trade, cruises, and tourism to Africa using the Sister- Seaports agreements that are in place with African Ports as a framework. Mr. Kuryla also shared some of the highlights from his recent travel to seaports in West and South Africa.

C.D. Glin, President and CEO, U.S. Africa Development Foundation (USADF), delivered the keynote speech during the Opening Session. Mr. Glin emphasized the need to help SMEs in Africa expand their capacity to meet market demand in the Western Hemisphere using the Africa Trade Development Center(ATDC) in South Florida as a point of entry.

The Opening Session was followed by a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, declaring the Exhibition Hall open to the public. The ceremony was conducted by Fred Oladeinde President, FDA; Gershwin Blyden Chairman, FDA; Commissioner Dennis Moss; C.D. Glin and other dignitaries. The exhibits consisted of small, and medium enterprises in the handicrafts, apparel, beverages, ethnic food, and spice industries from the Caribbean, the United States, and throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, such as, Benin, Cameroon, Kenya, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and South Africa.

Concurrent sessions on *Trade Supply Chain and Secure Commerce*, and *Port Infrastructure and Logistics* followed the ribbon cutting ceremony. The two sessions consisted of panelists, including some of our strategic partners, in addition to other professionals that are subject matter experts in the areas of trade and commerce security, custom services and C-TPAT / supply chain security issues and programs.

The *Trade Supply Chain and Secure Commerce* was moderated by Dr. Erahbor Ighodaro, Vice Mayor, City of Miami Gardens and presentations were made by Fermin Cuza, President, World Business Alliance for Security Commerce (BASC); George M. Politakis, Supervisor, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Miami Department of Homeland Security; Chris Mangos, Marketing Division Director, Miami International Airport; Gerard Philippeaux, Strategic Initiative Manager, PortMiami; and Roberto Barcelo, Sr., Manager, Business Development, Port Everglades.

The *Port Infrastructure and Logistics Security* Session was moderated by Ronald Thomason, Vice President, Security Dynamics LLC, a counterterrorism and risk management security consultancy; Presenters included: Samuel L Harvill Jr., Port Security Manager, Port Everglades; Irede Ajala, Senior Investment Advisor to Nigeria's Minister of Agriculture & Rural Development; Yves Monfort, Chief of Seaport Enforcement PortMiami, Florida; and, Diaty Conde, Director General of Guinea's Ministry of Commerce. Attendance at this session was standing room only, and focused on identifying opportunities for partnerships between African and US seaports, to enhance interactive training opportunities between their respective security staffs, and leveraging security procedures to enhance operational efficiencies that can lead to increased capacity and revenues.

Luncheon

Two distinguished experts, and both advisers to two former presidents of the United States gave keynote remarks during the Luncheon. Kim E. Petersen's, President and Chairman, Security Dynamics LLC., a global security and counterterrorism consultancy that specializes in maritime and intermodal security. Mr. Petersen served as an advisor to President, George H.W. Bush, and former Secretaries of State Henry A. Kissinger and Alexander M. Haig. Mr. Petersen's speech focused on "Maritime Security 2.0" and the need to institute a "Maritime Security 2.0" program in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly, in the West Africa Region.

Becky Norton Dunlop, the Heritage Foundation's Ronald Reagan Distinguished Fellow for Policy Promotion, and former advisor to President Ronald Wilson Reagan, delivered a speech that addressed the "Reforms Necessary to Strengthen Supply Chain in a Free Market Democracy."

During her speech, Ms. Norton Dunlop commented on the wisdom of the Free Market, the importance of having a vision, how your vision helps to point you in the right direction, and allows you to begin the process of reform. Additionally, Ms. Norton Dunlop highlighted three key lessons learned from the Heritage Foundation's research that most directly affect the discussions of AfrICANDO 2017, they are:

1. Countries that encourage private ownership of property through effective titling and registration with honest and even handed judicial protection encourage more entrepreneurial initiative than do countries that require collective or government ownership or control of economic resources.
2. Governments that impose heavy taxation or that incur excessive debt to fund high levels of government spending crowd out private economic activity and job-creating investment.
3. A consistently applied regulatory scheme that encourages competition and dispersed decision-making, innovation, productivity gains, and economic efficiency promotes a better allocation of resources than is achieved by systems of central planning.

Following her luncheon presentation, Ms. Norton Dunlop visited the Exhibit Hall where she signed and distributed copies of The Heritage Foundation's 2017 Index of Economic Freedom Book which is published, annually and in partnership with The Wall Street Journal.

Day Two

Fred Oladeinde, opened day two with a recap of the first day's activities, and at that time, he introduced Anthony Okonmah, Executive Director, ATDC. Mr. Okonmah served as the moderator *for Trade Supply Chain and Commerce*. The session centered on "how to's" of exporting, and consisted of practical information regarding complying with US customs, and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations FDA; meeting international standards; insuring and protecting your cargo at sea; and best practices for exporting. Panelists included: Angela Ajala, National Deputy President, AWEF Nigeria; William Brauner, Manager, Brauner International Inc.; Elena Contreras, Manager, Intertek International; Nahomie Ductant, President and CEO, Roses Delight; and, Daniel Raab, Esquire, International Trade Law Attorney, Law Offices of Daniel Raab, PA. additionally, Mr. Raab reviewed specific cases that involved the total recovery of the market value, as well as, the invoice value of products. Lunch followed this panel.

After lunch, a matchmaking business- to- business networking program took place, followed by a SME competition for export ready companies in the handicrafts, apparel, beverages, ethnic food and spice industries. The contest was designed to give maximum exposure to SMEs' products from AGOA eligible countries from throughout the Sub Saharan region of Africa. A selection committee comprised of a team of judges that included investors, buyers, a custom broker, a development organization, and a technology expert, evaluated each of the products for their market access qualification. The products were presented in clusters by country and assessed on the following criteria; Product Availability - quantity, quality, price; Social Benefit/Impact; Product Economy of Scale; Production Capacity; and Export Readiness of the Product which includes: licensing and FDA export approval. Clusters were selected from five countries, namely, Cameroon, Guinea, Kenya, Nigeria, and Ghana which was selected during a previous competition. The chosen companies will receive a purchase order for shipment and distribution their products in the United via the Africa Trade Development Center (ATDC). ATDC working with its affiliates, and other partners aim to create sustainable demand for handicrafts, apparel, beverages, ethnic food and spices from AGOA eligible countries in the United States and other lucrative markets in the Western Hemisphere.

The final panel of the day was entitled *Quality Management Systems for SME's Technology Designed to Enhance SME's Business Activities*. The session was presented by Jose Matto, President/Chairman, Hispanic Commerce Coalition and Managing Partner of HUBB-UCS; Abdelatif Bedier, President, and Co-Founder, HUBB. This session emphasized creating and using business productivity tools that were specifically designed to connect SMEs in the Sub Saharan regions of Africa to the global marketplace, and expand the marketplace for African products in the Western hemisphere.

Fashion Show/Reception

The day ended with a fashion show/reception. The fashion show was successfully organized by Augustina Hammond, Jem Afrik Creations, and featured international models and apparel from the pool of SMEs exhibiting their wares during AfrICANDO, in addition to local models. The fashion show/reception was a festive event that included dancing, an offering of South African Wines, and delectable hors d'oeuvres prepared by Tropical Catering.

For additional information, please contact The Foundation for Democracy in Africa (FDA) via comments@democracy-africa.org or on 1-202-331-1333 or on 305-416-9201, E-mail: aokonmah@democracy-africa.org or visiting the web site at www.democracy-africa.org