

AEZO NEWSLETTER N° 08-2020-74 | SPECIAL EDITION
VIDÉO BEST OF 5TH ANNUAL MEETING

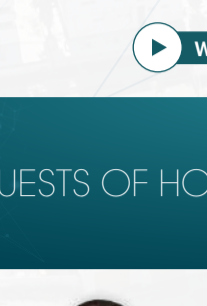


The Africa Economic Zones Organization 5th Annual Meeting, organized in conjunction with the AfCFTA Business Forum, saw incredible success.

We are pleased to announce that this year's virtual edition had a remarkably high turnout including more than 500 delegates representing 68 countries and international experts - gathered jointly to discuss "The role of Economic Zones in supporting the implementation of the AfCFTA and regional integration."

[WATCH THE REPLAY OF THE 5TH ANNUAL MEETING](#)

OPENING REMARKS



Mr. Fouad Brini
 Chairman
 Tanger Med Group

"Tanger Med has the ambition to play its role as a locomotive of continental development by starting with all the organization's members all the experiences that we have been able to achieve. Today we have 80 members representing 42 countries."

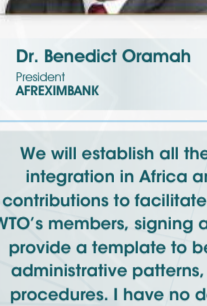


H.E. Albert M. Muchanga
 Ambassador for Trade and Industry
 African Union Commission (AUC)

If we want to increase the African trade, we need to deepen the processes of manufacture and Agro-processing. And in process of Export diversification, we need to increase such investments. It is against this background that we are finalizing a collaborative framework with the AEZO and assisting us coming up with a forecast program of engagement.

[WATCH THE REPLAY OF THE OPENING REMARKS](#)

GUESTS OF HONOR



Dr. Akinwumi Adesina
 President
 AfDB

While SEZs have primarily focused on exports they now need to shuffle the focus on the regional markets in Africa. SEZ will allow Africa to develop its manufacturing capacity, competitive regular value chains for exports in the African continental area and to expand integration into global value chains."

[WATCH THE FULL STATEMENT](#)

In Africa, SEZs offer pathway for countries to provide investments with targeted incentives, streamline administration and better infrastructure in a manner that might not be possible at a countrywide level. SEZs can play an important role for sustainable recovery in a post COVID-19 era.

[WATCH THE FULL STATEMENT](#)



Dr. James Zhan
 Senior Director for Investment and Enterprise
 UNCTAD

We at AFRXIMBANK, recognize that given Africa's resources and liberal advantages, the Economic Zones hold the potential to attract investments into Africa's manufacturing sectors of the labor intensive type, and act as a hub of Africa's industrial development.

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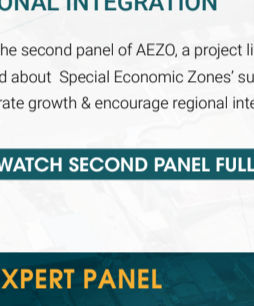
We will establish all the initiatives to arise original integration in Africa and would continue to give contributions to facilitate smoother trade flows across WTO's members, signing a trade facilitation agreement, provide a template to benefit trade through reduced administrative patterns, costs and delays related to procedures. I have no doubt that this will contribute to the successful implementation of the AfCFTA.

[WATCH THE FULL STATEMENT](#)



Dr. Yanov Frederick Agah
 Deputy Director General
 WTO

KEYNOT AfCFTA SECRETARIAT

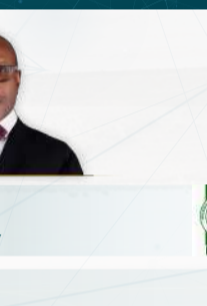


Dr. Francis Mangeni
 Head of Trade Facilitation and Programs
 AfCFTA Secretariat

Dr. Mangeni expressed his gladness about the partnership opportunity between the AfCFTA and AEZO. According to him, the upcoming launch of AfCFTA in January 2021 is a historic event marking a long way since negotiation started in 2015, before coming to an agreement in 2018 and finalizing the project in 2020. He highlighted that AfCFTA implementation aims to boost Africa's intra-trade and double it by the year 2022 compared to 2010, taking into account that it has already increased by 10% to 18% between 2010 to 2020.

He also discussed the developmental approach of Africa regional integration, which revolves around opening large markets, and encouraging industrialization. Besides, he also issued an important comment emphasizing that large markets without higher quality products are a liability. In addition, he set as a priority the improvement of infrastructure to facilitate the transports and logistics, as well as energy and communication technologies, and lastly including peace and security.

Mr. Bennis highlighted that the AfCFTA is a business opportunity for extending SEZs activities, Africa manufacturing and supplying its own goods, creating opportunities for investment, industrialization and promoting Intra-African Trade. All these also lead to job creation in the continent. He stated that despite all the concerns about this provision alleging unfair competition deriving from tax and other investment incentives granted to factories located in SEZs, excluding SEZs from the AfCFTA can have many undesirable effects. Therefore, he suggested accepting Special Economic Zones and utilize them for the purposes of triggering economic policy reforms which are focused on accelerated diversification of the production and export levels.



Mr. Ahmed Bennis
 Secretary General
 Africa Economic Zones Organization (AEZO)

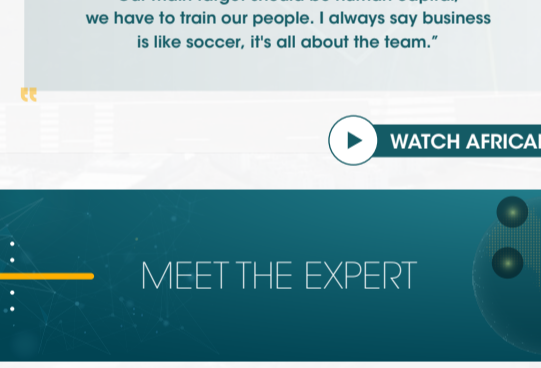
PANEL SESSION



PANEL 1 : IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AfCFTA - CONTRIBUTION OF THE ECONOMIC ZONES, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

AEZO 5th annual meeting first panel discussion set the scene by presenting an overview of the scope and structure of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) and exploring interlinkages between Special Economic Zones (SEZs) and the AfCFTA.

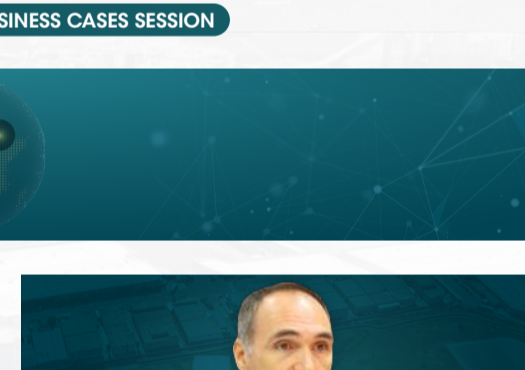
[WATCH FIRST PANEL FULL REPLAY](#)



PANEL 2 : SEZs' SUCCESS FACTORS TO GENERATE GROWTH & ENCOURAGE REGIONAL INTEGRATION

During the second panel of AEZO, a project live demonstration was held about 'Special Economic Zones' success factors to generate growth & encourage regional integration...

[WATCH SECOND PANEL FULL REPLAY](#)



PANEL 3 : SEZs SUPPORTING REGIONAL VALUE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT & AFRICA INTRA-TRADE INITIATIVE

How can SEZs foster cross-border trade and value chain complementarity across the continent and what they should do to enhance Africa intra-trade? These are the topics that were discussed during the third panel of the AEZO 5th Annual Meeting.

[WATCH THIRD PANEL FULL REPLAY](#)

AFRICAN SEZs BUSINESS CASES



Mr. Jaafar Mirhady
 Managing Director
 Tanger Med Zones

"The 2020 ranking of the FDI Intelligence places Tanger Med Industrial Platform as the 2nd SEZ in the world thanks to its value proposition in line with the expectations of global players, firstly, a strategic position at the cross roads of the main maritime lines and close to the larger market, particularly the European market, accessibility to 180 ports and 70 country, an integrated set of first-rate infrastructure and a large land reserve, an integrated management of the various activity zones by a single operator as well as the various ecosystem firmly established for 15 years. Moreover, the industrial platform is backing onto the first port complex in the Mediterranean and the African continent."



Prof. Adesoji Adesugba
 Managing Director
 Nigeria Export Processing Zones Authority

"Nigeria is also trying to ensure that some of the challenges that they are facing, are being tackled and addressed in order to attract even more investments. And in order to do that, they have to ensure that the business is seamless in Nigeria, and to also ensure that investors have a safe haven in doing business in the free zones of Nigeria. SEZs have also had a lot of support from the President, who recently has designated about 6 new SEZs across the countries."



Mr. Aboubaker Omar Hadi
 Chairman
 Djibouti Ports and Freezones Authority

"AEZO 5th annual meeting is very interesting, very good and very helpful. With AEZO, we are going to share experiences. Our main target should be human capital, we have to train our people. I always say business is like soccer, it's all about the team."



Mr. Siphso Reginald Zikode
 Deputy Director General, SITA
 Department of Trade and Industry

"The incentives for SEZs, is to attract local and foreign direct investment; with the main attraction that is provided as in the top-class infrastructure in SEZs. Moreover, SEZs are a tool to enhance regional integration in terms of cross border manufacturing and trading. Hence, having SEZs in the borders between south Africa and the neighboring countries."

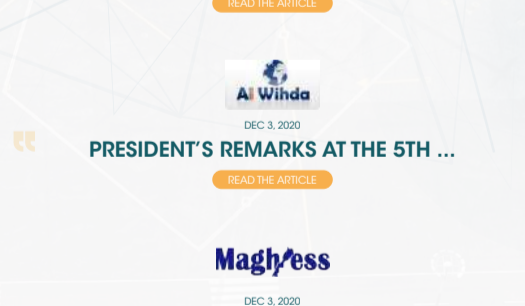
[WATCH AFRICAN BUSINESS CASES SESSION](#)

MEET THE EXPERT

MEET THE EXPERT SESSION 1 | BEST PRACTICES IN INNOVATION & DIGITALIZATION

Keys of Success Global economic and market conditions are rapidly changing, and, as a result, SEZs are also evolving over the time to suit with the new business and economic environment. In order to succeed in this new environment, Economic zones must undertake continuous technological and industrial learning and innovation upgrading. The objective is to enhance productivity and sustain long-term competitiveness.

[WATCH THE FULL SESSION](#)



Mr. Frank Grozel
 Coordinator, Business Facilitation Program
 UNCTAD

MEET THE EXPERT SESSION 2 | TRADE FACILITATION & SMART LOGISTICS CONNECTING SEZs

The global logistics hub and SEZs are reinforced by Africa's long standing support for the principles of trade liberalization and openness. The Economic Zones and Smart Logistics Initiative fully endorse and support this long standing position and its continuation as a guiding principle in Africa's Trade Policy.

[WATCH THE FULL SESSION](#)



Mr. Abiyu Bertie
 Senior Advisor, Logistics and Fulfillment
 AeTrade Group

INTERNATIONAL PRESS COVERAGE

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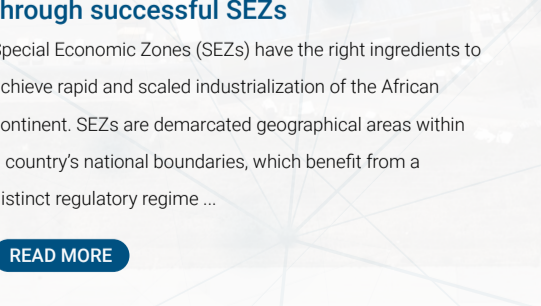
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AFRICAN ECONOMIC ZONES LATEST NEWS



#BOTSWANA - Board tours Pandamatenga Special Economic Zone

The Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Special Economic Zones Authority (SEZA), Thapelo Tsheole recently led the Authority's Board of Directors on a tour of key projects at the Pandamatenga Special Economic Zone (SEZA)...

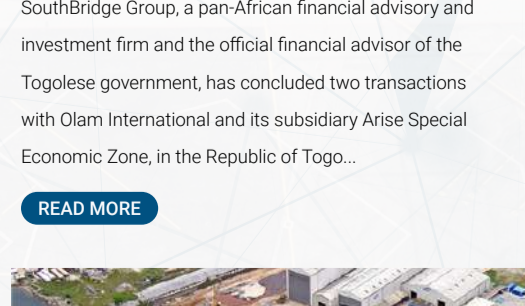
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#GABON - Sierra Leone's President Julius Maada Bio visit to Special Economic Zones

The President visited the Gabonese Special Economic Zones, GSEZs, to engage major agricultural and industrial projects being undertaken by the Central African country with abundant petroleum and foreign private investment...

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#SOUTHAFRICA - Special economic zones role in boosting jobs and economic recovery

During a joint sitting of parliament, President Cyril Ramaphosa presented SA's economic reconstruction and recovery plan including the impact of special economic zones on recovery ...

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Accelerating Africa's Industrialization through successful SEZs

Special Economic Zones (SEZs) have the right ingredients to achieve rapid and scaled industrialization of the African continent. SEZs are demarcated geographical areas within a country's national boundaries, which benefit from a distinct regulatory regime ...

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INVESTMENTS IN AFRICAN ECONOMIC ZONES



#TOGO - SouthBridge makes major transaction with Arise SEZ

SouthBridge Group, a pan-African financial advisory and investment firm and the official financial advisor of the Togolese government, has concluded two transactions with Olam International and its subsidiary Arise Special Economic Zone, in the Republic of Togo...

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#NIGERIA - FG seeking FDI to develop Special Economic Zones

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Investment, Otunba Adeniyi Adebayo stated that the Federal Government seeks to increase development into Nigeria's Special Economic Zones (SEZ) with the aid of Foreign Direct Investments...

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