

Press release

Paris, October 17, 2023

**Fifth edition of Ambition Africa:
Strengthening economic and commercial ties with Africa**

Organized by Business France to strengthen economic ties between France and Africa, the fifth edition of the Ambition Africa forum will take place on October 17 and 18, 2023 in Paris. Inaugurated by Bruno Le Maire, Minister for the Economy, Finance and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty, Chrysoula Zacharopoulou, Minister of State for Development, French-Speaking Communities and International Partnerships, and Laurent Saint-Martin, Chief Executive Officer of Business France, this edition brings together official figures along with African and French economic players.



From left to right: Bertrand Walckenaer, Deputy Managing Director of the French Development Agency, Edem Tengue, Minister of the Maritime Economy, Fisheries and Coastal Protection in Togo, Laurent Saint-Martin, Chief Executive Officer of Business France, Fatimata Wane-Sagna, Journalist at France 24.

Placed under the high patronage of President Emmanuel Macron and under the auspices of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Ministry for the

Economy, Finance and Industrial and Digital Sovereignty, this edition includes a plenary session, in the presence of French ministers, along with African countries and business delegations, 16 sectoral and transversal thematic round tables, as well as targeted business meetings and networking. **With Ambition Africa, Business France aims to place Africa at the heart of the development strategy of French SMEs and mid-size companies.** A continent experiencing a demographic, economic, digital and climatic transition, Africa will be home to one-quarter of the world's population by 2050. It is already at the heart of the challenges facing our world. Businesses must now build bridges and strengthen synergies between business communities, by forging links between men and women, from business leader to business leader in a win-win relationship.

This year's themes will focus on the economic situation and business climate in Africa, the development of urbanization and sustainable cities, agricultural and agri-food challenges, access to energy, FinTech and cybersecurity, infrastructure and logistics, healthcare systems and professional training and human resources.

For the first time, this edition will feature a round table on African companies establishing operations in France, entitled: "Perspectives on regions and investors."

Africa: A continent of growth in the 21st century

Over the last 25 years, African economies have grown faster than the global average (the second leading world area after Asia). In a turbulent international context, the growth outlook for the African continent remains solid for 2023 and stands at 3.8%, compared with 2.8% for global growth.

France, for its part, has one of the oldest and richest relationships with Africa of any western country. Historical and cultural links are coupled with strong business ties. Trade between France and Africa was at its highest level for the last 10 years in 2022.

The country remains one of Africa's leading trading partners, with 33,000 of French businesses having exported there, generating €28.2 billion in exports in 2022. France remains the leading European export country to Africa; around 20% of exports from the European Union to the African continent originate from France.

In terms of economic attractiveness, France is the leading European country for welcoming investments from Africa. African businesses accounted for 4% of total FDI in France in 2022, growing steadily as part of cross-Europe/Africa location strategies. More than 1,400 African businesses are present in France, employing more than 15,000 people.

"Ambition Africa 2023" program

Ambition Africa 2023 will bring together **1,800 participants**, including **1,000 African firms and 800 French businesses**.

By bringing together **key players from nearly 43 African countries**, Ambition Africa enables partnerships to be forged between African and French businesses, as well as between African businesses. In this respect, Ambition Africa is also a **"pan-African" event**.

The 16 round tables will enable businesses to understand Africa's challenges and opportunities. **Business France will also organize more than 2,000 business meetings**, which will ensure initial contacts with buyers, distributors and industrial partners, with advice from experts and event partners. **As a reminder, in 2022, two-thirds of businesses had started commercial negotiations.**

Ambition Africa enjoys enhanced credibility, thanks to the expertise of Business France in its role of supporting French firms internationally and on the African continent in particular. Business France operates across 12 African countries and can cover, directly or indirectly, the 32 most important markets in Africa, accounting for 80% of gross domestic product. In Africa, it can bring together 78 sector experts of 17 different nationalities.

About Business France

Business France is the national agency supporting the international development of the French economy, responsible for fostering export growth by French businesses, as well as promoting and facilitating international investment in France.

It promotes France's companies, business image and nationwide attractiveness as an investment location, and also runs the VIE international internship program.

Business France has 1,500 personnel, both in France and in 56 countries throughout the world, who work with a network of partners.

Since January 2019, as part of the reform of the state support system for exports, Business France has given private-sector partners responsibility for supporting French SMEs and mid-size companies in the following markets: Belgium, Hungary, Morocco, Norway, the Philippines and Singapore.

For further information, please visit: www.businessfrance.fr @businessfrance

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