



BRUSSELS --The Brussels office of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), together with the African Union (AU), hosted a celebratory lunch with African

Ambassadors and Representatives on the occasion of Africa Industrialization Day (AID) on the. Job creation and entrepreneurship development were this year's central themes.

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The event commenced with welcoming remarks from Mr. Christophe Yvetot, head of UNIDO in Brussels, who also presented a message from Mr. Li Yong, the current UNIDO Director General, and from H.E. Mr. Ajay K. Bramdeo, the African Union Ambassador to the European Union who presented a joint speech from the African Union, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and UNIDO. He spoke about the need to “shift” Africa into an industry driven region (continent?) and to compliment that transformation with entrepreneurship training to produce sustainable growth.

Mr. Bramdeo was followed by a keynote speech presented by Mr. Daniel Calleja Crespo, European Commission Director General for Enterprise and Industry, who spoke about the importance of investments, global value chains, entrepreneurship, and a skilled workforce. He emphasized the importance of small to medium businesses and the significant role they play within the European economy. Enterprises produce sustainable value chains that are the basis of job creation. He also touched upon the need to encourage more individuals towards entrepreneurship roles because they also encourage innovation and job creation.

Lastly, he called upon the need for a skilled workforce. Investment in human capital through education and vocational training are needed in order to have sustainable economic growth.

The speech was followed by a discussion of the outcomes of the inaugural “Forum for Young Entrepreneurs” held in Togo last month. A letter sent to UNIDO Brussels Office from the President of Togo, and presented by His Excellency, Ambassador Kodjo Sagbo, Permanent Representative of Togo to the European Union, reiterated a cooperation agreement signed, between UNIDO and Togo to work together on improving the country's challenges regarding unemployment, particularly with youths.

Mrs. Françoise Moreau, European Commission, DG Devco, Head of the Africa Partnership and Peace Facility Unit, followed with two briefings on the 5th EU-Africa Business Forum to be held in 2014 and on UNIDO's activities in support of Africa, particularly the Strategy for the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa (AIDA) and the Africa Agro-industry and Agribusiness Initiative (3ADI).

In follow up, UNIDO is organizing, with its partners, during the European Development Days, Tour & Taxis, Avenue du Port 86C, Brussels, A High Level Panel on productive work for youth. Details below:

- "Productive work for Youth: Inclusive Solutions for Youth Employment"
- Speakers include Katharina Steinkellner (SOS-CV), Christof Ehrhardt (DHL), Mohamed Dhaoui (UNIDO), Youth Testimonials, etc.
- Auditorium Panel in Auditorium B on Wednesday 27th November 11:30-13:00
- Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jwf79XGgGdY&feature=c4-overview&list=UUEdVD3q7YIDiWU-VkEhfOuA>