

CONCEPT NOTE

ACCELERATING AFRICA'S INDUSTRIALIZATION:

HIGH-LEVEL MOBILIZATION FOR THE FOURTH INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT DECADE FOR AFRICA (IDDA IV)

24 September 2025, 13:00-15:00 (EDT), Luncheon



Delegates Dining Room, East River View and Patio,
4th floor, UN Headquarters, New York

1. BACKGROUND

In 2016, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution A/RES/70/293, proclaiming 2016–2025 as the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III). The decade aimed to accelerate inclusive and sustainable industrial development across the continent. Over its nine-year implementation period, IDDA III has successfully aligned continental efforts with global development agendas including the SDGs, Africa's Agenda 2063, fostering partnerships that have driven progress in industrialization, infrastructure development, and regional economic integration.

As IDDA III draws to its close in July 2025 and following its strategic evaluation in 2024, there has been increasing calls in support of a successor Decade. These calls have been reinforced through multiple avenues, including during the 7th IDDA III high-level event held in September 2024 in the margins of the UNGA79.

In November 2024, the UN General Assembly's Second Committee commended UNIDO's leadership in advancing Africa's industrialization and called for the launch of IDDA IV, underscoring the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships.

In December 2024, the African Union's Specialized Technical Committee on Trade, Industry, and Minerals adopted a ministerial declaration recommending formal endorsement by the AU Assembly. This was confirmed by the AU Assembly Heads of State and Government held in February 2025 through the African Union Executive Council, Decisions which calls on the UNGA to proclaim the next decade for Africa's industrialization, building on the experiences of previous decades and the ongoing IDDA III and leveraging favorable global and regional contexts.

IDDA IV is envisioned as an ambitious, next generation platform to accelerate inclusive and sustainable industrial development in Africa, aligned with Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

To sustain this momentum and translate political will into concrete action, the AUC and UNIDO will co-host a High-Level Engagement and Advocacy Event on the margins of the 80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA80) in September 2025. By consolidating political momentum, enhancing global visibility, and engaging a broad coalition of partners, this high-level event will play a central role in securing the endorsement, formal proclamation, and successful launch and implementation of IDDA IV.

HIGH-LEVEL ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT EVENT FOR IDDA IV.

The event is jointly hosted by the AUC and UNIDO in partnership with AU Permanent Observer Mission to the UN (UNPOM), UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), Office of the Special Adviser on African Affairs (OSAA), AfDB, Afreximbank, AfroChampions Initiative, and African Business Council (AfBC).

It will take place on Wednesday, 24 September 2025 from 13:00 to 15:30 p.m. (EDT) as a luncheon at the Delegates Dining Room (East River View), UN HQ, New York.

The **theme** of the event, “*Accelerating Africa’s Industrialization: High-Level Mobilization for IDDA IV,*” captures the **urgency and opportunity of the current moment**. With the conclusion of the Third Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA III), African leaders, development partners, private sector actors are presented with an unprecedented opportunity to consolidate the gains already made and propel the continent towards globally competitive industrial future. IDDA IV emerges as the strategic framework to realize this vision, building on past achievements while addressing persistent challenges through innovation, investments and integration.

This requires integrated and coordinated action across three critical dimensions: deeper economic diversification to reduce commodity dependence, large-scale job creation to harness Africa’s demographic dividend, and enhanced regional/global competitiveness through technological adoption and global value chain integration

- Achieving the vision of a transformed, inclusive, and globally competitive industrial landscape demands deliberate and sustained efforts to enlarge **productive capacity**, shifting from primary commodity exports to **high-value manufacturing while strengthening regional value chains**. **Investment in reliable renewable energy, modern transport corridors, broadband connectivity, and climate-resilient industrial parks** will form the backbone for sustained industrial expansion.
- Equally crucial is harnessing the disruptive potential **Fourth Industrial Revolution technologies**, from artificial intelligence and advanced analytics to smart manufacturing systems. Realizing this potential requires parallel **investments in human capital**. This means cultivating a skilled workforce through demand-driven technical and vocational education (TVET), robust Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programs, and innovative industry-academia collaboration models, with particular emphasis on empowering women and youth as catalysts of industrial innovation.
- **Mobilizing capital at unprecedented scale is essential**. This necessitates targeted incentives for industrial investment, **robust public-private partnerships** that share risks and reward appropriately, strategically located special economic zones with world-class infrastructure, and **expanded access to industrial finance** tailored to Africa’s needs. Such financial innovation is essential to catalyzing flagship industrial projects, support SMEs, and foster entrepreneurial innovation across priority sectors from agro-processing to pharmaceuticals.
- **Continental integration through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) remains the anchor for these industrialization efforts**. The AfCFTA offers an unparalleled platform to streamline industrial policies, boost intra-African trade in manufacturing goods, and strategically embed African industries into global value chains.
- **Sustainability must be embedded at every stage of policy formulation and investment planning**. This includes scaling circular economy models, advancing green manufacturing, and building climate-smart infrastructure—positioning Africa as a frontrunner in environmentally responsible industrialization.

- **IDDA IV's success hinges on coherent, well-sequenced policies that align national strategies with continental frameworks including AfCFTA and Agenda 2063.** Such policy harmony will reduce regulatory fragmentation, build investor confidence, and ensure that industrial growth is both inclusive and future-proof.
- **Anchored in sustainability, innovation, and strategic partnerships, IDDA IV offers a transformative pathway to position industrialization as a central driver of Africa's achievement of Agenda 2063, the SDGs, and global climate goals—ushering in an era of shared prosperity and resilience.**

2. OBJECTIVES

The High-level Event is designed to achieve several strategic objectives that will collectively ensure that the successful proclamation and implementation of IDDA IV:

- Secure high-level political endorsement for IDDA IV from African leaders and their international counterparts, establishing the strong political foundation necessary for decade-long implementation.
- Mobilize financial and technical commitments from governments, development partners, and the private sector.
- Launch the IDDA IV Advocacy and Partnership Campaign, catalyzing broad stakeholder engagement, and positioning Africa's industrial transformation as a central pillar of global development discourse.
- Build political and diplomatic momentum for the formal submission and adoption of the IDDA IV resolution at UNGA80.
- Enhance global visibility of Africa's industrialization agenda, by demonstrating its alignment with SDGs, Agenda 2063 and other relevant Internationally Agreed Development Goals.

3. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The event is anticipated to yield several significant outcomes that will shape the trajectory of Africa's industrialization efforts through 2035. This includes:

- Formal statements of support and political endorsements by Heads of State and Governments, Ministers, and international leaders, affirming commitment to IDDA IV.
- Announcements of financial and technical pledges to support IDDA IV implementation, including investment in regional industrial corridors, green infrastructure, and digital transformation.
- Formal unveiling of the IDDA IV Advocacy and Partnership Campaign, featuring visibility through key global platforms, multilateral meetings and communication channels.
- Consensus on the text and trajectory of the IDDA IV resolution to be presented at UNGA80, reflecting common priorities and actionable deliverables.
- Increased global recognition of Africa's industrialization as a development priority, reflected in media coverage, partner commitments, and integrated strategies.

4. FORMAT

The High-Level Event will be held in person at the UN Headquarters in New York and structured around four core segments designed to generate visibility, engagement and momentum:

- a. **Opening Segment:** Remarks by the UNIDO Director General, the Chairperson of the African Union, and senior UN representatives, setting the tone for the event.
- b. **High-Level Leadership Panel:** Reflections from African Heads of State and Government, leaders of regional organizations, and key development partners on advancing political leadership and aligning national and regional efforts for Africa's industrial transformation.
- c. **Global Partnership discussion:** Perspectives from CEOs, Development finance institutions, UN entities, and multilateral on innovative finance mechanisms, blended finance, PPPs, and South-South cooperation in support of IDDA IV implementation.
- d. **Call to Action:** Joint launch of the IDDA IV Partnership and Advocacy Brief by the AUC and UNIDO, and culminating in a Joint Call for global solidarity, resource mobilization and policy alignment.

5. EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS

The event will bring together high-level stakeholders, including African Heads of State and Government, Ministers of Industry, Trade, and Foreign Affairs, the AUC, Heads of UN entities, Permanent missions, African regional organizations, the private sector, financial institutions, development partners, development banks, civil society, non-governmental organizations, academia, and media representatives.

FOCAL PERSONS

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