

A DIGITAL FORUM

REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

TIPS FORUM 2020

PART 1 28 & 29 JULY 2020
PART 2 4 & 5 AUGUST 2020



PRESS RELEASE

Regional industrial development in SADC the central focus of high-level conference

The centrality of industrial development across the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region to ensure accelerating sustained economic development will be the focus of deliberations at a conference starting this week.

Dr Arkebe Oqubay, a minister and special advisor to the Prime Minister of Ethiopia will be giving the keynote address in view of the importance of building industrial capacity in developing countries, especially in the context of the economic impact of COVID-19. He is a research associate at the Centre for African Studies, University of London and has an affiliation with the DST/NRF South African Research Chair in Industrial Development (SARChI) at the University of Johannesburg. He is the author of “Made in Africa: Industrial Policy in Ethiopia” and has been recognized as a “leading thinker on Africa’s strategic development” for his work on industrialization and industrial policies.

The conference – being organised in partnership with Trade and Industrial Policy Strategies (TIPS), SARChI, the United Nations University for Development Economics Research programme on Southern Africa – Towards Inclusive Economic Development (SA-TIED), and the South African Department of Trade, Industry and Competition - will be held virtually and take place over four morning sessions starting from Tuesday 28 July.

The TIPS Forum is held annually and this year will bring together a range of stakeholders involved in the various aspects of regional industrial development with participants and presenters from across the region including from countries such as Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Malawi, Cameroon, Nigeria and Ethiopia, to name but a few.

The TIPS forum is a platform for researchers, policymakers, and other stakeholders to present research and engage in dialogue on policy-relevant issues and in this instance, the conference seeks to deepen the understanding of a cross-section of issues on regional industrial development, and the related opportunities and challenges. In view of the economic impact of COVID-19 and the huge challenges the region faces in terms of industrialization – viewed as central to sustained economic development - the organizers

decided that the Forum should go ahead but in a virtual format with the sessions being run over four mornings starting from 10am (SA time) until 1pm.

TIPS director Saul Levin explains that a “regional approach to industrialisation is important, given the integration between Southern African economies, including through regional value chains. Patterns of industrial development in one country affect other economies in the region.” In addition, he adds, “given the small domestic markets in most Southern African countries, regional markets are important for reaching economies of scale necessary for industrial development.”

In view of this, in the policy domain, it is important to take a regional approach to industrialisation. In addition, industrialisation is a means to achieve socio-economic development and move towards greater levels of equality and a pro-employment development path.

Hence, some of the key questions which will be debated include, amongst others, how does regional integration and regional value chains support this? Will the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) contribute toward improved levels of industrialisation? How can the region fully utilise the upstream and downstream potential from mineral extraction to support industrialisation, what is the potential to do so? Similarly, what are the potential gains from agro-processing for industrialisation in the region, including through regional value chains in agro-processing?

Other issues which will be explored, include the impact of climate change and how does regional industrial development approach the transition, adaptation and mitigation of climate change? What approach is being taken to green industries that could potentially support this transition? How does technological change impact on the types of industries and approach to industrialisation in the region? South Africa has become a highly financialised economy, how has this impacted on the region? Has it supported industrialisation and growth, or had adverse outcomes? And, finally, the role of industrial policy in regional economies, and regional industrial policy.

Part 1 of the Forum will take place on 28 and 29 July and part 2 on 4 and 5 August 2020. Additional details of the Forum can be found on www.forum.tips.org.za

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