

# Nigeria to host high level policy dialogue on Science, Technology & Innovation and the African transformation agenda

Addis Ababa, 20 February 20, 2014 (ECA) - The UN Economic Commission for Africa in collaboration with the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria through the Ministry of Communications Technology (FMCT), and Ministry of Science and Technology (FMST) will hold a high level policy dialogue on the theme: *Science, Technology, and Innovation and the African Transformation Agenda*, in May 2014 in Abuja. The dialogue was announced this week by President Goodluck Jonathan of Nigeria during the inauguration ceremony of the National Research and Innovation Council (NRIC), of which he is Chairman.

The meeting will bring together high level policy makers and experts from across the continent in the areas of science, technology and innovation to discuss and deepen understanding on how technology and innovations can be deliberately and purposefully applied to accelerate the African transformation agenda, improve the life chances of Africans and enhance the competitiveness of Africa's economies.

According to the organizers, the objective is to bring together policy makers, technology and innovation leaders from academia, the private and public sectors, the international development community and other opinion makers and leaders (from within and outside Africa) to examine collectively the directions in which science, technology and innovation can be carefully and deliberately deployed to support and accelerate the African transformation agenda and contribute to agreed societal priorities.

More precisely, the high level policy dialogue will aim to:

- a. Surface the leading issues hindering the development, transfer and diffusion of technologies in Africa to identify short term, medium term and long-term actions to address them;
- b. Contribute to a deeper understanding of how new technologies and innovation can contribute much more effectively to the transformation of Africa's economies and the impediments to harnessing technologies and innovation for Africa's development;

- c. Facilitate dialogue between African policy makers, researchers and leading academics, the private sector and stakeholders working on Science and Technology Innovation on the pathways and modalities to accelerate the transfer to, and development and diffusion of technologies in Africa;
- d. Build sustainable partnerships among participants to advance STI policy making in Africa in general and the promotion of the application of technology to deal with Africa's multifarious challenges;
- e. Propose a set of ideas and issues that will guide and inform ECA's future programme of work;
- f. Result in a set of recommendations for consideration and adoption by African countries, their regional organizations and institutions, development partners and the international community.

**Note to editors:**

It is generally agreed that Africa's growth has been largely commodity driven and that total factor productivity growth remains low or an insignificant contributor. Securing the growth momentum and translating growth into transformation require enhancing the growth of productivity in all sectors of the economy of African countries - from agricultural to manufacturing to services. This requires that science, technology and innovation be deliberately and carefully applied. Furthermore, the potential return on investment in science, technology and innovations in regard to poverty reduction and wealth creation, industrialization, improvements in health outcomes etc. in Africa is high.

**The dialogue will comprise 8 sessions which will address the following topics:**

- Technology and Innovation in the African Union's Agenda 2063
- Africa, the UN post-2015 development agenda and the role of science, technology and innovation
- ICT and Sustainable Development
- Technology, innovations and governance: Open government, open government data, and open data
- Enabling national environment for science, technology, and innovation policies – (discussion of country experiences)
- Better measurement: R&D Data for decision making
- Urbanization - Enhancing the efficiency of African Cities as centres of innovation
- Youth and Innovation - Realizing the African transformation agenda

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