

# Tribert Rujugiro Ayabatwa Wishes the African Business Community a Successful 2021 Intra-African Trade Fair

TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA, July 23, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Tribert Rujugiro Ayabatwa](#) is a keen supporter of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) which makes Africa a single market across 55 countries, aimed at boosting trade and investment. Ayabatwa insists that AfCFTA can only bear fruits via robust networking among African and global business communities. The Intra-African Trade Fair which provides a platform for businesses to network must be encouraged in this important mission.

Launched on January 1, 2021, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is a game-changer. Currently, Africa accounts for just 2 percent of global trade. And only 17% of African exports are intra-continental, compared with 59% for Asia and 68% for Europe. The potential for transformation across Africa is therefore significant. The AfCFTA pact will create the largest free trade area in the world measured by the number of countries participating. Connecting 1.3 billion people across 55 countries with a combined gross domestic product (GDP) valued at \$3.4 trillion, the AfCFTA pact comes at a time when much of the world is turning away from cooperation and free trade.

According to Ayabatwa, turning the AfCFTA into reality calls for Africans doing sustained business across borders. Otherwise, the AfCFTA will not deliver the goods. Hence, the importance of the Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF) that actively promotes business networking. As Ayabatwa explains:

“First and foremost, doing business across African borders will require a substantial number of businessmen and businesswomen. Second, meaningful cross-border networking has to take businesses to the next level. It is in this sense that I congratulate the stakeholders of IATF. Besides showcasing products, IATF facilitates networking opportunities among African and global businesses as well as African policymakers - all ready to make a deal. It such networking initiatives that will turn the African Continental Free Trade Area into reality.”

The second Intra-African Trade Fair will take place in Durban, South Africa, from 15 to 21 November 2021. The importance of this event is self-evident, taking place 11 months after the formal launch of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Tribert Rujugiro Ayabatwa is a pan-African industrialist. He is the founder and controlling shareholder of the [Pan African Tobacco Group](#), Africa's largest indigenous manufacturer of tobacco products. The company, which in 2018 celebrated its 40th year of operations, manufactures cigarettes in nine African countries, namely, Angola, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and the United Arab Emirates. Ayabatwa is also one of Africa's leading philanthropists. He has helped communities uplift themselves in fields such as education, food security, afforestation, and water access. Through his non-profit foundation, Ayababwa strives to help young people to gain the practical engineering experience required to enter the job market in Africa. More recently, Ayabatwa assisted governments in the battle against the Covid19 pandemic by contributing medical equipment and foodstuffs during the lockdowns.

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