



**Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance – University of Cape Town,
South African Research Chair in Industrial Development – University of
Johannesburg, and
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)**

invite you to a Webinar:

**How can transformative industrialization and implementation of the AfCFTA
stimulate Africa’s sustainable development post COVID-19?**

Date: Thursday July 29th, 2021

Time: 16:00-18:00 (CEST)

Register at:

Covid-19 has exposed the underlying weaknesses, asymmetries and contradictions in our world, our economies and our societies. A number of African economies recorded robust growth and some promising signs of industrialization prior to the Covid-19 crisis, but this progress risks being undermined by the ongoing health and economic effects of the pandemic.

Covid-19 has made manifest the need for African countries to accelerate structural transformation to increase their resilience to economic, health and environmental shocks and take advantage of regional and international export opportunities. As part of this, local and regional production of pharmaceuticals and medical devices is important for the resilience and responsiveness of health systems. African countries are overwhelmingly dependent on external suppliers for their essential health needs, importing 99% of vaccines and about 94% of their pharmaceutical needs. Only ten countries in Africa have some pharmaceutical manufacturing capacity, albeit chiefly in the “filling and finishing” of imported active pharmaceutical ingredients for transnational pharmaceutical companies. Building manufacturing capabilities

in vaccines, pharmaceuticals and healthcare, especially in Africa, is essential for Africa's health resilience and health security, for saving millions of lives and contributing to meeting Africa's own development goals set out in Agenda 2063 and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Notwithstanding Covid-19's devastating impact on Africa's economy, there have been some positive responses which offer valuable lessons and cause for optimism. These include (i) some repurposing of existing capacity to ramp up pharmaceutical production and the early stage of joint ventures to produce vaccines; (ii) increased attention to the opportunities afforded by the industrialisation of agriculture and agro-processing products; and (iii) increased use of technological advances.

The AfCFTA holds promise for building regional integration and cooperation in Africa. It could also facilitate and stimulate manufacturing capabilities in Africa – and regional value chains. However, manufacturing capabilities will not emerge automatically but require purposive industrial and infrastructure policies. Africa needs to implement the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) in an inclusive manner that prioritises the development of industrial capabilities and infrastructure, and invests in the institutions needed to facilitate trade across the continent.

Whether in the context of meeting the SDGs, tackling the climate emergency, rewiring supply chains in response to the Covid-19 crisis or leveraging new digital technologies, industrial policy has returned to centre stage of debates over the direction of national development strategies. International organizations have become more open to discussing industrial policy in developing countries. There is now wide acceptance – across a broad spectrum of economists and policy makers – on the relevance, desirability, and practicability of industrial policy.

This webinar is the third of a four-part webinar series. The purpose of this series of webinars is to assess what this new consensus means and involves, particularly for developing countries. Tapping into the insights of the recently published *Oxford Handbook of Industrial Policy*, the webinar series will explore the challenges and potential of structural transformation, with a particular focus on building greater security of supply and resilience in pharmaceuticals and medical devices.

PROGRAMME

Session I:

Introduction:

- **Richard Kozul-Wright**, Director, Division on Globalization and Development Strategies, UNCTAD.

Moderator

- **Carlos Lopes**, Honorary Professor, Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance, University of Cape Town.

Guest Speakers:

- **Wamkele Mene**, Secretary General of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), Accra, Ghana.
- **Arkebe Oqubay**, Ethiopian Senior Minister, Professor of Practice at the University of Johannesburg and an Overseas Development Institute Distinguished Fellow Ethiopia.
- **Dani Rodrik**, Ford Foundation Professor of International Political Economy, Harvard University

Question & Answer Session

Session II:

Panelists:

- **Jomo Kwame Sundaram**, Senior Adviser at the Khazanah Research Institute, Visiting Fellow at the Initiative for Policy Dialogue, Columbia University, and Adjunct Professor at the International Islamic University, Malaysia.
- **Fiona Tregenna**, South African Research Chair in Industrial Development and Professor of Economics at the University of Johannesburg
- **Kirti Narsai**, Senior Research Fellow, Nelson Mandela School of Public Governance, University of Cape Town.
- **Nimrod Zalk**, Industrial Development Policy and Strategy Advisor at the South African Department of Trade and Industry

Question & Answer Session

Closing remarks