

# Made in Africa conference aims to drive Pan-African prosperity

The inaugural [Made in Africa Conference and Expo](#), a large virtual gathering and showcase for African buyers and sellers, will take place on 13 and 14 April 2021. Hosted by Smart Procurement World and Sapics, two key roleplayers in the procurement and supply chain management sphere, the event promises to bring together purchasing decision-makers, policymakers, investors and businesses from across the continent.



His Excellency Prof. Dr. Ambassador Tal Edgars, group executive chairman of GBSH Consult Group Worldwide

Made in Africa will feature a two-day, high-impact online programme that will enable delegates to learn, engage and do business.

## Buy Africa for Africa

Business leaders speaking at the launch of the inaugural Made in Africa conference, drove home the message that with the Covid-19 pandemic pushing African nations to develop local solutions to the continent's challenges, the time has come to rally around the Pan-African agenda, to collaborate and leverage the unique and diverse skills and resources of each region in Africa to drive growth and prosperity across the continent.

It is time for an unwavering commitment from all to buy Africa for Africa, to help grow local industries, entrepreneurial skills and "support our own" to grow and compete internationally.



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Speaking at the launch, John Karani, chairman of Kenya's Institute of Supplies Management, affirmed his belief in the transformational power of the event's theme, 'Buy Africa for Africa'. "Made in Africa is an initiative whose time is long overdue. Africa has so much – a beautiful climate, great natural resources, mineral wealth and fertile agricultural land. It is undoubtedly the world's richest continent. It is time to rally around this Pan-African call.

“If we can all collaborate and leverage our God-given resources, with each territory focusing on what they do best, imagine what Africa can achieve. We have both the consumption power and the buying power in Africa. With an initiative like Made in Africa supporting and developing our homegrown industries, businesses that start as cottage industries could quickly scale up to become global players with the support of fellow nations,” Karani said.

He shared the virtual stage at the Made in Africa launch with African business leaders from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Zambia, including his Kenyan Institute of Supplies Management colleague, acting CEO James Kaloki.

## Changing Africa’s trajectory

In his address to stakeholders, His Excellency Prof. Dr. Ambassador Tal Edgars, group executive chairman of GBSH Consult Group Worldwide, harked back to former President Thabo Mbeki’s powerful ‘I am an African’ speech in 1996, and appealed for support for Made in Africa to change Africa’s trajectory.

Kalaluka Kangulu, senior supply chain executive: international trade and compliance at Bayer, Zambia, discussed the advantages of buying Africa for Africa. “If we embrace the Made in Africa movement, all revenue generated from within will be spent within Africa. The risks of complex global supply chains will be mitigated. Working together, we will even be able to uplift and empower African nations and economies that are weak right now,” he said.

Susan Karcher, founder of the African Circular Economy Network, echoed this. “In the context of the Africa Free Trade Agreement and opening Africa to more intercontinental trade, the Made in Africa initiative is much needed now,” she commented.



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## Healthcare in Africa

Healthcare in Africa will be on the programme at the Made in Africa Conference and Expo. At the launch event, speakers Azuka Okeke and Elmarie Goosen highlighted the importance of the Made in Africa movement to improve the availability of life-saving health commodities in Africa. Okeke, who is the CEO of Africa Resource Center (ARC) in Nigeria, lamented the fact that Africa remains dependent on imported health commodities.

“Even though we have the highest HIV burden in Africa, we still import 80% of ARVs. Made in Africa and the drive to buy Africa for Africa resonates with me because it echoes the ARC mandate, which is to improve the supply of health commodities. To bridge the gap in the availability of life-saving commodities in Africa, we need to boost domestic pharmaceutical businesses by engaging them in local manufacture,” she said.

Goosen, who is the founder of Clinic with Purpose in South Africa, said that she was excited about the opportunities that Made in Africa offered SMEs (small and medium enterprises) to reach out across the continent and expand their horizons. “There is no time like now for Africa to unite and change the narrative, to work together to grow Africa’s economy by enabling African businesses,” she enthused.

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