

## **Africa STEM Alliance (ASA) launched at WEF 2018 to boost African industrialization and development**

### ***President Gurib-Fakim calls for increased investment in science and technology to shape a new future for Africa***

**Davos, January 24, 2018** - Her Excellency Mrs. Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, President of the Republic of Mauritius, has just announced the creation of the African STEM Alliance (ASA), on the occasion of annual Hinduja lunch organized at the World Economic Forum in Davos. Launched with the support of the AfroChampions Initiative, this project aims to strengthen African knowledge and skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, to create a stronger ecosystem of tech and industrial players capable of accelerating Africa's development.

The ASA will be structured around three pillars. The first priority is to work with partners to develop more scientific and engineering talent. The deepening and growth of Africa's STEM industry, supported by effective R&D public-public partnerships, is the second focus; on that front, the objective is to offer African young people opportunities at home once they are graduates and stop the brain drain, while encouraging local innovation for the benefit of African economies. Finally, the ASA will serve as platform to mobilize governments, donors and multinationals to improve investment in African research, expertise centers and major tech and skill intensive industrial projects.

For Her Excellency Mrs. Gurib-Fakim, *"the rationale behind the creation of the ASA is twofold. First and foremost, we must quickly close the African technical and scientific gap, otherwise our continent will no longer be able to successfully compete with other regions in the world. Then, and most importantly, we must build on our successes to date to leverage promising economic sectors. Fintech solutions in Kenya or Nigeria, drug production capabilities in South Africa, renewable training centers in Zambia or Burkina Faso bring unquestionable evidence that Africans can succeed in STEM. What we need is a clear ambition across the continent to multiply these initiatives - and make Africa attractive again for our youth."*

Special Advisor to the AfroChampions Initiative, Dr. Edem Adzogenu said: *"Industrialization is the challenge of Africa. We need to create tools to advance Africa and make it a driver of global growth, including creating African industrial champions"*. Stressing that the ASA would bring *"unique opportunities in terms of cross-country and regional cooperation, particularly between emerging regions"*, Mr. Gopichand Hinduja, Co-Chairman of the Hinduja Group, highlighted that *"the Hinduja group is committed to Africa and believes in its potential"*.

His Excellency Mr Alpha Condé, President of the Republic of Guinea and President of the African Union, His Excellency Mr Emmerson Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, His Excellency Mr Hassan Ali Khayre, Prime Minister of the Somali Democratic, His Excellency Dr Vincent Biruta, Minister for Environment and Natural

Resources of the Republic of Rwanda, as well as official delegates from the Republic of South Africa and the Republic of Angola attended the 2018 Hinduja lunch and brought their official support to the project. The ASA's 2018 agenda will focus on a major advocacy and fundraising campaign to support ASA-qualified projects. Her Excellency Mrs. Gurib-Fakim has started initial consultations to identify, with African delegations, first projects eligible for the ASA label, and to invite companies and recognized experts to join the council of the alliance which will be presented by end March 2018.

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### **About the Africa STEM Alliance**

Launched in January 2018, the Africa STEM Alliance (ASA) is a pan-African public-private initiative designed to be a catalyst for accelerating Africa's STEM capability building and STEM-competitiveness. Under the leadership of Her Excellency Mrs Ameenah Gurib-Fakim, President of the Republic of Mauritius, the ASA aims to promote and encourage STEM Education and talent development, STEM entrepreneurship and industry mobilization and STEM public policies and public investment. As an advocacy platform, the ASA brings together industry representatives and corporations, public and private donors and investors, governments, education organizations, research and R&D centers; by mobilizing African and foreign expertise, the ASA seeks to accelerate the creation of a genuine STEM ecosystem on the continent. One of the flagships projects is the creation of a STEM fund to support R&D commercialization and STEM start-ups.

### **About Hinduja Group**

The saga of the Hinduja Group started in Sind, the cradle of the Indus Valley Civilization, where more than 5,000 years ago, the human race learnt its first lessons in organized business and banking. Parmanand Deepchand Hinduja, a young entrepreneur from the fabled town of Shikarpur, realized early in life that business was all about spotting opportunities, and seizing them wherever they surfaced. Today, the Hinduja Group has become one of the largest diversified groups in the world spanning all the continents. The Group employs over 70,000 people. and has offices in many key cities of the world and all the major cities in India.

<http://www.hindujagroup.com/default.html>

### **About the AfroChampions Initiative**

The AfroChampions Initiative is a set of innovative public-private partnerships and flagship programs designed to galvanize African resources and institutions to support the emergence and success of African private sector multinational champions in the regional and global spheres. The Initiative, driven by the AfroChampions Organization, was founded by the advisory firm Konfidants; and is Co-Chaired by President Thabo Mbeki and Mr. Aliko Dangote, President and CEO of Dangote Group. The Initiative is headquartered in Accra, Ghana, and works with regional and global partners and governments, with the support of other corporate and institutional partners including ADS

Group, the Djondo Fellowship, Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Library and Thabo Mbeki Foundation.

[www.afrochampions.com](http://www.afrochampions.com)

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**Information and media requests :**

Presidency of the Republic of Mauritius : TBC

Hinduja Group : TBC

AfroChampions Initiative: [ae@afrochampion.com](mailto:ae@afrochampion.com) + 33 6 46 4177 84