

# CHINA – AFRICA ECONOMIC FORUM

On the first week of July, almost 1000 business leaders, private sector investors and government economic officials from across Africa and China met in the first Africa Economic Forum and Exhibition to discuss the increasing importance of public-private partnerships to delivering sustainable infrastructures that can advance progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The event also explored practical ways to accelerate economic opportunities and boost partnerships across Africa.



The Forum titled “Africa-China Sustainable Cooperation on Economic Structural Transformation: Towards the 2030 Agenda,” came immediately after the formal inauguration of the Djibouti International Free Trade Zone, on 5 July 2018 by HE Ismail Guelleh President of Djibouti, where the president has also given Djibouti Port Community System (**DPCS**) officially a green light to start operating. A project that will use technology to transform Djibouti into a logistics hub of excellence.

Heads of States from neighbouring Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia and Sudan also attended the inauguration and emphasized their support to this initiative, which is expected to impact economic growth in East Africa and beyond.

The Forum which provided a space to reflect upon and debate those impacts, was co-organized by the Governments of Djibouti and China; the Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority (DPFZA); the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade; and the Made in Africa Initiative; in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).



In its first iteration this year, the forum focused on the recently developed infrastructure in Djibouti—the outcome of a successful public private partnership between China and Djibouti. It also looked at how the African continent can benefit from the improved logistics network passing through Djibouti to increase economic competitiveness, productivity, industrialization and job creation.

For **DPCS** it was an opportunity at the right time to participate in such events in its time of launching and introduce its service to its potential clients.

Following this year's success, the organizers plan to make the Forum an annual event, hosted in Djibouti, focusing each year on a specific theme related to the 2030 Agenda, and the economic cooperation between African countries and China. The Forum intends to provide a platform for discussion on economic cooperation and trade opportunities between the two economic blocks to enhance industrialization and investment for sustainable development.