



PEACE, PROSPERITY AND
REGIONAL INTEGRATION

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

IGAD Applauds the Launching of the Largest Free Trade Zone in Africa by Djibouti

10-07-2018, Djibouti (Djibouti): The Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in a congratulatory message sent on July 09 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Djibouti welcomed and applauded the “*Republic of Djibouti on the launching of the largest Free Trade Zone in Africa on 5th July 2018*”

The message further continued as follows: “*This is a clear demonstration of regional economic integration that the Member States have been working towards.*”

Estimated to handle over USD 7 billion worth of trade in the next two years, the Free Trade Zone will house manufacturing, warehouse facilities, an export processing area and service centres that will create over 15,000 job opportunities. As H.E. President Ismael Omar Guelleh stated during the launch, the Free Trade Zone is a place of hope for thousands of young jobseekers.

The importance of this Free Trade Zone extends beyond the IGAD region to the rest of the African continent as was well articulated by H.E. President Kagame of Rwanda who noted that it will not only serve Djibouti but wider regions of the continent. This was also echoed by the Prime Minister of Ethiopia and Chair of IGAD, H.E. Abiy Ahmed, the President of Somalia, H.E. Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, the President of Sudan, H.E. Omar Al Bashir, and the African Union Commission Chair, Moussa Faki Mahamat, who graced the launch occasion.

The IGAD Secretariat is proud of this important milestone in regional integration and associates with it as it contributes towards the realisation of the aspirations of the ongoing discussions on the IGAD Free movement protocol and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).”

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