

**8<sup>th</sup> Africa Kaizen Annual Conference**  
**9-10 October 2023**  
**ETHIOPIA**

**COMMUNIQUE**

**COMMUNIQUE OF THE EIGHTH AFRICA KAIZEN ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
(AKAC 2023) HELD FROM 9 TO 10 October 2023 IN ETHIOPIA**

We, the Heads of African Kaizen institutes, National Productivity Centres, Africa Kaizen Initiative (AKI) Potential Centres of Excellence (COEs); Representatives of the private sector and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs); Representatives of the Government of Ethiopia, Kaizen professionals and consultants from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Japan; the organizing and partner institutions; The African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), as well as our distinguished invitees:

1. **Express** our sincere gratitude to the Government of Ethiopia, AUDA-NEPAD, and JICA for organizing the Eighth African Kaizen Annual Conference (AKAC) and the African Kaizen Awards (AKA) 2023.
2. **Acknowledge** the pertinence and timeliness of the theme of the 8<sup>th</sup> AKAC 2023 in contributing to the realization of Africa's industrial transformation, the implementation plan of Agenda 2063 and the Accelerated Industrial Development Plan for Africa (AIDA).
3. **Acknowledge** the need to work in a harmonised approach, nationally, regionally, and continentally to enhance Kaizen/ Quality and Productivity Improvement (K/QPI) activities contributing to African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
4. **Acknowledge** the principles of K/QPI can be effectively utilized in special economic zones (SEZs) / industrial parks (IPs) according to various country case studies raised in the dedicated panel session.
5. **Recognize** the critical role that governments, regional institutions, pan African financial institutions, partners, regulatory bodies, and the private sector, especially MSMEs, play in driving and improving competitiveness and productivity.
6. **Affirm** our commitment to promoting the newly initiated Strategy for Africa Kaizen Initiative Cluster Strategy 2024-2030 enhancing the performance of AKI-AP 2024-2027 and its contribution to achieving the main goals of the AU Agenda 2063.
7. **Re-affirm** that KAIZEN/QPI helps to foster competitive industries, develop technical and managerial skills, expand investment by generating additional revenue and profits, and thereby creating more job opportunities.
8. **Note** the progress made by AKI Member States, including the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and the outstanding performing companies nominated for AKA 2023. Further note

the progress made by some AU Member States outstanding and excellent performing companies nominated for AKA 2023 Awards by implementing AKI-AP.

9. **Note** the pertinence of accelerating AKI to enhance quality and productivity of African economies and further contribute to inclusive and sustainable development in Africa;

**10. Agree to**

11.1 Commit at all levels in implementing the outputs and recommendations of the 5 WGs' with a particular focus on expanding the effective engagement of all relevant stakeholders.

11.2 In consultation with Working Group 4, an African country will be identified and the name of the host country will be duly communicated. The appropriate candidate will first test the transition process.

11.3 Promote cooperation and exchange of information, knowledge, and best practices at all levels, regional and continental, by strengthening the capacity of K/QPI implementing agencies and further enhancing the capacity of existing potential AKI-COEs

11.4 Encourage governments on the creation of new AKI-COEs in areas where it is none existence to expand the implementation of AKI throughout the continent.

11.5 Foster research on the successes, challenges, and outcomes of K/QPI endeavours in the manufacturing industry.

11.6 Motivate and encourage enterprises to apply K/QPI and participate in the African Kaizen Awards organized annually by AUDA-NEPAD and JICA.

**11. Recommend**

12.1 Participating countries to further accelerate their commitments to implement the newly JICA initiated AKI Cluster Strategy and AKI-AP 2024-2027 at all levels and incorporate them into their national quality and productivity improvement policy frameworks with adequate resource allocation to facilitate its implementation and sharing best practices and lessons learned at all levels across Africa.

12.2 AUDA-NEPAD, in collaboration with partners, including Pan-African Productivity Association (PAPA) in particular, to strengthen its role in advocating and coordinating the implementation of AKI Cluster Strategy and AKI-AP 2024-2027.

12.3 JICA to continue its support for the effective implementation of AKI 2017-2027 framework in line with the TICAD-8 recommendations, particularly regarding the importance of investing in industrial human resources.

- 12.4 AUDA-NEPAD and JICA to continue communicating and coordinating development partners in Africa to facilitate their participation in AKI, scale-up and expanding K/QPI in the continent, reduce duplication of similar QPI activities through promoting the newly initiated AKI Cluster Strategy for AKI 2024-2030.
- 12.5 Participating companies to encourage and empower their managers and workers to implement K/QPI.
- 12.6 K/QPI Institutions to give due attention to MSMEs, strengthen their networks and relationships with relevant local institutions, the private sector, associations, educational institutions, to build and expand local capabilities.
- 12.7 K/QPI Institutions to establish a convention system (including at company and national levels) as part of AKI.
- 12.8 K/QPI practitioners and professionals in Africa to further strengthen their commitment to implement AKI-AP 2024-2027, share the knowledge and experiences gained at Capacity Enhancement Program (CEP) I 2023 to be held immediately after the AKAC 2023 to their management, fellow consultants and stakeholders, and show more tangible results to rally more momentum and partnerships at all levels.
- 12.9 All the stakeholders, to sustain AKI achievements attained so far and expand within the AKI-AP 2024-2027 and beyond.
- 12.10 The next AKAC 2024 will be announced in due course and we encourage increasing participation of KAIZEN/QPI institutions, international and regional organizations, development partners, researchers, prominent professionals and practitioners from all corners of the world.

**Done in Addis Ababa on 10 October 2023**

**Delegates of the AKAC 2023**