

**The African Regional Ministerial Meeting**

**25 March 2012**

**ECA Headquarters**

**Addis Ababa, Ethiopia,**

**“Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as Drivers of Productive  
Capacity and Job Creation”**

**UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)**

**in collaboration with the UN Economic Commission for Africa  
(ECA) and the International Labour Organization (ILO)**

**Discussant**

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(AU) and UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)**

Honourable



Out-of school rate for girls is likely to cause lower education achievement. Alternative and after-school hours programmes are necessary to complement school curricula and to maximize children's potential for a successful transition from school to work. Completion of primary education is the springboard to a quality secondary education, which in turn prepares adolescent and young people for decent work. Secondary education content can expand an adolescent's ability to function as actor for development. Investment in preparing girls for secondary and university education is important.

Adolescents need a wide range of skills to be prepared for finding gainful employment. Increasingly skills-based economy and vocational or technical training, providing a second chance to children, victims of child labour or those who have emerged from school without the knowledge and skills they need to secure decent work, contribute to sustainable enterprise development and enable the children to fulfill their greatest potential contribution to their families, communities and development of their country.

Honourable Ministers,