The United Nations General Assembly has adopted a resolution (A/RES/75/318) proclaiming 7 October as the International Day for Cotton, recognizing its vital importance.

As part of the celebration of World Cotton Day 2021, the Secretariats of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Trade Centre (ITC) are organizing a webinar to examine the status and potential of African value chains for cotton, textile, and the clothing sectors.

This event will explore the trade potential and business opportunities associated from further regional integration and cotton value addition on the continent so as to enable African countries to reap enhanced benefits from local cotton production and to pursue their social, economic and development objectives, while taking into consideration the specific cultural and fashion preferences of consumers on the continent.

AGENDA PART I - WTO

15:00 - 15:10 Opening Speeches
Mr. Jean-Marie Paugam, Deputy Director-General, WTO
Ms. Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Executive Director, ITC
H.E. Mr. Dieudonné Sougouri, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the WTO, and Coordinator of the Cotton-4 Group

15:10 - 16:15 “African cotton & textile value chains – a contemporary focus and emerging trends”, by Mr. Navdeep Singh Sodhi, Partner of Gherzi Textil Organization Zurich

AGENDA PART II - ITC

16:20 – 16:30 Opening remarks
Mr. Matthias Knappe, Programme Manager, Fibres, Textiles and Clothing

16:30 - 18:00 Investing in African cotton means investing in sustainability
Potential and practical ways to develop a green regional cotton to clothing supply chain to stimulate regional and intercontinental trade

Panellists:
- Mr. Kanwar Usman, Head of Textile Innovation - ICAC
- Tanya Aucamp, founder - Social Weaver Communications (PTY), South Africa
- Mrs. Inna Modja, African Designer and Women’s Rights & Climate Activist
- Mr. Jasminder Bedhi, Former President - International Textile Manufacturers Association
- Mrs. Natasja Ambrosio, Sustainability Executive - Mr Price Group Limited (South African retailer)
- Mrs. Julia Hughes, President - US Fashion Industry Association

The panel will explore the possibilities emerging under the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) and how to support and reinforce efforts to increase African regional trade along the cotton to clothing value chain. The panel will also discuss the possibilities that a regional supply chain offers to expand T&C exports to the world, while adding value to African cotton. The panel will thus look at:

- Investing in African cotton means investing in sustainability: The business case for African cotton and cotton products that have lower environmental footprints than cotton from other regions
- Connecting the existing cotton production with textile facilities on the continent
- How to build on African creativity and a thriving artisanal sector
- Market potential for green African ready-made products on the continent
- Emerging market potential for green products made entirely in Africa

Translation: English, French & Spanish
Link: https://bit.ly/3kmEJAT