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For Immediate Release*

SAHELINNOV

Innovation for Sustainable Development in the Sahel by Startups

Niamey, February 22-23, 2017

In order to meet the colossal challenges faced by the Sahel, using the dynamics of start-up development, the SahelInnov Network organizes the SahelInnov forum on 22 and 23 February 2017 in Niamey.

The SahelInnov Forum will contribute to the scaling-up of innovations with strong socio-economic impact by addressing the threats of the Sahel region, such as demographic issues, climate change, human development, job creation, in particular for young people and women. SahelInnov will address appropriate solutions to these challenges, which require deep changes of economies and societies, with positive values for basis and innovation as a lever.

Under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Niger, SahelInnov 2017 will gather a hundred actors in the Sahelian entrepreneurial ecosystem: entrepreneurs, state representatives, academics, support structures for entrepreneurship, investors / donors.

Over two days, the forum will be marked by numerous activities around the Sahelian startups with seven highlights:

- 1) Launch of the "SahelInnov" label,
- 2) launch of the "SahelInnovBoost" accelerator program,
- 3) "PITCH" contest,
- 4) Digital applications for development in Sahel contest,
- 5) Exhibition of the 20 best start-up solutions for the Sahel
- 6) Holding of the steering committee of the Africa Innovation Program (PAI) and integration of the OIF
- 7) Workshops on the startups development in the Sahel.

Initiated by the Incubator Center of SME in Niger (CIPMEN), the SahelInnov network brings together the main actors in the entrepreneurial ecosystem of seven Sahelian countries. The official launch of the network activities will take place at the forum. **This initiative is supported by international personalities such as Michaëlle Jean, General Secretary of the International Organization of la Francophonie (OIF); Jacques Attali, President of Positive Planet; And Ibrahim Mayaki, CEO of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and Jean-Michel Severino, President and CEO**

of I&P.

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