



## **85 think tanks build bridges in support to African development**

Marrakesh, 4 May 2016: With 85 think tanks from 45 countries attending, the 2016 Africa Think Tank Conference succeeded in bringing together more than 120 participants to discuss issues pertinent to both think tanks and African countries as a whole. Gathered in Marrakesh (Morocco), on 2-4 May, participants have taken up the challenge goal of bridging the gap impairing the relationship of African think tanks, covering a wide range of topics.

Discussions covered the preservation and development of African think tanks, including key aspects such as governance and capacity building, independence and financial sustainability, strategic communication, partnerships and cross-fertilization with other think tanks, governments and NGOs.

Participants also discussed how think tanks can help African policy-makers, influencers and populations face a number of common challenges such as fighting climate change, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals or ensuring countries benefit from free trade agreements, especially the CFTA (Africa's Continental Free Trade Agreement). Think tanks can do so by helping countries improve their data collection capacity, methodologies and indicators, providing their negotiators with adequate training and tools.

The Africa Think Tank Conference 2016 was jointly organized by the OCP Policy Center, the Economic Commission for Africa, and the Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program of the University of Pennsylvania (TTCSP) under the theme: "Building a Sustainable and Secure Future for the People and Institutions of Africa." This event was successful in encouraging the exchange of ideas and perspectives as well as the building of strong ties between a diversified group of African think tanks.

For more information about this event, please visit : [www.ocppc.ma](http://www.ocppc.ma) or follow us on Twitter (@OCPPolicyCenter; @CEA\_ANcoms and @TTCSP).

### **Note to the editors**

*The Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program (TTCSP, [www.gotothinktank.com](http://www.gotothinktank.com)) at the Lauder Institute of the University of Pennsylvania aims to raise the capacity of think tanks at the national, regional and global level to better serve policy makers and the public. TTCSP conducts research on the relationship between think tanks, politics and public policy and supports a global network of about 7000 think tanks.*

*Established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1958, the Economic Commission for Africa ([www.uneca.org](http://www.uneca.org)) aims to promote the economic and social development of its 54 member States, foster intra-regional integration and promote international cooperation for Africa's development.*

*OCP Policy Center ([www.ocppc.ma](http://www.ocppc.ma)) is a Moroccan think tank striving to contribute to an enriched reflection on key economic and international relations issues, from a Southern perspective. OCPPC provides a meaningful policy-making contribution in areas such as Agriculture, Environment and Food Security, Economic and Social Development, Commodity Economics and Finance, Geopolitics and International Relations.*