President Paul Kagame has emphasized the importance of promoting trade among women and youth, as it significantly contributes to Africa's economy.

He made this remark on Wednesday, October 9, 2024, during the opening of the second three-day conference of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Business Forum, known as Biashara Afrika, aimed at accelerating the implementation of the AfCTA.

The Head of State noted that many African women and youth operate small and medium-sized enterprises, which play a crucial role in the continent's economy. He urged leaders and stakeholders in the business sector to support them.

"Small and medium-sized enterprises should be prioritized because trade conducted by women and youth is vital for Africa's economy." He said. "This trade should not remain small or medium; it should be promoted."

President Kagame highlighted that building a common market in Africa cannot be achieved overnight, and while the necessary steps have been established, the implementation continues to face challenges.

He urged participants at the AfCFTA conference to continue collaborating as a means to achieve their commitments in promoting trade in Africa.

He said, "Together, there is nothing we cannot achieve."

This second meeting of the AfCFTA Business Forum, known as Biashara Afrika, which is being attended by over 1,200 people began on Wednesday, October 9, and will run until October 11, 2024.

Attendees include government leaders, private sector representatives, business organization representatives, investors, trade experts, and youth and women entrepreneurs.

Participants will discuss the goals set by Africa for trade, commerce, and investment, the progress made in their implementation, and the challenges faced, in order to expedite solutions to enhance trade and investment among member states of the African Union.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is the world's largest free trade area, connecting 54 countries of the African Union and various economic blocs.

So far, 47 countries have ratified the agreement, with Rwanda being among the first seven countries to initiate trade under it.

Rwanda aims to leverage AfCFTA to accelerate development, targeting an increase in exports from $3.5 billion to $7.3 billion.