

PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT

البرلمان الأفريقي



PARLEMENT PANAFRICAIN

PARLAMENTO PAN-AFRICANO

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RECOMMENDATION ON ACCELERATING THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA (AfCFTA): THE STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PAN AFRICAN PARLIAMENT

THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT,

CONSIDERING Article 17 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union, which establishes the Pan-African Parliament (PAP);

CONSIDERING ALSO Article 3 of the Protocol to the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community Relating to the Pan-African Parliament, and Rule 4 (a) of the Rules of Procedure of the Pan-African Parliament;

CONSIDERING FURTHER Chapter VI of the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (Abuja Treaty), devoted to the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment;

RECALLING Recommendation PAP.4/PL/Recom.02(III) of the Pan-African Parliament on the Free Movement of People and the new African Passport; Resolution PAP.4/PLN/RES/02/MAY.17 of the Pan-African Parliament on the Free Movement of People in Africa and the African Passport and Resolution On The African Continental Free Trade Area And The free movement of persons, right of residence and right of establishment (PAP.4/PLN/RES/03/MAY.18);

NOTING the presentations and submissions made during the Parliamentary Workshop for celebration of the African Union Theme of the Year 2023 as the year for “Acceleration of AfCFTA Implementation”, held in Midrand, on 22 – 23 May 2023;

RECALLING ALSO the African Union Agenda 2063, which envisions Africa as a continent where the free movement of people, capital, goods and services will significantly increase trade and investments amongst African countries and improve Africa's situation in global trade;

RECALLING FURTHER AU Decision *Ext/Assembly/AU/Dec.1(X)* adopted in March 2018, in Kigali, Rwanda on the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA);

NOTING WITH CONCERN the huge income inequalities and deepening poverty levels across the continent, which have lent fertile ground for social, economic and political instability, clandestine migrations and the use of unemployed and marginalised youth by armed and terrorist groups;

NOTING WITH APPRECIATION the adoption by the AU Assembly of the Protocol to the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community relating to Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment (“Protocol on Free Movement of Persons”) and its Draft Implementation Roadmap, in March 2018 in Kigali, Rwanda;

IN ACCORDANCE WITH Rule 5(b), (c) and (d) of the Rules of Procedure of the Pan-African Parliament, which empowers the PAP to, inter alia, organize debate, discuss, express an opinion, make recommendations and take resolutions on the objectives and on any matters relating to the African Union and its organs, Regional Economic Communities, Member States and their organs and institutions;

1. Establish legislative framework and institutional mechanism to accelerate the domestication and implementation of the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA);
2. Engage in robust advocacy in Member States to achieve full ratification of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA);
3. Establish a platform to articulate coherent guidelines for implementation of the operational instruments that will govern African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) such as Pan-African Payments and Settlements System (PAPSS) and adjustment Facility to respond to the challenges of short-term negative impact of the liberalization process on State Parties’ fiscal capacities;
4. Mobilize institutional processes in Member States for the ratification of the Protocols that are critical to the implementation of the AfCFTA and more particularly the Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence and Right of Establishment;
5. Sensitize Member States on the benefits of accelerating the implementation of African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), emphasise the long-term recovery and growth in member states, the impact on deeper integration in boosting incomes, increasing job creation and expedite investments;
6. Establish institutional mechanisms in Member States on value addition and encourage the development of an integrated and complementary African value chains to support

the commitment to transform Africa from a raw materials exporter to a producer of market-competitive value added products;

7. Deliberately facilitate youth, women and people with disabilities' access to trade information, services, affordable finance, ICT and markets opportunities;
8. Encourage the use of the African Trade Observatory to enhance the efficacy of the trade market and information intelligence on the continent and facilitate the transfer to the AfCFTA Secretariat;
9. Ensure that trade-related information from Member States and other sources, analysis focusing on emerging issues such as regional value chains and e-commerce, data obtained on the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation process and impact of the AfCFTA and the BIAT, trade-related information transmitted to the private sector and a database established for African trade and market access that is used to publish and disseminate information on intra-African trade are retained and owned by the African Union through the AfCFTA Secretariat;
10. Put in place a trade marketing framework which shall encourage and increase the local production and trade of goods produced in Africa; Set up mechanisms and strategies to put in place a trade related infrastructure to encourage the development of innovative, legal and financial mechanisms for multi-country infrastructural development projects;
11. Adopt legislation to ensure the implementation of a 40% procurement of goods and services in all AU member states in private sector development and resource mobilization Private sector development and resource mobilization;
12. Establish a platform that will facilitate the integration of the private sector in accelerating the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), develop institutional mechanisms for an improved private sector engagement, including Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) as well as women and youth;
13. Encourage a collaborative engagement with the Africa Business Council as an appropriate platform for policymakers, business and industry leaders, private sector stakeholders and investors to lay and consolidate the foundations for meaningful intra-African trade as well as stimulate intra-Africa investment. This is in recognition of the fact that while trade agreements were negotiated by governments, the private sector is the primary beneficiary and implementer of trade agreements;

14. Emphasize the need to implement a dedicated continental infrastructure network to facilitate free movement of goods, services and capital on the continent for the purpose of enhancing efficiency of -trade and transportation of goods;
15. Enforce the of harmonization measures pertaining to products and commodities within the Member States, such that the requirement for registering a given product across all African nations can be obviated upon its development;
16. Establish a continental fund for the purpose of interconnecting infrastructure throughout the African continent, with the primary objective of facilitating seamless transportation and fostering enhanced trade activities across the region;
17. Allocate a budget towards the establishment of an integrated high-speed rail network spanning the entirety of the African continent, with the express objective of expediting trade and transportation efficiency and regional integration;
18. Adopt an action plan aimed at ensuring comprehensive connectivity, within the digital transformation framework across the African continent in line with the AU Digital Transformation Strategy adopted by the AU Summit. This strategic initiative is imperative due to the pervasive nature of work that transcends the prevailing digital divide;
19. Enhance the capacity for legislative development with a focus on expedited implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement, while also identifying and addressing any existing regulatory gaps.

Adopted in Midrand, South Africa

23 May 2023