

2nd COORDINATION MEETING OF THE HEADS OF REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES (RECs) ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA

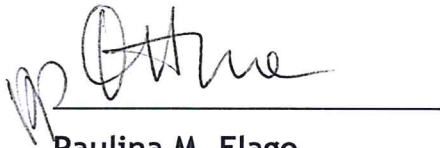
10 JUNE 2022, WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA

PRESS STATEMENT

1. The SACU Secretariat attended the 2nd Coordination Meeting of the Heads of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) on the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) that was held on 4–7 June 2022, in Arusha, Tanzania.
2. The Meeting deliberated on actionable strategies aimed at enhancing the effective implementation of the AfCFTA by drawing lessons from the implementation of RECs, Free Trade Areas and Customs Unions.
3. Currently, forty-three (43) countries have ratified the AfCFTA, whilst forty-six (46) of the fifty-five (55) countries have submitted tariff offers to the AfCFTA Secretariat, representing 85% of the African Union membership. Additionally, twenty-nine (29) of the tariff offers received have been technically verified and certified as having met the minimum threshold.
4. In SACU, all other Member States, with the exception of Botswana, have ratified the AfCFTA and work is ongoing to review the SACU initial offer of 5988 tariff lines, which represents 77 percent of the SACU tariff book, to comply with the adopted AfCFTA Modalities.
5. Furthermore, negotiations on the agreed Rules of Origin have reached a completion rate of 87.7% of the tariff lines. Trading documents such as *Origin Declaration Form*, *Certificate of Origin*, *Supplier's Declaration*, *Certified Declaration Form for Examination of Contents of Means of Transport*, and *Transit Plate*, have been finalised and 19 Member States have submitted their stamp impressions and authorised signatures for Rules of Origin. In this regard, the RECs have been urged to support the AfCFTA Secretariat by ensuring that their respective Member/Partner States promptly ratify the AfCFTA and gazette the Schedules of Tariff Concessions in line with the Ministerial Directive on the Application of the Provisional Schedules of Tariff Concessions.
6. The Meeting further considered the Draft Action Plan for collaboration between the AfCFTA Secretariat and the RECs on the implementation of the AfCFTA and agreed that the Action Plan shall serve as the basis for continued discussions between the parties. Furthermore, the Action Plan will inform the framework for collaboration and serve as a tool for resource mobilisation. The Meeting agreed on the need to mainstream the key actions and interventions of the Action Plan into the Work Programmes of the RECs.

7. The Meeting further noted the importance of resource mobilisation to the success of the AfCFTA and agreed on the need to mobilise the resources targeting initiatives that are impactful to unlock the production capacities within RECs and Africa at large. Therefore, domestic resource mobilisation will be explored to fund the AfCFTA programmes and a joint resource mobilisation strategy formulated.
8. On the margins of the Meeting, the Executive Secretary of SACU paid a courtesy call on the Executive Secretary of the East African Community (EAC), Mr. Peter Mathuki. The two leaders engaged on the need for collaboration on areas of mutual interest, including the finalisation of the negotiations between the EAC and SACU, under the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Arrangement.

Issued by:



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EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF SACU