



ONE TRADE AFRICA

NAIROBI DECLARATION

Trade Beyond COVID-19: Unpacking the AfCFTA for East African and Kenyan MSMEs

Preamble:

We the representatives of the Private Sector in Kenya and East Africa, have gathered for the **Trade Beyond COVID-19: Unpacking the AfCFTA for East Africa / Kenya MSMEs** hybrid forum Webinar/Seminar in Nairobi, Kenya on 19th November 2020, organized by the International Trade Centre (ITC) as part of its PARTNERSHIP FOR ONE TRADE AFRICA” setting our harmonized vision for Accelerating intra-African trade and ensuring that the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) a common area for Africa’s trade competitiveness and development directly benefits MSMEs, in particular women and youth-owned businesses as a commitment to implementing the African Union 2063 Agenda. We thank the Government and people of the Republic of Kenya through the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the ITC for their support in hosting this important event.

Countdown to AfCFTA

1. We affirm our commitment to the Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) entered into force on 30 May 2019, aimed at creating a single market for goods, services, facilitated by movement of persons in order to deepen the economic integration of the African continent and in accordance with the Pan African Vision of “An integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa” enshrined in Agenda 2063.
2. We appeal to our Kenyan and East African policymakers while considering input from the private sector to align both national and regional trade strategies while identifying and taking into consideration common trends and opportunities in the ongoing AfCFTA negotiations.
3. Recognising the importance of strengthening mechanisms for effective partnerships and coordination at national, regional and continental levels, we call on international and regional organizations, in particular the African Union, RECs, UN agencies such as ITC, UNCTAD, UNECA, regional development banks as well as bilateral and multilateral partners to offer and facilitate long term technical assistance, advisory services and training opportunities to women and youth led enterprises to effectively engage in the AfCFTA, increase learning opportunities

to export within the free trade area and shore up our small enterprises to expand their businesses to include e-commerce and green technology systems.

4. We task our policy makers to work towards ensuring that youth and women-led enterprises as well as vulnerable communities participate effectively in the public and private procurement process which is key to creating necessary demand for locally manufactured “Made in Africa” products as well as promoting technology based business start-ups.
5. We call upon our partners to facilitate the establishment a joint mechanism to support the development of regional value chains that will advocate for improved cross-border trade mechanisms and the increased inclusion of women and youth in adopting the latest trends in manufacturing and agri-business practices through global benchmarking to improve the production of value-added goods as well as services.
6. We count on existing trade promotion bodies to work towards increasing intra- African Trade by adequately sharing market information and market opportunities with the MSMEs.
7. We call for more Public-Private Sector Dialogue platforms to spur conducive business environment for public participation including youth and women organizations, as well as media engagement on trade policy issues and decision-making.
8. While leveraging on trade data readily available on digital platforms to gain advantage of the trade landscape in East Africa. We take note that the Africa Trade Observatory collects, analyses, and disseminates trade intelligence to policy makers and businesses as well as monitors intra-African trade flows.
9. We call for transfer of know –how, technology and best practices across the continent with a view of getting solutions that meet our needs and situation.
10. We adopt this Declaration and Call for Action and agree to refer it to the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) secretariat for consideration.