

**DECISION ON THE REPORT OF THE HIGH LEVEL AFRICAN  
TRADE COMMITTEE ON TRADE ISSUES  
Doc. Assembly/AU/13(XXIII)**

**The Assembly,**

1. **RECALLS** the Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.394(XVIII) on Boosting Intra-African Trade/Continental Free Trade Area taken on 30 January 2012 at its Eighteenth Ordinary Session;
2. **TAKES NOTE** of the Report of the High Level African Trade Committee (HATC) held on 25 June 2014 and endorses its recommendations;
3. With regard to the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement;
  - i) **REAFFIRMS** its commitment to the Doha Development Agenda and to its rapid completion in accordance with its development objectives;
  - ii) **ALSO REAFFIRMS** its commitment to all the decisions the Ministers took in Bali which are an important stepping stone towards the conclusion of the Doha Round;
  - iii) To this end **ACKNOWLEDGES** that the Trade Facilitation Agreement is an integral part of this process;
  - iv) **REITERATES** in this regard that assistance and support for capacity building should be provided as envisaged in the Trade Facilitation Agreement in a predictable manner so as to enable African economies to acquire the necessary capacity for the implementation of the agreement;
  - v) Therefore **AGREES** that the Trade Facilitation Agreement should be implemented in line with the decision Trade Ministers took in Bali.
4. **ADOPTS** the revisions to the Terms of Reference of the High Level African Trade Committee arising from its meeting held on 25 June 2014;
5. **CALLS UPON** Member States to maintain the momentum to fast track the establishment of the CFTA as scheduled by providing necessary financial and technical resources at national, regional and continental levels;
6. Cognizant of the impact of the negotiations of bilateral, multilateral and mega trade agreements on the African integration agenda, **URGES** Member States and RECs once more to ensure that they do not compromise the African trade integration process, by transmitting through their respective RECs the draft texts under negotiation with their partners;
7. **DIRECTS** the Commission to prepare Draft Terms of Reference of the CFTA Negotiating Forum based on best practices in the RECs/Tripartite, refined draft Guiding Objectives and Principles as well as Institutional Arrangements to be submitted to the next AU Trade Ministerial Conference for adoption and to the next AU Summit for

endorsement towards the effective launch of the CFTA negotiations in June/July 2015;

8. **REQUESTS** the Commission to also prepare terms of reference for the negotiations on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT), Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) and Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs);
9. **CALLS UPON** the Ministers of Trade to meet separately from the STC meetings as often as needed to ensure the effective completion of the CFTA negotiations and related issues;
10. **DECIDES** that the next meeting of the HATC will be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in the margins of the January 2015 Summit and will be chaired by the President of the Republic of Ghana.