

African Union, African Regional Bodies

Resolution on the establishment of a Pan-African Parliamentary Forum on Trade, Customs and Migration

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African Union

Resolution on the establishment of a Pan-African Parliamentary Forum on Trade, Customs and Migration

Published on 18 May 2017

Commenced

[This is the version of this document from 18 May 2017.]

THE PAN-AFRICAN PARLIAMENT;

CONSIDERING Article 17 of the Constitutive Act of the African Union on the establishment of the Pan-African Parliament to ensure the full participation of African peoples in the development and economic integration of the continent;

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, which empower the PAP to facilitate the implementation of policies, objectives and programmes of the African Union and to oversee their effective implementation;

RECALLING the African Union Assembly Decision /AU/Dec.394 (XVIII) of 2012 on the establishment of the Action Plan for Boosting Intra African Trade (BIAT) and the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) by 2017 in order to boost intra-African trade, particularly in the area of trade policy, trade facilitation, productive capacity, trade related infrastructure, trade finance, trade information and factor market integration;

RECALLING FURTHER the AU Millennium Integration Programme (MIP) adopted in 2009 as one of the steps towards the African Economic Community (AEC) in line with the Abuja Treaty;

NOTING WITH DEEP CONCERN the low level of intra-African trade due to the lack of capacity of the manufacturing sector, the undiversified production, lack of coordination and harmonization of production and marketing policies, which make Africa in the last position as compared to other regions of the world such as East Asia, where trade is believed to have been particularly instrumental in the development of that region and has had an enormous impact on poverty levels through its effect on economic growth, employment, consumer prices and government revenues and spending;

ACKNOWLEDGING that trade is a powerful engine for economic growth and development as recognised by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa's (UNECA) Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) Modelling of a Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA), which estimates the impact of the removal of all internal tariffs on goods and finds that the share of intra African trade would increase from 10.2 percent in 2010 to 15.5 per cent in 2022 after the establishment of the CFTA;

COGNIZANT of the role of Parliamentarians in the process of boosting Intra- African Trade (BIAT) and fast tracking the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) negotiations in line with the Decision Assembly/AU/Dec.394 (XVIII) of January 2012;

ACKNOWLEDGING FURTHER the efforts at both national and regional levels by the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Member States to elaborate and ratify the protocols on the Free Movement of Persons, rights of residence and establishment in the RECs which is a priority in the AU Millennium Integration Programme (MIP);

IN ACCORDANCE WITH Rule 5 (d) and Rule 24 (1) of the Rules of Procedure of the Pan-African Parliament;

NOW HEREBY RESOLVES:

1. The Pan-African Parliamentary Forum on Trade, Customs and Immigration is hereby established with the following objectives:
 - (a) To advocate for the ratification and domestication of relevant trade agreements, working closely with RECs, and relevant African Union and United Nations organs, institutions and agencies, as well as other development partners;
 - (b) To ensure capacity building, experience and knowledge sharing amongst African Members of Parliaments on Parliamentary monitoring of and oversight over trade agreements and deals;
 - (c) To create an interactive platform for African Parliamentarians to share best practices on trade facilitation, working in collaboration with Speakers/Presidents and Clerks/Secretaries General of African Parliaments;
 - (d) To empower National Portfolio Committees on Trade to effectively carry out their parliamentary oversight and legislative functions and hold the Executive accountable on the ratification of trade agreements and implementation of trade facilitation measures;
 - (e) To promote regional integration, the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area and the free movement of goods, services, capital and people across the African Continent;
 - (f) To advance the adoption of legislations that facilitate the establishment of One-Stop-Border Posts on the continent advocate and lobby for the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade;
 - (g) Promote a borderless continent with safe migration, cross border trade and protected refugee rights;
 - (h) Carry out evidence-based policy research and studies on trade agreements, trade facilitation and migration;
 - (i) Work closely with civil society to minimize the social impacts of trade and migration and to fight human trafficking in Africa.
2. The Pan-African Parliamentary Forum on Trade, Customs and Immigration shall have the Status of a Sub-Permanent Committee under the Committee on Trade, Customs and Immigration Matters, in accordance with Rule 24 (1) of the Rules of Procedure of the PAP.
3. The Pan-African Parliamentary Forum on Trade, Customs and Immigration shall function in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Rules of Procedure of the Pan-African Parliament.

Adopted at Midrand, South Africa

18 May 2017