

KIGALI DECLARATION FOR THE LAUNCH OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA

PREAMBLE

WE, the Heads of State and Government or duly Authorised Representatives of the Member States of the African Union (AU), having met in Kigali, Rwanda on 21 March 2018;

RECALLING the Assembly/AU/Dec.392 (XVIII) Decision on African Integration and the Assembly/AU/Dec 394 (XVIII) Decision on Boosting Intra-African Trade & Fast Tracking the Continental Free Trade Area on 30 January 2012 at its Eighteenth Ordinary Session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia;

FURTHER RECALLING the Assembly/AU/Dec.569 (XXV) Decision on the Launch of CFTA Negotiations at the 26th Ordinary Session on 14 to 15 June 2015 in Johannesburg, South Africa;

REITERATING our solemn resolve to deepen our integration through the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

NOTING and appreciating the progress that has been made in Phase I of the negotiations which are enshrined in the Agreement Establishing the AfCFTA;

REAFFIRMING the full integrity of what has been negotiated and agreed in the draft legal texts of the AfCFTA supported by the negotiated records;

RECOGNISING that there are still some outstanding negotiating issues on the Annexes to the Protocol on Trade in Goods and the Protocol on Trade in Services of the Agreement Establishing the AfCFTA that are necessary for its operationalisation;

COGNISANT of the need and critical importance of creating an expanded and secure market for the goods and services of Member States of the AU through adequate infrastructure and the reduction or progressive elimination of tariffs, and elimination of non-tariff barriers to trade and investment;

REAFFIRMING the importance of the CFTA Negotiations Guiding Principles as adopted Assembly/AU/Dec.569 (XVIII), and their relevance during the implementation phase of the AfCFTA;

DETERMINED to contribute to the continental integration process under the 1991 Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community;

CONSCIOUS of the importance of the outstanding Phase II development integration elements of the AfCFTA, in particular on Competition Policy,



Investment and Intellectual Property that are necessary to ensure sustainable economic growth and integration into the global economy;

NOW THEREFORE:

1. Launch the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) with the adoption and signing of the AfCFTA legal instruments;
2. Direct Member States to expedite the process towards the operationalisation of the African Continental Free Trade Area;
3. Direct Member States to finalise outstanding Phase I issues in accordance with the adopted AfCFTA Transitional Implementation Work Programme, including legal scrubbing
4. Direct the commencement of Phase II negotiations covering Competition Policy, Investment, and Intellectual Property;
5. Direct that all the negotiations, including outstanding work be carried out in accordance with the principles, processes and institutional structures as already approved by previous Summits;
6. Direct the Ministers responsible for Trade to develop a Roadmap on Phase II negotiations, their conclusion and the implementation of the outcomes thereof;

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, WE the Heads of State and Government or duly Authorised Representatives have signed this Kigali Declaration Launching the African Continental Free Trade Area in four original texts in Arabic, English, French and Portuguese languages, each of the texts being equally authentic.

DONE at Kigali in the Republic of Rwanda, on this 21st day of March 2018.

