

AFRICAN UNION

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**DECISION ON THE LAUNCH OF CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA
NEGOTIATIONS**

Doc. Assembly/AU/11(XXV)

Decision No: Assembly/AU/Dec. 569(XXV)

The Assembly,

1. **TAKES NOTE** of the outcomes of the Conference and **ADOPTS** the following:
 - i) The objectives and principles of Negotiating the CFTA;
 - ii) The indicative Roadmap for the Negotiation and establishment of the CFTA;
 - iii) The Terms of Reference for the CFTA Negotiating Forum (CFTA-NF);
 - iv) The institutional arrangements for the CFTA negotiation;
 - v) The Draft Declaration on the Launch of negotiation for the establishment of the CFTA.
2. **EXPRESSES** satisfaction with the preparatory work done towards the launch of the negotiations for the Continental Free Trade Area and **COMMITTS** to negotiate a CFTA with significant benefits by building on the progress already achieved by the RECs;
3. **LAUNCHES** negotiations for the establishment of the Continental Free Trade Area aimed at integrating Africa's markets in line with the objectives and principles enunciated in the Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community;
4. **REQUESTS** the Continental Free Trade Area-Negotiating Forum (CFTA-NF) to organise its inaugural Meeting in 2015 and to work towards concluding the negotiations by 2017;
5. **CALLS UPON** the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank, African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) and Development Partners to provide the necessary support to the Member States, the Commission and the Regional Economic Communities to ensure a timely conclusion of the Negotiations.
6. **TAKES NOTE WITH APPRECIATION** of the status of preparations for the

ASSEMBLY OF THE UNION, Twenty-Fifth Ordinary Session

14 – 15 June 2015, Johannesburg, SOUTH AFRICA

10th WTO Ministerial Conference 2015, and **CONGRATULATES** the Republic of Kenya for hosting this important Conference, and **URGES** Member States to participate actively;

7. WELCOMES:

- i) the briefing on progress made on AGOA as well as the initiative to hold in Gabon a Ministerial Meeting in preparation for the AGOA Forum;
- ii) the briefing on UNCTAD XIV due to be held in Lima, Peru in March 2016. In this regard, **CONGRATULATES** H.E. Ms. Amina Mohamed, Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Trade of the Republic of Kenya over her appointment by the UNCTAD General Council as Chair of the 10th Ministerial Conference.

8. CONGRATULATES the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the East African Community (EAC) for the launching of the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, in June 2015 which is a great achievement towards continental integration to be emulated by other regions.