

[Zambia](#) has deposited in December 2020 its instrument of ratification for the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) Agreement with the COMESA Secretariat, a process that is going slow, as since 2015, when the TFTA was launched, only 9 countries have made the Agreement legally effective (and binding) in their respective territories. The TFTA Agreement needs a total of 14 ratifications to enter into force.

Before Zambia, [Botswana](#) acceded to the TFTA Agreement in January 2020. The other countries that have ratified and deposited their instruments are, Burundi, Kenya, Egypt, Rwanda, Uganda, South Africa, and Namibia.

The TFTA was launched with the aim to integrate into an enlarged Free Trade Area (FTA) three of the major African Regional Economic Communities (RECs), COMESA, EAC and SADC, by gradually reducing to zero percent both the tariffs for all goods traded in the bloc, and obstacles to trade between countries that are members of the 3 RECs. The final objective is to reach full mobility of people, goods and services in such a regional area. For this reason, the TFTA can be considered an important building block for the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).