

There are no translations available.

As 2023 draws to a close, the AfCFTA Secretariat has made available on the AfCFTA Website the AfCFTA knowledge booklet, a publication that summarizes the progress made since the launch of the new Continental Free Trade Area, the key milestones, its main achievements and other aspects related to the acceleration of its implementation, i.e. the theme to which the year 2023 has been dedicated. As of November 2023, the agreement reached 47 ratifying State Parties, following the 47th deposit of the instrument of ratification by the Republic of Mozambique. Among the topics that deserve to be mentioned the following ones are particularly important:

- 1) the status of finalization of Phase II Protocols: currently only the Protocols on Digital Trade and on Women and Youth in trade remain to be adopted, with two regulations on [infant industries and on goods produced within Special Economic Zones \(SEZs\)](#) that are currently under consideration. With regard to SEZs, it has to be noted that the current art. 9 of Annex II on Origin to the [AfCFTA Protocol on Trade in Goods](#) (regarding criteria and issues pertaining to Special Economic Arrangements/Zones), indicates in a footnote as this article as 'an outstanding provision', i.e., as a remaining issue that is part of negotiations on AfCFTA rules of origin. This development of Ministerial Regulations on SEZs is also foreseen;
- 2) The Guided Trade Initiative (GTI): launched in 2022, with 8 countries actively engaged (Tunisia, Egypt, Kenya, Ghana, Cameroon, Rwanda, Mauritius, and Tanzania), this initiative is entering into a new phase, to cover also trade in services. To be noted that this month also [Algeria](#) was officially admitted to the GTI.
- 3) The AfCFTA e-Tariff book: web-based electronic database that contains the updated Schedules of Tariff Concessions submitted by AfCFTA state parties and Customs Unions active in Africa, it is available for consultation on the AfCFTA website, constantly updated with the most recent tariff offers submissions.
- 4) The AfCFTA rules of origin manual: the booklet announces that the manual is now available in [French, Portuguese and Arabic](#) . Currently, 92,3 percent of rules of origin have been agreed.

5) The AfCFTA Adjustment Fund: this is the financial tool developed to compensate for the loss of revenue in which some AfCFTA State Parties may incur as a consequence of the process of tariff liberalization for the full implementation of the Agreement. A host country Agreement for the Fund was signed with Rwanda to host the Fund, in Kigali, Rwanda.

6) Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS): this PAPSS centralised Financial Market Infrastructure enabling the efficient and secure flow of money across African borders developed by the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) to complement trading under the AfCFTA, has reached an extra-continental scope. The booklet informs that on 27th October 2023, all the Central Banks in the Caribbean region (CARICOM), 11 in total, unanimously adopted such a system as the preferred system for processing the settlement of trade transactions with African countries.

With regard to the AfCFTA Non-Tariff Barriers monitoring mechanism, we have analysed it in this [report](#) , showing how the mechanism has not achieved satisfactory results so far after almost 3 years since its operationalization.

The AfCFTA knowledge booklet is available in [English](#) and [French](#) .