There are no translations available.

As an integral part of the Tripartite Free Trade Area, a trade facilitation programme named " Tra de and Transport Facilitation Programme " (TTTFP) was officially launched on 26th October 2017, to promote the development of a more competitive, integrated and liberalised regional road transport market in 25 continental member states of COMESA, EAC and SADC (only Madagascar and the Comoros are not included in the TTTFP programme because they are insular States whose road transport operators operate exclusively within their territories and do not perform cross-border transport operations in the other Tripartite member States territories).

Funded by the European Union under the 11th European Development Fund (EDF), the TTTFP purpose is to develop and implement a set of harmonised tools (to be domesticated into the national laws and regulations of each member State), whose aim is to create a level playing field for road transport operators in the Tripartite region, with a more competitive, integrated and liberalised regional road transport market, which in turn should lead to an increased road transport efficiency and a reduction of transport costs and transit times along the transport corridors in the Region. In particular, such tools include:

-   road transport policies/strategies,
-   laws, regulations and standards for efficient cross border road transport and transit networks, transport and logistics services, systems and procedures.

The Multilateral Cross Border Road Transport Agreement (MCBRTA) is one of the main tools developed within the TTTFP for harmonizing the legal framework for cross-border road transport operations in 21 out of the 27 member States of the Tripartite (the list of such states is contained in the preamble of the MCBRTA). The MCBRTA will replace all the bilateral cross-border road transport agreements in the region, by defining the requirements for operators, vehicles and drivers to carry out cross-border transport operations in this area, with the relevant quality standards to be achieved and maintained for continued participation in such operations.

The MCBRTA also provides for the establishment of a common cross-border road transport operator registration system (for both freight and passenger), titled "Transport Register and Information Platform System" (TRIPS), that will capture information on cross-border operators, drivers and fleet amongst others. Other topics covered by the MCBRTA are: operator registration, registration of vehicles, registration of professional drivers, operator discs for cross-border operations and operating standards (equipment on vehicles, vehicle dimensions, loads on vehicles, transport of abnormal loads, transport of dangerous goods, testing stations and inspection of vehicles for roadworthiness, training and licensing of drivers and professional drivers and compliance with the vehicle overloading control).

However, for its practical implementation, the MCBRTA needs to be backed by specific national laws to be adopted by such States, that should also repeal all the existing bilateral cross-border road transport agreements concluded with other countries of the Tripartite, suppressing the cross-border permits currently required to foreign vehicle owners wishing to transport goods or passengers on a commercial basis on their territories.

To guide them in this process, a series of Model Laws relating to road transport have been developed under the TTTFP, which have been recommended for adoption and implementation. The TTTFP also offers technical assistance to the Tripartite countries, to assist them in domestication of such Model Laws or in the amendment of their national laws so to align them to the MCBRTA and the other harmonised tools developed by such organisation.

The MCBRTA is now in a Final Draft format awaiting to be ratified or implemented by member States, with most of them already reviewing their domestic transport policies/legislations to ensure compliance to the rules and standards contained in such Agreement.