There are no translations available.

During a meeting held in Addis Ababa from 14 to 15 May 2018, the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, highlighted the need for each AU member State to develop specific AfCFTA national strategies as a critical step for the AfCFTA Agreement to be operationalised, so that this agreement will deliver its expected outcomes.

The Ministerial statement issued at the end of the May 2018 meeting highlights the importance for each African Union country to develop national plans and strategies to seize the opportunities presented by the new African Continental Free Trade Area, by identifying the key trade opportunities, current constraints and steps required to take full advantage of the African market, including the empowerment of women and young people.

The need to develop national strategies for AfCFTA implementation was incorporated by the Assembly of Heads of States and Government of the African Union in a Decision adopted at its thirty-first ordinary session, held in July 2018 in Nouakchott (Assembly/AU/Dec. 692/(XXXI)) . Such a Decision, among others, urged each AU member State to create national implementation Committees made up of both public and private stakeholders to monitor the practical implementation of such strategies in their respective territories.

Guidelines for directing the AU member States in the development of national strategies for the implementation of the AfCFTA were successively developed by the African Union Commission in collaboration with the UN Economic Commission for Africa.

In practice, AfCFTA implementation strategies are aimed at identifying in each African country the priority products or services for which the export potential to other African countries is higher, and define concrete steps to actualize such exports. These plans should also indicate vulnerable sectors and sensitive products that need special consideration and measures of support at national level.

But this is not all: other key issues to be covered by national strategies include the identification of AfCFTA-related risks and opportunities and an analysis of the regional context, in view of possible regional and global value chain integration. In order to do this, it should be important for each African country to analyse the AfCFTA national strategies adopted by other African States, especially their neighbours. To date, however, this is not possible because most African

States are still lagging behind in adopting and validating these strategies, while others have simply chosen to make them not (or not yet) publicly accessible. In any case, it is surprising that the African Union has not yet considered to make the adopted strategies available on its website.

Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa, for instance, announced the publication of their national strategies by June 2021, while at the moment, the only countries that has made their AfCFTA national strategies publicly available are Cote d'Ivoire and Cameroon . Zimbabwe, after having published a draft version of its national implementation strategy on Zimtrade , has recently withdrawn the document from the website.