

There are no translations available.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) promises to increase trade between African countries by eliminating import duties on their respective imports and reducing non-tariff barriers that affect intra-African trade. In order to achieve this objective, accelerated investments in infrastructure and equipment are needed.

This means that upgrade and expansion of African ports, dry ports and airports, as well as increase of truck, vessels and airplane capacity will be necessary in order to accommodate the expected increased volume of cargo that will be moved between the various regions of the Continent in the next years.

In this regard, the Protocol on Services of AfCFTA identifies transport as a strategic sector for enhanced continental market access. However, while the road and (more limitedly) the maritime transport sectors are the dominant modes of transport in Africa, the railway transport has not received so far sufficient attention by investors, although this mode of transport has an edge over the others modes because of its relatively lower costs.

With regard to the maritime transport, a recent [press release](#) issued by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), estimates that the number of tons transported by vessels with the implementation of AfCFTA will increase from 58 million to 132 million tons. UNCTAD also estimates that the African countries that will experience a surge in traffic through their ports by 2030 will be Gabon, Ghana, Gambia, Somalia, Comoros, Mauritius, Mozambique, Madagascar and Namibia, while the most significant vessel demand to support trade flows resulting from AfCFTA implementation will be in North Africa.

