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By:

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African SMEs Face Challenges Despite Progress in Implementing Trade Facilitation Measures

Small and medium-scale enterprises in Africa continue to face trade facilitation challenges despite improvements on the continent as data for 34 countries in a recent United Nations (UN) survey shows. According to a survey released last week by the UN regional commissions, countries across the globe are moving towards a seamless and efficient trading environment within and beyond national borders by simplifying and digitizing formalities in international trade. This helps to sustain international trade despite the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nigerian Customs Enforces Zero Duty on Imported Aircraft and Spare Parts

After many deliberations, the Nigerian Customs Service (NCS) has begun the implementation of zero surcharges on imported commercial aircraft and spare parts used by local airlines. The Airline Operators of Nigeria (AON) confirmed the removal of mandatory seven percent charges that airlines have been

paying. It was a hard-fought battle that dates back to 2016. Though the Ministry of Aviation had rallied against the charges as part of measures to support local airlines, the Ministry of Finance and NCS had continued to impose the charges on operators.

Top 5 Reasons to Attend the U.S.-Africa Business Summit

Corporate Council on Africa (CCA) will hold the 13th U.S.-Africa Business Summit virtually on July 27-29 to build sustainable partnerships and opportunities between key government and private sector decision-makers across America and the African continent. This year's U.S.-Africa Business Summit will feature senior U.S. Government officials as they explain the Biden Administration's priorities for Africa.

CEMAC Seeks to Add Value to Wood Exports

The wood industry in Central Africa lacks dynamism. As a result, countries do not benefit enough from its resources. To change this situation, the Central African Economic and Monetary Community is focusing on the local processing of wood. Hence the ban on the export of logs. The measure comes into force in January of 2022. A continental free trade area project launched in January 2021 was in its preliminary stages. According to its secretary-general, Wamkele Mene, several African banks are working on financing the zone. A single market where goods and services made in Africa can be exchanged without customs duties is the aspiration of the AfDB president.

COVID-19: Different Tax Policies Complicate Trade in EAC Bloc

Growing concern among the business community about COVID-19 lockdown measures were addressed at the post East African Community tax and budget dialogue meeting for 2021/2022, held in Kampala, where participants suggested ways of easing trade. An official said EAC countries still operate dissimilar tax policies which defeats the essence of the EAC Customs Union, that provides for the Common External Tariff (CET) as one of its pillars. They added that gaps in the implementation of CET raises the prospect of goods smuggling, especially if tax rates differ.

Djibouti and Ethiopia Secure Funds to Launch Second Power Link

The African Development Bank (AfDB) has approved two grants worth U.S.$83.6 million which enable neighboring countries to proceed with the construction of a second power transmission line which will eventually boost their energy trade, after enjoying the returns from the first project that linked their power grids. The Board of Directors of the African Development Bank Group approved the funds in a bid to boost cross-border trade in electricity between Ethiopia and Djibouti.

Tanzania and Kenya Fight for Lucrative Uganda Petroleum Trade

The rising political temperatures in Kenya over President Uhuru Kenyatta's successor is likely to take a toll on the country's trade with its East and Central African partners as importers and transporters on the northern corridor are already exploring new routes for their cargo. Since July 19, 2021 Uganda began a trial delivery of petroleum products from Tanzania's Dar es Salaam port through to Lake Victoria, after a 16-year break. This move spells doom to the Port of Mombasa, which accounts for three-quarters of the transit cargo headed for Uganda.

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