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Advancing Trade Facilitation in the Great Lakes Region

COMESA discusses recent efforts to enhance trade facilitation in the Great Lakes Region through the implementation of the Great Lakes Trade Facilitation and Integration Project (GLTFIP). The initiative, supported by the World Bank, aims to reduce trade barriers and improve infrastructure and services at border posts between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Rwanda, and Uganda. A regional meeting held in Lusaka brought together stakeholders from the three countries, as well as representatives from the World Bank and COMESA, to assess project progress and discuss future priorities. Key areas of focus included improving border infrastructure, promoting cross-border trade, especially for small-scale traders, and strengthening institutional coordination. The project is expected to contribute to regional economic integration and poverty reduction by fostering more efficient and inclusive trade.

Member States Yet to Meet Stage One Macroeconomic Convergence Targets

Most COMESA member states have not yet met the first-stage macroeconomic convergence targets outlined in the COMESA Monetary Cooperation Programme. These targets include maintaining inflation below 5%, limiting fiscal deficits to no more than 3% of GDP, and sustaining foreign exchange reserves equal to at least four months of imports. The assessment was presented during the 29th meeting of the COMESA Committee of Governors of Central Banks. While some progress has been made in harmonizing monetary policies and establishing macroeconomic stability frameworks, the overall performance remains below expectations due to challenges such as global economic shocks and internal fiscal pressures. The meeting emphasized the need for renewed efforts and stronger policy coordination to achieve regional monetary integration goals.

How U.S. Dollar Strength Impacts the South African Rand Amid Trade Deal Uncertainty

According to *MSN*, the impact of the U.S. dollar strength on the South African rand amid uncertainty over international trade deals has been examined. It explains that a strong dollar typically puts downward pressure on emerging market currencies like the rand, making imports more expensive and contributing to inflationary risks in South Africa. Recent fluctuations in the rand's value are partly attributed to market concerns about the future of trade agreements, including AGOA (African Growth and Opportunity Act), and broader geopolitical tensions. Analysts note that investor sentiment is sensitive to global interest rate trends and the outlook of the U.S. economy, both of which influence capital flows and currency valuations. The article underscores the interconnectedness of global monetary policy and regional economic stability.

Putting African products on Global Markets: Advancing the Made in Africa Certification

According to *Zawya*, Efforts to expand the global reach of African products through the advancement of the "Made in Africa" certification initiative have been made. Spearheaded by the AfroChampions Initiative in collaboration with African governments and regional economic communities, the program aims to promote high-quality African goods on international markets by establishing a recognizable certification standard. The initiative seeks to build trust in African

brands, enhance competitiveness, and support the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) by encouraging intra-African trade and boosting exports. Stakeholders believe that a unified certification will help reshape the narrative around African manufacturing and position the continent as a credible player in global supply chains.

Celebrating Partnership: Switzerland and The International Trade Centre (ITC) Reaffirm Commitment to Africa's Trade Future

Zawya highlights the renewed commitment between Switzerland and the International Trade Centre (ITC) to support trade and development in Africa. During a high-level event celebrating their longstanding partnership, both parties reaffirmed their dedication to empowering African small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), enhancing trade competitiveness, and promoting inclusive growth across the continent. The collaboration focuses on providing technical assistance, facilitating market access, and supporting women and youth entrepreneurs. Switzerland emphasized its continued financial and strategic support for ITC-led initiatives aimed at unlocking Africa's economic potential through sustainable trade and private sector development.

Trump's Pivot from "Aid to Trade" Leaves Africa Wary as it Faces Tariffs and Uncertainty

According to *MSN*, African nations have had a cautious response U.S. President Donald Trump's shift in policy from aid to trade, particularly as they face rising tariffs and uncertainty in U.S.-Africa economic relations. While Trump emphasized mutual trade partnerships over traditional aid during his administration, critics argue that the approach lacked consistency and often sidelined African priorities. The imposition of tariffs and the uncertain future of key trade programs like AGOA (African Growth and Opportunity Act) have left many African governments and businesses wary of long-term U.S. commitment to equitable economic cooperation. Analysts note that although the pivot toward trade could offer sustainable development opportunities, it must be backed by predictable policy frameworks and deeper engagement with African stakeholders to gain trust and produce meaningful outcomes.

"We are on our own"- Africa looks Within to Weather Growing Global Tariff Turmoil

According to *Reuters*, African nations have expressed concern over former U.S. President Donald Trump’s policy shift from aid to trade, as they grapple with increased tariffs and growing uncertainty surrounding future economic relations with the United States. While Trump promoted a vision of partnership based on trade rather than traditional development assistance, African leaders and analysts noted that his administration's actions—such as imposing tariffs and showing wavering support for key programs like the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)—undermined confidence in the U.S. as a reliable economic partner. The article underscores that although greater emphasis on trade could foster long-term growth, it must be accompanied by consistent policies and meaningful dialogue with African stakeholders to be effective.

Strengthening Regional Ties: OHADA and CEMAC Sign Cooperation Agreement

According to *OHADA*, them and the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) have signed a cooperation agreement aimed at strengthening regional integration and institutional collaboration. The agreement, signed in Yaoundé, Cameroon, outlines a framework for joint initiatives in legal harmonization, capacity building, and economic governance to promote a more favorable business climate within the CEMAC region. Both organizations emphasized the strategic importance of aligning their efforts to support legal certainty, attract investment, and foster sustainable economic development across Central Africa.

End of the Official Tour of the President-in-office of the OHADA Council of Ministers

According to *OHADA,* the President-in-Office of the OHADA Council of Ministers concluded an official tour aimed at reinforcing the cohesion and operational efficiency of the organization's key institutions. The tour included visits to OHADA’s Permanent Secretariat, the Common Court of Justice and Arbitration (CCJA), and the École Régionale Supérieure de la Magistrature (ERSUMA). Throughout the mission, the President emphasized the importance of strengthening collaboration among these institutions to ensure the effective implementation of OHADA’s legal framework and promote a unified business law environment across member states. The visit also reaffirmed the

commitment to legal harmonization, judicial integrity, and institutional excellence in advancing regional economic development.

AfCFTA Coordination Meeting Reinforces Alignment with RECs and Business Councils

According to the *AfCFTA Secretariat*, a recent coordination meeting reinforced efforts to align the implementation of the AfCFTA with Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and African Business Councils. Held in Nairobi, Kenya, the meeting brought together key stakeholders to assess progress, address implementation challenges, and enhance cooperation among regional bodies. Participants emphasized the importance of harmonizing trade policies, improving private sector engagement, and accelerating the full operationalization of the AfCFTA. The discussions also focused on building institutional synergies and ensuring that regional integration efforts contribute effectively to the broader goals of intra-African trade, economic transformation, and sustainable development.

Nigeria: Inflation Falls Slightly for Third Month Straight, Crisis Not Over

According to *Africanews,* Nigeria's inflation rate has declined slightly for the third consecutive month, offering a modest sign of relief amid ongoing economic challenges. The National Bureau of Statistics reported a marginal drop in the year-on-year inflation rate, driven primarily by slower increases in food and energy prices. However, analysts caution that the country's broader economic crisis is far from over, with persistent issues such as high unemployment, currency depreciation, and rising debt levels continuing to pressure households and businesses. While the recent trend may reflect the impact of monetary tightening by the Central Bank of Nigeria, experts warn that sustained policy efforts and structural reforms are necessary to achieve lasting economic stability.

South Africa: Eskom Targets Mainly Clean Energy Sources by 2040

According to *Africanews*, South Africa's state-owned power utility Eskom has announced plans to transition primarily to clean energy sources by 2040. The company's new energy strategy prioritizes investments in renewable

technologies such as wind, solar, and battery storage, while gradually phasing out coal-fired power stations. Eskom officials stated that the transition is essential to meeting both national energy demands and global climate commitments, and emphasized the need for policy support and financing to ensure a just and sustainable energy shift. The move comes as South Africa faces ongoing power supply challenges and seeks to modernize its energy sector while reducing carbon emissions.

Trump to Slap 10% Tariff on Small Nations Including in the Caribbean and Africa

According to *Africanews*, U.S. President Donald Trump has announced plans to impose a 10% tariff on imports from small nations, including countries in the Caribbean and Africa, if re-elected. The proposal is part of a broader effort to reshape U.S. trade policy by reducing reliance on foreign goods and encouraging domestic production. Critics warn that such measures could harm developing economies that depend on exports to the U.S. and risk triggering retaliatory trade actions. African trade experts have expressed concern that the tariffs could undermine programs like the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and disrupt longstanding economic partnerships.

African Union and European Union Join Hands to Promote and Invest in Circular Economy and Sustainable Growth

According to *Zawya*, the African Union (AU) and the European Union (EU) have strengthened their collaboration to promote and invest in a circular economy and sustainable growth across Africa. The partnership focuses on supporting policies, capacity building, and innovative financing mechanisms to transition toward resource-efficient, low-carbon economies. Through joint initiatives and technical cooperation, the AU and EU aim to address environmental challenges, create green jobs, and stimulate inclusive economic development. The collaboration also aligns with global climate goals and the implementation of the African Green Recovery Action Plan, highlighting a shared commitment to sustainable development and environmental resilience.

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Building the Future: Sustainable Infrastructure in Africa. *Johannesburg Nedbank, 135 Rivonia Road Sandton, GP, 2196 South Africa*. 20 August, 2025.

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