

**DECISION ON THE REPORT OF THE HIGH LEVEL AFRICAN
TRADE COMMITTEE (HATC) ON TRADE ISSUES
Doc. Assembly/AU/11(XXIV)**

The Assembly,

1. **TAKES NOTE** of the Report of the High Level African Trade Committee held in January 2015 and **ENDORSES** the recommendations contained therein;

On the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA)

2. **TAKES NOTE** of the progress towards the establishment of the Tripartite Free Trade Area involving the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the East African Community (EAC) and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the launch of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Common External Tariff (CET) with effect from January 2015;
3. **URGES** Member States to expedite the accession and ratification to the regional free trade agreements;
4. **REQUESTS** the Ministers of Trade to propose options on levels of trade liberalization to serve as an indicative basis on which to start CFTA negotiations;
5. **EMPHASISES** the importance of involving various stakeholders such as the Private Sector, Parliamentarians, Civil Society, Academia, etc. in the process of establishing the CFTA through appropriate mechanisms so as to ensure ownership of CFTA by the peoples of Africa;
6. **MANDATES** the Chairperson of the HATC in collaboration with the Chairperson of the Commission to engage in High Level consultations for the establishment of the CFTA;
7. **REQUESTS** the Commission, in collaboration with UNECA and RECs, to undertake technical work, required studies and preparation in advance of the negotiations including the preparation of the draft negotiating texts;
8. **REAFFIRMS** the commitment to launch CFTA negotiations in June 2015 and in this regard **MANDATES** Ministers of Trade to meet and finalise preparations for the launch;

On the World Trade Organisation (WTO)

9. **WELCOMES** the breakthrough in the WTO Doha negotiations and **REITERATES** the importance of African countries speaking in one voice to ensure that Africa's interests are adequately addressed within the multilateral trading system;

10. **URGES** Member States to identify key issues in the post-Bali work programme that facilitate the achievement of Africa's strategic structural transformation and regional integration agenda;

On African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)

11. **NOTES WITH APPRECIATION** the announcement made by President Obama on the occasion of the Africa-US Summit held in August 2014 expressing commitment towards the reauthorization of AGOA;
12. **CALLS UPON** the US Congress to preserve AGOA as the cornerstone of Africa-US trade and investment partnership by ensuring the timely reauthorization of AGOA co-terminus with the Third Country Fabric Provision;
13. **FURTHER CALLS UPON** AGOA-eligible countries to enhance the advocacy to complement the efforts of the African Group of Ambassadors in Washington, USA towards the reauthorization of AGOA.

