E-Commerce and Digital Trade

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Ecommerce Depends on Many Moving Parts

- Entrepreneurs of all sizes use ecommerce from SMMEs using 'Social Commerce' to multinationals using e-Shops or e-Platforms, and much in between. Note: Ecommerce reduces competition advantages of large companies.

- The AU's Digital Transformation Strategy (2020-30) recognised that ecommerce will be a major driver for AfCFTA cross-border trade.

- The potential for online development of a robust, effective, scalable intra-African trade depends upon multiple points :-

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Ecommerce's Pain Points (1)

- Need to ensure Buyers' Trust in Ecommerce
- Transport infrastructure (lack of)
- Customs facilitation and need for e-documentation (preclearance/smart contracts)
- Removal of both tariff and non-tariff barriers (NTBs)
- Clarity on Sales and other Taxation (inc. import "special charges")
- Addressing the unaddressed and under-addressed
- Cooperation to reduce Cybercrime and increase Cybersecurity
- And

Ecommerce's Pain Points (2)

- Digital Inclusion – Ecommerce must have "a stable, robust, accessible & reasonably priced internet"
- Smooth intra-state data transactions - no funky, costly tariffs or rules
- A Regulatory level playing field, which includes:
    - 1 Consumer Protection
    - 2 Data Privacy
    - 3 IP/trademark protection
    - 4. Effective Non-discriminatory Competition Environment
- And

Ecommerce's Pain Points (3)

- Cross-border Payment Solutions (inc. mobile money) which are interoperable
- The Reduction of Currency Exchange Volatility – preferably a "stable coin" trading currency based on a basket of commodities, not a CBDC
- Promotion of Investment, which requires comparable statistics on ecommerce
- Training/Skilling/Education on the digital economy and promotion for Women and the Youth to prosper in ecommerce
- Finally, many SMEs exports enjoy the US's and EU's *de minibus rules* – defend these!

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