

WTO TRADE FACILITATION AGREEMENT AND SADC

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Introduction

- Trade facilitation is the simplification, modernization and harmonization of export and import processes including transit procedures.
- WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement negotiations were concluded during the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference in Bali, Indonesia from 3-7 December 2013

Categories

- Category A Provisions for immediate notification and implementation.
- Category B Provisions whose indicative dates for implantation should be given within a year
- Category C Provisions that need technical and capacity building support

Results

- The protocol was adopted and opened for acceptance by Members on 27 November 2014.
- The Agreement required two-thirds of WTO Members to ratify it and notify the WTO for it to be operational.
- The Agreement came into force on 22 February 2017 when the number of ratifications reached 112 out of 164 WTO Members.
- Currently SADC Members fall either in developing or in least developed countries categories and those who ratified should notify and implement Category A provisions and notify Category B and C and their indicative dates for implementation.
- 8 out of 15 SADC countries have ratified the Agreement and these are: Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Swaziland and Zambia.
- 5 more countries have made Category A notifications and these are: DRC, Malawi, Namibia, Tanzania and Zimbabwe.
- Angola and South Africa are yet to either ratify or make any notifications. And no official reason has been made public.
- TFA to reduce trade costs and speed movement of goods across borders
- TFA augurs well for SADC trade facilitation agenda

Conclusions

- WTO TFA is mainly a reflection of WCO RKC provisions
- Most of SADC countries have been implementing WCO RKC provisions
- Implementation of WTO TFA is a process; important to link to regional initiatives



References

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Further information

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