

## Trade Policy Unit

### Daily news and updates

#### **(1) Agriculture meeting highlights food security, urgency of implementing MC12 outcomes (WTO)**

- Food security was the main focus of the meeting of the WTO's Committee on Agriculture on 14 - 15 September 2022.
- WTO members discussed how to act quickly amid the ongoing polycrisis to implement outcomes reached at the 12<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Conference (MC12), in particular those related to food security and the WTO response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Members continued examining each other's farm policies to ensure compliance with WTO rules while working across other implementation issues relevant to the Bali and Nairobi ministerial decisions.

#### **(2) Africa's has an Untapped Export Potential Of \$31 Billion (Africa.com)**

- United National Conference on Trade and Development says Africa's untapped export of \$31 billion can be achieved if Africa implements partial tariff liberalisation under the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) Agreement over the next five years.
- Currently, trade between African countries comprises 61% of processed and semi-processed goods. Infrastructure and the harmonisation of logistics will make the AfCFTA fly, including simplicity of moving goods, automation, services across countries and cross-border clearance processes, among other challenges hampering trade.
- According to Jürgen Maier, Owner of Mobility Advisors in Switzerland and Partner and Adviser at the Transport Evolution Africa Forum and Expo 2022, automation is one of the key areas to increasing Africa's transport efficiency and customer orientation. However, in order to achieve the full benefit of automation, the industry must ensure that it incorporates the following trends into a comprehensive and collaborative growth strategy.
- "What's still missing, is a clear, legal master plan that defines benchmarks and framework conditions, and serves as a starting point for sustainable, cost-effective, coordinated, and successful development," adds Maier. "This plan should cover automation, processes, digitalisation as well as legal and technical harmonization. Most importantly, for automation to fulfill its full potential, the

overall system needs to be co-developed on common principles, not just at a national level, but in partnership with AfCFTA.”

### **(3) IMF roots for cross-border Africa trade to stem rising food insecurity (The East African)**

- The International Monetary Fund is appealing to African countries to open up their local markets to commodities from their regional peers as a long-term solution to persistent food shortages.
- Last week, the fund released a policy paper urging countries to expand cross-border trade to better deal with the rising food crisis on the continent. According to the paper “How Africa can Escape Chronic Food Insecurity amid Climate Change”, only 15 percent of food imports into the continent are from neighbouring countries.
- “African countries have not lifted most of the restrictions even though it could benefit both net food importers and exporters from trading with one another,” states the document authored by a team of African economists.
- “In the context of climate change, greater regional trade integration can enhance food availability and affordability,” the paper says. “Combined with resilient storage and transport infrastructure, it can facilitate sales of one country’s bumper harvests — that may have gone to waste — to a neighbouring country facing shortfalls.”

*Trade Policy Unit  
International Trade Division  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade  
20 September 2022*