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SEMINAR ON THE POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA ON MAGHREB ECONOMIES

Rabat (Morocco), 11-12 November 2019

Seminar Report

I. Opening Addresses

1. The opening ceremony was highlighted by the participation of H.E. Sid'Ahmed Ould Mohamed, Minister of Trade and Tourism of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania and H.E. Ambassador Albert Muchanga, African Union Commissioner for Trade and Industry.
2. In her opening remarks, Mrs. Lilia Hachem Naas, Director of the ECA-North Africa Office (ECA-NA), first welcomed the participants to the regional seminar. She then noted the importance of the theme chosen for this meeting, which is one of the major development challenges for the countries of the sub-region and the African continent as a whole. Indeed, with a population of more than 1.2 billion people, which will double by 2050, and a GDP of more than 3 trillion dollars, the establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) would enable an increase of more than 60% in the continent's internal trade (more than 42 billion dollars in volume), according to ECA estimates, and would mainly concern manufactured industrial products.
3. The Director stressed that « In this context, the construction of an integrated and mutually supportive economic area in the Maghreb is becoming an imperative, especially in view of the changes we are experiencing today, in particular: the rising trade tensions between world powers, the economic slowdown affecting Europe, which is the Maghreb countries' main trading partner, the growing role of emerging countries in the conduct of international relations, and lastly the political, economic and social changes under way in North Africa. »
4. « Integration of the Maghreb, considered as a milestone in the process of continental integration, is more relevant than ever in view of the similarity of development challenges and the opportunities it represents in terms of growth and employment, given the sub-region's strategic position », added Mrs. Lilia Hachem Naas, for whom the genuine integration of the Maghreb would strengthen the negotiating powers of the States of the region, encourage the development of trade and investment, and allow the achievement of economies of scale by increasing the size of markets and better predictability of public policies by anchoring them in a regional perspective.
5. Recent ECA studies have indeed revealed that integration of the Maghreb, one of the eight pillars of the implementation of the AfCFTA and African integration, can enable Maghreb countries to diversify their economies, accelerate their structural transformation and generate employment.
6. The Director recalled that the main objective of the seminar is to promote policies and programmes to strengthen the processes of integration and economic cooperation in application of the Abuja Treaty that established the African Economic Community and the Constitutive Act of the African Union. Within this framework, ECA provides support to member countries and regional economic communities such as the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), for the implementation and operationalization of the AfCFTA through the preparation of national strategies, support to public-private consultation, provision of consultancy services and spaces for dialogue and sharing of experiences such as our regional seminar today. She concluded by wishing this dialogue full success in its work.
7. After welcoming the participants, H.E. Taieb Baccouche, Secretary General of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) underscored the importance of the issue of regional integration for Africa's development and the role of integration in the Maghreb in addressing sub-regional challenges and successfully building the single African market.
8. Organized with the objective of encouraging a better positioning of the Maghreb economies in the process of building the African single market, the seminar on the potential impact of the African Continental Free Trade Area is an opportunity for the participants to agree on the decisive role of the private sector in the process of regional integration and the need to set up mechanisms likely to enable it to contribute to the success of the process, enhance support of the financial system in the Maghreb to import-export activities and pay

greater attention to the removal of non-tariff barriers which are the most significant obstacle to trade in the sub-region, according to the Secretary General.

9. Entering into force on May 30, 2019, the AfCFTA seeks to reduce tariff barriers and harmonize trade rules among member countries in order to reduce transaction costs and promote intra-regional trade in goods and services. Thanks to its many strategic advantages (complementarity of economies, sub-regional value chain opportunities, quality of transport infrastructures, educated and well-trained workforce, common language, proximity to the Euro-Mediterranean area, etc.), the Maghreb could benefit even more from the AfCFTA if it is associated with a proactive entrepreneurial dynamic capable of taking advantage of the commercial and economic potential of the single market.

10. At the end of his opening remarks, H.E. Baccouche invited the representatives of five member countries to help build a united Maghreb equipped to integrate an increasingly dynamic African continent.

11. Mrs. Michaela Dodini, Representative of the European Union Delegation Ambassador to Morocco thanked ECA and the AMU General Secretariat for having associated the Delegation of the European Union to Morocco with this important meeting on a major challenge for the Maghreb countries and for the rest of the Continent.

12. Mrs. Dodini reaffirmed the European Union's unwavering support now that the agreement has been ratified by 28 countries and Africa is embarking on this journey of continental integration. In particular, she said: « African partners can count on the EU which has supported the AfCFTA process from the very beginning, whether in the negotiation/ratification phase or currently in the implementation process, continental regional integration is the very foundation on which the European Union was built. »

13. Mrs. Dodini added that « Our vision is that, once implemented, the AfCFTA can become the linchpin of a continent-to-continent free trade area, which would create a vast area of integration and prosperity between Europe and Africa. »

14. H.E. Sid' Ahmed Ould Mohamed, Minister of Trade and Tourism of Mauritania opened his remarks by noting that « North Africa enjoys an unheard-of geostrategic position ». He added that, as it is straddling two very different economic worlds, it must act as a bridge in global industrial value chains. He called on the AMU to facilitate intra-Maghreb consultation on the negotiations needed to enhance and catalyse the opportunities now available to North Africa. The Mauritanian Minister also invited the AMU to organize a meeting of the Maghreb ministers of trade and an extraordinary summit on the theme of economic integration between its member countries within the AfCFTA.

15. Lastly, H.E. the Minister encouraged the Maghreb countries to finalize their lists of tariff concessions, their offers in the area of trade in services, and to complete the first key stages of implementation.

16. Thereafter, H.E. Ambassador Albert Muchanga, African Union Commissioner for Trade and Industry, took the floor to thank ECA and the AMU General Secretariat for associating the African Union Commission with this regional seminar. H.E. the Ambassador, in his brief introductory remarks, which were followed by the delivery of a keynote address, pointed out the importance of integration of the Maghreb for the success of the AfCFTA project. He added that the continent needs its north to support its march towards progress.

17. The word of the host country was delivered by Mr. Abdelouahed Rahal, Director General of Trade, on behalf of the Minister of Industry, Trade, and Green and Digital Economy. After thanking ECA and the AMU General Secretariat for organizing this regional seminar to discuss and examine the opportunities offered by the AfCFTA, H.E. the Minister called on the member countries of the Regional Economic Community to « ensure that our business communities are fully involved in the implementation of the AfCFTA ». In this regard, the Minister added, « we welcome the measures adopted at the Extraordinary Summit held in Niamey last July to

strengthen the role of the private sector in the process of building the African common market. »

18. The themes of this seminar touch upon these aspects and will make it possible to draw up relevant recommendations that will enrich the joint actions of the AMU and the African Union, in favour of a united and prosperous Africa, noted the Minister.

19. At the end of his opening remarks, the Minister wished the meeting every success.

II. Keynote address of H.E. Ambassador Albert Muchanga, Commissioner for Trade and Industry of the African Union Commission (AUC)

20. The opening ceremony was followed by a keynote address by the Commissioner for Trade and Industry of the African Union Commission (AUC) on the process of establishing the AfCFTA and a presentation of the potential impact expected from its establishment. The conference was structured in five parts dealing with substantive issues.

- A brief presentation on the background of the idea of creating the African Continental Free Trade Area and, beyond that, the conception of the continental vision
- An outline of the signing and ratification of the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area. The historical dates relating to the process were outlined, as well as the achievements and commitments of member countries
- In the following section, a review of the progress made in the establishment of the AfCFTA secretariat and the relations with the Regional Economic Communities and the African Union Commission was shared with the audience.
- Subsequently, a forward-looking approach to the upcoming perspectives and major challenges facing the implementation of the Agreement was outlined.
- Finally, the keynote speaker identified the main potential impacts of the African Continental Free Trade Area on the economic development of the continent.

21. H.E. Muchanga concluded his word by stating that the Agreement is a large-scale undertaking that has raised expectations across Africa. With this tremendous responsibility to avoid creating a crisis of expectations, Africa's only choice is to successfully implement the Free Trade Agreement.

III. Presentation of the « Results of impact assessments at the continental and sub-regional level »

22. In his presentation, Mr. Souleymane Abdallah, Economist at ECA, first recalled the rationale for an African Continental Free Trade Area in view of the low level of intra-African trade compared to other regions of the world, notably Asia or Europe. Notwithstanding this fact, he stressed the quality of intra-African trade, which is characterized by an important content of manufactured products.

23. He then presented an outline of the ECA study on the impact of the AfCFTA and its implications for North Africa. The study found that Africa would benefit but that the gains expected for North Africa would be greater than the African average due to the relatively large industrial base in that part of the continent.

24. He said there would be different impacts on economies given the great diversity in the economic structure of African countries. Thus, the most competitive and industrialized economies are in a better position to take advantage of opportunities in the short term, while other economies will need to improve their positioning in value chains and make the short-term adjustments/adaptations necessary to overcome potential challenges. At the same time, strategic actions to seize opportunities in the medium and long term are required.

25. Therefore, the need to develop national strategies for the implementation of the AfCFTA at the level of African states, which would be complementary to the existing national development framework, would make it possible to identify opportunities for diversification through production and marketing, prioritize target sectors and identify new markets. It would also identify current challenges and measures to be taken to improve competitiveness in order to take full advantage of the African continental market; and finally propose practical and low-cost solutions to the obstacles and identify a better distribution of institutional responsibilities for the implementation of the AfCFTA.

26. During the discussions, participants noted the challenges for the implementation of the AfCFTA particularly in the face of the realities of some African states that close their land borders with their neighbours. Concerning the model used by ECA for simulations, the idea is to put the results into perspective, while taking into account the reliability and availability of data on the continent in relation to the variables of interest in the model.

27. The participants called on ECA to provide support to African states in the implementation of the AfCFTA, particularly for the upgrading of enterprises at the national level.

IV. Presentation of « the African Trade Observatory (ATO) » as a support tool for the implementation of the AfCFTA

28. ATO was introduced by Mr. Jean Bertrand Azapmo, Regional Trade Advisor to the African Union Commission (AUC), who indicated that the new source of wealth is information, adding that the International Trade Centre (ITC) has shown in studies based on surveys of business leaders that lack of information is a barrier to trade.

29. ATO addresses this problem by providing trade information to countries and companies. This project, which goes back to 2012, aims to collect, analyse and monitor the implementation of trade agreements. A Dashboard was launched in July 2019 and an information platform with 3 modules is available. About thirty countries have so far provided the list of focal points for the feeding and use of the platform and the Observatory.

30. The project will be deployed in 4 phases at the end of which all African countries would be covered.

31. The platform allows the production of descriptive statistics according to different dimensions, useful for decision-makers and government officials.

32. Initial results have confirmed that processed products for African exports account for 35% of exports. African products exported to Africa are more processed than those exported to other geographical areas, and therefore create more wealth.

33. In order to improve African trade, action should focus on:

- Improving access to information and the capacity to process it
- Mechanisms for identifying barriers to trade
- Mechanisms for supervising trade integration.

V. Presentation of negotiation tools for the implementation of the AfCFTA

34. Mr. Mondher Mimouni, Chief of the Trade and Market Intelligence Section at the International Trade Centre (ITC) presented the platform designed to facilitate trade negotiations around the AfCFTA. It is an information and exchange tool whose access will be limited to negotiators and their teams. The definition of national lists of sensitive and excluded products will enable member countries to start negotiations between them. The platform aims to make exchanges and negotiations between partners more fluid and to save the resources put in place for this exercise.

35. The audience noted the usefulness of the platform and thanked the ITC and the AUC for this commendable initiative which will contribute to the operationalization of the AfCFTA,

especially as it is a process involving more than fifty countries. The involvement of negotiators in the use of the platform is necessary to enhance the usefulness of the instrument.

VI. Panel discussions

36. The third agenda item initiated discussions within three panels:

- Panel 1: the private dynamics of the Maghreb, challenges and opportunities;
- Panel 2: the role of the financial sector in the success of the AfCFTA;
- Panel 3: lessons learned from the first phase of the negotiations and the challenges of the second phase.

Panel 1: the private dynamics of the Maghreb, challenges and opportunities

37. The panel was moderated by Mrs. Michaela Dodini, Head of the Commercial Section at the European Union Delegation in Morocco.

38. The panel was composed of:

- Mrs. Nermine Abulata, Advisor to the Minister of Trade and Industry, Egypt;
- Mr. Mohamed Badr, Senior Advisor (WFP);
- Mr. Mondher Mimouni, Chief of the Trade and Market Intelligence Section at the International Trade Centre (ITC);
- Mrs. Bilen Mammo, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Finance, Ethiopia.

39. The panel discussions indicated that one of the major challenges related to the implementation of the AfCFTA is to involve the private sector, which so far has not been involved during the preparatory phases and negotiations.

40. Mrs. Mammo, pointed out that the continent has a number of opportunities to enable it to take maximum advantage of the AfCFTA, namely the size and youthfulness of its population to achieve sustainable economic growth. Nevertheless, it is clear that, with the exception of some countries, the private sector has not been fully involved in the debates at the national level and its concerns have not been taken into account in the negotiations. The example of Nigeria is most emblematic of the fact that the private sector has shown significant reservations about the impact of the AfCFTA on their economy.

41. Three important dimensions need to be taken into account, Mrs. Mammo added:

- The objectives and impact of the AfCFTA must be clearly established in order to have an understanding of the process.
- Involving and actively engaging different stakeholders such as representatives from the private sector, but also women and youth in the negotiation process.
- Key development partners involved in the capacity building process should work together.

42. Mr. Mimouni noted that the approach advocated is to involve the private sector from the very beginning of the negotiation process. In this process, the availability of reliable data is essential and access to information is crucial, especially for small and medium sized enterprises which constitute the core of the economic fabric in North Africa. The private sector in general, and in North Africa in particular, has no control over information because it is an expensive tool. Reliable data on international trade, including import and export volumes, prices charged for different products, government procurement, etc., are not accessible to the private sector. It is also important to know the conditions of access to different markets such as rules of origin, health rules, etc.

43. The International Trade Centre is working on these areas so that countries can have access to this information, Mr. Mimouni concluded.

44. For Mrs. Abulata, it is necessary to develop a strategic partnership between three key actors: government, the private sector and international institutions in order to put in place effective standards and procedures for trade facilitation. The most important challenges to integrate into regional and global value chains are non-tariff (phytosanitary and security) barriers as well as logistics (transport costs and delays). Logistics must be at the heart of the discussion in the context of the implementation of the AfCFTA. Egypt's export promotion strategy takes these elements into account and its development has been carried out with the active participation of private sector representatives such as the National Federation of Exporters.

45. Mr. Badr informed the audience that the WFP assists countries and national institutions working with small farmers to promote the South-South trade approach. The WFP is currently working with more than 2 million small and medium-sized farmers in this type of programme to bring buyers and sellers in African countries together. The use of new information and digital technologies is an asset in this area and helps to reach a wider audience, Mr. Badr added.

Panel 2: the role of the financial sector for the success of the AfCFTA

46. The panel was moderated by Mr. Sami Mouley, Director of the Economic Studies and Cooperation Department, Banque Maghrébine d'Investissement et de Commerce Extérieur (BMICE).

47. The panel was composed of:

- Mr. Nabil Jedlane, University Professor, Head of the Management Department, National School of Business and Management of Tangier
- Mr. Moses Obinyeluaku, Manager, Strategy and Innovation, AFREXIMbank
- Mr. Dhafer Saidane, Professor, SKEMA Business School
- Mr. Mohamed H'midouche, Vice-President of the Moroccan Association of Exporters (ASMEX), Advisor to the President in charge of Africa.

48. The moderator commended the quality of the speakers, which will make it possible to identify appropriate solutions to the problems raised, with a view to drawing up a road map at the end of the seminar.

49. Speaking first, Mr. Saidane pointed to the dichotomy between financial and economic integration. We must first fight against balkanization, with recapitalized banks which have a critical size at a regional level. There is a need for incubator banks of trans-Maghreb projects, financing banks with significant resources, Mr. Saidane added.

50. Banks must have a business model that is adapted to regional trade. Today they are essentially retail banks. Banks must be able to reach out to companies. They need financial engineering, trade-solutions, risk-management know-how, ACH (Automatic Clearing House) tools and good information systems. There is also a need to develop financial know-how, financial culture and strengthen coordination between the financial institutions of the Maghreb, he said.

51. Mr. Jedlane highlighted the limitations of the operating model and the strategic direction of the sub-region's banking system, which has very high profitability compared to experiences in other regions of the world, driven mainly by retail rather than investment business. Return on equity can reach 20%, against 16% in West Africa.

52. This situation occurs at a time when the bank penetration rate is very low, at around 34%, compared to more than 70% in middle-income countries. The female bank penetration rate is only 26%, Mr. Jedlane added.

53. Mr. Obinyeluaku shared with the audience his view on the role AfreximBank plays in promoting trade and African regional integration. He presented the financial instruments available, in particular:

- A « Facility » authorized to provide support to countries that are heavily impacted by the AfCFTA;
- The establishment of an intra-African payment and settlement system, to enable countries to exchange in their local currency;
- A programme to support the development of industrial parks and special economic zones;
- A trade facilitation programme aimed at strengthening the confidence of parties in trade transactions;
- The Global Facility for intra-African Trade Champions, which aims to facilitate the replication of successful business models in other African countries.

54. For Mr. H'midouche, who stressed that the financial sector has a major role to play in regional integration, there is a problem of harmony between the investment frameworks of the Maghreb countries. Maghreb banks are in a situation of over-liquidity, and do not take sufficient risks to support economic activity and trade. It is in this context that the African Development Bank (ADB) has set up lines of credit for banks to finance SMEs. These lines of credit are very little used, Mr. H'midouche regretted.

55. The Maghreb needs a financial system that finances the entire value chain, with long-term financing. Infrastructures can be financed through public-private partnerships, such as the financing of Dakar Airport. However, mechanisms must be found to mitigate risks and act on stability. Then Mr. H'midouche called for the creation of a development bank for the Maghreb, capable of providing economic operators with innovative instruments to mobilize resources internally and externally.

Panel 3: lessons learned from the first phase of the negotiations and the challenges of the second phase

56. The panel was moderated by Mrs. Lilia Hachem Naas, Director, ECA-North Africa Office (ECA-NA).

57. The panel was composed of the five chief negotiators of the AMU countries, namely:

- Mrs. Jemila Abdel Vetah, Chief Negotiator of Mauritania
- Mrs. Saida Hachicha, Chief Negotiator of Tunisia
- Mrs. Latifa El Bouabdellaoui, Chief Negotiator of Morocco
- Mr. Abdullah Eljadi, Chief Negotiator of Libya
- Mr. Khaled Bouchelaghem, Chief Negotiator of Algeria

58. By way of introduction to the works of the third panel, the moderator recalled the general problem discussed by the panel members. The speakers were invited to develop their remarks around two key points:

- Achievements and lessons learned from the first phase of the negotiations
- A forward-looking approach to the challenges related to the second phase of the negotiations.

59. Mrs. Abdel Vetah pointed out that the integration of Mauritania into the Maghreb and the rest of the continent is of crucial importance. The country was the first in North Africa to ratify the Agreement in December 2018. It is also an associate member of the ECOWAS zone, which, after a year of tough negotiations, now has a common external tariff on goods. This is an important step forward that facilitates Mauritania's alignment with the upcoming negotiations.

The AMU Secretary General should provide leadership, by organizing consultation meetings, to facilitate the intra-Maghreb negotiations and help define a common position in the construction of the continental project.

60. The importance of developing strong trade relations with the continent is also a strategic choice for Morocco, Mrs. El Bouabdellaoui noted. The existence of sensitive products, justified by socioeconomic considerations, should not constitute an obstacle to trade liberalization in Africa. Trade and economic complementarity should take precedence over competitiveness stakes in the negotiations and conclusion of agreements. The establishment of flexible and intelligent rules of origin, which take into account the productive fabric of member countries, is an important lever for the promotion of genuine integration around strong regional value chains that are as broad as possible. Mrs. El Bouabdellaoui called on the five AMU countries to promote coordination and consistency between their sectoral and development strategies to facilitate regional integration and boost the relevant potential gains.

61. Mrs. Hachicha supported the remarks made by the Chief Negotiators of Mauritania and Morocco by inviting AMU countries to better coordinate the operationalization of the AfCFTA in the sub-region. This will involve revitalizing the role of the AMU General Secretariat to facilitate the flow of information and the structuring of intra-Maghreb negotiations. The continental project is ambitious and complex at the same time and calls for synergy of efforts for its success.

62. Mr. Aljadi began by recalling that Libya is going through a period of political instability and insecurity which has an impact on its integration dynamics in the Maghreb and Africa. The country has not attended all the negotiation meetings conducted by the African Union Commission but has spared no effort to accompany the continental process. Improving the situation that the country is going through as well as support from its international partners will undoubtedly enable Libya to better position itself in the second phase of the negotiations.

63. Mr. Bouchelaghem outlined the approach followed by Algeria internally to facilitate the involvement of key players in the continental negotiations, particularly through the establishment of working groups on issues such as rules of origin, services, etc. the Chief Negotiator regretted the low level of trade with the rest of the continent and welcomed the AfCFTA's significant potential for greater African economic integration.

VII. Results and recommendations of the seminar

64. The discussion and exchanges generated by the contributions of the panel members around the three themes addressed led to the following recommendations:

Panel on the dynamics of the private sector

- The process of negotiation and implementation of the AfCFTA must be inclusive by actively involving different actors such as representatives of the private sector, but also women and youth;
- It is vital to improve the business environment of our member countries and our trade facilitation services to boost exports and attract foreign investment;
- The definition of the lists should be done in close consultation with private operators;
- It is essential to develop reliable and up-to-date information on the various markets (prices charged, current regulations, etc.). The use of new information technologies and digitalization is an important lever for a better flow of information.

Panel on the role of the financial sector

- The financial sector, particularly the banking system, which is fairly developed in the AMU countries, should better direct its operations towards economic operators by adopting a model that is less retail-driven and more business-oriented;
- Calling on member countries to consider the possibility of creating a Maghreb development bank;
- Examining all the possibilities of promoting trade finance, including the establishment of national export and import banks;
- Collaboration with pan-African entities, such as the African Development Bank, should be strengthened to facilitate synergy of efforts.

Panel on negotiations

- The definition of the lists of sensitive or excluded products should not be based on a simple criterion of market conquest but on the logic of regional integration;
- One of the major obstacles to the operationalization of the AfCFTA is non-tariff barriers, for which a collective effort is needed;
- Launching an effort to harmonize the sectoral strategies of the Maghreb countries in order to better build an integrated Maghreb;
- The AMU General Secretariat must play a leadership role in promoting consultation among member countries.

VIII. Closing ceremony

65. The proceedings of the regional dialogue were officially closed with statements by the ECA Director and H.E. the AMU Secretary General who thanked the audience for their participation and contribution to enriching the debates on the central issue of the position of a united Maghreb in a dynamic continent.

66. H.E. the SG informed the participants that discussions were currently underway between the AMU and Mauritania to convene a Maghreb Trade Ministerial Council meeting with the African Union for the organization of a High Level Summit on the side-lines of the next African Union Summit in February 2020 on the basis of the recommendations of the regional seminar.

Annex 1: Programme of Work

Day 1: Monday 11 November 2019

08h30 – 08h45

Registration

09h00– 09h45

Opening Addresses

- Mrs. Lilia Hachem Naas, Director, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) - North Africa Office
- H.E. Taïeb Baccouche, Secretary General of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)
- Mrs. Michaela Dodini, Representing the Ambassador of the European Union Delegation to Morocco
- H.E. Sid' Ahmed Ould Mohamed, Minister of Trade and Tourism, Mauritania
- H.E. Ambassador Albert Muchanga, Commissioner for Trade and Industry, African Union Commission
- Mr. Abdelouahed Rahal, Director General of Trade, Ministry of Industry, Trade and Green and Digital Economy, Morocco

09h45 – 10h00

Keynote Speaker, H.E. Ambassador Albert Muchanga, Commissioner for Trade and Industry, African Union Commission

10h00 – 10h45

Mr. Souleymane Abdallah, Economist (ECA) « *Results of impact estimates at the continental and sub-regional level* »

- Discussion

10h45 – 11h00

Coffee-break

11h00 – 13h00

Panel on the private dynamics in the Maghreb, opportunities and challenges

One of the major challenges related to the AfCFTA negotiations and its implementation is the degree and quality of private sector involvement. With the exception of some countries, the private sector in the continent seems to have received little consideration, and its aspirations, fears and insights seem to have been poorly integrated into government offers in the negotiations. The Panel wishes to help fill this void by fostering a public-private dialogue around Maghreb private sector participation and to produce a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities related to the AfCFTA in the region.

Moderator: Mrs. Michaela Dodini, Head of the Commercial Section at the European Union Delegation in Morocco

Panellists

- Mrs. Nermine Abulata, Advisor to the Minister of Trade and Industry, Egypt
- Mr. Mohamed Badr, Senior Advisor (WFP)
- Mr. Mondher Mimouni, Chief of the Trade and Market Intelligence Section at the International Trade Centre (ITC)
- Mr. Walid Loukil, Founder of Tunisia-Africa Business Council, Tunisia (To be confirmed)
- Mrs. Bilen Mammo, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Finance, Ethiopia
- Discussion

13h00 – 14h30

Lunch

14h30 – 15h00	<p>Tools to support the implementation of the AfCFTA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mr. Jean Bertrand Azapmo, Trade Advisor to the African Union Commission (AUC) « African Trade Observatory »
15h00 – 17h30	<p><i>Panel on the role of the financial sector for the success of the AfCFTA</i></p> <p>The financial sector, particularly the banking sector, is an indispensable link in the promotion of trade and regional integration. In the case of the Maghreb, domestic private banks have overcome barriers to gain market share in other countries in the region, thereby fostering improved financial integration, which in turn can promote actual trade and economic integration. What lessons can be drawn from the leading experience of the financial sector? Can it play a role as a facilitator and support economic actors to take advantage of business opportunities in the region?</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Sami Mouley, Director of the Economic Studies and Cooperation Department, Banque Maghrébine d'Investissement et de Commerce Extérieur (BMICE)</p> <p>Panellists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mr. Nabil Jedlane, University Professor, Head of the Management Department, National School of Business and Management of Tangier – Mr. Moses Obinyeluaku, Director, Strategy and Innovation, AFREXIMbank – Mr. Dhafer Saidane, Professor, SKEMA Business School – Discussion
16h15 – 16h30	Coffee-break
16h30 – 17h30	<i>Continuation of panel discussion</i>

Day 2: Tuesday 12 November 2019

09h00 – 09h15	<p>Negotiation tools for the implementation of the AfCFTA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mr. Mondher Mimouni, Chief of the Trade and Market Intelligence Section at the International Trade Centre (ITC)
09h15 – 12h30	<p><i>Panel on the lessons learned from the first phase of the negotiations and the challenges related to the second phase</i></p> <p>This panel wishes to achieve two results: i) address the lack of information on what AMU member countries have negotiated and obtained during the first phase and, ii) prepare the economic actors, private and public sectors, to better integrate the specificities of the fields open to the negotiations of the second phase. The presence of the chief negotiators of the five countries provides a unique opportunity to promote the exchange and sharing of experiences.</p> <p>Moderator: Mrs. Lilia Hachem Naas, Director, ECA-North Africa (ECA-NA)</p> <p>Panellists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Mrs. Jemila Abdel Vetah, Chief Negotiator of Mauritania – Mrs. Saida Hachicha, Chief Negotiator of Tunisia – Mrs. Latifa El Bouabdellaoui, Chief Negotiator of Morocco

- Mr. Abdullah Eljadi, Chief Negotiator of Libya
- Mr. Khaled Bouchelaghem, Chief Negotiator of Algeria
- Discussion

11h00 – 11h15 *Coffee-break*

11h15 – 12h30 *Continuation of panel discussions*

12h30 – 13h00 *Closing Addresses*

13h00 *Lunch*

Annex 2 List of participants

General Secretariat of the Arab Maghreb Union

1. H.E. Taïeb Baccouche
Secretary General of AMU
2. Mrs. Basma Soudani
Director of Political Affairs and Information, Chief of staff
3. Mr. Misbah Al-Mabrouk
Director of Food Security
4. Mr. Zahre-eddine Belbashir
Expert, Directorate of Economic Affairs
5. Mr. Hassan Bouti
Expert, Directorate of Infrastructure
6. Mr. Sidi Ould Moustapha
Expert, Directorate of Human Development

African Union Commission

7. H.E. Ambassador Albert Muchanga
Commissioner for Trade and Industry
8. Mr. Jean-Bertrand Azapmo
Regional Advisor for Trade

AMU countries

Algeria

9. Mr. Khaled BOUCHELAGHEM
Chief Negotiator
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