

THE EAST AFRICAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION



REPORT ON THE SUB-REGIONAL FORUM ON AFRICA CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA (AfCFTA)



**Sub- regional Forum Theme: Five Years of the African Continental Free
Trade Area (AfCFTA) - Progress, Lessons Learnt and Mechanisms to
Mainstream Labor Rights**

14TH-15TH AUGUST, 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE SUB-REGIONAL FORUM ON AfCFTA

The 18th Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Heads of State and Government adopted a decision to establish a African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). Subsequently, after ten (10) negotiation rounds, the Agreement establishing the AfCFTA was adopted by the 10th Extraordinary Meeting of the Heads of State of the African Union held on 21st March 2018 in Kigali, Rwanda. The AfCFTA is one of the flagships of Agenda 2063 and seeks to create a single market for goods and services and ultimately, a Continental Customs Union. These are earmarked as critical steps to establish the African Economic Community (AEC) envisioned under the Abuja Treaty of 1991. Covering a market of 1.2 billion people and a combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of US\$ 3 trillion, simulations by UNECA¹ project the AfCFTA to boost intra-African trade by 52.3% through the elimination of import duties, grow the manufacturing sector to \$1 trillion by 2025 and create over 14 million jobs. The AfCFTA entails progressive liberalisation of trade in goods up to 97%, and liberalization of five (5) priority service sectors i.e., financial services, Transport, Communication, Tourism and Professional services.

The AfCFTA implementation has seen a slow start, with 54 out of 55 African countries having signed it (out of which only 47 State Parties have ratified it) as of February 2024. Concerning trade in goods, as of May 2024, the number of adopted Provisional Schedules of Tariff Concessions for market access has risen to 45 from 42. Under Trade in Services, twenty-two (22) Schedules of Specific Commitment have been adopted covering five (5) priority sectors. Furthermore, additional legal instruments including the AfCFTA Protocols on Investment, Intellectual Property Rights, Competition Policy and Digital Trade have been incorporated into the AfCFTA framework and are awaiting ratification by AfCFTA State Parties at the national level, and will enter into force 30 days after the deposit of the Twenty-Second (22nd) instrument of ratification for each respectively. Whereas legal trading under the AfCFTA began on 1st January 2021, there was no actual take-off until 7th October 2022 when the AfCFTA Guided Trade Initiative (GTI) was launched, with a primary goal of testing the operational, institutional, legal and trade policy environment under the AfCFTA. Initially bringing together eight (8) State Parties i.e., Cameroon, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, Tanzania and Tunisia and focused on nine (9) products², the GTI's scope has been broadened to include thirty-five (35) State Parties and more products³. An initiative similar to the GTI is now planned for trade in services under the AfCFTA's five priority service sectors.

Since its inception, there have been concerns by Trade Unions and Human Rights experts over the lack of labor rights mainstreaming in the AfCFTA. This is despite the AfCFTA implementation having a direct bearing on labor rights. Apart from the potential jobs to be created in the manufacturing and agriculture sector, the promotion of trade in services under the pact will create more jobs for youth and increase entrepreneurship opportunities. However, there are potential dangers too concerning labor rights. The AfCFTA could potentially negatively affect the livelihoods of workers along the production value chains through retrenchment, low wages, and reduced workers' benefits if firms are affected by the liberalisation effects. With regards to trade in services liberalisation, poor concessions might not only affect workers (regarding job losses), but may also hinder innovation and skills

¹ <https://www.uneca.org/stories/stakeholders-discuss-benefits-afcfta-ghana>

² Products included ceramic tiles, batteries, pharmaceuticals, palm kernel oil, rubber, avocados, horticulture, tea, and components for air conditioners.

³ Product scope has been broadened to include mushrooms, flowers, biopesticides, powdered milk, fish oil, frozen tuna, mineral and chemical fertilizers, essential oils, packaged moringa, fortified maize porridge, honey, nut butter, fruit jams, tea, coffee, meat products, beverages, milling (flour and maize meal), pasta, and fabric(material)

transfer, which are critical in enhancing human resources. The same applies to gig-workers who are employed in a highly unregulated digital economy. Therefore, there are both potential benefits and challenges of AfCFTA on labor rights that need to be considered in line with Decent Work Agenda. Therefore, East African Trade Union Confederation (EATUC) in partnership with International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa) organised the Sub-regional forum to take stock of the key achievements from these past engagements of AfCFTA, identify the limitations encountered, and chart a way forward on the best way to ensure trade unions proactively engage their governments in the review and implementation of the AfCFTA.

1.1 The aim and objectives of the Forum

The overall purpose of the Sub-regional Forum was to *take stock of the progress and lessons learnt over the past 5 years of AfCFTA implementation and assess its implications for the workers.*

1.2 The Objectives of the Forum

The Sub-regional Forum on AfCFTA achieved the following planned specific objectives;

- a) It helped to take stock of the progress and lessons learnt over the past 5 years of AfCFTA implementation and its implications on workers,
- b) It provided an avenue to understand the AfCFTA review roadmap under the AfCFTA Implementation Review Mechanism (AFIRM) and,
- c) Lastly, it enabled Trade Unions to generate a strategy and roadmap to guide them in engaging in the AfCFTA review and implementation monitoring.

1.3 The Participants who attended the Sub-Regional Forum

Participants to the regional Sub-forum was drawn from;

- a) EATUC Affiliates, as
 - Central Organisations of Trade Unions-Kenya (COTU-K),
 - National Organisation of Trade Unions-Uganda (NOTU),
 - Confédération Syndicale du Burundi (COSYBU) and,
 - (Rwanda Workers' Trade Union Confederation) CESTRAR,
- b) Representatives of East African Community (EAC) Secretariat,
- c) International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC-Africa),
- d) EATUC-Cooperating Partners, such as CSOs working on trade and investment issues like Third World Network),
- e) Representatives from Government of Rwanda, Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Labour.

1.4 The Methodology and approach used during the Sub-regional Forum on AfCFTA

In achieving the workshop objectives, number of methods and approaches were used. These, included; scene setting and welcome remarks. Facilitations which involved power point presentations, Role play/group work exercises, Group presentations and Plenary sessions involving questions and answers as well as documentation of the proceedings.

2. SCENE SETTING AND OPENING REMARKS

The Sub-regional Forum was led and facilitated by EATCU Executive Secretary, Bro. Mwaiko Stephano who welcomed participants and the facilitators to the Sub-regional forum on AfCFTA. In addition, he shared with the participants the workshop objectives and the planned programme items and called for their active participation and sharing to ensure labour issues are integrated within AfCFTA.

2.1 Official Opening remarks

Official remarks were made by the following entities' heads; -

2.1.1 Third World Network Africa

Mr. Sylvester W. Bagooro, Programmes Officer of Third World Network (TWN) noted that *“TWN has a long history of working with trade unions because of the power of labour movement in advocating for workers rights and interests”*. Mr. Sylvester stressed the need by trade unions to always provide high premium when invited or given spaces for dialogue. He observed that, as TWN Africa in their implementation course, they have realised that Africa has three main issues or constraints among all its states. These are; unemployment, high level of debt burden (for example, by 2022 its debt burden was at USD 1.8 trillion) and weak economic systems that can not create the needed employment potentials and opportunities for its population. He implored the meeting to ensure these fundamental challenges are addressed if Africa is to have prosperity for its people.

2.1.2 African Regional Confederation of International Trade Union

On his part, Comrade Joel Akhator Odigie, General Secretary of ITUC-Africa stressed that, *“ITUC is committed to gender equality in all its interventions, for example, if two participants are invited for a meeting, one of them ought to be a female”*. He observed that, *“the forum is organised at a time when African countries are experiencing high costs of fuel, food and financial crisis”*. To avert some of these economic challenges, he stressed the need to leverage on the AfCFTA to improve Africa's production capacity. Finally, he implored members to reflect on how to promote the rights and interest of workers, how to contribute to trade and investment at national and global levels to ensure Africa become one of the key global players.

2.1.3 Rwanda Workers' Trade Union Confederation Remarks

Secretary General, Rwanda Workers' Trade Union Confederation (CESTRAR), Comrade Biraboneye Africain welcomed all the participants to the workshop in Kigali, Rwanda. He shared that Rwanda has just concluded its General Elections for different political offices, which provide an opportunity for the country to engage new pool of leaders on labour issues as well as trade and investment. He implored members to actively contribute, socialise and understand the implications of trade and investment implications on workers of the region and Africa. Lastly, he stated that *“for the workshop to achieve its intended objectives, they should be in position to openly and freely discuss and come up with strong recommendations that can shape Africa's interests in trade and investment”*.

3. MAJOR PRESENTATIONS AND ENGAGEMENTS DURING THE SUB-REGIONAL FORUM ON AfCFTA

The following were the major presentations that formed discussions of the regional meeting;

3.1 *AfCFTA after Five Years: State of Play, Achievements, Lessons Learned and Review Mechanism*

This presentation was made by Ms. Angelique Umolisa, Principal Trade Officer International Trade, EAC Secretariat. It focused on the following areas;

- Background and status of AfCFTA, in which Eritrea is the only country yet to sign the agreement.
- Trade in goods that provides schedule of tariff concessions. For example, there is EAC tariff to the framework. Thus, partner states are recognising their tariffs in line with commitments to AfCFTA.
- Key principles agreed at regional level, includes capacity building and awareness to ensure concessions to partner states.
- Other areas shared included, Rules of Origin, dispute settlement mechanisms, insights from GTI as well as tools and initiatives.
- Lastly, she stressed that, experiences and gains in EAC will facilitate implementation of the frameworks in the region. *(See details in the presentation)*

3.2 *AfCFTA after Five Years: State of Play, Achievements, Lessons Learned and Review Mechanism*

Additional presentation on this topic was made by Mr. Sylvester W. Bagooro, Programme Officer, Third World Network. The focus was;

- Introduction to AfCFTA and stages of AEC/successive process.
- Pillars of Economic integration and envisioning by the African union.
- Initiatives to further the Agenda 2063 in relation to trade liberalisation completion of Protocols.
- The Guided Trade Initiatives (GTI) provides lessons that can be used.

3.3 *Trade Union Engagement at Regional Level: Research on Awareness, Knowledge and Challenges of AfCFTA among African Workers*

presented by Dr. Hod Anyigba Kwadzo.

- Introduction: The attainment of AfCFTA's objectives heavily depends on the engagement, understanding, and perspectives of Africa's workforce who constitute the backbone of the continent's economies trade, provide better jobs, reduce poverty, and increase shared prosperity throughout Africa.
- The problem: They extend beyond individual workers to encompass collective labour representation, policy advocacy, and equitable economic growth.
- Literature Review/ Desk Review: Specifically, the review included AfCFTA documents such as "A New Era for Global Business and Investment in Africa 2023"; AfCFTA Secretariat's "AfCFTA Private Sector Engagement Strategy, 2022–2032"; Africa Legal Network's "Agriculture Under the African Continental Free Trade Area 2022"; AfCFTA Agreement, AfCFTA Implementation Documents (Protocols, Annexes, and Decisions); AfCFTA Progress Reports, National Trade Policies and Strategies; African Union (AU) Documents; Case Studies on the Implementation of AfCFTA, World Trade Organization Reports.
- The research focused on demographics, awareness and knowledge, concerns and perceptions, gender and youth focus, AfCFTA contributions to workers, popularity

and awareness among peers, winners and losers, facilitating trade and free movement, cross tabulation analysis and proposed recommendations. *(See details in the presentations)*

3.4 Research Findings from Project Countries: Kenya by COTU-K. Ms. Selina Ngei and she presented on the following areas; -

- Ratified protocols,
- Membership to Regional Economic Communities
- Main exports and imports engaged in by Kenyan traders
- Export and Import destinations of Kenyan's goods and services
- Overview on the trade within the EAC region. *(See details in the presentations)*

3.5 Research Findings from Project Countries: CESTRAR Rwanda, Gaspard

His presentation was focusing on the following issues:-

- **Research Objective** - Participating, trade unions in Africa, advance decent work and workers' rights in the negotiations and implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement at the national, sub-regional and the regional level
- **Research Methodology**
 - Desk review
 - Organise interviews with key stakeholders
 - Trade Unions
 - Ministry of Commerce, Trade and Industry as a lead negotiating agency
 - Private Sector Federation –
 - Participated in the African conference AfCFTA and Standards
- **Research Findings**
 - Existing of the AfCFTA Negotiation task force led by the MINICOM
 - Limited involvement of the trade union in the AfCFTA negotiation due to lack or limited information
 - Limited knowledge on its process,
 - There is a need to conduct an advocacy for the trade union to be part of the AfCFTA implementation committee (Eg Position paper)
 - Guidelines on Rule of origin for products (under development)
 - Good understanding of the role of regional economic bloc
 - Low understanding of the implementing committee on who should be invited to the meeting
 - Different consultative meetings to discuss Rwanda's strategy of the African Continental Free Trade Area, (AfCFTA) with private sector, civil society and government met to discuss the country's readiness for the implementation of the agreement.
- **Gaps and Challenges in implementation of AfCFTA among trade union in Rwanda**
 - Limited financial capacity to help them deepen engagements and implement projects to realize the AfCFTA agenda.

- Lack of specific dialogue forum amongst trade union that inhibit trade unions' role and participation in the AfCFTA. For example, there is no consultative framework, specific coalition on AfCFTA at National level
- Lack of collaboration and coordination between trade unions with government and other relevant stakeholders, like the media.

3.6 Study visit to Companies trading under AfCTA: Rwanda Mountain Tea

A study and sharing visit were made to Rwanda Mountain tea share on how the company is taking advantage of AfCFTA, how they are working with other stakeholders such as trade unions, government and Civil society and lastly, how to use trade and investment to grow prosperity for job creation, access to finance and as well as welfare of the workers.

During the visit, the management shared that they joined AfCFTA so as to benefit from the scale of economies and avoid middle men. It has also helped them to build strong infrastructure systems such as transport structures like concessions with Rwandair for exporting tea, repackaging tea in receiving countries within Africa. As a result, the company is fast-growing without much challenges. The only challenge shared is that, Rwanda is a land locked country. However, this has been resolved through creating strong negotiating tea and marketing team to expand and explore new markets in the continent. To ensure quality products, the company has a diversity of workers who sustains value addition with customer satisfaction. In addition, Ministry of trade has been handy in ensuring markets are expanded.

In addition, company staff have been trained in e-tariff platform. To ensure decent work and social justice for all workers, they have closely work with CESTRAR, line ministries and agencies. They have labour committees in all the company branches and follow labour standards through certification of products by global trade marks and associations such as Red Alliance.



Figure 1 Comrade Joel Akhator Odigie sharing his remarks during the study visit at Rwanda Mountain tea in Kigali, Rwanda

3.7 AfCFTA Implementation: Prospects and Challenges: Key achievements and Platform for Trade Union Engagement by Fred MURIGANDE, His presentation was focusing on the following issues

- AfCFTA and its protocols
- AfCFTA Guided Trade Initiative
- Operational Instruments and trading under AfCFTA
- Rwanda AfCFTA National Implementation Committee
- Linking made in Rwanda policy with AfCFTA(Benefits for MiR products under AfCFTA
- Ways/strategies for the implementing AfCFTA and MiR

From Civil Society Organisations Perspective. This presentation was made by JB Kanyangoga and focused on the following areas;

- Concept of regional integration and the AfCFTA,
 - Key timelines for African Economic Integration,
 - Key milestones, such as dispute settlement mechanism, Pan African Payment and Settlement System, African trade observatory, NTB online mechanisms, adjustment facility and Guided trade initiative.
 - Initial participating countries, Phase 2 of GTI and activities roadmap of the GTI.
- (See details in the presentation)*

4. LEARNINGS AND OBSERVATIONS DURING THE SUB-REGIONAL FORUM

The following were the key learning and observations shared and identified; -

- a) EAC Employment projections: This is likely to increase to about two million jobs by 2022. However, this will be associated with informality and labour rights issues, compromising decent work and social justice.
- b) Major areas of review of AfCFTA: According to Article 28 of the Agreement establishing the AfCFTA, the review will focus on compliance in its implementation rather than the content, making its review limited in the context.
- c) Stakeholder engagement and assessment: This forms key part of AfCFTA processes as they provided concrete views and positions on how best to move forward the framework.
- d) Sharing of Experiences and lessons by committees of RECs at AfCFTA: This helps in getting lessons and good practises that can be used to further trade and investment.
- e) Ownership of production: This is very key in creating economic value of participating countries in AfCFTA, since most often Africa's production is construed with irregularities such as poor infrastructures, hostile internal trade regimes among others.
- f) Integration of labour issues in the review process of AfCFTA: The review process provides window for trade unions to ensure labour issues are reflected in all the protocols so that labour standards and rights are safeguarded.
- g) Trade in goods, for which RoO are finalised, can take place under the tabled tariff offers. These offers must comply with the agreed modalities for tariff negotiations: tariffs on 90% of tariff lines are to be eliminated. These are tariffs on non-sensitive goods. Non-Least Developed Countries liberalise tariffs of non-sensitive goods over 5 years and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) over 10 years. 7% of tariff lines can be sensitive goods. Non-Least Developed Countries liberalise tariffs of sensitive goods over 10 years and LDCs over 13 years. 3% of tariff lines can be excluded from liberalisation. The value of these imports may not exceed 10% of total intra-Africa imports. This calculation is not friendly and does not offer enough protection to domestic products.
- h) Resource and financial mobilisation: This is very key in ensuring development of trade and investment in the region, rather than relying on foreign-based banks with stringent banks such as EXIM bank.
- i) The role of RECs and their importance in driving AfCFTA is being constrained: For example, ECOWAS is on the verge of collapse due to foreign interference. Thus, the need to ensure unity and togetherness in regional blocs in the face of the success of AfCFTA.
- j) Movement of persons and E-migration: This ought to have been well catered for within the AfCFTA, since few countries have adopted protocol on movement of persons.
- k) Big brother syndrome and its value in the economic development of the continent: This can be achieved by leveraging with the big economies in the region, such as South Africa, Nigeria among others.
- l) Comprehensive engagements on labour issues by trade unions: This should exceed ILO standards to include economic value, Collective Bargaining Agreements, value addition among others. This will help to ensure the whole context is considered for transformational development of member states.

5. MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAYFORWARD

The following were recommended for the different key AfCFTA stakeholders; -

5.1 Labour Centers and Trade Unions

- a) ***Comprehensive inclusive trade union involvement in trade and investment issues:*** Trade unions to be supported and capacitated in social dialogue and negotiations of trade and investment agreements at national, regional and international levels. This can be achieved through among others befriending negotiators and demanding spaces for trade union involvement in all the platforms.
- b) ***Capacity and technical enhancement of trade union leaders in trade and investment:*** for example, through trainings on trade and investment, developing pool of national trade negotiators to ensure trade unionism foot prints in AfCFTA and trade issues.
- c) ***Creating and identifying strong strategic partnerships and collaboration with alike-minded actors:*** This will help to leverage on the strengths and resources for the interests of workers. This can be done through mapping and identification of key stakeholders and institutions for actions and responses.
- d) ***Development of position papers, policy briefs and statements:*** This will help to influence decisions of AfCFTA and national governments on trade and investment.
- e) ***Development of communication strategy on AfCFTA and Trade:*** This will help to undertake awareness raising on AfCFTA and its implications on all sectors.
- f) ***Advocate for ratification of AU Protocol on free movement of persons:*** National centers and EATUC should advocate to EAC governments on the need to ratify AU Protocol on free movement of personbased on the strong values and practises.
- g) ***Development of strong research and policy department:*** This will be charged to generate evidence for stakeholder engagements and lobby and advocacy to improve trade and investment negotiations. Research can be on the services and jobs opportunities, policy gaps, trade issues to be negotiated on among others.
- h) ***Synergies with line Government Ministries and bodies:*** There is need to establish strong collaborative partnerships on issues of trade and investment such as with Ministry of Trade, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Regional and Foreign Affairs among others. This will help in ensuring that trade unions become part of committees that influence decision making.
- i) ***Advocate for trade unions representation, membership and participation:*** Especially in National Implementation Committees and spaces as per the AfCFTA stakeholder strategy.
- j) ***Development and translation of IEC materials:*** Especially, simplified versions of AfCFTA and other trade and investment related materials for dissemination to create knowledge among the population and traders.
- k) ***Celebration and Usage of political power:*** Such as petitions, statements and capitalising days of action, for example, International Day of Youth, African Day among others.
- l) ***Strategic interfaces and engagements:*** For example, one on one meeting with power centers and decision makers to influence trade union participation and decision making on issues of trade and investment as well as labour issues integration.

5.2 Partners States

- i) ***Inclusive multi-stakeholder national consultation platforms and systems:*** Governments should ensure trade unions are part of national, regional and continental platforms and implementing committees.
- ii) ***Harmonise and domesticate AfCTA within national and policy frameworks:*** This will help in actualisation and easy implementation of the framework.
- iii) ***Sectoral integration approach:*** Ensure sectoral workers form part of national, regional and continental negotiation and committees for inclusive and transformational growth.

5.3 Regional Economic Communities (EAC)

- a) ***Sharing of the relevant documents:*** EAC Secretariat to share with labour centers and EATUC the developed Draft Regulatory frameworks which is meant to guide the development and implementation of national laws.
- b) ***Harmonisation and convergence systems between AfCFTA and regional economic communities/frameworks:*** This should be designed and operationalised to help Members states in realising opportunities at both regional and continent level.
- c) ***Trade union is one of the key stakeholders in trade and investment issues.*** Therefore, they should be involved in all stakeholder engagement in AfCFTA issues at the regional levels. They should be involved in all sector specific to strengthen sector collaboration and engagements.
- d) ***Review and implementation of protocol on labour movement:*** Regional economic frameworks should be reviewed or implement provisions that allow for movement of professionals and have regulations to support MRAs.
- e) ***Development of labour mainstreaming strategy:*** EAC Regional AfCFTA implementation strategy should consider labour issues, including its monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

5.4 ITUC-Africa

- i) ***Engage and write to AfCFTA Secretariat on the detailed Review Roadmap to be shared with trade unions and regional labour center.*** Tentatively, it starts in August 2024 in Kenya, then October, 2024 for Council of Ministers' Meeting and February, 2025.
- ii) ***Coordinate and mobilise trade unions:*** To advocate for review of AfCFTA to include review of its scope to include labour related issues as well as other stakeholder involvement such as trade union's role in AfCFTA implementation within national, regional and continent level.
- iii) ***Official letter to President of Nigeria:*** Develop a sample letter to sent President of Republic of Nigeria on the need to contribute to Africa's transformation.
- iv) ***Set-up Communication desk:*** This will help in development of information, education and communication materials on trade and investment to be shared and disseminated among trade unions in the continent.

- v) **Conduct comprehensive research on goods and services in Africa:** Including employment opportunities that can be generated as a result of AfCFTA. This will provide for cost benefit analysis as well as possible areas of synergies and entry points for Partners States and other stakeholders.


7. POST SUB-REGIONAL FORUM PLANNING ON AfCFTA REVIEW: KEY ASKS BY LABOUR UNIONS; SPACES FOR ENGAGEMENT

Participants were grouped into two groups to reflect on the key demands, strategies and possible required areas of support, as seen below; -

- i) Amend preamble and objectives of the AfCFTA main Agreement to include labor rights,
- ii) Integrate Labor Provisions in the AfCFTA Protocols on Trade in Goods & Services,
- iii) Advocate for an AfCFTA Annex on Labor (to the main agreement),
- iv) Lobby for the promotion of E-Immigration,
- v) Expedite signing and ratification of the AU Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and other similar protocols at REC level,
- vi) Lobby for an end to discriminatory practices against African expatriates e.g. Rescinding of Nigeria's Expatriate Employment Levy (EEL),
- vii) Expedite implementation of Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs) at the Regional Economic Community (REC) level,
- viii) Integrate implementation of the AU Free Movement of People (FMP) Protocol in national and regional AfCFTA Implementation Strategies,
- ix) Amend Rules of Origin (RoO) to incorporate proof for certificate of compliance with Labor Rights,
- x) Ensure representation of Labor Unions on national and regional AfCFTA Implementation Monitoring Committees.

Group 1 presented as below;

1) What are the top four demands
<p>The top four demands are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Integration of labour provisions in all the protocols of AfCFTA, not necessarily only in Goods and Services, ii) Ensure representation of Labour Unions in all national and regional AfCFTA Implementation Monitoring and Working Committee, iii) Amend Rules of Origin (RoL) to incorporate proof for Certificate of Compliance with Labour Rights, iv) Social dialogue, Negotiations and Stakeholder engagements for Trade Unions across all levels <p>Other proposed demands for consideration proposed by the group were;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Safety net issues such as social protection, OSH among others. ii. Business and Human Rights.
2) What can be done (strategies in advancing the demands, in terms of proposed strategies, activities and institutions to be engaged)

Strategies	Activities	Institutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">  Capacity strengthening to help to understand the framework.  Strategic partnership.  Harmonization of labour standards.  Lobby and advocacy  Production of intellectual property (Research).  Multi-stakeholder engagement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trainings and awareness raisings on AfCFTA. • Community campaigns and outreaches. • Identification and mapping • Consultations and dialogue meetings. • Policy analysis and developments. • Design and development of communication materials. 	<p>Ministry of Trade, Labour and Planning.</p> <p>Ministry of Foreign Affairs.</p>
3) What support is needed to advance the identified demands		
<p>These are;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Financial support, ii. Technical, iii. Legal support, iv. Form team of experts. 		

Group 2 presentation were as follows;

1) What are the top four demands		
<p>The top four asks agreed on, are;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Amend preamble and objectives of the AfCFTA main Agreement to include labor rights. ii. Integrate Labor Provisions in the AfCFTA Protocols on Trade in Goods & Services. iii. Advocate for an AfCFTA Annex on Labor (to the main agreement) Lobby for the promotion of E-Immigration. iv. Integrate implementation of the AU Free Movement of People (FMP) Protocol in national and regional ACFTA Implementation Strategies <p>Most four priorities agreed on are;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Ensure representation of Labor Unions on national and regional AfCFTA Implementation Monitoring Committees b) Amend preamble and objectives of the AfCFTA main Agreement to include labor rights. Expedite signing and ratification of the AU Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and other similar protocols at REC level c) Expedite signing and ratification of the AU Protocol on Free Movement of Persons and other similar protocols at REC level d) Advocate for an AfCFTA Annex on Labor (to the main agreement) 		
2) What can be done (strategies in advancing the demands, in terms of proposed strategies, activities and institutions to be engaged)		
Strategies	Activities	Institutions

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Establishment of National Sectorial Research desk. ➤ Strengthen engagement through (capacity building, position paper). ➤ Develop Communication strategy and its Dissemination systems. (to include media campaigns, awareness creation among members, social media, adopt a comprehensive understanding of trade agreement). ➤ Lobby and advocacy to sit in the National Implementation Committee as members. ➤ Establish Working Group; focusing on the thematic committee of labour issues and rights. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nation Social dialogue on the country level about the AFCFTA agreement • MOA Bilateral/multilateral (Unions and stakeholders) • Research on labor standards for companies under AFCTA • Awareness/sensitize affiliates (national and regional) • Regional Joint position paper 	Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Finance, chamber of commerce, Employer's association.
3) What support is needed to advance the identified demands		
These are; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical support from the secretariat of AfCFTA, ITUC, AU, EATUC. • Advocacy campaign materials in local languages. 		

8. CONCLUSION

In his closing remarks, Comrade Joel Akhator Odigie, General Secretary of ITUC-Africa challenged participants to put in practise what has been learnt. He remarked that, ‘*let us be one of the few who can make a change at individual and organisational level*’. In addition, he implored participants to develop power to think outside the box as it creates avenue for innovative thinking to further the cause of workers in Africa. Lastly, he implored the attendees to report back two or three action areas that can be considered by their respective labour centers or organisations to strengthen trade and investment within their areas of mandates.

EXPENDICTURE

No	Item	Amount (USD)
1.	Dinner	1760
2.	Accommodation/Conference	6,088
3.	Local Transport	250
4.	Facilitation	500
5.	Tickets	7,361
	Total	15,959