

RECUEIL DES INSTRUMENTS JURIDIQUES ET INSTITUTIONNELS
DE FACILITATION DU TRANSPORT ET DES ÉCHANGES
EN AFRIQUE SUBSAHARIENNE

ANNEXE VI-9

**PROTOCOL ON SIMPLIFICATION AND HARMONIZATION
OF TRADE DOCUMENTS AND PROCEDURES (ZEP)**

(LUSAKA 1981)

**PROTOCOL ON SIMPLIFICATION AND HARMONIZATION
OF TRADE DOCUMENTS AND PROCEDURES**

PREAMBLE

THE HIGH CONTRACTING PARTIES

RECALLING the provisions of item (ix) of subparagraph (a) of paragraph 4 of Article 3 of the Treaty which requires that the simplification and harmonization of trade documents and procedures shall be set out in a Protocol to be annexed to the Treaty.

HEREBY AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

ARTICLE 1

Interpretation

In this Protocol:

“Committee” means the Customs and Trade Committee established by Article 11 of the Treaty;

“trade facilitation” means the co-ordination and rationalization of trade procedures and documents relating to the movement of goods from their place of origin to their destination; and

“trade procedures” means activities related to the collection, presentation, processing and dissemination of data and information concerning all activities constituting international trade.

ARTICLE 2

Scope and application

1. The provisions of this Protocol shall apply to all documents and procedures employed at all stages of transactions relating to trade within the Preferential Trade Area from the placing of orders to the delivery of goods.

2. For the purpose of this Protocol, the Member States undertake to simplify procedures and reduce to the minimum, formalities, administrative processes and expenses related to trade among the Member States by:

- (a) reducing to a minimum the number of trade documents and copies thereof;
- (b) reducing to a minimum the number of institutions required to handle documents referred to in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph,
- (c) harmonizing the nature of the information to be contained in documents referred to in subparagraph (a) of this paragraph; and
- (d) designing standard trade documents.

Trade facilitation

The Member States undertake to initiate trade facilitation programmes aimed at:

- (a) reducing the cost of documents and the volume of paper work required in respect of trade between the Member States;
- (b) ensuring that the nature and volume of information required in respect of trade within the Preferential Trade Area does not adversely affect the economic development of, or trade among, the Member States;
- (c) adopting common standards of trade procedures within the Preferential Trade Area where international requirements do not suit the conditions prevailing among the Member States;
- (d) ensuring adequate co-ordination between trade and transport facilitation within the Preferential Trade Area;
- (e) keeping under review the procedures adopted in international trade and transport with a view to simplifying and adopting them for use by the Member States;
- (f) collecting and disseminating information on trade facilitation and documents;
- (g) promoting the development and adoption of common solutions to problems in trade facilitation among the Member States; and
- (h) initiating or promoting the establishment of joint programmes for the training of personnel engaged in trade facilitation among the Member States.

ARTICLE 4

Standardization of trade documents and information

The Member States undertake where this is appropriate, to design and standardize their trade documents and the information required to be contained in such documents in accordance with internationally accepted standards, practices and guidelines, and taking into account their possible use in computer and other automatic data programming systems.

ARTICLE 5

The Committee

1. The functions of the Committee shall include the undertaking of all activities relating to trade documents and procedures necessary to carry out trade transactions efficiently within the Preferential Trade Area. It shall more particularly deal with those documents and procedures relating to:

- (a) customs operations relating to the exportation, re-exportation and importation of goods;
- (b) the collection and remission of customs duties;
- (c) export and import licensing;

- (d) foreign exchange control;
 - (e) clearing and forwarding of goods by agents;
 - (f) insurance of goods and transit traffic bonds;
 - (g) operations relating to transit trade;
 - (h) transport operations and licensing of carriers; and
 - (i) statistical control and dissemination of information on trade documents.
2. Each Member State shall establish or designate an appropriate national institution to serve as a focal point for the facilitation of trade.
3. The Member States undertake to promote co-operation between their national institutions, the Committee and other institutions engaged in the facilitation of trade.

ARTICLE 6

Regulations

The Council may make regulations for the better carrying out of the provisions of this Protocol.