



THE ROLE AND PARTNERSHIP OF THE FOOD AND DRUGS AUTHORITY (FDA) WITH THE AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA (AfCFTA)

Background of AfCFTA

- The AfCFTA was created by the African Continental Free Trade Agreement among 54 of the 55 African Union nations.
- AfCFTA is one of the largest free trade areas since the formation of the World Trade Organization, given Africa's current population of 1.2 billion people, which is expected to grow to 2.5 billion by 2050.
- One of the main strategic objectives of AfCFTA **is to increase intra-African trade through better harmonization and coordination of trade within the African continent.**

What is the goal?

- The main goal of the AfCFTA is **to create a single continental market for goods and services**, with free movement of business persons and investments.
- It will also expand intra-African trade through better harmonization and coordination of trade liberalization and facilitation across Africa in general.
- The agreement initially **requires members to remove tariffs from 90% of goods**, allowing free access to commodities, goods, and services across the continent.
- The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa estimates that the agreement will **boost intra-African trade by 52 percent by 2022.**

How will it be done?

- The AfCFTA will be **governed by five operational instruments**, i.e.
 - the Rules of Origin;
 - the online negotiating forum;
 - the monitoring and elimination of non-tariff barriers;
 - a digital payments system, and
 - the African Trade Observatory.

- In the long term, the Agreement may **assist in resolving the historical anomaly in which Africa trades less with itself and more with the rest of the world.**

When? (Timelines & Milestones)

- Trading under the AfCFTA Agreement has been postponed to **1 January 2021 due to the COVID-19.**
- The Official Commissioning and Handing Over of the AfCFTA Secretariat Building in Accra happened on **17 August 2020** via Zoom.

Ghana Hosts AfCFTA Secretariat

- Ghana has been chosen by the African Union (AU) to host the secretariat of the African Continental Free Trade Area
- **H.E. Mr. Wamkele Mene** was officially appointed the first Secretary-General of the Secretariat on 19 March 2020.
- It is envisaged that the Secretariat will provide administrative support for the implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement, such as;
 - convening meetings,
 - monitoring and evaluating the implementation process, and
 - other duties assigned to it by the Committee of Senior Officials, Council of Ministers, and the AU Assembly.
- The secretariat is also expected to drive **increased air and other traffic into Ghana**, as well as **boost demand in the hospitality, commercial and residential real estate**, and other related sectors.

The Role and Partnership with Ghana's FDA include but not limited to:

I. Increased Regulation

- The increase in the influx of goods and services as a result of AfCFTA introduces the added responsibility of **increased regulation to ensure the safety of the African population in respect of the inflows and outflows of goods and services.**

II. Safety & Reliability Assurance

- It will be vital for AfCFTA to be assured of additional **success and reliability of the safety of goods and services exchanged in the process.**

III. Effective Partnerships with the FDA

- To this effect, there will be **the need to partner with regulatory bodies such as the FDA.**
- Thus, in order for AfCFTA **to execute its core mandate efficiently, the services of the FDA will be vital.**