Promoting the role of African women in stimulating intra-African trade

Resolution adopted by the 45th Conference
(Abidjan, 15 December 2023)

The Committee of Women Parliamentarians of the African Parliamentary Union, meeting on 13 December 2023 in Abidjan (Côte d’Ivoire),

Considering that African countries have enormous trade potential, both regionally and globally,

Recognizing the leading role that women play in regional trade,

Considering the key function that African women perform in trade in Africa,

Underscoring the essential place that African women must occupy with the objective of fully exploiting the commercial potential of the continent,

Again underscoring the need to advocate for the granting of land to African women producers,

Aware of the need for national consultations to promote better knowledge of the experiences of women in cross-border trade (producers of goods and services, investors, business owners and actors in the formal and informal sectors),

Noting that the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is an opportunity for competitiveness within the African continent and outside the African continent,

Highlighting that the AfCFTA is also an opportunity to stimulate growth and achieve sustainable and inclusive socio-economic development,

Again highlighting the technical support provided by the UNDP and UN Women, in collaboration with the UN, to the AfCFTA for its initiative,

Proposes the following recommendations to the 45th Conference:

1. Recognition by public authorities of the role of African women in trade and the promotion of their role in stimulating intra-African trade;

2. Relaying this recognition to civil servants at all levels;
3. Monitoring by African governments of the implementation of the rules and regulations governing trade at borders; This, for the purposes of helping women cope with the risks they face in their trade-related activities;

4. Fair distribution of the benefits of integration;

5. Training African women in managerial skills to improve their access to knowledge and the development of competences, thus facilitating their access to financing;

6. African women’s access to information and knowledge of opportunities;

7. Access of African women to information relating to trade, policies, regulations, standards, taxes, markets and investment opportunities;

8. Establishing mechanisms to increase awareness of the opportunities offered by the AfCFTA;

9. Support for African women to use the agreements and market opportunities of the AfCFTA;

10. Promoting policies and laws that protect the rights and opportunities of African women;

11. Providing them with an environment conducive to export activity;

12. Promoting the leadership of African women and their participation in business and export networks for export trade;

13. Trade facilitation measures for African women in the AfCFTA;

14. Improving amenities offered to African women at border posts (safe storage, access to clean water and hygienic sanitation facilities, care, safe accommodation and transport infrastructure and public transport, etc.);

15. Implementation of personal security measures (harassment, gender-based violence, etc.) and property security (theft, confiscation of property and corruption, etc.);

16. Recovery from shocks: unexpected events or crises (e.g. COVID-19, climate-related events, conflicts, etc.) affect women exporters;

17. The adoption of coping mechanisms by women in commerce to deal with unexpected events and crises, as well as to strengthen their resilience.