



# The SADC Protocol on Trade in Services

## Opening Markets to Create Opportunities



On 21-25 November 2022, the second meeting of the Sector Focus Group (SFG)-Business Services and Trade Negotiating Forum was held in Johannesburg.

The SFG comprised of Member States' representatives from Ministries of Trade as well as regional and national policy, regulatory and private sector institutions representing services sub-sectors categorised as business services.

The meeting was attended by government representatives of Angola, Botswana, DRC, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe, as well as some private sector representatives of the legal, accounting, medical, real estate sectors and Printing SA representing printing, packaging, signage and visual communication. Representatives of the EAC and COMESA Secretariats also participated.

The meeting from 21-23 November was chaired by Printing SA representative Ms Khanyi Ntanzi.

The negotiating issues for business services in the SADC were highlighted taking into account the characteristics of each sub-sector. It was also noted that the business services were included in the priority sectors offered in the first round of AfCFTA trade in services negotiations.

There were recommendations that training and awareness regarding trade in services be undertaken in order to build capacity in both regional and national level for high participation and to fast track the negotiations.



From left: Khanyi Ntanzi, representing Printing SA and the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition representatives



Khanyi Ntanzi

The development of a regulatory cooperation framework was considered in the various business services subsectors to address regulatory challenges that were raised by the SFG as impediments to cross-border trade in services and to encourage collaboration among industry stakeholders at the regional level.

Consideration on how to harness the efforts in the national alignment of qualifications in order to support the development of Mutual

Recognised Agreements (MRAs) starting with professions where the need for an MRA has been indicated.

It was noted that the SADC region is characterised by moderate investment, comparatively high cost and limited access to services by the general public. At the same time, it is acknowledged that services are the most important part of Southern African economies and are also important inputs to production in all sectors. Services are important elements for growth and competitiveness.

SADC Member States recognise that the deeper integration not only of trade in goods, but also of their services markets holds great economic potential. In the SADC Treaty Member States undertook to develop policies aimed at the progressive elimination of obstacles to the free movement of capital and labour, goods and services.