

The Myriad of Trading Arrangements and Economic Integration Efforts in Africa

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The G20 Summit in New Delhi in September 2023 deliberated upon global issues which are at the forefront. It concluded with the G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration with an announcement on the inclusion of the African Union as a permanent member of the grouping under the heading 'Creating a More Inclusive World'. The African Union and the myriad of preferential trade agreements and integration efforts currently undergoing in the vast continent have generated a lot of interest and remain at the center stage.

AFRICA is a huge continent that has 54 sovereign countries¹ on its landmass with a combined population of around 1.39 billion². 48 countries are located on mainland Africa while six are island nations. Besides, there are two disputed areas: Somaliland, an autonomous region of Somalia, and Western Sahara, presently occupied by Morocco³ but claimed by the

Polisario⁴. A variety of trading arrangements and economic integration initiatives have been undertaken by the countries in the different regions of this continent and there is a substantial overlap in the membership of these arrangements. There are a total of 28 Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) in Africa out of which seven are within Africa Plurilateral, three are Africa External Plurilateral, and 18 are Africa Bilateral. Besides, about seven RTAs involving Africa are presently inactive⁵. This paper explores these trade arrangements that exist within the continent of Africa, the level of economic integration within these blocs, their relationship with each other and with other countries and blocs outside Africa, and the initiatives to integrate these various regional arrangements into a Pan Africa integrated economic system.

to their overseas territories continues to be reflected in the bilateral agreements that they have had and continue to have with the countries and blocs in Africa.

There are regional variations in the continent with a multitude of languages, vast diversity in income levels, huge variations in resource endowments and differences in the level of infrastructure development across the countries. It is, therefore, pertinent that we first understand the map of Africa. Looking at the complexity and the challenges of fathoming a vast continent like Africa, it is tempting to reproduce the comment made in the Harvard Business Review's publication 'Africa's Business Revolution':

*"It's one thing to get a handle on the physical map of Africa, but it's even greater challenge to create an accurate mental map of the continent"*⁶.

Table 1 gives the important region-wise economic data of the Continent. The combined GDP of the continent in 2021 stood at around US\$2.69 trillion with a growth rate projected at 3.4 per cent by the African Development Bank Group in the African Economic

Being home to numerous LDCs and other developing countries, 'development' naturally remains high on the agenda of these arrangements. The African continent has a long history of colonial rule by the European powers and the preferential treatment extended by these powers

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TABLE 1
ECONOMIC DATA OF AFRICA

Region	GDP (US\$ bn.)	Major Economies in the Region	GDP (US\$ bn.)
North Africa (7 Countries)	792.12	Egypt	396.32
		Algeria	163.81
		Morocco	126.03
		Libya	27.30
		Tunisia	42.73
		Sudan	35.91
		Western Sahara	–
West Africa (17 Countries)	773.281	Nigeria	448
Central Africa/Middle Africa/Equatorial Africa (9 Countries)	229.00	Cameroon	38.76
East Africa (19 Countries)	446.05	Kenya	101
		Tanzania	62.24
		Ethiopia	95
Southern Africa (5 Countries)	447.611	South Africa	351

Source: International Monetary Fund, *World Economic Outlook*, October 2021.

Outlook for 2021⁷. Africa's Per Capita GDP, with the total population and total GDP figures on hand, works out to around US\$1,950. The GDP of North Africa in 2021 was US\$792.12 billion, while the combined GDP of Sub-Saharan Africa was US\$1.89 trillion⁸.

Different Regions of Africa

The Sahara Desert is an important reference point in the continent of Africa. It can be seen as a rough dividing line between North Africa and the rest of Africa. The countries lying above the Sahara dividing line represent North Africa and the countries figuring below this are what are referred to as the Sub-Saharan African countries. These Sub-

Saharan countries are further divided in terms of different regions representing West Africa, Central Africa, East Africa, and Southern Africa. A word of caution is necessary here, the 'Central African Republic' is a country, not a region, and is a part of Central Africa. There are two countries named after the River Congo in Central Africa: the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Congo located on the two sides of the river. Similarly, 'South Africa' is a country located in the Southern Africa.

The preferential trading arrangements in Africa have to be understood in the context of these different regions of Africa. Each

region has its own set of arrangements with a certain level of economic integration already attained and some others vying for more ambitious levels of integration in time to come.

Different Dimensions of Regional Arrangements

There are several dimensions of such arrangements that comprise preferential agreements within the region (Intra-regional), arrangements between the regions (Inter-regional), arrangements with countries outside Africa (bilateral), arrangements with trade blocs outside Africa, and the relationships between the countries within the continent and beyond in the context of multilateral framework of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Forty-four countries in Africa are Members of WTO, nine have the Observer status, and one (Eritrea) is neither a member nor has the Observer status⁹. As members of WTO, the countries are bound by the Rules of the Organization when they engage in trade with each other or with other members of WTO outside the continent. The trade arrangements entered into within the continent or outside are also covered by the relevant provisions in the multilateral framework of trade.

The other important factor to be considered is the nature and the level of the economic integration existing within a bloc itself. There is a wide spectrum of economic integration in the arrangements that can be entered into by the countries. This can range from a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) on one end to a full-fledged Political Union on the other end of this spectrum.

There are several other forms lying between these two extremes. A PTA can graduate to a Free Trade Area (FTA), which in turn can graduate to a Customs Union (CU). Moving further, we can have a Common Market (CM) and an Economic Union (EU) before ending up with a Political Union (PU) in this continuum. One needs to understand the technicalities and other political and economic implications related to each level of economic integration. Once we know this, then it is easier to appreciate the objectives and challenges related to the economic integration efforts of the countries and regions.

To understand the exact form of the trade bloc, which may not always be apparent in the formal nomenclature of the bloc, one may need to look at the manner in which the bloc is notified to WTO. As members of WTO, any trade bloc-related arrangement has to be notified to WTO. The notification made to WTO can reveal the exact nature and form of the trading arrangement. Has it been notified under Article XXIV of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)¹⁰ 1994, or does it cover Article V of General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)¹¹, or does it come under the purview of the Enabling Clause (1979) of the GATT¹²?

Typically, a bloc inside Africa would normally comprise Developing or Least Developed Countries (LDCs) only and thus would be notified to WTO under the Enabling Clause and/or Article V of GATS depending upon whether services are included in the arrangement or

not. However, when an African country or a trade bloc enters into a trade arrangement with an individual developed country or a trade bloc comprising developed countries outside the continent, then notification may be done under Article XXIV. Trade blocs and trading arrangements in Africa have been notified under these various provisions.

North Africa in the Context of West Asia/Middle East and the Arab League

North Africa is normally seen in conjunction with the Middle East or West Asia. That is why terms like West Asia and North Africa (WANA), or Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are often heard in trade talks. North Africa is sub-divided into Maghreb¹³ and Mashriq¹⁴ regions. Maghreb comprises of Western part of North Africa and the Arab world and includes Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Mauritania. It also includes the disputed territory of Western

Sahara. Mashriq is the eastern part of the Arab World, comprising of Western Asia and Eastern North Africa. Egypt and Sudan are the two African countries in Mashriq. All the North African states, in the Western or Eastern part of North Africa, are members of the Arab League which was founded in 1945 and which is headquartered in Cairo, Egypt.

The Economic Council of Arab League had envisaged a Greater Arab Free Trade Area (GAFTA), now formally called the Pan-Arab Free Trade Area (PAFTA) which has 18 members including all the North African countries: Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, and Sudan. It may be mentioned here that the Arab Common Market that was created as a Customs Union in 1965 had become inactive by December 1998 only to be replaced by the PAFTA in 1998, a Free Trade Area that became operational in 2006. It was notified to WTO under GATT Article XXIV (Table 2).

TABLE 2
PAN-ARAB FREE TRADE AREA (PAFTA)

Name of the Regional Trade Agreement	Coverage	Type	Notified on	Notification Type
Pan-Arab Free Trade Area (PAFTA) (Middle East; Africa) Bahrain, Kingdom of; Egypt; Iraq; Jordan; Kuwait, the State of; Lebanese Republic; Libya; Morocco; Oman; Qatar; Saudi Arabia, Kingdom of; Sudan; Syrian Arab Republic; Tunisia; United Arab Emirates; Yemen + Algeria and the Palestinian Authority of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip are now Parties of PAFTA.	Goods	FTA	3 Oct. 2006	GATT Art XXIV

Source: Regional Trade Agreements Database, WTO.

The four North African member states of PAFTA are also part of Arab Maghreb Union (AMU)¹⁵ which was created in 1989 in Marrakech when these five North African States comprising Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia approved the Treaty Instituting the Arab Maghreb Union. The member states agreed to coordinate and harmonize their policies to achieve sustainable development

in the region. Libya and Sudan are also participating in the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD)¹⁶ which was established on 4 February 1998 in Tripoli. Mali, Chad, Niger, and Burkina Faso are the other members. In the 36th Ordinary Session of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in Lomé (Republic of Togo) in July 2000, the CEN-SAD became a Regional Economic Community¹⁷.

Economic Integration in West Africa

West Africa has the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) notified as a Customs Union to WTO. Eight French-speaking countries (mostly from French West Africa) and six English-speaking countries have a West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) and a West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) respectively. While WAEMU has a Customs Union and Currency Union, the WAMZ has a plan for its own single currency, to be called *eco*. WAMZ shall ultimately merge with the WAEMU to form a single monetary zone in West Africa. (Table 3).

Economic Integration in Central Africa

Central Africa has an Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), a Customs Union, to promote the process of sub-regional integration through the Monetary Union with CFA Franc (Table 4).

The Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa (OHADA), though not a trade bloc, has nonetheless played an important role in facilitating integration in the region through harmonization of law in the French-speaking countries in West and Central Africa.

Economic Integration in East Africa

East African Community (EAC), a Customs Union and an Economic Integration Agreement (EIA) is the potential precursor to the establishment of the East

TABLE 3
TRADE BLOCS IN WEST AFRICA

Name of the Regional Trade Agreement	Coverage	Type	Notified on	Notification Type
Western African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU) Benin; Burkina Faso; Côte d'Ivoire; Mali; Niger; Senegal; Togo + Guinea Bissau	Goods	CU	27 Oct. 1999	Enabling Clause
West African Monetary Zone (WAMZ) Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone	Launch of Single Currency	Ultimately to Merge with WAEMU	20 April 2000 (Accra Declaration)	Not Notified to WTO
Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Benin; Burkina Faso; Cabo Verde; Côte d'Ivoire; Ghana; Guinea; Guinea-Bissau; Liberia; Mali; Niger; Nigeria; Senegal; Sierra Leone; The Gambia; Togo	Goods	CU	6 July 2005	Legal Cover modified from Enabling Clause to GATT Art XXIV

Source: Regional Trade Agreements Database, WTO, and West African Monetary Institute.

TABLE 4
TRADE BLOCS IN CENTRAL AFRICA

Name of the Regional Trade Agreement	Coverage	Type	Notified on	Notification Type
Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) Cameroon; Central African Republic; Chad; Congo; Equatorial Guinea; Gabon	Goods	CU	21 July 1999	Enabling Clause

Source: Regional Trade Agreements Database, WTO.

African Federation. In 2010, it launched its own Common Market with the goal of attaining a common currency and forming a political federation (Table 5).

The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) has Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan, South Sudan, and Uganda as its member states.¹⁸ IGAD, as a Regional Economic Community (REC) is one of the building blocks for the realization of the African Economic Community (AEC). It was created in 1996 as a successor to the erstwhile Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development that, in turn, was created in 1986 to deal with drought and desertification-related

problems in the so-called 'Horn of Africa' (also known as Somali Peninsula: a large peninsula of East Africa located on the easternmost part of the African mainland).

Economic Integration in Southern Africa

South African Development Community (SADC) was formed in 1992, with Front-Line States (FLS) and South African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC) as its forerunners and notified as a Free Trade Area. South African Customs Union (SACU) is a Customs Union, comprising Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, and South Africa, which was created in 2007. South Africa is a part of both SADC and SACU (Table 6).

Further Integration Amongst the Regions

Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) of 1995 is a huge Customs Union that runs from Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt in the North down to South Africa along the Eastern side of Africa. It has 22 member countries (Table 7, Figure 1).

COMESA was formed in December 1994 to replace the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) which had been in existence since 1981 for the, as per the 'Objectives and Priorities' indicated on the COMESA Website, economic prosperity through regional integration.

*"Comprising of 21 Member States, COMESA covers almost two-thirds of the African Continent. With a population of over 583 million, a Gross Domestic Product of \$805 billion, and a global export/import trade in goods worth US\$324 billion, COMESA forms a major marketplace for both internal and external trading"*¹⁹

While COMESA comprises countries from North, East, and Southern Africa, each one of these regions also has its trading arrangement in the form of AFTA, EAC, and SADC and SACU, though AFTA has other Arab countries as its members in addition to North African countries. There is an intersection in terms of common membership in these arrangements. EAC, SADC and COMESA agreed to establish an expanded Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) in 2008.

"The TFTA is considered by regional policy-makers and some analysts to be a big deal and

TABLE 5
TRADE BLOCS IN EAST AFRICA

Name of the Regional Trade Agreement	Coverage	Type	Notified on	Notification Type
East African Community (EAC) Burundi; Kenya; Rwanda; Tanzania; Uganda	Goods and Services	CU & EIA	9 Oct 2000 (G) 1 Aug. 2012 (S)	Enabling Clause and GATS Art V

Source: Regional Trade Agreements Database, WTO.

TABLE 6
TRADE BLOCS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Name of the Regional Trade Agreement	Coverage	Type	Notified on	Notification Type
South African Development Community (SADC) Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Eswatini, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe + The Democratic Republic of Congo	Goods	FTA	2 Aug. 2004	GATT Art XXIV
South African Customs Union (SACU) Botswana; Eswatini; Lesotho; Namibia; South Africa	Goods	CU	25 June 2007	GATT Art XXIV

Source: Regional Trade Agreements Database, WTO.

TABLE 7
HYBRID TRADE BLOC

Name of the Regional Trade Agreement	Coverage	Type	Notified on	Notification Type
Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Burundi; Comoros; DR Congo; Djibouti; Egypt; Eritrea; Eswatini; Ethiopia; Kenya; Libyan Arab Jamahiriya; Madagascar; Malawi; Mauritius; Rwanda; Seychelles; Somalia; Sudan; Tunisia; Uganda; Zambia; Zimbabwe.	Goods	CU	14 May 1995	Enabling Clause

Source: Regional Trade Agreements Database, WTO.

FIGURE 1
COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA



*potentially a game changer for the African trading system... indeed, the deal is expected to be the launching pad for the establishment of the even more ambitious Continental Free Trade Area that is expected to cover all of Africa. In the process, the launch has demonstrated the possibility of collective action among 26 very heterogenous nations and shows the feasibility of harmonizing three very different preferential trade regimes into one unified scheme*²⁰.

African Continental Free Trade Area

The multiple regional arrangements in Africa are referred to as Regional Economic Communities (RECs). As we have seen, there are

overlaps in terms of membership in some of these RECs. There is a realization that these RECs can be integrated to create a Pan-African entity. That is what the African Union aims to do with its proposed African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), also referred to as the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) that will integrate the existing eight Regional Economic Communities.

African Union was launched in 2002, after the Sirte Declaration of 1999 in Libya. It was created as a successor to the Organization for African Unity (OAU) which was created in 1963 in Addis Ababa. African Union has a goal to take the proposed AfCFTA to higher levels of economic integration of a

Customs Union, to a Common Market, and eventually to the level of an Economic and Monetary Union with a common Central Bank and a common currency²¹.

Bilateral Arrangements with Countries outside Africa

There are several bilateral agreements entered into by individual countries and blocs of Africa with the external countries and blocs (Table 8). Morocco has with European Free Trade Area (EFTA), European Union (EU), USA, Turkey, and UAE. Tunisia with EFTA and EU, Algeria with EU, Egypt with EFTA, EU and Turkey, South Africa with EU; Cameroon with EU; Ghana with EU; and Cote d'Ivoire with EU.

EU-SADC (FTA & EIA), EFTA-SACU (FTA), and EU-EAC Economic Partnership Agreement are the active arrangements between blocs (Early Announcement), and the EU-West Africa Economic Partnership Agreement (Early Announcement) are the ones being negotiated.

India is also negotiating the India-SACU FTA and an early announcement on this has been made to WTO. Feasibility studies with COMESA and ECOWAS is being done as well.

India provides preferential treatment to LDCs under the Duty Free Tariff Preference (DFTP) Scheme which includes all the Sub-Saharan countries excluding South Africa and Nigeria. India is bracketed with South Africa in BRICS²² and IBSA²³.

In 2019, India launched the second phase of the Cotton

TABLE 8
TRADING ARRANGEMENTS WITH COUNTRIES OUTSIDE AFRICA

Name of the Regional Trade Agreement	Coverage	Type	Notified on	Notification Type
Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries (GSTP)	Goods	PSA	25 Sept. 1989	Enabling Clause
EU-Tunisia	Goods	FTA	15 Jan. 1999	GATT Art XXIV
EFTA-Morocco	Goods	FTA	20 Jan. 2000	GATT Art XXIV
EU-Morocco	Goods	FTA	13 Oct. 2000	GATT Art XXIV
EU-South Africa	Goods	FTA	2 Nov. 2000	GATT Art XXIV
EU-Egypt	Goods	FTA	3 Sept. 2004	GATT Art XXIV
EFTA-Tunisia	Goods	FTA	3 June 2005	GATT Art XXIV
Turkey-Tunisia	Goods	FTA	1 Sept. 2005	GATT Art XXIV
US-Morocco	Goods & Services	FTA & EIA	30 Dec. 2005	GATT Art XXIV GATS Art V
Turkey-Morocco	Goods	FTA	10 Feb. 2006	GATT Art XXIV
EU-Algeria	Goods	FTA	24 July 2006	GATT Art XXIV
EFTA-Egypt	Goods	FTA	17 July 2007	GATT Art XXIV
Egypt-Turkey	Goods	FTA	5 Oct. 2007	Enabling Clause
EFTA-SACU	Goods	FTA	17 July 2007	GATT Art XXIV
EU-Cote d'Ivoire	Goods	FTA	11 Dec. 2008	GATT Art XXIV
EU-Cameroon	Goods	FTA	24 Sept. 2009	GATT Art XXIV
Turkey-Mauritius	Goods	FTA	5 June 2013	GATT Art XXIV
Mauritius-Pakistan	Goods	PSA	2 Oct. 2015	Enabling Clause
EU-Ghana	Goods	FTA	3 April 2017	GATT Art XXIV
EU-SADC	Goods	FTA & EIA	3 April 2017	GATT Art XXIV
Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR)-Southern African Customs Union (SACU)	Goods	PSA	19 July 2017	Enabling Clause
Morocco-UAE	Goods	FTA	19 June 2019	Enabling Clause
India-SACU FTA	Goods	FTA	Early Announcement Under Negotiation	
EU-East African Community (EAC) EPA The EU would like to inform the WTO Members that on 16 October 2014 it has initiated an Economic Partnership Agreement with the Eastern African Community (EAC) Partner States consisting of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.		EPA	Early Announcement Under Negotiation	
EU-West Africa EPA The EU would like to inform the WTO Members that on 30 June 2014 it has initiated an Economic Partnership Agreement with 16 West African States (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo and Mauritania), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU).		EPA	Early Announcement Under Negotiation	

Source: Regional Trade Agreements Database, WTO.

Technical Assistance Programme (TAP) in Africa which covers 11 countries including the Cotton-4 (C4)²⁴.

Africa provides an interesting case study of a multitude of economic integration arrangements existing on a continent. The massive exercise being attempted to integrate the various Regional Economic Communities into a Pan-African bloc is one of its kind efforts in the world. The European Union provides another important case study of a complex regional economic integration effort. The European and African economic integration projects have obvious differences in the kind of challenges they face on account of variations in the level of economic development at which the countries in the two continents operate or the experience that the two regions have related to the colonial past. There is, nonetheless, another important distinction between the two projects. While the European case has been more about expansion in membership and deepening of economic integration within a bloc, the African case is about the creation, sustenance, and a sort of amalgamation of several independent trade blocs into a unified entity. In Europe, the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) and European Economic Community (EEC) have coexisted and while European Union (EU) evolved from EEC and grew in membership through countries shifting from EFTA to EU over the years or through the addition of the countries from East Europe, EFTA has in the meanwhile dwindled in size. African initiative, on the other hand, is a project in progress and

has a complexity of its own as it entails integrating eight Regional Economic Communities into a massive African Economic Community²⁵.

NOTES

¹ United Nations, [Online: web] Accessed on 15 February 2022. URL: <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/member-states>

² Worldometer, "Africa Population (Live)", [Online: web] Accessed on 27 February. URL: <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/africa-population/>

³ Nationsonline, "Countries of Africa", [Online: web] Accessed on 15 February 2022. URL: <https://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/africa.htm#:~:text=48%20countries%20share%20the%20area,and%20claimed%20by%20the%20Polisario>

⁴ *Polisario*: Politico-military organization striving to end Moroccan control of the former Spanish territory of Western Sahara, in northwestern Africa, and win independence for that region.

(Source: Britannica [Online: web] Accessed 24 February. 2022 URL: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Polisario-Front>)

⁵ Based on WTO RTA Database, World Trade Organization, Regional Trade Agreements Gateway, [Online: web] Accessed 17 February 2022 URL: <http://rtais.wto.org/UI/PublicMaintainRTAHome.aspx>

⁶ Leke, A., Chironga, M. and Desvaux, G. (2018), *Africa's Business Revolution: How to Succeed in the World's Next Big*

Growth Market, Boston: Harvard Business Review Press, p. xi.

⁷ African Development Bank (2021), *African Economic Outlook 2021: From Debt Resolution to Growth, the Road Ahead for Africa*, Abidjan: African Development Bank. [Afdb.org/en/knowledge/publications/african-economic-outlook-2021](https://www.afdb.org/en/knowledge/publications/african-economic-outlook-2021).

⁸ IMF (2021), *World Economic Outlook October 2021: Recovery During a Pandemic*, Washington DC: International Monetary Fund. <https://www.statistictimes.com/economy/african-countries-by-gdp.php>

⁹ WTO, "Members and Observers", [Online: web] Accessed on 27 February 2022. URL: https://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/org6_e.htm

¹⁰ Article XXIV of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) recognizes the contribution to the expansion of world trade through the economic integration of member countries. Since there are special provisions for developing countries, Article XXIV normally covers regional agreements on merchandise trade amongst developed countries.

(Source: VanGrasstek, C. (2013), *The History and Future of the World Trade Organization*, Geneva: World Trade Organization, p. 78).

¹¹ Article V of General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) in WTO Covers Regional Trade Agreement Related to Liberalization of Trade in Services.

(Source: Hoekman, B.M. and Kostecki, M.M. (2009), *The*

- Political Economy of the World Trading System: the WTO and Beyond, 3rd edn., Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 338.)
- ¹² GATT adopted 'The Enabling Clause' officially called the "Decision on Differential and More Favourable Treatment, Reciprocity and Fuller Participation of Developing Countries" in 1979 to enable developing countries to give differential and more favourable treatment to other member developing countries. The Enabling Clause is thus the legal basis for regional arrangements among developing countries.
- (Source: Ravenhill, J. (2020), *Global Political Economy*, 6th edn., Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 143.)
- ¹³ Britannica, "Maghreb Region: North Africa", [Online: web] Accessed on 18 February 2022. URL: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Maghreb>
- ¹⁴ Britannica, "Mashriq Geographical Region: Middle East", [Online: web] Accessed on 18 February 2022 URL: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Mashriq>
- ¹⁵ United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, "AMU-Arab Maghreb Union", [Online: web] Accessed on 22 February 2022. URL: <https://archive.unece.org/oria/pages/amu-arab-maghreb-union>
- ¹⁶ The Sahel is the vast semi-arid region of Africa separating the Sahara Desert to the north and tropical savannas to the south. The region despite being endowed with abundant human and natural resources that offer tremendous potential for growth, is mired in environmental, political and security-related challenges that affect the prosperity and peace of the region. The United Nations has come up with a unique support plan targeting 10 countries in the Sahel to accelerate prosperity and sustainable peace in the region.
- (Source: United Nations, "Africa Renewal: The Sahel, Land of Opportunities", [Online: web] Accessed on 22 February 2022 URL: <https://www.un.org/africarenewal/sahel>)
- ¹⁷ African Union, "CEN SAD", [Online: web] Accessed 22 February 2022. URL: <https://au.int/en/recs/censad>
- ¹⁸ The Intergovernmental Authority on Development, "IGAD: its history and development", [Online: web] Accessed 25 February 2022. URL: igad.int/about-us/what-we-do
- ¹⁹ COMESA, "What is COMESA", [Online: web] Accessed on 20 February 2022 URL: <https://www.comesa.int/what-is-comesa/>
- ²⁰ Brookings, "Africa in Focus: Understanding the Importance of Tripartite Free Trade Area" [Online: web] Accessed on 18 February 2022. URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2015/06/17/understanding-the-importance-of-the-tripartite-free-trade-area/>
- ²¹ African Union, "About the African Union", [Online: web] Accessed on 16 February 2022. URL: <https://au.int/en/overview>
- ²² BRICS is an acronym coined to associate five major emerging economies: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa.
- ²³ IBSA is a Forum that brings together India, Brazil and South Africa, three large democracies and major economies from three different continents.
- ²⁴ Cotton-4 (C4): Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, and Mali.
- ²⁵ Mehtani, R. (2023), *Regional Economic Integration in Africa: At the Centre of the Debate*, *Focus WTO*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 51-52.

