

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) is a regional economic grouping comprising 19 member States which have agreed to promote regional integration through trade development and to develop their natural and human resources for the mutual benefit of all their people. The member states are Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. COMESA has an area of about 11.6 million square kilometres, spanning Northern, Eastern and Southern Africa and has a population of over 451 million (2010). Moreover, the region is endowed with diverse natural resources which include arable land, minerals, petroleum, water, etc, and it is also a big market.

Trade and investment are considered as the primary instruments for promoting and deepening economic integration in COMESA. In order to facilitate trade and investment, the development of appropriate physical infrastructure and facilitation in energy, transport and communications are taken as key issues.

The COMESA Customs Union, which by definition incorporates a Free Trade Area, was launched in June 2009. The intra-COMESA trade reached a US\$ 17 billion mark in 2010.

Energy plays a critical role in the development process, as a domestic necessity but also as a factor of production whose cost directly affects prices of other goods and services and the competitiveness of enterprises. Moreover, as the region's economy and trade continue to grow, energy will be critical element to support and sustain the achieved growth.

For more details click on the attachment below