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**DRAFT RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON CAPACITY BUILDING**

***THEME: COMESA - Towards Digital Economic Integration***

*CC/SK eck(2021)*

**PURSUANT TO COUNCIL DECISION OF ITS FORTY-FIRST MEETING OF 26 NOVEMBER 2020, THE RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP (TWG) ON CUSTOMS CAPACITY BUILDING ARE HEREBY MADE:**

# Rule 1

# Background

The Thirty-Fifth Council of Ministers in its meeting of 7- 8 December 2015 in Lusaka, Zambia, decided that there should be a regional approach to the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA).

In line with the said Council decision, the Forty-First Council of Ministers, in its virtual meeting of 26 November 2020, established the Technical Working Group (TWG) on Customs Capacity Building (CCB) with the view of assisting the region in developing capacity in customs.

These Rules may be cited as the Rules of Procedure of the Technical Working Group on Customs Capacity Building.

**Rule 2**

**Election of Members of Bureau and Meetings**

1. The TWG - CCB shall elect, from among its members, members of the Bureau consisting of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur, who shall hold office for a term of one year.
2. If the Chairperson is absent from a meeting, the Vice-Chairperson shall preside over the meeting.
3. If both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson are absent from meeting, the Rapporteur shall preside over the meeting.
4. If the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur are absent from a meeting, the members present shall elect a member from amongst them to preside over the meeting.

**Rule 3**

**Frequency, Venue of Meetings and Costs**

1. The TWG - CCB shall meet at least twice a year and as often as their mandate to complete assigned work as required.
2. All meetings of the TWG - CCB shall be convened by the Secretary General by order of the Chairperson. Invitations for the meetings of the TWG - CCB to members, advisors and observers shall be issued by the Secretary General in consultation with the Chairperson.
3. The meetings of the TWG - CCB shall be held at the Headquarters of COMESA except where a member has offered to host a meeting and the offer has been accepted.
4. The costs for holding meetings of the TWG - CCB shall be supported by the EDF funded Trade Facilitation Programme during its implementation period and the Secretariat will arrange for on-going funding for operations of the TWG at the end of the TFP.

**Rule 4**

**Voting**

1. The TWG will endeavor to approach matters expertly and objectively and only as a last resort and when all other avenues have failed, The Bureau may decide that a matter under consideration by the TWG - CCB be voted by secret ballot.
2. Every member shall have one vote.
3. Observers invited to meetings of the TWG -CCB shall have no right to vote.

**Rule 5**

**Conduct of Business of Meetings of TWG – CCB**

1. At the beginning of each meeting, the TWG - CCB shall adopt its agenda and work programme.
2. The Chairperson shall open and close the meetings, direct discussions, give speakers the floor in the order in which it is requested, submit matters under discussion for decision and announce the decision and rule on questions of procedure in accordance with these Rules.

**Rule 6**

**Secretariat Services of the Meetings of the TWG - CCB**

The Secretariat services of the meetings of the TWG - CCB shall be provided by the Secretary-General who shall keep the minutes of the meetings of the TWG - CCB and shall as soon as possible, transmit copies thereof to the members.

**Rule 7**

**Languages**

The working languages of the TWG - CCB shall be Arabic, English and French and will be guided by the current membership of the TWG.

**Rule 8**

**Amendment**

These Rules may be amended at a meeting of the TWG - CCB.

**Rule 9**

**Entry into Force**

These Rules shall enter into force once they have been adopted by the TWG - CCB.

**Rule 10**

**Miscellaneous**

If there is any doubt as to the procedure to be followed in any particular case, or if no procedure is prescribed by or under these Rules, the procedure to be followed shall be determined by the TWG - CCB.