

COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA (COMESA)

COMESA is an African economic grouping of 20 member states who are committed, over the long term, to the creation of a Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. It was established in 1994 as a building block for the African Economic Community and replaced the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa, which had been in existence since 1981.

Membership. Angola, Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Objectives. To facilitate the removal of the structural and institutional weaknesses of member states so that they are able to attain collective and sustainable development.

Activities. COMESA's Free Trade Area (FTA) was launched on 31 Oct. 2000 at a Summit of Heads of States and Government in Lusaka, Zambia. The FTA participating States shall have zero tariff on goods and services produced in these countries.

In addition to creating the policy environment for freeing trade, COMESA has also created specialized institutions like the Trade and Development Bank of Eastern and Southern Africa, the COMESA Re-Insurance Company, the Clearing House and the COMESA Court of Justice, to provide the required financial infrastructure and service support.

Official Languages. English, French, Portuguese.

Headquarters: COMESA Secretariat, COMESA Centre, Ben Bella Road, PO Box 30051, 10101 Lusaka, Zambia.

Website: <http://www.comesa.int>

Secretary General: Erastus Mwencha (Kenya).

SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY (SADC)

History and Membership. The Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), the forerunner of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), was formed in Lusaka, Zambia on 1 April 1980, following the adoption of the Lusaka Declaration—*Southern Africa: Towards Economic Liberation*—by the nine founding member states.

Members. The nine founder member countries of the SADC were Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mauritius, Namibia, the Seychelles and South Africa have since joined, bringing membership up to 14 countries.

Aims and Activities. To promote economic integration and strengthen regional solidarity, peace and security. The founding treaty provides for the establishment of an arbitration tribunal.

At the Johannesburg summit in Aug. 1995 an agreement was reached committing members to the sharing of water resources. A treaty to eliminate internal trade barriers by 2000 was also drawn up; and in 1994 SADC ministers of defence meeting in Arusha, Tanzania, approved the establishment of a regional rapid deployment peacekeeping force to contain regional conflicts or civil unrest in member states.

A report on the restructuring of SADC institutions was approved in March 2001 articulating a more explicit common agenda that takes into account a number of principles such as market integration and development, facilitation and promotion of trade and investment and development orientation. In the context of SADC's