

Southern Africa regional consultation on CFTA, 4-6 April 2017

Third World Network-Africa (TWN-Africa), in collaboration with Economic Justice Network (EJN) of the Fellowship of Christian Councils of Southern Africa (FOCCISA) and the Centre for Trade Policy and Development, is convening a Southern Africa multi-stakeholder Regional consultation on the Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) and Africa's economic structural transformation. It is scheduled for April 4-6 in Lusaka, Zambia.

The consultation seeks to enhance engagement on the CFTA especially the challenges of the 2017 deadline for concluding the CFTA, the process and content that have emerged during the negotiations so far. These challenges became ever more evident at the maiden edition of the Africa Trade Week in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in December 2016 convened by the Africa Union Commission (AUC) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

The SADC Regional consultation is part of efforts to contribute to better engagement and possible resolutions of the challenges with the CFTA processes. The choice of SADC stems from the fact that it has been a key driver in the Tripartite Free Trade Agreement (TFTA) processes which were originally meant to provide a model of harmonisation for other regional blocs.

The consultation will bring together policy and government officials, women groups, trade unions, faith-based organisations, domestic private sector players and non-governmental organisations mostly from the SADC region as well as strategic allies and representatives from the other economic blocs of Africa.