

Challenges Impeding Regional Integration in Southern Africa

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Abstract

Regional integration through the establishment of regional groupings has been taunted as a gateway to regional development and growth, the coming together of countries to share and contribute to knowledge, policy development, peace and security, trade and educational development is undoubtedly seen as the key to the development of Southern Africa. However, regional integration in Southern Africa has been hampered by numerous challenges which have derailed the quest of regional countries to deepen integration and cooperation. By strictly analyzing relevant literature related to regional integration in Southern Africa, it became evident that the region is engulfed with serious challenges that are hindering the quest for deeper integration, and often this is further compounded by internal economic challenges that members' states are faced with. The study uncovered the fact that regional integration has been difficult to entrench as member states are confronted with numerous internal challenges which are diverting their need to focus on regional matters. Consequently, regional integration is under threat in Southern Africa as many countries are not effectively prioritizing the development of policies aimed at aiding its entrenchment, mainly because of the significance of the challenges that they are facing and this will further affect members' states regarding socioeconomic development. The study underscored the importance for regional governments to cooperate on issues of common threats and urgently develop and institute policies/mechanisms that would ensure the entrenchment of regional integration and more importantly its sustainability.

Downloads

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Research Paper

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Regional integration in Africa. Challenges and prospects Jaime de Melo. 1. and Yvonne Tsikata. Keywords: regional integration, Africa, trade creation, trade diversion, Franc zone, trade liberalization JEL classification: F6, F12, F15, F16. Acknowledgements: An earlier version of the paper was presented at a workshop in Beijing 8–10 December 2013. Special thanks to Phoebe Wong for help and Céline Carrère, Julie Regolo, and the editors for comments. Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa Customs Union Doing Business (World Bank) Direction of Trade Statistics. East African Community Everything But Arms Economic Community for Central African States Economic Community of West African States. Africa's regional integration in. of productive forces in most parts of the continent. It. Thus regionalism as applied in Africa can only be viewed as a form of escapism from real challenges at the domestic level, as well as a strategy to consolidate alliances that would reinforce political sovereignty of member countries. But policy makers cannot completely escape the reality that domestic successes precede continental successes. The measure of progress in Africa should be the success of sound and functional policies at the domestic level. Southern African region, it was motivated more by. schemes as well as variations in the number of. politics than by economic logic. Greater African integration has long been a cherished but elusive Greater African integration has long been a cherished but elusive goal. Political leaders at official conferences and formal summits have long promoted the idea, although with only limited results on the ground. There is a renewed impetus to establish closer economic and political ties among the continent's numerous countries, based on a heightened appreciation of the need for regional integration and a clearer understanding of the past failures. integration could not sustain the impending. threat. This African response is best studied in. The record of regional integration in Africa. so far has been a sobering one, as uncoordinated. initiatives, political conflicts and low levels of. First, to conceptualize regional integration in Africa, and in southern Africa in particular, this article looks at the views of three prominent African leaders and founding fathers: Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, 5See generally Haile Sellassie I, *The Autobiography of Emperor Haile Selassie I: 'My Life and Ethiopia's Progress' 1892–1937* (Edward Ullendorff trans., 1976) (discussing Haile Selassie's ascent to. Nkrumah renamed himself "Osagyefo," meaning "Redeemer," but his imposition of one party rule and other restrictions led to the dissatisfaction of many Ghanaians and his eventual overthrow in 1966. See Jonathan Zimmerman, *The Ghost of Kwame Nkrumah Zimbabwe and Africa*, *Int'l Herald Trib.*, Apr.