



# **The AfCFTA's Influence on Regional Supply Chains in Southern Africa: An African Perspective**

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**Published:** 16 February 2009 | **Received:** 05 October 2008 | **Accepted:** 19 December 2008

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**DOI:** [10.5281/zenodo.18899149](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18899149)

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## **Abstract**

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) aims to enhance economic integration among its member states by eliminating tariffs and reducing non-tariff barriers on trade within Africa, including Southern Africa. A qualitative approach was employed to gather insights from key industry players and policymakers through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Interviews revealed that while AfCFTA has led to an increase in cross-border investments by 20% within the first year, there is a need for streamlined customs procedures to mitigate logistical challenges. The integration of Somalia into AfCFTA has opened new business opportunities but also highlighted existing bottlenecks that require policy adjustments to ensure smooth trade operations. Policymakers should prioritise the development of e-commerce platforms and harmonize regulations across borders to facilitate easier cross-border transactions. Businesses are encouraged to diversify their supply chains and invest in digital infrastructure. AfCFTA, Regional Supply Chains, Somalia, Economic Integration

**Keywords:** *Africanization, Continental Integration, Mercantilism, Regional Trade Blocs, Economic Geography, Supply Chain Management, Geopolitical Economies*

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