THEME: THE BEGINNING OF TRADE AMONG THE AFRICAN COUNTRIES UNDER THE AfCFTA AGREEMENT: BOOSTING INTRA-AFRICAN TRADE WITHIN THE AFRICAN SINGLE MARKET THROUGH “ONE STANDARD - ONE TEST- ONE CERTIFICATE- ACCEPTED EVERYWHERE.”

In This Edition, read about:

1. Why creative economy is important for Africa’s sustainable development
2. Message from the Editorial Team: NEVER AGAIN – The Africa we want and the world we desire to belong to: Reflections on the Visit of the ARSO Delegates to the Rwanda Genocide Memorial site.
3. From the desk of the ARSO president – Mr. Charles Booto Angon
4. From the Desk of The Secretary General: A peep into the 2021 diary of the ARSO Secretary General, and the Standardisation and trade Policy Debates
5. The Hybrid Events of the 26th ARSO General Assembly Meetings of 14th – 17th June 2021
6. ARSO Beyond 2022 – the election of Prof. Alex Dodoo of GSA Ghana as the ARSO President-Elect for the 2022-2025 Term of Office, as per the ARDO Constitutional Provisions.
7. Implementing the AfCFTA Agreement and the Discussions on the role of ARSO and the National Bureau of Standards with a focus on a Strategic Cooperation with the AfCFTA Secretariat and the Meeting of the ARSO and AfCFTA secretaries Generals
8. Implementing One Standard - One Market for Africa under the AfCFTA Agreement - the Universal Membership in ARSO as Morocco is admitted to the ARSO Membership by the 26th ARSO General Assembly.
9. Implementing One Standard - One Market for Africa under the AfCFTA Agreement - the crucial universal Membership in ARSO as Morocco is admitted to the ARSO Membership by the 26th ARSO General Assembly.
11. The ARSO-UNECA Technical Study on priority products and value chains for standards harmonisation in Africa and the role ARSO-RECs’ SMC and JAG.
14. How ARSO is using Standardisation Goodwill Ambassadors to increase awareness creation on the role of Standardisation and ARSO visibility
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17. The ARSO 2021 Standardisation Essay Competitions and the Winners with a highlight also on the ISO Annual Essay Competitions for Young Standardisers.
18. The Example of the EU SMEs Youth Essay Competitions and Lessons for Africa under the ARSO Made in Africa Expo for the Competitiveness of the African SMEs.
19. How ARSO is positioning Africa to benefit from International Standardisation through signed MoUs
20. How ARSO is engaging with partners (USAID-ANSI-PCPC; UL Standards and PTB Germany) to help in the building of the capacity of African Standardisation Experts
21. Standardisation news From the ARSO Member States (Benin, Ethiopia, Ghana, Sudan, Tanzania, Zanzibar,) and New appointments of the Chief Executive Officers at the ARSO Member States NSBs.
22. ARSO President welcomes you to the ARSO 2022 Week in Yaoundé Cameroon.
23. ARSO President-Elect welcomes you to the ARSO Council Week in November 2021 in Accra, Ghana.
24. ARSO Brief on Scheduled Events beyond July 2021, including the:
   (i) ARSO July – November ARSO Webinars
   (ii) Launching of Harmonised African Standards in Zimbabwe on 2nd August 2021
   (iv) Launch of the Continental platform for Eco Mark Africa Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) with the UN Forum on Sustainability Standards (UNFSS)
   (v) The 18th PAQI JC meeting on 13th – 14th July 2021and Side-line Discussions with the AfCFTA Secretary General- Focusing on the bigger picture of African Quality Infrastructure

Plus, the List of African Standards Approved by the 64th ARSO Council in June 2021. This includes the International Standards proposed for adoption through Notification.
One of the strongest pillars of Rwandan culture, and indeed the African continent, is the traditional dance, because music and dance have always been an essential part of society. Known for its grace and outstanding drumming style, the *Intore* dance is popular at many celebrations, from wedding ceremonies to national celebrations and festivals and celebrations like the ARSO General Assembly Meetings which bring together different Stakeholders to celebrate as well as lay strategies for the implementation of ARSO Programmes. Dance is a strong Pillar of Creative Economy. **Creative Economy** is one of the sectors which are emerging as potential sectors for propelling Africa industrialisation as traditional trade in creative goods and services remains an important part of the local economies of many African countries due to its dual worth both in terms of commercial and cultural values and diversity. With a growing global market of $208 billion in 2002 to $509 billion in 2015, and with world exports of creative goods, increasing from $208 billion in 2002 to $509 billion in 2015 (UNCTAD 2018), and continuously growing in leaps and bounds, trade in creative goods and services is proving to be a powerful, growing economic force in Africa. In recognition, the *37th Ordinary Session of the AU Executive Council* held virtually on 13-14 October 2020, officially declared the Year 2021 as the AU Year of the Arts, Culture and Heritage and adopted the African Union theme for 2021 as ‘Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want’. This is also in line with Aspiration 5 of Agenda 2063 - an Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics. The UN, also under its RESOLUTION 74/198 (A/C.2/74/L.16/Rev.1 - E - A/C.2/74/L.16/Rev.1, declared 2021 the International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development.

These declarations are focusing on the transformation of African countries into locations of competitive industrial production and the prioritisation of sectors with high potentials for industrial growth and meaningfully making Africa leapfrog in its industrial development. For this, ARSO and the National Bureau of Standards continue to put in place the Standardisation Infrastructure for boosting the Competitiveness of the African Creative Economy Goods and Services as called for by the African Union in its Nairobi 2005 Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries in Africa which aims to promote the safeguarding, organisation, production, marketing, distribution, exhibition and preservation of African cultural and creative industries, and calls on members to establish standardization and quality assurance mechanisms (That is developing standardization tools and instruments to ensure competitiveness and
marketability of cultural goods and services; elaborating codes of conduct for in the manufacturing, transaction and consumption of cultural goods and services). Read about the 2021 ARSO Essay competition on the same on page, 17.

The Photo of the moment: ARSO Council members at the 26th ARSO General Assembly Hybrid Events, Hotel Des Milles Collins, Kigali Rwanda, on 14th – 15th June 2021 where the Council approved 157 new African standards for adoption and International Standards for Adoption by Notification, as highlighted below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technical body</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) ARSO CACO Technical Regulations Sub-Committee</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2) ARSO/TC 06, Coffee, cocoa, tea and related products (1 physical meeting, 15 virtual technical meetings)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) ARSO/TC 59, Automotive technology and engineering (21 virtual meetings)</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>(4) ARSO/TC 78, Medical devices and equipment (14 virtual meetings)</td>
<td>76</td>
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<td>(5) ARSO/TC 80, Pharmaceuticals and medicinal products (14 virtual meetings)</td>
<td>37</td>
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Total guidelines and standards: Highlights: 157

The WTO encourages Harmonization, use of equivalence and mutual recognition in the bilateral free trade agreements, such as the AfCFTA. The anticipated standards to be harmonised by ARSO being comparable to the 4,547 HS6, Tarif lines for the AfCFTA. The AfCFTA TBT Annex 6 provisions on standards, Conformity Assessments and accreditation indicate the need for harmonization and mutual recognition between the State parties, with the role of ARSO defined. As a policy instrument, the AfCFTA Agreement, under the TBT Annex 6 and SPS Annex 7, addresses the TBTs and SPS issues, and binds all State parties to commit to their progressive elimination and calls for cooperation in their development, harmonisation and implementation of standards, conformity assessment and the related themes. The reality, therefore is, ARSO has the task of facilitating the harmonisation of African Standards and Conformity Assessment Regimes as per the TBT Annex 6 and the Universal membership of African Countries in ARSO therefore, remains a call to African Governments.

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Did you know?

...there’s an African Standard on Medical Respirators

**ARS 1694:2021, Medical respirators — Specification**

This African Standard covers the material, classification and performance requirements for medical respirators, and is intended to limit the transmission of infective agents in the healthcare environment.
In 2013, the African Union (AU) member states crafted an African driven vision “Agenda 2063 “The Africa We Want” that outlines how the African continent should look in 50 years based on the pillars of wealth generation, regional integration, and attainment of a peaceful society, all driven by Africans. In 2015, UN member states unanimously adopted the 2030 Agenda, which balances the dimensions of economic, social and environmental development, underpinned by good governance. Agenda 2063 builds on, and seeks to accelerate the implementation of past and existing continental initiatives such as the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action and the 1991 Abuja Treaty, and builds on national, regional, continental best practices in its formulation for growth and sustainable development. These goals, with their targets (the A2063 - 20 goals with 174 targets; SDGs-17 goals with 169 targets) broadly converge on social-political and human capital development, inclusive economic growth, peaceful societies, and for which standardisation plays a key role. Both the Agendas emphasise on peaceful society. The ARSO Delegates visit to the Rwanda Genocide on 15th June 2021 in solidarity with the Government and the People of the Republic of Rwanda to say NEVER-AGAIN is symbolic to the role of standardisation in bringing order, harmony and peace in Societies as standards permeates all sectors of life in a global manner, be it Health, Trade, Manufacturing, Social and political governance, Finance and Economic Development.

FROM THE DESK OF THE ARSO PRESIDENT – MR. CHARLES BOOTO a NGON

With different Regional Economic Communities and based on the WTO TBT Agreement National Obligations and rights, the number of Technical Regulations and Standards adopted by countries in quality management, food safety, labour conditions and ethical, ecological and social areas has grown significantly and they continue to play more and more significant role in the cross-border Trade between the RECs and in intra-African trade among the African countries, in turn, growing in economic and political importance in countries’ Trade and regulatory policies. The main challenge is that the Technical Regulations and standards developed autonomously seem to reflect in each country the governmental policy in consumer protection and security and to respond consumers’ demand for safe and high-quality products, thus posing a great challenge as barriers to intra-African trade, which standards at an average of 15%-16% (Tralac 2016). With this, therefore, the ability of African countries to exploit commercial and industrial opportunities offered under the AfCFTA Agreement and to compete on global markets and to participate in international Trading Systems will be facilitated by the implementation of a Common Regulatory Framework for Africa with regards to the Adoption and Implementation of adoption of harmonised Standards and Conformity Assessment regimes, together with Mutual Recognition Arrangements. The current momentum being witnessed to achieve the Africa’s regional integration and industrialization Agenda as is reinforced by the Constitutive Act of the African Union (AU) of 2000, the African Agenda 2063 and the fast-tracking the implementation of its Flagship Project, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AFFCFTA) Agreement, explains, therefore, why the increased need for strengthening the capacity of Quality infrastructure in African countries in relations to metrology, standards (Technical Regulations), accreditation and conformity assessment to address the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBTs) issues remains a key strategy. As an intergovernmental body, established by Organization of African Unity (OAU, currently African Union (AU)) and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in 1977, the mandate of ARSO to harmonise Standards and Conformity Assessment Regimes to facilitate the free Movement of Goods and Services, and thus promote intra-African trade and global trade, remains crucial for the achievement of the goals of the African Union Agenda 2063 and its Flagship project of the AICFTA that requires Africa to transform its economic structures for industrialisation and economic growth, while at the same time promoting the creation of Regional value chains for the Made in Africa products. The ARSO regulatory policy towards simplicity, transparency, harmonization, equivalence in regulations and Mutual Recognition Arrangements, supplemented with increased Capacity Building and Awareness Creation, among African Policy Makers, Institutions, Consumers, Traders and general citizens, as outlined under ARSO 2017-2022 Strategic Plan, are strategic in addressing the TBTS Challenge in Africa and the role of harmonised African
standards and Conformity assessment systems in the Governance of the Regional Value Chains for Made in African Products, under the AfCFTA Agreement.

The need therefore, for the cooperation of all African countries, under ARSO, for harmonised standardisation systems to promote the governance of African Regional Value chains to boost intra African Trade, as desired under the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action, the 1991 Abuja Treaty and the 2014 CAMoT decisions, remains desirable and critical, as the African Continent has started trading under a Single Market, on 1st January 2021, in July 2020, within the AfCFTA trade deal. The final Admission of the Kingdom of Morocco into ARSO by the 26th ARSO General Assembly on 16th June 2021 and current considerations of membership by the Government of Somalia, Mauritania, Chad, and Mali are historic and all lauded, as critical as ARSO gears to enter into a transition period focusing on the year 2022 and beyond, under the ARSO Strategic Plan 2022-2027, highlighting the election of Prof. Alex Dodoo of Ghana as ARSO President Elect for the 2022-2025 term of office, while also noting the appointment of Hon. Alan John Kwadwo Kyeremateng, as a New Standardisation Goodwill Ambassador, as I salute the tremendous contributions of the current Goodwill Ambassadors Her Excellency, Prof. (Mrs) Aminah Gurib-Fakim, former President of the Republic of Mauritius, and His Excellency, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, the former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. More sincerely, I take this opportunity to thank the ARSO members for proudly continuing to contribute towards the Sustainability of ARSO, and the development Partners (highlighted in this newsletter) for the sincere support to the ARSO Programmes. We remain committed to our International Peers with whom we have signed MoUs, as we look into ARSO Beyond the year 2022. The Government of the Republic of Cameroon and the ANOR welcomes you all to the ARSO 2022-Week (27th ARSO GA Events) in Yaoundé Cameroon in June 2022. Standardisation Moments the ARSO President.


ARSO contends with the fact that the Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade, as highlighted under NTBs Annex 5 of the AfCFTA Agreement, and including the Technical Barriers to Trade associated with Standards and their compliance systems, is one of the greatest threats to trade among African countries under the African single market. Indeed, the relatively poor domestic (16%, TRALAC 2016) and external (3% AfDB 2014) trade performances of Africa, as compared with other regions of the world, due to the Technical Barriers to Trade, has been a focus of debate and interests to African Leadership, Trade Experts, Policy makers and the Standardisation Community. The optimism for increased intra-African Trade associated with the AfCFTA Agreement is gaining momentum and working towards a common regulatory Framework, taking advantage of the AfCFTA Annex 6 on Technical Barriers to Trade and Annex 7 on Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures of the AfCFTA Agreement, which defines mechanisms of regulatory cooperation, therefore is vital for the African countries, and ARSO together with the African Union, UNECA, the African Quality Infrastructure Institutions (AFRIMETS, AFRAC, AFSEC) and the African Regional Economic Communities, the Member States NSBs, the Stakeholders and development partners has the greatest opportunity and the goodwill to make standardisation a key pillar in this process. Therefore, a progressive elimination of Technical Barriers to Trade within Africa, as envisaged by the different steps of regional integration, especially the AfCFTA Agreement, and the ARSO -RECs cooperation under the ARSO SMC and JAG, remain key strategies. These Developments have taken place as ARSO continues to reposition itself, beyond 2022, and transitioning into the ARSO Strategic Plan 2022-2027, including in leadership and through various activities, partnerships and cooperation, as highlighted in this edition of the ARSO Newsletter, to address the TBTs challenges in Africa. Priority areas include the Increased harmonisation of Standards and Conformity Assessment (in identified Priority Sectors such as Agriculture, Pharmaceuticals and Automotive Industry); The Capacity Building and with Development Partners, The Awareness Creation Activities like the ARSO webinars, Essay Competitions and the Standards Launching Events in different Countries. In particular the on-going support from Afreximbank/ITP, AIDB, African Union, UNECA, PTB-Germany, UL Standards, USAID-ANSI-CPCP. The Strategic Support of member State (with recognition of New Director Generals in some member States), remains a key pillar and is appreciated.
(i) 16th February 2021 – ARSO joined the 17th PAQI Joint Committee Meeting including better institutionalisation of the QI at the at the African Union Commission, including the fast-tracking of the establishment of the TBT Committee. The Stakeholders are discussing the mandate of the QI unit and implementation strategies.

(ii) 23rd April 2021 – ARSO joined the SADC Virtual Workshop on The Implications of The African Continental Free Trade Area on the SADC Regional Quality Infrastructure. There is expressed need for the Africa’s RECs’ QI orientation on the AfCFTA Agreement, and to ensure a meaningful participation and contribution.

(iii) 29th April 2021 – ARSO Secretary General paid a courtesy call on the on the AfCFTA Secretariat, Secretary General H.E. Wamkele Mene, at the AfCFTA Secretariat, in Accra Ghana and held discussions on the implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement, in the context of the TBT Annex 6 and SPS Annex 7, as well as Rules of Origin Annex 2 and NTBs Annex 5, highlighting the role of ARSO and Members.

(iv) 30th April 2021 – All African Consultative Virtual Workshop for the Made in Africa Qualification Criteria Workshop Document for the ECCAS, ECOWAS, UMA, CEN-SAD regions.

(v) 19th May 2021 ARSO Secretary General is the Moderator for the ARSO Webinar on Interfacing the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures for Market Access: Topic: Trading in Agriculture and Food Products – Interfacing the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures for Market Access. TBT Annex 6, SPS Annex 7, The AfCFTA Agreement.

(vi) 2nd - 4th June 2021 – ARSO joined the WTO TBT Committee members, ARSO being an Observer member of the WTO TBT Committee. On 28th May 2021, ARSO held around table discussions with the WTO TBT Secretariat on the role of ARSO in contributing standardisation and trade benefits in Africa in the context of the WTO TBT/SPS Agreements. ARSO is scheduled to participate in the WTO’s Public Forum/WTO flagship annual public outreach event on 28-30 September 2021 on the theme of QI and post-COVID resilience in Africa.

(vii) 3rd June 2021 – ARSO Secretary General is the Moderator for the ARSO Webinar on CONFORMITY ACCESSMENT AND TRADE: Addressing Specific Trade Concerns and disputes under the AfCFTA single market and promoting Africa’s exports in world markets – Conformity Assessment and Trade - an Enabler or a Technical barrier to Trade”.

(viii) 23rd – 25th June 2021 – Fairtrade Africa 7th Convention in which ARSO highlighted the role of the ARSO Conformity Assessment, including the Eco Mark Africa and its sustainability Standards, with regards to the UN 2030 SDGs in Africa.

(ix) 17th June 2021 – The ARSO Secretary General with Mr. Temwa Gondwe of Afreximbank at the official launching event of the African Harmonised Automotive Standards to the Automotive Stakeholders in Rwanda, at the Hotel Des Miles Collines, Kigali, Rwanda.

YouTube: ARSO Videos on YOUTUBE: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLUwRWdcn-p16pFHTEu-hHq/videos.
The 26th ARSO General Assembly Hybrid Meetings - Highlights

ARSO Held its 26th ARSO General Assembly events through a Hybrid System comprising the Virtual 7th ARSO Champions meeting on 9th June 2021; the physical Meeting of the 64th ARSO Council held at the Hôtel des Mille Collines, Kigali, Rwanda on 14th – 15th June 202, and the Virtual meeting of the 26th ARSO General Assembly on 16th June 2021. ARSO Members Hailed the Hybrid Hosting as Historic and a breakthrough after the General Assembly had been postponed, since June 2020, due to COVID-19 mitigation regulations. Held under the theme “the beginning of trade among the African countries under the AICFTA Agreement: Boosting intra-African trade within the African single market through “one standard - one test- one certificate- accepted everywhere. The Assembly reviewed the ARSO Programmes, elected New ARSO President Elect for the 2022-2025 Term Office, Appointed New ARSO Highlighted the Africans participation in International Standardisation, approved 157 African Standards for adoption, applauded new partnerships being initiated through MoUs and cooperation. The initiated Cooperation with the AICFTA Secretariat in the context of the NTBs Annex 5, TBT Annex and SPS Annex 7 is such one milestone in ensuring a Common Regulatory Framework. The recognition of the initiatives such the Made in Africa Qualification Criteria, development of African Quality Policy; the continued strategic role of the ARSO Monthly webinars with Panelists from both local and International Stakeholders; ARSO membership reviews, with the inclusion of the Associate membership for African countries with low GDPs; ensuring ARSO Sustainability. H.E. Clementine Mukeka, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Government of Rwanda, who officially presided over the opening Ceremony of the 26th GA Events called for increased focus on a common regulatory Framework for Africa within the opportunities under the AICFTA Agreement.

The Assembly emphasised the need for:

1. Increased Support to Quality Infrastructure (QI) in Africa with commitments by standardization Stakeholders and policy makers and Governments to strengthen the Quality Infrastructure in Africa through better understanding of the role, the Components, their interrelatedness, interdependence and interplay and the status of Quality Infrastructure in Africa and the associated challenges associated challenges, as well as the ongoing interventions. This includes increased Government commitment and support to QI in respective countries including include budgetary allocations in the National budgets and the Projects with the Development partners.

2. Greater Awareness on the role of QI and Standardisation and mostly Sensitising African Governments, policy makers, National, Regional and Continental Parliaments on the respective challenges facing the Quality Infrastructure Institutions in Africa and the importance of regulatory Coherence in Africa for the implementation of AICFTA.

3. Push for a harmonized Regulatory Framework and adoption of African Standards to address TBTs in Africa for increased Intra-African Trade, including facilitation of partnerships and collaborative efforts within the provisions of the TBT AICFTA Agreement, Annex 6 and SPS Annex 7 which provides for mechanisms for regulatory cooperation among the standardization Stakeholders. The anticipated standards for harmonisation (and as basis for technical regulations and Conformity Assessments) by ARSO is comparable to the 4,547 HS6, AICFTA Tarif lines. As well as More cooperation under PAQI - Pan African Quality Infrastructure platform (AFRIMETS, AFRAAC, AFSEC and ARSO) in the harmonization regulatory framework (standards, technical regulations, conformity Assessments, Mutual Recognition Arrangements, Quality Marks) that address the TBTs challenges in Africa, under the TBT Annex 6 and SPS Annex 7, and increased participation as members in the Organisations, as per AU/CAMOT Decision of 2014 on ARSO membership for all African countries.

4. Better Policies and legislations that promote QI in Africa, including the adoption of African Quality Policy and development of National and Regional Quality Policies as well as Formulation of African Union Regulatory Directives, Summit decrees and legislations that promote QI and Common Regulatory Framework (harmonised Standards, Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment Procedures) and increased collaborations and Partnerships and increased support from RECs, AU, UNECA, UNIDO, AUDA-NPAD, Afreximbank, AfDB, Private Sectors and Donors.

5. Targeted standardization programmes for competitiveness of Made in Africa Products and regional value chains, including clear frameworks (Qualification Criteria) for activities that prioritize the production, trade and competitiveness of Made in Africa Products; and the standardisation programmes that facilitate the competitiveness of the African Enterprises/SMEs and Africa’s regional Value Chains as engines of Africa’s sustainable Industrialisation; Implementation of African Quality Mark and Sustainability Conformity Assessment Schemes such as the Eco Mark Africa Scheme

6. Positioning Africa for self-reliance and resilience in the face of future pandemics and in reference to home grown standardization (standards and Conformity assessment) solutions to address such pandemics as COVID-19 and Greater focus on the African Traditional Medicine and Pharmaceutical, as well as Agro-processing industry. H.E Hon. HABYARIMANA U. Béata, the Minister of Trade and Industry, Government of the Republic of Rwanda, in her official Key Note Opening Address emphasised on the need for policy re-orientation that promotes Quality Infrastructure at the National, regional and Continental levels.

H.E Hon. Patricia UWASE, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Infrastructure, Government of the Republic of Rwanda officially presided over the launching event of the African Harmonised Automotive Standards in a Workshop organised by the Rwanda Standards Board and ARSO for the Automotive Stakeholders in Rwanda, at the Hotel Des Mille Collines in Kigali, Rwanda.
The ARSO Constitution, Schedule I: Rules of Procedure for the General Assembly of the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO), Rule 4 (Page 25), paragraph 4.2.2, provides that “One year prior to the completion of office of a President, the next President shall be elected and shall commence his/her duties upon approval by the GA”. Submission for Candidates must be done and endorsed through the respective Governments. Prof. Dodoo, The 26th ARSO General Assembly held on 16th June 2021, therefore, unanimously, elected Prof. Alex Dodoo Elected the ARSO President-Elect for the 2022-2025, three-years Term of Office, as per the laid down rules. ARSO Goodwill Ambassador to the AfCFTA Secretariat, appointed by the ARSO Council in November 2019

Prof Alex Dodoo is the Director-General of the Ghana Standards Authority (GSA). He is also an Associate Professor at the Centre for Clinical Tropical Pharmacology & Therapeutics, University of Ghana. He trained as a pharmacist in Ghana before undertaking his MSc (Biopharmacy) and PhD (Pharmacy) programmes at Kings College London, University of London after a year of working as a Research Assistant in Molecular Biology and Neuropharmacology at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. He worked as a Senior Scientist at Roche Discovery Welwyn, UK from 1996-1998 and joined the University of Ghana in January 2000 rising to the position of Associate Professor before being appointed Director-General of the GSA in June 2017. He is Ghana’s representative to the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO). He serves or has served on several local and international advisory, training and safety committees Alex has several peer-reviewed scientific publications in reputable journals and has authored one book: “Healthy secrets: a layman’s guide to health issues”.

Implementing the AfCFTA Agreement – Discussions on the Role of ARSO and the National Bureau of Standards. Strategic Cooperation with the AfCFTA Secretariat.

On 29 April 2021, the ARSO Secretary General Dr. Hermogene Nsengimana (right) paid a courtesy call on H.E. Wamkele Mene (left), Secretary General of the AfCFTA Secretariat. The AfCFTA has been heralded as a landmark agreement and advocates and Trade and Standardisation Experts highlight that, it will transform business across Africa by removing tariffs and making it easier to trade across borders reducing the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBTs – Different Standards, Conformity Assessment procedures, Accreditation and Metrology systems). The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) predicts that the AfCFTA, which is prioritizing the production of value-added goods and services that are “Made in Africa”, has the potential to increase intra-African trade by 52.3% by eliminating import duties, and to double this trade if non-tariff barriers, especially the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBTs) are also reduced (UNECA 2018). Under Article 6 Cooperation in Standardisation the State Parties shall promote cooperation between their respective standardisation bodies with a view to facilitate trade; develop and promote the adoption and/or adaption of international standards; promote the adoption of standards developed by the ARSO and the AFSEC; and where a relevant international standard required to facilitate trade does not exist, request the ARSO and/or the AFSEC to develop the required standard to facilitate trade between State Parties. The State parties shall also promote membership, liaison and participation in the work of ISO, IEC, ARSO 9Universal membership in ARSO will facilitate Common Regulatory Framework required for intra-African Trade), AFSEC and similar international and regional standardisation organisations.
One Standard - One Market for Africa under the AfCFTA Agreement - the Universal Membership in ARSO as Morocco is admitted to the ARSO Membership by the 26th ARSO General Assembly.

16th June 2021: Formal Admission of the Kingdom of Morocco into ARSO Membership. From Right Mr. Charles Booto a Ngon, President, ARSO; H.E. Youssef Imani, the Morocco Ambassador in Kigali, Rwanda; H.E. Clementine Mukeka, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Government of Rwanda; Dr. Hermogene Nsengimana, Secretary General, ARSO.

From the 1980 Lagos Plan of action, 1991 Abuja Treaty to the AfCFTA Agreement, a forceful effort at streamlining African regulatory frameworks with regards to common standards, certification and quality regulations at the regional and continental levels has been an appropriate priority for African leaders, trade and standards policymakers, with a clear goal of obtaining testing, certification, and registration of quality systems one time, and in one market, accepted everywhere and with the African Union, through its Decisions, calling on all African Countries join ARSO to facilitate this process.

The AfCFTA agreement, has enhanced the focus of the African Standardisation Community and Leadership on the threat of the Technical Barriers to Trade to the goals of the AfCFTA Agreement and has therefore, in various Articles/Annexes/ (NTB Annex 5, TBT Annex 6 and SPS Annex 7), comprehensively addressed the issue, including encouraging the development of a coherent Regulatory Framework in Africa based on the international best regulatory practices, in the context of the WTO TBT/SPS Agreements, while encouraging the adoption and implementation of International Standards, while encouraging ARSO to harmonise African standards, where international standards are not available, for adoption by the State parties. The AfCFTA Agreement under TBT Annex 6, Article 4, sets to (a) facilitate intra-African trade through cooperation in the areas of standards, technical regulation, conformity assessment, accreditation and metrology; and urges State parties, under Article 5, to cooperate in the development and implementation of standards, technical regulations, conformity assessment procedures, accreditation, metrology, capacity building and enforcement activities in order to facilitate trade within the AfCFTA, and as well, under Article 6 (b), to promote the adoption of standards developed by the ARSO and the AFSEC. The Main Objectives of the AfCFTA Agreement are to create a single continental market and expand intra-African trade while at the same time facilitating integration of the continent into the global Trading system. It is acknowledged that seamless flow of goods and services under the AfCFTA requires harmonised standards and Conformity Assessment. Formed in 1977 by the African Union (formerly OAU) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), and currently with a membership of 39 African countries, (Algeria, Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire, Congo Brazzaville, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, New State of Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Sudan, South Sudan, South Africa, The Kingdom of Eswatini, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, with Zanzibar as an observer member), ARSO’s mandate of promotion of standardisation and conformity Assessment and the related activities in Africa to facilitate trade, and the need to cooperate with other standardisation bodies and development partners, in the context of the TBT Annex 6, remains crucial in the Context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Agreement and the ongoing outbreak mitigation activities on for the COVID-19 Pandemic in Africa. In this regard, ARSO continued with the Standards harmonisation and Conformity Assessment activities, including Awareness creation/Webinar Series, and Capacity Building online Workshops, while at the same time actively mobilising African countries to join ARSO, and for which the Kingdom of Morocco, which formalised its ARSO membership in March 2021, officially admitted into the ARSO Membership by the 26th ARSO General Assembly on 16th June 2021. In the event, the Kingdom of Morocco was officially represented by the H.E, Youssef Imani, Ambassador, Embassy of Morocco, Kigali, Rwanda.
Presenting the 157 New African Standards For Adoption Approved By 64th ARSO Council In June 2021

With the anticipated standards to be harmonised by ARSO being comparable to the 4,547 HS6 Tariff lines for the AfCFTA and with the need for more International Standards to be considered for approval for adoption by notification, as per the TBT Annex 6, of the AfCFTA Agreement, the ARSO Standardisation Experts
from across the continent has continued with the standards harmonisation activities within the 15 Priority Sectors and under 82 Technical Harmonisation Committees (ARSO TCs) with both sponsorship by ARSO, ARSO Members Côte d’Ivoire and Ghana, partners African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) and the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC), facilitating experts to the meetings. ARSO presents to the members and Stakeholders, including the Private Sector, the following Standards and Technical Guidelines which were approved by the 64th ARSO Council on 14th June 2021, during its Session in Kigali Rwanda. The Standards are available online, through controlled access. The ARSO Catalogue is accessible under on the ARDO Website: https://www.arso-oran.org/?page_id=49

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<th>Technical body</th>
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<td>(1) ARSO CACO Technical Regulations Sub-Committee</td>
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<td>(2) ARSO/TC 06, Coffee, cocoa, tea and related products (1 physical meeting, 15 virtual technical meetings)</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>(3) ARSO/TC 59, Automotive technology and engineering (21 virtual meetings)</td>
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<td>(4) ARSO/TC 78, Medical devices and equipment (14 virtual meetings)</td>
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<td>(5) ARSO/TC 80, Pharmaceuticals and medicinal products (14 virtual meetings)</td>
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<td>Total guidelines and standards: Highlights:</td>
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(i) ARSO CACO Technical Regulations Sub-Committee
- ARS GL 1703:2021, Guideline for regulation of African traditional medicine
- ARS GL 1704:2021, Guideline on marketing authorization of human pharmaceutical products
- ARS GL 1705:2021, Guideline for regulation and conformity assessment for medical devices
- ARS GL 1706:2021, Guideline for regulation and conformity assessment for in vitro diagnostic medical devices (IVDs)
- ARS GL 1707:2021, Guideline for setting up emergency/temporary / field hospitals

(ii) ARSO/TC 06, Coffee, cocoa, tea and related products
- Three (3) Standards from Unique Development Procedures (ARS)

(iii) ARSO/TC 59, Automotive technology and engineering (21 virtual meetings)
- Thirteen (13) Standards from Unique Development Procedures (ARS)
- 23 International Standards (ASTM, EN, ISO, SAE, UNECE) Standards being considered for approval for adoption by notification.

(iv) ARSO/TC 78, Medical devices and equipment (14 virtual meetings)
- Eight (8) Standards from Unique Development Procedures (ARS)
- 68 International Standards being considered for adoption by notification, 59 of which are ISO Standards.

(v) ARSO/TC 80, Pharmaceuticals and medicinal products (14 virtual meetings)
- Five (5) Standards from Unique Development Procedures (ARS)
- 32 International Standards being considered for adoption by notification, 10 of which are ISO Standards.

Mr. Temwa Gondwe, the Manager (Trade Facilitation) | Intra-African Trade Initiative, Afreximbank addressing Automotive Stakeholders at the official launching event of the African Harmonised Automotive Standards to the Automotive Stakeholders in Rwanda, at the Hotel Des Milles Collines in Kigali, Rwanda. Afreximbank supports the harmonisation of these standards under the ARSO TC 59 on Automotive Technology and Engineering.
Creating Awaness on the Harmonised ARSO Standards

The ARSO Central Secretariat continues to hold Awareness creation on harmonised African Standards under the Automotive and the Pharmaceutical Sectors.

The Awareness creation was held for the Stakeholders in Accra Ghana on 28th April 2021 and in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 10th May 2021. A similar awareness creation programe was held on 17th June 2021, in Kigali, Rwanda, targeting the Automotive industry Stakeholders.

The African Automotive Standards are expected to facilitate trade in the Automotive Industry in Africa, which is one of the key priority sectors under the AfCFTA Agreement. The standards have been harmonised under the ARSO TC 59 on Automotive technology and engineering and supported by the Afreximbank, with participating Experts from Africa (ARSO member States).

African Pharmaceutical Standards harmonised under the ARSO/TC 78, Medical devices and equipment TC 80 on Pharmaceuticals and medicinal products, TC 82 on African traditional medicine, are expected to facilitate the manufacturing and trade of the pharmaceutical products in Africa. The standardisation activities in the sector which is considered key for Africa, as per the AU Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa (PMPA), is are being carried within the ARSO/African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank)/ International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) Project.

...there’s an African Standard on Unleaded Petrol

ARS 1362:2021. Automotive fuels — Unleaded petrol — Requirements and test methods

This African Standard specifies requirements test methods for marketed and delivered unleaded petrol. It is applicable to unleaded petrol for use in petrol engine vehicles designed to run on unleaded petrol.
Trading in African Products: ARSO and UNECA Technical Study on Identifying priority products and value chains for standards harmonization in Africa? And facilitation through the ARSO-RECs’ SMC and JAG.

Standards Underpin Industrialisation, Trade and Market Access. As Consumers demand safety and quality assurance, and with the support of Government regulations, the emphasis of Quality and compliant to standards Requirements, as a major determinant of trade in a FTAs is on the surge, as standards and technical regulations define what can (or cannot) be exchanged, and outline the procedures under which such exchanges are or are not permissible, depending on the Consumers Interests and needs. With the disruptions of the COVID-19 on external supply chains, the desire for African Manufactured Goods, Industrialisation and trade in well-established value Chains has been highly expressed. ARSO and UNECA (The ARSO Champion on Regional Value) value Chains, carried a technical Study in response to the request by ARSO and the Pan-African Quality Infrastructure. The Need for determining priority areas for the Harmonisation of Standards and Conformity Assessment, remains key for the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, as highlighted under the TBT Annex 6. This study covers six regional economic communities in Africa, namely, the East African Community, the Common Market for East and Southern Africa, the Economic Community of West African States, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Southern Africa Development Community and the Arab Maghreb Union, with the final chapters identifying priority value chains in the continent (and within the RECs), and subsequently priority products for the harmonization of standards. Also see more under UNECA - https://www.uneca.org/african-trade-policy-centre.

ARSO RECs cooperation in standards Harmonisation through the ARSO SMC and JAG and SMC (ASHAM (Article 5.3 and 5.4, respectively)

To facilitate cooperation in the harmonisation of the African Standards, ARSO and the African RECs established the ARSO Standards Management Committee (SMC) and the ARSO Joint Advisory Committee. The JAG, with current Chairperson as Ms. Stella Apolot of EAC, is composed on one representative, each from the 8 African RECs (UUMA, CEN-SAD, COMESA, EAC, ECCAS, ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC), while the SMC, with the current Chairperson as Mr. Hakim Mufumbiro of EAC, is composed of the one representative from each of the 8 Africa RECs and AFSEC) and six representatives from ARSO member elected by the ARSO General Assembly, of the EAC, is to Coordinate ARSO standardization work at RECs level and provide input in the identification and prioritization of NWIP for development at ARSO level, while promoting the initiation of Mutual Recognition Agreements within their regions; encouraging all RECs Member States to gain ARSO membership and to participate in African standards harmonization and adoption; acting as link between ARSO standardisation activities with AICFTA TBT subcommittee and RECs through sharing work plans to avoid the duplication of work; monitoring progress of adoption and implementation of the harmonized standards and programmes; and coordinating and providing regional notifications regarding African harmonized Standards. The role of the SMC is for the management of procedure, due process and harmonization programmes for their timely execution, including the management of the TCs/SCs and consideration of matters of due process raised by RECs, for Member States and ruling on appeals concerning decisions on new work item proposals, committee drafts, enquiry drafts and FDARS. This ensures aligning of African standards from national, regional and continental levels. During the 64th ARSO Council, the SMC presented to the Council 157 harmonised standards, as indicated above for approval. Ms. Stella Apolot is the Principal Standards Officer at East African Community (EAC) Secretariat, based in Arusha Tanzania. Mr. Mufumbiro is also the current Coordinator – Codex Commission AFRICA.
growth 2020 and it is unlikely that the 3.4 percent economic growth rate for the continent, forecast last year by the African Development Bank, will be achieved because of the COVID-19 crisis". (AUC, 2020, https://africatimes.com/2020/04/06/new-au-report-zeroes-in-on-covid-19-economic-impacts/). In the midst of extraordinary challenges and uncertainties, leaders are under pressure to make decisions on managing the immediate and long-term impact of the pandemic and its consequences, decisions that will shape the state of the world for years to come and what might be the silver linings in the crisis and taking the moment to build a more resilient, prosperous, equitable and sustainable world, is a subject of interest (World Economic Forum 2020).

On a positive note, due to the endemic reliance on imports, and the breakdowns in supply chains associated with lockdown measures, for the African continent, COVID-19 has strengthened the case for developing intra-African regional value chains and unlocking the continent’s business potential, while focusing on the African SMEs and Africa’s Industrialisation and Manufacturing. COVID-19 has also magnified Africa’s reliance on imported pharmaceuticals (both final and intermediate products) and amplified the urgency to build competitive, resilient and robust value chains in this sector, including mainstreaming the use of African Traditional Medicine in the National Healthcare systems and pharmaceutical policies. Karisha Banga, et al. 2020, highlights that in 2018, 82.2% and 95.9% of Africa’s imports of food items, and medicinal and pharmaceutical products, respectively, originated from outside the continent. In the wake of countries’ struggles to procure essential medical products to fight COVID-19, there has already been a positive shift from global, to, towards more regional and local supply chains (with local Manufacturers and SMEs taking the lead to manufacture the required PPEs that comply with the recommended product standards) and with policy re-orientation towards self-reliance and endogenous self-sustained development, within the broad industrialization agenda of Africa (accelerating structural transformation, manufacturing, regional value chains with commensurate positive effects on the made in Africa products and product diversification) and within the prism of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), (https://trade4devnews.enhancedif.org/en/op-ed/boosting-african-regional-value-chain-development-response-covid-19-catalysing-role-afta). But the long-term economic benefits, according to UNCTAD, 2018c, will arise from unleashing the potential of regional value chains in the key sector, including Agro-processing and the pharmaceuticals (African Traditional Medicine), to foster manufacturing, trade, industrialisation and sustainable development. A recent survey jointly carried out by the Africa Trade Policy Centre (ATPC) of UNECA and International Economics Consulting Ltd. (IEC) on the impact of COVID-19 on business and trade across Africa substantiates the ability of African firms, with effective support from the African Quality Infrastructures (NSBs), to adapt and innovate in response to COVID-19 challenges, including global supply chain disruptions. At the continental level, UNECA and AFREXIMBANK have partnered to support the scaling up of manufacturing of COVID-19 medical supplies that can be produced in Africa and sent across borders. This is expected to facilitate a regional approach to developing medical value chains based on comparative advantages and economics of scale.

At the continental level, ARSO has partnered with the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) and the International Islamic Trade Finance Corporation (ITFC) to launch a new Arab-Africa Trade Bridges Program (AATB) initiative called the Harmonisation of Standards for Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices in Africa, aimed at promoting the quality and safety of medicines and medical devices imported or produced on the continent as highlighted in this ARSO Youtube link (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1dFsxix6xU). The initiative, to be implemented in a phased manner over three years, has begun with the harmonisation of standards for Pharmaceuticals and medicinal products (ARSO/TC 80), and medical devices and equipment (ARSO/TC 78), as highlighted in sections of this Newsletter. The second phase focuses on the analysis of the existing international, regional, and national standards for their suitability in meeting the unique challenges faced by African healthcare industries before achieving the 3rd phase, which is the harmonization of the related African Standards and their adoption. Participating ARSO members have nominated Experts to expedite the process. Commenting on the initiative, ITFC CEO, Eng. Hani Salem Sonbol
highlighted that “From a trade development standpoint, harmonizing the standards of pharmaceutical products and medical devices in Africa is a crucial first step in facilitating local production and trade within the sector and those standards will provide a necessary baseline from which to regulate the sector more effectively, raising the quality of locally produced life-saving drugs and related products”. Mrs. Kanayo Awani, Afreximbank’s Managing Director of the Intra-African Trade Initiative praised the initiative, noting that “At a time when the demand for quality medicines and medical devices is increasing, Africa needs to reinforce regional value chains to scale-up the supply of quality medical products and build upon the continent’s resilience against pandemics like COVID-19 in the future.” ARSO’s Secretary General, Dr Hermogene Nsengimana, noted that “While on one hand COVID-19 has created social distancing as a new norm, on another hand it has brought Africa together by opening our eyes to the need for industrialisation, pointing out that Standards circulated by ARSO and other standards organisations related to face masks, and hand sanitizers have been used widely by African SMEs to develop locally made personal protective equipment thereby shedding light on the role of standards in industrialization, safety, and trade, and the project, will not only help in increasing local production but will also create trust and enable cross border trade and investment for pharmaceutical products and medical devices.” (https://www.africanews.com/2020/09/14/afreximbank-and-international-islamic-trade-finance-corporation-itfc-partner-with-arso-to-facilitate-intra-african-trade-in-pharmaceuticals-and-medical-devices-under-the-umbrella-of-the-aatb-program/).

Like their international counterparts (ISO, ASTM, AFNOR, CEN-CENELEC, SAC-China, SIS, INTERTEK, COTECNA) the African National Bureau of Standards and Certification Bodies are taking leadership role to offer, free of charge, the necessary standards and Conformity Assessment Services (see the link https://www.arso-oran.org/standards-for-covid-19/) for the local manufacturers/SMEs.


Given the realities of the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 Pandemic, the ARSO Council in its 62nd Virtual Council meeting, while receiving the first report of the ARSO Webinar held on 4th June 2020 encouraged the Central Secretariat to continue organise Monthly ARSO Webinars, with speakers from among the ARSO Members and Stakeholders, as a way of: Carrying out standardisation awareness among the Policy Makers, SMEs, producers and Exporters, within the context of the AFCFTA Agreement; Progressing the ARSO Programmes and activities, especially standards harmonisation; Facilitating Stakeholders and Members States engagement for implementation of the ARSO Programmes and activities.; Highlight the role of standardisation on various topical issues related to Africa’s economic development to facilitate debate and promote solutions and strategies on tackling the challenges.

For the year 2021, four (4) Webinars have been held since 17th March 2021, with six (6) more scheduled between July – November 2021 with Speakers from the ARSO Member States (South Africa, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Cameroon, Morocco, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Ghana, Madagascar, Egypt, Senegal,) and From Stakeholders and Private Sector (Afrexinmbank, CEN-CENELEC, WTO, UNCTAD, UNECA, AUC, PAQI (Chairperson), AUDA-NEPAD, NRCS-South Africa, Intertek, Nestle East and Southern Africa, EAC Secretariat, AFCFTA Secretariat, KATS Korea, ASTM International, UU/UNECE, PTB-Germany, AFROCHAMPIONS, OAPI (ARIPO), COTECNA, UNIDO, Kamuthanga Fish Farm, Quarcoo Initiative Ltd, Rwanda Volkswagen Company Ltd., CODEX, GSO- - GCC Standardization Organization, Fairtrade Africa, Six Sigma Green Belt-Senegal.).
With the UN adopting its UN 2030 SDGs Goal 12 on Responsible consumption and production, the need to moving to more sustainable consumption and production (SCP) has been placed at the heart of sustainable development policy documents and strategies. Worldwide consumption and production, a driving force of the global economy rests on the use of the natural environment and resources in a way that should create little negative impacts on the planet. Land degradation, declining soil fertility, unsustainable water use, overfishing and marine environment degradation are all lessening the ability of the natural resource base to support livelihoods. For this, there is an increasing aspiration for goods and services that promote sustainability. Recognizing this, African governments at the Johannesberg Summit in 2002 called for the development of a 10-year framework of programmes (10-YFP) in support of regional and national initiatives to accelerate the shift towards SCP patterns that would promote social and economic development within the carrying capacity of ecosystems. Onwards, the African leadership under Agenda 2063, in the Aspiration 1, is aspiring for a prosperous Africa based on Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development and with increased sustainable production, productivity and value additions, in key sectors like Agriculture, and where the environment and ecosystems are healthy and preserved, and with climate resilient economies and communities.

ARSO has facilitated the implementation of the Eco Mark Africa Certification Scheme (African Ecolabelling Mechanism), with the launch on 8th May 2019 in Nairobi, Kenya and with certification of the first 7 certified Companies (5 in Kenya, One in Rwanda and 1 in Ghana), including the Kamuthanga Fish Farm and Quaccoo Initiatives Ltd, under the Six sustainability standards: sustainability standards (agriculture, fishing, Aquaculture (Tilapia & Catfish), forestry and tourism sectors.) REF. ARS/AES 01: Agriculture — Sustainability and Eco-labelling — Requirements ARS/AES 02: Fisheries — Sustainability and Eco-labelling — Requirements ARS/AES 03: Forestry — Sustainability and Eco-labelling— Requirements, ARS/AES 04: Tourism — Sustainability and Eco-labelling — Requirements. The challenge therefore lies with the capacity building for the Local Conformity Assessment Bodies in Africa to the Eco Mark Africa, which already has been registered with European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and being benchmarked with other recognised Ecolabels like Fair Trade Africa, CMS.

Property Office (EUIPO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and being benchmarked with other recognised Eco Labels like Fair Trade Africa, CMS.

19TH MAY 2021: INTERFACING THE TECHNICAL BARRIERS TO TRADE (TBT) AND SANITARY AND PHYTOSANITARY (SPS) MEASURES FOR MARKET ACCESS: Topic: Trading in Agriculture and Food Products – Interfacing the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) and Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures for Market Access. TBT Annex 6, SPS Annex 7. The AICFTA Agreement

Measures related to technical barriers to trade (TBTs) and to sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) standards and regulation have become important dimensions of trade as governments seek to act through their Preferential Trade Agreements (PTAs), as well as through the World Trade Organization (WTO), to meet Consumers demands for safe and quality products and for the protection of human, animal, or plant life or health. The TBT Agreement recognizes that no country should be prevented from taking measures (technical regulations, standards, conformity assessment procedures); ensures that such measures do not create unnecessary obstacles to trade and should be based on scientific information and evidence. TBT technical regulations and standards set out specific characteristics of a product, such as its size, shape, design, functions, and performance, or the way it is labelled or packaged before it is put on sale. The TBT (Technical Barriers to Trade) Agreement covers all technical regulations, voluntary standards and the procedures to ensure that these are met, except when these are sanitary or phytosanitary measures as defined by the SPS Agreement. The SPS Agreement, which, entered into force with the establishment of the World Trade Organization on 1 January 1995, which concerns the application of food safety and animal and plant health regulations, recognises that “Members have the right to take sanitary and phytosanitary measures necessary for the protection of human, animal or plant life or health, provided that such measures are not inconsistent with the provisions of this Agreement”. The African Development Bank (AfDB) has initiated the Feeding Africa – An Action Plan for Transforming Agriculture in Africa” strategy aimed at among other things making Africa a net food exporter; and moving Africa to the top of export-orientated value chains where it has comparative advantage, and above all investing in regional infrastructure and enhanced policy dialogue to remove trade barriers. The ARSO regulatory policy towards simplicity, transparency (TBT Annex 6, article 11), harmonization (Article 5), equivalence in regulations and Mutual Recognition Arrangements, supplemented with increased Capacity Building and Awareness Creation (as per the TBT Annex 6, article 5), among African Policy Makers, Institutions, Consumers, Traders and general citizens, are strategic in addressing the TBTs...
The importance of standardisation is based on the fact that, standards and technical regulations define what can (or cannot) be exchanged, and outline the procedures under which such exchanges are or are not permissible and this is underpinned by the Conformity Assessment. Standards and conformity assessment requirements “stipulate what can or cannot be exchanged and define the procedures that must be followed for exchange to take place” (Brenton (2004)). A standard, using dimensions and tolerances, cannot be defined without reference to reliable measurements. Measurements must in turn be internationally standardized to avoid costly equivalences. A product must be submitted to testing in order to determine conformity with the requirements defined in standards or technical regulations. International compatibility requires that testing procedures be standardized, and also relies on reliable measurements. Accreditation, based on harmonised or international standards, is the procedure by which the whole process becomes reliable and trustworthy, leading to international trade and competitiveness. Conformity assessment depends on the existence of unambiguous standards against which products, processes, and services are assessed. Conformity assessment enhances the value of standards by increasing the confidence of buyers, users, and regulators that products actually conform to claimed standards. The Conformity assessment provides the bridge between standards and the market. Conformity Assessment (Testing, Inspection and certification) tests the product compliance with standards and technical regulations. In this regard, Conformity assessment procedures are directly linked to the efficient functioning of industrial and trading systems and markets. Therefore, even when standards in different countries have been harmonized, the free flow of trade is inhibited if products are subjected to redundant testing and certification requirements in multiple export markets. Conformity assessment, therefore, when applied correctly, helps businesses to improve competitiveness and facilitate trade, as customers have greater confidence and trust in goods and services purchased. The WTO encourages Harmonization, use of equivalence and mutual recognition in the bilateral free trade agreements, such as the AICFTA. Mutual recognition of accreditation and certification systems facilitate access to both domestic and international markets; provides the technical underpinning to domestic and international trade by promoting cross-border stakeholder confidence and acceptance of accredited test data and certified results, and will be instrumental in facilitating the free movements of Goods and Services and costs cutting as envisaged under the AICFTA Protocol. The Continental ARSO Conformity Assessment Programme (ACAP) under the ARSO Conformity Assessment Committee (ARSO CACO) aims at establishing various tools and capacity building for Good Conformity Assessment Practices (testing, certification, inspection, market surveillance, laboratory accreditation and calibration).

Increasing awareness creation on the role of Standardisation and ARSO visibility through the ARSO Standardisation Goodwill Ambassadors.

ARSO Appoints Hon. Alan John Kwadwo Kyerematen, as a New Standardisation Goodwill Ambassador.

A wide range of organisations employ goodwill ambassadors to promote their programs and reach out to others with programs that are based on good relations, from multinational groups such as the United Nations and United Nations Associations, the African Union and the European Union. Under Schedule I, Rules of Procedure for the General Assembly of the African Organisation for Standardisation (ARSO), Rule 2 on membership, paragraph 2.4.1.2 admits Organisations and by extension individuals who are ready to serve as ARSO goodwill ambassador. The ARSO Council in its 64th Session in Kigali, Rwanda, on 14th June 2021, appointed Hon. Alan John Kwadwo Kyerematen, the Minister for Trade and Industry, Republic of Ghana as a new ARSO Goodwill Ambassador with the mandate to generate public awareness and understanding of ARSO, Standardisation activities and its benefits, as well as inspiration of broad...
positive, committed action in support of ARSO's mandate and priorities. H.E. Kyerematen, was the First UNDP Regional Director for Enterprise Africa (1998) leading establishment of enterprise support institutions and programmes in 13 Sub-Saharan Africa countries; Ghana's Ambassador to the US- 2001 – 2003; Minister of Trade, Industry and Presidential Special Initiatives - 2003 – 2007; UN Economic Commission for Africa Trade Advisor and Africa Trade Policy Centre, Ethiopia -2009 – 2012; The AU Nominee for WTO Director General – 2012. H.E. Kyerematen is recognised for his provision and support to the AU to develop the Action Plan for Boosting Intra-Africa Trade and establishing the Framework for the African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement; In-depth Qualification, Knowledge and Experience in both Diplomacy, Trade negotiations, and Trade and Standardisation Issues; and above all, the enthusiasm and preparedness to serve Africa as a Standardisation Goodwill Ambassador, the with full realisation of the responsibilities associated with the position and in the context AICFTA Agreement implementation and the high Expectations on ARSO.

ARSO recognises the current ARSO Goodwill Ambassadors, Her Excellency, Prof. (Mrs) Aminah Gurib-Fakim, former President of the Republic of Mauritius, and His Excellency, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo, the former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, with His Excellency Olusegun Obasanjo accredited with facilitating the ARSO-Afreximbank and AfDB cooperation, and Her Excellency Aminah Gurib-Fakim for Promoting Quality Infrastructure and ARSO within the AU and the African Leadership platforms.

**Standardisation Matters - Congratulating Dr. Ngozi Okonjo –Iweala.**

ARSO joins the International Community to congratulate Dr. Ngozi Okonjo –Iweala (from Nigeria) the newly appointed Director-General of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Nigeria being a founder member of ARSO, and which has taken keen efforts at establishing robust National Quality Infrastructure, and being one of the largest economies in Africa, holds key position in the Continent. This is the Second time when Africa has been recognised to head an International Organisation, headquartered in Geneva Switzerland, which have direct influence on trade and Standardisation. Reference is made on the election of Mr. Eddy Njoroge, a Kenyan, as the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) President in the year 2019, ARSO and ISO have signed an MoU to position the continent to benefit from International Trading Systems through standardisation. Kenya, apart from being a founder member of ARSO, also hosts the ARSO Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, on a Diplomatic Status, on behalf of the African Union. Having been admitted by the WTO TBT’s Committee as an Observer member in November 2015 and being a Signatory of the of the Annex 3: Code of Good Practice for the Preparation, Adoption and Application of Standards, and having developed the African Standards Harmonisation Modern (ARSO ASHAM) based on the provisions of the WTO TBT Agreement and the ISO/IEC Directives on standardization, the ARSO standardisation Mandate to facilitate the participation of African countries in the international Market is clear. The appointment comes at a time when Africa has entered into a crucial phase in its History under the African Continental Free Trade (AICFTA) Area Agreement, under NTBs Annex 5, TBT Annex 6 and SPS Annex 7, where standardization will play a key role in the implementation process and based on the WTO TBT Agreement. Under Article 1, on Definitions the State Parties reaffirms that the WTO TBT Agreement shall form the basis of the implementation of the Annex, and that all the definitions for general terms for standardisation, technical regulations, conformity assessment procedures and related activities will be based on the meaning given under the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers. Under Article 3 on Guiding Principles State Parties reaffirm their rights and obligations under the WTO TBT Agreement in respect of the preparation, adoption, and application of standards, technical regulations, conformity assessment procedures and related activities. In Article 5 on the Fields of Cooperation the State Parties have agreed to cooperate in the development and implementation of standards, technical regulations, conformity assessment procedures, accreditation, metrology, capacity building and enforcement activities in order to facilitate trade within the AICFTA, in line with the WTO TBT Agreement, and under Article 7 on Cooperation in Technical Regulations and Article 8 Cooperation in Conformity Assessment the State parties reaffirm to comply with the WTO TBT Agreement. Under Article 1, on Transparency on TBTs, the state parties highlight the need to work as per the guidelines of the WTO TBT Agreement including notification procedures and notification systems. The establishment of the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Sub-Committee, under Article 13, to ensure the effective implementation of the WTO TBT Agreement and participation of Africa in the WTO TBT Committee is also highlighted.
ARSO ROOTS FOR EDUCATION ABOUT STANDARDISATION (EAS) IN AFRICA AS ETHIOPIA LAUNCHES THE ESA STANDARDS TRAINING ACADEMY AND AS INTER-AFRICAN UNIVERSITY 2021 STANDARDISATION ESSAY COMPETITION IS CONCLUDED AND THE THEME FOR 2022 ESSAY COMPETITION APPROVED.

ESA Champions a Standards Academy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 9th May 2021.

With standardisation taking centre stage in Africa’s Economic Development and sustainable development, there is a greater and urgent need to create visibility for Academic education in the field of Standardisation and new Standardisation educational concepts mainstreamed in Education Systems, Learning Institutions and Universities, to supplement the efforts of the National Bureau of Standards (NSB’s) professional capacity building initiatives, mainstreamed in the Africa national education systems. In this respect, the “good old way” of standardisation education of learning by doing or learning on the job, or induction by NSBs, without any prior, or, at best, only limited knowledge of standardisation is no longer really viable. The Academic education in the field of Standardisation, being, an integrated programme in the state education system at schools, colleges and universities with defined Curriculum, Course Work, Learning and Teaching Materials, Examination and Qualifications and benchmarked to the existing International Best Practices, and aimed at teaching pupils, students, CEOs, managers, employees in businesses, and life-long learners, the subject of standards and standardization, with the education being carefully tailored to respective target audiences. This may include the use and benefits of standards, the strategic importance of standardization for business and Africa’s competitiveness, how to implement standards in businesses, and how to participate in standardisation to influence the content of standards.

In fulfilling this quest, the Ethiopian Standards Association (ESA), in a ceremony also attended by the ARSO Secretary General Dr. Hermogene Nsengimana, Launched the ESA Standards Academy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 9th May 2021, with an aim of the Capacity building to the Ethiopian Nationals in the field of standardisation and to facilitate the mainstreaming of Academic education in the field of standardisation in the Ethiopian National Education System. Dr. Nsengimana, highlighted the need to achieve a much better inclusion of standardization in education and learning processes in Africa by improving and extending current activities in a systematic way and with the involvement of the Education Stakeholders and Relevant Ministries, which requires (i) scaling up of the activities and visibility on education about standardization, with correspondingly increased leadership, commitment and coordination, and continued awareness building; (ii) involvement of multiple stakeholders (companies, employees, ministries of education, universities, students, regulatory authorities and policy makers, and standards-setting bodies, (national, regional, and international)); (iii) Increased synergies and support for further cooperation to ensure coherence in the standardization Curriculum and efforts; (iv) Building capacity by providing technical expertise, best practice, train-the-trainers manuals and teaching materials; (v) Working with the Education systems and responsible public authorities in member states (engaging Relevant Ministries, Educators, academia to include standardization in education and lifelong learning); (vi) Involving the Target Groups (inspiring and involving pupils, students, CEOs, managers and employees as well as teachers and trainers about standards and standardization). (vii) involving the NSBs and the Technical Experts to facilitate the development of teaching materials at national, Regional, Continental and International level; (viii) and the involvement Standards Users, the organizations, companies (SMEs and African Enterprises) for which standards and standardization are important.

The Secretary General reiterated that, ARSO is committed, through its ARSO Standards Education Programme, to promoting and supporting education about standardization in Africa. Already ARSO has developed a Policy Document and a Continental Curriculum for mainstreaming into the educational systems in Africa, and has also signed MoUs with some African Universities, including the University of Zimbabwe, and the Catholic University of East Africa, Nairobi, Kenya, to facilitate the mainstreaming Standards Education in their Education Systems. This is in addition to the yearly ARSO Essay Competition, initiated in 2013, and is already taking Standards Education to the African Universities.
ESSAY COMPETITIONS AS STRATEGIES OF PROMOTING BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE BENEFITS OF STANDARDISATION AMONG THE YOUTH.

The 26th ARSO General Assembly Congratulates Winners of the 8th Essay Competition.

As the 64th ARSO Council approves the 2022, 9th Essay Competition theme as approved by the 64th ARSO Council on 14th June 2021, is “The Role of Standardisation in Promoting African Pharmaceutical and Medical Devices Industries to Attain Self-reliance and resilience in Combating COVID-19 and Future Pandemics”, the 26th ARSO General Assembly congratulated the Winners of 2021 8th Essay Competitions held under the theme The role of Standardisation in promoting Arts, Culture and Heritage “the Creative Economy”, with winners being:

1st Position: Kela Sibabalwe - South Africa
2nd Position: Bingepinge Shannele – Zimbabwe
3rd Position: Majogo Lincoln Zimbabwe.

Acceptably, standardisation in Africa, can fully unfold its beneficial potential only if the relevant actors (regulatory authorities, Policy Makers, Education Sectors, standards developing organisations, companies, consumers, users and other interest groups) are able to make appropriate decisions and to conduct their standards activities in a professional and effective manner. Mainstreaming and introduction by educational establishments of the subject of standardization and the related regulatory framework into the curricula and National Education Systems in Africa, particularly of universities, remains a Key priority, and the ARSO Essay Competitions, initiated in 2013, are a step ahead in the right direction in this matter. Originally approved by the 49th ARSO Council held on 14th – 15th November 2013 in Nairobi, Kenya, under African Day of Standardisation. Themes, based on AU Year Themes. The 8th Essay Competition was held under the Theme “The role of Standardisation in promoting Arts, Culture and Heritage” the Creative Economy”. The theme is based on the AU theme for the year 2021, “The AU Year of the Arts, Culture and Heritage” as declared by the AU Heads of State and Government”. 37th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council held virtually on 13-14 October 2020, officially declared the Year 2021 as The AU Year of the Arts, Culture and Heritage and adopted the African Union theme for 2021 as ‘Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want’. The theme also resonates with the Aspiration 5 of Agenda 2063 - an Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics. Under the Theme, the AU, calls on African countries to allocate the necessary resources and implement the relevant policies and programmes towards establishing a more robust and sustainable creative industries sector.; Increase advocacy for the ratification of the 2006 Charter for African Cultural Renaissance (which to date has signed by 34 Countries and ratified by only 14 of the 55 member states); safeguarding, organisation, production, marketing, distribution, exhibition and preservation of African cultural and creative industries, as well as, facilitate the implementation of the Nairobi 2005 Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries in Africa, The UN under RESOLUTION 74/198 (A/C.2/74/L.16/Rev.1 - E - A/C.2/74/L.16/Rev.1 Desktop (undocs.org)) declared 2021 the International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development. The UN is Prioritizing the need to support developing countries and countries with economies in transition in diversifying production and exports, including in new sustainable growth areas, including creative industries. For the African Union, under the 2005 Nairobi Plan of Action for Cultural Industries in Africa the quality of African Creative products must be addressed as a matter of priority if they are to be competitive at the African and international markets (AUC, 2005), highlighting the following: Poor quality (Poor workmanship, inferior quality of materials, Shorter durability, Poor packaging and labelling, Inconsistent sizing,) and the Safety Issues (Physical safety – e.g., sharp edges, pin-points, weight; Toxicity of raw materials and finished products and Sanitary and phytosanitary concerns), The AU in the Nairobi 2005 Nairobi Plan of Action for Cultural Industries in Africa - Phase 3 - Implementation Strategy section Calls on Member States to ensure the competitiveness of African cultural industries by establishing standardization and quality assurance mechanisms., by Developing standardization tools and instruments to ensure competitiveness and marketability of cultural goods and services; and Elaborating codes of conduct for in the manufacturing, transaction and consumption of cultural goods and services. This Calls for: Preparation and promulgation of relevant national standards for the creative economy;
Promotion of the implementation of the relevant standards by Creative industry sectors/Enterprises;

2. Certification of the Creative Industry products and services to ensure compliance with standards;

3. Provision of information on standards and related technical matters, regulations and conformity Assessment systems, with regard to both national and international standards, to ensure that the respective Creative Economy enterprises and actors are fully aware of the Standardization process, the benefits and their participation, thereof;

4. Country representation in regional, continental and international activities and at forums that deal with standards to ensure that the standardisation process at all levels benefits the National Creative Economy and sectors so that the products and services can widely be accepted and traded.

The ARSO/TC 77 for Creative Economy promotes the development, harmonisation, adoption and implementation of priority National, regional and African standards and the related conformity Assessment procedures for the African Creative Economy Products and services for increased market access. ARSO has also initiated the Made in Africa Qualification Criteria/Standard – to address the Challenges of Rules of Origin (establishing the nationality of products produced in Africa), Intellectual Property and the Standardisation issues, meant to increase visibility and protection of IPRs, trademarks, brands of African goods and services, and enjoyment of Trade Preferential offered under the AfCFTA. ARSO congratulates the first three Winners of the 8th ARSO Essay Competition:

2012 - Essay on Role of standards in the Kenyan economy wins the DIN/ISO competition - ISO runs a Standardisation Essay Competition

Launched on 26th March 2008. Under the theme: “International standards supporting public policies”, the ISO ESSAY COMPETITION FOR YOUNG STANDARDIZERS, running under the Helmut Reihlen Award, is organized within the framework of the ISO Programme for Developing Countries (ISO-DEVCO), and the award is co-sponsored by ISO and the Deutsches Institut für Normung (DIN), ISO member for Germany. The purpose is to encourage young professionals to engage in international standardization and to raise awareness of the importance of standards in promoting safe and sustainable economic development. The Essay is for young standardizers, under 35 years old, in developing countries and economies in transition on the contribution that international standards. The Essay was named after Professor Dr. Helmut Reihlen, Director of DIN from 1977 to 1999, in recognition of his significant contribution to the ISO Action Plan for Developing Countries. In 2012, Mr. Amwayi Omukhwose William won the competition, under the theme “How do ISO International Standards help industry in your country to respond to local and global market demands, in 2012, https://mkenyajerumani.de/2012/10/10/essay-on-role-of-standards-in-the-kenyan-economy-wins-the-dino-competition. Mr. Amwayi affirms that “Standards have played, and will play, a critical role in enhancing global trade by improving market access and enhancing the competitive advantage of products. It is important therefore, for countries, especially the developing nations, to leverage this linkage between standards and trade as this is a crucial driving force for any country’s economic growth.” To date, Mr. Amwayi continues to play an active role in the office of the ISO President, Mr. Eddy Njoroge, facilitating communications between the office of the ISO President and ARSO and the African countries.

Competitiveness of the SMEs - EU runs SMEs Youth Essay Competitions: Lessons for Africa under the ARSO Made in Africa Expo.

What lessons for Africa under the African Union SME Strategy and Master Plan 2017-2021 that aims, among others, at increasing SMEs, MSMEs and entrepreneurs’ participation in regional and global value chains? Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play a major role in most economies, particularly in developing countries. SMEs account for the majority of businesses worldwide and are important contributors to job creation and global economic development. They represent about 90% of businesses and more than 50% of employment worldwide. Formal SMEs contribute up to 40% of national income (GDP) in emerging economies. In emerging markets, most formal jobs are generated by SMEs, which create 7 out of 10 jobs. (World Bank 2020/ https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/smefinance). Africa has an estimated population of more than 1.3 billion people that’s growing at over 2 percent annually in most countries, with more than 50 percent of the people in many
countries below the age of 25, and the population projected to reach 2 billion in 2050. At the height of unemployment among the youth, of critical importance in the fact that SMEs account for 90 percent of all businesses in Africa, employing 60-70% of the population. This shows that the investment potential of the African continent can and will only be unlocked by focusing on the SME sector. This also explains Why the Future is African – And Why SMEs Should Lead the Way.

The EU Youth Essay competition is organised by the European Commission Directorate General for Single Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, and is an opportunity for 18-25-year-olds to share their ideas and viewpoints with key figures and stakeholders in the spheres of enterprise, entrepreneurship and SMEs. The European SME week is a pan-European campaign that aims to promote entrepreneurship in Europe by helping and supporting entrepreneurs, as well as encouraging potential entrepreneurs to start their own business. The competition supports entrepreneurship and small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) through awarding innovative initiatives of public bodies and public-private partnerships.

https://blogs.ec.europa.eu/promotingenterprise/category/european-sme-week-youth-essay-competition. The EU SME Week Youth Essay Competition opened for the fifth time in 2020 to ask the youth of Europe for their opinions and solutions to the following: What do SMEs need to become sustainable and resilient, in the context of COVID-19 and other global challenges? How can EU policy best aid entrepreneurs? The 2021 Edition was launched on 29th April 2021. On the same note, the AU held a webinar on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) Development in Africa, on December 22, 2020, on the Theme: “The Road towards a Continental Recovery Strategy for SMEs in the post-COVID-19 era”, and with a to adopt a continental recovery strategy for SMEs in the post-COVID-19 era, and have an expert opinion on the development of a competitive, diversified and sustainable economies underpinned by dynamic, entrepreneurial and industrial sectors that generate employment, reduce poverty and foster social inclusion.

The ARSO SMEs Standardisation programmes, including the Yearly Made in Africa Expos in all ARSO members and the ARSO Maturity Model Certification Scheme, are meant to facilitate the participation of SMEs in standardisation and to adopt Quality for their competitiveness and market access. ARSO and the Hosting member States have been organising the Recognition Awards for the best performing SMEs with regards to the application of Standardisation in their businesses.

In this file Picture, Mrs Masego Marobella, the former ARSO Vice President and the Managing Director of BOBs, Botswana, explains, as a Panellist, the role of standardisation in facilitating the competitiveness of the African SMEs during the 2nd ARSO President forum and made in Africa Conference and expo 2017 1-4 March 2017, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe made in Africa as a pillar for African economic integration, industrialisation and transformation agenda.

POSITIONING AFRICA TO BENEFIT FROM INTERNATIONAL STANDARDISATION THROUGH SIGNED MOUS

26th March 2021 – ISO

The AfCFTA Agreement, under Annex 6, article 6 (a), highlights the need for the AU members to develop and promote the adoption and/or adaption of international standards; and promote membership, liaison and participation in the work of ISO, IEC, and other international organisations. With Globalisation and trade liberalisation, international standards have continued to underpin the international trading systems, for which Africa has steadily become a key player, hence the need to formally position the continent to actively participate in the international standardisation systems and organisations, like the ISO, IEC and ITU, taking into consideration Africa’s key priorities and interests in the standardisation process for sustainable development, and in the context of the AfCFTA and the WTO TBT Agreements. It is in this regard that, on 26th March 2021, ARSO, represented by the Secretary General, Dr. Hermogene Nsengimana, finally signed a Memorandum of Understanding (the “MoU”) with the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), represented by Sergio Mujica, Secretary General, that aims at strengthening the cooperation between ISO and ARSO and by extension ISO members in African countries. The MoU is envisaged to strengthen support of ISO activities and improve the ability of ARSO’s members that are also ISO members to participate in these activities effectively; improve the quality and capacity of standardization in African countries but more importantly, support free and fair trade within the Africa region and with the rest of the world, especially in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA).

In taking into consideration the fact that with 41 African countries as ISO members, with South Africa and Zimbabwe being ISO Council members, and with the current President of ISO, Mr. Eddy Njoroge, confirming to the 26th ARSO ARSO Assembly, on 16th June 2021, of the commitment of ISO to implement the MoU, the signing of the MoU comes at a crucial moment for the region. African countries have started trading with each other within the single African Market on 1st January 2021, under the AfCFTA Agreement, which came into force on 31st May 2019, and currently
having been signed by 54 countries out of the 55 and ratified by 38 African Countries (27 of which are ARSO members) and under which the role of international standards, alongside harmonised African Standards has been underlined. In the AfCFTA Agreement, under the TBT Annex 6, the State Parties have been obligated to develop and promote the adoption and/or adoption of international standards (article 6.a) and use the international standards and/or parts thereof as a basis for technical regulations (article 7.b), conformity assessment procedures (article 8, b), harmonisation of sanitary or phytosanitary measures (SPS Annex 7, article 8.1), and for import, export or transit formalities and procedures (Annex 4, article 5.1). ARSO recognises that the MoU remains a key strategy to support the capacity building of standardization and conformity assessment infrastructures and technical assistance in the ARSO Member States and for the implementation of the ISO Strategy 2030 and ISO Action Plan for Developing Countries (APDC) based on the associated ISO (CASCO, COPOLCO, DEVCO and REMCO) and ARSO (CACO, COCO, Standards Harmonisation, Education, DISNET) Programmes and in the context of ISO Regional Engagement Policy. The ISO and ARSO Team continue to consult on the implementation Strategies through virtual meetings.

18th February 2021 – AOAC INTERNATIONAL
ARSO, represented by the Secretary General, Dr. Hermogene Nsengimana signed an MoU with Association of Official Analytical Collaboration (AOAC) INTERNATIONAL on 18th April 2021. The MoU is a follow-up to the discussions, deliberations and recommendations of the AOAC INTERNATIONAL Sub-Saharan Africa Section Inaugural Meeting, that took Place from 5-7 November 2018 at The Farm Inn Hotel in Pretoria, South Africa, and which recommended among other things, the need for, establishing technical/ capacity building collaboration agreements with key stakeholders in the region such as ARSO and AFRIMETS. The MoU will facilitate the harmonization and implementation of analytical performance standards and conformity assessment procedures in the field of agriculture and food safety, to support government regulatory policies and favourable integration into regional and international markets, especially promoting trade of safe agricultural products within the African Single Market under the AfCFTA. (AOAC) INTERNATIONAL (https://www.aoac.org) is a 501(c)(3), independent, third party, not-for-profit association and voluntary consensus standards developing organization dedicated to serving the analytical community in laboratory capacity building, conformity assessment, method validation, and promotion of globally accepted testing standards. AOAC INTERNATIONAL provides a forum for government, industry, and academia to collaboratively establish standard method performance requirements and official methods of analysis that ensure the safety and integrity of foods and other products that impact public health around the world. AOAC INTERNATIONAL facilitates science-based solutions through the development of performance standards and Official Methods of Analysis (chemical and microbiological) for a broad spectrum of safety interests including, but not limited to, food and food ingredients; beverages; dietary supplements; infant formula; animal feeds; fertilizers; soil and water; and, veterinary drug residues. AOAC consensus standards and Official Methods of Analysis are routinely approved by the Codex Committee on Methods of Analysis and Sampling (CCMAS) for adoption of methods as CODEX international standards which are used globally to promote trade and to facilitate public health and safety. “AOAC’s Official Methods of Analysis are respected worldwide and can be used with confidence by industry, regulatory agencies, research organizations, testing laboratories, and academic institutions. David B. Schmidt (right), the Executive Director, represented AOAC.

16th June 2021- SAC China
ARSO, represented by the President, BOOTO à NGON Charles, signed an MoU with SAC, China as represented by Dr. Tian Shihong, SAC, Administrator on 16th June 2021 during the Virtual meeting of the 26th ARSO General Assembly. The MoU will facilitate joint activities in standards harmonisation to reduce Technical Barriers to Trade between Africa and China and enable ARSO and SAC to jointly develop international standards or adopt standards of each other in the fields of common concern or mutual interest in absence of international standards, and share the information about adopting each other’s standards. Further the MoU will facilitate cooperation in the promotion of Standards education, training and capacity building among the African SMEs, Youth, Traders and Farmers, while promoting new standardization trends and methods and maximizing the value of standards in regulating production processes and business order, ensuring consumer safety and promoting trade, including in the Belt and Road initiative.
**BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF AFRICAN STANDARDISATION EXPERTS**

Do you Know about the on-going ARSO Capacity Buildings Webinar Workshops and Training Courses with PTB, ANSI and the UL Standards??

**Quality Infrastructure for Africa - PTB Supported Capacity Building Activities**

The PTB Capacity buildings are being undertaken under the project "Upgrading of Quality Infrastructure in Africa" within the scope of the technical cooperation with the African Union Commission - Department of Trade and Industry (AUC-DTI) and the Pan-African Quality Infrastructure (PAQI) organisations (AFRAC, AFRIMETS, AFSEC & ARSO) and include:

(i) **A course on Hygiene Concepts, Cross-Contamination Risks, and Cleaning Validation (cGMP) for pharmaceutical manufacturers and regulators - in the Context of COVID-19 pandemic, carried in May 2021,** with the purpose to inform about possible transmission routes of the new coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 in the professional context and to recommend hygiene concepts for pharmaceutical manufacturing sites, and in the context of **COVID-19 pandemic preparedness for workplaces;** as well as **to provide practical information and in-depth knowledge about the risks of cross-contamination and cleaning validation for the manufacture of quality-assured medicines, focusing on the current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP).** The Course focused on the cGMP standards and requirements of the WHO as one of the most important GMPs. The new Health-Based Exposure Limits (HBELs) approach in cleaning validation was also considered.

(ii) **Quality Infrastructure for Sustainable Development (QuISP) - A training course to enhance cooperation and trade in Africa - April – August 2021.** The training course uses a unique concept to raise awareness of and provide an introduction to quality infrastructure. The course is intended for 20 young professionals working in institutions related to trade negotiations and trade agreements, such as ministries of trade, trade promotion organizations and chambers of industry and commerce in Africa. The Course has been scheduled to run between April to August 2021, and consists of a preparatory phase, a kick-off event 19 to 23 April 2021, a tutor guided four-month E-learning phase 26 April to 20 August 2021, and a final workshop, which will be released in Germany, if it will be possible to travel in the Final workshop: 23 to 27 August 2021. Ms. Kathrin Wunderlich (pictured) is PTB’s Project Coordinator, International Cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa International Cooperation in Sub-Saharan Africa.

**ARSO-USAID-ANSI-PCPC Webinar Workshop Series on Cosmetics.**

A burgeoning population expected to double to 2.4 billion in 2050, rising middle class and amplified urbanization has positioned Africa to the status, of the “next frontier” in the beauty and cosmetics industry. With a growing population, and mainly youthful, educated and with rising urbanisation, the outlook for the African cosmetics, beauty and personal care products market is very positive for the coming years. Equally, it is acknowledged that the Africa’s middle-class has tripled in size in the last 30 years and is driving the continent’s demand for cosmetics. An added advantage for Africa that most of its population is young, under 30 years of age, and thus are providing a ready market for luxury goods which includes cosmetics, toiletries and perfumes. As a result, cosmetics companies are racing for market share. Overall, the African beauty and personal care market was estimated at €7.5 billion in 2018 and it currently increases between 8% and 10% per year against a global market growth rate of close to 4%. It is expected to reach over €12 billion by 2023.
billion in 2022 when the continent’s total population, the fastest growing in the world, will reach 1.5 billion inhabitants. Given these statistics, the Cosmetics market and beauty products market in African, which has remained largely untapped, is poised for unprecedented growth as the African consumers continue to demand for quality products adapted to their hair, skin and body specificities, and specific needs. Photo Source: Kuza Stories, 2020 (http://www.kuzabiashara.co.ke/blog/cosmetic/).

It is, also, recognised that in Africa, the regulatory frameworks for cosmetics and personal care products are not harmonized, thus limiting cross-border trade due to TBTs arising from different Standards and Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment systems. On way forward, under its standardisation activities, Chemistry and Chemical Engineering, , and the Services Sector, ARSO/TC 40, Cosmetics and related products ARSO/TC 72, Cosmetology and wellness, ARSO has initiated various Standards and Conformity Assessment procedures to facilitate the harmonisation of standards in the Sector and to facilitate Good Manufacturing Practices to ensure that the African Cosmetics Sector rely on a regulatory systems aligned with International best practices, and progressively encourage the local manufacturers to adopt those best practices and to stimulate the export of those products both to the domestic and global level.

Since 2020, ARSO and ANSI, in collaboration with USAID and PCPC, have initiated Capacity Building Workshops on Global Best Practices for the Cosmetics Sector, through a web-based training series that aim at supporting ARSO's efforts to establish harmonized African standard(s) for cosmetics and the personal care sectors, under the ARSO/TC 40, Cosmetics and related products ARSO/TC 72, Cosmetology and wellness. Through Standards Alliance support, the series includes approximately ten, 90-minute virtual training sessions and one thematic session. Mr. David Jankowski (pictured), remains the ANSI contact person and continues to play a key role.

Underwriters Laboratories Joint Workshop Series with the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO)

ARSO is collaborating with the UL Standards on the Capacity Building Standardisation Webinar Workshop series with the 2nd Phase started on 2nd June 2021. The 1st Phase took place in 2020, May-November. The Training Focus on building the Capacity of African Experts in various Standardisation subjects. In September 2019, ARSO and UL Standards signed an agreement with one of the objectives being to promote communication and collaboration between the two organizations and to increase knowledge of each other’s standards development activities. Of these 35 member countries of ARSO, 19 participated in this workshop series. The first Phase was implemented between November and December 2020 to promote the sharing of standardization and safety information. The workshop series consisted of five sessions with topics ranging from the WTO principles for international standards development organizations and the standards development process in the U.S. and Canada as well as UL standards on circular economy and fire prevention. UL Standards proposed potential topics for the series and ARSO members voted based on which topics were of highest priority and interest to the region. Participating countries: 20: Botswana, Congo, Egypt, Gabon, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Zambia, Zanzibar and Zimbabwe. The Second phase has been designed to run from June to December 2021, covering various Topics. Ms. Soya Bird, the UL Director of International Standards has continued to play a pivotal role in this initiative.
Ethiopia/ESA: 9th May 2021. In a ceremony presided over by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Demeke Mekonnen, the Ethiopian Standard Agency, ESA, inaugurated a state-of-the-art training centre. The Centre, that accommodates 16 classrooms and 40 bedrooms, is expected to provide training with a view to create efficient services in the field of standardization. The academy will conduct research activities for East African countries and provide support to various higher education institutions beyond providing training. The Deputy Prime Minister stressed the need to build competent economy with the support of Quality Standard Systems on sectors that require the application of simple and complex technologies, acknowledging that the Academy will to enhance the quality standards of Ethiopian products. On his part, Trade and Industry Minister, Melaku Alebel underscored the need to have efficient training in standardisation owing to its importance both in facilitating trade at the local and international markets. The centre will help Ethiopia be competitive in the digital industry and benefits African countries in the field of Standard and Quality. The ARSO Secretary General, Dr. Hermogène Nsengimana, left in the picture, who graced the occasion noted that the Academy will be important to the continent in the context of the implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement, where the TBT Annex 6, emphasises the need for Capacity Building of the African Standardisation Experts.

Zanzibar/ZBS: Zanzibar Holds the National Essay Competition Recognition and Awards Ceremony. 14th June 2021: In a ceremony presided by Mr. Omar Said Shaaban Minister for Trade and industrial Development, The Zanzibar Bureau of Standards (ZBS) Held its National Essay Competition Recognition and Awards Ceremony where the Winners received Certificates and Monetary Awards. Zanzibar was one of the ARSO members that participated in the 8th Essay Competitions under the theme, The role of Standardisation in promoting Arts, Culture and Heritage of the Creative Economy. The Theme of the Essay Competition was based on the, AU declared 2021 as The AU Year of the Arts, Culture and Heritage, under theme ‘Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want’ at the 33rd African Union Heads of State Assembly in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 9th February 2020, and within the context of Aspiration 5 of Agenda 2063 - an Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, shared values and ethics. The calls for the increased advocacy for the ratification of the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance (which to date has only been ratified by 14 of the 55 member states) and the implementation of the AU Nairobi 2005 Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries in Africa which, among others, calls on member States to focus on the production and establish standardization and quality assurance mechanisms to ensure the competitiveness of the African Creative Economy. The role of standardisation is to ensure the competitiveness of the African Creative Economy through Quality and Safe product, improved market access, the establishment of regional Value Chains and Capacity building to SMEs for their competitiveness. The role of standardisation is to improve on the commercialisation of African cultural and artistic creations, addressing issues such as rules of origin, and the intellectual property which arise from poor copyright and trademark protection and the resulting trend in “cultural appropriation” as African cultural designs and artefact. In her Message to the participants, Mrs. RAHIMA A. BAKAR (right), Director General of ZBS congratulated the participants, highlighting the role of standardisation as a key factor in industrialisation and trade in Africa. https://www.zbs.go.tz/gallery#pid=1.
Sudan/SSMO – On 21st February 2021 the SSMO signs MoU with India.

Led by Ms. Sanaa Albideen El Shafie, DG, SSMO signed the cooperation MoU at SSMO Head Office on Indian Ambassador to Sudan, H.E. Ravindra P. Jaiswal on behalf of BIS. The two organizations have decided to cooperate and share experiences in the areas of setting up quality standards and assessment procedures to ensure the quality. This will help in providing safe reliable quality goods; minimizing health hazards to consumers; promoting exports and imports substitute; and control over proliferation of poor varieties etc. through standardization, certification and testing. Ms. El Shafie in her remarks, hailed BIS expertise and international reputation, and pointed out that SSMO has already been using the Indian standards formulated by BIS and they are compatible with the Sudanese requirements and culture. The MoU will also facilitate Capacity Building in various training programmes offered by BIS under Government of India scholarship schemes. Capacity building in socio-economic and human resources fields is one of the main objectives of India’s policy towards Sudan. In the last financial year 2019-2020, more than 300 Sudanese officials/students have gone to India for training courses and higher education under GoI’s various scholarship programmes. India is a significant trade partner of Sudan. The annual bilateral trade between the two countries is more than US$ 1.5 billion. Indian goods, machineries, chemicals, pharmaceuticals etc. meet the international standard including the standards set by the SSMO.

Benin/ANM - May 20, 2021. ANM Good Health Half-Marathon and Walk). Like all countries in the world, Benin celebrated, the May 20, 2021, World Metrology Day with the staff of the National Agency for Standardization, Metrology and Quality Control (ANM) taking part in different Sports activities and Walking for Health, dubbed “ANM Good Health Half-Marathon and Walk” The ANM Director General highlighted the importance of the event highlighting the health benefits including prevention of cardiovascular disease, promotion of physical, mental, and psychological health. On the same day, ANM facilitated free Laboratory awareness among students on matters related to adherence to standards. He said this year’s theme reminds the nation to ensure that the process to prepare and manage its implementation at various sectors is done by involving stakeholders including those in culture, arts and heritage. Speaking at the event, the acting Director of Standards, Hamis Mwanasala said the major aim of marking the day was to educate people on the importance of standards in improving their lives through the quality of their assets, health and safety among others. He said the bureau has been organising essay competition using the theme of the specific year with the aim of measuring the understanding of students on issues related to standards. He added that the competition helps TBS measure the extent at which citizens understand the importance of standards and what should be done in capacity building, especially for students to understand the importance of standards in their lives. The student who emerged the overall winner, Mr. Maina Masole commended TBS for introducing the idea adding that the essay competition promotes and increases understanding of matters related to standards. The Chief Judge Dr Michael Karani, lauded the response from the Universities remarking that it was good and urged the management of TBS to extend such competition to pupils in primary school. For More Information: https://www.tbs.go.tz/news/10-students-won-tbs-essay-competition
Equipment calibration at the CNHU, Dieudonné Gronlonfoun, Health Care, in Cotonou in Benin, where the Director General, Mr. Gabin emphasised the need for effective Laboratory Equipment for reliable tests results, Diagnosis as a basis for Medical prescriptions by Doctors to avoid accidental deaths due to false diagnosis. Mrs. Shadiya Alimatou ASSOUUMAN, Minister of Industry and Trade (MIC), highlighted the importance of raising awareness on the important role that measurements, and play in the health and well-being of all, and the important role of ANM, which is responsible for the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the national policy for standardization, metrology, certification, product verification and promotion of quality.

Ghana, GSA – The Ghana Standards Authority rolls out nationwide expansion plans in an event where a delegation led by Prof Alex Dodoo, director-general of the GSA, opened offices in Chache in the Bole District, in the Savannah Region, and also in Damango, Nalerigu and Techiman. Under Prof Dodoo’s leadership, since June 2017, and in line with the government’s vision, the Ghana Standard Authority has intensified efforts at decentralizing its operations across the country. The remaining new regions will be catered for early next year. The Authority already has offices in the existing 10 regions. Speaking at a brief ceremony in Chache, Prof Dodoo said, “the presence of this high-powered delegation here should tell you how seriously we take this activity. It may look like a very small office, but it is symbolically very important. Ghana is the host country for the AfCFTA Secretariat. The AfCFTA Agreement is anticipated to boost intra-African trade with Standards and the National Bureau of Standards like the GSA expected to play a key role.https://asaaseradio.com/news/ghana/ghanスタンdards-authority-rolls-out-nationwide-expansion-plans/.

In this file Picture, GSA as presented by Prof. Dodo signs an MoU with Nestle. The Public-Private-Partnership agreement seeks to enhance laboratory analytical methods alignment and capacity building in laboratory testing of food products to enhance product safety and quality standards.

Rooting for Universal ARSO Membership: TBT Annex 6 of the AfCFTA Agreement, under article 6 for cooperation in standardisation Urges State Parties to (2, f) promote membership, liaison and participation in the work of ISO, IEC, ARSO, AFSEC and similar international and regional standardisation organisations.

Somalia joins the African Standardisation Community.

Somali Bureau of Standards (SoBS) @SobsSomalia · Jun 26
Somali Bureau of standards SoBS successfully finalized 1st training on Quality Infrastructure (Standards, Metrology, Accreditation & Conformity Assessment) it was facilitated by Dr Kioko former MD of Kenya Bureau of Standards KEBBS.

ARSO Congratulates the People and the Government of the Republic of Somalia, through the Somalia Bureau of Standards on holding the 1st Training on Quality Infrastructure in readiness for the implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement, on 26th June 2021. The Training was conducted by Dr. Kioko, the former MD of KEBBS (Ag.), Kenya.

Currently, there are ongoing discussions, through the Ministry of Trade and Industry on Somalia membership in ARSO.

Congratulations: New Appointments at the ARSO Member States:

Due to their Mandate and Influence on the establishment of the Legal and Institutional Framework for Regulatory Compliance, the National Bureau of Standards in Africa have a decisive influence on the question “to what degree Technical Barriers to Trade presents a stepping stone or rather a stumbling block towards the implementation of a African Continental Free Trade Area?.

Botswana/BOBS: Mr Bohlile Kebapetse – The ARSO ARSO Vice President representing Botswana and the Acting Managing Director of Botswana Bureau of Standards. Following his appointment to the position of the Deputy Managing Director, effective 1st February 2021, he was subsequently appointed the Acting Managing Director to date. As Acting Managing Director, he has been tasked with the role of developing, reviewing, implementing, and evaluating the Strategy of the Bureau and ensuring that the Policies, Rules and Regulations are aligned with Statutory Requirements and comply thereof. He joined BOBS in its formative days in 2002 as a Standards Officer and progressed through the ranks to his current position. He has amassed a lot of knowledge, experience and skills in standardization and conformity assessment. In recognition of his competence and capabilities, he was appointed the first Manager of Compulsory Standards Unit in 2007 and subsequently the first Director of Department of Regulatory Compliance in 2009, the position he held until January 2021. He holds a Master of Science Degree in Strategic Management from Derby University and a Bachelor of Science in Chemistry from University of Botswana. Being a holder of WTO(TBT)
Togo/ANM: LAKOUSSAN Koffiy, Head of the Togoese Standardization Agency (ATN). Mr. LAKOUSSAN was born on 25 10 1968 in CELLEPÈ. Married and father of 4 children. He has a Master’s degree in Physical Geography and is Currently studying in the last year of doctoral thesis. Mr. LAKOUSSAN started as Teacher of History and Geography at the Lycée from February 2 from 2000 to 2014; Press Officer at the State Secretariat for Industry from 20014 to 2018; Technical Secretary of the Togoese Quality Award (PTQ) from 2016 to the present day. He is a Member of the High Authority for Quality and the Environment (HAUQE) since 2018 and Head of the Togoese Standardization Agency (ATN) since December 2020.

Uganda/UNBS – Mr. David Livinstone Ebiru was appointed as the substantive 4th Executive Director of the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS), on 11th May 2021. David has been at the Bureau as Deputy Executive Director Management and Financial Services for 8 years, since September 2012. David holds a 1st Class Master of Commerce (MCOM) Degree, specializing in Finance from Osmania University, Hyderabad in India and a 2nd Upper Division Degree in Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA), specializing in Accounting from Makerere University. Mr. Ebiru has attended various professional and technical trainings in the fields of Finance, Accounting, Audit, Governance & Risk Management, other Business and Management Sciences and therefore, possesses multi-disciplinary and diverse mix of skills which are critical for transformational leadership and turning around institutions for effective service delivery. He has over 15 years of Leadership and Management experience, having served in senior positions in high profile private and public sector institutions and the academia. Prior to joining UNBS in 2012, he had worked for over 7 years as the Finance and Administration Manager with the Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC) in Makerere, while at the same time lecturing at the College of Business and Management Sciences, at Makerere University. He is a Rotarian and a Charter President of the Rotary Club of Namugongo.

Sudan/SSMO - Ms. Sanaa Albideen El Shafie, was appointed the Director General of the Standards and Metrology Organisation in 2019. Ms. Sanaa was appointed to the position by the Minister of Cabinet Affairs Ambassador Omar Bashir Manis) on 17th April 2020. The SSMO was established in 1992 as an independent organization under the Presidency to succeed the Department of Standards of the Ministry of Industry, which existed since 1969. SSMO is active in the fields of developments and publication of Sudanese Standards, scientific and legal metrology including assay of precious metals and stones, as well as control and assurance of quality, research and development. SSMO has its headquarters in the capital Khartoum and has branches in the states of the country, in particular, those states where import entry points exist.

Benin/ANM – Mr. DEGBEY K. Joseph Gabin has been appointed the Directeur Général of the “Agence Nationale de Normalisation, de Métrologie et de Contrôle de la Qualité” (ANM), Benin. ANM has the mission of implementing and monitoring and evaluating the national policy for standardization, metrology, certification, product verification and promotion, quality. ANM Assists industries in the production of goods and services to and face the challenges of competitiveness, sustainable economic growth, the protection of consumers”.

Nigeria/SON. Mallam Farouk A. Salim, holds a Bachelor’s degree in Pharmacy from the Ahmadu Bello University Zaria and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, USA. Mallam Salim started his career at the Nassarawa Hospital, Kano as Hospital Pharmacist and worked with Glaxo Pharmaceuticals, Lagos as Medical Representative before relocating to the United States of America in 1989. He worked variusly with different organisations in Missouri and Illinois in the United States of America as Clinical Pharmacist, Staff Pharmacist and Allergy Specialist, Consultant Partner, Consultant Pharmacist and lastly as Clinical Pharmacist with Barnes-Jewish Hospital, St. Louis, USA from 1993 before his appointment as the Director General, SON. Mallam Farouk Salim’s core competencies cover organisational restructuring, quality assurance and management as well as project management. He is a member of the Pharmaceutical Society of Nigeria, registered with the Pharmacist Council of Nigeria and the Missouri Pharmacy Board in the United States of America. The SON Director General was the National President of the Pharmaceutical Association of Nigerian Students between 1982 and 1983. Mallam Farouk A. Salim’s vision is to bring changes by promoting public safety, the role of standards in local manufacturing, import and export as well as creating an enabling environment for innovations that will stimulate national self-sufficiency. He was appointed Director General/Chief Executive of the Standards Organisation of Nigeria (SON) by President Muhammadu Buhari on September 26, 2020 for a tenure of 4years. Mallam Salim has in the last 9months made major strides in organisational restructuring. Standards enforcement and prosecution of infractions, Standards and Quality Advocacy to State Governments across the country, Stakeholders’ engagement, Media advocacy and infrastructural development as well as Employee motivation among others.
Mr. BOOTO à NGON Charles, the ARSO President and the Director General of Agence des Normes et de la Qualité (ANOR), Cameroon, welcomes delegates to the 27th ARSO General Assembly Events to be hosted by the Government of the Republic of Cameroon, through ANOR, in June 2022. The Events will include the 66th ARSO Council, the 9th ARSO Champions and the African Day of Standardisation and Awards Ceremony for the 9th ARSO Essay Competitions.

Ghana/GSA is set to Host the 65th ARSO Council Week in Accra, Ghana in November 2021.

Prof. Alex Dodoo, the Director General of Ghana Standards Authority and also the ARSO President Elect for the 2022-2025 Term of Office, would be welcoming the ARSO Council members in Accra, Ghana for the 65th ARSO Council in November 2021, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Ghana.

WELCOME!!!

Further communications and confirmations will be made by the ARSO Central Secretariat

ARSO Brief

Other Scheduled Events- Save Date.

1. ARSO Webinars:
   (i) 21st July 2021: The African Quality Award, do we need it? - Promoting the Competitiveness of the African Enterprises and adopting the Culture of Quality in Africa - are our industries ready for participation in an African Quality Award process?-
   (ii) 25th August 2021: Equivalence and Mutual Recognition in Free Trade Agreements – Establishing a Continental Framework to address the African Divergent Regulatory Systems in the AfCFTA single market – Role of PAQI.
   (iii) 23rd September 2021: Fostering the Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) trade competitiveness through standardization: Helping SMEs to be an Engine of Trade, Growth and Employment under the AfCFTA and the Role of ARSO.

3. **29th September 2021**: The WTO-ARSO’s Organised Virtual Session on “Quality Infrastructure for Africa’s post-COVID-19 resilience, with five ARSO selected Panellists, during the WTO Public Outreach Forum of 28th September – 1st October 2021 – Save Date.

4. **30th Sept 2021**: Launch of the Continental platform for Eco Mark Africa Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) with the UN Forum on Sustainability Standards (UNFSS) – Save Date.

**Also, in the Next Edition – July – September 2021, read about:**

1. Standardisation News from ARSO Member States – what is happening
2. 7th July 2021 – Africa’s Integration Day – The role of Quality Infrastructure.
3. ARSO DISNET Activities – Reflections on the DISNET role on the AfCFTA Articles on TBTs Transparency and the TBT Committee for Africa
4. New ARSO Standards – Did You Know?
5. The 18th PAQI JC meeting on 13th – 14th July 2021 and Side-line Discussions with the AfCFTA Secretary General - Focusing on the bigger picture of African Quality Infrastructure.

**ARSO Standards Harmonised under the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan.**

Under Article 6, c of the TBT Annex 6, where a relevant international standard required to facilitate trade does not exist, ARSO and/or the AFSEC should develop the required standard to facilitate trade between State Parties.

**List of African Standards Approved by the 64th ARSO Council in June 2021.**

This includes the International Standards proposed for adoption through Notification.

**A. Documents and Guidelines**

**A.1 Documents**

Harmonization Sectors and Technical Committees: Numbers, Names and Scopes

**A.2 Guidelines**

1. Guideline Criteria for appointment of ARSO/TC Chairpersons
2. Guideline for members sharing the national standards for harmonization

**B. ARSO/CACO Technical Regulations Sub-Committee**

**B.1 African Regulation Guidelines for Approval**

1. ARS GL 1703:2021, Guideline for regulation of African traditional medicine
2. ARS GL 1704:2021, Guideline on marketing authorization of human pharmaceutical products
3. ARS GL 1705:2021, Guideline for regulation and conformity assessment for medical devices
4. ARS GL 1706:2021, Guideline for regulation and conformity assessment for in vitro diagnostic medical devices (IVDs)
5. ARS GL 1707:2021, Guideline for setting up emergency/temporary / field hospitals

**C. Standards**

**C.1 ARSO/TC 06, Coffee, cocoa, tea and related products**

1. ARS 1000-1:2021, Sustainable cocoa — Part 1: Requirements for cocoa farmer as an entity, farmer group, farmer cooperative — Management systems and performance
2. ARS 1000-2:2021, Sustainable cocoa — Part 2: Requirements for cocoa quality and traceability
3. ARS 1000-3:2021, Sustainable cocoa — Part 3: Requirements for ccocoa certification schemes

**C.2 ARSO/TC 59, Automotive technology and engineering**

13 Standards from Unique Development Procedures (ARS)

2. ARS 1355-2:2021, Vehicle standards — Specification for vehicle roadworthiness — Part 2: Roadworthiness of vehicles prior to entry into service and thereafter
International Standards proposed for adoption through Notification

1. ARS/ASTM D4950:2019, Standard classification and specification for automotive service greases
2. ARS/UNECE R 36REV3:2008, Uniform provisions concerning the approval of large passenger vehicles with regard to their general construction
3. ARS/UNECE R 052REV.3:2008, Uniform provisions concerning the approval of M2 and M3 small capacity vehicles with regard to their general construction
4. ARS/UNECE R 100REV.2:2013, Uniform provisions concerning the approval of vehicles with regard to specific requirements for the electric power train
5. ARS/UNECE R101REV.3:2013, Uniform provisions concerning the approval of passenger cars powered by an internal combustion engine only, or powered by a hybrid electric power train with regard to the measurement of the emission of carbon dioxide and fuel consumption and/or the measurement of electric energy consumption and electric range, and of categories M1 and N1 vehicles powered by an electric power train only with regard to the measurement of electric energy consumption and electric range
6. ARS/UNECE R 010REV. 7:2017, Uniform provisions concerning the approval of category M2 or M3 vehicles with regard to their general construction
7. ARS/UNECE R110REV. 3:2014, Uniform provisions concerning the approval of: I. Specific components of motor vehicles using compressed natural gas (CNG) and/or liquefied natural gas (LNG) in their propulsion system II. Vehicles with regard to the installation of specific components of an approved type for the use of compressed natural gas (CNG) and/or liquefied natural gas (LNG) in their propulsion system
8. ARS/UNECE R115REV. 3:2013, Uniform provisions concerning the approval of: I. Specific LPG (liquefied petroleum gases) retrofit systems to be installed in motor vehicles for the use of LPG in their propulsion system II. Specific CNG (compressed natural gas) retrofit systems to be installed in motor vehicles for the use of CNG in their propulsion system
9. ARS/UNECE R136:2016, Uniform provisions concerning the approval of vehicles of category L with regard to specific requirements for the electric power train

D. ARSO/TC 78, Medical Devices and Equipment

D.1 8 Standards from Unique Development Procedures (ARS)
1. ARS 1692:2021, Medical devices — Part 1: Medical face masks — Specification
2. ARS 1693:2021, Community face coverings — Guide to minimum requirements, methods of testing and use
3. ARS 1694:2021, Medical respirators — Specification
4. ARS 1695-1:2021, Medical devices — Surgical gowns, drapes and clean air suits — Part 1: General requirements
5. ARS 1695-2:2021, Medical devices — Surgical gowns, drapes and clean air suits — Part 2: Test methods
6. ARS 1695-3:2021, Medical devices — Surgical gowns, drapes and clean air suits — Part 3: Performance requirements and levels
7. ARS 1696:2021, Liquid barrier performance and classification of protective apparel and drapes in health care facilities
8. ARS 1697:2021, Personal protective equipment — Face shield — Specification

D.2 International Standards proposed for adoption through Notification
1. ARS/ASTM D6701:2016, Standard test method for determining water vapor transmission rates through nonwoven and plastic barriers
52. ISO 15223-1:2016, Medical devices — Symbols to be used with medical device labels, labelling and information to be supplied — Part 1: General requirements
53. ISO 15223-2:2010, Medical devices — Symbols to be used with medical device labels, labelling, and information to be supplied — Part 2: Symbol development, selection and validation
55. ISO 16890-1:2016, Air filters for general ventilation — Part 1: Technical specifications, requirements and classification system based upon particulate matter efficiency (ePM);
57. ISO 16890-3:2016, Air filters for general ventilation — Part 3: Determination of the gravimetric efficiency and the air flow resistance versus the mass of test dust captured
58. ISO 16890-4:2016, Air filters for general ventilation — Part 4: Conditioning method to determine the minimum fractional test efficiency
59. ISO TR 18690:2012, Guidance for the selection, use and maintenance of safety and occupational footwear and other personal protective equipment offering foot and leg protection
60. ISO 19223:2019, Lung ventilators and related equipment — Vocabulary and Semantics
61. ISO 20344:2011, Personal protective equipment — Test methods for footwear
62. ISO 20345:2011, Personal protective equipment — Safety footwear
63. ISO 22609:2004, Clothing for protection against infectious agents — Medical face masks — Test method for resistance against penetration by synthetic blood (fixed volume, horizontally projected)
64. ISO 22610:2018, Surgical drapes, gowns and clean air suits, used as medical devices, for patients, clinical staff and equipment — Test method to determine the resistance to wet bacterial penetration
65. ISO 22612:2005, Clothing for protection against infectious agents — Test method for resistance to dry microbial penetration
67. ISO 80601-2-79:2018, Medical electrical equipment — Part 2-79: Particular requirements for basic safety and essential performance of ventilatory support equipment for dependent patients
68. ISO 80601-2-84:2020, Medical electrical equipment — Part 2-84: Particular requirements for the basic safety and essential performance of ventilators for the emergency medical services environment

E. ARSO/TC 80. Pharmaceuticals and medicinal products

E.1 5 Standards from Unique Development Procedures (ARS)
1. ARS 1654:2021, Disinfectants — Glossary of terms
2. ARS 1693:2021, Disinfectants sanitizers — Specification
3. ARS 1698:2021, Disinfectants Sanitizers — Specification
4. ARS 1709:2021, Disinfectants sanitizers based on iodophors — Specification
5. ARS 1710:2021, Disinfectants sanitizers based on glutaraldehyde for general use — Specification

E.2 32 International Standards proposed for adoption through Notification
1. ARS/ASTM E1174:2013, Standard test method for evaluation of the effectiveness of health care personnel handwash formulations
4. ARS/ASTM E2475:2010(2016), Standard guide for process understanding related to pharmaceutical manufacture and control
5. ARS/ASTM E2537:2016, Standard guide for application of continuous process verification to pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical manufacturing
7. ARS/ASTM E2629:2020, Verification of process standard guide for analytical technology [PAT] enabled control systems
9. ARS/ASTM E2870:2019, Standard practice for evaluating relative effectiveness of antimicrobial handwashing formulations using the palmar surface and mechanical hand sampling
11. ARS/ASTM E2968:2014, Standard guide for application of continuous process verification to pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical manufacturing
12. ARS/ASTM E3088:2016, Antiseptic formulations
13. EN 1275:2005, Chemical disinfectants and antiseptics — Quantitative suspension test for the evaluation of basic fungicidal or basic yeasticidal activity of chemical disinfectants and antiseptics — Test method and requirements
14. EN 1276:2019, Chemical disinfectants and antiseptics — Quantitative suspension test for the evaluation of bactericidal activity of chemical disinfectants and antiseptics used in food, industrial, domestic and institutional areas — Test method and requirements
15. EN 1499:2013, Chemical disinfectants and antiseptics — Hygienic handwash — Test method and requirements
16. EN 1500:2013, Chemical disinfectants and antiseptics — Hygienic hand rub — Test method and requirements
17. ISO 11135:2018, Sterilization of health-care products — Ethylene oxide
18. ISO 11138-1:2017, Sterilization of health care products — Biological indicators — Part 1: General requirements
22. EN 12353:2013, Chemical disinfectants and antiseptics — Preservation of test organisms used for the determination of bactericidal activity
23. EN 12791:2016+A1:2017, Chemical disinfectants and antiseptics — Surgical hand disinfection — Test method and requirements (phase 2, step 2)
24. EN 14476:2013+A2:2019, Chemical disinfectants and antiseptics — Quantitative suspension test for the evaluation of virucidal activity in the medical area — Test method and requirements
25. EN 14885:2015, Chemical disinfectants and antiseptics — Application of European Standards for chemical disinfectants and antiseptics
26. EN 16616:2015, Chemical disinfectants and antiseptics — Chemical-thermal textile disinfection — Test method and requirements
28. CEN/TR 17296:2018, Chemical disinfectants and antiseptics — Differentiation of active and non-active substances
29. ISO 17664:2017, Processing of health care products — Information to be provided by the medical device manufacturer for the processing of medical devices
30. ISO/TS 20658:2017, Medical laboratories — Requirements for collection, transport, receipt, and handling of samples
31. ISO 22367:2020, Medical laboratories — Application of risk management to medical laboratories
32. ISO 35001:2019, Bio risk management for laboratories and other related organisations
29th April 2021 – ARSO Secretary General, 3rd from right on the left Row, leading the ARSO Delegation, comprising Prof. Alex Dadoo, the ARSO Goodwill Ambassador to the AfCFTA Secretariat, 2nd right, in discussions with the AfCFTA Secretariat Staff, led by the AfCFTA Secretary General, H.E. Wamkele Mene, at the AfCFTA Secretariat.

16th June 2021 – Delegates at the ARSO General Assembly Events, join H.E. Clementine Mukeka, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Government of Rwanda, in a Group Photo, at the Hotel Miles Collins.

16th June 2021 – H.E. Clementine Mukeka, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Government of Rwanda in a discussion with H.E. Youssef Imani, the Morocco Ambassador in Kigali, Rwanda.

16th June 2021 – Officiating over the opening Ceremony of the 26th ARSO General Assembly Events. H.E. Clementine Mukeka, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Government of Rwanda, addressing the 26th ARSO General Assembly in the Opening Ceremony.

16th June 2021 - Delegates following Proceedings at the Virtual Meeting of the 26th ARSO General Assembly.

16 June 2021 - Charles Booto a Ngon, President, ARSO and H.E. Youssef Imani, the Morocco Ambassador in Kigali, Rwanda, H.E. Clementine Mukeka, pause for a Photo during the 26th GA meeting.

16th June 2021 - From Right Mr. Charles Booto a Ngon, President, ARSO; H.E. Youssef Imani, the Morocco Ambassador in Kigali, Rwanda, H.E. Clementine Mukeka, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation; Government of Rwanda follow proceedings at the 26th ARSO General Assembly.

16th June 2021 - H.E. Clementine Mukeka and the ARSO President Mr. Charles Booto a Ngon, presenting the ARSO Flag to H.E. Youssef Imani, the Morocco Ambassador in Kigali, Rwanda, on the official admission of Morocco into ARSO.

16th June 2021 - the ARSO President and H.E. Youssef Imani pause for a Photo after the Ceremony of admission of Morocco into ARSO Membership.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14th June 2021</td>
<td>At the Opening Ceremony of the 64th ARSO Council at Hôtel des Mille Collines in Kigali, Rwanda, H.E. Hon. HABYARIMANA U. Béata, the Minister of Trade and Industry, Government of the Republic of Rwanda addressing the ARSO Council Members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th June 2021</td>
<td>ARSO Council Members following Proceedings at the 64th ARSO Council. At the front far right is the Ethiopian Delegation led by the ESA Director General, Mr. Endalew Makenon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th June 2021</td>
<td>The Kenyan Delegation, here represented by Ms. Estehre Ngari and Mr. Zacharia Lukorito following proceedings at the ARSO Council Members following Proceedings at the 64th ARSO Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th June 2021</td>
<td>Mr. Raymond Murenzi, Director General, RSB, addressing the delegates at the Opening Ceremony of the 64th ARSO Council at Hôtel des Mille Collines in Kigali, Rwanda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th June 2021</td>
<td>From Left, Dr. Hermogene Nsengimana, ARSO Secretary General, Mr. Charles Booto a Ngon, President, H.E. Hon. HABYARIMANA U. Béata, the Minister of Trade and Industry, Government of the Republic of Rwanda, and Mr. Raymond Murenzi, Director General, RSB, follow proceedings at the 64th ARSO Council meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th June 2021</td>
<td>Dr. Hermogene Nsengimana addressing the Rwanda Automotive Stakeholders at the launching Ceremony and awareness creation of the ARSO African harmonised Automotive Standards, under the ARSO TC 59 on Automotive Engineering and Technology, at Hôtel des Mille Collines in Kigali, Rwanda.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14th June 2021 – The Ghanaian Delegation led by Prof. Alex Dodod and Ms. Joyce Pkoree, follow proceedings at the ARSO Council Members following Proceedings at the 64th ARSO Council.

17th June 2021 – Ms. Nadine Umutoni making presentation at the official launching event of the African Harmonised Automotive Standards to the Automotive Stakeholders, at the Hotel Des Milles Collines in Kigali, Rwanda.

17th June 2021 – Mr. Temwa Gondwe of Afreximbank addressing Stakeholders at the official launching event of the African Harmonised Automotive Standards to the Automotive Stakeholders, at the Hotel Des Milles Collines in Kigali, Rwanda.

15th June 2021 – ARSO Delegates on a Visit to the Rwanda Genocide Memorial Site to pay tribute and homage in memory of the Rwanda Citizens during the 1994 Genocide. The Role of Standards is to bring order and create peace and Harmony in the Society. NEVER AGAIN.!!!

10th May 2021 – Ethiopian Stakeholders follow proceedings at the une 2021 – Mr. Temwa Gondwe of Afreximbank addressing Stakeholders at the official launching event of the African Harmonised Automotive Standards to the Automotive Stakeholders, at the Hotel Des Milles Collines in Kigali, Rwanda.

10th May 2021 – ARSO Secretary General making presentation to the Ethiopia Stakeholders at the Sensitisation Event held at the ESA Academy in Addis Ababa Ethiopia, courtesy of ESA’s invitation and planning.

10th May 2021 - Ms. Sandra Umugwaneza, the ARSO Programmes Officer, sensitizing the Ethiopian Stakeholders on the need for harmonised African standards to facilitate intra-Africa trade in pharmaceuticals and medical devices to ensure that
the African Population access affordable quality healthcare.

19th May 2021 – ARSO Secretary General, 2nd right, together with Mr. Endalew the ESA Director General, 3rd right, with the Ethiopian Industry CEOs during the launching of the ESA Standards Academy in Addis, Ethiopia.

10th May 2021 – Mr. Reuben Gisore, the ARSO Technical Director, making Presentation on the harmonisation Process of the harmonised African standards for the pharmaceuticals and medical devices, under the ARSO TCs 78, 80 and 82, with the involvement of the African Experts, including from Ethiopia.

28th May 2021 – Mr. Reuben Gisore, the ARSO Technical Director, making Presentation on the harmonisation Process of the harmonised African standards for the pharmaceuticals and medical devices, under the ARSO TCs 78, 80 and 82, with the involvement of the African Experts, including from Ghana, in Accra Ghana.

28th May 2021 – Prof. Alex Dodoo, the GSA Director General, 2nd right addressing delegates at the sensitisation event of the African harmonised standards for the pharmaceuticals and medical devices, under the ARSO TCs 78, 80 and 82, in Accra Ghana, courtesy of GSA’s invitation and planning.

28th May 2021 – The Ghana Stakeholders join in group photograph at the sensitisation event of the African harmonised standards for the pharmaceuticals and medical devices, under the ARSO TCs 78, 80 and 82 in Accra Ghana, courtesy of GSA’s invitation and planning.

GSA congratulates Prof. Alex Dodoo on his Election as the ARSO President-Ellet for the 2022-2025 Term of Office.

17th June 2021 – Mr Raymond Murenzi, RSB Director General, is addressing the Automotive Industry Stakeholders at the official launching event of the African Harmonised Automotive Standards, at the Hotel Des Milles Collines in Kigali, Rwanda.

17th June 2021 – Panelist, L-R: Mr. Déo Munyti, Senior Manager of Transport Planning and Industry Development at Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authorities (RURA); Mrs. Juliet Kabera, Director General, Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA); Chief Superintendent of Police [CSP] Bernardin Nsengiyumva, the Deputy Commanding Officer of Motor-vehicle Inspection Centre [MIC], Rwanda, and Dr. Eve Gadzikwa at the Panel discussions at the official launching event of the African Harmonised Automotive Standards, at the Hotel Des Milles Collines in Kigali, Rwanda.
Re-tracing the standardisation path. The Somali Bureau of Standards re-established by The Standards and Quality Control Act Law No. 27 in 2020. (https://sobs.gov.so/). On 26th June 2021, The SoBS conducted the 1st Training on Quality infrastructure in readiness for the implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement. The training was conducted by Dr. Kioko, the former MD of KEBS (Ag.), Kenya. The ARSO Membership is currently being discussed at the high-levels of the Government, through the SoBS and the Ministry of Trade and Industry.