How AfCFTA will impact on African tourism

From June 2020, the Agreement on the AfCFTA (African Continental Free Trade Area) will become operational, making the continent the world’s largest free trade area involving 54 countries with a population of 1.27 billion people, and a combined GDP of $2.6 trillion. The development is expected to increase the trade among African countries that is currently at a low 16 percent.

A major positive fallout of the development will be a rise in the demand for hospitality services throughout the continent as people travel across national borders to seek business and economic opportunities. Africa’s new status will throw up the opportunities that will be sought by people representing themselves and their countries, thus having huge impact and demand for the hospitality sub-sector of the tourism industry.

Even before the agreement takes effect, hotel operators on the continent have embarked on expansion programmes to position them for the expected boom. International and indigenous hotel brands are making efforts to register their presence in every part of the continent. Especially, the tourism sector has seized the opportunity with both hands. The strategy and monitoring and evaluation framework that will track progress on the implementation of the Agreement. The National AfCFTA Implementation Strategy for The Gambia's national AfCFTA implementation strategy from 23 March in Banjul, the Gambia.

Mr. Luke acknowledged that tariff liberalization as envisaged under the AfCFTA will result in revenue loss in an already relatively challenging fiscal framework in The Gambia. The draft strategy document recommends that the Gambia should seek adjustment support to compensate for this. Policy makers and experts from the public, private sector, civil society, youth, women and academia have gathered to review and validate the national strategy and come up with recommendations for the effective implementation of the strategy. The work in the Gambian on implementing the AfCFTA is part of a comprehensive project aimed at deepening Africa’s trade integration through effective implementation of the AfCFTA Financially supported by the European Union and Global Affairs Canada, ECA has been working with its partners including the African Union Commission (AUC), International Trade Centre (ITC), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and independent trade experts to ensure effective AfCFTA implementation strategies.