Ministerial Meeting of the Horn of Africa Initiative –Communique
28 September 2026, Nairobi, Kenya

We, the Ministers of Finance of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan, met in Nairobi, Kenya on 28 September 2026, for the 29th Ministerial Meeting of the Horn of Africa Initiative (HoAI). The Meeting was co-chaired by Mr. Bihi Iman Egeh, Minister of Finance, Somalia, Chair, and Mr. Volker Oel, Director-General for Reconstruction and Stability, MENA, Sahel, Horn of Africa, Eastern Europe, Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany.

We expressed our appreciation for the support and participation of our Development Partners, the African Development Bank (AfDB), the European Union (EU), the Federal Ministry of Cooperation and Development (BMZ, Germany), the United Kingdom (UK), and the World Bank Group. We welcomed the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA) as the newest full member of the Initiative, and the participation of Sweden as an observer. Our partners have provided substantial financial support, contributing to approximately US$14 billion in financing mobilized or planned to-date, including US$13 billion under implementation or recently completed and over US$1 billion earmarked for projects under preparation, alongside important analytical work that has informed stakeholders dialogue, notably on the trade agenda.

Today's meeting aimed to deepen the implementation of priorities discussed during previous meetings. Its primary focus was to advance the agenda for trade integration in the Horn, built on six years of analytical work, technical engagement, and policy dialogue at national and regional levels. The meeting also marked the first opportunity to apply the "whole of Government approach" adopted in January 2026, bringing together the relevant technical ministries to jointly consider the regional trade agenda and build ownership of its implementation across government.

We also listened with interest to a presentation by the World Bank on its report Integrating Africa: From Threads to Hubs. This study provided valuable evidence on regional value chains, trade costs and frictions, agreement depth and the institutions needed to deliver regional integration, which can help inform our trade integration Initiatives in the Horn.

Our exchanges on trade achieved three concrete outcomes. First, we reaffirmed our support for the revised Regional Trade Facilitation Roadmap (2026–2031) and its 14 goals, 5 of which have been identified as priorities for immediate action. Second, we welcomed the establishment of the Regional Trade Facilitation Committee (RTFC) through the Joint Ministerial Declaration adopted by the HoAI Ministers of Trade on 3 September 2026. Third, we endorsed the 45-Day Action Plan to guide the RTFC initial roll-out and translate its mandate into concrete actions. We welcomed the scheduling of the first meeting of the committee for 29 September, marking an important step in translating the regional trade facilitation agenda from agreed

priorities into coordinated action. We look forward to receiving regular updates in 2027 on progress in implementing the roadmap and on the concrete results emerging from its priority interventions. Development Partners also underscored that deeper private sector involvement in the RTFC would strengthen it is effectiveness and help ensure that its work reflects the practical needs of businesses and traders.

All Development Partners confirmed their continued commitment to supporting the regional trade facilitation agenda. More specifically, we welcomed Germany's announcement whereby an additional €9.5 million would be earmarked through the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) to support the implementation of the roadmap.

The meeting was also briefed on a pilot in the energy sector undertaken during the past few months aimed at monitoring Ministerial Decisions. This "implementation tracker" was country led in collaboration with Eastern Africa Power Pool. The information collected evidence of progress or partial progress in 58 percent of the indicator tracked. This finding is encouraging and needs to be sustained in lagging areas. Ministers agreed that lessons from energy monitoring should be extended to other sectors, notably trade and digital

In conclusion, the meeting called for accelerated implementation of the trade facilitation roadmap and for the implementation tracker to be extended to cover at least one additional sector during 2027. This included finalization of the draft scorecards discussed at the RTFC meeting. In this context, a Regional Trade Facilitation Roadmap Scorecard, being finalized, will provide a practical tool for tracking progress against the Roadmap's goals and activities and making implementation of related projects more visible. And creating a common regional platform for monitoring implementation and identifying required further actions.

Ministers expressed optimism that the progress achieved in trade and energy demonstrates the value of political leadership, the involvement of line Ministries, technical expertise, regional coordination, and donor support. They reiterated their commitment to seeking tangible results across other sectors. Ministers also requested Development Partners to provide additional support, while recognizing the need to explicitly prioritize trade within AfDB and World Bank national allocations to facilitate access to regional resources. They further encouraged continued monitoring of decisions in 2027, with updates on energy and a new pilot launched in another area, and called for the establishment of a working group with EAPP to ensure priority policy actions are fully implemented. The MDTF was recognized for its key role in promoting analytical work, capacity building, funding the Secretariat, and convening consultations. Appreciation was expressed to AfDB for its investment in recruiting National Advisers, and to Germany (BMZ, KfW, GIZ) for advancing the trade agenda.

HoAI countries have been facing three converging crises due to disruptions in maritime traffic and increased refugee flows caused by rising conflict, and

exacerbated climate change due to El Ninio. The meeting called for coordinated action from HoA countries, mobilization of funding by international partners, and integrating climate preparedness and refugee response planning.

The meeting closed by thanking Germany for co-chairing and its proactive role in organizing the upstream consultative meetings. Participants also thanked all Development Partners for their contributions. Appreciation was expressed to national teams and the HoAI Secretariat for their support. Participants agreed that the next meeting and would be held around end January 2027, focused on resilience, and further details will be provided by the Secretariat during the second half of October 2026.