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**REJOINDER - SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT OF TENSION AT THE SECRETARIAT OF THE  
AFRICAN CONTINENTAL FREE TRADE AREA (AfCFTA)**

The attention of the Ministry of Trade and Industry has been drawn to a social media report carried on the online portal [GhanaNewsPage.com](http://GhanaNewsPage.com) on 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2021 titled “Secretary General of AfCFTA threatens to sack all Ghanaian employees”. The report alleges a rift between Ghanaian officials and foreign nationals working at the (AfCFTA) Secretariat in Accra.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry wishes on behalf of the Government of Ghana to state emphatically and unequivocally that there is no such rift or tension between the Ghanaian nationals and their foreign counterparts at the Secretariat.

The report is not only false and misleading but disingenuous and is designed to cause disaffection between the two groups of officials working at the Secretariat and it is also intended to jeopardize the cordial relations between the Government of Ghana and the leadership of the AfCFTA Secretariat.

Since August 2020, when the Secretariat was formally commissioned, the Government of Ghana in consultation with H.E. Wamkele Mene, the Secretary General of the AfCFTA, deployed a team of experienced Ghanaian professionals and experts for a transition period as an Operational Support Team (OST) to assist the Secretary General to commence operational activities, while the formal process of recruitment is activated.

The OST, since its deployment, has had a harmonious working relationship with the Secretary General and his initial team made up of foreign nationals.

It is to be understood that the OST from the onset has been intended to be a short-term transitional arrangement until permanent staff for the Secretariat are engaged. It is therefore erroneous to create the impression, as the report suggests, that the Secretary General is averse to working with Ghanaian nationals.

Ghana as a member of the African Union (AU), like any other member state has a specific quota for nationals that entitles them to apply for positions and work in the AfCFTA Secretariat.

In this regard, when the AU recruitment process for permanent staff for the Secretariat commences, interested citizens may apply on a competitive basis to be considered for recruitment to the AfCFTA Secretariat.

The claims made in the said report that the Secretary General is attempting to sideline Ghanaian nationals is false.

The Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration will continue to work closely with the AfCFTA Secretariat to ensure Ghana harnesses the full range of benefits from the AfCFTA as Host Country.



**PATRICK Y. NIMO**  
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**MINISTRY OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY**