e-EAC Newsletter

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Rwanda and Burundi join EAC Customs Union

The East African Community Customs Union was today officially launched on the 6 July 2009 in the two new Partner States of Burundi and Rwanda. In Burundi, the official launch ceremony was presided over by the 2nd Deputy President, His Excellency Gabriel Ntisezerana and was held at the Bujumbura Port. In Kigali, the Prime Minister of Rwanda, the Right Honourable Bernard Makuza, presided over the ceremony held at the Kigali Serena Hotel.

"launching of the Customs Union in the two countries is a turning point for their full integration into the EAC"

In Burundi, the ceremony was attended by Honourable Ministers led by the Minister of EAC Affairs, Hon. Hafsa Mossi, the President of Burundi Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Agriculture and Art, Mr. Hermenegilde Ndikumasabo, Members of the East African Legislative Assembly, the Deputy Secretary General in charge of Planning and Infrastructure, Mr. Alloys Mutabingwa, members of the diplomatic corps, senior officials from the EAC Secretariat, as well as the Private Sector.

In Rwanda, the occasion was also graced by Rwanda's Minister for East African Community and Chairperson of EAC Council of Ministers, Honourable Monique Mukaruliza, the East African Community Director General for Customs and Trade, Mr Peter Kiguta (representing the Secretary General, Ambassador Juma

Mwapachu), the EAC Deputy Secretary General in charge of Productive and Social Sectors, Mr Jean Claude Nsengiyumva, the Commissioner General of the Rwanda Revenue Authority, Mary Baine, the Chief Executive Officer of the Private Sector Foundation (Rwanda), Mr Emmanuel Hategeka, members of the national and regional Parliaments (East African Legislative Assembly), senior officials from the EAC, diplomats and members of the business community.

The 2nd Deputy President of the Republic of Burundi, His Excellency Gabriel Ntisezerana reiterated the government's support to all the processes that will result in Burundi reaping benefits from the Customs Union. He recognized the critical role that will be played by the private sector in driving the Customs Union and assured them of Government rediness to create the necessary conducive environment for the business to flourish and the country's economy to grow.

In Rwanda, the Rt. Honourable Makuza hailed Rwanda and Burundi's joining the Customs Union as a landmark achievement for the region, while pledging the government's support to ensuring the success of the Union.

"The expansion of the Customs Union is a landmark achievement which brings a sense of pride to our integration efforts and the successes that have been achieved so far have resulted in significant respect and admiration for our region," he said, adding, "contrary to belief that the Customs Union would negatively affect the economies of the Partner States in terms of revenue erosion and competitiveness, major benefits have accrued to the region in terms of increased trade and customs revenue. It is on this strength that Rwanda confidently embraces the Customs Union without reservation".

In a statement read for him simultaneously at both venues (by Mr. Alloys Mutabingwa in Bujumbura and Mr Peter Kiguta in Kigali), the Secretary General of the East African Community said "this day marks a further stride in the integration journey of transforming EAC into a single and strong economic and ultimately political entity. The integration of EAC envisages a balanced and sustainable development in order to raise the standard of living of its people. He said the economic integration is the heart of the EAC integration process that sets the momentum for deeper and widened engagement of the Partner States. Adding that "the commencement of implementation of Customs Union in Rwanda and Burundi is therefore a turning point for which our region attaches immeasurable importance".

The EAC Secretary General noted that the Customs Union had spurred intra-EAC trade since its inauguration in 2005, which, he said, would be enhanced with Rwanda and Burundi joining.

"Since its implementation in 2005, the EAC Customs Union has exhibited tangible and positive outcomes with significant growth in trade among the Partner States. From 2004 to date the total growth of intra-EAC trade flows is over 40%. The joining of Rwanda and Burundi further enlarges the market size with a population of 120 million people and a combined GDP of around US $60 billion," the Secretary General said.

The Commissioner General of the Rwanda Revenue Authority expressed Rwanda's readiness for the Customs Union, underscored by among others, the bold step it has taken in agreeing to immediately dismantle the internal tariff to zero while the Chief Executive Officer of the Private Sector Foundation (Rwanda), Mr Emmanuel Hategeka urged the Rwandan business community to take advantage of what he described as the window of opportunity resulting from the launch of the Customs Union, particularly the zero tax on importation of heavy trucks – which shall initially be open for one year only. The Customs Union implementation in the republics of Rwanda and Burundi commenced 1 July 2009.

US Deputy Secretary of State holds Talks with EAC Secretary General

The US Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources, Mr. Jacob Lew paid a one-day working visit to the EAC Secretariat and held talks with the EAC Secretary General, Amb. Juma Mwapachu in Arusha, Tanzania.

Accompanying the Secretary General to the talks were the Deputy Secretaries General in charge of Finance and Administration, Dr. Tangus Rotich; in charge of Planning and Infrastructure, Mr. Alloyce Mutabingwa; in charge of Productive and Social Sector, Mr. Jean Claude Nsengiyumva; the Executive Director of CASSOA, Mr. Mtesigwa Maugo; Director for Trade, Dr. Flora Musonda; Director for Productive and Social Sector, Dr. Caleb Weggoro; and other senior officials from the EAC Secretariat.

The US Deputy Secretary of State, Mr. Jacob Lew was accompanied by a contingent of 8 senior US government officials, who included among others; the Regional Director, USAID, Mr. Lawrence Meserve; the Chief of Party, COMPETE Program, Mr. Steve Walls; and the East Africa Affairs Officer, U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam, Mr. David Scott.

During the talks, Amb. Juma Mwapachu briefed the US Deputy Secretary of State on the current developments in the EAC regional integration process specifically highlighting milestones in the EAC Customs Union, which he said the region had benefitted enormously from and EAC was now gearing towards establishing a duty free regime come 2010.

Amb. Mwapachu briefed the US diginitaries on the ongoing negotiations of the EAC Common Market Protocol, assuring them that it will be in place by 2010. The Secretary General also briefed his Guests on the ongoing EPA negotiations and the EAC-COMESA-SADC Tripartite efforts towards establishing a Free Trade Area (FTA).

The Secretary General reiterated that the EAC Secretariat was to launch, as a matter of high priority, a comprehensive and robust integrated infrastructure development programme for the region involving railways, roads, air transport, ICT and energy development. “We have in place, among others, the East African Power Master Plan, the East African Road Network Plan, the East African Railways Master Plan and these are all strategic underpinnings for the development of the region”, said Amb. Mwapachu.

Mr. Jacob Lew pledged commitment to further strengthening of the ties between United States of America and EAC. He said he was proud of the role the US government was playing in the region in terms of disease control and collaborating in general to create the expertise, information, and tools that people and communities need to protect their health – through health promotion, prevention of diseases, and preparedness for new health threats. He said the USA’ government’s role in humanitarian needs and emergency assistance will continue in the region.

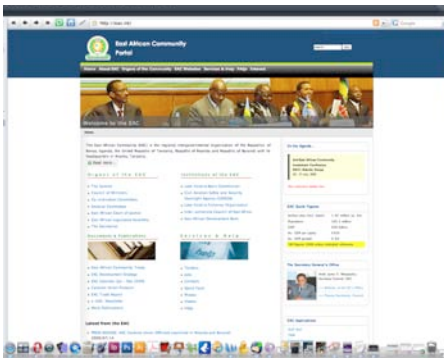
US Deputy Secretary Conveys Obama Message to EAC

Concluding the talks, Mr. Jacob Lew hailed the Secretary General, Amb. Juma Mwapachu and his team at the Secretariat for being well focussed in driving the East African regional integration agenda. He said the US government was happy with the whole concept.

Mr. Jacob Lew conveyed US President Barack Obama’s special message to the EAC that is “the US government views the USA-EAC relations as being very successful and important and the US government is prepared to take this relationship to a higher level” and assured the EAC of his country’s continued firm support to the regional integration programme.

EAC Launches Web Portal

The East African Community on 25 June 2009 launched its Web Portal at the EAC Headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania at a function presided over by the Secretary General, Amb. Juma Mwapachu and attended by the EAC Deputy Secretary General (Planning and Infrastructure), Mr. Alloys Mutabingwa, senior officials from the EAC Secretariat and a host of Arusha-based local and international journalists.



New websites created for EAC organs and sectors

The web portal, hosted at http://www.eac.int, is an entry point to all resources from the EAC that are available online and provides links to fully-fledged standalone websites newly created for the Community's various sectors, organs and key offices at the Secretariat that include: the Directorates of Customs, Trade and Infrastructure; sector-specific websites for Tourism and Travel, Investment, Peace and Security, Statistics, Corporate Communications, Education, Health, Agriculture and Energy among others. He said EAC organs to whose websites the main portal links include the East African Legislative Assembly, the East African Court of Justice.

Ultimately envisioned as the starting point for any East African Community-related information search on the internet, the web portal also provides links to the websites of the various institutions of the Community, websites of Partner State government institutions and those of strategic partners in the public and private sectors.

The Ag. Head of the Department of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs, Mr Owora Richard Othieno said that efforts have been made to ensure a consistent look and feel across all platforms, with specific emphasis placed on accuracy, currency and relevance of information for the EAC's various publics.

EALA Acquires Broadcasting Equipment

The East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) has purchased broadcasting equipment in a move to strengthen the institution's capacities as the people's voice as well as provide a forum for the expression and building of consensus on conflicting interests among the Partner States.

The broadcast equipment is designed for mobile use since EALA holds sittings around the five Partner States at different times in the year. Once in place the unit is expected to mirror the US Congress and UK's House of Commons broadcasting system and will provide live audio/video streams to media stations for transmission to the public on a trial basis as EALA prepares to acquire a fully fledged broadcast unit in the future.

EA citizens to better understand the work of EALA through Live Assembly

This live broadcasts are expected to enable East African people understand better the work of EALA and involve them more in the day to day activities of the Assembly.

The live broadcasts will also enable the electorate to understand the issues affecting them, especially new bills being passed by the regional Assembly and to understand how well those whom they have nominated are representing their East African interests in the regional Parliament.

Providing feeds to media houses is also expected to improve relations with the media as part of its commitment to good governance, openness and accountability.

Late last month several EALA staff travelled to the United Kingdom to attended training on parliamentary reporting at the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

The project was a joint initiative by the Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA) and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD).

EAC Secretariat and International Livestock Research Institute Sign MoU

The East African Community Secretariat and the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), an international research institute with its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya have signed and exchanged a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that aims to establish a long-term relationship for purposes of exploiting their complementarities in research knowledge generation and its application to further their respective missions.

The MoU, signed by the Secretary General of the East African Community, Ambassador Juma Volter Mwapachu on behalf of the East African Community, and Mr. Carlos Sere, the Regional Representative, on behalf of the International Livestock Research Institute, spells out clearly areas of cooperation between the EAC Secretariat and ILRI.

The EAC Secretariat has put in place various structures to advise and guide the prevention and control of transboundary animal diseases.

In particular, ILRI and EAC are to explore possibilities of collaborating in research and its application based on the following ILRI's research competence areas; Targeting and Innovation; People, Livestock and Environment; Expanding Market Opportunities; Biotechnology; and lastly Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System.

According to the MoU, each Party shall provide such staff support, institutional services and materials as may be deemed necessary for the implementation and achievement of the Main Objective of the MoU. The MoU carries no financial commitment on either Party.

The signing of the MoU comes at a time when the Partner States are putting in place several initiatives to harmonize their policies and programmes on livestock and fisheries resources within the region.

According to the EAC Senior Livestock and Fisheries Officer, Mr. Timothy Wesonga, the EAC Livestock Division has initiated a number of activities aimed at enhancing livestock production, productivity, marketing and trade for increased incomes.

To ensure smooth livestock trading, the EAC has already developed Sanitary and Phytosanitary Standards (SPS) measures and procedures for animals, fish and fisheries.

Further, the EAC Secretariat has put in place various structures to advise and guide the prevention and control of transboundary animal diseases. These include the EAC Regional Steering and Technical committees on transboundary animal diseases. "It is due to the importance of livestock trade, human and animal welfare that the EAC has given a lot of emphasis to the control and prevention of transboundary animal diseases", asserted Mr. Wesonga.

The Livestock sector at the EAC works closely with the human health sector and other stakeholders in the control of transboundary animal diseases. The EAC has an ongoing project funded by the European Union to prepare the EAC region to respond to avian influenza in the event of an outbreak. The project objective is to contribute to the socio-economic welfare and public health in the EAC by minimizing the impact of Avian Influenza (AI).

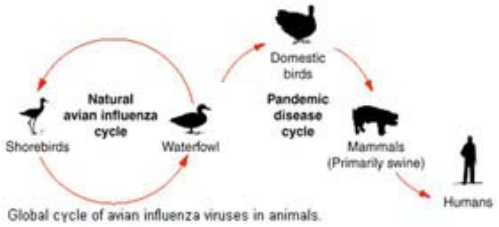
In addition, EAC Secretariat is making initiatives to harmonize the regional fisheries policies in liaison with LVFO and LVBC which are EAC institutions. Proposals have been prepared under the 10th European Development Fund (EDF) on development and management of marine fish and fisheries and promotion of aquaculture.

Closer collaboration and partnering of EAC and ILRI is going to assist the region make informed decisions for the faster development of the EAC livestock industry.

EAC Moves to Curb Spread of Swine Flu

Authoities in East Africa have moved to curb the spread of Swine flue after a few cases of Swine Influenza (AH1N1) weren detected in the East African Community in the Republics of Kenya and Uganda.

The Kenyan and Ugandan authorities have instituted appropriate measures to minimize and eliminate the spread of the disease. The EAC Secretariat is in constant communication with both the Kenyan and Ugandan authorities on the matter. The EAC Secretariat has urged all EAC Partner States to fully activate their surveillance networks in line with EAC Diseases Control Strategy of Early Detection-Early Response. The EAC Partner States have been further urged to step up public health education on swine flu to avoid public panic. Further, EAC Partner States have been urged to set up hotlines. The EAC Secretariat is ensuring coordinated efforts in the control of AH1N1 within the region.



The Kenyan case is of a 20 year old Medical student from Nottingham University in the UK. The student arrived in the Republic of Kenya on aVirgin Atlantic flight through Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, in Nairobi on 21st June, 2009 and took a chartered bus directly to Kisumu with stopovers at Naivasha for lunch.

EAC Partner States have instituted appropriate measures to limit the spread of the disease

The British student was in a group of thirty five students from the UK on a field trip to KEMRI-CDC laboratory in Kisumu. The student realized that he had flu like symptoms on Saturday 27th June, 2009 and immediately sought medical assistance. Samples submitted to the laboratories in Kenya tested positive for AH1N1. Doctors in Kisumu, say that the patient's illness is mild and does not need hospitalization, but close monitoring.

In the Ugandan case, authorities affirm that a 40-year-old male who arrived in country on June 26 from London via Nairobi to Entebbe without any symptoms was confirmed to have AH1N1 on July 1. Ugandan authorities further confirm that the man is under isolation in Entebbe and in good condition.

According to World Health Organization (WHO), as of 1st July 2009, the Flu epidemic which started in Mexico two-months ago has already infected 77,201 people and killed 332. WHO has since declared it a pandemic at level six.

At level six pandemic alerts, there is human to human spread, characterized by community level outbreaks in at least one other country in different WHO regions. Designation of this phase indicates that a global pandemic is underway.

AH1NI (Swine Influenza) is caused by influenza A viruses. These viruses are known to have the ability to change their antigenic structure and create new strains. Gene reassortments (gene segment exchange) between strains of swine, poultry and human are said to be frequent.

The symptoms of AH1N1 in man include in man fever, lethargy, lack of appetite, aching body, coughing, runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and or diarrhoea. The symptoms are very much like those of the common cold.

AHIN1 in pigs causes coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge, fever, breathing difficulty but the mortality rates in an affected herd are generally low.

According to recent updates received from the CDC, the H1N1 influenza virus is a genetic re-assortment of four different influenza strains including swine influenza from North America and Eurasia, Avian gene segments from North America and human influenza gene segments. This genetic combination of swine influenza virus has not been recognized previously among swine or human isolates anywhere in the world.

According to the EAC Senior Livestock and Fisheries Officer, Mr. Timothy Wesonga, the disease can be avoided through good personal hygiene. "It is recommended that hands should be washed thoroughly with soap and water after touching contaminated surfaces. While sneezing or coughing, a hankie or tissue should be used. Crowded places should be avoided. People who show influenza-like symptoms should seek medical assistance" advised Mr. Wesonga. The EAC Senior Livestock and Fisheries Officer has also strongly advised the general public to be vigilant and report to the nearest Health authorities any suspected cases.

CASSOA and FAA Conduct Re-Certification Seminar for Air Operators in the Region

The East African Community Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (CASSOA) in collaboration with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) of the United States of America conducted a two-weeks seminar on the re-certification of key Air Operators from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda on 15 - 26 June 2009 at the CASSOA Headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania.

CASSOA initiated the re-certification process to assist the Partner States Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs) in August 2008 by convening a pre-application meeting of the airlines. However, subsequently it was realized that the airlines required a seminar to guide them in developing acceptable regulatory documents and manuals.

The seminar attracted over 45 stakeholders comprising members of the re-certification teams fom Partner States' Civil Aviation Authorities (CAA), Air Operators' representatives from Kenya Airways, Precision Air and Air Uganda.

In accordance with the rotational system established by the CASSOA Board of Directors during its 4th meeting, the Chief Airworthiness Inspector of Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority, Mr. Makhiid Towillo chaired the sensitization seminar, while the Airworthiness Inspector of the Civil Aviation Authority of Uganda, Mr. Francis Wanyama, was the rapporteur.

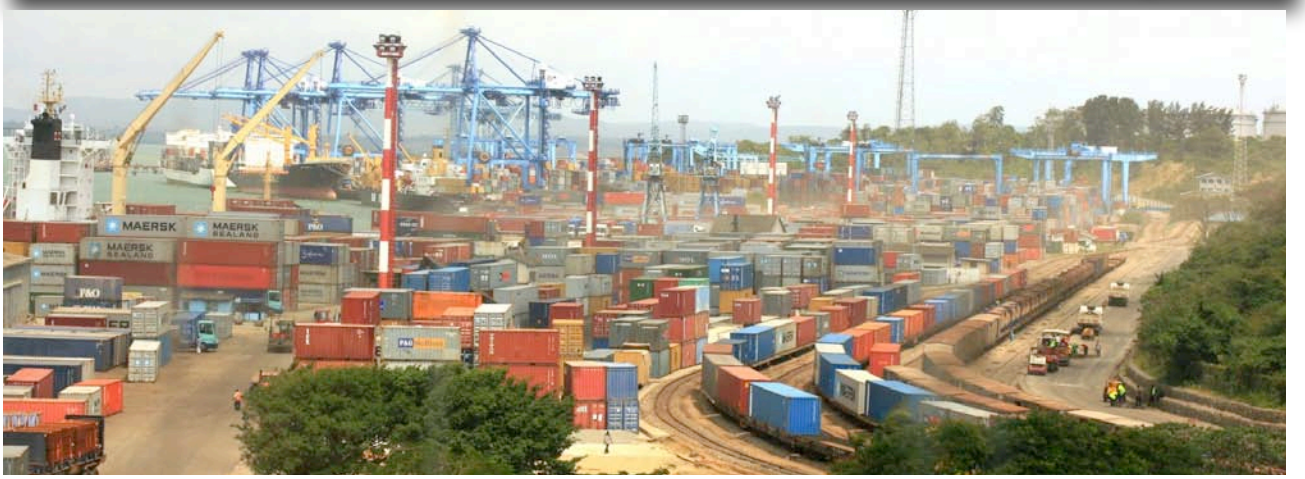
Re-certification is the process where an Air Operator has to be certified anew after fulfilling the requirements of the new harmonized EAC Civil Aviations Regulations. It is a 5-phase process including; Pre-application, where the Air Operator informs the relative CAA of the intent to be re-certified as per the new harmonized Regulations; Formal Application, where the Air Operator formally submits the application seeking to be re-certified; Document Evaluation, where the Air Operator's documents and Manuals are evaluated by the CAA for compliance with the harmonized Regulations and guidance materials; Demonstration, where the Air Operator demonstrates to the Regulatory Authority his/her practical compliance with the new regulations; and lastly Certification, the Certification of the Air Operator after a successful demonstration exercise.

Airlines to be certified only after fullfilling requirements of the harmonized EAC Civil Aviations regulations

During the seminar, the Executive Director of CASSOA, Mr. Mtesigwa Maugo while briefing the delegates about CASSOA and the re-certification process, emphasizing that the Document Evaluation phase was the hardest and longest of the 5-Phase Certification process. He further said that the submitted Air Operators' documents and manuals would be used during the seminar as a reference to provide respective guidance Air Operators Operator on the development and amendment of their manuals.

The seminar was divided into three sessions dedicated for each Air Operator. Each seminar session was facilitated by the respective airline CAA Certification Team members headed by its Certification Project Manager (CPM).

The CASSOA Technical Coordinator, Mr. Robert Mwesigwa Nviiri, said that in the current re-certification programme, Kenya Airways was to be the first followed by Precision Air, and lastly Air Uganda.



EAC Reaches out as New Hub of Global Trade and Investment Opportunities

The East African Community (EAC) is planning a major re-launch of its position in the global markets with an international investment conference that will be held in Nairobi on 29th – 31st July. Key to the event is the leveraging later this month of a regional bloc of 120 million people and a combined GDP of $ 60 billion, into a vibrant market and a new hub of global trade and investment opportunities.

The 2nd EAC Investment Conference, organized by the EAC Secretariat in collaboration with the East African Business Council and the Investment Promotion Agencies of the EAC Partner States is expected to have an attendance of over 2000, representing key regional and international trade and investments actors, policy makers, business leaders, to review the investment outlook of the EAC region and discuss investment opportunities.

Conference focus

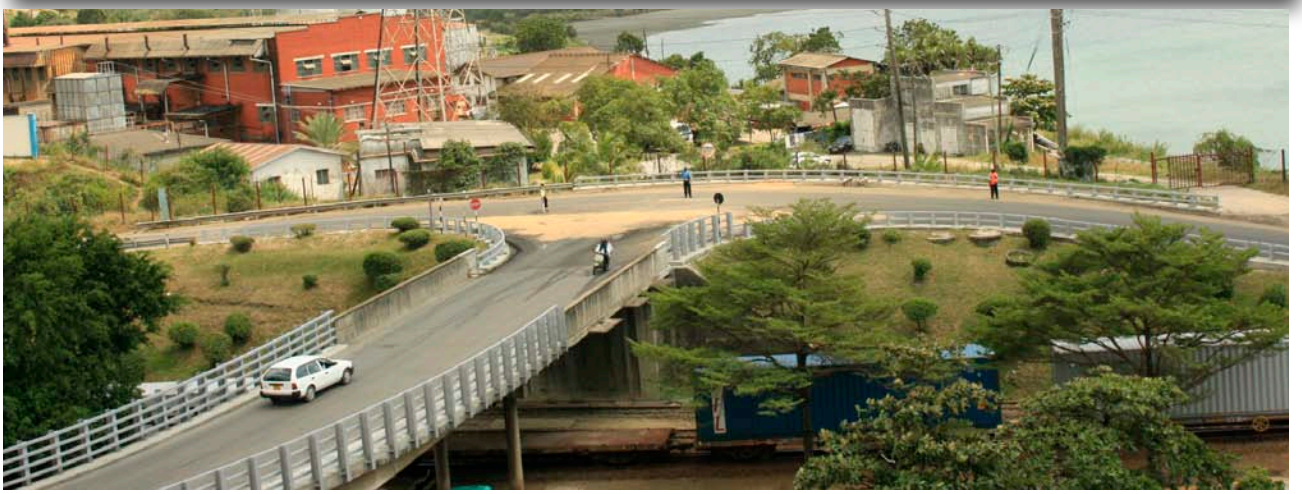
The Investment Conference will focus on major areas and key sectors of growth opportunity in banking and finance, manufacturing, agriculture and agro-processing, ICT, tourism and other hospitality industries; infrastructure and energy, especially hydro, geothermal, methane and natural gas; roads and railways. The Conference will feature plenary sessions and panel discussions as well as an international exhibition of products and services that will run parallel to the plenary sessions.

The EAC Investment Conference is an annual event that is held in rotation in the EAC Partner States since the inaugural one that was held in Kigali, Rwanda in June 2008. It is the premier forum for the EAC and the Partner States to promote the region as a single market and investment area. The inaugural event was successful, attended by all the five EAC Heads of State and brought together over 1200 participants from the region and the international community, attracting 15 countries from outside the region.

The 2nd EAC Investment Conference is therefore being held against the favourable background of the encouraging success and achievement of the inaugural Conference. It has incorporated vast improvements in terms of its organization, and expected levels of participation and impact. The EAC Secretary General, Ambassador Juma Mwapachu, has said the Investment Conference will project "a renewed determination to move the EAC region from a largely agriculture and primary produce economy to an industrial based economy and status of a middle income economy".

"A renewed determination to move the EAC region from a largely agriculture and primary produce economy to an industrial based economy and status of a middle income economy"

With its theme, Invest in the EAC: Where Global Challenges are Opportunities, the 2nd EAC Investment Conference comes at a time when the global economy is experiencing a downturn unprecedented since the 1930s. It also happens that the Investment Conference is coming at a



time when the EAC countries, along with a number of other African countries, are experiencing their strongest economic recovery since the 1980s.

Global context

The IMF predicts an overall 1.3% decline in global economic activity in 2010 particularly of the economies of the industrialized countries, while some of the EAC countries, and a number of African countries are projected to grow by between 5% and 7%. It is indeed a rare moment as they come in global development trends, however into the scenario, the EAC is determined to stake a claim and foster a strong economy and competitive business environment.

EAC is buoyed by the great interest and positive appreciation it is attracting among an international trade and investment community that is turning to East Africa where they perceive that a new, vibrant investments and trade platform is emerging. In August 2006, just over one year after the launch of the EAC Customs Union in January 2005, the EU delegation at the WTO meeting in Geneva declared that the EAC was "the most successful illustration of regional integration on the African continent".

From Customs Union to Common Market

In its 5th year of implementation, the EAC Customs Union has realized a great stimulus on the region's trade, investments and revenue earnings. On 1st July this year, Rwanda and Burundi, the new entrants, in 2007, into the EAC, acceded to the Customs Union. A few months to go, on 1st January 2010, the Customs Union will reach its threshold when goods imported from Kenya by other EAC Partner States will start attracting zero customs duty; and a fully fledged EAC Customs Union will spring forth.

The countdown to the full fledged EAC Customs Union has been systematic and fast paced, featuring mainly the phase down to zero tariff for Kenyan exports, elimination of non tariff barriers, strengthening the institutional framework for the Customs Union and promoting investment flows.

EAC joint trade negotiation

Already, EAC has put in place an export promotion strategy and the EAC Competition Act came into operation last February. In April 2008, the EAC launched the negotiations for the Common Market protocol and contrary to earlier fears that they would be bogged down or finally scuttled, the negotiations of the Common Market Protocol proceeded smoothly and swiftly. The stage is now set for finalization and signing of the Protocol in November 2009. The enactment of the EAC Trade Negotiations Act in 2008 came as a major breakthrough and boost to the EAC Partner States' longstanding search for agreement to negotiate as a bloc in the multilateral trade fora.

In November 2007, EAC initialed the EAC-EU Framework Economic Partnership Agreement (FEPA). The negotiations of the economic partnership agreement (EPA) with the European Union (EU) are progressing well with the EAC negotiating as a bloc. EAC's participation at the forefront of the Tripartite EAC-COMESA-SADC Arrangement that seeks to establish a larger Free Trade Area and later Customs Union of 26 African countries, stretching from Cape Town to Cairo, has followed the same pattern of the EAC's growing confidence in trade expansion.
Investment promotion

With this confidence and determination, during 2008/2009, EAC held or participated in a record number of major investments and trade promotion events. These included the small to medium scale industries in Kigali, the EAC Investment Conference in London, the 4th EAC Petroleum Conference in Mombasa, the EAC investment promotion in Canada and the 1st EAC/EABC Energy Conference in Dar es Salaam as well as the Berlin International Tourism Fair (ITB) and the London World Travel Market (WTM).

Strategic posture

The EAC economy prides itself of a strategic central location and link to the wider eastern and central African market, encompassing the Great Lakes Region, including the vast Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan. This provides the region with a great growth and expansion potential with vast natural resources and great potential to transform into an area and space of peace, stability, economic opportunity and prosperity.

Based on this realization, EAC has steered a steady course to broaden its world outreach and outlook. Since concluding a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) with the USA in August 2008, EAC has stepped up the search for similar focused trade and investment arrangements with other strategic partners in the world markets, including India, China, Eastern Europe, Far East and Latin America.

Focus on infrastructure

Together with the trade promotion activities, EAC has focused on regional infrastructure development with a determination to get a number of regional infrastructure projects off the ground. Breakthroughs have been made in the implementation of the East African Road Network Project with the upgrading of the Arusha-Namanga- Athi River road, a vital regional link, which commenced in July 2008 and is expected to be completed in 2011.

Similar developments and breakthroughs were realized in the railways sub-sector. Although the concessions for the central railway line of Tanzania and the Kenya-Uganda Railway have faced challenges, the EAC Partner States are actively pursuing the implementation of the East African Railways Development Master Plan. The stage is now set for the development of the feasibility studies and preparations are underfoot for holding an East African Railways Investors' Conference in the last quarter of 2009. The EAC Partner States have made substantial provisions for expenditures on the development of railways and other regional projects in their budgets of the current financial year.

Other developments in regional infrastructure development include ongoing harmonization of civil aviation safety and security regulations in the EAC under the EAC Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (CASSOA). In the area of communications, The East African Marine System (TEAMS) and the East African Sub Marine Cable System (EASSy), both projects being private sector-led are on course. The TEAMs Project is expected to be in service by end of 2009, while the EASSy network is expected to be ready for commercial service in 2010.

Conclusion towards food security and energy self sufficiency

To complete the picture of a region that has set its sights on a major turn round, the EAC has prioritized programmes in agriculture and food security; and the East African Power Master Plan under the current EAC Development Strategy (2006-2010).

The implementation of the EAC Agricultural and Rural Development Strategy will be launched this year. Agriculture is an area in which the EAC countries have significant comparative advantage and offers great scope for investments in food production to meet both domestic and export demand. The East African Power Master Plan, on the other hand, envisages energy sufficiency to support increased productivity and industrial development; and is a major underpinning of investments promotion in the region.

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