

2nd Tourd' EAC 2017 Flagged off at the EAC Headquarters



East African Community Secretariat; Arusha, Tanzania; 10 August 2017:

The 2nd East African Bicycle Tour dubbed Tour d'EAC was flagged off yesterday at the EAC headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania by the Deputy Secretary General in charge of Planning and Infrastructure, Eng. Steven Mlote, on behalf of the EAC Secretary General.

The 2nd Tour d'EAC 2017, organized by Campfire Logs Guild, an initiative of idealized young East Africans with diverse adventure background committed to the development of young people through Adventure Learning/Training Programs, brought together a team of 27 cyclists from all six EAC Partner States. Among the team of cyclists, 2 are physically impaired.

Participation in the Tour d'EAC is open for all citizens of the EAC region who are enthusiastic about adventure and tourism. This year, the initiative with a 45-day expedition is themed; "Unlocking East Africa's Trade and Tourism potential through an effective and efficient Integration Process".

The 2nd Tour d'EAC follows the very first successfully concluded Tour d'EAC 2016, which took place from August 1st to September 3rd, 2016.

The organizers realized that the entire region is blessed with many economic opportunities and tourism attractions – diverse cultures, nature, recreation and the warmth resilience of the hardworking people – all of which help to boost East Africa's economy, and concluded that if marketed effectively and efficiently, these resources have the potential to develop EAC.

Speaking briefly at the flag off, the Director and Team Leader of the Campfire Logs Guild Initiative, Mr. John Bosco Balango outlined the goal of the cyclists initiative, which is to promote the spirit of the East African Community among the people of East Africa; promote tourism and business potential of the Community while enhancing the awareness of social and cultural peculiarities of people and places in the EAC.

“In other words, the event seeks to promote the integration agenda by sensitizing the citizens of East Africa along the way and helping them understand and own the integration process”, reiterated Mr. Balongo, adding that “ the East African bicycle tour is an expression of unity, oneness, togetherness and peace”.

The Director Trade at the East African Community Secretariat, Mr. Alhaj Rashid Kibowa, who received the team on arrival in Arusha from Uganda via Kenya, saluted and commended the youthful cyclists for their committed efforts towards the voluntary exercise.

The Director stated that the Tour d'EAC will go a long way in promoting the EAC and marketing the integration agenda by exposing the people at the grass-roots to information about EAC in regards to its existence, achievements, opportunities, benefits and challenges in order for them to fully embrace the integration pillars. The Director also thanked GIZ for their firm support in making the initiative a reality.

In his remarks prior to the flagging off , Eng. Steven Mlote applauded the team for their commitment towards the noble cause and encouraged them to keep rekindling the East African spirit across the EAC Partner States. He urged them to establish the event as an annual event in collaboration with the EAC Secretariat, aimed at championing the integration agenda. Eng. Mlote also urged the cyclists whom he called true ambassadors of the EAC, to advocate for peace and tranquillity throughout their entire journey.

The team has so far ridden from Kampala, Uganda to Arusha, Tanzania via Nairobi, Kenya and is yet to complete the full cycle of the trail route via Dar-es-Salaam, Dodoma, Kigoma, Bujumbura, Kigali and finally back to Kampala; covering 5,600 kilometers.

- ENDS -

For more information, please contact:

Mr Owora Richard Othieno
Head, Corporate Communications and Public Affairs Department
EAC Secretariat
Arusha, Tanzania
Tel: +255 784 835021
Email: OOrthieno [at] eachq.org