

***EAC Headquarters, Arusha, 19 August 2008:*** Delegates of the High Level Task Force on the Negotiations of the EAC Common Market Protocol (HLTF) on the second day of their meeting in Nairobi today reached a consensus on most of the issues which had been raised by Tanzania. The delegates however referred a number of issues for further deliberation by a technical committee of the HLTF.

Among the issues on which consensus was reached were the restructuring of the Preamble of the proposed Protocol on the EAC Common Market to reflect economic growth and development as the main pillar (overall objective) of the Common Market in addition to free movement of persons, labour, services, capital and right of establishment.

The delegates referred for further discussions in the specialized committee issues that Tanzania had raised on free movement of goods, free movement of persons, free movement of workers/labour; right of residence and right of establishment.

The delegates also agreed with the Tanzania position that there is a need to ensure that the commitments made by the Partner States under the Customs Union, especially the elimination of all non-tariff barriers (NTBs) to trade, are fully implemented to lay a firm foundation for the Common Market.

The 2nd round of the negotiations of the EAC Common Market Protocol opened in Nairobi at the Grand Regency Hotel yesterday (18 August) and goes on up to 23 August. The first round of the negotiations was held in Kigali, Rwanda on 14-22 April 2008. Other rounds of the negotiations are planned to be held in the capitals of the rest of the EAC Partner States. Negotiations of the Common Market Protocol are scheduled to be concluded in December 2008.

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