

# EAC manufacturing summit expected to discuss local content

By Guardian Reporter

OVER 400 stakeholders from public and private sector will next month meet during the second manufacturing summit aimed at deliberating on the nexus between application of local content requirements and East African Community (EAC) industrialisation.

The Chief Executive Officer of the East African Business Council (EABC), Lilian Awinja, said in a statement issued yesterday that the summit will be held in Kigali, Rwanda, from May 23 to 25, this year.

The official said that local content requirements have been used with varying degrees of success in many countries in the world, and that it required firms to use at least a specified minimum amount of domestically produced inputs in their production process with the aim of enhancing domestic industrial base, innovation, transfer of technology, employment generation, production efficiency and a check against trade imbalances.

According to Awinja most developed countries have employed local content guidelines to boost domestic value addition.

"The 2nd EAC manufacturing summit provides an avenue for the private sector to share practical insights on the linkages among local content, do-

mestic value addition and promotion of industries," EABC boss said in an interview with Turdaco Times.

She said local content requirements in regard to Public and Private Procurement of large projects such as infrastructure could create high demand for locally manufactured products as well as promote technology-based business start ups.

"Improving the value chain of EAC strategic sectors is key for the region



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to reap benefits of local content requirements," said the EABC boss.

The summit will provide a stage for discussion of cross cutting issues related to manufacturing, specifically financing for the manufacturing sector; standards and quality management, industrial skills, technology and innovation, combating illicit trade, product piracy and intellectual property

violations as well as attracting diaspora investment in the manufacturing sector.

Others are industry round tables on automotive, agro-processing, food and beverages, mineral processing, pharmaceuticals, construction materials, fertilizers and agro-chemicals as well as leather and textiles sectors will also be held.

The EAC manufacturing business summit 2017 is co-organised by the EAC with support from the Rwandan government.

The event is co-hosted by the EABC and the East African Manufacturing Associations such as the Rwanda Association of Manufacturers (RAM), Uganda Manufacturers Association (UMA), Confederation of Tanzania Industries (CTI), Burundi Manufacturers Association (AIB), and Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM).

During the summit there will also be exhibition, whereby investors, enterprises, researchers and academia will collectively showcase new products and services as well as latest innovations in manufacturing, particularly those with relevance to small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Established in 1997, EABC is the apex body of business associations of the private sector and corporate from the five EAC member states.