



**EAC SECRETARIAT**  
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**PRESS RELEASE**

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL EAC SECRETARY  
GENERALS FORUM FOR PRIVATE SECTOR, CIVIL SOCIETY AND  
OTHER INTEREST GROUPS**

**THEME: "15 YEARS OF THE EAC: TOWARDS A BORDERLESS  
COMMUNITY"**

The 5th Annual EAC Secretary General's Forum for Private Sector, Civil Society and Other Interest Groups, was held in Bujumbura, Burundi from 22nd to 23rd June 2017. Participants to the forum were drawn from Governments of EAC Partner States, Private Sector Organizations (PSOs), Civil Society Organizations (CSO's), and other Interest Groups.

Themed: ***"15 Years of the EAC: Towards a Borderless Community"***, the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual EAC Secretary Generals Forum was organized by the EAC Secretariat in collaboration with the coordinating Ministries, as well as the Dialogue Partners - the EABC, EACSO, EALS, EALGA, EATUC and with the support from GIZ. The core objective of the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual SG's Forum was to provide an opportunity for the private sector, civil society and

other interest groups to share experiences and good practices of the integration process experienced in the last 15 years and work out a coordinated strategy towards a common future of a political integration and a borderless community.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual EAC Secretary General's Forum was attended by over 180 participants drawn from the private sector, civil society, professional associations, representative of employer and workers organizations, media, government representatives, resource persons and other interest groups.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL EAC SECRETARY GENERAL'S FORUM**

### **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

1. The Inter University Council of East Africa should encourage and introduce a unit within the structured syllabi to promote the tenets of East Africa and encourage the "East Africaness" of students at all levels of education
2. The youth should be acknowledged as critical change agents for the advancement of the Community; and
3. The region should develop an integrated Labour Market information system to facilitate the exchange of young workers in the region.

**SUB-THEME: REALIZING THE RIGHT TO WORK AND RIGHT TO RESIDENCE WITHIN THE EAC.**

**TOPIC: How Best can we Achieve Free Movement of Labour and Services in the East African Community.**

- a) The EAC Secretariat should resume meetings of the Forum for Ministers responsible for Labour to facilitate the fast tracking and implementations of the commitments made in the EAC Common Market Protocol;
- b) Partner States should address administrative barriers such as age limitations and the salary cap for employment to allow for freedom of movement; and
- c) Finalize and adopt a regional framework for Social security coordination as directed by the Council of Ministers to allow for portability of social security savings.

**SUB-THEME: SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN EAST AFRICA**

**TOPIC: Enhancing Food Security and Agricultural Value Chains in the region.**

- a) EAC Secretariat should develop a value -chain policy to support agribusiness through technological innovation and skills development;
- b) EAC Partner States should develop initiatives for addressing post-harvest losses through exemption of taxes on post-harvest equipment;
- c) EAC Secretariat should fast-track the development of an EAC Anti counterfeit law to address substandard products and more specifically farm inputs such as seeds to support the enforcement of rules and regulations for food safety for regional trade in food staples; and
- d) EAC Partner States should support mechanization, agro-processing, irrigation and other modern farming processes and replace the use of hand hoe to enable economies of scale required for regional food security.

**TOPIC: Localizing the Climate Change Agenda; from Policies to Practical Interventions.**

- a) Harmonise Partner States actions to manage natural resources – policies, strategies, legislations – including funding and set a benchmark for climate action financing;
- b) The EAC should work towards a common (regional) emission target that can be contributed to by the various (NCDs) nationally determined contributions and harmonise policies and programmes on Climate Change with the commitments made from the Paris Climate Change Accord 2016;
- c) The EAC should conserve the Lake Victoria Water Catchment area as a means to mitigate the Climate Change
- d) The EAC should develop a regional policy on irrigation.
- e) Popularise Public Private Partnerships for low carbon & climate resilient growth strategies: Climate Smart Agriculture, diffusion of renewable energies, energy efficiency (with CSOs & Private sector at national and local levels);
- f) EAC Partner States to encourage adaptation of simple technologies at local level such as smart Jiko, solar technology among others to conserve energy and reduce the impact of deforestation;
- g) EAC Partner States to enhance climate change education, training and public awareness on the Climate Change Agenda, options and opportunities while ensuring human rights and gender-responsive climate change actions including the protection of vulnerable groups; and
- h) Dialogue Parties to use own transformational power of collaboration and networking to share lessons, pioneer new approaches and technologies, test solutions and share costs

and resources - build cross-industry and cross-stakeholder partnerships.

**TOPIC: Reflections on Gender Parity in EAC: Tracking Inclusivity and Participation of Women in Economic, Political and Public Leadership.**

- a) Equality, Equity and Development Bill;
- b) EAC Partner States should reform or repeal all policies, strategies and regulations, which discriminate against women or which in any way limit or negatively affect women's access to, use and control of land and other productive resources;
- c) EAC Organs and Institutions to implement the 'not more than two thirds' Gender Principle in appointive and elective positions in the East African Community; among others;
- d) EAC to finalise the development of an EAC Gender barometer as a tool to monitor progress on implementation of gender parity commitments;
- e) Partner States should develop/implement strategies for male involvement in gender programming for both to appreciate each other's roles and rights;
- f) EAC organs and Institutions should engender their policies, protocols and other frameworks and adopt gender-responsive M&E and reporting; and
- g) Fast track the finalization and adoption of the EAC Strategy on Women in Business as a means of enhancing participation of women in cross border trade.

**SUB-THEME: ICT AND MEDIA AS ENABLERS OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION**

**TOPIC: Media as a Vehicle for Effective Citizen Participation and Engagement within the EAC integration process.**

- a) Media houses should support the regional integration agenda through stimulating discussions of regional nature, building capacity to report and engage the public on EAC;
- b) EAC should develop a framework for engagement between EAC and media in the region and encourage the media to focus not only on giving information but citizens feedback;
- c) The EAC Secretary General in collaboration with the Media Houses should reintroduce the EAC Annual Media Summit to provide a forum for engaging the media in East Africa; through a Public Private Partnership arrangement;
- d) The EAC to disseminate the EAC Communication Strategy in a way that is attractive to media and easily translated at grass root level as well as the young demographic;
- e) EAC and Partner States should support and publicize smart innovations to address the challenge of digitization at the EAC secretariat while identifying new models to engage the informal sector;
- f) The Partner States should use the media positively as a tool to advance gender parity;
- g) EAC to urge partner states to use the governments media houses to have special program which report on EAC regional Integration (radio and television).

**SUB-THEME: PUBLIC PROCUREMENT AS A TOOL FOR EAC DEVELOPMENT**

**TOPIC: Promoting Local Production through Public**

## **Procurement**

- a) EAC Secretariat to develop an EAC Local Content Policy with a clear definition of local contents for the region and define the targets for the Local Content requirements;
- b) EAC should expedite the completion of the regional procurement policy and legal frame work;
- c) EAC and EABC to undertake capacity assessment for priority sectors across the Partner States;
- d) EAC Partner States to identify areas where citizens need to effectively participate and ring fence such areas in terms of local content requirements;
- e) Partner States to create special purpose vehicles to support local companies (PPP vehicles);
- f) Partner States to encourage the participation of the private sector in the original contracts that are to be signed is key; and
- g) Partner States to make quality marks compulsory to enhance quality, competition and innovation (EAC Quality Mark).

## **PRESENTATION OF THE MATRIX OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE PAST SG'S FORUMS**

1. The Regional Dialogue Committee (RDC) to re-prioritize the recommendations of the previous editions of the SG's Forums and remove what is not implementable, categorize quick wins, define responsibilities and sources of funding; and
2. The RDC to develop a road map for the implementation of all outstanding recommendations with clear timelines.