

Business

EABC urges member states to expedite ratification of double taxation agreement

By Peterson Tumwebaze

THE East African Business Council has called on EAC member states to accelerate the process to ratify double taxation agreement (DTA).

This, according to the region's business council, will help increase trade flows and facilitate economic development across the trading bloc.

"The region needs to remove barriers to trade and take advantage of bigger markets," said Nick Nesbitt, the EABC vice chairperson.

He was speaking during the council's general assembly meeting in Kampala, Uganda last week.

The business community has for long complained about inefficiency, corruption and unharmonised tax regimes across the six-nation bloc as one of the major bottlenecks slowing down efforts to attain impressive economic growth in the region.

They say the region must move faster to have the double taxation treaty ratified by all the East African Community (EAC) partner states, else they lose out on the opportunity to spur investment that could have made the region an important player on the global stage.

Double taxation agreement



Trucks await clearance at Gatuna border post between Rwanda and Uganda. *File*

among the East African Community member states was signed back in 2010 but there has been little progress in fast-tracking internal approvals by individual member countries.

Only Rwanda has ratified the agreement.

Meanwhile, Samuel Nyantahe, the EABC board director, called

for more efforts to push forward infrastructure projects that will help reduce the cost of doing business across the bloc.

"We still have to move faster on addressing major challenges, including fast-tracking industrialisation to unlock the region's economic potential and ensuring that we move faster on the

liberalisation of trade in service across the region," he said.

This, according to David Baliraine, the Associated Tax Director at EY Rwanda, would help make regional economies more resilient and competitive.