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PRESIDENT NKURUNZIZA PITCHES FOR MEDICO-PASTORAL APPROACH IN HEALTHCARE



Burundi President Pierre Nkurunziza has called for close collaboration between medical practitioners and the clergy in the delivery of healthcare.

A jovial President Nkurunziza told delegates to the 6th EAC Health and Scientific Conference being held in Bujumbura, Burundi that human beings and other creatures do not owe their life and survival to doctors, healers or any other health-related sciences but to God.

President Nkurunziza said the society should consider doctors, healers and medical researchers as God's assistants who in return should not take their responsibilities for granted.

"Whoever lands a helping hand to God, in any healthcare-related activity, should be proud of it on the one hand and, on the other hand, they should refrain from any behaviour or attitude likely to affect life in a negative way," said Nkurunziza.

President Nkurunziza said that in the beginning, faith and healing were integrated, adding that this was no longer the case today.

"Today, medical science limits itself to what is physical, observable and replicable. In this process, our concept of the person has become fragmented. Diseases of the body are the concern of medicine, problems of the mind are the realm of psychology, while spiritual problems are relegated to pastors and priest," he said.

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“We must adopt a holistic approach; trying to involve the whole community in the many aspects of this long healing journey.” ~ President Nkurunziza

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The President said the onus was on leaders and clerics to bring faith and the practice of medicine back together as an integrated whole.

“To do this, we must first recognise the wholeness of the person we seek to heal; the combination of body, spirit, emotions and other phenomena,” he said, adding that this could be done in three major ways.

“First, healthcare professionals must understand who the whole person is, and how thoughts, feelings, emotions and desires affect our total health and healing. Secondly, we need to learn how to refer sick persons to pastoral caregivers and how to work together as a team. Thirdly, medical and pastoral leaders need to find ways to develop this team approach in hospitals, clinics and private practice situations. We must adopt a holistic approach; trying to involve the whole community in the many aspects of this long healing journey.”

He noted that the integrated medico-pastoral healing approach to healing has proven successful in Burundi and other countries.

“There are definite limits of medical science. Unfortunately, not all human conditions and afflictions can be adequately diagnosed even after exhaustive tests and studies. Medical providers live with that reality every day and so do our patients,” said Nkurunziza.

“When specialists and diagnostic studies have not revealed a cause to your symptoms, it does not mean you do not have a problem. It just means that no one has been able to find thus far except God who knows everything. We all know of many cases where doctors give up on their patients. The latter would walk the streets in search of a solution but in vain. Once all ways and means have proven inadequate, an invisible hand works a miracle. That invisible hand is God.”

President Nkurunziza said there had been instances where death certificates were written, people were taken to mortuaries or cemeteries, but manage to return to life, leaving doctors speechless and onlookers astounded.




He noted that many doctors only reconsider their spiritual beliefs when they fall sick with serious diseases.

“Doctors should not wait for the above situation to arise. They should always seek advice, guidance and inspiration from God if they want to be more efficient and successful in the long run,” he said, adding that even death was under God’s control.

“The number of days that we will live on this earth is ordained by God, not by medical science. It is God who has the power to shorten or prolong it. Read Isaiah 38:5 or Job 14:5 for better understanding. “Death, of course, is not a failure. Death is normal. Death may be the enemy, but it is also the natural order of things. There is nothing we can do about it. We have to do with it.”

He quoted the Apostle Paul to the effect that God’s plan was “... to bring all things together.

“We can play a crucial part in this by allowing God to work through healthcare professionals and leaders to reunite medicine and faith because, as God told Moses, ‘I am the Lord who heals you.’” 

Republic of Uganda Takes Over Chairmanship of EAC From the United Republic of Tanzania



The Republic of Uganda officially took over from the United Republic of Tanzania as the new Chairperson of East African Community in April 2017.

The Republic of Rwanda became the new rapporteur during the 35th Meeting of EAC Council of Ministers which concluded on 2 April 2017, at the EAC headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania.

The tenure of office of the Chairperson of the EAC is one year and it is held on rotational basis among the Partner States as per Article 12 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the EAC.

Speaking after taking over, the new Chairman of the EAC Council of Ministers, Hon. Dr Ali Kirunda Kivejinja, Uganda's Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of East African Affairs, said that the Council of Ministers meeting came at a time when there was growing demand by the East African citizens to see, touch and feel the tangible benefits of the regional integration especially following the launch of the Customs Union in 2005, the Common Market in 2010, and the Monetary Union in 2013.

"At this critical period, the Council's contribution towards the regional integration process therefore cannot be overemphasized," Hon. Kivejinja. He urged EAC Partner States to enhance the visibility of the tangible benefits of the integration by implementing fully the Customs Union and Common Market protocols.

Hon. Kivejinja said that since the operationalization of the Customs Union and Common Market protocols, Partner States have not fully allowed the citizens to enjoy the anticipated benefits.

"Our people are still experiencing non-tariff barriers, harmonization of national laws to conform to the Protocols are still far, and popular participation in the integration process is still generally low in all the Partner States," said the Minister.

The new Chair of the Council also reminded members of the Council on the Summit directive to the Council to present a report on Alternative Financing Mechanism including the option of 1% of Imports from outside the Community in line with the Principle of Financial Solidarity and Equity. He urged the Ministers of Finance to finalize the proposal as soon as possible so that the Summit can be guided to this outstanding matter.

On his part, the outgoing Chair, Amb. Augustine Mahiga Tanzania's Minister for Foreign Affairs, East Africa, Regional and International Cooperation, called upon the Organs and Institutions of the Community to refocus and re-engineer how to move forward the integration agenda.

"I urge them to refrain themselves from unnecessary expenditures which amount equally to wastage of tax payers money," said Amb Mahiga. Amb. Mahiga disclosed that there are inbuilt challenges in any regional integration schemes which need to be addressed as long as they are known.

"Generally what I can say during our tenure we came across plains, hills and valleys but all is well." 

EAC Secretariat Remains Impartial in Burundi Dialogue

The East African Community Secretariat has noted with concern an opinion article titled "*Mfumukeko and EAC Summit have failed the test of impartiality on Burundi crisis*," as published in the April 22 -28, 2017 edition of the East African newspaper.

The writer, Mr. Wachira Maina, imputes possible bias on the part of the Summit of the EAC Heads of State and the EAC Secretary General, Amb. Liberat Mfumukeko, in the ongoing Inter-Burundi Dialogue whose Facilitator is former Tanzanian President, H.E. Benjamin William Mkapa.

To set the record straight, the EAC remains an impartial arbiter in the Inter-Burundi Dialogue. The Community is prepared to work with all stakeholders in a structured manner to ensure the success of the Dialogue and lasting peace in Burundi, and by extension, the entire East African region.

The EAC Secretary General never dismissed the report of the Special Adviser to the UN Secretary General on Conflict Prevention, Amb. Jamal Benomar, to the UN Security Council. Rather, he only stated that the EAC Secretariat did not participate in the preparation of the said report.

It is therefore not clear how the SG's clarification on the matter draws the EAC into the Republic of Burundi's alleged quarrels with the UN as the writer claims.

The EAC Heads of State Summit at their 17th Ordinary Meeting affirmed that H.E. Yoweri Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, was the Community's appointed Mediator for the Inter-Burundi Dialogue. The Summit also appointed a team under H.E. Mkapa, as the Facilitator of the Mediation.

Mr. Maina is therefore right to say that the EAC is actively mediating the Burundi peace process. However, he misses the point when he claims that the 'EAC is also partnering with the African Union and the UN in a joint technical working group on the conflict.' The Secretariat wishes to make it clear that no 'joint technical working group' has formally been established so far between the EAC, AU and UN. However, the EAC, AU and UN are in consultations to set up a joint working mechanism for the dialogue.


The EAC Secretary General has not at any time spoken on behalf of the Burundi government as the writer claims. Amb. Mfumukeko has since his appointment as Secretary General of the EAC never commented on the relationship between the government and the opposition groups in Burundi, the country's political situation, and security situation in Burundi. It is therefore inaccurate for the writer to say that the Secretary General is receiving instructions from any Partner State as the writer appears to insinuate.



Prior to his appointment as Secretary General, Amb. Mfumukeko was a high ranking bureaucrat in the government of Burundi. It is worth noting that all previous Secretaries General of the Community have served at the apex levels of their governments back home either as Cabinet Ministers or top civil servants before nomination by their Heads of State to serve in this office.

As to why Burundi was allowed to nominate a Secretary General to the Community, the writer would do himself some justice by reading the Treaty for the Establishment of the EAC in full rather than just selectively. Article 66 of the Treaty provides that the Secretary General shall be appointed by the Summit upon nomination by the relevant Head of State under the principle of rotation. The Secretary General shall serve for a fixed term of five years.

The writer acknowledges in his article that he's not clear what the Secretary General's alleged criticism of Amb. Benomar's report to the UN Security Council was all about. It would be in the best interests of the writer's audience and the people of East Africa if the writer had carried out proper background research on what the Secretary General actually said before lunging into blatant attacks and accusations against the Office of the Secretary General and the Summit.

The Burundi Dialogue is still on course and is not a lost cause as the writer implies. No one dreamed it would be a walk in the park given the country's chequered history. The EAC Secretariat has and will continue to provide moral and material support to the Facilitator, H.E. Benjamin Mkapa. We trust that the Dialogue will result in a genuine and lasting for the people of Burundi. 

EAC Secretary General Pays Courtesy Call on CEO of Trademark East Africa in Nairobi



The Secretary General of the East African Community (EAC), Amb. Liberat Mfumukeko paid a courtesy call on the Trademark East Africa (TMEA) CEO, Mr. Frank Matsaert on Tuesday, 11 April, 2017, at the Trade Mark East Africa Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.

The two officials had a lengthy discussion on a number of issues including the support to the East African Community by TMEA and the importance of Partnership between the two parties.

The Secretary General briefed Mr. Frank Matsaert on the reforms being undertaken at the EAC and that EAC was now ISO certified. He disclosed to the TMEA CEO that the impact of reforms had led to cost reduction in the way EAC does business and emphasized that the reform agenda will continue to ensure efficiency in the use of available resources.

On management of different projects at the EAC Secretariat, Amb. Mfumukeko informed Mr. Matsaert that the Projects Coordination Unit will be fully functional by July 2017. On his part, Mr. Frank Matsaert emphasized that TMEA takes EAC partnership seriously, and congratulated the EAC for passing the EU Fiduciary Risk Assessment, which TMEA supported.

Mr. Matsaert informed the Secretary General that a commitment had been made to support the initial phase of operationalization of the Projects Coordination Unit at the EAC Secretariat. "Already a consultant had been recruited by TMEA to help in the finalization of the design of the unit". The report will be finalized by end of April 2017, added the CEO.

Mr. Matsaert also expressed his happiness on the video conferencing facility installed at the EAC Secretariat and in the Partner States supported by TMEA that is working and contributing to the reduction of costs.

He made a request to the Secretary General for computation of the savings by the video conferencing facility since it started operating. "There is need to double up the video conferencing facility to allow two or three meetings at the same time."

The Secretary General and the Trade Mark CEO agreed to work more closely with other Development Partners to avoid any potential duplication of programs. They also noted the need for a joint meeting especially between EAC, TMEA and European Union (EU) to identify areas of joint implementation.

The two officials also agreed to review the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between EAC and TMEA. They identified level of engagement especially at Projects Coordination Committee as one area that needed to be revisited.

Mr. Matsaert told the Secretary General that TMEA is planning to send a high level mission to visit EAC for deeper discussions.



EAC Secretary General Meets Aga Khan Representative in Nairobi



The East African Community (EAC) Secretary General, Amb. Liberat Mfumukeko met the Diplomatic Representative of the Aga Khan in the Republic of Kenya, Dr. Azim Lakhani on Tuesday 11th April, 2017, in Nairobi, Kenya.

The meeting was a follow-up of the Secretary General's visit to His Highness the Aga Khan on 11th November 2016, where the Secretary General and His Highness the Aga Khan explored the possibility of expanding the Aga Khan Integrated Health Systems across all the EAC Partner States, especially in secondary cities like Kisumu, Mombasa, Arusha, Mwanza, Entebbe, Jinja, Butare and Ngozi, among others.

Amb. Mfumukeko had also requested capacity building support from His Highness the Aga Khan to the East African Community through scholarship programmes to enhance capacity of staff in different projects and programmes.

The two officials discussed in detail the Financing Agreement signed recently between the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) and the French Co-operation Agency (AFD) for the expansion of hospitals in Kisumu and Mombasa worth USD28 Million. Another Financing Agreement to expand the Aga Khan hospital in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, had already been signed and implementation is on-going.

In Investment Promotion Service (IPS), especially in the areas of Agro-processing by the Aga Khan, Dr. Lakhani informed the Secretary General that currently, AKDN had an Export Agro-processing industry to empower rural areas from production to export. This is already being implemented in Kenya with a programme of 7,000 farmers involved through Premier Food Inc (food processing); Frigoken (vegetable processing) and All fruit (fruits processing), amongst others.

The Secretary General urged AKDN to ensure similar programmes are replicated in other EAC Partner States. In this regard, it was agreed that an EAC Delegation would visit the AKDN Food Processing Plant in Ruiru and Murang'a in Kenya with a view to rolling it out to other Partner States.



Secretary General Meets Director General of UNON in Nairobi



The Secretary General of the East African Community (EAC), Amb. Liberat Mfumukeko paid a courtesy call on the Director General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), Amb. Sahle-Work Zewde on Thursday, 13th April, 2017, at the UNON offices in Gigiri, Nairobi, Kenya.

The two officials discussed on a number of issues including the need for a more structured relationship between the EAC and the UN.

The Secretary General updated the UNON Director General on a number of issues in EAC including the institutional review and the progress so far where implementation of phase one had already started.

The Secretary General updated the Director General on the reform agenda in the EAC Secretariat geared to cutting costs and ensuring efficiency. He said that implementation of reforms was a response to a call by the Summit of the EAC Heads of State and other key stakeholders. Amb. Mfumukeko also informed the Director General that the Republic of South Sudan was now a full member of the EAC, but there were a number of activities required to fast track their integration.

The Secretary General reiterated that there was need for a well-defined framework which clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of all entities involved in the Burundi peace process. He further informed that draft Terms of Reference has been developed to this effect and await finalization. The Director General reiterated the UN's commitment to finding a lasting solution for peace to prevail in Burundi.

The Principals also discussed the situation in South Sudan as well as the upcoming elections in the Republics of Kenya and Rwanda. The EAC official informed his host that the Community will launch Observer Missions in the two Partner States.

Both Amb. Sahle-Work Zewde and Amb. Liberat Mfumukeko concluded that there was need for a more structured cooperation between the East African Community and the United Nations and thus the importance of finalizing the pending cooperation agreement. The UNON official observed that while the UN has signed cooperation agreements with other RECs, there was still none with the EAC.



EAC Travel Expenditures Decline Significantly



The East African Community Secretariat significantly reduced traveling expenses over the 10-months period running from May 2016 – February 2017 compared to a similar period from May 2015 – February 2016.

EAC Travel expenditures fell to US\$ 9.1 million in the period ending February 2017 compared to US\$ 12.5 million the previous financial year, a drop of US\$ 3.4 million.

EAC travel expenditure includes air tickets for EAC Staff, air tickets for Partner States' delegates and other participants at EAC meetings, and Daily Subsistence Allowance (DSA) for EAC Staff, Partner States delegates and other participants in EAC meetings.

Making the disclosure, EAC Secretary General Amb. Liberat Mfumukeko said that some of the most significant cost reductions were in expenditure on air tickets which dropped by US\$ 456,491 and air tickets for Partner States' delegates and other participants to EAC meetings which declined by US\$ 408,273.

The Secretary General said that DSA for EAC Staff from also plunged from US\$ 4.5 million to US\$ 3.2 million over the same period, a difference of US\$ 1.36 million.

Expenditure on DSA for Delegates to EAC meetings went down from US\$ 4.4 million to US\$ 3.5 million, a drop of US\$ 1.05 million.

Also worth noting is that the EAC overall Travel budget has declined significantly over the past three financial years. The Community's travel budget was US\$ 28.1 million in the 2014/2015 Financial Year; US\$ 28.0 million in the 2015/2016 Financial Year, and; declined significantly to US\$ 21 million in the 2016/2017 Financial Year.

The Secretariat has since April 2016 been undergoing administrative and institutional reforms aimed at cutting down on costs and reducing wastage in its expenditure.

The ongoing reforms have helped the Community to adapt to the reduction of its travel budget and to the overall financial constraints it has been facing.





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EAC to Start Issuing EA e-Passport January 2018



The 35th EAC Council of Minister's meeting has directed Partner States to commence issuance the New EA e-Passport by 31st January 2018, after the consideration of the different status of preparedness by the Partner States during their recent meeting in Arusha.

The Council directives came on the backdrop of the 17th Ordinary Summit of the EAC Heads of State directed the Partner States to commence issuance of the New EA e-Passport by 1st January, 2017 and implement the phase out programme for the current machine readable East African and National Passports from 1st January 2017 to 31st December 2018.

According to the 35th EAC Council of Minister's report, Republic of Burundi reported that through Public Private Partnership (PPP) arrangement had completed the process of procuring the EA e-Passport booklets and is ready to commence issuance by 3rd April 2017.

The Republics of Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda reported to commence issuance of the New International EA e-passport not later than April 2017 while the United Republic of Tanzania will be ready to commence the issuance of EA e-Passport by 1st January 2018.

EA e-Passport is expected to boost free movement of people across the region and it will be in line with implementation of the Common Market protocol which guaranteed the right to move between countries in East Africa.

The EAC e-Passport will have Diplomatic, Service and Ordinary categories and is different from the current machine readable passport being issued by the Partner States. It will be valid for up to 10 years while the Diplomatic passport and service passport will be valid according to specific term of the service of the holder.

The standard international e-Passport will have a chip that holds the same information that is printed on the passport's data page, the holder's name, date of birth, and other biographic information. It will also contains a biometric identifier and have a digital photograph of the holder and security features to prevent unauthorised reading or "scanning" of data stored.

The new EAC travel document will come in red, green and sky blue — the colours of the EAC flag — but with text and national emblems, in gold to complete its face. The colour of the passport will depend on categories. For instance, EAC diplomats will carry a passport that is red in colour, green for officials and sky blue for ordinary citizens.

The outer front cover will have the words 'East African Community' in gold on top and below the name of the issuing Partner States will be pasted.



EAC Partner States Undertaking Reforms in Implementation of the Common Market Protocol



The East African Community Partner States have undertaken a number of reforms over the past four years to facilitate implementation of the EAC Common Market Protocol, this is according to the East African Common Market Scorecard (CMS 2016).

The Scorecard, which is published by the World Bank, says that Partner States have implemented significant reforms in the free movement of Capital, Goods and Services that are enshrined in the Common Market Protocol (CMP).

The CMS 2016, however, notes that there is still cause for concern as numerous barriers remain in all the three areas. Also worrying, according to the Scorecard is the fact that new measures have been implemented that hinder regional trade and investment.

The Scorecard indicates that in the case of free movement of goods, Non-tariff Barriers (NTBs) which often emerge when tariffs have been eliminated – have been addressed more quickly during the 2016 reference period than during the 2014 period falling from an average of 34 to eight (8) months per NTB.

With respect to the free movement of capital, three Partner States – Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda – have undertaken a total of 11 reforms including measures that enhance the region's securities capacities by adding a framework for trading in derivatives in Kenya and Uganda.

The findings were revealed during a two-day dissemination workshop on EAC Common Scorecard 2016 that was held at the EAC Headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania. The World Bank team was led by Ms. Jean Lubega-Kyazze, Senior Private Sector Specialist, while the Director of Planning, Mr. Wilberforce Mariki, represented the EAC Secretary General.

The report observes that Kenya undertook three reforms but added one restriction; Tanzania and Rwanda each eliminated one Non-conforming Measure (NCM). It adds that Uganda also had one reform but added one restriction.

Under the CMP, Partner States committed to liberalize 20 capital market operations. However, at the end of December 2015,

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... for the EAC to achieve the accelerated economic growth and development, an efficient services sector is key

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the reference period for CMS 2016, only two (2) of these 20 operations were free in all Partner States showing no improvement since 2014.

Eleven (11) reforms have been undertaken since the publication of CMS 2014, all in the securities area, notes the report.

Since the publication of the 2014 CMS, both Kenya and Uganda adopted a regulatory framework for derivatives and thus removed two of the restrictions recorded in 2014.

"In the CMS 2016 results, Kenya has met the threshold of no restrictions on the 14 operations measures relating to securities. Uganda also enacted reforms affecting two of the operations but continues to have residency restrictions on the local purchase of shares or other securities and of bonds and other debt instruments by charging non-residents withholding tax rate of 15% on dividends from listed companies while residents are charged 10%," notes the report.

"In terms of credit operations, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda continue to be open to both borrowing and lending abroad by residents. Burundi and Tanzania both restricted lending abroad by residents in 2014," it adds.

The report observes that on personal capital operations, all EAC Partner States – except Tanzania – require that all amounts above \$10,000 should be declared on exit or entry. However, Partner States do not restrict the operation.

"Tanzania places a \$10,000 limit for residents traveling abroad with foreign currency, including to EAC Partner States. Tanzania also provides that funds due from assurance policies taken outside Tanzania may only be transferred into or from Tanzania is servicing such policies is done using externally generated funds."

CMS 2016 notes that only two (2) out of the 20 capital operations are free in all Partner States, namely external borrowing by residents and repatriation of proceeds from sale of assets. All other 18 operations have at least one Partner State restricting the operation.

The Scorecard, among other things, recommends that to release regional capital for private sector growth, the EAC should prioritize the rollback of laws, regulations and investment codes that impede investment.

On the Free Movement of Services, the CMS 2016 notes that although Partner States have committed to liberalization in a

number of service sectors, they followed a positive list approach, scheduling only those sub-sectors they were willing to open up.

"Non-conforming Measures (NCMs) have increased in the telecommunications sector – largely because telecommunications commitments did not take effect until 2015, so all countries were rated as having zero NCMs. The vast majority – about two thirds – of NCMs are in professional services," says the report.

The report notes that for the EAC to achieve the accelerated economic growth and development envisaged in the CMP, an efficient services sector is key, given its centrality to the proper functioning of every other sector. It recommends the amendment of the relevant provisions on trade in services under the CMP, noting that this will not only deepen integration in services in the EAC, but also greatly boost and attract investment within and into the EAC region.

On the Free Movement of Goods, the report points out that as was the case in 2014, all Partner States have eliminated tariffs on goods originating from within the EAC. All Partner States therefore score full marks in CMS 2016 for compliance with the Rules of Origin (RoO) following the revised RoO.

"Despite this legal compliance, the CMS 2016 results point to the continued use of tariff equivalent measures primarily arising from the non-recognition of RoO certificates among EAC Partner States, thus triggering application of tariffs on goods that would have otherwise not attracted import duties and the application of charges of tariff equivalence," says the report.

The report observes that Partner States continue to apply charges on each other's goods that are equivalent to the tariffs that were removed to facilitate free movement of goods.

"These charges include charges levied on imports by various government agencies and local authorities or county governments, road user charges, charges associated with all cases of non-recognition of Certificates of Origin. In total, there were 35 such charges, 28 new charges which were imposed in the CMS 2016 review period and seven (7) charges carried from the CMS 2014."

The report, among other things, calls for the: elimination of Tariffs and charges with equivalent effect; elimination of NTBs, and; harmonization and mutual recognition of Sanitary and Phyto-sanitary Standards (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT).



EAC Holds 23rd Kwibuka Commemoration of Genocide Against the Tutsi



The East African Community in collaboration with the Arusha and Moshi Rwandan Community and the UN Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals (MICT) commemorated the 23rd Anniversary of the Genocide Against the Tutsi on 7th April 2017, at the EAC Headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania.

This year, Rwanda marks the 23rd commemoration of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Themed "Remember the Genocide against the Tutsi – Fight Genocide Ideology – Build on Our Progress", the commemoration was an occasion to pay tribute to the more than one million innocent lives lost through the heinous extermination of Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994.

The commemoration began with a walk to remember from the East African Community Secretariat Headquarters to Arusha City Centre followed by a wreath laying ceremony led by the Regional Commissioner, Arusha, Mr. Mrisho Gambo; the High Commissioner of Rwanda in Tanzania, Mr. Eugene Kayihura; the EAC Secretary General represented by the Deputy Secretary General in charge of Finance and Administration, Hon. Jesca Eriyo; and the MICT Registrar, Mr. Olufemi Elias.

The East African Community (EAC) staff led by Hon. Jesca Eriyo and Hon. Christopher Bazivamo; Deputy Secretary General in charge of Productive and Social Sectors, participated in a somber 'walk to remember' from the EAC Headquarters to Arusha City center.

On return to the venue, the front-liners of the 'walk to remember' lay flowers at the Genocide Memorial Plaque at the EAC headquarters, after which commemorative candles were lit in honour of the lives lost during the horrendous genocide.

The commemoration brought together a broad spectrum of stakeholders including local government, religious groups, Trademark East Africa, GIZ, Rwandans from the diaspora, Arusha and Moshi Rwandan Community, EAC staff, United Nations Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals, University youth and schools children.

Speaking during the commemoration, Arusha Regional Commissioner, Mr. Mrisho Gambo called for East African Community to be at the forefront of preventing conflicts and fighting against genocide ideology and denial in the community that do escalate into mass murders, extermination and the genocide as we experienced in Rwanda in 1994.

"Let me register my appreciation to the Secretariat for having taken it over as EAC family to own this commemoration event as you have demonstrated by hosting us here in your premises".

Mr. Gambo urged the EAC Secretariat to continue in that spirit by putting in place policies geared towards preventing conflicts in the region and more specifically to adopt measures to combat the spread of genocide ideology and its denial in the Community.

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“... the world should recognize the incredible bravery of those who rescued others during the genocide – a great risk to themselves and their families” ~ Hon. Bazivamo

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“I am happy that there is a good number of youth in this room. The youth are usually misled and used in cases of violence, conflicts and as we witnessed in Rwanda the youth were very active in the killings of their peer innocent children during the genocide. It was awful, added Regional Commissioner.

He called upon the EAC leadership to do all it takes to design programs to support the youth to grow into responsible citizens. Rwanda’s High Commissioner to Tanzania, H.E. Ambassador Eugene Kayihura thanked the EAC Executive for taking the lead in organizing the event and standing with the Rwandan Community in this year’s commemoration.

Amb. Kayihura disclosed that Rwanda experienced a tragedy in which over a Million innocent Tutsis were savagely exterminated in a very horrific and systematic manner, during a three months’ Genocidal killing from 7th April to 4th July in 1994; meaning on average, 10,000 people were killed per day, yet all this happened as the entire world was simply looking.

He informed the invited guests that for the last 23 years Rwandans chose a completely different path of resilience and courage necessary to get solutions for their problems, rejecting the rotten politics of hatred and divisionism, thus, rebuilding Rwanda from the ashes.

Amb. Kayihura expressed his appreciation to the governments and the people of East African Community for standing in solidarity with the government and people of Rwanda during trying moment. “Not forgetting the African Union (AU) and the United Nation (UN) who have also set apart this day the 7th of April every year on their calendars as a special day to commemorate the 1994 genocide against Tutsi”, noted the Ambassador.

On her part, the EAC Deputy Secretary General in charge of Finance and Administration, Hon. Jesca Eriyo said that as the region and world at large commemorate for the 23rd time, it is important to reaffirm the fundamental truth that we are all created equal and we have certain alienable rights that include the right to life and no one has the right to take it away as it was done 23 years ago from the innocent children, men and women of Rwanda.

“Let’s join the Government and people of Rwanda to commemorate the 23rd anniversary of the Genocide against Tutsi and to encourage all EAC Partner States to be part of the event”.

The EAC Deputy Secretary General in charge of Productive and Social Sector, Hon Christophe Bazivamo said the EAC region in general and the Government and the People of Rwanda in particular ask the world to stand against genocide denial and its ideology and to recognize the incredible bravery of those who rescued others during the genocide – at great risk to themselves and their families.





EAPCE'17



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EAC Official Commends Partner States for Promoting Tourism and Wildlife Management Sector



The Deputy Secretary General in charge of Productive and Social Sectors, Hon. Christophe Bazivamo, has commended the EAC Partner States for their willingness to promote Tourism and Wildlife Management sector in a coordinated manner as illustrated by their renewed commitment in supporting regional tourism development and wildlife conservation, in the overall context advancing the EAC integration agenda.

The Deputy Secretary General, who was addressing Partner States' delegates attending the 7th Meeting of the Sectoral Council on Tourism and Wildlife Management in Kampala, Uganda, reiterated the need to continuously market the region as a single destination and the need for the region to enhance its marketing strategies not only internationally but also regionally.

Hon. Christophe Bazivamo further noted that in the last decade, the region had witnessed a decline in wildlife population exacerbated by poaching and illegal trafficking of wildlife and wildlife products and commended the discussions by Partner States on anti-poaching initiatives being carried out in the region by individual Partner states and how those initiatives could be merged into a regional action plan to deal with poaching activities of wildlife and wildlife products.

The 7th Meeting of the Sectoral Council on Tourism and Wildlife Management considered amongst others; implementation status of previous decisions and directives of the Sectoral Councils/Council; the draft Regional Strategy to Combat Poaching and Illegal Trafficking of Wildlife and Wildlife products; the draft Terms of Reference for the two Sub-Committees on Tourism and Wildlife Conservation and Management; and Progress report of the activities of the Tourism and Wildlife Management Sector in

general, including the draft Protocol of Cooperation in Tourism and Wildlife Management. The implementation of the Single Tourist Visa by all partner states was also tabled.

The Chair of the Sectoral Council commended the good work done by the Partner States in deliberating on key issues and reviewing progresses in the implementation of previous decisions and recommending the way forward for efficient and successful implementation of the tourism development and wildlife conservation programs and initiatives by the EAC. More importantly, he underscored the focus by Partner States on how to enhance their individual synergies to create the much-needed visibility but also to strategize on how to become a competitive block in relation to other tourist destinations.

The EAC Council of Ministers have recognized the serious threats to the survival of many wildlife species in the region and recommended the EAC Secretariat to develop regional strategy to combat poaching and illegal trafficking of wildlife and wildlife products. That strategy has been developed and awaits adoption by the Sectoral Council for its implementation.

The Sectoral Council meeting in Kampala also noted that progress had been made by the EAC in marketing the region with the view of ensuring that the sector makes tangible impact on the lives of the people of the region. It was noted that the region stands to benefit holistically from the Single Tourist Visa Regime. Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda were commended for introducing and implementing the Single Tourist Visa.

The meeting directed the EAC Secretariat to expedite crafting of a road map to guide the full implementation of the Single Tourist Visa Regime by all EAC Partner States.



EAC Hosts Regional Training on the Malabo Declaration



On 10 -14 April 2017, the East African Community hosted the Eastern Africa Regional Training Workshop on the preparation of Biennial Report on the June 2014 Malabo Declaration on Agriculture Growth and Transformation in Africa. The training was organized by the African Union Commission in collaboration with the EAC, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA).

The main objective of the training was to prepare AU Member States in the Eastern Africa region to prepare the Biennial Review report as part of the continental roadmap on the Malabo Declaration.

The African Heads of State at the 23rd Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in June 2014 adopted the "**Malabo Declaration**" to accelerate agricultural growth and transformation by the year 2025. The goals of the Declaration include ending hunger on the continent and tripling intra-African trade in agricultural goods, among others.

Hon. Christophe Bazivamo, EAC Deputy Secretary General, Productive and Social Sectors presided over the official opening of the training course.

In his remarks, he noted that the AU Heads of State will be anxiously waiting to receive the Biennial inaugural report in January 2018.

He emphasized that the foundational report will set the benchmark upon which future performance and progress towards achievement of the Malabo Declaration commitments will be monitored and tracked.

The five day training was attended by Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Program (CAADP) Focal Points, statistical officers and Monitoring & Evaluation Specialists from Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Somalia and Tanzania, with trainers drawn from the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System and the Economic Policy Research Centre, Makerere University, Uganda.

The Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) and Africa Lead supported the event financially while Retouch Africa provided the technical facilitation. 

EAC Partner States Directed to Formulate National Kiswahili Language Policies



The 35th Meeting of the East African Community Council of Ministers took place from 30 March to 4 April 2017 at the EAC Headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania.

Among other highlights was the key resolution of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) on promoting the use of Kiswahili and adopting it as one of the official languages of the Community.

The Council considered amendment of Article 137 of the EAC Treaty to include Kiswahili as one of the Official Languages of the Community and directed Partner States to formulate National Kiswahili Language Policies and enhance the use of Kiswahili in official domains as well as initiate the process of institutionalization of Kiswahili as one of the EAC Official Languages through the establishment of National Kiswahili Councils and National Kiswahili Associations.


In August 2016, EALA passed a Resolution to urge the Summit of EAC to amend the Treaty for the establishment of the East African Community to provide for Kiswahili as one of the official Languages of the Community.

In January 2017, the resolution sailed through at the 4th Meeting-5th Session of the 3rd Assembly held in Kampala,

Uganda during which, the lawmakers underscored the need to elevate Kiswahili as one of the official languages of EAC from its current status of lingua franca.

Article 119 of the EAC Treaty, provides for the development and promotion of indigenous languages especially Kiswahili as a lingua franca of the region. Kiswahili is not only recognized as a unifying language spoken by East Africans but it is rich in dialect and expression.

This therefore means that Kiswahili will soon be adopted as an official language within the Community as soon as the EAC Summit of Heads of State amend the treaty to accommodate the new resolution. After amendment, Partner States are expected to facilitate adoption of the language at the national level.

Adopting Kiswahili as the second official language within the region will therefore mean a step towards uniting the people of the region. It will also deepen and widen integration within the region. Embracing the language at the regional level will increase the participation of the people of East Africa in the affairs of the community. 

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