

***Sectoral Council to consider draft EAC Common Market Protocol***

**East African Community Headquarters, Arusha, Tanzania, 16 April 2009:** The 7th meeting of the EAC Sectoral Council on Legal and Judicial Affairs is currently going on at the Arusha International Conference Centre (AICC). The Meeting was convened to address several legal and judicial issues pertaining to the EAC regional integration and development process.

Among them are status of implementation of previous decisions made by the Council; draft EAC Common Market Protocol; the Status of Contributions to the EAC Budget by the Republics of Rwanda and Burundi; report of the High Level Task Force on the Amendment of the Treaty for the Establishment of East African Community; draft Procurement Manual for the East African Community; and the proposed Amendments to the East African Community Financial Rules and Regulations, 2006.

The Sectoral Council will also consider the draft Staff and Financial Rules for Lake Victoria Basin Commission; a proposal on the Establishment of a Sectoral Council on Environment and Natural Resources; draft Regulations on the Lake Victoria Transport Act, 2007; report of the East African Judicial Education Committee (EAJEC); the Protocol on the Establishment of the East African Kiswahili Commission; and the Protocol on the Establishment of the East African Science and Technology Commission (EASTECO).

The Meeting is being conducted through the following sessions: Session of Legislative Draftspersons from 16 to 18 April; Session of the Sectoral Committee on Legal and Judicial Affairs from 16 -20 April; Session of the Deputy Attorneys General/Solicitors General Permanent Secretaries from 21-22 April; and the Session of the Hon. Attorneys General / Hon. Ministers of Justice and Constitutional Affairs on 23-24 April, 2009.

The Sectoral Council is expected to consider the Report on the Status of Implementation of its previous decisions and give guidance on the way forward. The Council is also expected to consider the legal content of the draft EAC Common Market Protocol and recommend to the EAC Policy Organ; the Council of Ministers as appropriate.

The Sectoral Council is expected to give guidance on the status of contribution to the EAC Budget by the Republics of Rwanda and Burundi. At its 16th Meeting held on 13 September,

2008, the Sectoral Council was requested by the EAC Council of Ministers to determine the effective date when the Treaty rights and obligations for the Republic of Rwanda and the Republic of Burundi came into force following their joining of the East African Community in July 2007. The Sectoral Council was informed of the conflicting legal and political positions on this matter.

The Sectoral Council is expected to consider the legal contents of the proposed amendments of the Treaty; the proposed Amendments of the East African Community Financial Rules and Regulations, 2006; the draft EAC Procurement Manual; the Lake Victoria Basin Commission Staff and Financial Rules and Regulations and advise the Council of Ministers accordingly.

The Sectoral Council is also expected to consider the revised text of the Protocol on the Establishment of the East African Kiswahili Commission and the proposed Article in the Protocol on the East African Science and Technology Commission on the functions of the Governing Board and recommend to the Council of Ministers for its adoption.

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