

Presidents Jakaya Kikwete and Mwai Kibaki to launch the Arusha-Namanga-Athi River Road Construction Project on 28th April

East African Community Headquarters, Arusha, Tanzania, 17 April 2009: The 10th Ordinary Summit of the Heads of State of the East African Community is scheduled to take place on 29 April, 2009 at the Ngurdoto Mountain Lodge, Arusha, Tanzania. President Paul Kagame of Rwanda and current Chairperson of the Summit, President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete of the United Republic of Tanzania, President Pierre Nkurunziza of Burundi, President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya, and President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda will attend the Summit.

The 20th Extra-Ordinary meeting of the EAC Council of the Ministers will be held from 26-27 April 2009 at the Arusha International Conference Centre (AICC) to prepare for the Summit.

The 20th Extra-Ordinary Meeting of the Council of Ministers will be attended by the Ministers responsible for East African Community Affairs and such other Ministers of the Partner States as each Partner State shall determine. Among its functions, the Council promotes, monitors, and keeps under constant review the implementation of the programmes of the Community and ensures proper functioning of the regional organization

Also to attend both the Summit and the Council of Ministers meeting are Permanent Secretaries and Senior Government Officials responsible for various sectors involved in the East African regional integration; Diplomats and High Commissioners; as well as the Chief Executives of several regional and international organizations.

Among the items on the agenda that the 10th Ordinary Summit will consider are the Report of the Council of Ministers; the Report of the National Consultations on Fast Tracking the East African Political Federation in the Republics of Rwanda and Burundi; progress report on the EAC Common Market Negotiations; EAC position on the proposed African Union Government; swearing in of Hon. Justice James Ogoola Munange (Uganda) as Judge of the East African Court of Justice (EACJ); and appointment and swearing in of the new Deputy Secretaries General.

Meanwhile, President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete of the United Republic of Tanzania and President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya are to launch the Arusha-Namanga-Athi River Road Construction Project on 28 April 2009 at the road site some 20 kilometers on the Arusha-Namanga Road. President Paul Kagame and Chairperson of the EAC Summit, President Pierre Nkurunziza, President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, H.E Amani Abeid Karume of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, Dr. Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank, Madame Sadako Ogata, President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Ministers of Infrastructure and EAC Affairs, Mr. Reginald A. Mengi, Chairman of the East African Business Council, Ambassadors, High Commissioners, and other high profile dignitaries are expected to witness the launching of this EAC Road Project.

The Arusha – Namanga – Athi River road development project is part of the EAC Road Network Project Corridor No. 5 running from Tunduma in Tanzania to Moyale in Kenya. The construction of the project is being co- financed by the African Development Bank for the Kenya component and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency for the Tanzania component.

The two Agencies have provided jointly, a loan totaling USD 156.3 million to cover civil works and construction supervision. ADB is financing the Athi River – Namanga Section in Kenya for an amount of USD 93.1 million, while JICA is financing the Arusha – Namanga Section in Tanzania for a total of USD 63.2 million. The two Governments are providing counterpart funding to the tune of about USD 8 million to augment the loans.

Construction on the Athi River – Namanga Section (Kenya) commenced in November 2007, while on the Arusha – Namanga Section (Tanzania) works started in September 2008. Construction on the Kenyan side is expected to be completed by November 2010 and on the Tanzanian side by July 2011.

The road is of strategic importance to the region and forms part of the priority Corridor No. 5 of the EAC Regional Roads Network which spans from Tunduma in southern Tanzania to Moyale in northern Kenya, and onward to Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The designation of five priority corridors is a result of collaborative effort between the EAC, the Partner States and donors active in the region's transport sector.

The development of this road project will facilitate movement of traffic from Zambia, through Tanzania, Kenya to Ethiopia as well as Uganda and Sudan. The road will also enhance import / export traffic from the port of Mombasa, which is the more convenient port for Northern Tanzania on account of distance. The road is also part of the tourist circuit serving the national parks of Amboseli and Tsavo in Kenya and Manyara, Ngorongoro and Kilimanjaro in Tanzania.

The significance of the road as a regional road network is in line with the development priorities

of the two Governments and the African Development Bank's strategy for support to multinational programs which enhance regional integration among African states.

The Arusha – Namanga section in Tanzania is 105 km long and traverses flat to rolling terrain, including the Loliondo game control area. It was constructed to bitumen standard in 1967. The road is narrow (about 5.5m on average) and deformed. Average speed is about 70 km/hr. Traffic on the Arusha side is about 2,800 vehicles per day and decreases to 450 vehicles per day towards Namanga. The road has exceeded its design life and was urgently due for reconstruction.

The Namanga – Athi River section in Kenya is 135 km long in rolling terrain. Having received recent interventions (re-carpeting in 1995), the section is fairer but is still characterized by deformations and potholes. The section sustains quite heavy loading from the cement manufacturing and building industries in Athi River and Nairobi. Average speed is about 80 km/hr. Traffic is about 7,000 vehicles per day in Athi River and 1,000 vehicles per day in Namanga. Most of the traffic around Namanga branch off to the Amboseli Game Park.

*NB: Journalists intending to cover both the Summit and the Council of Ministers meeting are advised to get accreditation from the EAC Media Centre located within the Directorate of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs on 2nd Floor Ngorongoro Wing, Arusha International Conference Center. Contacts: mediacentre@eachq.org or Steve Machage m achage@eachq.org
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