



**EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY**  
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## EAC Joint Sectoral Council on Defence, Inter-State Security and Foreign Policy Coordination adopts framework involving youth in peace and security

The East African Community Joint Sectoral Council on Inter-State Security and Foreign Policy Coordination has adopted a framework for establishing a Regional Youth Peace and Security Platform.

The Joint Sectoral Council further directed the EAC Secretariat and Partner States to operationalize the platform and develop a Peace and Security communication strategy to facilitate awareness creation on the existing Peace and Security structures and promote coordinated and meaningful participation of youths at all levels in implementing the platform.

The Sectoral Council also adopted the Draft EAC Strategy and Implementation Plan for Youth Peace and Security (2021-2026).

The Ministers directed the Secretariat to undertake a baseline survey to establish the current state of the youth engagement and participation in the Peace and Security Matters in the Region, the gaps and challenges thereof.

In adopting the Draft Strategy, the Ministers observed that document had already received inputs from Partner States that have enriched the draft Youth Peace and Security

The Ministers observed that there was a need to popularise the EAC Youth Peace and Security Instruments and initiatives with key stakeholders in the region, adding that there was also need to have a consistent definition of the youth with international, continental and regional instruments.

The meeting further noted that there was need to establish a baseline on youth participation in EAC Peace and Security Activities.

The Sectoral Council also approved the **Draft Enabling institutional structure to support the Council of Ministers on Peace and Security matters** and referred the same for consideration by the Sectoral Council on Legal and Judicial Affairs for legal input in line with Decision 33 of the 33rd Meeting of the Council of Ministers.

While approving the Draft Enabling Institution Framework, the Ministers observed that the **Protocol on Peace and Security**, which operationalises the Directorate of Peace and Security, had been ratified by all Partner States hence the need to recruit staff under the Directorate of Peace and Security to enhance coordination of the sectors.

## EAC Secretariat to prioritise strengthening Public-Private Partnerships in efforts to steer joint investment in vaccine manufacturing



Kenyan private sector players have expressed optimism in making steps towards recovery of Covid-19, following a commitment by the East African Community Secretariat to prioritise strengthening public-private sector partnerships between the private sector in the region and EAC Partner States governments, to jointly invest in vaccine manufacturing in the region.

The EAC Secretary General, Hon. Dr. Peter Mathuki, said that there was need for a coordinated approach in handling COVID-19 in the region and emphasized on the need for local production of vaccines.

“EAC is working on strengthening partnerships between the private sector and EAC Partner States’ governments, to jointly establish investment in vaccine manufacturing, to ensure the region can produce and avail vaccines to East Africans. Truck drivers transporting goods across the region should also be included among the priority groups who need to be vaccinated,” Dr. Mathuki said.

Speaking during a CEO roundtable breakfast meeting organised by the East African Business Council (EABC), in Nairobi, Kenya, Dr. Mathuki also noted that the EAC Secretariat is working on reviewing the Treaty for the establishment of the EAC.

The Secretary General further disclosed that the

Community was working on developing a harmonized framework for a collective response by Partner States to COVID-19 in the region through the EABC and EAC Technical Working Group (TWG) launched in July, 2021.

On his part, Hon. Adan Mohamed, the Chairperson of the EAC Council of Ministers and Kenya’s Cabinet Secretary for EAC and Regional Development, reaffirmed his commitment to improving the business climate in all EAC Partner States through stronger Public-Private Dialogues (PPD).

“We are also currently in the process of building a Ksh.5 billion cross border market at the Kenya-Uganda border which is set to increase cross border trade,” said Mr. Mohamed.

The EAC Director General for Customs and Trade, Mr. Kenneth Bagamuhunda, said that the EAC was developing an e-Commerce strategy and a centralized platform for trade facilitation agencies in order to ease intra-EAC trade.

The meeting held under the theme ‘Enhancing a Private Sector-led Integration & Emerging Opportunities in East Africa’ was attended by industry captains from the EABC, Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) and the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM).



## EAC Secretary General urges Partner States' Governments to invest in Industrial Parks to improve the region's competitiveness



The East African Community (EAC) Secretary General, Hon. Dr. Peter Mathuki, has urged EAC Partner States' governments to invest in industrial parks and infrastructure to improve the competitiveness of the region and increase Intra-EAC trade.

Speaking during the opening session of the East Africa Trade and Industrialization Week (EATIW 2021), held at the Julius Nyerere Convention Centre, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Dr. Mathuki urged EAC Partner States' governments to enhance industrial productivity and strengthen institutional frameworks and policies to accelerate economic growth in the region.



"Currently, manufacturing contributes to GDP a meagre 8.9%. To achieve the set target of 25% in 2032, there is a need for diversification of the manufacturing base and raising local value-added content resource-based exports," he said.

The Secretary General called for promotion of rural industrialization through an agricultural development led industrialization strategy and strengthening of research, technology and innovation capabilities of all EAC Partner States, to foster structural

The East African Trade & industrialization week brings together business operators, policy makers, civil society leaders, international and UN organization leaders, academia from all avenues to address challenges and propose solutions to the changing role of business in the region and the continent.



transformation of the manufacturing sector and industrial upgrading.

As a strategy towards economic recovery amid Covid-19 in the region, Dr. Mathuki called upon EAC Partner States Governments to offer long-term stimulus packages for private sector development and sector-specific incentives for the established regional value chains such as cotton, textile and apparel, leather livestock and Agro-processing.

“Instead of competing, EAC Partner States need to complement each other. Harnessing our comparative advantage by collectively improving infrastructure connectivity will fast-track regional development,” Dr. Mathuki added.

The Secretary General also reaffirmed EAC’s commitment to finalize the Common External Tariff (CET) before the end of 2021.

“The EAC is committed to finalising the Common External Tariff (CET) by the end of the year, in a move set to promote the Community’s domestic industries & safeguard the region from international shocks,” he said.

The 38th Meeting of the Sectoral Council of Ministers on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (SCTIFI), which was held on 26th May 2021, adopted a four-band CET structure (0%, 10% and 25%).

The Secretary General said emphasised the need for EAC Partner States Governments to speed up the finalisation and implementation of EAC Regulations on liberalisation of air transport services, in a move set to lower flight costs and in turn reduce the cost of doing business in the region.

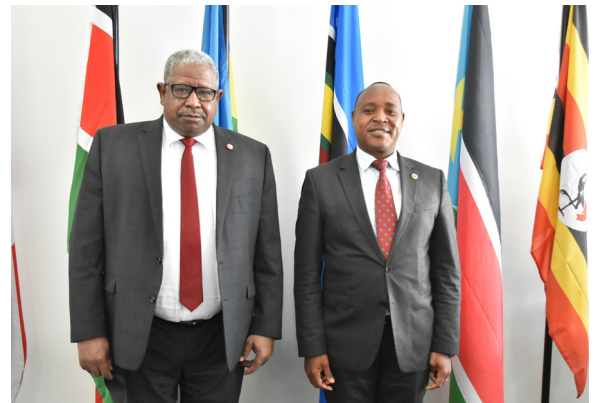
“With only about 2% of East Africans vaccinated, it is critical that the private sector leads deliberate public campaigns on Covid-19 vaccination and jointly to enhance EAC as an investment destination,” Dr. Mathuki said.

On his part, Mr. David Osiany, Chief Administrative Secretary, Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development, Republic of Kenya, called for consistent public-private sector dialogues and collaboration to develop policies corresponding with the current business environment.

In his remarks, Hon. Prof. Kitila Mkumbo, Minister for Industry and Trade, United Republic of Tanzania called for joint investment by EAC Governments and the Private sector in skills development.

“Only 50% of our workforce are employable in the current job market. The public-private sector should come up with a strategy on skills development to fill this gap,” said Prof. Mkumbo.

# EAC and RECSA to enhance cooperation on cross-border security matters



The Executive Secretary of the Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, Horn of Africa and Bordering States (RECSA), Lt Gen Badreldin Elamin, on Thursday paid a courtesy call on the EAC Secretary General, Hon. (Dr.) Peter Mathuki at the EAC Headquarters in Arusha, Tanzania.

The two officials discussed several issues touching on regional peace and security including the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol for the prevention, control and reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes and the Horn of Africa.

The Secretary General commended RECSA for their commitment in preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit manufacturing of, trafficking in, possession and use of small arms and light weapons in the sub-region.

“RECSA plays a very important role in the EAC regional integration agenda, for integration will never work if there are no systems in place to ensure there is peace and security for the people of the region,” said Dr. Mathuki.

Dr. Mathuki reaffirmed the EAC’s commitment to enhancing cooperation between the EAC and RECSA, noting the need for the two institutions to develop

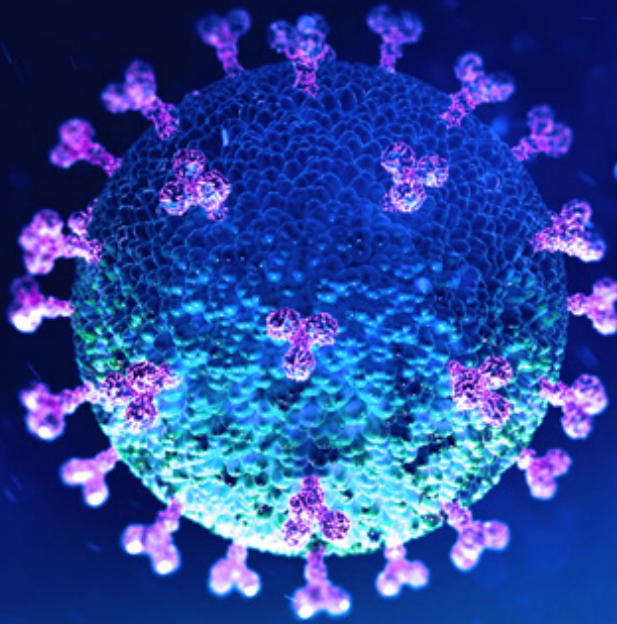
a cooperation framework that will guide the joint implementation of activities in the region.

On his part, Lt Gen Badreldin Elamin hailed the long standing partnership between the EAC and RECSA in the peace and security sector, which he said was a key enabler to the integration process in East Africa.

The Executive Secretary noted the need for collaboration in implementing programmes that address cross-border as well as pre- and post-election security challenges in the region.

The EAC-RECSA cooperation framework is set to provide for areas of cooperation on matters of peace and security in the region, including initiatives focused on disarming the mindset, ensuring compliance to instruments governing peace and security as well as establishment of information sharing mechanisms that will facilitate rapid and timely response to cross-border threats.

The EAC and RECSA partnership has implemented various programmes targeting illicit small arms and light weapons in the past including: a regional standard firearms marking system that can easily identify and trace fire arms; the destruction of small arms and light weapons in post-conflict societies; as well as voluntary civilian disarmament initiatives.



## **EAC Secretary General pushes for a coordinated approach among Partner States in countering Covid-19 Pandemic**

The East African Community (EAC) Secretary General, Hon. (Dr.) Peter Mathuki, has called for a coordinated approach among EAC Partner States in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Hon. Mathuki called for the harmonization of COVID-19 testing charges and quarantine administrative procedures across the region.

Dr. Mathuki further pushed for the strengthening of public-private sector cooperation for joint investment in the manufacturing COVID-19 vaccines.

The Secretary General, however, noted that there was immense hope in the horizon with all Partner States having embarked on national vaccination drives, adding that more work needs to be done to increase vaccination levels in the region that currently stand at 2% vis-à-vis 70% in other parts of the world.

Dr. Mathuki urged East Africans to turn out in their numbers for the job saying that without vaccination, people will fear visiting the region and critical service sectors and especially tourism would continue to suffer.

Dr. Mathuki said that the EAC would continue pushing for the adoption by Partner States of the EAC Pass, which integrates all EAC Partner States' negative test

results for COVID-19 and those already vaccinated to ensure safe and seamless travel across the region.

The SG disclosed that the EAC Adhoc Regional Coordination Committee, which has since 2020 been supporting the EAC Partner States through interventions including supporting testing capacity, provision of laboratory supplies, test kits and personal protective equipment, policy guidance and training of key personnel, among other steps, would continue with its work until the pandemic was fully contained.

The EAC Adhoc Regional Coordination Committee for COVID has been steering the regional response activities against the pandemic including coordination of policy organ meetings and mobilization of resources.

Hon. (Dr.) Mathuki was speaking during the SG's First 100 Days Forum that focused on the highlights, challenges and achievements since he assumed office on 27th April, 2021. The forum drew 267 participants including Permanent/Principal Secretaries from EAC Partner States' Ministries of EAC Affairs, Development Partners, Members of the Diplomatic Community, Private Sector, Civil Society, Staff of EAC Organs and Institutions, and the Media.



Dr. Mathuki disclosed that he had already held consultations with the members of the Summit of Heads of State to seek their views on how the Community should be run.

“The Heads of State reiterated that the Community should be steered in the spirit of the EAC Treaty that puts emphasis on a people-centred, market driven and private sector led integration process. These, to accelerate regional growth, create wealth and reduce poverty in the region,” he said.

“They further emphasised the need to take the EAC integration to the people at the grassroots, as they are the actual owners of the process,” said the Secretary General.

On the Customs Union and Common Market pillars, Dr. Mathuki disclosed that the 38th Meeting of the Sectoral Council of Ministers on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (SCTIFI), which was held on 26th May, 2021, had adopted a four-band CET structure (0%, 10% and 25%). The SG said that it was anticipated that an agreement on a rate that is above 25% shall be concluded before the end of 2021.

On increasing private sector participation in the integration process, Dr. Mathuki said that he had held consultative meetings with the business community in all EAC Partner States to grasp issues hampering the growth of the private sector in the region.

“The issues include Non-Tariff Barriers, implementation of trade policies and adoption of a regional coordinated approach in handling Covid-19,” said the SG.

Dr. Mathuki said that the Secretariat had further provided leadership in the formation of a Private Sector Technical Working Group (TWG) between the EAC and EABC, adding that the role of the TWG would be to promote private sector development in the region.

“The TWG’s specific mandate is to provide a platform for receiving and addressing concerns raised by the business community. It is also tasked with developing a harmonized framework for a collective response by Partner States to COVID-19 in the region, among other things,” said Dr. Mathuki.

The Secretary General hailed the United Republic of Tanzania and the Republic of Burundi who recently launched their own Trade Information Portals (TIPs), which would map out all their imports, exports and transit procedures, fees and time.

“It is anticipated that the TIPs will provide information for merchants seeking to do business across the region,” said the SG.

Dr. Mathuki said that intra-EAC trade had increased significantly over the past three months and singled out the Namanga border post where he said trade between Kenya and Tanzania had risen six-fold. He said that intra-EAC trade currently stands at less than 15% as compared to 70% within the EU and gave an assurance that the Community would try to raise it over the next five years.

On progress towards the full implementation of the EAC Roaming Framework, Dr. Mathuki reiterated the announcement by Tanzania that it was currently reviewing its legal framework and would be joining the One Network area (ONA) framework on 30th September, 2021.

“The Republic of Burundi has given an assurance that it will implement the One Network Area by 30th June, 2022. Full implementation of the EAC One Network Area is expected to lower the cost of communication

in the region and spur intra-regional trade through harmonization of roaming tariffs," he said.

On the East African Monetary Union, the third pillar of the integration, Dr. Mathuki disclosed that the East African Monetary Institute Act had taken effect on 1st July, 2021 and that the EAC Secretariat had invited interested Partner States to submit proposals or applications to host the EAMI.

"Following this invitation, five EAC Partner States submitted their applications to host the Institute. In line with the EAC procedures, the Secretariat is now in the process of constituting a Verification Committee to verify the said applications, including the suitability of the location and facilities being offered to host the EAMI," said the SG.

On the EAC Political Confederation, which is the fourth and ultimate stage in the integration, National consultations for the EAC Political Confederation have so far been held for the Republics of Burundi and the Republic of Rwanda. Plans are at an advanced stage to hold similar consultations in the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Rwanda, the Republic of Kenya and the Republic of South Sudan.

On recruitment to 49 vacant positions within the EAC that had been advertised earlier this year, Dr. Mathuki said that the Community had received more than 20,000 applications for the positions, noting that the deluge of applicants was a demonstration of the eagerness of East Africans to serve in the Community.

The Secretary General said that the profiling and shortlisting of candidates had already been completed, adding that the Partner States through the Council of Ministers had already resolved outstanding issues that had been blocking the recruitment.

Dr. Mathuki further said that the EAC Sectoral Council on Tourism and Wildlife Management had also met after a while and had already approved the EAC Regional COVID-19 Tourism Recovery Plan, which is set to help the tourism sector in the region recover from the impact of COVID-19.

On the anticipated entry of the Democratic Republic of Congo into the EAC, Dr. Mathuki disclosed that the Verification Mission that was in Kinshasa from 25th June to 5th July, 2021 had since compiled its report which would be presented to the Council of Ministers as per EAC Procedures for admitting new members into the Community.

"The entry of DRC will be a game-changer in as far as intra-regional trade in East Africa is concerned. In 2018, for instance, the value of imported goods into the DRC stood at \$7.4 billion. From this, the value of EAC exports to the DRC stood at 855.4 million dollars only, which represents just 11.5 % of DRC imports," he said.

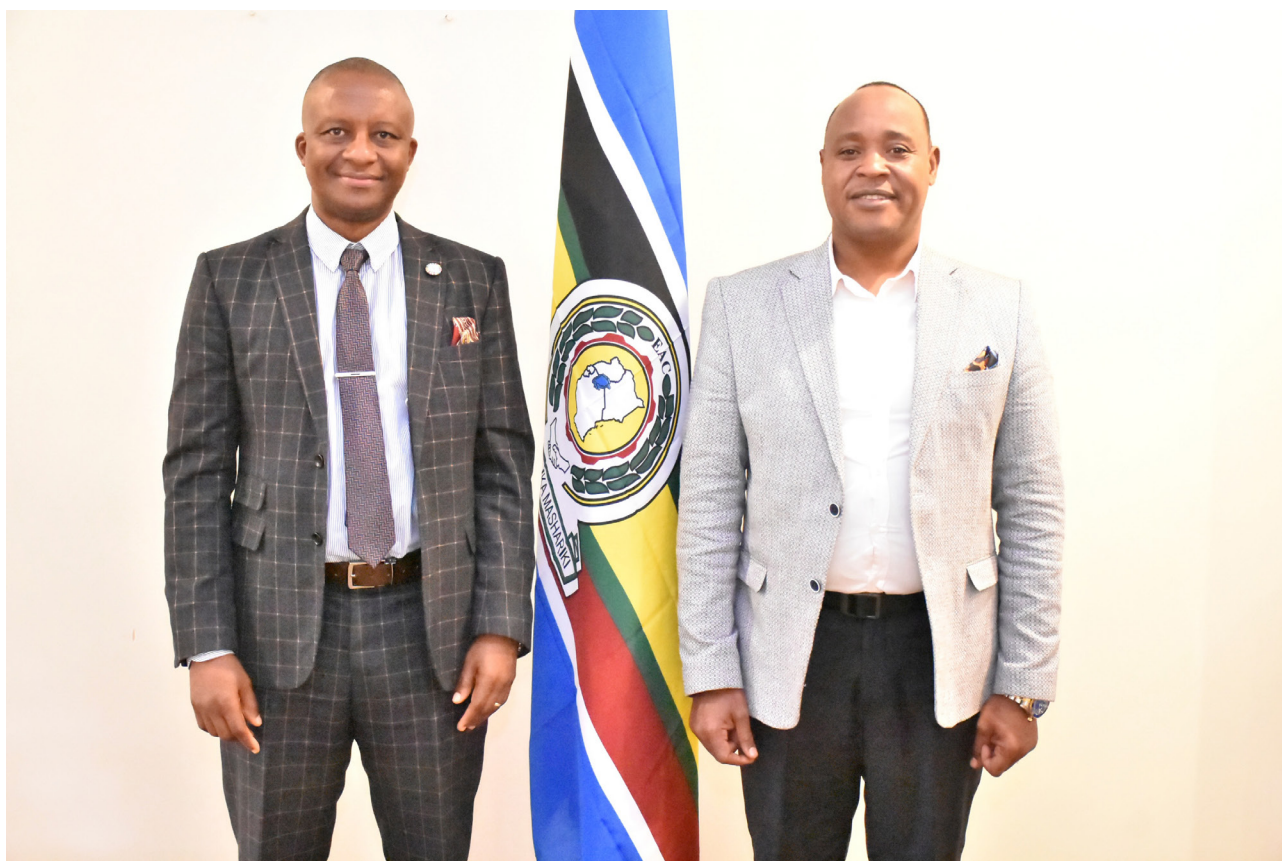
"In terms of market control, China has the largest share of the DRC market with imports from China having a share of 31.2 %; South Africa follows at 15.8% and Zambia takes third position at 13%," said Dr. Mathuki, adding that the entry of DRC into the EAC would expand the bloc's market to almost 300 million people, which would be highly competitive and attractive at a global level.

On revitalization of relations with Development Partners, Dr. Mathuki disclosed that over the last 100 days, he had held consultative meetings with various development partners to explore areas of supporting the bloc's programmes and projects, adding that development partners had reaffirmed their commitment to working with the EAC.

On improving working relations between the EAC Organs and Institutions, Dr. Mathuki said that the EAC Organs and Institutions were now working harmoniously and were committed to performing their roles in line with their objectives as set out in the Treaty.

On renewing relations with the Civil Society, the Secretary General said that he had already held discussions with the Chairman of the East African Civil Society Organizations' Forum (EACSO) on modalities to revive the EAC SG forum to ensure the active participation of the civil society in the integration.

## UNIDO Representative reaffirms his Organisation's commitment to Industrialisation in the EAC



The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) Representative to Tanzania, Mauritius and the EAC, Dr. Stephen Bainous Kargbo, on Friday paid a courtesy call on the EAC Secretary General, Hon. (Dr.) Peter Mathuki in Arusha, Tanzania.

Welcoming his guest, the Secretary General noted the important role UNIDO had played over the years in supporting the EAC's industrialisation efforts.

"UNIDO's contribution to the industrialization efforts in the region remain unsurpassed," said Dr. Mathuki.

Dr. Mathuki said that the EAC Heads of State recognise that for socio-economic development to be sustainable, the EAC region must prioritise industrialisation.

"The need for the region to prioritise industrialisation has been stressed upon by our Heads of State. We now need leaders and technocrats in the region to think of a collective regional strategy to respond to unemployment including expanding the manufacturing sector's capacity and promoting youth entrepreneurs," said the Secretary General.

The Secretary General decried the huge amount of resources that the Community is losing in exporting raw materials, leading to the loss of jobs and investment opportunities. He reiterated the need for the region to work together in developing the manufacturing sector rather than competing against each other.



“We must develop our regional value chains, but in so doing, we must establish our comparative advantages, identifying who is best fitted to do what, and thereby establishing complementarity in the region,” he said.

On his part, the UNIDO representative said that of the EAC-UNIDO partnership has been instrumental in supporting and tracking industrial development in the region. “UNIDO will continue to play its role by supporting relevant institutions in capacity building activities for strengthening industrial policy making capacities,” said Dr. Kargbo.

The EAC-UNIDO ‘Strengthening Capacities for Industrial Formulation and Implementation in the East African Community’ Programme’ enhanced the region’s capacity to: design, manage and implement an industrial policy and collect industrial statistics and data. Further to this, the programme also strengthened the institutional capacity of the EAC Secretariat, EAC Partner States’ governments and key private sector stakeholders.

On the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR), Dr. Kargbo said that the quality of industrial policies would be key in helping the region to put the necessary building blocks in place to prepare for 4IR, through linking EAC industries with international partners, arriving at shared solutions, and by providing up-to-date knowledge on industrial diagnosis and policymaking.

“We must have clear goals in mind for our industrial transitions: what we should achieve, what we can achieve, and how we should go about it,” said the UNIDO Representative.

On Pharmaceutical Manufacturing, Dr. Kargbo disclosed that in 2011, UNIDO and the African Union Commission (AUC) had agreed to a partnership for the accelerated implementation of the Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan for Africa (PMPA).

“This programme was initiated owing to the fact that Africa needed to invest in home-produced pharmaceutical products and therefore increasing access to essential medicines and enhancing export opportunities,” said Dr. Kargbo.

It is against this backdrop that the EAC Regional Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Plan of Action (EAC-RPM-POA) 2012–2016 and 2017-2027 were developed to serve as a roadmap to guide the EAC towards building an efficient and effective regional pharmaceutical manufacturing industry.

The two officials were in agreement that with the correct policies already in place, the Covid-19 pandemic provides a platform for the EAC Partner States to look into pharmaceutical manufacturing as a priority.

“We need to develop a strategy on how we can produce a Covid-19 vaccine as a region,” said Dr. Mathuki, adding that this would enable the region to fast-track the Covid-19 vaccination efforts and thereby reopen the region to key socio-economic activities such as trade and tourism.

# EAC inks Joint Action Plan with India in readiness for Mutual Recognition Agreement to facilitate faster clearance times for Accredited Traders



Traders from the East African Community (EAC) stand to benefit from faster clearance of their goods and lower costs of running their business following the signing of a Joint Action Plan between the EAC and the Government of India

The Joint Action Plan will pave the way for a full Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) between the two parties.

The MRA once realised, will benefit companies under the Authorised Economic Operators (AEO) Programme run by the EAC Partner States under the coordination of the EAC Secretariat since 2008.

Speaking on behalf of the Government of India, the Chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), Mr. M. Ajit Kumar, emphasized the crucial role of having in place a robust, safe and largely digitized system, on one hand, and a pool of trusted and validated trading entities on the other hand.

Mr. Kumar said that a fully digitized system and valid trading entities would guarantee security in the entire supply chain in trading across borders, adding that an AEO-MRA agreement was one such endeavour.

The selection of India as an MRA partner was based on the principle of mutual recognition and the fairly steady trade between the EAC and India over the past five years (2014 - 2018), before Covid-19 disruptions, which cumulatively amounted to over \$30 billion.

This timely MRA will enable facilitation of EAC traders under the AEO Programme while in India and vice versa, enabling fast clearance of their goods and as a result savings in costs and time. Currently, there are 135 AEOs under the EAC Regional AEO programme eligible for facilitation in any part of the EAC where they are conducting business.

Speaking at the virtual signing ceremony, the EAC Director General for Customs and Trade, Mr. Kenneth Bagamuhunda said that the MRA, once finalised and implemented, would have a big impact on the flow and growth of trade between East Africa and India.

“Besides the optimism, however, we are aware that the path to an MRA is usually lengthy, meticulous and tedious. The signing of the Joint Action Plan which we are doing today, signals an important milestone in this journey that we have started, and we are delighted to undertake it,” said Mr. Bagamuhunda.

The AEO programme is a concept derived from the World Customs Organisation (WCO) SAFE Framework of Standards, an instrument that was adopted by the WCO Council in 2005 to enhance facilitation and security of global trade.

It works on the principle of compliance, trust and partnership whereby, economic operators that demonstrate compliance with Customs supply chain security standards, are recognised as low-risk clients with whom Customs enters into a partnership arrangement.

One of the key benefits of being an AEO is, reduced Customs controls when transacting business with Customs Authorities and recognition as a low-risk and reliable business partner by other traders and government agencies.

Further to saving trading costs and time, the MRA between the EAC and India is set to foster growth in sustainable trade between the two trade partners while eliminating non-tariff barriers and enhancing cooperation between the Customs administrations of EAC and India.

In attendance at the virtual signing of Joint Action Plan were all the Commissioners of Customs in the Partner States, AEO National Project Managers and officials from the EAC Secretariat.



**SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION CONFERENCE**  
20<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021

THE 2<sup>nd</sup> EAC SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION CONFERENCE

**Save the Date**

“The Role of Science, Technology and Innovation in EAC Regional Integration and Socio-Economic Development in the phase of Covid-19 Pandemic”

<https://sticonference.easteco.org>

## Preparations in high gear for the 2nd EAC Regional Science, Technology and Innovation hybrid Conference

The 2nd East African Community Regional Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Conference is set to be held from 20th to 22nd October, 2021 under the theme: “The Role of Science, Technology and Innovation in EAC Regional Integration and Socio-Economic Development in the phase of Covid-19 Pandemic.”

The objective of the 2nd EAC Regional STI Conference is to provide a platform for information sharing and networking among scientists, technologists, innovators and industrialists from a wide range of sectors including the academia, the industry, the public and the private sector.

The conference is geared towards providing a platform for the players in the STI and stakeholders in the EAC and beyond to share their experiences and results within the knowledge and technology generation, translation and transfer chain.

The event will be held in a hybrid format through virtual and face-to-face platforms. The East African Science and Technology Commission (EASTECO), an institution of the East African Community based in Kigali, Rwanda, is coordinating the three-day conference in partnership with a Regional Organizing Committee and a Regional Technical Committee.

EASTECO is organizing the 2nd STI Conference with support and in collaboration with stakeholders of STI in the region and globally, including the Inter-University Council of East Africa (IUCEA), the African Union Commission (AUC), Ministries responsible for STI, National Councils/Commissions of Science and Technology, among other stakeholders.

It is anticipated that the conference will: stimulate the establishment and strengthening of strategic alliances among stakeholders to promote the generation; dissemination and translation of research findings; building collaborations and networks; and harness partnerships among stakeholders in the region.

The 2021 edition ultimately envisions enhanced sharing of research findings, collaboration and linkages through conference presentations, a ministerial roundtable, exhibitions and publication for regional integration and socioeconomic development.

An Exhibition and Trade fair will also feature at the event where Academia, Public and Private organizations will interact as well as showcase their services or products. These include research institutions, STI and academic practitioners, industries, NGO's, CSO's, line Ministries, EAC Secretariat, international organizations among others.

For further information, please visit: <https://sticonference.easteco.org/>

# EAC Secretary General urges private sector to take advantage of bilateral engagements between Partner States to unlock trade barriers



The East African Community Secretary General, Hon. (Dr.) Peter Mathuki, is urging the private sector to take advantage of the ongoing bilateral engagements between Partner States, to promptly resolve trade disputes so as to increase trade among EAC Partner States.

Hon. (Dr.) Mathuki further called upon the private sector to promptly harmonise their positions on trade agreements at the national level before engaging their counterparts in other Partner States to fast track trade deliberations.

“Regular consultations and dialogues within the national private sector bodies, is critical in building consensus within a Partner State. Divergent positions

within a country will only delay in concluding trade deliberations at the regional level, further delaying implementation of regional trade policies,” said Dr. Mathuki.

Speaking during a CEOs engagement roundtable with business leaders in Arusha, that was convened by the East African Business Council (EABC), Dr. Mathuki called upon the business community to push for Public-Private Partnerships, citing the increased trade flows between Kenya and Tanzania, resulting from public and private bilateral dialogues in the recent months.

The SG attributed the significant increase in trade to bilateral meetings by the Heads of State of the



United Republic of Tanzania and the Republic of Kenya in May 2021.

According to data from the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) published by the Central Bank of Kenya, Kenya's imports from Tanzania grew by 70% from January 2021 to June 2021, compared to the same period last year. The statistics indicate that the value of goods ordered by Kenya from Tanzania stood at US\$167.5 million in the stated period. The same data shows that Kenya's export to Tanzania dipped by 21.39% (US\$158 million), resulting in a rare deficit of US\$9.3 million.

Further, the Secretary General noted the trade volumes at the Namanga border increased sixfold last month, compared to a similar period last year.

Dr. Mathuki urged the private sector to drive the trade and investment agenda by establishing partnerships with their Governments to fast track infrastructure development.

"Private sector needs to move beyond advocacy and liaise with the Government in providing solutions to some of the trade issues being faced across EAC Partner States," he said.

The Secretary General also highlighted the urgent need for the private sector to improve the

competitiveness of their firms, by embracing ICT, to promote digital trade, to compete with other regions that are fully automated.

To promote a favourable business environment, the SG also called upon the Tanzania private sector to take a lead role in engaging the government to roll out vaccination programs in the country.

"A region that is vaccinated will provide an attractive ground for tourism and also attract and retain investors. The Tanzanian private sector needs to also implore citizens to be open to vaccination, as a strategy for economic recovery," he said.

On improving cross border trade, Dr. Mathuki said that the EAC Secretariat was working on deploying a 24 hour working system at the border, among all Partner States and fully integrating the One Stop Border Post systems.

In addition, the Secretary General also reaffirmed his commitment to pushing for the finalization of the comprehensive review of EAC Common External Tariff, harmonization of domestic taxes in EAC (excise taxes, value-added taxes & income taxes), elimination of Non-Tariff Barriers in the region and activation of the EAC disputes settlement mechanism among others.

# EAC hosts workshop on enhancing participation of women in African Continental Free Trade Area



The East African Community (EAC) hosted a two-day virtual workshop aimed at enhancing the participation of women in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Speaking during the opening session of the workshop, the EAC Deputy Secretary General in charge of the Productive and Social Sectors, Hon. Christophe Bazivamo, said that traders in Africa especially women, youth and SMEs face significant challenges when attempting to benefit from multilateral and regional trade agreements as many trade agreements do not include their specific needs and concerns.

Hon. Bazivamo, who represented the EAC Secretary General, said that the goal of the EAC was to ensure that women in the region were fully equipped and capable of accessing and exploiting the numerous opportunities and benefits that accrue from the AfCFTA initiative, adding that the continental free trade area provides significant business opportunities for the region.

“In EAC, the AfCFTA will allow our people to access a large continental market and increase EAC export to African countries outside the region. It will also improve movement of people across Africa, advance trade and development aspirations and ultimately put the region in a better position to trade more with the rest of the world,” said Hon. Bazivamo.

The Deputy Secretary General disclosed that the EAC had initiated a number of steps towards the implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement.

“We have now almost finalized the submission of our tariff offers which conform to the agreed modalities in addition to the schedules of liberalization of trade in services. We have also prepared a draft strategy for the implementation of the Agreement, which takes into account the need for capacity building. It is presently under consideration by the Partner States,” said Hon. Bazivamo.

“Further, we are also fully involved in negotiations on the outstanding areas such as Rules of Origin,

Trade in services as well as the phase II issues on investment, competition, intellectual property rights and e-commerce," he added.

On his part, the EAC Director General for Customs and Trade, Mr. Kenneth Bagamuhunda, said that women own approximately 40% of businesses in the EAC region.

Mr. Bagamuhunda, however, noted that women traders face various challenges including limited market knowledge, low access to capital and credit, limited access to information, limiting cultural practices, attitudes and beliefs and low levels of education.

Mr. Bagamuhunda said that the expectations of the EAC were that AfCFTA would result in, among other things, lowering of business costs, promote local content and provide a platform for settlement of disputes.

The DG said that EAC would leverage on its existing trade environment to promote women's participation in the AfCFTA, namely: regional customs and trade instruments; interconnectivity of systems including customs and other border clearance agencies; One Stop Border Posts; national Trade Information Portals; simplified trade regimes; trade exhibitions and symposia, and; expansion of the EAC especially the anticipated admission of DRC into the Community.

DG Bagamuhunda said that the EAC was currently operationalising a framework for affirmative trade development through the digitalization of markets, information dissemination, showcasing the region's products and market opportunities, and the transitioning of the dominance of women in the informal sector to the formal sector.

Speaking at the workshop, Ms. Godje Bialluch, the EAC-GIZ Cluster Coordinator, said that the German Development Cooperation (GIZ) supports the African Union, Regional Economic Communities such as the EAC as well as individual Member States in AfCFTA processes.

"This includes stakeholder engagements to ensure that the private sector and especially women are participating in and contribute to the AfCFTA processes," said Ms. Bialluch.

Ms. Bialluch hailed the EAC Secretariat for taking positive steps in the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women in the region, for instance, by adopting the EAC Gender Policy in 2018, adding that GIZ, adding that her organisation was now taking the next step towards gender mainstreaming in the AfCFTA.

Ms. Bialluch observed that there had been considerable progress in the EAC region on the AfCFTA with input from GIZ.

"So far, a joint offer for Trade in Goods and an initial offer for Trade in Service have been developed and submitted to the AU Commission. Capacity building in EAC Partner States with regards to the AfCFTA has been facilitated on a request basis," said Ms. Bialluch.

She disclosed that GIZ was currently planning to support non-state actors in two lighthouse projects on AfCFTA.

"Both shall strengthen commitments in EAC Partner States to incorporate gender considerations in the implementation of national trade policies to correspond with the AfCFTA," she said.

Ms. Bialluch said that the main activities in these projects would be to conduct a gender analysis of regional but also of national trade policies, to create awareness and build capacity of women, and to provide policy advocacy for addressing structural barriers to women's cross border trade.





## **EAC implements sanitation project to prevent and tackle infectious diseases**

The EAC Secretariat in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is implementing a project on water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) that will strengthen the capacity of Partner States to prevent and address infectious diseases at hot spot areas in the region.

“We have secured EUR 1.5 million from the German Government for the project. The project aims at increasing awareness and enhancing health and hygiene protective behaviours and practices to prevent and respond to the spread of infectious diseases including COVID-19,” says EAC Deputy Secretary General in charge of Productive and Social Sectors Hon. Christophe Bazivamo.

The project targets high-risk groups and areas in the six EAC Partner States, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda that include cross border communities, communities along transport and water ways corridors, urban fragile communities, truck drivers, boda-boda, taxi drivers and migrants. It also includes community leaders and local authorities such as border officials dealing with customs, immigration and port health. The project is expected to reach more than 1 million people with health and hygiene promotion initiatives and install around 19 fixed handwashing facilities at selected areas in the respective countries.

The project, which will be undertaken in close cooperation with Partner States, will contribute to the implementation of the EAC COVID-19 Response Plan (2020), the IOM COVID-19 Strategic Response and Recovery Plan launched in April 2021 and health relevant regional plans. It will also contribute to the achievement of the WHO WASH Strategy and the regional IOM migration strategy for the East and Horn of Africa addressing the health component.

“The collaboration with EAC is placed within a memorandum of understanding between IOM and EAC and aims at improve migration management in the region,” said IOM’s Regional Director for East and Horn of Africa Mohammed Abdiker.

Preparations started in June 2021 in close collaboration between EAC and IOM at regional and country level and in July the team started collecting baseline data from households, Points of Entry and health facilities along selected borders and communities to guide field operation. The construction of the handwashing facilities and the health and hygiene awareness campaign will start in late August 2021. The project runs until December 2021 and the final completion report will be ready by January 2022.

Funds for the Programme have been provided by the German Government through the Support to Pandemic Preparedness (PanPrep) project, which is implemented through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

The East African Community (EAC) region has experienced communicable, and water borne diseases outbreaks in the past and is still at risk of future ones. In addition to the COVID 19 global pandemic, the EAC has experienced other preventable outbreaks including Cholera, Measles, Rift Valley Fever (RVF), Yellow Fever, Crimean-Congo Hemorrhagic Fever (CCHF) and E. Coli infections over the past five years alone. Due to the high human mobility in the region, the communities at the borders and along the transport corridors are continuously exposed to communicable diseases.

## Eighteen TVET Lecturers selected for Postgraduate training under EASTRIP China TVET Scholarship



Eighteen lecturers from Technical Vocational Education and Training Institutes (RFTIs) in Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania have been awarded scholarships to pursue their postgraduate studies at top Universities in China.

The Lecturers were selected from 16 Regional Flagship TVET Institutes (RFTIs) supported by the World Bank, through East Africa Skills for Transformation and Regional Integration Project (EASTRIP). The scholarships are part of the Project's effort to improve the quality of TVET programmes in East Africa.

The scholarship is part of a 5-year tripartite partnership between the Inter-University Council for East Africa (IUCEA), the People's Republic of China through the Ministry of Education, and the World Bank to promote excellence in TVET and facilitate regional integration in East Africa.

The Scholarship Programme, which was signed in Beijing in November 2019 and commenced in the 2020/2021 academic year, will offer over 100 scholarships to qualified young lecturers who are currently teaching in the RFTIs over a period of five years to pursue masters and PhD level study at top Universities and Technical Colleges in China. To-date a total of 35 scholarships have been awarded.

The programme is intended to compliment the World Bank EASTRIP support but with focus on improving the much needed academic, technical, and pedagogical capacity of the faculty in the growing

sectors of the economy including but not limited to Manufacturing, ICT, Energy, ICT, Agriculture, and Transport and to promote regional integration.

The selection process of candidates was rigorous involving the college management, IUCEA, the China Scholarship Council, and Chinese universities. Among this year's awardees, 9 are from Ethiopia, 4 are from Kenya, and 5 are from Tanzania, all going to top STEM universities in China including Tsinghua University and Zhejiang University. Among the awardees, 9 will be offering PhDs and 9 Master's programmes.

EASTRIP is currently supporting 16 Regional Flagship TVET institutes (RFTIs) in the region to improve access and quality of TVET programmes for economic transformation and regional integration.

The Scholarship is open to both male and female students from Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania under the age of 35 years for master's Programs and under the age of 40 years for doctoral programs. Out of the 20 selected candidates for the 2020/2021 academic year, 6 are females.

The 20 scholarships are available annually for five years, to support college students and teachers from Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania to pursue relevant technical and engineering master's or Ph.D. degrees in top Chinese universities and technical colleges.



# EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

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