



4th June 2009

COMESA Business Forum Opens in Vic Falls



The ninth COMESA Business Forum and exhibition opened at the Elephant Hills Hotel in the tourist resort of Victoria Falls Town on 4th June 2009 with a call from the public and private sector for the need to remain united and find ways of attracting investment to the region.

Chairman of the COMESA Business Council Mr Said Omar Moussa said the private sector is one of the main engines to drive development in the region and hence should be involved in issues of regional integration.

“This forum and other events like it are important to COMESA’S economic and social development because they help draw the business community’s attention towards participating actively in COMESA’s regional integration agenda. And while the road to integration may be difficult, the destination is worth the journey,” Mr Moussa told the gathering which has attracted several local and international business people.

The COMESA Business Council being a regional body aims to foresee that the interests of the business community and other interest groups in the

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One Stop Border Post to Open in September 2009



The Prime Minister of Zimbabwe, the Right Honourable Morgan Richard Tsvangirai has announced that the One Stop Border Post between Zambia and Zimbabwe at Chirundu border will be launched on 1st September 2009.

This concept has been introduced in the region in an effort to ease congestion at border posts as well as reduce transit times for traders and transporters.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Tsvangirai says the impending launch of the Customs Union is a key milestone in the development of the region and will give greater impetus to enhancing intra regional trade.

"It will offer a more predictable economic environment for both investors and traders across the COMESA region, since regionally administered tariff rates tend to be stable. The Customs Union will also assist to level the playing field for the region's producers since it imposes uniform customs procedures and external tariffs on goods imported from third countries," Honourable Tsvangirai said.

He was speaking when he gave the key note address at the official opening of the Business Forum in Zimbabwe.

He cited the COMESA Yellow Card, Customs Bond Guarantee Scheme as well as the Harmonised Axle Loading and maximum Vehicle Dimension as some beneficial instruments put in place by COMESA with regard to transport and communication.

Prime Minister Tsvangirai mentioned the COMESA Clearing House and the African Trade Insurance as some equally important institutions of COMESA that work to reduce costs of transaction and guards against political risk for businesses.

On tariff barriers, Hon. Tsvangirai said an online reporting system to eliminate these has been developed and it has since been extended to SADC and EAC countries in an effort to harmonise the programs within the context of the tripartite forum.

'The Business of Business is Business' – Ngwenya

The business of business is business – that is to say the business community knows better what is good for them and we are here to serve them in making this region a prosperous one for all, COMESA Secretary General Mr Sindiso Ngwenya has said.

He was speaking at the Business Forum and exhibition in Zimbabwe. He reiterated that value addition, trade and food security are key pillars for consolidating the Free Trade Area and the COMESA Customs Union.

"A fully integrated market under a unified Customs Union will break down most of the barriers that you have faced. It would be unfortunate if the business community did not rise up to the challenge and deliver a diversified portfolio of goods from our rich natural resource base from tourism and from services,"

The Secretary General added that despite all the successes in COMESA, the region still faces challenges which include power shortfalls, low income levels of the majority of the people, inadequate infrastructure and food insecurity.

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market are taken into consideration by the organs of the common market. By initiating private sector development programmes, it aims at strengthening and encouraging co-operation among chambers of Commerce and Industry in the region by providing them with up-to-date commercial intelligence regularly to speed up response and dissemination of information among member States.

Earlier this year, during the Conclave on India Africa partnership which was held in New Delhi, India, the COMESA business Council signed an MoU with the Confederation of Indian Industries. The MoU provides a framework for promoting technical cooperation between the CII and the CBC in all fields of economic activity.

Mr Moussa ended his remarks by appealing for the COMESA region to enhance collaboration with various organizations and regions such as the African Union/NEPAD, Asia (China and India), Americas including the USA-AGOA and Trade and Investment Framework Agreement between COMESA-USA, the Pacific Islands, Europe and the GCC countries.

Export finished Products, COMESA told



COMMON Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) member states have been urged to stop exporting raw materials rather than finished products.

The call was made by the bloc's Assistant Secretary General Mr Stephen Karangizi at the official launch of the Cotton- to- Clothing Strategy (CCS) document during the

“That missing link is costing us a lot,” he said

business forum meeting.

Mr Karangizi said, “It pains me to see that a lot of our raw materials like cotton are exported in their raw state. After that I see a lot of second hand cloths dominating our markets when we are the producers of cotton,” he said.

He added that the bloc should quickly find the technology and the means to link cotton- textiles and clothing.

“That missing link is costing us a lot,” he said

In his presentation, Mr Frank Koongo of the African Cotton Textile Industries Federation (ACTIF) said there was need to develop programmes used by COMESA to coordinate donor interventions to help countries export finished products.

“When you export cotton, you export labor,” he said

CLIMATE CHANGE AND BUSINESS



Dr. M Kanyangarara
Climate Change Programme Coordinator

What's at stake?

The most respected scientific bodies have spoken: global warming is occurring, and people are causing it by burning fossil fuels (like coal, oil and natural gas) and cutting down forests. The only debate is about how much and how fast warming will continue. There are more than enough facts about causes and fixes to implement solutions right now.

We have all heard of the impact of climate change: global warming; droughts, floods, cyclones; food and water scarcity; rising sea levels; extinction of species; etc. Although we didn't cause it, we are in the same boat as those who caused it.

Now is the right time to build climate action into your business strategy:

- It's good business. Leading firms have found that reducing global warming pollution nets savings from lower energy costs and drives innovation.
- Customers are looking to business for improvements and solutions. Distinguish your company with a strong climate action.

- National policy is on the horizon. Climate legislation is becoming a high priority for governments. Get out in front of it now.

Some examples of what can companies can do

- Establish an emissions inventory and set reduction targets. Investigate the potential of trading carbon credits from reducing emissions
- Conserve energy: Simple operational changes in many areas from lighting to office equipment to corporate fleets can substantially cut electricity and fuel use. Such changes often reduce costs, too.
- Convert to lower-carbon energy. Where possible, your company can switch to lower carbon power, such as wind, solar, biomass and geothermal energy.
- Globally, trillions of dollars are forecast to flow into renewable and energy efficient technologies and environmentally preferable products and services. Investigate and tap into these.
- Many countries are experiencing water shortages that impact human health and agriculture operations. Employ water efficiency technologies.
- Harvest and conserve water; reduce dependence on rain fed agriculture and improve agricultural productivity by adopting conservation farming techniques
- Paper use and over-packaging is growing, and so are their impacts on the environment. The paper industry is a large consumer of wood, water and energy. Use less paper and/or switch to recycled paper to reduce demand for wood and pressure on forests.

POEMS

GENEROUS HOSPITALITY

Zimbabwe's generosity is hospitality
Zimbabwe's hospitality is generosity
Guests visitors or strangers feel at home
Wrapped up in the warmth of her bosom

More important you are than ourselves
Graciously we offer the best from our shelves
Restaurants casinos and hotels
Also catering resorts clubs and motels

Oh precious Visitor great and small
A hand of Love is extended to all
For you to embrace and hold
A solidarity and union to behold

Oh behold a land of many virtues
Written all over on ever smiling faces
Indeed an indelible mark on many faces

Oh precious visitor poured to you are virtues
Pleasant it is to behold your joy
Grasp to your heart extended virtues
Which virtues are released with great joy

The Falls give out beauty unceasingly
The Zambezi River never ceases to flow
Hospitality is released unreservedly
Love and Care continue to flow

All visitors great and small are important
Without you all splendour will be none
With you all beauty and pride are relevant
Indeed the Guest is number ONE

By Eddington A.K. Munatsi

POET

(The writer of the above poem is the Director of Finance, Human Resources and Administration in the Ministry of Regional Integration and International Cooperation)

REAR VIEW MIRROR

We have been driving down
This bumpy road
For many years and many miles
The long journey has taken its toll
Some have fallen by the wayside
But, though tired and tried,
Though thirsty and weary,
Still we have continued to drive
We have driven uphill and downhill
We have driven through forests
Thick and hostile
Still we have continued to drive
Our hands steady on the wheel
Our leg hard on the pedal
Our eyes fixed on the road ahead

And now that we have conquered
The long last mile
We can afford a smile
We can afford to rest
For we have passed the test

We look in the rear view mirror
And see the past disappear
No more obstacles
Here comes the customs union

CALENDAR OF OPENING DATES FOR MEETINGS

5th June 2009	Meeting of Foreign Affairs Ministers
6th June 2009	COMESA Golf Tournament
7th June 2009	First Ladies Roundtable
7th & 8th June 2009	13th COMESA Heads of State Summit