

AFRICA CHAMBERS LEADERS' FORUM

NAIROBI DECLARATIONS

PREAMBLE:

Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry hosted the African Chamber leaders together by the President of World Chamber Federation Mr. Peter Mihok on 23rd and 24th October 2018 in Nairobi, Kenya. The key objective of the forum was to discuss the progress of African Continental Free Trade Area and the role of MSMEs in the Economic Development of the African Continent which constitute the bulk of the chambers of commerce membership base. This is in line with the Memorandum of Understanding which the African Chambers, through PACCI, signed with the Department of Trade and Industry of the African Union Commission in Addis Ababa, in November, 2013.

Recognizing that the African business community has a key role to play during all phases of the Agreement, which include negotiating reforms and subsequently implementing and monitoring them through public-private partnerships, it was expected that PACCI should lead an effort by the continent's business community to promote the intra-African trade which is crucial for the continent's development.

The Nairobi business meeting at the same time, highlighted the need and importance for the private sector groups to expand their knowledge on the AfCFTA, enhance their advocacy skills and form common positions on issues to engage effectively in public-private dialogue mechanisms. It is recognized that the AfCFTA is a step forward towards realizing the Pan-African dream for continental integration through trade, thereby realizing the African unity dream. It has always been the hope that 'the goal of the African union is for full political and economic independence. AfCFTA also responds to Africa's Agenda 2063.

SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF THE NAIROBI FORUM

Meeting with the President of the Republic of Kenya

The meeting started with a Press briefing from the KNCCI head office after which the delegates paid a courtesy call to H. E. the President of the Republic of Kenya where they discussed the private sector support to government in lobbying for the ratification as well as the President to be the goodwill Ambassador for African Chambers in spearheading the

voice of the business community. The main forum at Weston Hotel, Nairobi highlighted the key role of African Chambers in ACFTA, Cross cutting challenges encountered by African Chamber and role of PACCI promoting Intra Africa Trade.

Meeting with the Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya

The DP hosted the African Chambers delegates to a luncheon at his Karen home, in the outskirts of Nairobi during the second day of the meeting.

The DP affirmed the Government's commitment to supporting SME's and the establishment of a fund to extend credit at affordable interest rates.

The request for Chambers to be accorded the issuing of all COO's would be an item for discussion, as KNCCI was now on a credible footing.

In respect of the backlog of outstanding payments due to vendors, Government has taken a Cabinet decision to suspend further procurement until the backlog payments are settled.

Nairobi Meeting Final Outcomes

The uniqueness of the Nairobi meeting was that the African Chambers delegates were also able to participate and listen in on the deliberations of KNCCI's National Governing Council (NGC) meeting which had been called to adopt the amendment of some clauses in the Memorandum and Articles of Association which govern the Kenya chamber.

KEY RESOLUTIONS FROM THE AFRICAN CHAMBERS LEADERS FORUM

1. African Chambers to actively participate in the on-going negotiations on trade agreements and policies and lobby their respective governments to ratify the AfCFTA.
2. On sustainability African countries should embrace the practice of arbitration as a revenue generating activity to be combined with ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution).
3. African Chamber Leaders proposed the Kenyan Chamber Patron President Uhuru Kenyatta to become a Goodwill Ambassador of African Chambers of Commerce to spearhead the agenda of the Chambers being the Voice of private sector in African countries: to achieve observer status at AU, and convene heads of Chamber meetings alongside AU meetings.
4. Anchor African Chambers as global trade facilitation agencies to ensure that the issuance of COO and ATA Carnet become primary mandate of all Africa Chambers.
5. SME growth is key for economic development and creation of jobs; There is need for Chambers to lobby formalization of the SME Sectors. In addition, the Governments must set aside funds and create mechanisms for funds availability.

6. African Governments should complete acquisition of shares in African Trade Insurance Agency based in Kenya for the express purpose of mitigating risk in their respective countries.
7. The chambers should establish or take control of weigh stations and host Government Functionaries at border points and corridors to minimize transit barriers.
8. Chambers to be involved in the development of the TVET Curriculum as a way to improve skilled manpower for enterprise growth.
9. All African Chambers to support the work of the Pan African Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and by extension increase its participation in ICC/WCF
10. African Chambers are committed to fighting corruption as a means to provide a conducive environment for business sustainability.
11. African Chambers commit to working with Governments Countries towards developing an Africa/China policy based on shared information across countries.
12. African Chambers to ensure that at all meetings are tri-lingual – English, French and Portuguese.
13. African Chamber Leaders to promote intra-African traded investment, and pursue opportunities at global forums/platforms.
14. African Chambers to establish Youth and Women Empowerment Programs
15. African Chamber Leaders commit to attend the meeting in Cairo, Egypt on 17th December 2018, to discuss restructuring PACCI.
16. The Kenya Chamber National Chairman to be the convener of future Meetings and to be assisted by the President of Abuja Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI).
17. African Chamber Leaders should request African Governments to have Chamber representation on all National Investment Agencies.
18. African Chamber Leaders commit to facilitate increased participation of business persons with disclosure and ensure that their facilities are conducive for them