



**REMARKS BY MR. FELIX G. N. MOSHA, CHAIRMAN EAST
AFRICAN BUSINESS COUNCIL (EABC)**

AT

**EABC BREAKFAST MEETING BETWEEN TRADE FACILITATION
INSTITUTIONS AND BUSINESS COMMUNITY**

SERENA HOTEL, DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA

18TH JULY 2014

- **Ms. Joyce Mapunjo, Permanent Secretary Ministry of East African Cooperation**
- **Representative from Ministry of Industry and Trade**
- **Mr. Salum Shamte Acting Chairman of the Tanzania Private Sector Foundation**
- **Mr. Godfrey Simbeye Executive Director of Tanzania Private Sector Foundation**
- **Representatives of Trade Facilitation Institutions**
- **Representative of the East African Community Secretariat**
- **Members of the Business Community at this meeting**
- **Management and Staff of KCB Bank Tanzania Limited**
- **Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen.**

On behalf of the East African Business Council, and on my own behalf, may I take this opportunity to welcome you to this Breakfast Meeting between Trade Facilitation Institutions and the Business Community, which the EABC is hosting with support from KCB Bank Tanzania Limited.

Madam Permanent Secretary,

We – the business people and Trade Facilitation Institutions, are very grateful to you for accepting our invitation despite your very busy schedules. Your participation at this meeting will give you a sense of, and provide clarity on, the challenges the business community in East Africa as a whole, are facing when dealing with Trade Facilitation Institutions in Tanzania and on how best to tackle them.

May I also thank the representatives of Trade Facilitation Institutions who have accepted our invitations and are here with us today; need less to say, their presence is crucial in taking a realist assessment of the situation and the way forward.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

You may recalled that one year has already passed since EABC held its Trade Facilitation Breakfast Meeting in this same place in July last year. I am delighted that all the key trade facilitation institutions which participated in last year's meeting are also here today. Clearly, their presence makes it possible for the meeting to take stock aimed at looking at where we have come from; where we are now; where we are headed; and, how best to get there. Such a review is crucial, if we have to achieve one of the main objectives of this Breakfast Meeting, i.e. to apprise the business community and the partner states on the status and progress in the implementation of the recommendations agreed in our last meeting. In addition, our collective effort here will help this meeting to identify key outstanding and emerging trade facilitation issues, which would require further follow up by all of us.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Reading from the agreed recommendations of the last year's meeting there are some achievements attained so far. Some of these achievements include, but not limited to:

- Harmonisation of duty on paper products: Following the study conducted by EAC Secretariat, we have noted that in this financial year EAC Partner States have harmonised import duty on paper products by reducing such duty from 25% to 10% on a variety of paper products which are not produced in the region.
- Harmonisation of standards: In May this year, SCTIIF i.e. the EAC Sectoral Council on Trade, Industry, Investment and Finance approved and declared 41 standards as East African Standards. In

addition, 96 normatively referenced international standards were endorsed by SCTIIF for adoption by the EAC Partner States. EABC therefore encourages the business community to engage their National Standards institutions to adopt these East African standards within 6 months without any deviation from the approved text of the standards in question; and also withdraw any existing national standards with similar scope and purpose as prescribed by SQMT i.e. Standardization, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing Act Section 15(1). Further more, relevant International Standards should also be adopted by each Partner State as per the ISO Procedures.

- Duty remission scheme: EAC Administrative mechanism on duty remission for manufactured exports was developed and approved by SCTIIF i.e. Sectoral Council on Trade, Industry, Investment and Finance in May this year. In addition, in order to smoothen the facilitation process, EABC Secretariat in collaboration with EAC Secretariat conducted sensitization workshop on Duty Remission Scheme in Nairobi last year.
- Information on Tariff Changes: As had been expected, EABC Secretariat has circulated to its members the EAC Gazette of 2014/15 Financial year that reflects tariff changes, amendments, stay application and duty remission for 2014/15 Financial year.
- Information on use of renewable energy: EABC is planning to hold a Renewable Energy Conference in Dar es Salaam in October this year which is aiming at giving some fresh insight into the renewable energy industry in East Africa, the challenges and opportunities in achieving the region's ambitious goals.
- WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA): As we are all aware, the agreement was concluded in Bali (Indonesia) in December last year.

With a view to fast tracking the ratification and implementation of the Agreement, the Business Community appreciates the fact that the EAC Secretariat has commenced preparation to establish a coordination mechanism at regional and national levels to implement the Bali Agreement.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

We have made progress on a number of the issues. We should not just look at where we are – but rather, where we started. Notwithstanding, EABC believes that there is room for improvement. The reality is, achieving the Single Customs Territory in all its manifestations is a crucial step towards the realization of the full integration dream of all East Africans. In consequence, all our initiatives should be geared towards trade facilitation in a manner that also involves the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement to which all the EAC Partner States agreed to in December last year.

Once again I thank you all for coming to this breakfast meeting and it is my expectation that by the end of this meeting we will be able to develop a time-bound action plan to resolve the key challenges, we are facing as a nation.

Thank you.