



JOINT MEDIA ADVISORY

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY (EAC)

CONSULTATIVE MEETING ON THE CFTA/BIAT

INVITATION TO REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MEDIA

What: *The East African Community Consultative Meeting on the CFTA/BIAT*

Who: The Consultative Meeting will be attended by Member States of EAC; Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. The East African Business Council will also be invited to attend the meeting. UNECA and AfDB will also attend the Meetings as members of the AUC-UNECA-AfDB Joint Secretariat.

When: **27th – 28th November 2014.**

Where: **Hilton Hotel, Nairobi, Kenya.**

Why: To facilitate consultations and dialogue among EAC Member States on the CFTA with a view to develop regional strategies for engagement in the CFTA Negotiations.

Objectives:

- i. To Facilitate consultations and dialogue among EAC Member States on the CFTA with a view to develop regional strategies for engagement in the CFTA Negotiations.
- ii. To Prepare EAC Member States for effective engagement in CFTA negotiations.
- iii. To Identify areas for capacity building at the regional and national levels.

Expected Outcome:

- i. Dialogue among EAC Member States and the private sector on the CFTA and the BIAT Implementation Strategy.
- ii. Initiate a process of preparations in EAC for CFTA negotiations that could lead to the development of a Draft Action Plan and Strategy taking into account the regional dynamics and realities.
- iii. Identification of capacity building needs of EAC Member States and the EAC Secretariat for effective participation in CFTA negotiations and agreement on a joint resource mobilization strategy.

Background:

In January 2012, the African Union Summit of Heads of States and Government approved an Action Plan for Boosting Intra -African trade and the establishment of a Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA) by an indicative date of 2017. According to the approved Road Map, during the period 2012 to 2014, the Regional Economic Communities that are recognised by the African Union are supposed to ensure the effective implementation of regional free trade agreements. During this period, it is expected that COMESA, EAC and SADC will conclude negotiations for the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) by the year 2014. ECOWAS, ECCAS, AMU, IGAD and CEN-SAD are encouraged to ensure that their regional free trade areas are working effectively and to prepare to engage for negotiations that are scheduled to take place starting from 2015.

As part of the preparations for the CFTA negotiations, the African Union Commission is partnering with the EAC Secretariat and UNECA in organizing the EAC Consultative Meeting on the CFTA. Issues to be discussed in the meeting include the current state of trade liberalisation in EAC, Implementation Strategy for Boosting Intra Africa Trade, studies on the trade potential of the CFTA, Principles Guiding the Negotiations for the CFTA, Institutional Arrangements for the Negotiation of the CFTA, technical issues on the CFTA and private sector views on the CFTA.

Journalists are invited to cover the opening session of the meeting on the 27th November 2014 at 9:30am.

Media inquiries and interviews should be directed to **Mr. Stanley Evarist Alphonse**, Communication Officer, Directorate of Information and Communication, AUC, Tel: +251929188243, E-mail: AlphonseS@africa-union.org

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