



**COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN
AND SOUTHERN AFRICA**

**FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ
OF THE EIGHTEENTH SUMMIT OF THE COMESA AUTHORITY
OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

Theme: "Inclusive and Sustainable Industrialization"

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

31 March 2015

THE EIGHTEENTH SUMMIT of the Authority of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) was held at the African Union Complex, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 30 to 31 March 2015 under the theme “*Inclusive and Sustainable Industrialization*”.

The Summit was attended by the following COMESA Heads of State and Government and Plenipotentiaries:

His Excellency His Excellency Mr Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia;

His Excellency Mr Joseph Kabila Kabange, President of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC);

His Excellency Mr Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe;

His Excellency Mr Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda;

His Excellency Mr Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti;

His Excellency Mr Hery Rajaonariamampianina, President of the Republic of Madagascar;

His Excellency Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika, President of the Republic of Malawi;

His Excellency Mr Nouridine Bourhane, Vice-President of the Union of Comoros;

His Excellency Honourable Prosper Bazombanza, First Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi;

His Excellency Mr Danny Faure, Vice President of the Republic of Seychelles;

His Excellency Honourable Edward Kiwanuka Ssekandi, Vice-President of the Republic of Uganda;

His Excellency Mr Bakri Hassan Salih, Vice-President of the Republic of Sudan;

His Excellency Eng. Ibrahim Mahlab, the Prime Minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt;

His Excellency Dr Barnabas Sibusiso Dlamini, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Swaziland;

His Excellency Mr Abd-Alrahman Ala Hrish, Deputy Prime Minister of Libya

Her Excellency Ambassador Dr Amina Mohammed, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Kenya;

His Excellency Mr Etienne Sinatambou, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Mauritius;

His Excellency Dr Ngosa Simbyakula, Minister of Justice, Republic of Zambia;

Mr Biniam Berhe, Charge d'Affaires Permanent Mission of Eritrea to African Union and UNECA;

THE SUMMIT WAS ALSO ATTENDED BY THE FOLLOWING:

Her Excellency Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission;

His Excellency Dr Carlos Lopez, Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA);

His Excellency Mr LI Yong, Director General, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO);

His Excellency Dr Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary General, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD);

Dr Geraldine Fraser Moleketi, Vice President, African Development Bank and Special Envoy for Gender;

Mr Charles Njoroge, the Deputy Secretary General, Political Affairs, East African Community;

The following countries were represented at the Summit: Australia, China, Cuba, France, Finland, Germany, India, Japan, Nigeria, Norway, Palestine, Reunion Island, Russia, Spain, United Kingdom, and United States of America;

The following Chief Executive Officers represented their Organisations at the Summit: Dr Donat Bagula Mugangu, Executive Secretary of the Northern Corridor/Transit Transport Co-ordination Authority (TTCA/NC).

The following represented COMESA Institutions: Mr Tadesse Admassu, President, Eastern and Southern Africa Trade and Development Bank (PTA Bank); Mr Mahmoud Mansoor Ali, Executive Secretary, COMESA Clearing House; His Lordship Justice Nzamba Kitonga (SC), Judge President, COMESA Court of Justice; Dr Amany Asfour, Chairperson, COMESA Business Council; Dr M. Charles Moturi, Chairman, Leather and Leather Products Institute (LLPI); Mr George Lipimile, Director, COMESA Competition Commission; Mrs Katherine N. Ichoya, Executive Director, Federation of Associations of Women in Business in Eastern and Southern Africa (FEMCOM); Mr Ibrahim Zeidy, Director, COMESA Monetary Institute; Prof. Venasisus Baryamureba, Chairman of the COMESA Innovation Council.

The following institutions were also represented; the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF); the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD); the International Monetary Fund (IMF); the International Organisation for Migration

(IOM), the United States Agency for International Development/Regional Economic Development Services Office for East and Southern Africa (USAID/REDSO/ESA); IDB, UNESCO, and TUSKON.

OPENING OF THE SUMMIT

At the beginning of the Summit, a moment of silence was observed in memory and honour of the late President Michael Chilufya Sata, former President of the Republic of Zambia.

WELCOME STATEMENT

In his welcome address, His Excellency Hailemariam Desalegn, the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia welcomed their Excellencies and distinguished delegates to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. He reminded them that the city of Addis Ababa had recently hosted the dignitaries who attended the 24th AU Summit that had adopted Agenda 2063; and in that same spirit of Pan-Africanism, they were meeting under the COMESA umbrella to advance regional and continental integration. He invited the guests to explore the various tourist attractions that Ethiopia has to offer, such as the Danakil Depression, Lake Tana; the Blue Nile Falls, Simien Mountains National Park, among others.

He said that the Summit theme of: *“Inclusive and Sustainable industrialization”* could not have come at a better time because inclusive industrialization is the pillar to sustained economic growth, food security and poverty eradication in Africa. He added that inclusivity prioritizes shared prosperity, increased employment opportunities, particularly in the industrial and agro-industrial sectors, and social cohesion. He emphasised the need for COMESA to promote the use of clean technologies in industrial production; greater resource and energy efficiency. He reiterated the need for the speedy implementation of COMESA's regional integration programmes, particularly the establishment of a Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. He concluded by welcoming the business community to the Summit deliberations; and thanked their Excellencies for choosing Ethiopia as the host for the 18th COMESA Summit of Heads of State and Government.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The outgoing Chairperson, His Excellency Joseph Kabila Kabange, President of the Democratic Republic of Congo and outgoing Chairman of the COMESA Authority said that the Summit theme: *“Sustainable and Inclusive Industrialization”* is timely and appropriate. He said that there should be structural diversification of the economies, to enable the production and export of high value commodities. He said that COMESA provides a vehicle for the region's collective might to bring about structural changes and make the region an equal partner in the global economy. He said that the slowdown in the growth of emerging economies affected the performance of African economies in general and COMESA economies; and so the average GDP growth for 2014 in COMESA was 5.5 percent which is still below the 7 percent growth that is required to make a dent on poverty.

He noted however, that intra-COMESA trade rose from US \$19.2 billion in 2013 to US \$22 billion in 2014. With the participation of D R Congo, Ethiopia and Uganda in the COMESA FTA, the region will likely see intra-COMESA trade increase to US \$25 billion in 2016. The COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area, supported by the infrastructure and industrial pillars will further mark a turning point in the region's collective quest to structurally transform its economies through the beneficiation of minerals, and industrialization.

He said that during his term of office COMESA has been able to reduce the cost of doing business through the Regional Payment System, and the harmonization of transport regulations and standards which has facilitated the movement of goods and services. The implementation of the COMESA Virtual Trade Facilitation System (CVFTS), the Yellow Card insurance scheme and the Regional Customs Bond Guarantee System also made it possible for goods and means of transport to move seamlessly among Member States. Further, 14 Member States have so far signed the National CAADAP Compacts and six have accessed funding from the Global Food Security Programme (GFSP) amounting to US \$254 million for improved agriculture production. He paid tribute to the COMESA institutions for their continued support to both governments and the private sector. He concluded by saying that in 2014, COMESA Member States issued infrastructure bonds with a total value of US \$12.4 billion and this was the right step forward in facilitating the critically needed infrastructure in the region. He extended best wishes to His Excellency Ato Hailemariam Desalgn, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and pledged his full country's support to the Chairmanship of Ethiopia.

STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY, PROF. ARTHUR PETER MUTHARIKA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALAWI

His Excellency, Prof. Arthur Peter Mutharika, President of the Republic of Malawi, said that he was grateful for the hospitality extended towards his delegation since their arrival in Addis Ababa. He congratulated the Heads of State attending the Summit for the first time: particularly His Excellency Hery Rajaonariamampianina the President of Madagascar; upon being elected to lead his country. He wished him success in the new office. He said that the people of Malawi were grateful to COMESA for the support towards the election process in that country. COMESA sent an election observer mission to Malawi, and the elections were described as free, fair and credible. He also extended appreciation for the assistance received in the wake of the heavy rains and floods that killed many people in Malawi. He said that the country still requires assistance to reconstruct homes, schools, health centres and recover from destroyed crop harvests.

His Excellency Mutharika said that Malawi is committed to ensuring that the goals of the continent's forefathers are achieved; and that the theme of the Summit reflected the urgency for the region to achieve those aspirations. He said that the region integration agenda can be achieved when all Member States work together to produce value added products, and support SME development.

He commended the efforts of COMESA to address the isolated security challenges and added that Malawi is fully committed to the security and peace of the region. He

concluded by reiterating his Government's support to the transformation of the COMESA region for the benefit of all the citizens.

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY, HERY RAJAONARIAMAMPIANINA
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MADAGASCAR**

His Excellency Hery Rajaonariamampianina thanked the President and people of the Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for the warm hospitality accorded to his delegation since their arrival in Addis Ababa. He said that after a long period of absence from the Policy Organs, Madagascar is back revitalized to fully participate in the COMESA regional integration agenda. He said that his country is grateful to the support given to her during the elections and in the recovery period after the crisis. On behalf of all Malagasy people, he said thank you for the support during the difficult time, and indicated that many Member States were not quiet during the crisis and the voices of peace were heard loud and clear.

He said that the region cannot speak of sustainable development without peace, therefore, COMESA's commitment to condemn the forces against peace in the region, is paramount. The commitment for peace should be inculcated in the young, and violence should be quelled from the youth population who should be included in the development agenda. He said that Madagascar is writing a new chapter of their history and as they restore the rule of law, protect national integrity and seek national reconciliation, they have tried to gather the four former heads of state, free political detainees, and improve the situation of former President Ravalomanana. The constraints to this process are many and the Member State is determined to overcome them.

He concluded that sustainable development in the region will be achieved through the inclusion of national values, women, youth, the production of value added products, investment promotion, technological exchange; the use of renewable sources of energy; and the promotion of local market goods.

**STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY IBRAHIM MAHLAB, PRIME MINISTER OF
THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT**

His Excellency Ibrahim Mahlab, the Prime Minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt thanked the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for hosting the Summit. He thanked the President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, His Excellency Joseph Kabila Kabange for his leadership of COMESA as Chairperson of the Authority for the past year.

He said that Egyptian exports to the COMESA region are immense, and that the country is the biggest importer of tea from Kenya, and beef from Sudan and Ethiopia. He added that Egypt is digging a canal parallel to the Suez Canal to increase intra-regional trade and exports to other countries in COMESA and beyond. He said that the benefit of establishing an FTA is to expand the market and to enable the consumers enjoy the competitiveness availed by increased production and making imports more lucrative on the international market. He added that industrial development should attract modern and appropriate technologies to produce high value goods. He noted that the Tripartite FTA is a precursor to Africa eventually

achieving a continental FTA and this will fulfill not only the aspirations of the people, but also those of the forefathers of Africa. Projects like the land road that will connect the Lake Victoria region to the Sea will receive the support of Egypt towards the feasibility studies, and subsequent construction.

He said that Egypt is grateful for the support given to her during elections, and also the messages of condolences to the victims of the recent terrorist attacks.

He concluded by inviting their Excellencies to the Tripartite FTA Summit to be held in June 2015 in Egypt.

Statement by Chairperson of the African Union Commission

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Her Excellency Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, welcomed their Excellencies and their delegations to the headquarters of the AU. She said that the AU Summit in January 2015 adopted Agenda 2063 and the call to unite or perish is central to this agenda. The achievement of Agenda 2063 calls upon all African States to work together to further regional economic and social development. She said that the AU has commissioned a study to be conducted on the capacity required for the implementation of Agenda 2063. This study will inform the required resources and division of labour. COMESA and the other RECs will be key partners in the priorities of Agenda 2063; and the achievement of these priorities requires: expansion in health, enlargement in health services, relentless focus on science and innovation, agriculture, and skills revolution.

She said that the AU will work with COMESA Heads of State and Governments in the initiative of banning the hand-held hoe to the museum in order to free more time of especially the women engaged in agriculture, and attract the young population to this important sector of the continent's economy. She said that 2015 is the year for the empowerment of women and so COMESA has to be practical in their involvement in decision making at all levels. The elections due to take place in Ethiopia, Burundi, Egypt and Sudan should represent a commitment to the empowerment of women.

She congratulated COMESA-EAC and SADC on the upcoming Summit and signing of the Tripartite FTA and said that there will still be a lot of work to be done after the launch, and best practices shared in the implementation of the FTA if it is to be meaningful to the citizens.

The Summit was also addressed by:

Dr Geraldine Fraser Moeleketi, Vice President, African Development Bank and Special Envoy for Gender; His Excellency Dr Carlos Lopez, executive Secretary, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA); His Excellency Mr LI Yong, Director General, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); and His Excellency Dr Mukhisa Kituyi, Secretary General, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

AFTER THE FORMAL OPENING OF THE SUMMIT, THE AUTHORITY:

ELECTED by acclamation His Excellency Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, as Chairperson; His Excellency, Hery Rajaonariamampianina, President of the Republic of Madagascar, as Vice Chairperson; and President Joseph Kabila, President of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) as Rapporteur;

EXPRESSED gratitude to His Excellency President Joseph Kabila Kabange, President of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Outgoing Chairperson of the COMESA Authority for his illustrious and outstanding leadership of COMESA for the period of 2014-2015;

RECOGNISED and **EXPRESSED** gratitude to His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda for his excellent and steadfast support and leadership on the COMESA Bureau as Vice Chairman, Chairman and Rapporteur of the COMESA Authority for the past three years;

NOTED the Report of the Secretary General on the State of Regional Integration in COMESA;

CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED the Report of the Thirty Fourth Meeting of the COMESA Council of Ministers;

CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED the Report of the Fourteenth Meeting of the COMESA Ministers of Foreign Affairs;

ON THE COMESA BUSINESS COUNCIL

NOTED the conclusions and recommendations of the Ninth COMESA Business Forum.

ON THE COMESA ANNUAL REPORT

LAUNCHED the COMESA Annual Report for 2014/15.

ON COOPERATION BETWEEN COMESA AND PARTNERS

EXPRESSED APPRECIATION to the cooperating partners for their continued support to the implementation of COMESA programmes.

ON COMESA INSTITUTIONS

RECOGNISED with appreciation the contribution made by COMESA Institutions in supporting the COMESA Integration Agenda.

ON THE COMESA FREE TRADE AREA (FTA)

NOTED WITH SATISFACTION that intra-COMESA trade had increased to US \$ 22.4 billion by the end of 2014, signifying a recovery from 2009 when intra-COMESA trade was US \$12.7 billion due to the global financial crisis and economic recession;

COMMENDED Uganda for beginning to implement the COMESA FTA and depositing its Accession Instrument to the COMESA Secretariat and **URGED** Uganda to prepare and present its proposed schedule for the phasing out of the sensitive products;

COMMENDED the Democratic Republic of Congo on the Commitment to join the COMESA FTA and **NOTED** with appreciation the progress being made in the ongoing legislative process to pass the necessary legal instruments for accession to the COMESA FTA;

URGED the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to finalize the ongoing legislative process on accession to the COMESA FTA and deposit accession instruments with the COMESA Secretariat;

COMMENDED the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on its commitment to join the COMESA Free Trade Area and **URGED** the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia to expedite ongoing internal consultations and finalize instruments of accession to the COMESA Free Trade Area and deposit them with the COMESA Secretariat;

NOTED with appreciation the State of Eritrea's commitment to joining the COMESA Free Trade Area and **URGED** the State of Eritrea to expedite its process of joining the COMESA Free Trade Area

NOTED with appreciation progress in the application of the Tripartite online reporting and monitoring mechanism in the elimination of all Non-Tariff Barriers constraining intra-regional trade and **CALLED** upon COMESA Member States to continue using the online mechanism in the expeditious elimination of outstanding Non-Tariff Barriers;

URGED COMESA Member States to continue Consolidating the COMESA Free Trade Area by removing all Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) using the Tripartite Online Reporting and Monitoring Mechanism.

ON THE APPLICATION OF SAFEGUARDS FOR THE KENYA SUGAR INDUSTRY

ENDORSED the Council decision for the Kenya sugar sector to be given a one year extension of the existing safeguard subject to review and renewal for another one year;

Further **ENDORSED** the Council decision on establishing an Ad Hoc Technical Working Committee to be convened not later than 30 June 2015 to consider the draft formula for proposed allocation of export sugar quotas into the Kenya sugar market; and the draft criteria for determining that an industry to be infant in COMESA.

ON THE COMESA CUSTOMS UNION

RE-AFFIRMED the application of the principle of variable geometry to the implementation of the Customs Union in line with previous decisions; and

NOTED with appreciation the inauguration of the Heads of Customs Sub-committee to address issues in relation to the implementation of the Customs Union.

ON THE TRIPARTITE FREE TRADE AREA (FTA)

WELCOMED with appreciation the progress made towards the finalization and launching of the COMESA-EAC-SADC-Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement;

COMMENDED the Arab Republic of Egypt for accepting to host the Tripartite Summit on 10 June 2015.

ON TRADE IN SERVICES

URGED Member States that have not submitted their revised schedules of specific commitments in the four priority sectors of transport, communications, financial and tourism should do so by 30 June 2015; and ensure that the commitments add value and are therefore WTO plus;

URGED the Secretariat should circulate the submitted finalised Schedules to all Member States by 30 April 2015.

ON MICRO SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

RECOGNISED the progress made under the 2013/14 theme of: *“Consolidating Intra-COMESA trade through MSME development”*, and **CALLED** upon the Secretariat to facilitate Small and Medium Enterprises from the region to access existing regional and continental financial arrangements;

URGED COMESA Member States that do not have updated Medium and Small Enterprises (MSME) policies and strategies to domesticate the COMESA MSME Policy.

ON INDUSTRIALIZATION OF THE COMESA REGION

RECOGNISED the importance of the 2015 theme of *“Inclusive and Sustainable Industrialisation,”* and **UNDERScored** the importance of the COMESA Industrialization Policy for the economic transformation and sustainable development of the region;

ENDORSED the Council Decision on the adoption of the COMESA Industrialization Policy and urged Member States to domesticate the Policy;

DIRECTED the Secretariat to prepare the implementation strategic plan of the COMESA Industrialization Policy for consideration by Member states by 30 September 2015;

WELCOMED the offer by UNIDO to work with COMESA in the implementation of the COMESA Industrialisation Policy.

ON AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT

NOTED that agriculture is the mainstay of the region's industrial development, and **DIRECTED** the Secretariat to implement the CAADP Regional Compact and related investment Framework, and to complete the design of the Regional Livestock Policy;

URGED Member States to mainstream the Malabo Declaration (2014) Implementation Strategy and Roadmap in their existing National Agriculture Policies, Strategies and Programmes;

DIRECTED the Secretariat through its specialized institution ACTESA, to speed up the implementation of the Fertilizer Marketing and Distribution Programme in the Member States;

FURTHER DIRECTED the Secretariat to mobilize resources to support the establishment of the Centre of Excellence for Dry Lands by 2016, in Djibouti.

ON CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMUNITIES

NOTED WITH APPRECIATION the continued collaboration between COMESA and the other regional economic communities in Africa, particularly, within the frameworks of the ESA-IOC made up of COMESA, EAC, IGAD, IOC and SADC and the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite arrangement;

URGED for the strengthening of this co-operation with a focus on harmonization and coordination of programmes for the mutual benefit of Member States.

ON GENDER AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

COMMITTED to sign and ratify the COMESA Social Charter to enable its domestication and implementation to address social development priorities and ensure inclusive development in the region;

UNDERScoreD the importance of gender mainstreaming in all programmes, projects and activities including gender disaggregation of statistical information to ensure targeted and evidence-based programming for inclusive and sustainable development;

ENDORSED the COMESA Youth Programme and Pilot Projects developed to address unemployment and enhance their participation in civic matters;

URGED Member States to support women entrepreneurs by implementing the Simplified Trade Regime, the minimum standards for the protection of small scale cross border traders, training, coaching, mentoring, and facilitating linkages to markets;

UNDERScoreD the importance of sharing of good practices among Member States on gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women;

URGED Member States to continue mainstreaming gender in all national development programmes.

ON COMESA MONITORING AND EVALUATION POLICY DIRECTIVE

NOTED with appreciation the adoption by Council of the COMESA M&E policy and guidelines and **URGED** Member States that have not yet established the COMESA Coordinating Committee to do so immediately to facilitate implementation of the M&E policy;

FURTHER URGED all Member States, the Secretariat and all COMESA institutions to start using the M&E online system immediately.

ON MULTILATERAL AND OTHER TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

NOTED the importance of co-operation among Member States in the manufacturing of essential drugs as well as the entry of force on the Amendment of TRIPS Agreement on compulsory licencing for medicine;

FURTHER noted with concern the low number of COMESA Member States that have accepted the Protocol amending the WTO TRIPS Agreement and notified the same to the WTO;

URGED COMESA Member States that have not yet accepted the Protocol amending the WTO TRIPS Agreement to do so as soon as possible and notify the WTO Secretariat by December 2015 after which date the acceptance shall be invalid;

CALLLED UPON COMESA Member States to promote and invest in strategic programmes aimed at improving access, manufacture and distribution of anti-retroviral and other drugs and medical commodities as a sustainable step towards ending major epidemics (AIDS, TB and Malaria) and as an untapped economic opportunity in the region and continent.

On Intellectual Property Rights

NOTED with appreciation the inauguration of the Intellectual Property Committee; and

CALLLED UPON the Secretariat to engage with the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) on collaborative efforts of undertaking intellectual property audits.

ON ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN ESA-EPA GROUP AND EU

REITERATED the commitment of ESA-EPA Group of countries to conclude a development friendly and inclusive EPA with EU that enhances their competitiveness, economic transformation and supports regional integration;

EXPRESSED concern over the lack of progress made in the full ESA-EU EPA negotiations over the past four years and specifically the conditions set by the EU Party for resumption of the full EPA negotiations;

URGED all ESA-EPA countries to prepare market access offers based on their collective national and regional development objectives and directed the ESA Council to engage the EU to revive full and inclusive EPA negotiations that adequately respond to key development and regional integration needs of ESA countries.

ON COMESA AID FOR TRADE

APPRECIATED the substantial support from the European Union for the COMESA Adjustment Facility (CAF) of the COMESA Fund; and

DIRECTED the Secretariat to finalize the CAF sustainability strategy and present it to the next meeting of the COMESA Fund Ministerial Committee for consideration.

ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

NOTED with appreciation the Decision by Council to establish a COMESA Virtual University with a network of universities which will incorporate an Academy of Science, Technology and Innovation as well as research networks;

URGED Member States to recognize the potential contribution of unused TV frequencies (TV white spaces) and use them to improve spectrum efficiency for economic development;

Directed the Secretariat to coordinate in partnership with Ubuntu Net Alliance Project and the Innovation Council the sharing of best practices on the deployment of white spaces following the examples of Kenya, Malawi, South Africa and Tanzania that have run successful white space pilot programmes;

FURTHER DIRECTED the Secretariat to work with stakeholders in developing a model policy framework to guide Member States in developing local regulations and policies to enhance the utilization of white spaces.

ON INNOVATION AWARDS FOR THE YEAR 2014/15

ENDORSED the adoption of the report of the Innovation Awards Panel for 2014/15;

CONGRATULATED the following winners of the 2014 COMESA Innovation Awards:

1. Jacob Maina Rugano (Nairobi, Kenya) Youth Category
2. Therese Izay-Kirongozi Bakemamie (Kinshasa, DRC) Women Category
3. Isidore Nzeyimana (Kigali, Rwanda) SME Category
4. Moustafa Youssef and Heba Allah Aly Abd El-Halim Aly Ismail (Alexandria, Egypt)
5. Andrew Oduory, Western Institute of Professionals (Luanda, Kenya)

CALLED upon COMESA Member States to promote innovations at the national level and encourage participation in the COMESA Innovation Awards;

URGED Member States to promote the production and utilisation of the innovations for attainment of the aims and objectives of COMESA;

CALLED upon the private sector to support and promote innovation for the development in the region.

ON INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

APPRECIATED the US \$15 million contribution by the PTA Bank towards the capitalisation of the COMESA Infrastructure Fund;

COMMENDED Member States that have used innovative means of financing infrastructure and energy projects, among others through infrastructure bonds and Diaspora bonds;

COMMENDED the European Union and the German Development Bank (KfW) for the financial support towards the development of cross-border infrastructure projects;

NOTED with appreciation the implementation of the cross border infrastructure projects along the corridors and **ENDORSED** the Council decisions on establishing the Djibouti Corridor Authority and the implementation of One Stop Border Post along the corridor;

URGED Member States to implement the transport transit instruments such as axle loads, carrier license and harmonized road user charges;

UNDERScored the importance of having safe and secure cyber space and **URGED** Member States to implement the cyber security policy and legal framework, and participate in the COMESA High Level Cyber Security Forum;

ENDORSED the adoption of the renewable energy guidelines on Feed-in-Tariffs, Power Purchase Agreement, Public-Private Partnership and project joint developments to stimulate investment and increase power generation;

COMMENDED the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, for providing a site for the construction of the proposed headquarters of the East Africa Power Pool (EAPP).

ON WOMEN IN BUSINESS

CALLED upon the Member States and FEMCOM Chapters in Member States to contribute funds for the programme activities of FEMCOM; and

DIRECTED the Secretariat to mobilize funds for FEMCOM activities.

ON COMESA COMPETITION POLICY

URGED Member States without national competition legislation to come up with respective national competition legislation; and

CALLED upon all Member States to implement the Kinshasa decision on the domestication of COMESA competition regulations.

ON PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

COMMENDED the COMESA Business Council (CBC) on the development of a common public private action against illicit trade that is detrimental to the industrialization of the region, and support the private sector in the ongoing deliberations on a regional framework on curbing illicit trade in COMESA;

CALLED upon Member States to support ongoing consultations on the development of the “Made in COMESA” label;

ON CO-OPERATING PARTNERS

NOTED with appreciation the continued support from the co-operating partners and the key role they are playing in supporting COMESA integration agenda and **APPEALED** for their continued support.

ON COMESA CLEARING HOUSE

COMMENDED Central Bank Governors and the COMESA Clearing House for putting in place the COMESA Regional Payment and Settlement System (REPSS), a home-grown solution to our regional payments requirements, that is fully compliant with all Bank for International Settlements (BIS) Core Principles;

EXPRESSED appreciation to the Bank of Mauritius for hosting and running the system on its platform and acting as its Settlement Bank;

COMMENDED the Central Banks of Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Swaziland, Uganda and Zambia for being live and transacting on REPSS;

COMMENDED the Central Bank of the Democratic Republic of Congo for scheduling to go live on the system on 31 March 2015;

COMMENDED the Central Banks of Burundi, Egypt and Sudan for scheduling to start live operations by 30 June 2015;

URGED Central Banks that have not yet signed the various agreements pertaining to REPSS and its operations and met the prerequisites for joining the system to do so by December 2015;

URGED Member States and their respective Central Banks to sensitise their stakeholders on the utilisation of the Regional Payment and Settlement System for the benefit of the entire region, particularly through their respective Commercial Banks Associations/Unions, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Exporters & Importers Associations;

URGED Member States, pursuant to Article 73 of the Treaty, to use the COMESA Clearing House in order to generate resources for the COMESA Fund which will be used to leverage funding from cooperating partners for the sustainable funding of COMESA programmes.

ON DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

REITERATED the importance of democracy and good governance in the maintenance of peace, security and stability and **URGED** COMESA Member States to continue strengthening democratic processes, structures and institutions in order to consolidate democracy and good governance in the region;

CONGRATULATED His Excellency President Peter Mutharika upon his election as President of the Republic of Malawi; and **COMMENDED** the people of Malawi for turning up in large numbers to elect their leaders and for remaining peaceful and calm;

CONGRATULATED His Excellency President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi upon his election as President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and **SALUTED** the High Election Commission for its professional management of the elections and for incorporating and effectively managing the Diaspora vote;

CONGRATULATED His Excellency President Agila Selah Issa upon his election as President and **COMMENDED** the people of Libya for holding Parliamentary elections and for respecting the democratic processes;

CONGRATULATED His Excellency Sir Anerood Jugnauth, GCSK, GCMG, QC on his election as Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius, and **COMMENDED** the Electoral Commissioner's Office of Mauritius for its professional management of the elections and the people of Mauritius for turning up in large numbers to vote;

EXPRESSED condolences to the Government and the People of Zambia on the death of His Excellency President Michael Chilufya Sata;

CONGRATULATED His Excellency President Edgar Chagwa Lungu upon his election as the sixth President of the Republic of Zambia; **COMMENDED** the

Zambian Electoral Commission for its professional management of the elections especially given the short planning period to run the by-elections and **CONGRATULATED** the people of Zambia for remaining peaceful before, during and after the by-election;

CONGRATULATED the people of Union of Comoros and the Comoros Independent National Electoral Commission for successfully holding the legislative elections under peaceful conditions and **CALLED** for support to Comoros towards holding its Presidential Elections in 2016;

EXPRESSED APPRECIATION to COMESA Elections Observer Missions and particularly **APPRECIATED** the Committee of Elders upon their role in supporting the consolidation of democracy in the region;

ENDORSED the election of Ambassador Ashraf Gamaal Rashed from Egypt, Sir James Mancham from Seychelles, Ms Hope Kishanda Kivengere from Uganda and Ambassador Dr Simbi Veke Mubako from Zimbabwe as members of the COMESA Committee of Elders and **APPOINTED** them for a term of four years.

ON PEACE AND STABILITY

REITERATED the importance of peace, security and stability for creating an enabling environment for investment and economic development;

REITERATED the importance of comprehensive post conflict reconstruction as an imperative to successful peace processes and **COMMENDED** the Secretariat for its efforts to empower border communities in the Great Lakes Region through the construction of border markets and offices;

COMMENDED the Government of President Hery Rajaonarimampianina for the remarkable progress made in the socio-economic transformation of Madagascar since assuming power, and **ENCOURAGED** the President and political leaders to pursue their efforts to promote national reconciliation;

WELCOMED the talks between H.E President Bashir and H. E President Salva Kiir towards ending hostilities between the Sudan and South Sudan; and **ENCOURAGED** them to continue to seek non-violent, peaceful and constructive resolution of disputes;

URGED Member States to continue to monitor the situation in Burundi very closely and to provide support towards peaceful 2015 elections that reflect the will of the people of Burundi;

Realizing the negative socio-economic impact of the unilateral sanctions imposed on Sudan by the United States of America and other international partners, **CALLED** for the lifting of these sanctions to allow for the enhancement of development, peace, stability and regional integration;

EXPRESSED deep concern over the deteriorating situation in Libya and **CONDEMNED** in the strongest terms all acts of violence and terrorism by armed militia groups;

ENCOURAGED its Member States to sign and ratify the Protocol on Amendments to the Protocol establishing the African Court of Justice and Human Rights and **COMMENDED** Kenya on its pledge to provide financial support towards the establishment of the Court;

WELCOMED the withdrawal of the charges against His Excellency Mr Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya at the ICC; and **REQUESTED** the ICC to terminate or suspend the proceedings against Deputy President William Samoei Ruto of Kenya until the African Concerns and Proposals for amendments of the Rome Statute of the ICC are considered;

CALLED upon the African State Parties to the Rome Statute to continue their firm commitment to the African Union decision which calls on the African State Parties to preserve the integrity of the African States and immunity of its Presidents;

Further **CALLED UPON** the African Union Commission to transmit its decisions regarding the relations with the ICC, which were issued in its ordinary session in Addis Ababa in January 2015 to the United Nations Security Council, including the necessary follow-up on the implementation of the paragraph of the Decision which called for the UNSC to withdraw its referral of the Sudan case from the ICC;

SUPPORTED the AU to pursue political, legal and strategic approaches to address concerns over proceedings initiated against African Sitting Heads of State and Government and the threat it poses to the ongoing efforts to promote peace and national healing, and reject particularly the continued efforts to arrest President Bashir;

COMMENDED the decision taken by the African Union during its Summit on the relations with the ICC for the enlargement of the function of the African Court of Justice and Human Rights to deal with African cases;

EXTENDED its condolences to the Government and people of Malawi and Madagascar over the impact of the floods including the loss of life, destruction of property and displacement of people; and **CALLED ON** the region to support Malawi, Madagascar and all other affected countries to recover from the floods;

CALLED ON the countries of the region to strengthen their disaster preparedness; as well as establish disaster early warning and rapid response systems.

ON SECURITY

NOTED with appreciation the reduction of piracy in the Indian Ocean and **COMMENDED** the efforts by respective actors that are attributed to this decline, including EU naval operation ATALANTA, EUCAP Nestor and the operations of AMISOM; and thus **REQUESTED** that the international forces be maintained until such a time that stability and normalcy is restored in Somalia;

CONDEMNED all acts of terrorism in the region including incidents in Djibouti, Egypt, Kenya, Libya and Somali and **EXTENDED** its condolences to the families of the victims, the governments and peoples of the affected countries;

Specifically **CONDEMNED** in the strongest terms the barbaric beheading of 21 Egyptian Christians by the Islamic State and **CONVEYED** its condolences to the families of the victims and the Government of Egypt;

Strongly **CONDEMNED** all acts of violence by the Allied Democratic Forces – NALU, the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda and the Lord's Resistance Army;

Strongly **CONDEMNED** the failure of the FDLR to disarm and demobilize voluntarily as they pledged to do before the set deadline of 02 January 2015; and **COMMENDED** President Joseph Kabila, the DRC Government and the DRC FARDC for launching military operations against the FDLR, and also **URGED** the pursuit of said operations up to the total neutralization of this group;

URGED the DRC and the UN to resolve the impasse that has resulted in the pull out of MONUSCO from the joint operations against the FDLR;

NOTED with appreciation the dismantling of ADF strongholds from positions in eastern DRC and **COMMENDED** FARDC's efforts through the various phases of Operation Sukola; and **CALLED** on the DRC and MONUSCO to urgently intensify their efforts to neutralize the ADF to comprehensively dismantle of the group;

Further CALLED on all concerned parties to hasten the implementation of the Nairobi Declaration.

ON ADMINISTRATIVE, LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

COMMENDED the outgoing Assistant Secretary General (Administration and Finance) Ambassador Nagla El-Hussainy for her dedicated service to COMESA over the last ten years;

COMMENDED Member States for paying their annual assessed contributions to the budget of COMESA and **URGED** those Member States with arrears to clear them in accordance with approved repayment plans.

ON THE COMESA RESERVES

NOTED with appreciation the status of the COMESA reserves.

ON INNOVATIVE MEANS OF FINANCING

URGED the Secretariat in collaboration with COMESA Institutions to come up with proposals for innovative means of financing for COMESA institutions and Member States.

ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF COMESA HEADQUARTERS

RECALLED Summit decision of 2012 on the exploration of funding options for the COMESA Headquarters;

UNDERScoreD the importance of having the COMESA Headquarters constructed; and

ENDORSED Council Decision to set up a ministerial and technical committee to oversee the construction of the COMESA Headquarters.

ON THE COMESA COURT OF JUSTICE

COMMENDED the Government of the Republic of Sudan for putting up and furnishing the COMESA Court of Justice Building and for organizing a successful inauguration ceremony of the Court Building;

COMMENDED and EXPRESSED gratitude to the outgoing Judge President, His Lordship Mr Justice Nzamba Kitonga (Kenya) for his dedicated service to COMESA over the last ten years as Judge President of the COMESA Court of Justice;

COMMENDED AND EXPRESSED gratitude to the following Judges for their dedicated service to COMESA as Judges of the Appellate Division of the COMESA Court of Justice for the past ten years:

1. Honourable Justice Ernest Linesi Sakala (Zambia);
2. Honourable Justice Borhan Mohamed Tawhid Amrallah (Egypt);
3. Honourable Justice Kheshoe P. Matadeen (Mauritius); and
4. Honourable Justice Duncan G. Tambala (Malawi).

COMMENDED AND EXPRESSED gratitude to the outgoing Principal Judge of the COMESA Court of Justice, His Lordship Mr Justice Sam Rugege for his dedicated service to COMESA as Principal Judge of the First Instance Division of the COMESA Court of Justice for the past ten years;

COMMENDED AND EXPRESSED gratitude to the following Judges for their dedicated service to COMESA as Judges of the First Instance Division of the COMESA Court of Justice for the past ten years:

1. Honourable Justice Adrien Nyankiye (Burundi);
2. Honourable Justice James Munange Ogoola (Uganda);
3. Honourable Justice Menberetsehai Tadesse (Ethiopia);
4. Honourable Justice Luke Malaba (Zimbabwe);
5. Honourable Justice Stanley B. Maphalala (Swaziland); and
6. Honourable Justice Hortense Rabenjarivelo neé Rakotomena (Madagascar).

APPOINTED the following as Judges of the COMESA Court of Justice for a term of five years:

Appellate Division:

1. Judge President, Honourable Ms Justice Lombe P. Chibesakunda (Zambia);
2. Judge, Honourable Mr Justice David Chan Kan Cheog (Mauritius);
3. Judge, Honourable Mr Justice Michael Charles Mtambo (Malawi);
4. Judge, Honourable Mr Justice Abdalla Elamin El Bashir (Sudan); and
5. Judge, Honourable Mr Justice Wael Marodouh Hassan Youssef Rady (Egypt).

First Instance Division:

1. Principal Judge, Honourable Mr Justice Andrew Mutema (Zimbabwe);
2. Honourable Mr Justice Leonard Gacuko (Burundi);
3. Honourable Mr Justice Ali Sulaiman Mohamed (Ethiopia);
4. Honourable Ms Justice Mary N. Kasango (Kenya);
5. Honourable Ms Justice Qinisile Mabuza (Swaziland);
6. Honourable Mr Justice Benard Derek Errol Victor Georges (Seychelles); and
7. Honourable Ms Justice Clotilde Mukamurera (Rwanda).

ON THE COMESA COMPETITION COMMISSION

RENEWED the tenure of office for the following Commissioners of the COMESA Competition Commission for renewal another three years:

1. Matthews Chikankeni (Malawi)
2. Ali Mohammed Afkada (Djibouti)
3. Chilufya Sampa (Zambia)
4. Thabisile Langa (Swaziland)
5. Francis Kariuki (Kenya)

NOTED the appointment by Council of the following new Commissioners of the COMESA Competition Commission for a tenure of three years:

1. Amira Abdel Ghaffar Mohamed (Egypt)
2. Patrick Okilangole (Uganda)
3. Georges Jude Emmanuel TIRANT (Seychelles)

ON THE 2014 COMESA MEDIA AWARDS

AWARDED the 2014 COMESA Media Awards to the following:

1. Mr Julius Barigaba, the East African Newspaper, Uganda
2. Ms Violet Mengo, the Daily Newspaper, Zambia
3. Mr Leonidas Ninteretse, Radio Television Nationale du Burundi

APPRECIATION

EXPRESSED appreciation to His Excellency Hailemariam Desalegn, the Government and People of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia for the warm and fraternal hospitality extended to all delegates;

EXPRESSED appreciation to Her Excellency Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson of the African Union Commission, for hosting the March 2015 COMESA Summit and Policy Organs Meetings.

CONDOLENCES

EXPRESSED condolences to His Excellency Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, the Government and people of the Republic of Zambia on the death of the late President, His Excellency Michael Chilufya Sata, former President of the Republic of Zambia;

EXPRESSED condolences to His Excellency Mr. Pierre Nkurunziza, the Government and people of the Republic of Burundi on the death of many people and destruction of property as a result of flooding in the southern part of Burundi;

EXPRESSED condolences to His Excellency Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika, the Government and People of Malawi on the death of so many people and destruction of property as a result of flooding in the southern part of the COMESA region.

CLOSING OF THE SUMMIT

In closing the Summit, His Excellency Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, lauded their Excellencies for their constructive deliberations during the Summit. He said that the invaluable inputs helped to clarify the Heads' common understanding of the regional integration agenda of COMESA in 2015 and beyond.

He said that their Excellencies had achieved collective understanding of how to enhance value addition, inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and increasing access to the global value-chains. He noted that the decisions taken in all programme areas, and peace and security should be fully implemented by the Secretariat and Member States. He thanked the co-operating partners for their unwavering support to COMESA; and reiterated Ethiopia's commitment to the achievement of COMESA's set goals.

He urged their Excellencies to stand united in pursuit of implementation of the decisions of the Eighteenth COMESA Summit; and wished them a safe return to your respective countries.

The Authority **ADOPTED** its Final Communiqué as read by the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers, His Excellency Ato Ahmed Shide.

DONE Addis Ababa, Ethiopia **ON THE THIRTY FIRST DAY OF MARCH, 2015** in the Arabic, English and French languages, and all texts being equally authentic.