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**COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN
AND SOUTHERN AFRICA**

**TWENTY SECOND SUMMIT OF THE COMESA AUTHORITY OF
THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

Lusaka, Zambia
8 June 2023

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

*Theme: "Economic Integration for a Thriving COMESA Anchored on Green Investments,
Value Addition and Tourism"*

THE TWENTY SECOND SUMMIT OF THE AUTHORITY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA was hosted in physical format at Mulungushi International Conference Centre, Lusaka, Zambia on 8 June 2023, under the theme: *“Economic Integration for a Thriving COMESA Anchored on Green Investment, Value Addition and Tourism”*.

IN ATTENDANCE Heads of State and Government of Burundi, Egypt, Kenya, Malawi and Zambia. At Vice President Level; Libya, Seychelles, and Uganda. Prime Ministers; Kingdom of Eswatini and Deputy Prime Minister of Somalia.

PARTNERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The following development partners and organizations also attended the Summit: African Union Commission (AUC), the Commonwealth Secretariat and African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), Africa-Export-Import Bank (AFREXIM Bank), United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), international Trade Centre (ITC) African Union Development Agency-New Partnership for African Development (AUDA-NEPAD), International Labour Organization (ILO), African Development Bank (AfDB), European Union (EU), United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) and the International Conference on Great Lakes Region (ICGLR)

OPENING OF THE SUMMIT

His Excellency, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt and outgoing Chairperson of the Authority called the Summit to order;

ELECTED by acclamation the Bureau of the Twenty-Second Summit of the Authority with His Excellency, Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia, as Chairperson, His Excellency, Evariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic Burundi, as Vice Chairperson and His Excellency, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, as Rapporteur of the COMESA Authority;

His Excellency, Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia **RECOGNISED** and **EXPRESSED** gratitude to His Excellency, Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt for the service of Egypt as Chairperson of COMESA Authority since November 2021;

His Excellency, Hakainde Hichilema **THANKED** the Authority for the honour bestowed upon the Republic of Zambia to serve as Chairperson of the Authority and committed to advancing COMESA’s integration agenda.

The Heads of State and Government of Kenya and Malawi and the Vice President of Libya made maiden statements during the meeting;

In addition, the following regional economic communities and other regional and international organizations made statements: COMESA Secretariat, African Union

Commission; Commonwealth Secretariat, the AfCFTA Secretariat and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

AFTER THE FORMAL OPENING OF THE SUMMIT, THE AUTHORITY

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

NOTED the Report of the COMESA Business Council;

CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED the Report of the Forty-Third Meeting of the COMESA Council of Ministers;

CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED the Report of the Eighteenth Meeting of the COMESA Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

A. ON COVID – 19 PANDEMIC AND RECOVERY PATH

COMMENDED collaborative efforts by the Secretariat, Member States and other organizations including Africa-CDC, Global Fund, WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA in the bid to strengthen the region's health system;

NOTED with satisfaction the progress being made in the development of the region's Pharmaceutical Industry through sustainable production and supply of affordable medicines and pharmaceutical products in order to strengthen **PREPAREDNESS** towards combating future health-related challenges.

COMMENDED the Secretariat for the establishment of the COMESA Ministerial Committee on Health and steps towards operationalization of the COMESA Health Desk as strategies to effectively address health related challenges in the region.

APPRECIATED the economic recovery efforts in Member States and **RECOGNISED** tourism as a critical sector in enhancing the said recovery.

B. ON THE COMESA FREE TRADE AREA

NOTED that membership to the COMESA FTA remains at 16 and **URGED** Non-FTA Member States to make necessary steps to join the FTA;

APPRECIATED that Intra-COMESA exports expanded from US\$ 2.25 billion in 2000 when the FTA was established to US\$ 13 billion in 2021.

NOTED that the potential for Intra-COMESA trade is approximately USD 100 billion and **CALLED UPON** Member States to take necessary steps to attain the full potential for Intra-COMESA trade;

NOTED progress being made in enhancement of transparency and efficiency in tackling Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) to trade and **URGED** Member States and the Secretariat to continue strengthening institutional structures, reporting and monitoring tools for NTBs to capture wider ranges of barriers;

URGED Member States to speedily domesticate and enforce agreed Protocols and Regulations on the elimination of NTBs for the realisation of full benefits of trade liberalisation;

NOTED the progress being made in implementation of the *Small-Scale Cross Border Trade Initiative* to encourage formalisation of informal small scale cross border trade leading to higher revenue collection by governments and increased security for higher incomes for the traders;

NOTED the progress being made in implementation of the *Trade Facilitation Programme* to strengthen border management, increase efficiency in clearance and reduce transaction costs thereby leading to increased intra-COMESA trade and investments;

RECOGNIZED the support by Development and Cooperating Partners, including the European Union, World Bank, African Development Bank, Afrexim Bank, UNCTAD, World Customs Organization, among others, for continued support in the implementation of various Trade Facilitation instruments to overcome barriers and accelerate intra-regional trade and investments.

C: ON THE COMESA-EAC-SADC TRIPARTITE ARRANGEMENT

RECALLED that the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) Agreement was launched in June 2015 in Sharm-El-Sheikh, Egypt;

RECOGNIZED the importance of the Tripartite Agreement in resolving the challenges of multiple memberships in the three Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and of championing and expediting continental integration process.

NOTED the adoption of the *Tripartite Transport and Transit Facilitation Programme* model laws and regulations to facilitate cross border trade in the Tripartite region and **URGED** the scaling up of the Programme to Continental level;

NOTED that the following 11 Tripartite Member/Partner States have submitted instruments of ratification: Botswana, Burundi, Egypt, Eswatini, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe;

NOTED that the Tripartite Agreement only requires three more ratifications for its entry into force and **CALLED UPON** COMESA Member States that have not yet ratified to do so.

CALLED UPON COMESA, the AfCFTA Secretariats, and other regional bodies to work together in **COLLABORATION** in strengthening continental integration.

D: ON PROMOTION OF MOVEMENT OF PERSONS, LABOUR, AND SERVICES

RECOGNIZED the importance of services in fostering production, employment generation and Foreign Direct Investments and **URGED** Member States to liberalize various sectors in order to facilitate production and movements of goods and services across the region;

URGED Member States to remove all restrictions on movement of persons, labour, goods and services across the region including visa requirements and mutual recognition of qualifications in order to foster intra-regional trade and investments, for full realization of the benefits of integration;

E: ON INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

APPRECIATED the financial and technical support provided by cooperating partners to Member States and the COMESA Secretariat on infrastructure projects;

NOTED the progress in establishment of a Navigational Route between Lake Victoria and the Mediterranean Sea (VICMED) Project and the establishment of the Shipping Line for COMESA Island States as part efforts to enhance surface connectivity;

ENCOURAGED Member States to harmonize and domesticate adopted regional transport policies, Economic Regulations and Consumer Protection Guidelines developed by the African Civil Aviation Commission applicable under the Single African Air Transport Market;

APPRECIATED efforts made towards the establishment of the East African Power Pool (EAPP) and the work done by the Regional Association of Energy Regulators of Eastern and Southern Africa in establishing regional guidelines for renewable energy integration in the Eastern Africa-Southern Africa-Indian Ocean (EA-SA-IO) region;

F: ON GENDER AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

NOTED the progress achieved in the implementation of initiatives in economic empowerment of women, youth and social justice across the region and urged for their inclusion in the implementation of all programmes and activities in the integration agenda;

G. ON AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY AND PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

NOTED progress made in the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture and Development Programme (CAADP) and urged Member States to adopt

technologies and innovations that enhance productivity, food security, value addition and green investments.

URGED Member States to fast track the domestication of the 2017 – 2026 COMESA Industrial Strategy and Action Plan and **PROMOTION** of joint Investments across the region;

ENCOURAGED Member States to promote higher productivity, value addition and diversification of products and markets as a way of transforming the economies of Member States and creating employment opportunities;

ENDORSED the COMESA Regional Blue Economy Strategy and urged Member States to make every effort to domesticate the Strategy, promote it and encourage Public Private Partnerships in its implementation;

H: ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

CONGRATULATED the President of the Republic of Zambia and the Government of the Republic of Zambia for being elected as the Chair of the Paris- Agreement's African Group of Negotiators (AGN) for 2022-2023;

COMMENDED the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt for hosting the COP27 in November 2022 and associated itself with the outcomes of the Conference;

RECOGNIZED the establishment of a Loss and Damage Fund as an important achievement in implementing the Polluter Pays Principle for damages caused by climate change and **CALLED ON** its early operationalisation;

URGED the Transition Committee that was established by COP27 to provide practical and actionable recommendations that will assist countries that suffer loss and damage due to adverse effects of climate change;

NOTED WITH CONCERN the adverse effects of climate change-induced droughts and cyclones in the reporting period also noting the potential of these hazards to adversely affect the peace and conflict dynamics in the region;

EXPRESSED deep sympathy with victims of the CYCLONE FREDDY during floods in Malawi, parts of Zambia and Madagascar as well as floods in DR Congo;

APPRECIATED national Governments in COMESA and international organisations that responded to Malawi's appeal for assistance towards aiding the victims of Cyclone Freddy;

EXPLORED the potential roles of the private sector in financing the regions climate action and green growth ambitions as well as the benefits of Africa's enormous and untapped natural resources for inclusive and sustainable growth;

CALLED UPON Member States to undertake effective regulatory reforms and incentives for enhancing climate and green growth investments for inclusive and sustainable development;

ENCOURAGED International Partners to enhance support to Member States in adaptation measures in order build long-term resilience to climate change shocks.

I. ON DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

CONGRATULATED His Excellency Hassan Sheikh Mohamud on his election as President for the Federal Republic of Somalia

ENCOURAGED the UN, AU, IGAD and COMESA to support Somalia in building its capacity to hold the 2026 elections under Universal Suffrage, and thus facilitate adherence to international best practices while supporting the aspirations of the Somali people.

CONGRATULATED H. E. Dr. William Samoei Ruto on his election as the fifth President of the Republic of Kenya and **WELCOMED** him to the COMESA Authority;

CONGRATULATED the People of Tunisia for peacefully participating in the Parliamentary elections and the Referendum.

APPRECIATED COMESA and the AU for deploying a joint election observer mission for preparing and deploying an observer mission for the General Election and for their deployment of a pre-elections assessment mission.

J. ON PEACE AND STABILITY

UNDERSCORED the importance of peace, security and stability for creating an enabling environment for investment, sustained economic development and a viable integration for the region;

REITERATED its support to an inclusive Libyan-led and Libyan-owned process facilitated by the United Nations.

WELCOMED the establishment of a joint 6+6 Committee and **URGED** it to address the remaining issues notably to finalise the legal basis towards holding the elections and to reach consensus on the eligibility criteria of candidates for the elections and thus **CALLED ON** all the parties to negotiate in good faith embracing a spirit of compromise

CALLED UPON the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Rapid Support Forces (RSF) to embrace dialogue to resolve their differences for the sake of the Sudanese people and the Region and **REITERATED** the need for a permanent ceasefire and to resume the political process as soon as possible;

TOOK NOTE of the Sudanese fleeing the conflict, **APPRECIATED** neighbouring countries that are hosting refugees and **APPEALED** to COMESA countries, the international community, and Humanitarian Agencies to provide support to the Sudanese refugees.

COMMENDED the Government of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia and the Tigray Peoples Liberation Front on their commitment and engagement in the Peace Talks that culminated in the signing of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement on 2nd November 2022, **FURTHER COMMENDED also** the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on its plans to commence a National Dialogue process with the view of identifying the root causes of contentious issues that could lead to conflict or crisis and **CALLED** on other countries in the region to adopt the same approach to strengthen national unity.

APPOINTED six Members of the COMESA Committee of Elders for a four-year term;

K. ON SECURITY

STRONGLY CONDEMNED the continued targeting and killings of civilians in the Eastern DR Congo by specifically the M23 and other armed groups including ADF, FDLR and CODECO.

WELCOMED the establishment of the East African Community Regional Force (EACRF) efforts to bring stability in Eastern DRC; **APPRECIATED** the Troop Contributing Countries, namely Burundi, Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda for their commitment and sacrifice; and **FURTHER WELCOMED** the establishment of the EAC Monitoring and Verification Mechanism.

WELCOMED also a decision by SADC to deploy a SADC Force to the Eastern DRC and encourage its coordination with the EACRF and other forces operating in the region.

URGED Member States to take necessary steps to ensure that their Anti-Money Laundering and Combating Financing of Terrorism (AML/CFT) legal and regulatory frameworks conform to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) international standards;

CALLED ON COMESA Secretariat to develop a policy and strategy on transnational organised crimes including a wide range of aspects including money laundering

L. ON PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

CALLED FOR development of a regional private sector development strategy for effective involvement and participation of private sector in the COMESA integration agenda by COMESA Secretariat and COMESA Business Council;

CALLED FOR the development and harmonization of continental standards through collaborative efforts between COMESA Secretariat, Member States and the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO);

CALLED UPON Member States to embrace Public Private Partnerships in order to fill financing gaps in development of land, water and air connectivity infrastructure, green investments and adaptation to climate change effects;

RECOGNIZED the importance of Tourism as a major driver to domestic economic growth, enterprise development and job creation and **URGED** Member States to identify niche tourist products and embrace the spirit of integrated tourism development.

M. ON COOPERATING PARTNERS

EXPRESSED appreciation to Development and Cooperating Partners for sustained solidarity and **URGED** them to continue supporting COMESA;

ENCOURAGED Development and Cooperating Partners to establish appropriate coordination structures for **HARMONIZATION and COORDINATION** of various programmes and activities to ensure **COMPLEMENTARITY and EFFECTIVE UTILIZATION** of resources;

N. ON SUPPORT FROM COMESA MEMBER STATES, ORGANS, INSTITUTIONS AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

NOTED WITH APPRECIATION the contributions made by COMESA Member States, Organs, Institutions and Specialized Agencies in promoting the COMESA Integration Agenda.

O. ON EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT

RENEWED the contract of Ms. Chileshe Kapwepwe (Republic of Zambia) as Secretary General of COMESA for a second term of Five Years.

RENEWED the contract of Dr. Dev Haman (Republic of Mauritius) as Assistant Secretary General (Administration and Finance) of COMESA for a second term of five years.

APPOINTED and SWORE IN Ambassador Dr. Mohamed Kadah (Arab Republic of Egypt) as Assistant Secretary General (Programmes) of COMESA for a first term of five years.

TOOK NOTE of the land donated by the Republic of Zambia for the construction of a new COMESA Headquarters and **CALLED UPON** COMESA to hasten its construction and **ENGAGE** the Government of Zambia to lead the Build Operate and Transfer (BOT) Project.

P. ON THE 2022 MEDIA WARD

AWARDED the 2022 COMESA Media Prizes to the following:

CAROLYN Jemutai Tomno (Kenya), RAKOTOMIARINTSOA Nirina Lalao Claude (Madagascar), Hany FOUAD (Egypt) and GERALD Tenywa (Uganda).

Q. VENUE OF NEXT SUMMIT

The 23rd Summit of the Heads of State and Government will be held in the Republic of Burundi.

The 24th Summit of the Authority of Heads of State and Government will be held in the Kingdom of Eswatini.

R. CLOSING OF THE SUMMIT

The Authority **ADOPTED** its Final Communiqué as read by the Secretary General of the Common Market.

S. VOTE OF THANKS

The Vote of thanks was **GIVEN** by the Vice Chairperson of the COMESA Authority His Excellency Mr. Evariste Ndayishimiye President of the Republic of Burundi

DONE at Lusaka, Zambia, this **eighth day of June 2023**, in the English, French and Arabic languages, all texts being equally authentic.