



**REMARKS BY EABC CHAIRMAN MR. JIM KABEHO AT THE LAUNCH
OF THE INAUGURAL EABC BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS
INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL, NAIROBI KENYA 10TH JANUARY 2018**

Fellow business leaders

Members of the Business Community

EABC Board Directors

Our Development Partners

EAC Partner States Governments

EAC Secretariat

Media Colleagues

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning to you all.

On behalf of the East African Business Council Board of Directors and on my own behalf I welcome you all to this Launch of the Inaugural EABC Business Excellence Awards organized by the East African Business Council and our partners.

As you may be aware, EABC was formed in 1997 and this year we are celebrating our 20 years of existence in leading the EAC Private sector towards advocating for a favourable business environment in the EAC region and the progression of the EAC integration process with a strong private sector input.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The 20th EABC Anniversary is an opportunity to reposition and rebrand EABC whilst making its key messages in view of the evolving and dynamic changes and scenarios in Policy Advocacy and representation of business interests. It will also provide an opportunity for EABC to increase its recognition as the voice of the Private Sector in East Africa and one of the foremost regional representative bodies in Africa.

The key planned events in celebrating the 20 years are:

(a) A high level conference as part of the 20th Anniversary celebrations on the 23rd March 2018 at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) Nairobi themed *“Beyond East Africa- Moving from Aspiration to Action”* expected to be attended by regional and international thought and business leaders, EABC members, Partners and Key EAC Stakeholders;

(b) A made in East Africa Products and Services Exhibition running from the 22nd to 23rd March 2018 aimed at promoting Made in East Africa Products and services

(c) The Inaugural EABC Business Excellence Awards (EABC BEAs) to be unveiled on the evening of 23rd March 2018 at the KICC.

(d) An Award Winners luncheon on the 24th of March 2018.

(e) Further, in recognizing the role of Women entrepreneurs in the EAC regional integration, a one day event on the 22nd March for the

East Africa Women in Business Platform focusing on improving the participation of Women in Business in the EAC Integration process will be held;

Ladies and gentlemen

EABC intends to bring to the fore the critical role of the Private sector in the EAC region through the EABC Business Excellence Awards which will be held biennially to reinforce the role of the private sector in the economy of East Africa and to recognize and celebrate businesses from Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, South Sudan and Uganda that demonstrate exceptional business performance in accelerating regional growth, creating wealth and employment and reducing poverty across the region. As the only regional business awards, the EABC-BEAs provide businesses in East Africa an opportunity to compete for the ultimate business accolade at the EAC level.

Ladies and gentlemen

As we launch the EABC BEAs today, this is to also officially open the call for entries and I therefore urge all businesses across the region to make their timely submissions. As earlier stated, the winners will be unveiled at the Gala Dinner on Friday 23rd March at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) Nairobi. The dinner will be graced by high level Public and Private Sector dignitaries from across the EAC and beyond.

The Entry process of these awards will be uploaded onto the EABC website (www.eabc-online.com/awards)

Ladies and Gentleman

The EABC BEAs will be recognizing companies in three categories with a total of 14 individual categories ie the Corporate Awards

which are the cross cutting category, Corporate Awards which are in the sector categories and crown it up with EABC Chairman's Award to be awarded to the **“Overall Best Regional Company”**. This Award will seek to recognize an East African company that has made the most notable contribution to the EAC objectives of accelerating regional growth, creating wealth and employment and reducing poverty across the region in ways that can be demonstrated.

As I conclude I take this opportunity to invite members of the business community, Partners, Public sector, Thought leaders and opinion shapers in business to join us in celebrating our successes and charting EABC's next agenda.

I thank you all.

God bless East Africa.

Asante sana