



**REPORT OF EABC CEO ROUND TABLE  
HELD ON 3<sup>RD</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020 AT THE AFRICAN TULIP HOTEL, ARUSHA, TANZANIA  
THEME: “BUSINESS & EMERGING OPPORTUNITIES”**

## 1.0 Background

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Round Table was organized by Business Community by East African Business Council (EABC) with support from GIZ Creating Perspective Project. With the theme “*Business Rebound & Emerging Opportunities*” the main objective of the Round Table was to convene members of the business community with aim to discuss on state of play of intra-EAC trade and investment, business rebound and emerging opportunities for business in the EAC region.

The CEO Round Table was officiated by Rt. Honourable Martin Ngoga, the Speaker of East African Legislative Assembly (EALA). The meeting was well attended by members of the business community from Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions.

*The list of the participants is hereto attached as Annex I*

## 2.0 Opening Session:

### 2.1 Welcome Remarks by Hon. D. Peter Mathuki EABC Executive Director



Dr. Peter Mathuki, Executive Director of the East African Business Council welcomed all delegates to the CEO Round Table. He thanked all delegates for creating time to participate in the CEO Round Table. He reiterated the need for the business community to reorganized themselves and speak with one voice in the region.

EABC Executive Director highlighted that reorganization of the business community will position the region as a stronger bloc in taking advantage presented by EAC integration as well as the wider African market through African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). He insisted that the application of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to EAC will opening new opportunities to businesses making the region to have over 250 million population.

He said that the attainment of the middle-income status by Tanzania coupled with country's decision to keep the economy open has offered a major relief to the private sector in terms of business resilience. He concluded by urging the business community to reorganized themselves and tap into the emerging opportunities presented by the regional and global economic changes as the world adapts to the new normal.

## **2.2 Remarks by Eng. John Benedict, Representative of GIZ-Creating Perspective Project**



Eng. John Benedict, Managing Director, Green Earth Paper Products Ltd, as a beneficiary of the GIZ-Creating Perspective Project elaborated on the support East African SMEs have received from the Project. He said that the Creating Perspective Project has been able to promote business partnerships between German companies and selected East African SMEs. Furthermore, the project has enabled SMEs to upscale their businesses through matchmaking and getting mentorship from German companies as well as product market access to Germany. He elaborated that through the project, East African companies have been receiving succession planning and management training and coaching.

### 2.3 Remarks by Mr. Walter S. Maeda, Chairman of TCCIA Arusha Region



Mr. Walter S. Maeda, the Chairman of the TCCIA, Arusha Region welcomed all delegates to the CEO Round Table. He reiterated the need for the business community in the EAC region to reorganize themselves in order to tap into the opportunities presented by EAC Common Market of over 170 million consumer market.

He said that if the private sector becomes united and speak with one voice it will become easy for the public sector to listen to their proposals. He said that the COVID-19 pandemic has generally affected daily life and especially the tourism sector an important sector in the Arusha region.

The Chairman urged the East African Governments to design various fiscal and monetary reliefs to enable businesses to recover from the impact of COVID-19 pandemic. He said the reliefs will enable the private sector to continue playing its role of job creation and contributing Government revenue in tax collection .

## 2.4 Opening Remarks by Rt. Hon. Martin Ngoga, Speaker of East African Legislative Assembly



Rt. Hon. Martin Ngoga, Speaker of East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) appreciated the EABC for organizing the CEO Round Table for the business community. He appreciated EABC for creating a regional platform for the business community to articulate regional issues.

The EALA Speaker said that though the EAC integration is work in progress he was apologetic that policymakers have not been very successful in developing deserving policies on a conducive environment for business in the region. He challenged the business community to be united and provide leadership in the EAC integration process. He hinted that unlike political interests which are diverse and keep changing business interests are always very common. He said that one of the reasons that lead to the collapse of the first East African cooperation was simple political misunderstandings among East African leaders.

Rt. Hon. Ngoga emphasized that to avoid the future collapse of the EAC, the future of integration should be entrusted to the business community and people of East Africa. He, therefore, urged the business community to provide leadership and direction to shape political leadership on EAC integration agenda.

### **3.0 Presentations and Discussions on Initiatives on Business Rebound and Emerging Opportunities**

#### **3.1 Presentation on Business Rebound & Emerging Opportunities in East Africa**

Ms. Miriam Mondosha of the EABC Secretariat presented on Business Rebound & Emerging Opportunities in East Africa. The presentation highlighted the following: SnapShot of EABC achievements and interventions on COVID-19; Projections of the Global, African and Regional Economic growth; Inter and Intra-EAC Trade; Impact of COVID-19 to Tourism, Transport & Logistic; Manufacturing & Agriculture and Emerging Opportunities.

*The presentation is attached hereto as Annex II*

#### **3.3 Plenary Session**

During the panel discussion, businesspersons shared views on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on the economic sectors and urged for various fiscal and monetary measures to support the recovery. Some of the sectors impacted by the pandemic include: tourism, agriculture especially horticulture, transport & logistic and air transport. The discussions highlighted that all sectors are interlinked both at the national and regional level and there is a need for the public sector to contemplate cross the border interest and implications during decision making.

In order to give relief in the tourism sector, both private and public sector should promote and support both regional and domestic tourism as players in the sector have lowered the cost of tourism.

Some of the recommendations arising from the meeting include:

- Business community committed to speak with one voice;
- Business community to provide leadership to influence political leaders in terms of creating a conducive environment of doing business in the region;
- Business community to reorganize themselves to tap into opportunities presented in the EAC integration process and African continent market through the African Continent Free Trade Area (AfCFTA);
- Business Community continue engaging the public sector through Public Private Dialogue to address challenges affecting businesses in the region;
- Business community to repurpose their business to be able to seize emerging opportunities presented by the current challenges of COVID-19



#### 4.0 Closing Remarks by Mr. Kake Dhariwal, EABC Past Board Member & Managing Director of AVCO (T) Ltd



In his closing remarks, Mr. Kake Dhariwal, EABC Past Board Member and Managing Director AVCO (T) Ltd thanked all delegates for their active participation. He demonstrated the benefits his company has enjoyed as a member of EABC. He testified that his company has significantly benefited from policy changes instituted in the EAC region following EABC's advocacy. These benefits include: low transit time for trucks, reduced the turn around time of trucks across EAC borders, lodging of a single document instead of multiple documents for trading across EAC; usage one-stop border posts and mutual recognition of standards.

Mr. Kake urged business persons in Arusha to join EABC to get support on accessing the EAC common market, cross border trade assistance among other benefits presented by EAC integration agenda.

#### 4.0 Official Launching of New EABC Website.



Rt. Hon. Martin Ngoga, Speaker of East African Legislative Assembly officially launched the new revamped EABC Website [www.eabc-online.com](http://www.eabc-online.com)

## 5.0 Media Advocacy and Visibility

Dr. Peter Mathuki, CEO EABC participated in the press conference held after the round table.

The following are the news links:

- Press Release: [EABC Calls for Deeper Collaboration between the Public and Private Sector amid the Global Economic Disruptions](#)
- Leo TV: ZITAKA KENYA, UGANDA, RWANDA KUIGA TANZANIA ILIVYOKABILIANA NA COVID 19  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJeQn7BrBz8>
- Council calls for sector collaboration amid economic disruption  
<https://www.pd.co.ke/business/council-calls-for-sector-collaboration-amid-economic-disruption-50599/>
- Voice of America Swahili Radio: <https://youtu.be/JmBVu-iAcXM>
- Deeper public and private sector collaborations tipped to boost intra-EAC trade during pandemic <http://smartinvestor.co.ke/4400/deeper-public-and-private-sector-collaborations-tipped-to-boost-intra-eac-trade-during-pandemic>
- EAC urged to collaborate, drive region's trade <https://www.the-star.co.ke/business/2020-09-04-eac-urged-to-collaborate-drive-regions-trade/>
- EAC urged to collaborate, drive region's trade <https://www.msn.com/en-xl/news/other/eac-urged-to-collaborate-drive-regions-trade/ar-BB18Hiff>
- Why Tanzania's economy is shining despite Covid-19  
<https://www.thecitizen.co.tz/news/Why-Tanzania-s-economy-is-shining-despite-Covid-19/1840340-5618824-view-asAMP-13q876mz/index.html>
- EALA SAYS SORRY FOR HINDRANCE POLICIES <https://www.dailynews.co.tz/news/2020-09-035f511a26538b1.aspx>
- EAC to deliberate on business environment <https://www.dailynews.co.tz/news/2020-09-015f4de13a0dbc6.aspx>

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