

FINAL COMMUNIQUE of the 9th Summit of the COMESA Authority of Heads of State and Government

THE NINTH SUMMIT of the COMESA Authority of Heads of State and Government was held in Kampala, Republic of Uganda, on 7th and 8th June 2004 under the theme: Deepening Regional Integration Through COMESA Customs Union.

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

- (a) His Excellency Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda
- (b) His Excellency Mr. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe
- (c) His Majesty King Mswati III, King of the Kingdom of Swaziland
- (d) His Excellency Mr. Omer Hassan Ahmed El-Bashir, President of the Republic of Sudan
- (e) His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti
- (f) His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda
- (g) His Excellency Mr. Levy Mwanawasa President of the Republic of Zambia
- (h) His Excellency Mr. Mwai Kibaki, President of the Republic of Kenya
- (i) His Excellency Mr. Domitien Ndayizeye, President of the Republic of Burundi
- (j) His Excellency Mr. Azali Assoumani, President of the Union des Comores
- (k) His Excellency Dr. Bingu wa Mutharika, President of the Republic of Malawi
- (l) His Excellency Mr. Jean-Pierre Bemba, Vice-President of the Democratic Republic of Congo
- (m) His Excellency Atef Abeid, Prime Minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt

The following Plenipotentiaries represented their countries:

- (a) His Excellency Mr. Jérémie Bonnelame, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Seychelles

(b) His Excellency Mr. Marcel Ranjeva, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Madagascar

(c) His Excellency Mr. J. K Cuttaree, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Regional Cooperation of the Republic of Mauritius

(d) His Excellency Mr. Sufian Ahmed, Minister of Finance and Economic Development of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

(e) His Excellency Stifanos Habte Ghebremariam, Head of the Delegation of the State of Eritrea

His Excellency Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, First President of the Republic of Zambia attended as a Special Guest.

The following countries attended as observers: Botswana, China, France, India, South Africa, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the United States of America.

The following represented their Organisations at the Summit: His Excellency Patrick Mazhimpaka, Vice-Chairman of the Commission of the African Union; Honourable Donald Mackinnon, Secretary General, Commonwealth; Mrs. Laila Ben Barka, Deputy Executive Secretary of United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN); Dr. Michael Gondwe, President, Eastern and Southern Africa Trade and Development Bank (PTA Bank); Mr. Shadreck Lubasi, Managing Director, PTA Re-Insurance Company (ZEP-Re); Dr. Kombo Moyana, Executive Secretary, COMESA Clearing House; Mr. Siphon H. Zwane, Registrar, COMESA Court of Justice; Dr. Geremew Debele, Director, Leather and Leather Products Institute (LLPI); Mr. Godfrey Onyango, Executive Secretary, TTCA Northern Corridor; Mr. Albert Muchanga, Deputy Executive Secretary, Southern African Development Community (SADC); Dr. Kiplagat Cheluget, Deputy Secretary General, East African Community (EAC); Dr. Ali Gaddaye Adoukhour, Deputy Secretary General of the Community of Sahel and Saharian States (CEN-SAD); and Mr. Damian Udenma Agbanelo, Secretary General, African Regional Organisation for Standardisation(ARSO).

The following organisations were also represented: the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF); the African Development Bank (ADB); the Islamic Development Bank (IDB); the European Commission (EC); the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA); the United States of America Agency for International Development/Regional Economic Development Services Office for East and Southern Africa (USAID/REDSO/ESA); the World Health Organisation; Dr. Attala Hamad Bashir, Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Authority on

Development (IGAD); the International Civil Aviation Organisation; the World Bank (IBRD); the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA); and African Export and Import Bank (AFRIEXIM).

His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, in his welcoming statement extended the hospitality of the people of Uganda to the delegates attending the COMESA Summit and Business Summit.

The President recognised the historic nature of the ninth Summit as it was taking place on the 10th anniversary of the transformation of the PTA into COMESA, which took place in Kampala, Uganda when the Treaty was signed in 1993. The President further noted that as Chairman in 1993 he presided over this momentous occasion and now he was assuming the Chairmanship of the Organisation in the year COMESA is advancing preparations for launching the Customs Union.

He acknowledged the partnership that had to be built between governments and business leaders given the challenges of wealth creation, sustainable development and poverty alleviation faced by COMESA. He challenged business leaders to identify and conclude agreements on mutually beneficial business partnerships during the Business Summit.

The outgoing Chairman of the Authority, His Excellency President Mr. Omer Hassan Ahmed El-Bashir, President of the Republic of Sudan, expressed appreciation for the hospitality extended to the delegations by the people of Uganda. He recognized the invaluable assistance that he had received from the members of the Bureau in discharging the responsibilities that had been entrusted to him.

He underlined the role that COMESA has to play as a building block of the African Union. He further identified a number of global developments that had a negative impact on COMESA Member States.

President Omer Hassan Ahmed El-Bashir paid tribute to the efforts of his fellow African leaders in resolving conflicts on the continent and saluted the launching of the African Peace and Security Committee and the intentions behind the Great Lakes Conference to be held later this year.

On the economic front he regretted the negative impact likely to arise from the escalating oil prices on the member States economies and urged committed implementation of regional integration initiatives to mitigate the impact of such external shocks. He further recognized the importance of agriculture to the economies of the region and recommended that member States prioritize implementation of the COMESA programme on agricultural development.

The President also congratulated Rwanda and Burundi for joining the COMESA FTA.

President El-Bashir assured the incoming chairman of his support and recognised that a safe pair of hands was taking over from him.

In accepting the Chairmanship of the COMESA Authority, His Excellency, Yoweri Kaguta Museveni President of the Republic of Uganda, expressed gratitude at the honour bestowed on the Ugandan people and himself on the appointment. He also thanked the outgoing Chairman, His Excellency Mr. Omar Hassan Ahmed El-Bashir, President of the Republic of Sudan for his leadership of the organisation over the last year.

President Museveni also shared his ideas with the Heads of State and Government on a number of issues, which included multilateral issues, infrastructure development, relationship between regional integration organisations, supply side issues and marketing arrangements for the region's products.

He strongly supported resumption of negotiations under WTO framework and in this regard called on COMESA to articulate issues of interest to the member States with a unity of purpose.

He further urged member States to make a concerted effort to improve the trading environment in the region by removing remaining non-tariff barriers and supporting the activities of the trading community who should be the drivers of regional integration.

He called for a paradigm shift in the development of common user infrastructural facilities in that they had to be recognised as regional assets. In this regard he undertook to lead regional consultations on how this goal could be realised.

The President stressed the need for member States to benefit from the raw materials that are in abundance in the region to enhance the returns that the region gets from exports. Products identified as meriting immediate attention, in this regard, were tea, coffee, copper and tobacco.

The other priority programmes identified by the incoming chairman were agricultural development, industrialisation, intra-firm trade, environmental protection, informal cross-border trade, economic and regulatory policies and mainstreaming of women in business.

The incoming Chairman undertook to lead COMESA Member States through the challenges ahead with resolve and determination to improve the lives of the people of the COMESA region.

After the formal opening of the Summit, the Authority:

ELECTED by acclamation the Republic of Uganda as Chairman, the Republic of Djibouti as Vice-Chairman and the Republic of Sudan as Rapporteur.

CONGRATULATED and welcomed His Excellency Dr. Bingu Wa Mutharika for his being elected President of the Republic of Malawi and looked forward to his contribution to the strengthening of COMESA in particular and regional integration in general.

NOTED the Report of the Secretary General on the state of integration in COMESA.

CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED the Report of the Seventeenth Meeting of the Council of Ministers and that of the Fifth Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

ENDORSED the summary conclusions of the First COMESA Business Summit and agreed on the need to maintain public and private sector partnership.

ENDORSED the Communiqué of the First Summit of the First Ladies of the COMESA Heads of State and Government which took place simultaneously with the Ninth COMESA Summit.

URGED the Member States that are not participating in the FTA to do so as soon as possible.

COMMENDED the Republic of Burundi and the Republic of Rwanda on joining the Free Trade Area on 1st January 2004.

EXTENDED the derogation to the Kingdom of Swaziland from reciprocating tariff preferences up to the next Summit and urged her to complete consultations with her other SACU partners to allow her to join the Free Trade Area by 2005.

NOTED with satisfaction the growth in intra-COMESA trade.

URGED Member States to expeditiously eliminate the remaining non-tariff barriers in order to further enhance intra-COMESA trade.

NOTED the need to enhance the food security situation in the region and URGED the Member States to expedite implementation of COMESA programmes that address the food security concerns of the region.

EMBRACED the Kigali Declaration and Kigali Consensus of African Ministers of Trade on WTO multilateral negotiations.

SUPPORTED the Kigali Communiqué on UNCTAD XI by the African Ministers of Trade.

EXPRESSED concern that little progress has been made in implementing the Doha Development Agenda.

NOTED the progress that the Eastern and Southern African countries, which are also African Caribbean Pacific countries, have made in negotiating an Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union.

REAFFIRMED the role of COMESA as a building block to support the AU agenda for the integration of Africa.

APPRECIATED the work being done by COMESA and AU/NEPAD to implement programmes on agriculture and infrastructure and urged that the programmes be implemented expeditiously.

URGED the National Telecommunications Operators (NTOs) to participate in the COMTEL project and facilitate the due diligence exercise to be conducted by the Strategic Equity Partner.

URGED the Secretariat to finalise the programme on addressing HIV/Aids being developed in collaboration with other international organisations.

REAFFIRMED the need for Member States to continue supporting the PTA Bank, PTA Re-insurance Company (ZEP-Re), the COMESA Clearing House, the African Trade Insurance Agency (ATI) and the Leather and Leather Products Institute (LLPI) in taking up membership or fulfilling their share capital commitments as the case may be.

REAFFIRMED their decision on the need for the PTA Bank to finalise the practical modalities jointly with the Government of Burundi for the return of the Bank to Bujumbura, in accordance with the Authority decision at its Seventh Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

REITERATED the need for Member States that have not yet ratified the Protocol Establishing the COMESA Fund to do so as soon as possible.

URGED Member States to take measures to ratify all COMESA Protocols where they have not done so.

NOTED with satisfaction the progress made in enhancing the role of women in leadership positions in COMESA Member States.

APPRECIATED the support received from cooperating partners in the implementation of COMESA programmes and URGED them to continue the support.

NOTED with satisfaction the continued collaboration between COMESA and other regional organisations in Africa particularly with regard to joint programming under the Regional Integration Programme funded under the Ninth European Development Fund.

CALLS on the authorities of the United States of America to urgently enact the African Growth and Opportunities Act III, having due regard to the heavy investments and employment creation in the COMESA region as a result of the duty and quota free provisions of the legislation.

REITERATED the critical importance of peace, security and stability for the realization of the social and economic development objectives of COMESA.

REAFFIRMED the need to enhance solidarity among Member States of COMESA in the promotion of peace and security under the COMESA economic integration agenda as enshrined in the COMESA Treaty.

REVIEWED the peace and security situation in the COMESA Region and acknowledged the significant gains made in the promotion of peace, security and stability.

EXPRESSED APPRECIATION and satisfaction on the improvement of the security situation in Burundi and reiterated its support to the government and people of Burundi in the search for durable and sustainable peace.

COMMENDED the Governments of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Republic of Mozambique and the Republic of South Africa under the auspices of the African Union for their peacekeeping efforts in the Republic of Burundi which have provided a conducive environment for the process leading to democratic elections.

WELCOMED the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1545 which provides the mandate for the deployment of United Nations Peace keeping forces in the Republic of Burundi.

NOTED with deep concern the atrocities being committed by the Palihehutu-FNL and their refusal to join the peace process in Burundi.

COMMENDED the authorities and people of the Comoros for the significant progress achieved in resolving the political problems faced by that country.

NOTED the outcome of the recently held Legislative elections in Comoros and encouraged the authorities in the archipelago to pursue efforts in consolidating their democratic process in the country.

NOTED the outcome of the recently held Presidential and Legislative elections in Malawi and commended the people of the Republic of Malawi for holding peaceful and successful elections.

COMMENDED the transitional government of national unity and the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo for their continued commitment to peace and for the significant progress made towards the process of holding democratic elections.

NOTED however with deep concern the recent escalation of violence and deterioration of peace and security in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, particularly in Bakavu and Walikale that is causing untold suffering and loss of lives of innocent civilians.

URGED the United Nations Security Council to deploy more peace keepers to the Democratic Republic of Congo to strengthen MONUC to enable it contain the on-going violence.

AGREED on the need for Member States to urge that the international community should use all possible means to accelerate the disarmament of Interahamwe and ex-FAR in line with the provisions of the Lusaka and Pretoria agreements.

AGREED on the need for COMESA Member States to give impetus to the United Nations and the African Union efforts to address the impasse in the Ethiopia - Eritrea peace process through dialogue.

URGED COMESA Member States to support and encourage Ethiopia and Eritrea to comply with the Resolution 1531 of March 2004.

URGED the Somali people to put an end to their differences and put the interest of their country first.

URGED COMESA Member States and the international community to assist in mobilizing resources for the Somali Peace process.

COMMENDED the Government of Sudan and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army for signing the protocols which represent a major step leading to the conclusion of a final and comprehensive peace agreement.

URGED COMESA Member States and the international community to assist the Government of Sudan in post-conflict reconstruction particularly in areas affected by the conflict.

EXPRESSED APPRECIATION to the Government of the Republic of Kenya and the Inter Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) for their continued efforts in facilitating the Sudan and Somali Peace Talks.

EXPRESSED concern that the problem of refugees and internally displaced persons continues to pose a major challenge to sustainable development in the COMESA region.

AGREED on the need for COMESA Member States to address the issue of refugees and internally displaced persons collectively.

URGED Member States to set up a mechanism for sharing information for the maintenance of peace, security and stability in the region.

NOTED with appreciation the bid by Egypt to host the Pan African Parliament and commended Egypt for her commitment and readiness to host the Parliament.

EXPRESSED appreciation to His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, the Government and people of the Republic of Uganda for the warm and fraternal hospitality extended to all delegates.

His Excellency Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti moved a vote of appreciation to His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, for the warm hospitality extended to all the delegations during the Summit. On behalf of the President and Government of the Republic of Djibouti, he invited all the Heads of State and Government to the next Summit to be held in Djibouti in 2005.

His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, in closing the Summit, thanked his colleagues for their attendance. On behalf of his colleagues and on his own behalf, he further congratulated the outgoing Bureau for the excellent work they had done. President Museveni reiterated the commitment of the incoming Bureau to continue with the implementation of the COMESA programmes. He also gave a comprehensive catalogue of the challenges to be tackled during his team's term of office and identified the strategies to be employed in responding to them.

Finally, President Museveni echoed the sentiments of all his colleagues on the need for continued promotion of peace and security in the region.

The Authority adopted its Final Communiqué as read by the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers, Honourable Professor Edward Rugumayo, Minister of Tourism, Trade and Industry of the Republic of Uganda.

DONE at Kampala, in the Republic of Uganda on 8th June 2004 in the English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic.