

The Minister of Trade, Industry and Co-operatives in the Government of Uganda, Hon. Amelia Kyambadde, on Wednesday, 26 September 2012 held a press briefing in order to launch the country's hosting of this year's Summit to the media. At the briefing hon. Kyambadde said that Uganda is a founder member of the PTA in 1982, and that the Treaty transforming the PTA to COMESA was signed in Kampala on 05 November 1993.

"Uganda agreed to host the Summit this year, and it shall take place at the Speke Resort, Munyonyo on 23-24 November 2012 alongside various Policy Organs' meetings that commence on 13 November 2012."

"The theme of this year's Summit: "Enhancing Intra-COMESA Trade Through MSMEs Development," emphasizes the importance and central role that MSMEs play in the economies of our Member States. It is our strong conviction that MSMEs be promoted and encouraged to access the intra-regional market to improve the livelihoods of our people," she said.

Hon, Kyambadde added that it is expected that all Heads of State of COMESA will attend as well as invited leaders from other RECs, the region, and internationally. "We will have a trade fair and bazaar as well as business forum to discuss trade, investment, tourism, infrastructure and communications. I encourage the private sector in all Member States to come and enhance business and economic development in our region," Hon Kyambadde said.

She added that Uganda will also have acceded to the Tripartite FTA by the time the country hosts the Summit in November.

The 7th meeting of the First Spouses round table will also be held in Kampala, and the Minister said that the country's hosing of the summit will further Uganda's visibility and profile on the international scene.

The briefing was attended by Kenya's Ambassador to Uganda, His Excellency Geoffrey Okanga; COMESA's ASG (Finance & Administration), Amb. Nagla El-Hussainy; and also officers from the COMESA Secretariat as well as from the Ministry of Trade, Uganda.