

COMESA Secretary General Sindiso Ngwenya has told the various stakeholders in the Transportation industry in Uganda that COMESA intends to increase the Gross Domestic Product from the current US\$18 in 2011 to US\$50 Billion by the year 2015 provided the stakeholders are ready to embrace the new technologies and work extra harder.

“We need to work very hard because I made a promise at the just ended COMESA heads of states and summit here in Kampala, at Munyonyo, to the heads of states and government, that we need to increase the Gross Domestic product of the region from the 18 billion Us dollars in 2011 to 50 billion US dollars by the year 2015,” Ngwenya said.

He added; “ we are only going to achieve this if we work hard and embrace the new technologies currently in place. We also need to be ready to work 24 hours as we expect cargo to move without stopping and at the borders, we will need to operate without stopping.”

The Secretary-General said that there is need for the transporters to employ two drivers who should get certified to drive cargo in the night without stopping.

“Why should you pack your truck in the evening because you don’t have night drivers? You need to have two drivers like it is in the air transport where there are two pilots and these drivers should be certified to drive in the evening, and this is the only way we shall meet the target,” Ngwenya echoed.

With the ever-rising trade amongst and beyond the COMESA region the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa COMESA Secretariat, has realized the need for reducing the cost of doing business in various ways.

One of the way in which the region will gain in the ever-growing trade is by reducing the transportation costs of goods from one point to the final destination by cutting down on unnecessary costs y using new technologies that cost less.

In this vain, COMESA has continued to sensitize its' Member States on the use of the new projects i.e., the Comesa Trade Virtual Trade facilitation system and the COMESA Electronic marketing system which are aimed at reducing the cost of doing business.

The second sensitization workshop was conducted in Kampala, Uganda at the Hotel Africana, attended by the Uganda Revenue authority, the Uganda Transportation Association, Insurance Companies and many other stakeholders.

He told the participants that the pilot project will run for three months after which recommendations will be made as to whether the project can work or not.

Ngwenya was however quick to urge the Customs authority to ensure that they examine each truck so that no illegal compartments may be used to carry smuggled goods.

He said that there is also need to ensure that the truckers or transporters carry with them approved customs declaration documents form the origin through the borders until the point of destination.

The Uganda Transporter have been given 50 units for piloting the project in the Kampala and other parts of the country.