

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa traces its genesis to the mid 1960s. The idea of regional economic co-operation received considerable impetus from the buoyant and optimistic mood that characterised the post-independence period in most of Africa. The mood then was one of pan-African solidarity and collective self-reliance born of a shared destiny. It was under these circumstances that, in 1965, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) convened a ministerial meeting of the then newly independent states of Eastern and Southern Africa to consider proposals for the establishment of a mechanism for the promotion of sub-regional economic integration. The meeting, which was held in Lusaka, Zambia, recommended the creation of an Economic Community of Eastern and Central African states.

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