



# SUMMIT

Newsletter 2018

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## 20<sup>th</sup> Summit: A Watershed for COMESA

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## 20th Summit: A Watershed for COMESA

The Twentieth COMESA Summit of the Authority of Heads of State and Government that took place July 9 - 19, 2018 was a watershed moment of the regional economic community. The expansion of the Common Market from 19 to 21 Members States brought back a founder member Somalia and a new member, Tunisia.

At the same time, two of COMESA Members, erstwhile

arch foes, Ethiopia and Eritrea, buried the hatchet and signed a joint declaration of peace. And as the COMESA Policy Organs and Summit progressed, major diplomatic breakthroughs were unfolding in Addis Ababa and Asmara.

"Things are happening at lightning speed," Ambassador Beyene Russom of Eritrea who represented his country at the Policy Organs meetings and the Summit said.

"I have never dreamt this would happen in my lifetime."

At the same time, the Summit brought in the first lady Secretary General Ms. Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe and marked the end of the tenure of Mr. Sindiso Ngwenya. Ngwenya left after serving the organization for three and half decades rising from the technical rank and file, to the pinnacle of the regional body.



The Summit was attended by three Heads of State and Heads of State Plenipotentiaries including one Vice President, two Prime Ministers, one Deputy PM. Eleven Ministers, one Chief Administrative Secretary and one Ambassador led their respective country delegations to the Summit.

*A section delegates at the Summit*

Sectoral Ministerial meetings preceded the Summit where policy decisions to guide the regional block in the next one year were taken.



*L-R: President Hery Rajaonarimampianina (Madagascar), President Edgar Lungu (Zambia) and former Secretary General Sindiso Ngwenya*



Chair of the Authority, President Hery Rajaonarimampianina' 2nd Right and Tunisia Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Mr. Khemaies Jhnaoui raise the Tunisia flag to mark the country accession to COMESA

## What Tunisia, Somalia Brings to COMESA

The admission of Tunisia and Somalia as the 20th and 21st members of COMESA came to pass as the final rites were performed at the 20th Summit. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Tunisia, Mr. Khemaies Jhnaoui appended the final signatures to the accession documents while Somalia Prime Minister Mr. Hassan Ali Khaire did the same for his country.

The flags of the two States were then placed in their right alphabetical positions amongst those of 19 older Member States. Tunisian flag will henceforth flutter between that of Sudan and Uganda while that of Somalia takes its place between that of Seychelles and Sudan. For, Somalia, it was a grand

homecoming after more than three decades since the fall of government in 1981. Somalia is a founder member of the Preferential Trade Area, the precursor to COMESA.

The two States bring into the

Common Market a combined population of about 26 million people, with 11.3 million Tunisians and Somalia's 14.7 million. Similarly, the COMESA Gross Domestic Product has risen to \$768 million with Tunisia's \$40.2 million and Somalia's \$7.3 million.



Somalia Prime Minister Mr. Hassan Ali Khaire (R) signing accession documents

# The Scorecard and the Road Ahead



*Chair of the Authority, H.E. President Hery Rajaonarimampianina and Malawi President H.E. Prof. Arthur Peter Mutharika*

The adoption of innovative technologies was one of the fulfilling developments of the first 20 months of President Hery Rajaonarimampianina's tenure as chair of the COMESA Authority.

In his keynote address at the Summit, the President described as a game changer, the deployment of innovative technologies such as the Blockchain, which is now in use by insurance companies.

"Another first that COMESA has scored in deploying innovative technologies and applications is the use of the Blockchain technology by our insurance companies who have started issuing the digital COMESA Yellow Card," he said. "This will enable motorists to buy the Yellow Card online and speed up the settlements of claims."

He said this would lay the foundation for COMESA countries to participate in the new global economy that is

characterized by global supply chains and outsourcing.

## **Mobile Apps**

The President applauded the introduction of the COMESA Mobile Application for small scale cross-border traders which will reduce the cost of doing trade and the COMESA Electronic Certificate of Origin which is in the process of being implemented.

"Digitizing the implementation of our programmes will further facilitate

trade, connectivity, reduce our transaction time and costs, and certainly increase efficiency in our various interventions,” he noted.

Further, he commended the Africa Leather and Leather Products Institute for implementing the national and regional Design Studios, which through 3D printing has enabled leather clusters to manufacture customized shoes that can be sold online within the region and to the rest of the world.

“The economy of the future requires that the COMESA region reviews and overhauls the educational system to provide an education and skills that will see an increasing number of people being self-employed in the provision of services,” he said.

In his keynote address, titled “The Next Comesa and The Next Generation” Malawi President H.E. Prof Arthur Peter Mutharika, made a special case for the youth of the continent in virtue spaces.

“We can only prepare for the future by investing in the youth in a manner that prepares us for the next world,” the President implored the delegations. “We must define the youth as an opportunity and not as a problem.”

He said the future into which the next generation is going will be different from the world in which COMESA exists today.

“The space of markets will be different as we think and operate more,” he concluded.

The Prime Minister of Rwanda Rt. Hon. Dr Edouard Ngirente, urged the



(L) Prime Minister of the Republic of Rwanda Rt. Hon. Dr Edouard Ngirente is received by the Chair of Authority



leaders to ensure the decisions made at the Summit were translated into actions.

“Whether they relate to deepening both intra and inter Member States trade; harmonization of customs processes and requirements; capacity development for our private sector; increased agriculture productivity and food security; infrastructural development; multilateral issues; cooperation with other regional communities and more so strengthening our relations with our development partners, among others, all these need to be put into action,” he stated



**We must define the youth as an opportunity and not as a problem.”**  
President  
H.E. Prof  
Arthur Peter  
Mutharika



# A Homecoming for the Summit



*President Edgar Lungu arriving at Mulungushi Conference Centre for the opening of the Summit*

**H**osting of the 20th COMESA Summit in Lusaka was epochal. It was the first time in many years that this has happened. The last time it did, in the year 2000, COMESA did not exist in its current form. It was then known as the Preferential Trade Area of Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA).

The other time was at the inaugural Summit of the Authority of the PTA that took place in Lusaka on 16-17 December 1982.

Usually, this annual event takes place in other Member States

and not the country that hosts the COMESA Secretariat. This time, however, the Summit was organized by the Secretariat and hosted in Zambia. The country's delight in having the Summit in Lusaka was summed up by President Edgar Lungu's welcoming address to the assembly of Heads of State and plenipotentiaries.

"I wish to express how delighted and honoured we are in Zambia to host this 20th Summit of COMESA Authority taking place here in our beautiful city, Lusaka," he said.

He lauded the collective resolve of the leaders to enhance the visibility of COMESA as a regional economic community which has enabled the organization to continue playing a pivotal role in boosting intra African trade.

"As a region, we have expanded in terms of membership to become one of the most populous regional economic bodies with membership that spans from the north to the south, and among the eight recognized building blocks for Africa's economic integration process," he said.

# Fresh Impetus Towards Implementation of Digital Free Trade Area



COMESA Pre-summit meeting in session

A sub-committee to oversee the implementation of Digital Free Trade Area (D-FTA) in the region has been established. This followed the decision of the 38th COMESA Council of Ministers when they met on 15-16 July 2018.

The sub-committee is made up of members from ministries responsible for trade, information and communication technology as well as relevant line ministries in the Member States. Further, the Council allowed the incorporation of other

stakeholders including those from the private sector.

The Council instructed the Secretariat to finalize the DFTA Gap Analysis in all Member States by December 2018. Thus, Member States that have not submitted their questionnaire for the Gap Analysis were expected to have done so by 17 August 2018.

The DFTA is an online platform for trade facilitation comprising of three segments namely electronic

Trade (e-Trade,) e-Logistics and e-Legislation. The e-Trade aims at promoting e-Commerce by providing a platform for traders in COMESA region to conduct business online.

The leaders noted the progress made in preparation of the instruments for the DFTA and encouraged Member States that are ready to implement the instruments to do so on a pilot basis.

# Ethiopia- Eritrea Peace Deal

## *An African solution to an African problem*



Ambassador of Eritrea Mr. Beyene Russom

The Ethiopia- Eritrea peace deal signed a few days before the COMESA Summit was one of the proudest development for COMESA and Africa. Leaders attending the Summit and the preceding meetings of the Policy Organs described the deal as a succinct demonstration that Africa had home grown solutions to its own problems.

“In recent weeks, the COMESA region, Africa, and indeed the whole world was dazzled by the spectacle of His Excellency, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed receiving the Eritrean delegation in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and the flags of the two sisterly nations flying side by side,” President of Madagascar H.E Hery Rajaonarimampianina said at the opening of the Summit. “This is



This is indeed the realization of the rallying cry under agenda 2063 of “the Africa we want” and our mantra of “Africa’s solutions to African problems.”

indeed the realization of the rallying cry under agenda 2063 of “the Africa we want” and our mantra of “Africa’s solutions to African problems.”

In their Communique, the Heads of State urged COMESA Member

States to fully support the process towards the full implementation of the six-point agreements between the two countries. They also encouraged other countries that are in conflict to draw lessons from Ethiopia and Eritrea in the peaceful resolution of conflicts by taking their own initiative.

### **Standing ovation**

Earlier, at the Council of Ministers meeting, delegates gave a standing ovation to the two states and an extended applause after the Ambassador of Eritrea Mr. Beyene Russom, briefed the meeting on the Joint Declaration of Peace. The Council meeting coincided with a reciprocal visit to Addis Ababa by the President of Eritrea H.E. Isaias



H.E. Mr. Hasabo Mohammed Abdelrahman

## Next Summit in Sudan *Current Chair of the Authority Remains*

**S**udan will be the next host of the COMESA Summit in 2019. The offer to host the 21st Summit was made at the 20th Summit in Lusaka. Egypt too made its bid to host the 22nd Summit and both offers were warmly welcomed by the assembly of the Heads of State.

Meanwhile, the President of

Madagascar will continue to serve as Chairperson of the COMESA Authority until he hands over to the next chair in 2019, the President of Sudan. The election of the chair was by way of acclamation.

President Arthur Peter Mutharika of Malawi was elected the Rapporteur.

## Ethiopia - Eritrea Peace Deal...

Afwerki to meet his counterpart, Prime Minister, Dr Abiy Ahmed. On both occasions, the two leaders warmly embraced as a sign of the new friendship while declaring that all misunderstandings had been resolved and the war was over.

In the Declaration, which was also read out at the COMESA Summit by Ambassador Rossum, Ethiopia and Eritrea agreed to restore the diplomatic, trade and transportation links that were severed during the border war they fought between 1998 and 2000.

A day after the Summit, the National Bureau of the Yellow Card of Eritrea announced that it would henceforth accept and issue the COMESA Yellow Card to motorists travelling to and from Ethiopia.

The COMESA Yellow Card Insurance Scheme is a regional Third-Party motor vehicle insurance scheme that provides third party legal liability cover and compensation for medical expenses resulting from road traffic accidents caused by visiting motorists.

The sentiments of the Council were summed by the chairperson, Honourable Mrs. Yvette Sylla, who is also the Minister of Trade and Consumption from Madagascar, who described the peace deal as long overdue and one whose impact will reverberate across the COMESA region.

# New Hands on the Deck

## *Secretary General and Deputies Sworn in*



*Secretary General Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe congratulated by predecessor Sindiso Ngwenya*

**W**hen Madam Chileshe Kapwepwe walked up the steps at the COMESA Centre to occupy the corner office on the second-floor, she made history as the first female Secretary General of the of the Common Market.

Her appointment and swearing-in were conducted at the 20th Summit of the COMESA Authority thus opening a new chapter for the regional bloc under her

“My government, as host of COMESA Secretariat, is indeed delighted to have Ms. Kapwepwe as the first woman Secretary General of COMESA. Her competence and experience were among the key considerations which earned her this appointment, which was highly contested by equally competent candidates,”  
President Lungu

stewardship. It also marked the last bow for Sindiso Ngwenya, as he exited the stage after a 34-year illustrious career at the COMESA Centre, 10 of them at the helm.

President Edgar Lungu of Zambia was the first to toast to the appointment of Madam Kapwepwe. “My Government, as host of COMESA Secretariat, is indeed delighted to have Ms. Kapwepwe as the first woman Secretary General



Secretary General Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe



Assistant Secretary General Programmes Dr Kipyego Cheluget



Assistant Secretary General Administration and Finance Mr. Dev Haman

of COMESA. Her competence and experience were among the key considerations which earned her this appointment, which was highly contested by equally competent candidates.”

Two Assistant Secretaries General were also sworn in: Dr Kipyego Cheluget (Programmes) whose contract was renewed for a final five-year term and Mr. Dev Haman (Administration and Finance). Mr.

Haman previously worked as the Director of Budget at the Secretariat before retiring about two years ago.

Heads of State and Government and plenipotentiaries from all the participating Member States paid glowing tribute to Mr. Ngwenya the former Secretary General, for his wealth of institutional memory and expertise. They congratulated new Secretary General on her appointment.

Ms. Kapwepwe a Chartered Accountant and holds a Masters Degree in Business Administration from the University of Bath, U.K. She has vast experience spanning 30 years in middle and top management in both private and public sectors, locally in Zambia and in international organizations. She has worked in various sectors including the motor industry, trade facilitation and quality assurance, aviation and government.

# In their own words





H.E. Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina

## Multilateral Cooperation remains the Best Model for Regional Trade Integration

Let me at the outset convey our profound gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu, President and the people of Zambia for the warm hospitality accorded to all of us.

Since our last summit that I hosted in Madagascar in 2016, there are important geo political developments that have taken place within the region and in the rest of the world that are affecting our economies positively and negatively. Within the COMESA region, we are witnessing profound developments that augur well for our individual and collective prosperity.

The new dawn of peace and stability is attributed to the decisions that our brothers and sisters have taken to resolve some of the longstanding differences that have been holding back our collective quest to realize the vision of our founding fathers of a COMESA that is economically integrated, prosperous and at peace with itself.

Without being exhaustive I would like to take this opportunity to express our profound gratitude to our brothers the Heads of State and Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the State of Eritrea

for the historic decision to end the hostilities of more than 15 years. This is indeed the realization of the rallying cry under Agenda 2063 of “the Africa we want “and our mantra of “Africa’s solutions to African problems.”

The second breathtaking development has been the coming together of the protagonist in South Sudan which has resulted in the cease fire which is being implemented.

It is against this background that we should support the ongoing efforts to resolve misunderstandings that results



in conflicts as without peace and stability, our dream of a prosperous COMESA and Africa will remain a mirage.

### Win-Win Framework

There is no dispute that the post second world war of multilateral cooperation provided for a framework of win-win cooperation that took into account the social and economic asymmetries and inequalities between and among nation states at different levels of development. The resurgence of parochial nationalism that has, as its philosophy, confrontation and not cooperation poses a serious threat to global peace and security. This nationalism also threatens to unravel the global production and supply chains that have been the basis of globalization of the world economy that has lifted millions of people in the developing world and emerging economies out of poverty.

The origins of this renunciation of multilateralism is to be traced to the 2007 global financial crisis which decimated industries and made people lose their properties. As is always the case, instead of addressing the governance and regulatory weaknesses of the financial sector, populist leaders emerged who have blamed other countries for the woes afflicting their citizens.

The lessons we should learn from the attempts to abandon multilateralism in favor of parochial nationalism is that we need to strengthen our cooperation

in trade, investment, infrastructure and energy development. In celebrating our achievements thus far, we should be mindful that the trade between and amongst ourselves is only a small fraction of our global trade. Currently, our intra COMESA trade stands at nine billion dollars. In percentage terms, this is about 10 percent of our total trade with the rest of the world.

### \$72b Imports

I would urge that to make our economies more integrated horizontally and vertically we should exploit the low hanging fruits based on our existing production facilities. The studies by our Secretariat reveal that the COMESA region imports 72 billion dollars' worth of goods that we already produce and trade among ourselves. As COMESA, we are fortunate in that we have established world class financial institutions, such as, the Trade and Development Bank and the African Trade Insurance Agency that can provide financing and guarantees to our industries to modernize and upgrade our industries to employ more people and increase trade among ourselves.

At this juncture I would like to share with you my vision on the theme for this year's summit which is "COMESA towards digital economic integration." The theme reminds us that the 21st Century will be defined by the following three features, namely, knowledge management, continuous learning and adaptation and innovation. All these three elements are

facilitated by modern information communications technologies.

### eTrade

It is encouraging to note that COMESA Member States have taken the lead in the use and application of different IT applications for mobile payments and electronic trade to mention but a few. Among others, we should celebrate the introduction of the COMESA mobile application for small scale cross border traders which will reduce the cost of trade and the COMESA digital electronic Certificate of Origin which is in the process of being rolled out.

Another first that COMESA has scored in deploying innovative technologies and applications is the use of the Blockchain technology by our insurance companies who have started issuing the digital COMESA Yellow Card. This will enable motorists to buy yellow card on line and speed up the settlements of claims.

These small, but significant steps being undertaken by COMESA will lay the foundation for our countries to participate in the new global economy that is characterized by global supply chains and outsourcing. On the industrial sector we should commend the Africa Leather and Leather Products Institute, for implementing the national and regional Design Studios that, through 3D printing, will enable the leather clusters to manufacture customized shoes that can be sold online within the region and to the



*The resurgence of parochial nationalism that has, as its philosophy, confrontation and not cooperation poses a serious threat to global peace and security.*



rest of the world.

On 10th June 2015, when we signed and launched the COMESA, EAC and SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area, we agreed that it would be operational within 12 months. This has not been possible as only, Egypt, Kenya and Uganda have ratified the agreement. We need 14 tripartite countries to ratify the agreement for it to come into force.

#### **Tripartite FTA**

This Summit provides us with an opportunity to exchange ideas and experiences on how we can expedite the implementation of the tripartite FTA which will lay the basis for the African Continental Free Trade Area that was launched in Kigali in March 2018.

Since our last summit, our countries have individually and collectively made tremendous progress in implementing projects and programs that strengthen the integration of our economies. Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya should be commended for implementing

the standard railway gauge which has made it faster and cheaper to move goods and people. We also look forward to the completion of the standard railway gauge projects in the northern corridor and central corridor that links up the port of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania with Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda.

In the energy sector, in addition to the commissioning of new hydro and renewable power generating plants, the region is making steady progress in implementing the Ethiopia and Kenya interconnector on one hand and the Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya interconnector on the other. These will enable trade in power to take place between the East African Power Pool and the Southern African Power Pool.

#### **Bankable projects**

In addition, I am happy to note that China has come up with two complementary initiatives for infrastructure development and economic development. The first is China Overseas Infrastructure

Investment Development Corporation (COIDIC) with funding of \$550 million. This will go a long way in addressing the challenges of coming up with bankable projects. The second initiative that is global and will benefit our countries is the Belt and Road initiative. Some COMESA Member States, including my country Madagascar have signed the belt and road initiative.

The significance of the belt road initiative is that it provides a holistic development approach that envisions infrastructure, energy and information communications technologies as enablers for social and economic transformation. It is my conviction that we should design and implement the belt road initiative at the regional level if we are to derive maximum benefits.

Our summit is historic in that we shall be admitting the Republic of Tunisia and the Federal Republic of Somalia as members of the COMESA family. Our collective thanks also go to the COMESA ministerial team supported by the Secretariat that facilitated the negotiations of membership by the two Member States.

**H.E. Hery Martial  
Rajaonarimampianina,  
President of The Republic of  
Madagascar  
Chairman of The COMESA  
Authority**



President Edgar Lungu

## Moving Towards New Economic Trajectories

I wish to begin by expressing how delighted and honored we are in Zambia to host this 20th Summit of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) authority taking place here in our beautiful city, Lusaka.

On behalf of the government and the people of the republic of Zambia and indeed on my own behalf, may I take this opportunity to warmly welcome you all to Lusaka, on the occasion of the twentieth session of the assembly of the COMESA Heads of State and Government Summit, being held under the theme "COMESA: towards digital economic integration."

The high-level participation at this

meeting is a clear indication of our collective resolve to further enhance the visibility of COMESA as a regional economic community which has continued to play a pivotal role in boosting intra African trade. We have remained consistent and committed to implementing programmes directed at maintaining peace and economic stability within the region.

The positive strides we have made since the establishment of the Preferential Free Trade Area in the early 1980s, and subsequent transformation into the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa in 1994 speak for themselves.

As a region, we have expanded in terms of membership to become one of the most populous regional economic bodies with membership that spans from the north to the south, and among the eight recognized building blocks for Africa's economic integration process.

Our membership is poised to grow and as we witness the admission of Tunisia and re-admission of Somalia, this will bring membership to 21. This is indeed a commendable and significant achievement, which should be upheld.

We can boast of having in place a functional and united market unified since the establishment

of the COMESA free trade area in 2000, which together with several trade facilitation instruments has tremendously contributed to the seamless flow of trade across the COMESA region.

We have worked tirelessly indeed together to establish a politically and economically stable regional environment, and as such gained confidence among cooperating partners and investors.

### **Investment destination**

Today, COMESA is among the most attractive investment destinations on the African continent. It is also a well-known fact that COMESA has emerged as one of the strong and influential regional economic communities on the African continent with membership cutting across the African continent. As a region, we have been a pioneer of many integration programmes directed at harmonizing policies, programmes and documentation, which have been adopted and adapted by other regional economic communities across the African continent.

These include simplified customs procedures including the establishment of one stop border posts to reduce the time spent at border crossings. This is with a view to reducing the cost of trading, and subsequently, promoting the competitiveness of our private sector players.

Going forward, we must uphold this leadership role and further enhance efforts directed at creating vibrant economies whose

economic benefits will be shared equally across the region and within our respective countries. I believe we have taken the right decision to embrace the digital age as reflected in this year's summit theme.

Technology has proven to be a vital catalyst for accelerated growth and development, where the right institutions, resources and capabilities exist. We, therefore, have a challenge before us to put in place necessary support structures and resources to ensure that our economies are not left behind in this digital age.

*Today, COMESA is among the most attractive investment destinations on the African continent.*

### **Decent livelihood**

Every common man on the street deserves a decent livelihood and it can only be through collective effort that we can make it happen for the ordinary man or woman on the street.

Our goal should not be limited to assisting individuals to have food on the table, but to create a conducive environment which will enable our private sector to generate the necessary financing to invest in value addition and

make our region a hub for manufactured products. We cannot continue to trade in raw commodities among ourselves, while relying on markets outside the African continent to supply us with finished products from our very own resources obtained from our region.

I am confident that during our two days of deliberations, we shall emerge out of this assembly with clear policy decisions to guide our technocrats as we pursue our regional integration process. This is to ensure that COMESA continues to provide the necessary leadership in advancing Africa's economic aspirations.

We cannot afford to backpedal in our integration process. Our objective should be to move towards new economic trajectories with less dependence on foreign capital and place our region on the path of enhanced and sustained economic growth and development.

As Zambia, we remain committed to the integration process under COMESA.

***His Excellency, Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu,  
President of The Republic of Zambia***



H.E Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika

## “The Next COMESA and the Next Generation”

I want to make a special case for the Youth. We can only prepare for the future by investing in the Youth in a manner that prepares us for the next world.

From the wisdom of our people, one of our African proverbs puts the case in its perspective. This proverb says: We have not inherited our land from our ancestors, rather, we have borrowed it from our children.

The way we plan and manage our resources today shapes the reality that our next generation must grapple with. Our resources include the human capital. Let us consider the Youth as a human resource capital as well. Therefore, we must define the Youth as an opportunity

and not as a problem.

At the same time, our planning for production, distribution and consumption of our natural and financial resources must always put the Youth at the center stage.

It is commendable that, as an organization, we have begun to take measures for empowering the Youth and creating job opportunities for them. It is also commendable that various Member States are taking active measures to address the Youth question. What we now need is to unite and consolidate our efforts.

### **Far-Sighted plans**

By the nature of the mission and

aspirations of COMESA, the Youth Agenda should inevitably be at the core of our focus. We are an economic community that aspires to achieve sustainable economic and social progress in all the Member States. We have agreed to attain this sustained development through economic integration.

However, the idea of sustainability necessitates that we must inaugurate far-sighted plans and develop a human capital that will continue the vision. Thus, we must invest in the future by investing in the Youth.

The future into which we take the next generation is going to be different from the world in

which COMESA exists today. Our economic reality will be different. The space of markets will be different as we think and operate more in virtual spaces. In a few years to come, the nature and patterns of trade will change. The economies of the region are likely to be better, bigger and in need of a different kind of a labour market. In a few years, our economic community will be trading services more than trading goods. There will be more demand for ICT services, banking services, financial services and tourism services among others. Soon, we will be more industrialized countries. Agriculture will be more mechanized. We will be producing more.

### **Value Chains**

We are looking at a region in which countries will have no choice but to join regional value chains. A product made in one country will depend on services provided from other countries. Let me give one example to illustrate this point.

Energy being generated in Malawi may depend on coal imported from Mozambique or gas from Tanzania while transportation and logistics come from Zambia.

The energy generated may in turn be fed into the regional pool of power to run factories and power houses in other countries. That is the integrated world we look forward to. The question remains: how are we preparing our next generation for such a world?

This is the Youth generation who are increasingly migrating into the digital world. In a way, our Youth

live in virtual space. They have multiple sources of knowledge. This can be a danger aggravated by the fact that there is no common way of understanding what various countries are growing, producing or offering. A Youth generation that does not share a common understanding of our African reality can easily be a source of disintegration in a region that desires integration.

### **Quest for progress**

In our quest for progress here in COMESA, we have agreed to move as one economic front. But how shall we march to progress as one front if we don't get our next generation to walk a common path?

We can integrate in trade, customs and monetary affairs. We can integrate in transport and communication. We can integrate in information and technology infrastructure. But our integration will remain incomplete unless we integrate our thinking, including the mindset of our Youth. Regional integration must succeed as a psychological progression if it is to succeed as an institutional process.

In this context, I submit that this organization must consider pursuing the following measures. First, we need to find or create an institution that regulates common and authoritative curricula in economic and trade interests of the region. Let us teach our Youths to think as a region, to think as a block, and to act as a front. We cannot talk of integration if we don't understand what different Member States do.

Second, we must create a forum at which our ministers responsible for Youths and education convene to share best practices for addressing the Youth question. Let us take advantage of the fact that Member States are taking various initiatives in dealing with the Youth question. Let us learn from one another. Let me offer that Malawi is willing to host the first ministerial meeting on this cause.

Thirdly, we need to create a mechanism for encouraging us all to increase our national budgets on the Youth bracket. Let us refocus our economic planning on the Youth. My list of proposals is not cast in iron or stone. The more heads we put together, the more productive we become. And as we say, many hands make work light.

***H.E Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika  
President of The Republic of Malawi***

## COMESA: The Journey to Here



*Sindiso Ngwenya, Former Secretary General - COMESA*

The origins of COMESA can be traced back to 1965 when Zambia hosted a meeting of the then independent States in Lusaka to explore how they could work together to achieve economic transformation. The outcome of that meeting was the Lusaka Declaration to establish an economic community of East and Central African States with the Headquarters in Lusaka. It is against this background that I wish to thank the government and people of this country for the role they have played and continue to play in the political and economic emancipation of not only in the

COMESA region but in the entire African continent.

Within the COMESA region in recent weeks we have witnessed unprecedented developments with Ethiopia and Eritrea agreeing to beat their swords into plough shares, thus bringing to a swift and spectacular end the state of war which had defied external mediation. This was triggered by the unconditional acceptance by Ethiopia of the boundary commission ruling on Badme . These seismic developments are a harbinger of peace in the horn of Africa and the COMESA region and

indeed the entire continent. The African Union decision of silencing the guns by 2020 is within reach.

Another important development concerns South Sudan where there has been agreement that Dr. Riek Machar, resumes his position as vice president.

### **Spectacular Growth**

In the past 36 years COMESA, and its predecessor the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States (PTA) has made significant progress and contribution to the realization of the African Economic Community

under the African Union. The launching of the COMESA Free Trade Area on 31st October 2000, which was the first in Africa, has witnessed a spectacular growth of intra-COMESA exports from \$1.7 billion to \$8 billion dollars in 2017.

COMESA continues to be a leader in trade facilitation with its acclaimed trade facilitation instruments contributing to reduced costs of doing business. These instruments include but are not limited to: the COMESA yellow card, the Regional Customs Transit Guarantee Bond, the COMESA Carrier License and the COMESA Single Administrative Document.

The theme of this year's summit of "COMESA Towards Digital Economic Integration" is being implemented through several interventions which have already seen the digitization of the COMESA Yellow Card and Regional Customs Transit Guarantee bond. In the coming months, Member States with the support of the Secretariat will be rolling out the digital Certificate of Origin to mention but a few. These acclaimed trade facilitation instruments are intended to reduce costs and improve competitiveness by creating a COMESA borderless economy through the use and application of information communications technologies and software applications.

Contrary to popular perception, COMESA is not the Secretariat which is one of the organs of the Common Market as provided for in article 7 of the Treaty, but rather the Member States and institutions

that have been established through Charters or Agreements.

### **COMESA Institutions**

COMESA has the largest number of autonomous and semi-autonomous institutions that contribute to the implementation of the provisions of articles of the Treaty. In total, COMESA has the following fifteen institutions: Trade and Development Bank (TDB), COMESA Clearing House, African Trade Insurance Agency, COMESA Re Insurance Company, ZEP-RE, COMESA Monetary Institute, Federation of Women in Business (FEMCOM), Alliance for Commodity Trade In Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA), East African Power Pool, Africa Leather and Leather Product Institute, COMESA Regional Investment Agency, Regional Association of Energy for Eastern and Southern Africa (RAERESA), Council of Bureau on the Yellow Card, COMESA Competition Commission, COMESA Business Council and Association of Regulators of Information And Communications (ARICEA). In addition, COMESA has been a midwife to the following regional private sector associations: the African Cotton and Textile Federation (ACTIF) and Eastern and Southern Africa Dairy Associations (ESADA). These industry associations are involved in implementing COMESA programs in their respective fields.

These institutions fall into three categories with respect to their functions and business, namely, financial, advocacy and facilitation, and regulatory.

### **Billion Balance sheets**

The COMESA financial institutions have a combined balance sheet of more than one billion dollars. They mainly provide funding to the private sector. The case in point is the TDB whose assets were \$5.2 billion in 2017, compared with \$1.2 billion in 2012. The other institution, ZEP-RE which has seen its shareholding grow from \$5 million in the early 1990's when it was established to 225 million dollars in 2017 with operations in 55 countries in Africa and outside the continent. Cumulatively, ZEP-RE has underwritten \$950 million in premiums and paid out over \$450 million dollars in claims. The African Trade Insurance Agency underwrites political and commercial risk. Since its inception in 2000 the ATI has supported business in COMESA participating countries to the tune of \$35 billion and insured trade and investments totaling \$2.4 billion.

I would like to inform their excellencies that the three institutions complement one another in that whereas the TDB provides trade and project financing, ZEP-RE and ATI provide insurance. The financing of Ethiopian airline is a case in point among many.

### **Regulatory institutions**

The regulatory institutions are critical for the orderly and efficient performance of the COMESA economy. In this regard, the RAERESA and ARICEA have been key to the formulation of COMESA harmonized model legislation that is being implemented by most Member States. These institutions



are funded by the members of the associations an affirmation that COMESA stakeholders own the regional integration programs.

The other regulatory institution is the COMESA Competition Commission which is the second regional competition commission in the world after the European union's competition commission. Since its inception in 2013 the commission has assessed over 175 mergers with a turnover of \$73 billion. In addition, the commission has assessed more than 13 regional distribution agreements to determine whether they have the effect of substantially lessening or preventing common market competition. The mergers and acquisitions are proof that the region is attractive for investment.

The other institutions play a critical advocacy role without which it would be difficult to have consensus on policy and institutional reforms for deeper integration. Further, they are involved in implementing their programs and provide direct technical support to industry. The African Leather and Leather Product Institute is an example of what these institutions do. Thanks to the institute the leather clusters that have been established in different Member States will be in a position in the coming years to be part of the fourth industrial revolution by moving to customized production which is a marked departure from the Henry Ford model of mass production.



*Opening of the first COMESA Summit in Lusaka in 1982*



### **Pan African Travelers**

I have been with this organization since its inception. To be precise, since 1st February 1984 and that I am the last of the original nine officers to leave the organization after, my predecessor, my close friend and fellow traveler in pan African and regional integration, Mr. Erastus Mwencha.

As I reflect on the journey of 34 years that I have travelled I am more than convinced, that for COMESA in particular and Africa in general, we need more cooperation to destroy the artificial boundaries

that were bequeathed to Africa by colonialism. The paradox is that today the 54 States in Africa have thicker borders than when Africa was partitioned at the Berlin Conference. As our leaders, you owe it to the future generations to ensure that people, goods and services can move freely within COMESA and indeed in the African continent.

*Long live COMESA*

*Long live the African Union of one people one destiny*

**Sindiso Ngwenya**

**Former Secretary General - COMESA**



# Tunisia: *The Pride of Joining COMESA*



H.E. Mr Khemaies Jhnaoui signing the accession documents

I would like at the outset to extend my sincere thanks to the Government of the sisterly Republic of Zambia, for its kind and generous hospitality. I would like as well to express my gratitude to H.E. the President of the sisterly Republic of Madagascar, for his commendable efforts, in his capacity as chairman of the COMESA, to advance this important regional group.

In addition, I would like to convey to Your Excellency the warm greetings of H.E. the President of the Republic of Tunisia – Mr. Beji Caid Essebsi – and the sincere thanks, appreciation and gratitude of the Government and People of Tunisia for the support of Your Excellency in helping Tunisia acquire the status of member at the COMESA.

Special greetings are also due to the COMESA Secretary General, the Secretariat and specialized bodies for their efforts, which made it possible for Tunisia to continue the negotiations leading to its membership in this esteemed organization.

## **African Roots**

Tunisia prides itself in its deep African roots and has always been keen on strengthening its multi-dimensional strategic partnerships with its sisterly African States in line with an ambitious strategy and a far-reaching vision based on its unwavering faith in the ability of the African continent to deliver its own developmental alternatives, relying solely on its resources. This is achieved by way of investment in economic complementarity, which – in turn

– would achieve developmental coalescence in the framework of South-South cooperation, and with a keen interest for stability and progress for all Africa.

Tunisia is proud of its African identity, particularly empowered by its close relationship with COMESA countries and a shared vision, which has been the basis of this important organization in the framework of a common geographical area.

This organization is a model of solidarity and benefits of high competitiveness and sustainable economies, making it a powerful partner of economic growth, boosting investment and trade exchange. Tunisia began its endeavor to join COMESA in January 2016 and became a



*We pride ourselves in this new membership with the COMESA, which will automatically allow us to join the Free Trade Area*



member of the COMESA in October 2017.

Here we stand today, thanks to the concerted efforts of all parties, to sign officially the admission of Tunisia to this great economic body.

#### **Our pride**

We pride ourselves in this new membership with the COMESA, which will automatically allow us to join the Free Trade Area – an entity that includes, in addition to the COMESA, the EAC and SADC, accounting for nearly half of countries in Africa and with big potential resources and opportunities of mutual development.

In the same context, Tunisia has been among the first signatories of AfCFTA at the African Union extraordinary summit, which convened in Kigali last March. Our country has striven to develop its relationships with various regional blocs in the North and West

Continent alike.

#### **Economic Forum**

Tunisia organized last April, the African Economic Forum with 38 African participant countries, including all COMESA Member States. The Forum was attended by prominent decision-makers, many African Ministers of Trade, representatives of African and international financial institutions and businesspeople. The Forum sought to find ways to develop African relationships in promising sectors. Tunisia hopes to host soon a COMESA economic forum, with the participation of government, private sector and international company representatives in the region. Trade agreements with Kenya, DRC and Cameroon are expected to be signed within the year or the coming few years, thanks to Tunisia joining the COMESA.

#### **Flights Coming**

Regarding African integration, transport and logistics have to be

dealt with as important elements.

In this respect, Tunisia has launched flights to new African destinations, especially West African cities, with additional flights expected this year to Sudan and other African countries, including COMESA member countries. This expansion calls for government approval, including decisions by the Higher Export Council, providing support for Tunisian institutions working in the field of African cooperation, and granting privileges on freight and insurance to facilitate import and export activities across the continent.

#### **Mutual Vision**

Tunisia reiterates its thanks and appreciation to the Heads of States and governments of the respective COMESA Member States for endorsing the membership of Tunisia in this prestigious organization, which will undoubtedly help deepen economic and trade cooperation among them. Tunisia is determined to focus on enabling mutual vision, trends, projects and programs among Member States for their mutual benefit.

Thank you for your kind attention and, again, I wish to thank you for enabling Tunisia to hold a seat in this important organization as a Member State.

**H.E. Mr Khemaies Jhnaoui,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Republic of Tunisia**



Somalia Prime Minister Mr. Hassan Ali Khaire signing accession documents

# Somalia: *We Never Lost the Vision*

**I**t is a great honor for me to join you today. I thank you, the Member States for welcoming Somalia back into the fold as we proudly join you as the 21st nation of Africa's largest trading block.

As you may know, Somalia was among the founding members of the Preferential Trade Area. At the time, Somalia's vision was of a strong, united and prosperous Africa that would spur economic growth and development for our people. A continent that could fully take advantage of the ingenuity of our people as well as our vast resources for the benefit of our citizens. Unfortunately, due to civil strife, for a number of years, we have been absent from the regional

and international stage, but we never lost sight of this vision.

### Rightful place

Our return today is a testimony to our relentless efforts to rebuild our nation, and a true indication of our commitment to taking our rightful place in the growth of our region and our continent.

By our reentry, I reassure you of our commitment to fully abide by and implement COMESA programmes and to join its financial, technical, semi-autonomous and autonomous institutions.

On the other hand, Somalia has much to offer this 512 million people market. We bring to the

table a population with a great entrepreneurial spirit, where our business community is the backbone of our society. Somalia offers a coastline of over 3000kms with an exclusive economic zone of some 825,052 Kms<sup>2</sup>. Somalia also possesses vast untapped natural resources. From fisheries to oil and gas, the potential in Somalia is enormous.

We are ready to contribute to the growth of our continent, it is our vision that we will soon be in the position to not only give prospects to Somalis' but to our African brothers and sisters.

### **H. E. Hassan Ali Khaire**

*Prime Minister of Federal Republic of Somalia*



## Malawi's Giant Footprints in COMESA's History

**I**t is always a great honour to be among colleagues that share a common mission as we do here. As we all recall, we created the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa out of the Preferential Trade Area some 15 years ago. At this time, my brother Bingu wa Mutharika was in the secretariat. I was privileged to work with him in the background, providing my modest legal assistance, unofficially. I remember working on the various instruments that were later to be part of the foundations of COMESA.

We recall that this organization

was formed in conformity with the Lagos Plan of Action which envisaged continental economic integration in which the regional economic groupings would be the building blocks. What we have always wanted is attaining a deeper integration as a means to social and economic progress in the region. We have learnt that there are times we achieve more by cooperating more than competing.

That does not contradict the fact that competition is in the human nature and we will always compete. Competition within the broader spirit of regional cooperation is as

possible as our unity in diversity. Let me pledge that Malawi will always play its role as Member State of this organization. We believe in being a team player. Malawi was amongst the founding Member States who joined PTA on 21st December 1981.

### **Peace and Security**

Since joining COMESA, Malawi has actively participated in COMESA's regional integration agenda. We play a significant role in the political arena of this region. In one instance, we are playing a critical role in contributing to the promotion of peace and security in the region. In doing so, Malawi has expressed



its commitment to continue being part of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) through the SADC Force Intervention Brigade (FIB).

And we will continue to participate in various COMESA Electoral Observer Missions because we believe that the region needs a democratic environment for social and economic growth.

In addition, Malawi has successfully fielded candidates who have served in the Secretariat and various Technical Committees in this organization. Among the notable candidature, is that of Late President Professor Bingu Wa Mutharika who served as the Secretary General of COMESA from 1992 to 1997. Malawi played its role in the foundation of this regional body.

Malawian citizens have also taken various roles in the Secretariat, as well as the Technical Committees. Recently, Bishop Mary Nkosi has successfully served a member

of the Committee of Elders for a period of three years.

As a country, we are also doing our best to improve our economy so that we can participate in the regional economic affairs as a stronger country. But Malawi's economic path has been a steep road to climb in the last four years. I am delighted to report that we have made progress against the odds.

When I came to lead Malawi in 2014, we found a very difficult economic situation. We had a deficit that nearly equaled our annual national budget. There was simply no money because of the massive looting of government resources that we called Cashgate.

### **Tough measures**

We had to take the route of tough austerity measures, which included cutting down on travel. Regrettably, that may have limited our participation in some forums, but we just had to cut down on spending in order to improve the economy.

In 2015, we had a double tragedy

of national floods and drought in one year. Our crops failed and there was hunger throughout the country. In 2016, we had another drought and crops failed again. There was national hunger. Throughout this time, Malawi had no budgetary support from any donor. But we achieved economic recovery without donor budget support through crises of national disasters.

Four years ago, inflation was at 24 percent. Today, we have managed to attain a single digit inflation. Four years ago, interest rates were at 42 per cent. Today, interest rates are at 16 per cent. We have also taken our foreign currency import cover from the lowest point to the highest point in our economic history. From an import cover of two months to an import cover which now stands at 6 months. Our local currency is now stable and predictable.

In these few years, we have taken GDP Growth Rate from 2.4 per cent. In the 2018/2019 financial year, we expect growth to be at 4 percent in 2018 and rise to 6 percent in 2019. We are also implementing a robust Foreign Direct Investment program. Malawi has significantly improved on the Global Doing Business Index.

Our goal is to have a smaller Government and a bigger private sector. We believe this is the way the region must go. In short, Malawi is doing everything possible to become a dependable partner and team player in the region. And we are making progress.

***H.E Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika  
President of The Republic of Malawi***

# Tripartite Signatures Rise as Libya Signs



*H.E Mohamed Syala, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Libya signing the Tripartite Agreements (L) Secretary General Chileshe Kapwepwe*

The State of Libya signed the COMESA- EAC and SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement on July 18, 2018 in Lusaka. By then, only five signatures were outstanding from the remaining six countries. Then Tunisia and Somalia joined COMESA the same day, and the equation changed, raising the balance of signatures.

No problem though as the two new Member States have pledged their commitment to participate in the existing regional trade frameworks, including the Tripartite, to catch up and fortify their integration into the regional bloc.

It is however the ratification of the Tripartite FTA that is experiencing

headwinds. The process has been rather slow, yet it is a prerequisite for the implementation of the TFTA. Only three countries: Egypt, Kenya and Uganda have so far ratified the Agreement since its launch in June 2015.

At the time the Tripartite FTA was mooted and launched, it was envisaged that within three years, negotiations would be completed paving way for the Agreement to come into force. In any case, the three regional economic communities, all had Free Trade Area Agreements (FTAs).

Once implemented, the TFTA has the potential to unlock sustainable development in Africa by bringing 800

million people in one market with a combined gross domestic product of \$1.5 trillion.

Analysts and commentators have attributed the lack of progress to a variety of factors, among them: lack of political will and the absence of a robust institutional arrangement in the form of a dedicated Secretariat with a clear mandate of coordinating Tripartite.

Also cited are the negotiations principles that gave pride to national sovereignty, which is the antithesis of regional cooperation and integration among others.

# Kenya Bags Another Sugar Safeguard



Kenya's Head of delegation to the Summit Hon. Abadu Namwaba (R) and High Commissioner to Zambia H.E Sophie Kombe

**K**enya sugar industry will enjoy another two years of imports' protection after the Council approved its request for extension of the current safeguard due to lapse in February 2019. The Council however directed that a subcommittee be constituted to undertake monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the safeguard, covering all the conditions.

The subcommittee was considered as an appropriate technical framework for overseeing the implementation of the safeguard. It will be made up of the COMESA

Secretariat, the sugar exporting Member States, and the Member State implementing the safeguard.

In its submission to Council, Kenya presented a report on its implementation of the sugar safeguard that highlighted the history, performance and importance of the sugar sector in Kenya. Further, Kenya informed the Council that the deficit in its market has increased from 210 to 250 metric tonnes, which will increase the shares of sugar exporting COMESA Member States.

In granting the safeguard, the Council directed the Secretariat to prepare Draft Terms of Reference for the Subcommittee on the Safeguard, which will be considered by the next meeting of the Trade and Customs Committee in August 2018.

"The Trade and Customs Committee can still discuss this matter, notwithstanding the Council Decision to extend the safeguard," the ministers said in their report.



Ms. Ellen Ruparanganda (Zimbabwe).



Mr. Michael Beyene (Ethiopia)



Hon. Danson Mungatana (Kenya)



Mr. Brian Lingela (Zambia)



Mr. Francis Lebon (Seychelles)



Mr. Islam Alhasan (Sudan)



## New Members of the COMESA Committee of Elders Appointed

Six new members of the COMESA Committee of Elders were appointed bringing the total number to nine. They include Dr. Sabine Nkarutimana, (Burundi) Professor Judith Bahemuka (Kenya) Bishop Mary Catherine Nkosi, (Malawi), Ambassador Patrice Eugene Cure (Mauritius) Ambassador Marie-Pierre Lloyd (Seychelles) and Dr. Mohammed Ahmed Abdelghaffar (Sudan).

The elders will serve as COMESA peace envoys for a term of four years. Among their key responsibilities is to lead the COMESA Election Observer Missions.

Prior to their appointment, the committee had only three elders; Ambassador Ashraf Rashed (Egypt) Madam Hope Kivengere (Uganda), and Ambassador Simbi Mubako of Zimbabwe.

Meanwhile nine new Commissioners for the COMESA Competition Commission were sworn in for a term of three years. These are: Mr. Ali Kako (Djibouti) Mrs. Thembelihle Dlamini (Eswatini) Mr. Michael Beyene (Ethiopia) Hon. Danson Mungatana (Kenya) Mrs. Charlotte Malonda (Malawi) Mr. Francis Lebon (Seychelles) Mr. Islam Alhasan (Sudan) Mr. Brian Lingela (Zambia) and Ms. Ellen Ruparanganda (Zimbabwe).

# COMESA Media Awards Winners Feted



(L-R) Prosper Ndlovu, Esther Mseteka, Peterson Tumwebaze, Ms. Herrsha Lutchman, Mona Sewilam and Sarah Natoolo

Six journalists were feted during the 20th COMESA Summit for their outstanding contribution to regional integration through their published and broadcast works.

Ms. Herrsha Lutchman of

Bizweek (Mauritius) Peterson Tumwebaze, New Times of Rwanda, Mona Sewilam of ON Network (Egypt), Esther Mseteka of Zambia Daily Mail, Prosper Ndlovu of The Chronicle (Zimbabwe) and Sarah Natoolo of Uganda Broadcasting

Corporation were the winners of the 2017- 2018 COMESA Media Awards.

Conducted under the annual COMESA Media Award Scheme, the event is aimed at recognizing and rewarding



journalists that have excelled in raising awareness on regional integration programmes.

The Chair of the COMESA Authority, President Hery Rajaonarimampianina of

Madagascar presented the journalists with trophies which also comes with a cash prize and a certificate.

The call for entries to the Award is made every year in

COMESA Member States. In the Call, journalists are required to submit published articles, radio and television documentaries relevant to regional integration.

FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ OF  
THE TWENTIETH SUMMIT OF THE AUTHORITY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

*THEME: TOWARDS DIGITAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION*

LUSAKA, ZAMBIA, 19 JULY 2018

**THE TWENTIETH SUMMIT OF THE AUTHORITY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA** was

held at Mulungushi International Conference Centre in Lusaka, in the Republic of Zambia on 18-19 July 2018, under the theme: COMESA: Towards Digital Economic Integration.

**ATTENDANCE**

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

H.E Mr. Hery Martial

Rajaonarimampianina, President of the Republic of Madagascar;

His Excellency Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, the President of the Republic of Zambia,

H.E Prof. Arthur Peter Mutharika, President of the Republic of Malawi;

H.E Mr. Hasabo Mohammed Abdelrahman, Vice President of the Republic of Sudan;

Rt. Hon. Dr Edouard Ngirente, Prime Minister of the Republic of Rwanda;

H.E Mr. Hassan Ali Khaire, Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia;

Hon. Senator Paul S. Dlamini, Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Eswatini;

H.E. Mr. Soeuf Mohamed El-Amine, Minister of Foreign Affairs on the Union of Comoros;

H.E Mr. Jean Lucien Bussa, Ministry of Commerce of the democratic Republic of Congo;

H.E Hassan Houmed Mohamed, State Minister of Trade and Tourism and

H.E. Moumin Ahmed Cheik, Minister of Justice of the Republic Djibouti;

HE Mr. Amr Nassar, Minister of Trade and industry of the Arab Republic of Egypt;

H.E Mohamed Syala, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Libya;

Hon. Seetanah Lutchmeenaraidoo, GCSK, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius;

Amb. Barry Faure, Secretary of State and Executive Head of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Seychelles;

Hon. Amelia Anne Kyambadde, Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives of the Republic of Uganda;

Hon. Simbarashe S. Mumbengegwi, Minister of State for Presidential Affairs and Monitoring Implementation of Government Programs of the Republic of Zimbabwe;

H.E. Mr Khemaies Jhnaoui, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia;

Hon. Ababu Namwamba, Chief Administrative Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kenya; and

Ambassador Beyene Russom of the State of Eritrea;

**COMESA INSTITUTIONS**

**The following represented COMESA Institutions:** Mr. Tadesse Admassu, President, Eastern and Southern Africa Trade and Development Bank (PTA Bank); Mr. Mahmood Mansoor, Executive Secretary, COMESA Clearing House; Her Lordship Justice Lombe Chibesakunda, Judge President, COMESA Court of Justice; Mrs. Heba Salama, Manager, COMESA Regional Investment Agency (RIA); Mr. George Otieno, the Chief Executive Officer, African Trade Insurance Agency (ATI); Dr. Amany Asfour, Chairperson, COMESA Business Council; Prof Mwinyihija, Chief Executive Officer of the Africa Leather and Leather Products Institute (LLPI); Mr. George Lipimile, Director, COMESA Competition Commission; Mrs. Katherine N. Ichoya, Executive Director, Federation of Associations of Women in Business in Eastern and Southern Africa (FEMCOM); Dr John Mukuka, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA); Dr Mohamedain E. Seif Elnasr, Acting Chief Executive Officer of the Regional Association of Energy Regulators for Eastern and Southern Africa (RAERESA), and Mr. Ibrahim Zeidy, Director, COMESA Monetary Institute;

**PARTNERS AND ORGANIZATIONS**

**The following countries, development partners and organizations also attended the Summit:**

European Union, African Development Bank (AfDB), New Partnership for Africa Development

(NEPAD), China, France, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the Vatican Holy See, Palestine, India, Japan/ JICA, Norway, Sierra Leone; as well as the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), the UN International Trade Centre (ITC), Afro Champions, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), Arab Maghreb Union, the Food Agricultural and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FARNPAN), and Gulf Cooperation Council;

## OPENING OF THE SUMMIT

**His Excellency Mr. Edgar Chagwa Lungu**, the President of the Republic of Zambia, and the host, delivered a statement welcoming all Heads of State and Government, plenipotentiaries and all delegations to the Twentieth Summit of COMESA and to Zambia. He reiterated the need to adopt digital technologies to harness efficiencies and lower the cost of doing business. He also urged COMESA Member States to add value to raw materials and be ready to fully welcome the African Continental Free Trade Area. He pledged to provide full support to the regional integration agenda of COMESA by providing clear leadership to the process;

**His Excellency Prof Arthur Peter Mutharika**, the President of the Republic of Malawi, underscored the existential importance of COMESA as an organization and assured the Summit of Malawi's unwavering commitment to implementing the COMESA integration programs. Pointing out the challenges the

Republic of Malawi has experienced over the past few years, he assured the Summit that measures have been put in place to put the country on a solid recovery path;

**The Rt. Hon. Dr Edouard Ngirente**, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Rwanda, in his statement, welcomed the theme of the Summit, *Towards Digital Economic Integration*, and highlighted a number of digitization programs that the Government of Rwanda has put in place, including on e-Government. He underscored the unwavering commitment of the Republic of Rwanda to COMESA and its integration programs;

**H.E Mr Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina**, President of the Republic of Madagascar and **Outgoing Chairperson of the COMESA Authority** gave a statement outlining the progress made during his tenure. He thanked the Republic of Zambia for the hospitality to all the Heads of State and Government and all delegations since their arrival in Lusaka. He expressed appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Zambia for hosting the COMESA Headquarters in Lusaka and further providing a 10-hectare plot next to the airport on which plot the new COMESA Headquarters would be constructed.

In his address, he applauded the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and the State of Eritrea for having the Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship. He further appreciated the implementation of the South Sudan cease fire as a result of facilitative work done by the Inter-Governmental Authority on

Development (IGAD).

The out-going Chairperson emphasized the need to modernize and upgrade COMESA industries in order to employ more people and increase intra-COMESA trade. He also applauded the introduction of the COMESA Mobile Application for small scale cross-border traders which will reduce the cost of doing trade and the COMESA Electronic Certificate of Origin which is in the process of being implemented.

H.E Mr Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina, informed the Summit that during his tenure, COMESA deployed innovative technology applications through the usage of block chain technology by insurance companies that have started issuing the digital yellow card and Regional Customs Transit Bond Guarantee Scheme. This initiative will enable the purchase of yellow cards and bonds online and also speed up the settlement of filed insurance claims.

The outgoing Chairperson commended the Africa Leather and Leather Products Institute for implementing the national and regional design studios which through 3D printing, have enabled leather clusters to manufacture customized shoes that can be sold online within the region and to the rest of the world. He stressed that these innovations would form the basis for COMESA's effective participation in the Fourth Industrial Revolution that is being driven inter alia by 3D printing and artificial intelligence.

In his address, he also informed the meeting that the economy of the

future requires that the COMESA region reviews and overhauls the educational system in order to provide an education and skills that will see an increasing number of people being self-employed in the provision of services.

On the matter of the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Agreement, he informed the Authority that only Egypt, Kenya and Uganda had ratified, yet it requires 14 ratifications for it to enter into force. He implored the Member States to ratify the Tripartite Agreement so that it may be used as a basis for implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya were commended for having implemented the standard railway gauge which has provided a cheaper and more efficient transportation of goods and passengers. The outgoing chairperson expressed his anticipation for the completion of the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) projects in the Northern and Central Corridors that link up the ports of Mombasa in Kenya and Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania with Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda. He expressed appreciation to Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya for the electricity inter-connector project which will enable trade in power to take place between the Eastern Africa Power Pool and the Southern Africa Power Pool.

The outgoing Chairperson appreciated cooperating partners for their support to the regional integration programs and projects. He further welcomed the Republic of Tunisia and Federal Republic of

Somalia into the COMESA family.

In conclusion, he thanked the Bureau of the Authority for the support it extended to his chairmanship during the tenure of his office and assured the incoming Bureau of his unwavering support.

#### VOTE OF THANKS

Honourable Simbarashe Mubengegwi tendered apologies on behalf of the President of Zimbabwe His Excellency Mr Emmerson Dambuzo Mnangagwa, who was attending to state matters. Mr Mubengegwi noted the bomb blast that occurred in Bulawayo Zimbabwe which claimed the lives of two people and assured the Summit that Zimbabwe intended to have peaceful elections despite the unfortunate event. He heartily thanked the President, Government and People of Zambia for hosting COMESA and the Twentieth Summit of the Authority, recalling the tireless efforts of Zambia as a frontline State in the liberation struggles in Southern and Eastern Africa. He paid tribute to Mr Sindiso Ngwenya, the outgoing Secretary General's dedication and selfless service to COMESA in various capacities for thirty-four years.

#### AFTER THE FORMAL OPENING OF THE SUMMIT, THE AUTHORITY,

**ELECTED** by acclamation His Excellency President Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina, President of the Republic of Madagascar, as Chairperson, and His Excellency President Arthur Peter Mutharika of the Republic of Malawi as Rapporteur of the Summit of the

Authority;

**RECOGNISED and EXPRESSED** gratitude to His Excellency President Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina the President of the Republic of Madagascar for serving as Chairperson of COMESA for the past 18 months;

**NOTED** the Report of the Secretary General on *The State of Regional Integration in COMESA – the Past, the Present and the Road Ahead*;

**CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED** the Report of the Thirty-Eighth Meeting of the COMESA Council of Ministers;

**CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED** the Report of the Sixteenth Meeting of the COMESA Ministers of Foreign Affairs;

#### ON THE COMESA ANNUAL REPORT

**LAUNCHED** the COMESA Bi-Annual Report for 2016-2017;

#### ON COMESA MEMBERSHIP

**ADOPTED** the Agreement on Admission of the Republic of Tunisia to COMESA and **ADMITTED AND WELCOMED** the Republic of Tunisia as the Twentieth Member of COMESA;

**NOTED WITH APPRECIATION** the Statement of H.E. Mr Khemaies Jhnaoui, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Tunisia, conveying gratitude, solidarity and commitment to COMESA as well as readiness to beneficially participate in COMESA and to join the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Arrangement;

**ADOPTED** the Agreement on admission of the Federal Republic of

Somalia to COMESA and **ADMITTED AND WELCOMED** the Federal Republic of Somalia as the Twenty First Member of COMESA;

**NOTED WITH APPRECIATION** the Statement H.E Mr. Hassan Ali Khaire, Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia, conveying gratitude, solidarity and commitment to COMESA as well as readiness to beneficially participate in COMESA and to join the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Arrangement;

#### **KEYNOTE SPEECH ON YOUTH AND COMESA**

**APPRECIATED** the keynote speech by His Excellency Prof Arthur Peter Mutharika, the President of the Republic of Malawi on *The Youth and COMESA* underscoring the critical role of the youth in sustainable social economic transformation and the need for job and wealth creation taking into account the nature of modern economies characterized by value chains and new technologies, **NOTED** the need for curriculum reforms and dedicated training to inculcate economic integration in the youth and institutional reforms to create the enabling environment, and **WELCOMED** the offer by the Republic of Malawi to host the first COMESA Ministerial Meeting on *The Youth and COMESA*;

**APPRECIATED** the various statements by Heads of State and Government and Plenipotentiaries, stressing the importance of COMESA as a prime organisation that has trail-blazed economic integration programs in Africa;

#### **ON INTRA-AFRICA TRADE FAIR,**

#### **INVESTMENT FORUM, AND BLUE ECONOMY**

**COMMENDED** the Arab Republic of Egypt on the Intra-Africa Trade Fair to be held in Cairo, Egypt from 11 to 17 December 2018 and the Third Africa Investment Forum to be held in Sharm-el-Sheikh from 8 to 9 December 2018; and **WELCOMED** the invitation to COMESA Member States;

**COMMENDED** the Republic of Kenya on the Blue Economy Conference to share experiences on the Oceans, Rivers and other water bodies as an economic development space in line with the SDGs, Agenda 2063 and COMESA MTSP, planned for 26-28 November 2018 in Nairobi and **WELCOMED** the invitation to COMESA Member States;

#### **ON LEGAL AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS**

**ENDORSED** Council decision to review and amend Article 28 of the COMESA Treaty extending the jurisdiction of the COMESA Court of Justice to include Investor State Dispute Settlement;

**COMMENDED** the Republic of Seychelles on signing the COMESA Social Charter;

**ADOPTED** the paper submitted by Mauritius on UN Commission on International Trade Law Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS);

**CONGRATULATED** sixteen Member States of COMESA that have enacted national competition legislation aimed at enhancing competition and fair trade in the COMESA Market and **ENCOURAGED** the remaining Member States

that have not yet enacted national competition legislation to do so;

**NOTED** that Eswatini is the new name of the former Kingdom of Swaziland;

#### **ON THE COMESA FREE TRADE AREA,**

**NOTED** the progress made in preparation of the instruments for the Digital Free Trade Area (DFTA) such as the electronic certificate of Origin and **ENCOURAGED** Member States that are ready to implement the instruments for the DFTA to do so on a pilot basis;

**STRESSED** the utmost importance of prioritization of programs that promote small scale cross-border trade, taking into account the aspects of gender empowerment and poverty eradication, **AND CALLED** for extension of these programs to cover both goods and services;

**COMMENDED** the Republic of Djibouti on its recently launched large Free Trade Zone;

#### **ON THE APPLICATION OF SAFEGUARDS FOR THE KENYA SUGAR INDUSTRY**

**ENDORSED** the decision of Council extending the sugar safeguard measure granted to Kenya, for another two years with effect from February 2019 when the current safeguard expires and **ESTABLISHED** a Subcommittee made up of the sugar exporting COMESA Member States, the Republic of Kenya and the Secretariat, to Monitor and Assess the implementation of the safeguard



to ensure that it benefits COMESA Member States;

#### **ON THE COMESA FUND**

**NOTED** the support to Member States for improved implementation of regional programs through the COMESA Adjustment Facility funded by the European Union under the Regional Integration Support Mechanism;

#### **ON MONETARY AFFAIRS**

**COMMENDED** the Central Banks of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Rwanda, Swaziland, Uganda and Zambia for transacting on the COMESA Regional Payment and Settlement Systems (REPSS);

**COMMENDED** the Central Banks of Burundi, Djibouti, Sudan and Zimbabwe for their preparedness for live operations;

**URGED** Central Banks live on REPSS to conduct sensitization workshops amongst their commercial banks and other stakeholders in order to promote the use/uptake of the system;

**URGED** Member States to have their Intra-COMESA trade settled through REPSS;

**URGED** Central Banks that have not yet met the prerequisites for joining REPSS to do so in earnest;

#### **ON INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT**

**WELCOMED** the progress made on various infrastructure programmes on road and railway transport, water and maritime transport, civil

aviation, energy, information and communication technology;

**URGED** COMESA Member States to mobilize resources for the implementation of priority regional infrastructure programmes;

**WELCOMED** progress made on the Victoria-Mediterranean Navigation Line programme and **URGED** COMESA footprint Member States to continue working together in solidarity and address all issues related to water management;

#### **ON THE PROPOSED COMESA AIRSPACE AGENCY AND THE DRAFT REGULATIONS ESTABLISHING THE COMESA SEAMLESS UPPER AIR SPACE PROGRAM**

**ENDORSED** the decision of the Council to refer the proposed **COMESA AIRSPACE AGENCY AND THE DRAFT REGULATIONS ESTABLISHING THE COMESA SEAMLESS UPPER AIR SPACE PROGRAM** for further technical consideration and evaluation by the Infrastructure Ministers through the relevant Technical Committee to address reservations raised by Egypt and supported by a number of Member States

#### **ON GENDER AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

**ENDORSED** Council decision on the need for COMESA to develop training and skills development programmes for the Youth as provided for in Chapter 25 of the COMESA Treaty in order to create jobs and wealth among the youth in COMESA Member States;

**NOTED** with appreciation the decision of Council on the adoption

of the framework for comprehensive support of women and youth Cross Border Traders;

**URGED** COMESA Member States to submit their annual gender reports with comprehensive statistics to enable the COMESA Secretariat to compile a regional gender statistics bulletin;

#### **ON THE COMESA-EAC-SADC TRIPARTITE ARRANGEMENT**

**NOTED** with appreciation the report of the Seventh Meeting of the Tripartite Sectoral Ministerial Committee on Trade which was held on 18 June 2018, in Cape Town, Republic of South Africa which took decisions on critical issues to advance operationalization of the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA);

**COMMENDED** the Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Kenya and the Republic of Uganda for ratifying the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Agreement(TFTA);

**CALLED ON** COMESA Member States that have not signed the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite (TFTA) to do so;

**COMMENDED Libya upon its signing of the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area Agreement at the Summit;**

**CALLED ON** COMESA Member States that have not ratified the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Agreement (TFTA) to do so for the agreement to enter into force;

## ON APPOINTMENT OF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

**APPOINTED** and **SWORE IN** Ms. Chileshe Kapwepwe (Republic of Zambia) as Secretary General of COMESA for a term of Five Years;

**APPOINTED** and **SWORE IN** Ambassador Dr. Kipyego Cheluget (Republic of Kenya) as Assistant Secretary General (Programmes) for a second term of five years;

**APPOINTED** and **SWORE IN** Mr. Dev Haman (Republic of Mauritius) as Assistant Secretary General (Administration and Finance) for a term of five years;

**APPOINTED** Mrs. Martha Elimu (Republic of Uganda) as Director for Human Resources and Administration;

## ON COMESA HEADQUARTERS

**COMMENDED** the Republic of Zambia for the ten-acre land granted for the development of the new COMESA Headquarters and the continued support for its construction;

**EXPRESSED** gratitude to the Republic of Zambia for providing the Sovereign Guarantee for the construction of the New COMESA Headquarters;

**DIRECTED** the Technical Committee on the Construction of the New COMESA Headquarters to consider the financing documents and oversee the implementation of the project;

**DELEGATED** the COMESA Council of Ministers to consider the report of the Technical Committee on the New Headquarters and take

appropriate decisions in relation to the construction of the new headquarters;

**FURTHER DIRECTED** that the Technical Committee on the New Headquarters should be expanded to include all Member States; and

**DIRECTED** the Secretariat to provide Member States with all information;

## ON PEACE, SECURITY AND STABILITY

**ENSHRINED** the pivotal role of African countries, and regional and international institutions in solving and mediating conflicts and **HIGHLIGHTED** the effectiveness and capacity of Africa to take the helm of its own destiny and to chart its future without unwarranted external interference;

**WELCOMED** the announcement of Egypt's hosting of the African Union Centre for Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development;

**REITERATED** the importance of peace and security and stability for creating an enabling environment for investment, economic development and a viable integration for the region;

**RECOGNIZED** the generally improved security situation in Burundi and reiterate its concern over the humanitarian situation as well as appeal to the international community and to the humanitarian agencies to continue to aid the affected populations;

**CALLED** on all Comorian stakeholders to engage in an inclusive dialogue in order to build consensus on the proposed

referendum on constitutional reforms;

**REITERATED** its solidarity with the Union of Comoros, **RE-AFFIRMED** the sovereignty of the Comoros on the Island of Mayotte and **URGED** the parties to seek a solution through dialogue;

**COMMEND** all Malagasy stakeholders for having given the privilege of facilitating the dialogue and allowed the appointment of Mr. Ntsay Christian as Prime Minister on the basis of consensus, and for having put in place a Government in charge of organizing elections;

**WELCOMED** the declaration ending the war, which is named joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship between Eritrea and Ethiopia and **CONGRATULATED** President Isaias Afwerki and Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed for their leadership that has led to the normalization of relations between the two countries; as well as **URGED** COMESA Member States to fully support the process towards the full implementation of the six-point agreements between the two Countries and **ENCOURAGED** other countries that are in conflict to draw lessons from the example of the two countries in the peaceful resolution of conflicts by taking their own initiative;

**REITERATED** its call for the full support for the Government of National Accord and **CALLED** upon all relevant stakeholders in Libya, under the LPA to prioritize finding ways to work together towards building a unified country **STRONGLY CONDEMNED** attempts to illicitly export oil from Libya and **REITERATED** that the National Oil

Organisation in Tripoli is the only authorized institution to deal with matters relating to the oil; and **CALLED** for immediate withdrawal of any armed activities in the oil fields and ports;

**CONGRATULATED** all Malagasy stakeholders for having opted for dialogue and for allowing the appointment of a consensus Prime Minister as well as the establishment of an inclusive Government to organize the upcoming elections;

**CONGRATULATED** President Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina for his wisdom and spirit of consensus, which he demonstrated in restoring an environment of peace and mutual trust in Madagascar

**APPRECIATED** IGAD Heads of State and Government and all Regional and Pan African efforts to resolve the crisis in South Sudan; and **URGED** them to remain seized on the matter until lasting peace is attained in South Sudan;

**WELCOMED AND COMMENDED** the initiative of HE President Omar al-Bashir of the Republic of Sudan to bring together the government and armed opposition in the Republic of South Sudan in the face to face talks in the capital Khartoum and called upon all parties to the ongoing peace talks in Khartoum to work towards achieving lasting peace;

**NOTED WITH APPRECIATION** the improved situation in the Abyei Area and commended the efforts of President Omer al-Bashir of Sudan and President Salva Kirr of South Sudan as well as the efforts by the United Nations Interim Force for

Abyei; and **ENCOURAGED** all parties to redouble their efforts towards resolving the final status of Abyei; **and CALLED** on the United States Government to remove the name of Sudan from its list of "States sponsoring terrorism";

**CONDEMNED** in the strongest terms, the continued attacks by the negative forces in the Great Lakes region namely the Allied Democratic Forces, the FDLR, the Lord's Resistance Army, the Sudan Liberation Movement (Abdulwahid Nour), Sudan Liberation Movement (Arku Minawi) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) Gipriel Ibrahim;

**CONDEMNED** terrorism in all its forms and **EXPRESSED SUPPORT** for all measures established to counter terrorism and violent extremism in Member States and especially the efforts of the National Governments and welcomed regional and international support to the National efforts exerted to uproot this plague; **and EXPRESSED its most sincere** condolences to the families of the victims of terrorist acts, and **AFFIRMED** its solidarity with the Governments of Egypt, Ethiopia Kenya, Libya, Somalia and Zimbabwe and their citizens;

**WELCOMED** the Mauritius Declaration on Maritime Security and noted the Communique of the 21<sup>st</sup> Session of the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia (CGPCS);

**NOTED** with appreciation, the previous work undertaken with the support of COMESA under the MASE RISM with regards to maritime security; **AND FURTHER**

**NOTED** the invitation by the Republic of Seychelles to the "Africa Ship-Owners Finance Forum" to be held in Seychelles in the first quarter of 2019;

**APPOINTED and SWORE IN** the following eminent citizens of COMESA to serve as Members of the **COMESA Committee of Elders** for a four-year term:

1. Dr. Sabine Nkarutimana, Republic of Burundi;
2. Professor Judith Bahemuka, Republic of Kenya;
3. Bishop Mary Catherine Nkosi, Republic of Malawi;
4. Ambassador Patrice Eugene Cure; Republic of Mauritius;
5. Ambassador. Marie-Pierre Lloyd of the Republic of Seychelles;
6. Dr. Mohammed Ahmed Abdelghaffar; Republic of Sudan

**SWORE IN** the three member of the **COMESA Committee of Elders** that were appointed during the Eighteenth Summit of the Authority, namely:

1. Ambassador Ashraf Gamal Rashed of Egypt,
2. Madam Hope Kishande Kivengere of Uganda, and
3. Ambassador Simbi Veke Mubako of Zimbabwe;

**NOTED** with satisfaction the progress made in the DRC with regard to the implementation of the Political Agreement of 31 December

2016, notably evidenced by the improvement of the pre-election political climate, the Government's commitment to finance the elections scheduled for 23 December 2018 and compliance with the electoral calendar as announced by the National Independent Electoral Commission on 5th November 2017;

**INVITED** all stakeholders in the DRC to work towards the successful completion of the current electoral process and to exercise maximum restraint and to seek non-violent means to resolve disputes;

**WELCOMED** the DRC Government's pacification efforts in the Kasai region in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks carried out by the Kamwina Nsapu militia and **WELCOMED** the gradual return of internally and externally displaced persons;

**WELCOMED** efforts by COMESA to support the nationally driven democratization process in Member States through launching, relevant States agreed upon, pre-elections assessment missions as well as electoral observer missions **AND NOTED** the appreciation by Zimbabwe authorities with respect to the pre-elections assessment mission undertaken in Zimbabwe by COMESA Committee of Elders, ahead of the July 30 2018 Elections in Zimbabwe; as well as confirming its deployment of an observer mission;

**NOTED** that the harmonized elections will be held in accordance with the Constitution of Zimbabwe and in compliance with the COMESA, SADC and African Union Principles and Guidelines governing

democratic elections;

## **ON DEMOCRACY, GOVERNANCE AND ELECTIONS**

**COMMENDED** the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo on the progress made on the electoral process **AND INVITED** all stakeholders to be involved in the process to achieve a successful ending of the process;

**REITERATED** the importance of democracy and good governance in the maintenance of peace, security and stability and **URGED** COMESA Member States continue to strengthen democratic processes, structures and institutions to in order to consolidate democracy and good governance of the region;

**CONGRATULATED** His Excellency President Paul Kagame on his re-election as President of the Republic of Rwanda;

**CONGRATULATED** His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta and His Excellency William Ruto on their re-election as the President and Deputy President of the Republic of Kenya respectively for the second term;

**NOTED** the maturity exhibited by the democratic institutions in Kenya including the Supreme Court and the Judiciary generally and Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission as well as the respect for the Rule of Law by the country's political leadership

**CONGRATULATED** His Excellency President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi for his re-election as President of the Arab Republic of Egypt;

**CONGRATULATED** His Excellency

President Emmerson Mnangagwa upon his assumption of the leadership of ZANU-PF and President of the Republic of Zimbabwe;

**CONGRATULATED** His Excellency Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed upon his appointment as leader of the ERPDF and Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia;

**COMMENDED** the political actors as well as the people of Ethiopia and Zimbabwe for their political maturity and the peaceful manner through which the transition in leadership was done;

**BID** farewell to H. E. Hailemariam Desalegn upon his resignation as Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia as well as **APPRECIATED** his contribution in the country and in the region;

**BID** farewell to H. E. Robert Gabriel Mugabe upon his resignation as President of the Republic of Zimbabwe as well as **APPRECIATED** his contribution in the country and in the region;

**WELCOMED** the declaration ending the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia and **CONGRATULATED** Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed and President Isaias Afwerki for their leadership that has led to the normalization of relations between the two countries; as well as **URGED** COMESA Member States to accompany the process towards the full implementation of the agreements between the two Countries and **ENCOURAGED** other countries that are in conflict to draw lessons from the example of the two

countries in the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

#### **ON COOPERATING PARTNERS,**

**EXPRESSED** appreciation to Cooperating Partners of COMESA for continued solidarity and support to COMESA and **URGED** them to continue supporting COMESA;

**COMMENDED** the European Union's financial contribution to COMESA small scale, trade facilitation, private sector development and institutional strengthening programs under the Eleventh (11) European Development Fund (EDF);

#### **ON COMESA INSTITUTIONS AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES**

**NOTED WITH APPRECIATION** the contribution made by COMESA Institutions and Specialized Agencies in supporting the COMESA Integration Agenda;

**NOTED WITH SATISFACTION** the excellent performance of the Trade and Development Bank in recent years which has transformed and seen its assets exceed the USD 5 billion mark, and attain the coveted investment grade status similar to the ratings of the best rated economies in the region such as Mauritius and South Africa;

**COMMENDED AND ENDORSED** the various reforms, innovations and modernization measures undertaken by the leadership of the Bank and its governance structures that has enabled successive improvements in its risk profile, boosted confidence and attracted several new investors and funders;

**CALLED UPON** Member States, in particular their Sovereign and related institutions to honour their obligations to the Bank and ensure that the Bank's Charter is honoured so that greater volumes of funding can be mobilized for infrastructure, industry and private sector development

**WELCOMED** progress made by the Africa Leather and Leather Products Institute (ALLPI) in the implementation of activities that are promoting the transformation of the leather sector from the production and export of raw hides to the production and export of value added products;

**COMMENDED** the ALLPI to continue to spearhead the development of the leather sector as a continental body whose focus is to improve wealth creation, employment and youth empowerment through the industrialization pillar;

#### **ON PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT**

**UNDERScored THE** need to develop a Regional Model on the General Data Protection Regulation to support Member States in domestication and implementation of the Regulation

**ENDORSED** the application COMESA for observer status at the World Health Organization- FCTC Conference of Parties

**URGED** Member States to put in place a policy framework for regional payment systems and digital payment services for SMEs

and cross border traders including women, the disabled and youth, which will reduce the cost of doing business

**URGED** Member States to develop awareness programs on block chain technology to support performance of business processes as well as government services

**URGED** Member States to consider balanced international regulatory frameworks for duty free sales and ensure no unjustified restrictions on duty free sales are imposed, with respect to the WHO Protocol to eliminate illicit trade in tobacco products and alcoholic beverages;

**SWORE IN** the following new Commissioners for the COMESA Competition Commission for a term of three years:

1. Mr. Ali Hamadou Ali Kako (Republic of Djibouti)
2. Mrs. Thembelihle Precious Dube nee Dlamini (Kingdom of Eswatini)
3. Mr. Michael Teklu Beyene (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia)
4. Hon. Danson Buya Mungatana (Republic of Kenya)
5. Mrs. Charlotte Wezi Malonda (Republic of Malawi)
6. Mr. Francis Lebon (Republic of Seychelles)
7. Mr. Islam Tagelsir Ahmed Alhasan (Republic of Sudan)

8. Mr. Brian Muletambo Lingela (Republic of Zambia)
9. Ms. Ellen Rugaranganda (Republic of Zimbabwe)

Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia, presented Mr Ngwenya with a copper-plated Plaque for Outstanding Service to COMESA and a golf kit;

The President also presented gifts to Mrs. Sibongile Ngwenya;

### ON APPRECIATION OF MR SINDISO NGWENYA, OUT-GOING SECRETARY GENERAL

#### THE AUTHORITY HIGHLY

**COMMENDED** Mr Sindiso Ngwenya upon his sterling service to COMESA in various capacities since 1984 and as Secretary General for two terms;

His Excellency Mr. Edgar Chagwa

### ON THE STATEMENT OF INCOMING SECRETARY GENERAL

#### THE AUTHORITY WELCOMED AND HIGHLY APPRECIATED

the statement of the Incoming Secretary General, Ms. Chileshe

Kapwepwe, in which she highlighted her commitment to advancing the COMESA regional integration agenda, including the prioritization of structural transformation to foster overall economic development in the Member States, building on the progress made since the gallant efforts of the founding fathers. She underscored her commitment to supporting the continental integration programs under the African Union, and she paid tribute to the Outgoing Secretary General, Mr Sindiso Ngwenya for his outstanding service to COMESA;

### ON THE 2017-18 COMESA MEDIA AWARDS

**Awarded the 2017/18 COMESA Media Prizes to the following:**

	NAME	MEDIA ORGANIZATION	COUNTRY
1.	Ms. Herrsha Lutchman	Bizweek	Mauritius
2.	Mr. Peterson Tumwebaze	New Times	Rwanda
3.	Ms. Mona Sewilam	ON Network	Egypt
4.	Ms. Esther Mseteka	The Daily Mail	Zambia
5.	Mr. Prosper Ndlovu	The Chronicle	Zimbabwe
6.	Ms. Sarah Natoolo	Uganda Broadcasting Corporation	Uganda

### CLOSING OF THE SUMMIT

#### THE AUTHORITY

**CONFIRMED ITS DECISIONS** that the Republic of Sudan will host the Twenty-First Summit of the Authority;

**WELCOMED** the offer by the Arab Republic of Egypt to host the Twenty Second Summit of the COMESA Authority;

**STRESSED** the need for annually convening the summits of the Authority;

The Authority **ADOPTED** its Final Communiqué as read by Honourable Mrs Yvette Sylla, the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers.

#### FINAL VOTE OF THANKS

Following the adoption of the Communiqué, the Rt. Hon. Dr

Edouard Ngirente, Prime Minister of the Republic of Rwanda moved a final vote of thanks to His Excellency Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu the President of the Republic of Zambia for hosting the Twentieth Summit of the Authority.

He also thanked H.E Mr. Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina, President of the Republic of Madagascar and Chairperson of the Authority for widely presiding

over the Summit. He thanked the Outgoing Secretary General Mr Sindiso Ngwenya, for his service and welcomed the Incoming Secretary General of COMESA Ms. Chileshe Kapwepwe, and highly noted with satisfaction and welcomed Tunisia and Somalia as new Member States of COMESA.

The Rt Hon Prime Minister expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the Summit and called for due implementation of the various Decisions taken at the Summit, to boost trade, develop infrastructure, industrialize, modernize agriculture, ensure food security, and strengthen our partnerships.

Finally, the Rt Hon Prime Minister re-iterated the commitment of the Republic of Rwanda to implementation of the COMESA integration agenda and to digital economic integration, noting that the Government of Rwanda has indeed prioritized digitization in its domestic programs.

## CLOSING STATEMENT

H.E Mr. Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina, the President of the Republic of Madagascar and the Chairperson of the Twentieth Summit of the COMESA Authority delivered a closing statement. In his statement, His Excellency the President expressed deep-felt appreciation to HE Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, the President of the Republic of Zambia and host of the Summit for the warm welcome and hospitality accorded to all Heads of State and Government Plenipotentiaries and all delegations. He expressed

appreciation to Mr Sindiso Ngwenya, the Outgoing Secretary General and all COMESA Staff for a very successful Summit and again underscored the timeliness and utter importance of Digital Economic Integration particularly the component of the Digital Free Trade Area.

H.E Mr. Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina, President of the Republic of Madagascar, pointed out that the Twentieth Summit of the COMESA Authority was pivotal in the history of the organization. Two new Member States were admitted, namely Republic of Tunisia and the Federal Republic of Somalia. A new Secretary General, Ms. Chileshe Kapwepwe, was appointed and sworn in, being the first woman to head the organisation. A number of conflicts had been resolved in the region and the peace and security situation improved, particularly noting the Declaration on Peace and Friendship between Eritrea and Ethiopia. His Excellency noted with satisfaction and appreciation that the various institutions of COMESA, including the Trade and Development Bank, the Africa Trade Insurance Agency and the Africa Leather and Leather Products Institute, had performed impressively and had greatly assisted economic integration as well as social economic transformation in the COMESA region and Africa at large.

His Excellency noted that the Summit immensely benefitted from the Report on the State of Integration presented by Mr Sindiso Ngwenya, which traced the history and development of

COMESA as an organization. The Report indicated how COMESA has been a resounding success as an organization. However, he called for mobilization of own-resources to reduce dependence on external funding.

Finally, His Excellency paid a glowing tribute to Mr Ngwenya the Outgoing Secretary General, noting his wealth of institutional memory and expertise.

He then wished their Excellencies the Heads of State and Government, the Plenipotentiaries and all delegations a safe journey home and **DECLARED THE TWENTIETH SUMMIT OF THE COMESA AUTHORITY CLOSED, TO A HUGE APPLAUSE.**

**DONE AT LUSAKA, THE REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA, THIS NINETEENTH DAY OF JULY 2018, IN THE ARABIC, ENGLISH AND FRENCH LANGUAGES, AND ALL TEXTS BEING EQUALLY AUTHENTIC.**













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