

COMESA and Sudan Engage On Regional Integration Issues



TDB President Mr Tadesse Admassu, Secretary General Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe (M) with the Prime Minister Hon Abdalla Hamdok

Secretary General (SG) Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe last week led a high-level delegation comprising of Heads of COMESA institutions, Directors and Senior Officers to Khartoum, Sudan on a tour of duty to re-engage the leadership on that country's participation in regional integration programmes as spearheaded by the bloc.

"I am happy that you are here as Secretary General with your team so that we can re-engage on the many programmes that we are implementing. We believe COMESA is a strong organisation and it will help us achieve our desires of developing our nation," PM Hamdok said.

The delegation met Prime Minister Right Hon. Abdalla Hamdok in his office in Khartoum where they discussed various issues on COMESA programmes and reviewed the level of implementation.

During the meeting, Prime Minister Hamdok reiterated his government's commitment to COMESA and pledged to continue working with the 21-member trade and development bloc in order to deepen regional integration. He pointed out that Sudan considers COMESA as a strong and dependable Regional Economic Community (REC) which they can depend on to support their development programme.

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us achieve our desires of developing our nation," PM Hamdok said.

He briefed the delegation on the various interventions being implemented in the area of trade and appealed for help to move the country from exporting raw materials to value addition on all the products being exported. This he added will help to create jobs for women and youths. The PM also requested for support from COMESA in areas of infrastructure development, finance, energy and agriculture.

The issues of empowering women and youths were also discussed and both sides committed to working together in this regard. Sudan was also requested to ratify the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) ahead of the launch scheduled for Rwanda during the course of this year.

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Ms Kapwepwe, who was on her maiden visit to Sudan as SG, commended the PM and his government for their continued dedication to deepening regional integration. She mentioned that Sudan is a founding member of COMESA and has been an active participant in COMESA programmes since it joined the organisation.

She revealed that there are many more areas such as Information Technology (IT), e-commerce and energy that the Secretariat could work with Sudan as the country moves to enhance development.

Before meeting the PM, Ms Kapwepwe held a brief meeting with the Minister of Industry and Trade Honourable Medani Abbas Medani and the Under-Secretary Mr Mohamed Ali Abdella at the Ministry of Trade.

During the five-day mission, the COMESA delegation held meetings with the Foreign Affairs Minister Hon. Asma Mohamed Abdalla, Under-Secretary at the Ministry of Justice Ms Siham Osman and Central Bank Governor Dr Badruddin Abdul Rahim. A one-day workshop was also conducted with the business community.

The SG was accompanied to Sudan by Trade and Development Bank (TDB) Bank President Mr Tadesse Admassu, COMESA Competition Commission Chief Executive Officer Mr George Lipimile, COMESA Court of Justice Registrar Ms Nyambura Mbatia, Federation for Women in Business in Eastern and Southern Africa (FEMCOM) Chief Executive Officer Ms Ruth Negash and ZEP-RE Country Manager Dr Hatim Abbas Mudawi.

Others are the Director of Gender at COMESA Secretariat Mrs Beatrice Hamusonde, Acting Director of the Agriculture and Industry Mr Innocent Makwiramiti, Legal Affairs Officer Mr Gabriel Masuku, Trade Expert Dr Seth Gor and COMAID Coordinator Mrs Hope Situmbeko.



TDB President Mr Tadesse Admassu (L) being welcomed by Prime Minister Hon Abdalla Hamdok



Foreign Affairs Minister Hon. Asma Mohamed Abdalla (L) and Secretary General Ms Chileshe Kapwepwe



Under-Secretary at the Ministry of Justice Ms Siham Osman (L) and Secretary General Ms Chileshe Kapwepwe



Central Bank Governor Dr Badruddin Abdul Rahim (centre in gray and black shirt) with the COMESA and Sudanese delegations



FEMCOM Sudan Chapter Signs MoU with Government



Under-Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Industry Mr Mohamed Ali Abdella (L) after signing the MoU with FEMCOM CEO Ms Ruth Negash

The Federation of National Associations of Women in Business from Eastern and Southern Africa (FEMCOM) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Sudan which will act as a framework for cooperation between the two parties in empowering women.

FEMCOM Chief Executive Officer Ms Ruth Negash signed for the institution while the Under-Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Industry Mr Mohamed Ali Abdella signed for the government.

The two parties agreed to work together in addressing barriers that prevent Sudanese

women to fully participate in economic activities and it will help in advancing gender equality and equity. This will be done through promoting women's economic empowerment by supporting the growth of women-owned enterprises in the country.

"This MoU will also help the FEMCOM Chapter and government to strengthen their collaboration in the area of women inclusiveness in many areas with a particular focus on finances and promoting access to justice," Ms Negash added.

This is the first FEMCOM Chapter to officially sign an MoU with the government and the CEO. The FEMCOM Chapter in the Democratic Republic of Congo has also signed an MoU between the government and the local chapter chairperson.

Ms Negash revealed that the institution is working to ensure that all the 18 chapters in the Member States sign MoUs with the governments. This, she said, will also help encourage ownership of the chapters by the governments.

COMESA Meets Sudanese Business Community



The event offered a good opportunity for the businessmen and women to ask questions and get answers on the burning issues and how they can take advantage of the regional market.

Chairperson of the Sudanese Chamber of Commerce Dr Osman Hassan commended the COMESA team for sparing time to spend with the business community and added that this would greatly help the business community in addressing some of their challenges.

Members of the Sudanese Businessmen and Employer's Federation interacted with the COMESA delegation during a full-day workshop held in Khartoum on 21st January 2020. Secretary General Chileshe Kapwepwe joined by Heads of COMESA institutions, Directors and Experts in Trade, Industry and Economics participated in the

interactive session which was the first of its kind for the Secretariat in that country.

The COMESA team made presentations on the different institutions, programmes and projects that COMESA is implementing and how Sudan could fully participate in the activities.

Presentations were made by the Trade and Development Bank (TDB), FEMCOM, the COMESA Competition Commission (CCC), COMESA Court of Justice (CCJ), ZEP-RE, Division of Trade, Division of Gender, Division of Industry and Agriculture and the COMAID project.

Regional Regulatory Framework Needed to Address Gaps and Weaknesses in Electricity Sector – COMESA/RAERESA



The COMESA Regional Association of Energy Regulators for Eastern and Southern Africa (RAERESA) is developing a framework which will act as the regulatory oversight for the electricity sector in the region. The association believes the framework will help control the area and enhance the efficiency of regional power trading on the continent.

As a way of moving this process, COMESA/RAERESA has conducted a regional consultative workshop for the study to develop a framework for regulatory oversight for the regional electricity market in Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian ocean region under the EU funded Enhancement of Sustainable Regional Energy Markets (ESREM) Project.

Energy Economist at COMESA Secretariat Mr. Chileshe Malama, who represented the organization at the workshop, said formulation of the framework was important as it will help regulate the regional energy markets.

He noted that energy plays a critical role in developing the region and significant investments have taken place in the sector, resulting in many ongoing projects in power generation and transmission.

“A regional framework is required to facilitate regional power trading as it would provide requirements and guidelines for handling the various issues that would arise at regional level,” Mr Malama added.

The workshop was officially opened by Senior Energy officer in the Ministry of Energy of Tanzania, Mr. Emilian Nyanda who indicated that the outcome of the workshop would help the COMESA-EAC-SADC region to develop and grow its energy production and market.

EU Tanzania delegation Head of Natural Resources Ms Jenny CORREIA NUNES indicated that the goal of the seven million Euro ESREM project is to promote a regional energy market, with the dual objectives of attracting investment and encourage sustainable development.

Participants to the workshop held 22 – 23rd January 2020 in Dar es Salaam were drawn from Members of the regional power pools, regulatory agencies, Regional centers of renewable energy and energy efficiency. Representatives from Ministries of Energy from Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Comoros, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Kenya and Lesotho also attend the consultative workshop. Others were from Malawi, Madagascar, Mauritius, Namibia Rwanda, Seychelles, Sudan, South Sudan, the Host Tanzania, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Sudan Hosts 37th International Trade Fair



Over 600 local and international exhibitors are participating at the 37th Sudan International Trade Fair which opened in Khartoum on 20th January 2020. It is expected to close on 28 January.

Secretary General Chileshe Kapwepwe witnessed the opening of the fair which was officiated by the Somali Minister of Trade.

COMESA countries that participated at the fair include Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya and Tunisia.