

COMESA to Establish Drone Technology Regulations



COMESA is set to establish model regulation for drone technology which can be applied at regional level. This is in line with the Decision of the COMESA ministers responsible for infrastructure, made in 2017, which mandated COMESA Secretariat to come up with regulations on drone technology.

Pursuant to this decision, COMESA participated in the first-ever African Drone Forum (ADF) organized by the Government of the Republic of Rwanda in collaboration with the World Economic Forum and the World Bank Group in Kigali, Rwanda 5 - 7 February 2020. The Forum brought together policy makers, civil aviation authorities, business community and civil society from across the continent.

Its objective was to appreciate the drone technology and emerging policy and regulatory

issues which will help COMESA Secretariat to establish regional drone technology regulations. COMESA team comprised of the Director of Infrastructure and Logistics Jean Baptiste Mutabazi and Telecommunications Officer Mr. Leonard Chitundu.

The African Drone Forum provided an opportunity to different stakeholders from Africa and around the world to review and devise new approaches

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-H.E. Paul Kagame.

to the management and regulation of drones. Participants appreciated the current applications of drone technologies in agriculture, health, education, survey among others, deployment challenges encountered and implementation solutions.

The Forum focused on technology demonstrations and creation of an enabling environment to unlock the social economic benefits of drone technology and maintenance of public safety.

Over 600 delegates from across the world participated with the official opening conducted by the President of Rwanda H.E. Paul Kagame. In his opening remarks, he stressed the need for regulatory policies and regulations that promote and not slow down innovation.

"The priorities of safety, security, and innovation can all be effectively catered for, within the regulatory framework," he said and challenged African countries to strengthen cross border cooperation in the adoption of the technology saying that it would boost the impact of technology.

At the same time, the COMESA team held talks with the Director General of Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA) to discuss the hosting of the Association of Regulators of Information and Communications for Eastern and Southern Africa (ARICEA) Secretariat and Regional

Cybersecurity Centre. Discussions centered on the draft host agreement for ARICEA Secretariat and MoU between COMESA and Rwanda Information and Security Agency (RISA) on the establishment of the Regional Cybersecurity Centre.

Double win for Zambia as FEMCOM Launches Cassava Cluster and Textile Factory



ZAM President Ezekiel Sekele (in red tie), COMESA Secretary General Chileshe Kapwepwe and part of the textile and garments equipment at the ZFAWIB textile cluster in Lusaka

The Federation of National Associations of Women in Business in Eastern and Southern Africa (FEMCOM) has launched the Kanakantapa Cassava Cluster factory situated in Chongwe area about 50 kilometers east of Lusaka, Zambia

FEMCOM has also handed over textile equipment worth over Euro 100,000 to the textile and garment cluster based in Lusaka's Villa Elizabeth area. The equipment was provided by the Zambia Association of Manufacturers.

The Kanakantapa Cassava Cluster factory is 'wholly women-owned and women-run' cassava processing plant and a major milestone in the implementation of the of the Cassava Cluster projects. It is owned and will be fully managed by a women's cooperative under the National FEMCOM Chapter, the Zambia Federation of Association of Women in Business (ZFAWIB).

ZFAWIB had been working with the women's associations and the Government of Zambia in the promotion of women in business activities in the cassava value chain, textiles and creation of market linkages for its members.

Cassava is one of the strategic food security commodities in the COMESA region which has been prioritized for commercialization. Speaking during the inauguration of the factory, Secretary General Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe, stated that the project proves that women are determined to create wealth and change the course of economic development in Africa and Zambia in particular.

"This project is testimony that with a little more effort, women can make a huge difference in their lives, those of their families and communities," she said. "There is compelling evidence that entrepreneurship is a powerful driver of economic growth and that women make significant contribution to the economy through their entrepreneurial activities."

FEMCOM Executive Director Ruth Negash said it was good to see the potential that lies in women being realized through the inauguration of the Kanakantapa cassava processing plant. "If more projects such as the processing plant continue to flourish, by the year 2063, over 90% of rural women would have access to productive assets, including land, credit, inputs and financial services.

She requested the Government of Zambia to provide land for the cassava farmers to expand their businesses as the launch of the plant is expected to increase cassava production and create more jobs in the country.

She added that FEMCOM has specifically tailored its strategic plans towards supporting practical interventions in the regional value chains and cassava and textiles.

At the relaunch of the ZFAWIB textile and garment factory in Lusaka, COMESA SG said the demand for African textiles and garments was increasing globally.

"African patterns are gaining recognition as truly fashionable and iconic pieces, with international fashionistas and fashion houses integrating more and more African influences in their latest collections," she noted.

She thanked the Zambia Association of Manufacturers (ZAM) that supplied the equipment adding that the factory will empower women and youths with skills and generate income for economic benefits through mass production of and access to regional and international markets. ZAM President Ezekiel Sekele thanked the women for reviving the textile sector. He said the equipment will help remove secondhand clothes which have affected the production in the sector.

ZFAWIB Chief Executive Officer and FEMCOM Chapter Chair, Maureen Sumbwe said:

"The hard work by the women in business in Zambia is now yielding results especially with the help coming from stakeholders like COMESA, FEMCOM and ZAM.



COMESA and ReNAPRI to Strengthen Relations in Agriculture Policy Research



Acting CEO of ACTESA Dr. John Mukuka with Dr. Nalishebo Meebelo, Head of the Secretariat of the Regional Network of Agriculture Policy Research Institutes (ReNAPRI) during the meeting at the secretariat

The COMESA Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) and the Regional Network on Agriculture Policy Research Institutes (ReNAPRI) will strengthen collaboration in Agriculture Policy Research and outreach in the region through an existing Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

The MoU provides for the establishment of a framework within which the parties will jointly explore and coordinate policy research and development activities that are of mutual interest. This will be done in a manner that conforms to their respective policies; to encourage joint efforts on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

This follows a meeting at COMESA Secretariat in Lusaka on Monday 10th February 2020 between the Acting ACTESA CEO, Dr. John Mukuka, and the Head of the Secretariat of ReNAPRI Dr. Nalishebo Meebelo. Dr Mukuka said ACTESA was ready to partner with ReNAPRI under the MoU with COMESA and to pursue potential areas of collaboration in 2020 and beyond.

He observed: “The role of concrete evidence in the formulation of agriculture related policy and decision-making is cardinal to the development of the region and the continent as a whole. We look forward to increased collaboration between us so that we can help reduce the poverty levels of our people in the region and beyond through Agriculture research which will assist us revamp the ailing agriculture sector due to climate change.”

Dr Meebelo said ReNAPRI was keen to work with COMESA due to its focus on strengthening trade related capacities for increased markets access and generally, its interest in enhancing agricultural

development, food and nutrition security. “ReNAPRI is well positioned to be the regional Think Tank, and to heighten the visibility of COMESA through its communication and outreach platforms. We therefore seek to strengthen collaboration amongst national policy institutes within the Eastern, Southern and West Africa regions to provide relevant and timely national and regional policy support to stakeholders such as national governments and Regional Economic Communities (RECs),” she added.

Established in 2012, ReNAPRI’s vision is to support leading national agricultural policy research institutes in Eastern, Southern and West Africa to be centres of excellence that guide and inform national and regional agricultural and food security policy issues.

ACTESA is a specialized agency of COMESA formed to address staple food production and marketing in order to increase market access; food production; food productivity and removal of food trade barriers..



ACTESA is ready to partner with ReNAPRI under the MoU with COMESA and to pursue potential areas of collaboration in 2020 and beyond.- Dr. Mukuka

COMESA to Lead Regional Meat and Live Animal Value Chain

COMESA will lead in the identification of comprehensive data and information for the meat and live animal value chain for southern and Horn of Africa required for inclusion in the design of the third Animal Resource Information System (ARIS 3).

This was part of the outcomes of a consultative workshop organized by AU-IBAR in Nairobi, Kenya, 03 - 07 February 2020, to identify priority data and information to be included in ARIS 3 to better handle information of priority regional livestock value chains.

Participants represented ministries responsible for livestock development from all 54 Member States of Africa and representatives from all Regional Economic Communities (RECs) including COMESA. Dr. Yoseph Mamo, Senior Livestock Officer, represented COMESA Secretariat.

"We agreed that AU-IBAR finalize the design of ARIS 3 and give appropriate trainings on the use of the application and that RECs statistical Units to be given training on ARIS 3 and be linked to Member States responsible unit to provide the required data," Dr Mamo said.

Each region chaired by the representative of the regional economic community identified comprehensive data and information required to be included in the design of ARIS 3. The Southern Region and the Horn of Africa were assigned to assess and identify data and information for meat and live animals, Northern and East Africa



to provide on Dairy products whereas Central and West Africa will handle poultry and eggs value chain.

It was also agreed that Development Partners will support the initiatives to promote livestock value chains in Africa for better economic integration.

The objectives of the Nairobi workshop were to conduct a comprehensive assessment of data and information needs by various stakeholders across the prioritized livestock value chains on regional basis (poultry, dairy, meat, and live animal) and identify critical data content for selected lvc to help develop a comprehensive continental data collection framework.

Participants were drawn from the Member States, Regional Economic Communities, Experts, Development Partners and Commodity Producer

Associations. They agreed on the benefits from implementing the ARIS 3 and Livestock Development Strategy for Africa (LiDESA).

The initiative is part of the AU-IBAR activities for the sustainable development of livestock for livelihoods in Africa Live2Africa to transform priority regional livestock value chains through strengthening systematic capacity building across member States. This is part of implementation and coordination of ARIS for the sustainable development of Animal Resources.

Implementation of the ARIS 3 is a follow up to the stakeholder workshop held in Cairo, Egypt in August last year, where key strategic actions and priority interventions were proposed. One of the crosscutting intervention was establishment of livestock value chain based information management system.

COMESA Diary

No	Meeting/Activity	Date	Venue
1.	1st COMESA Technical Working Group on Statistics of International Trade in Services	17th – 19th Feb 2020	Legacy Lodge in Chongwe, Lusaka, Zambia
2.	National Launch of the 50 Million African Women Speak Platform in Zambia	26-27 Feb 2020	Lusaka
3.	Basic DSGE modelling and forecasting for monetary policy formulation – COMESA Monetary Institute (CMI)	2 - 6 Mar 2020	Nairobi, Kenya
4	7th Meeting of the Technical Working Group of the Regional Customs Transit Guarantee (RCTG Carnet)	23-24 Mar 2020	Lusaka, Zambia
5	48th Meeting of the Management Committee of the Yellow Card Scheme	16 -17 March 2020	To be confirmed
6	5th Meeting of the IT Committee on the Digital Yellow Card (Date to be agreed)	April 2020 (date to be confirmed)	Lusaka
7	13th Meeting of the Management Committee (MC) of the RCTG Scheme	27-28 May 2020	To be confirmed



COMESA Institutions to Partner with AeTrade Group in Regional Trade Facilitation



AeTrade Group's Founder and CEO, Mr. MuluAlem Syoum (2nd Left) and former CBC Chairperson, Dr. Amany Asfour exchange the signed MoU as AU Commissioner for Trade Mr Albert Muchanga, (3rd left) CBC CEO Sandra Uwera and Secretary General Chileshe Kapwepwe (extreme right) applaud.

The COMESA Business Council (CBC) and Africa Leather and Leather Products Institute (ALLPI) have joined forces with AeTrade Group to advance intra-Africa trade. This will be done through cooperation on matters of digital business facilitation, technical skills development, trade partnerships and private sector development, with a specific focus on empowering Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

This was symbolically done through the signing of Memoranda of Understanding by the two COMESA institutions with AeTrade Group on 10th February in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The event was conducted on the sidelines of the 33rd African Union Ordinary Session Summit themed, "Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development."

Former CBC Chairperson, Doctor Amany Asfour, ALLPI Executive Director, Professor Mwinyikione Mwinyihija and AeTrade Group's Founder and CEO, Mr. MuluAlem Syoum, each signed on behalf of their organisations. Secretary General Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe and CBC Chief Executive Officer Sandra Uwera witnessed the signing.

Speaking at the event, the chair of the CBC Mr. Marday Venketasamy said: "This partnership is a real opportunity to transform the region's socioeconomic landscape, strengthening industries and SMEs through financial inclusion, business linkages and facilitation of market access."

The three institutions will further explore and implement as appropriate, actions that support solutions to some of Africa's trade and economic challenges. These are identified as priorities in line with the implementation of the Agreement on African Continental Free Trade Area, with a specific focus on the master plan of the African Union Strategy on Micro Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs).



This partnership is a real opportunity to transform the region's socioeconomic landscape, strengthening industries and SMEs through financial inclusion...
- Mr. Marday Venketasamy

"Our aim is working together to reap synergies and drive transformation faster in line with our respective mandates," said AeTrade Group's Founder and CEO, Mr. MuluAlem Syoum.

The cooperation will concentrate on, but not limited to the establishment and/or consolidation of regional electronic trade, and development of sustainable efforts in the areas of fair and transparent business models and practices.

The collaboration is a response to the low levels of intra-Africa trade, and will provide an opportunity to empower and support small and medium enterprises across the continent to take full advantage of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) and its opportunities in the digital market.

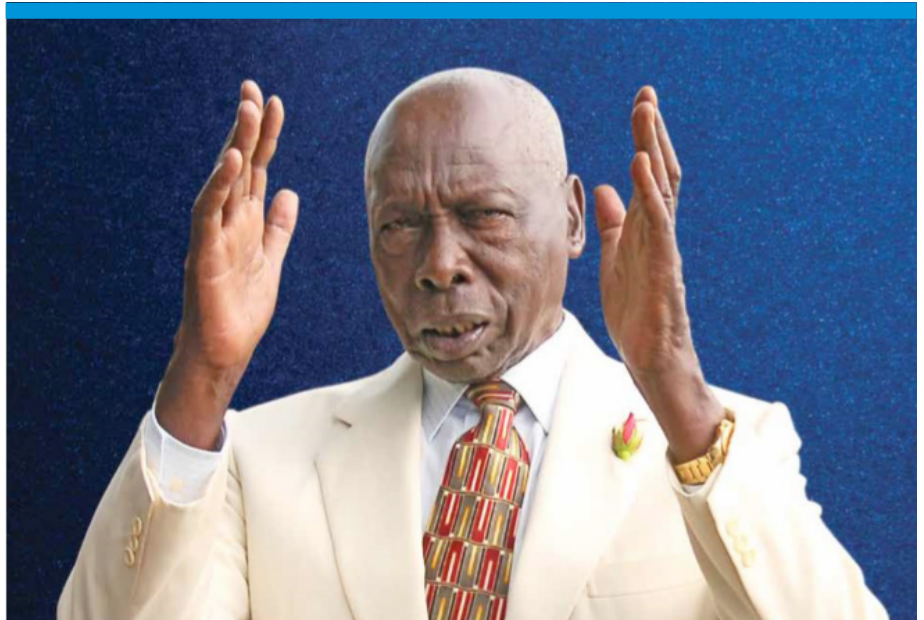
Both the public and private sectors are urged to explore ways that they can partner with the CBC, ALLPI and AeTrade Group, in facilitating the delivery of intra-regional trade enhancing solutions, through multi-stakeholder processes and mechanisms, befitting for the African context.

President Moi Left an Indelible Legacy in COMESA

COMESA was part of the mourners that gathered in Kenya last week to pay last respects to the late former President Daniel Toroitich arap Moi. Aged 96, President Moi, was among the African leaders that played a critical role in the establishment and promotion of regional economic communities, particularly COMESA and the East African Community.

Moi's legacy in COMESA is memorable. After taking over the chair of the Authority of COMESA Heads of States and Government in 1999, he led the organization in the countdown and eventual launch of the COMESA Free Trade Area the following year.

"This tremendous achievement has since impacted immensely on the growth of intra-COMESA trade rising from \$1.5 million at the time to over \$10 billion currently. "For COMESA,



President Daniel Arap Moi

President Moi's towering legacy is distinguished," said the Secretary General Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe, in her message of condolences to the President of Kenya, HE. Uhuru Kenyatta.

Assistant Secretary General in charge of Programmes, Ambassador Kipyego Cheluget represented the COMESA Secretariat at the State Funeral.

President Moi was the second and the longest-serving Kenya's Head of State who ruled the country from 1978 to 2002. Prior, he served as the third Vice President of Kenya from 1967 to 1978, and succeeded President Jomo Kenyatta following the latter's death.

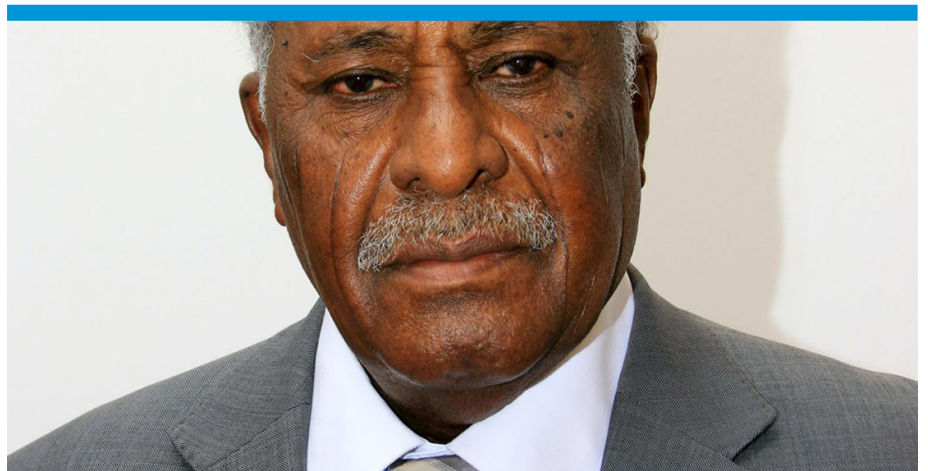
Justice Bashir of COMESA Court Passes On

Justice Abdalla El Bashir of the COMESA Court of Justice has passed on. The Judge who hails from Sudan, passed away on Thursday 6th February 2020 in Khartoum.

Justice Bashir was appointed to the bench of the CCJ in 2015 and served in the Appellate Division. He will notably be remembered for his contribution as a member of the Rules Review Committee that reviewed the Court's Rules of Procedure (2003) to capture shifting trends and current best practices in adjudication of international disputes to best achieve the Court's mission and vision.

In her tribute, the Judge President of the Court Hon. Lady Justice Lombe Chibesakunda described the deceased as a remarkable and accomplished Judge that is worthy of recognition.

"He was a very humble Judge who set remarkable examples by the way he conducted himself, always fair, decent and caring," she said. Justice Bashir held a Post Graduate Diploma and Master of Laws Degree from the University



Late Hon. Justice Abdalla El Bashir

of London and at the time of his election to the Appellate Division of the COMESA Court of Justice in 2015, he had been a lawyer for fifty five years, twelve of which he was attached to the Attorney Generals Chambers in Khartoum.

As a judge in Sudan, he served eight years in the High Court and the Court of Appeal and seven years as the President of the Constitutional Court. Apart from the bench, he had a rich and varied life

as a lecturer at the University of Khartoum and as a legal advisor to the Kuwait Fund for Investment and the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa for fifteen years.



Launch of Cassava and Textile Projects in Zambia

