Lusaka, Friday 13 December 2019: The 24th Meeting of the Bureau of the COMESA Committee of Central Bank Governors and their representatives met in Lusaka on Friday and discussed ways of enhancing implementation of the COMESA Monetary Integration Agenda. They have agreed that the success of several regional programmes including the Free Trade Area (FTA), the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) and the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) is dependent on a sound monetary system.

Speaking in her address to the Governors, Secretary General Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe emphasized that the drive towards industrialization and the plan to establish the Common Market and Economic Community requires greater monetary integration.

She commended the region for making significant progress in recent years towards improved, macroeconomic frameworks and adopting good international practices and principles.

“Our region has made progress on institutional reforms, improved in operational frameworks for fiscal and monetary policies, we have improvements in transparency and reporting. Most countries have also recorded increased investments and improved the conditions of doing business,” said Ms Kapwepwe.

This development was described as positive and in line with COMESA’s Medium-Term Strategic Plan which focuses on contributing to the structural transformation of the economies of COMESA member countries to foster overall economic development through trade facilitation and investment promotion.

The Governors however noted that more needs to be done by the region in order to attain inclusive growth and development.

Chairperson of the Committee of Central Bank Governors Mr Ahmed Osman highlighted some of the positive developments recorded by the COMESA Monetary Institute (CMI) and the Regional Payment and Settlement System (REPSS).

For 2019, CMI undertook several research and capacity building activities to improve macroeconomic management and assessment.
T he number of seed varieties listed on the COMESA Variety Catalogue has increased to sixty-nine after seeds from two more companies namely Western Seed and SEEDCO were listed through the Uganda National Variety List. This has been made possible by the COMESA Seed Harmonisation Implementation Plan (COMSHIP).

COMSHIP, a COMESA Seed Programme working in close collaboration with USAID has facilitated this process as part of ongoing efforts to operationalize the COMESA Variety catalogue. As a basic requirement, a seed variety is eligible to be listed on the regional variety catalogue if it first registers on lists in two COMESA Member States.

Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) Head and Seed Development Expert Dr John Mukuka recently revealed in Lusaka that the two seed companies can now trade some of their seed within Uganda and freely export the rest to neighbouring COMESA Member States.

“T hese early and medium maturing varieties of both Seed-co and Western seed are climate smart and shall assist small-holder farmers in mitigating climate change effects and maximum on increasing their house-hold incomes,” said Dr Mukuka.

Currently, thirteen national/regional and international seed companies have their varieties listed on the COMESA Variety Catalogue.

These include Bayer, Seed-co, Pannar, Pioneer Dupont, East African Seed Company, Hytech Seed Egypt, Europlant Pflanzenzucht, Kenya Seed co, Naseco MRI/Syngenta, Western Seed co and HZP Holland. Under the COMESA Regional Harmonised Trading System, these varieties can be traded freely without these seed companies having to register them for testing and certification before being traded in a given COMESA Member State.

The Seed-co varieties that have been listed include SC302 a very early maturing maize variety and early maturing maize varieties of SC403, SC 533, SC 529. Others are early maturing sorghum variety of SC Sila.

For Western Seed Company, the varieties listed include medium maturing varieties of WH101, WH 504, WH 505, WH507, WH 509 and late maturing maize varieties of WH 401 and 605.

The team is led by GLTFP Procurement Expert Joyce Mutale who is accompanied by Daniel Ssekamwa, a senior commercial officer at the Ministry of Trade, industry and cooperatives in Uganda, Serge Musana, the Regional TIDO coordinator for the GLTFP and COMESA Communications Assistant Daniel Banda.
Delegates in the Governors Meeting

of financial stability in member states while
REPSS has continued to grow with transactions
through the live payment system reaching more
than US$115 million over a five-year period as at
30 September 2019. The month of October 2019
saw transactions amounting to US$6 million
processed by REPSS.

“This upward trend suggest that the system will
indeed, significantly contribute to the expansion

---

**COMESA, EU, IOM Launch Migration Information and Data Analysis System at Mchinji**

Mchinji, Malawi, Friday 13 December 2019:
COMESA with support from the European
Union and the International Organization of
Migration (IOM) working with the Malawian
Government have launched the Migration
Information and Data Analysis System (MIDAS) at
Mchinji Border Post.

The system is part of the COMESA small scale
cross border trade initiative which aims at
increasing formal small-scale cross-border
trade flows in the COMESA-EAC-SADC tripartite
region. This is expected to lead to higher revenue
collection for governments at the borders as well
as higher incomes for small-scale cross-border
traders. Secretary General Chileshe Kapwepwe
revealed that the beneficiaries of this programme
are primarily small-scale traders in particular
women traders who regularly cross the border to
sell and buy goods.

“Today’s event marks an important step for the
whole COMESA region to attain its resilience as we
embark towards facilitating small-scale cross-
border trade flows between targeted countries
cal crosses effective policy and governance reforms,”
said Ms Kapwepwe. She was represented at
the event by the Assistant Secretary General for
Administration and Finance Dr Dev Harman.

COMESA has a co-delegation agreement with
IOM to support implementation of the COMESA
small scale border trade initiative, a programme
with financial support under the 11 European
Development Fund (EDF) COMESA sub envelope.
Malawi is one of the first countries to receive the
system in the region.

EU representative Mr. Jose-Maria MEDINA-
NAVARRO at the meeting added that the Union is
hopeful that once successful, the MIDAs initiative
will be quickly rolled out to other COMESA
borders.

“This Initiative ties in with COMESA efforts to
operationalise a Digital Free Trade Area which is
about empowering traders to participate in cross
border trade using ICT as a tool to minimize
physical barriers.”

The Event was attended by the Malawi Minister
of Homeland Security Honourable Nicholas Dausi
and IOM Regional Director Mr Charles Kwenin.
Permanent Secretaries from Malawi and Zambia
also attended the event.

MIDAS is an IOM supported Border Management
System which allows Member States to collect,
process, store and analyse information for
the purpose of identification of travelers, data
collection and analysis. It supports the evaluation
of cross-border traffic, helps determine the
optimum deployment of human resources at
border posts and supports a better understanding
of human mobility flows.