

## 24th COMESA Heads of State Summit Set for Kenya



Left: Hon. Lee Kinyangui with COMESA ASG Dr Dev Haman after the signing of the Host Agreement

The Government of Kenya and Executive Management at COMESA Secretariat have announced that preparations are underway for the upcoming 24<sup>th</sup> COMESA Heads of State and Governments Summit to be held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025 at the Kenyatta International Conference Center in Nairobi.

Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry Cabinet Secretary Hon. Lee Kinyangui made the announcement at a ceremony in Nairobi on Thursday 18 September 2025 when he signed the Host Agreement with the COMESA Assistant Secretary General for Administration and Finance Dr Dev Haman.

"As a region, we have made significant strides, including the recent entry into force of the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Free Trade Area which creates Africa's largest integrated market," said CS Kinyanjui.

The Summit will be preceded by the COMESA European Union (EU) Horticulture Connect on 06 - 8<sup>th</sup> October, the COMESA Business Forum on 7<sup>th</sup> October while the 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Committee of Ministers of Foreign Affairs will be on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

## Malawi Elections – Peaceful and Orderly

The Joint African Union- COMESA Election Observation Mission (AU - COMESA EOM) to the September 16 General Elections in Malawi has commended the country for conducting a peaceful and orderly election. The orderliness is attributed to the reforms undertaken since 2019 and enhanced logistical readiness and inclusivity measures by the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC).

This is contained in the Preliminary Statement

➡ page 3

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R-L: Lady Justice Effie Owuor receiving her observation certificate from H.E. Hailemariam Desalegn BOSHE as Amb. Ashraf Rashed and Rt. Hon Ruhakana Rugunda looks on

## Malawi Elections .....

issued on Thursday 18 September 2025 in Lilongwe. It was read out by Leader of the AU-COMESA EOM H.E Hailemariam Desalegn BOSHE, former Prime Minister of Ethiopia. The Mission Leader was assisted by Amb. Ashraf Rashed, Chair of the COMESA Committee of Elders.

"This largely reflects Malawi's continued commitment to democratic consolidation compliance with many international election principles and MEC procedures," fmr PM Desalegn said.

In support of Malawi's objective to further strengthen its electoral process, the AU-COMESA EOM has made preliminary recommendations to various stakeholders including the government and legislators, the MEC, Civil Society Organisations, political parties and the media.

The government and legislators have been urged to introduce legislated gender quotas or temporary special measures to guarantee a minimum threshold of women, youth and persons with disabilities' representation in Parliament and local councils in line with regional and international standards.

To the Malawi Electoral Commission, they should introduce electoral technology in the election management processes, invest time and resources in extensive voter and stakeholder awareness. These should include clear explanations of the purpose of the tools and their limitations. Conduct broad stakeholder consultations and awareness campaigns to explain the purpose, use and limitations of electoral technologies to build public trust.

Political Parties have been urged to adopt binding internal rules for gender-balanced primaries, transparent candidate selection and zero-tolerance for intimidation. Commit to supporting women, youth, and persons

with disabilities in leadership roles through mentorship, financial backing, and fair access to campaign platforms. Civil Society Organisations, should continue to advocate for women's rights and gender equality, including lobbying for legal reforms and providing practical support (training, advocacy, solidarity campaigns) to female candidates.

To the Media, they should ensure balanced and impartial coverage by giving fair airtime to all candidates and parties, including women, youth and PWDs, develop editorial guidelines and ethical standards that safeguard against disinformation, partisan bias and unfair access linked to financial advantage.

**Get the full statement** [https://qr.scan.page/uploads/pdf/Mk1dlx\\_9e2a6b8a7913b9ca.pdf](https://qr.scan.page/uploads/pdf/Mk1dlx_9e2a6b8a7913b9ca.pdf)

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**More Photos at**

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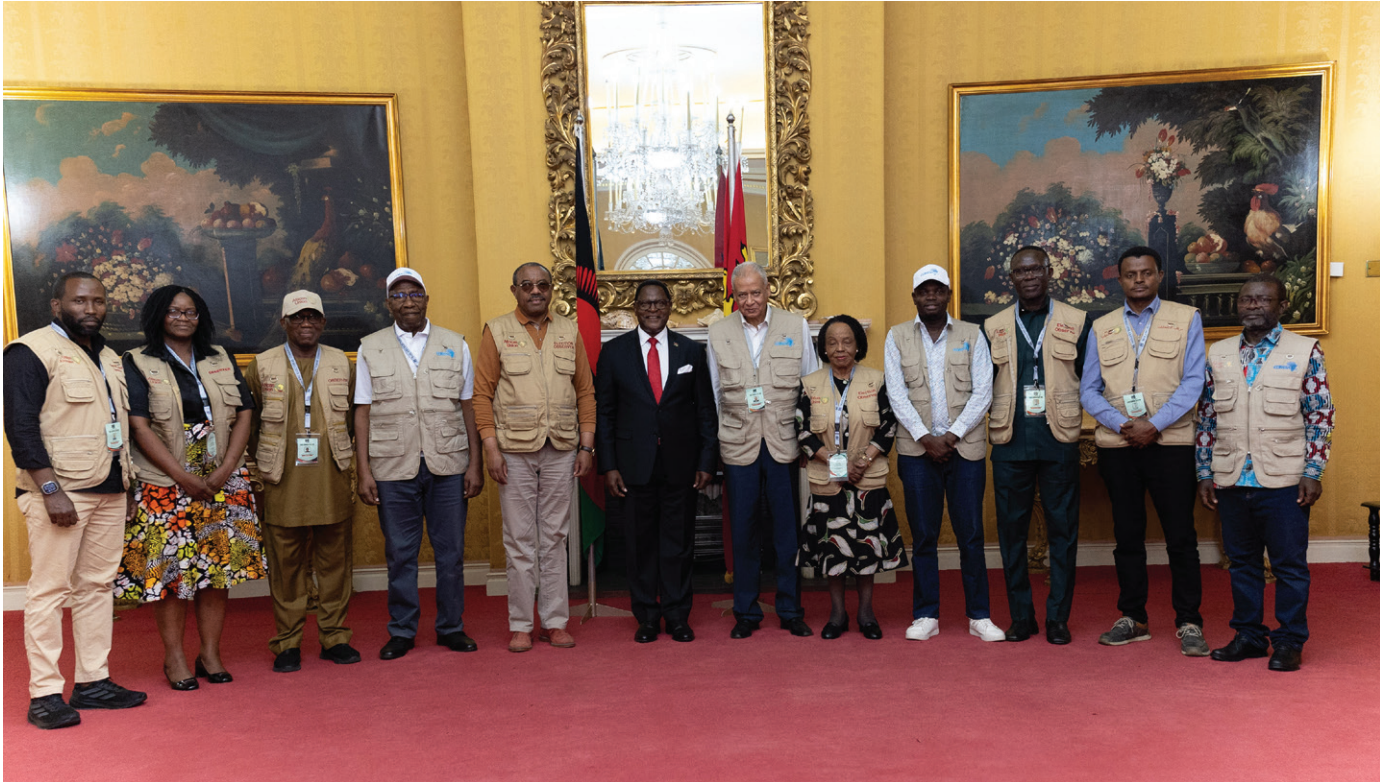
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## Impact of Non-Bank Financial Institutions on Economies

Recent studies by the COMESA Monetary Institute (CMI) have revealed that some Member States have experienced a significant impact on their financial stability caused by shocks from Non-Bank Financial Institutions (NBFIs).

The impact of NBFIs' shocks on financial stability has been mixed with some countries experiencing significant instability while for other countries, the impact was insignificant. This was revealed during the validation workshop held 08–09 September 2025 in Kenya for the country studies conducted by staff from COMESA Member Central Banks on the "Impact of Non-Bank Financial Institutions (NBFIs) Shocks on member country's Financial System Stability".

The meeting also noted key common policy recommendations arising from the studies, largely pointing to the need for strengthening governance, implementing risk-based supervision and promoting diversification within the NBFIs sector. In addition, the studies noted the need to institutionalize cross-sector stress testing and enhance oversight of concentrated NBFIs funding, harmonizing liquidity standards across the financial sector and strengthening financial stability surveillance

and early-warning frameworks to include NBFIs. These interventions are expected to enhance NBFIs' stabilizing role and mitigate systemic financial risks.

Other policy recommendations included strengthening cross-sector supervisory coordination among the Financial Sector's Regulatory Agencies, developing contingency and resolution planning for NBFIs, including liquidity support and recovery strategies; upgrading cross-sector data granularity and disclosure (including climate and cyber metrics); and undertaking regular stress tests for NBFIs, as this helps to identify vulnerabilities and inform policy responses to emerging risks and market

developments, among others.

The meeting further considered the training and other activities undertaken by CMI related to the COMESA Financial System Development and Stability Sub-Committee in 2025 and prepared a work plan for 2026 which will be implemented by CMI.

The workshop and meetings were attended by delegates from thirteen (13) COMESA member Central Banks, namely, the Central Bank of Burundi, DRC, Egypt, Eswatini, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Madagascar, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Date	Activity	Venue
20 – 30 Sept	Joint AU-COMESA Election Observation Mission to the Presidential & Parliamentary Elections	Seychelles
30 Sept – 2 <sup>nd</sup> October	Validation Workshop for Draft Policy and Regulations for Universal Access Planned – EGEE-ICT Programme	Kigali
6 – 8 October	COMESA EU Horticulture Connect	Nairobi
7 October	COMESA Business Forum	Nairobi
8 October	20 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs	Nairobi
9 October	24 <sup>th</sup> COMESA Heads of State and Govts Summit	Nairobi
14 – 16 October	Gender Technical Working Group Meeting	Lusaka





## Joint Border Committees between Burundi and DRC Operationalised

The Joint Border Committees (JBCs) at Gatumba/Kavimvira and Vugizo/Kiliba border posts between Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo have been operationalised. COMESA Secretariat convened two Joint border committee meetings for Gatumba/Kavimvira and Vugizo/Kiliba border posts on 8th - 9th September and 11th - 12th September 2025 respectively in Bujumbura, Burundi to make the committees functional.

The meetings were attended by appointed members of the JBCs drawn from border agencies, relevant government ministries, local authorities from border regions, representatives of civil society and private sector organisations including the small-scale cross-border traders' associations.

In March 2024, COMESA Secretariat, with financial assistance from the World Bank, began the journey to technically support the establishment and operationalisation of JBCs at borders between Burundi and DRC.

Terms of Reference for implementing the JBCs and a roadmap were developed that included developing and signing legal texts, appointment of the members of the local committees for each country based on the legal text and to organize, at border level, the JBC operationalisation meeting.

Burundi developed and signed its legal text, the Ministerial Order No. 750/6518 on 25 October 2024 and DRC developed and signed its legal text, in the Province of South Kivu, on 26 May 2025. Both countries appointed members of the JBCs according to the signed legal texts.

To move the process forward, the September meeting clarified the functions and responsibilities of JBC members and they adopted and signed their respective JBC's Rules of Procedures. Furthermore, the JBCs discussed non-tariff barriers identified at Gatumba/Kavimvira and Vugizo/Kiliba Border Posts and proposed roadmaps to resolve them.

JBCs are a Coordinated Border Management (CBM) approach used to improve cross border coordination to facilitate trade and they are key to trading more, faster, and safer besides making trade policy more inclusive of all marginalised and vulnerable groups such as women, youth, and people with disability. JBCs have proved to be efficient in eliminating non-tariff barriers (NTB), enhancing inter-agency coordination, promoting the sharing of available resources at border posts, improving public-private sector collaboration, and streamlining border operations in the overall interest of trade facilitation.



## Young COMESA Entrepreneurs Win 2025 GOGETTAZ AGRIPRENEUR Award

Two young entrepreneurs from Egypt and Uganda were recently awarded the 2025 GoGettaZ Agripreneur Prize Competition at the Africa Food Systems Forum 2025 held in Dakar, Senegal. Naglaa Mohammad of Egypt, co-founder of P-Vita, and Samuel Muyita of Uganda, co-founder of Karpolax, emerged as grand prize winners each walking away with a US\$50,000 to grow and scale their businesses.

This followed several months of intense competition, creative pitches and impactful storytelling by 13 young entrepreneurs from 11 countries across the continent.

The two prize winners were recognized as Africa's most innovative and impactful young agripreneurs, standing out among thousands of applicants across the continent, rising through rigorous application reviews, video pitches, and semi-finalist interviews.

P-Vita developed a patented system with components like algae and recycled palm agri-waste to tackle the problem of expensive imported fertilizer and inputs, which often use harsh chemicals and are

unaffordable for rural and low-income communities.

While Karpolax designed patented green nanotechnology to make innovative, non-toxic and affordable VOC-based sachets that extend the shelf-life of many fruits and vegetables, helping farmers and distributors reduce post-harvest losses and preserve produce quality.

Other contestants from the COMESA region included Daniel Wa Mukina, co-founder, DASEC SARL, of the Democratic Republic of Congo, tackling the problem of the high cost of imported agrifood machinery. Hazem ElTawab, co-founder, ReNile, Egypt, a climate-smart company that provides locally manufactured environmental sensors and a farm management platform to help farmers and factories monitor soil, water, and air in real-time, enabling data-driven decisions.

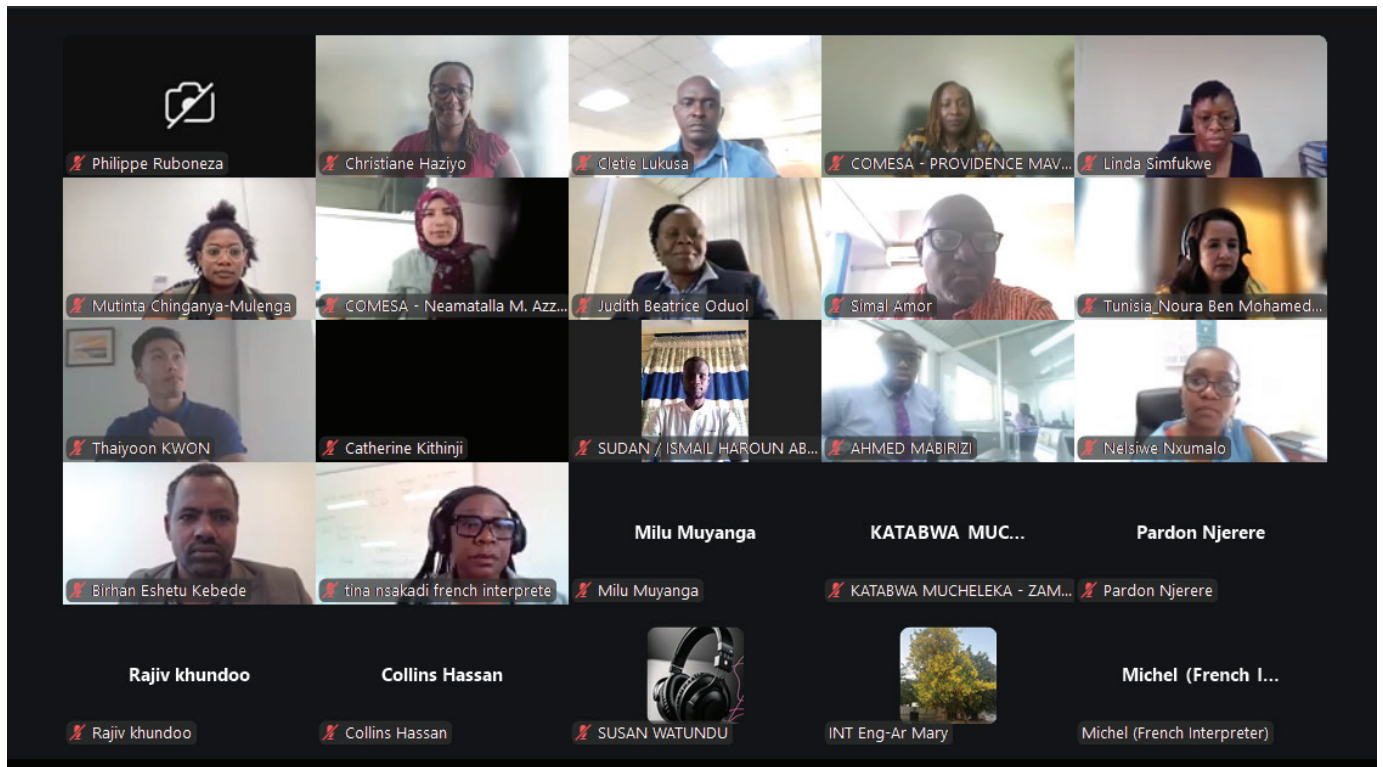
Niza Aritha Zulu, co-founder, Bio Green Technology, Zambia, provides smart water monitoring devices and a digital support platform that helps small and medium-scale fish farmers improve productivity,

reduce fish mortality, and adopt sustainable aquaculture practices. And Kidist Amedie of Guaro Farms, Ethiopia, is a young company bringing "last mile" processing hubs to smallholder growers of herbs and spices in selected spice-growing regions of Ethiopia.

All twelve finalists were awarded mentorship, programming linkages, and other guidance to continue their entrepreneurial journey.

The AFS Forum is a premier annual gathering of public and private sector leaders, policymakers, researchers, development partners, and youth-led enterprises dedicated to transforming food systems across the continent. This year's 20th annual summit was held in Dakar, Senegal, from 31 August to 4 September 2025.





## 12th Annual Research Forum on Regional Integration and Resilience

COMESA held its 12th Annual Research Forum from 16 – 18 September 2026 under the theme “Accelerating Regional Integration Through Value Chain Development in Agriculture, Mining, Tourism and Climate Change Adaptation.”

The three-day meeting brought together policymakers, researchers, private sector leaders, and development partners to exchange ideas, share knowledge, and propose evidence-based solutions that will drive sustainable growth and deepen regional integration.

In his opening remarks, Dr. Christopher Onyango, COMESA Director of Trade and Customs, commended the experts present for their dedication and urged them to use the Forum as a space for “collective problem-solving on the crucial issues affecting the region.”

Representing the Secretariat, Director of Industry and Agriculture Mrs. Providence Mavubi emphasized resilience in development planning and the inclusion of women, youth, and indigenous communities. “As climate change poses risks to our long-term viability, it is critical that our

strategy embraces resilience at every level,” She added “Effective solutions demand the inclusion of women, youth and indigenous communities in planning and decision-making processes,”.

She further highlighted that agriculture remains the backbone of the region’s economy but is increasingly threatened by climate change, making it essential to strengthen value chains and adopt climate-smart practices for food security, employment, and competitiveness. The meeting also noted that COMESA’s vast reserves of strategic minerals such as copper, cobalt, and lithium present opportunities for value addition but it is necessary that legal frameworks should be harmonized, sustainable practices are prioritized and public-private partnerships fostered.

Keynote speaker Mr. Daniel Njiwa who is Director for Inclusive Markets, Trade and Finance at the alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) underscored agriculture’s central role in Africa’s transformation, noting that the sector’s transformation is about much more than seeds and fertilizers. It requires functioning markets, resilient food systems, and the active participation of

women and youth in shaping the sector’s future.

The Forum, held virtually, gave participants a platform to engage in a spirited dialogue and present research papers and their findings.

Papers presented included:

- Promoting Trade, Production and Value Chain Development of Climate Resilient Orphaned Crops through Intra-COMESA Trade.
- Leveraging Regional Integration for Sustainable Tourism Development in COMESA
- Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Framework in COMESA Region Through Gender and Social Integration, A Paradigm Shift Approach. A case of Zimbabwe
- Leveraging Indigenous Knowledge Systems to Improve Climate Change Adaptation in Matebeleland South Province Rural Communities, Zimbabwe.



## COMESA and World Bank to Host ASCENT Week 2025 at Ciela Resort, Lusaka

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), in partnership with the World Bank, will convene the inaugural ASCENT Week 2025 from 22 to 26 September at Ciela Resort, Lusaka, Zambia. This flagship event marks a turning point in the region's energy transformation agenda.

ASCENT Week will gather over 350 high-level participants from across Eastern and Southern Africa, including officials from national governments, energy ministries, rural electrification agencies, utilities, regulators, and ASCENT project implementation units. The event will serve as a platform to accelerate the rollout of the ASCENT Program, a bold initiative aimed at expanding energy access to over 100 million people across 20+ countries.

Valued at US\$5 billion, the ASCENT Program is designed to catalyze an additional US\$10 billion in financing from development partners. At its heart is the COMESA Regional Acceleration Platform, a US\$50 million facility that provides technical

assistance in digital monitoring, knowledge exchange, and capacity building.

During a media briefing held at the COMESA Secretariat, on 18 September 2025, Dr. Malama Chileshe, ASCENT Project Coordinator, alongside Mr. Ahid Maeresera, ASCENT Technical Manager, emphasized the event's strategic objectives including raising awareness of the ASCENT Program's implementation progress, exploring opportunities to accelerate results and impact as well as sharing emerging good practices across participating countries.

"As you may be aware, the ASCENT Programme was launched last year and is now just over a year old. This meeting will highlight COMESA's support mechanisms for implementation and will also be used to chart the next steps in program execution," said Dr. Malama.

A key highlight of the event will be the participation of the Access to Energy Institute (A2EI), and Odyssey Energy Solutions

who support several COMESA member states and operates the regional Digital Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (dMRV) platform. A2EI will showcase its innovations at the COMESA booth, offering valuable insights for countries considering dMRV deployment.

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