

## COMESA champions Climate-Resilient Energy Systems



ASG Programmes Amb. Dr Mohamed Kadah

The Assistant Secretary General for Programmes (ASG-P) Amb. Dr Mohamed Kadah has reaffirmed COMESA's commitment to ensuring that the region implements programmes that support sustainable energy. He says the organisation has been involved in supporting efforts aimed at developing sustainable energy and some actions taken in the past include, the formulation of model policy and regulatory guidelines aimed at facilitating the adoption of good industry practices at country level.

Other initiatives being implemented include advocating for the harmonisation of laws and regulations and the adoption of the Eastern Africa Power Pool as a vehicle for driving electrical power development and trade in the east African region.

The ASG-P said this on Monday 8th September 2025 at the 2nd Africa Climate Summit in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia during his address to the delegates. This was at the launch of the Continental Energy Program for Africa (CEPA) inaugurated by the Executive Vice-President of the European Commission

Ms. Teresa Ribera.

EU through CEPA will support AUC, AUDA-NEPAD and African Energy Commission (AFREC) for 4 years by implementing Continental, Regional and National activities in the 55 countries of the African Union which covers the COMESA region.

Amb. Kadah said COMESA has also supported regional power interconnection projects such as the preparation of the Zambia-Tanzania Power interconnector, which is a section of the Zambia-Tanzania-Kenya power interconnector, which by 2028, is poised to link the Eastern Africa Power Pool (EAPP) and the Southern Africa Power Pool (SAPP).

He elaborated on other projects such as the Mission300, a programme aiming to deliver electricity access to 300million people across the African continent. Through the Accelerating Sustainable and Clean Energy Access Transformation Programme (ASCENT), COMESA is working with the World Bank to support the delivery of electricity connections to 100million people, and clean cooking

solutions to 20 million people in Eastern and Southern Africa. The 100million electricity connections target through the ASCENT Programme accounts for about 30% of the mission300 target.

In addition, COMESA is currently implementing a regional component of ASCENT aptly dubbed the Regional Energy Access Acceleration Platform (REAAP), which is meant to support ASCENT participating countries in scaling up access to clean, affordable, and reliable energy. "This platform is designed to be agile, responsive and inclusive providing tailored technical assistance, policy support and capacity building to countries at different stages of their energy transition," Amb. Dr Kadah said.

Through technical assistance support to be delivered through the REAPP, COMESA expects to help resolve some of the well-known barriers to increased access to energy services while promoting regional cooperation through joint delivery of regional energy solutions.



ACTESA CEO Dr John Mukuka



## Advancing Biotechnology for Enhanced Regional Food Security

The Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) has commended COMESA Member States for embracing biotechnology and implementing measures that are contributing to food security in the region.

ACTESA Chief Executive Officer Dr. John Mukuka recently revealed that several COMESA Member States are at an advanced stage in using biotechnology to improve the food situation in their respective countries.

He named the COMESA countries that have embraced and commercialized agricultural biotech crops and are reaping significant economic, environmental and food security benefits as Kenya, Malawi, Eswatini, Ethiopia and Sudan. Rwanda, Uganda and Egypt are advancing research in Biotechnology, while countries like Zambia are reviewing and refining their regulatory frameworks to enable safe trade and commercial cultivation.

He was speaking during the 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Africa Biennial Biosciences Communication Symposium (ABBC 2025), held in Lusaka, Zambia, on 26 – 28 August 2025.

Held under the theme "The War on Science,

how can we overcome the burden of misinformation and disinformation?" the Symposium provided a platform for sharing insights and highlighting the crucial role of Biotechnology in transforming agriculture, bolstering resilience to climate change, and enhancing regional trade in safe, high-quality agricultural products.

The symposium opened with a keynote by the ACTESA Chief Executive Officer, Dr. John Mukuka, who highlighted the crucial role of Biotechnology in transforming agriculture, bolstering resilience to climate change, and enhancing regional trade in safe, high-quality agricultural products.

Zambia's Minister of Agriculture, Hon. Reuben Mtolo Phiri addressed the Symposium and explained that Africa continues to face a convergence of food insecurity, disease burden, and environmental challenges, creating a complex crisis that threatens health and development.

"The spread of misinformation on science has emerged as a significant concern for both public health and the entire innovative space. Misinformation alongside disinformation has undermined trust, delayed progress, and in

some cases cost lives," he stated.

Africenter Board Chair Dr. Robert Karanja highlighted that misinformation and disinformation in science and technology undermine innovations that have the potential to address hunger and poverty.

ASAA Afri-Centre Executive Director Dr Margret Kerembu remarked that the challenge of disinformation threatens the ability to strengthen food systems, improve health, and build climate resilience.

The ABBC provides an Africa-based and African-led platform for stakeholders to actively exchange experiences and address pressing communication issues key to propelling biosciences' innovations in the continent and globally.

The Symposium was organised by ISAA AfricCentre in collaboration with National Biosafety Authority, (NBA-Zambia), with participants drawn from Botswana, Cameroon, Canada, Ethiopia, France, Ghana, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Zimbabwe and Zambia.



# COMESA and AU Deploy Observers in Malawi

The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) in collaboration with the African Union (AU) have deployed a short-term election observation mission to the 2025 General Elections in Malawi.

The joint Election Observation team set base on the ground from 7<sup>th</sup> September 2025 and will be headed by H.E. Hailemariam Dessalegn former Prime Minister of Ethiopia and assisted by Amb. Mohamed Ashraf Rashed from the COMESA Committee of Elders.

In deploying the observer mission, COMESA and AU are reaffirming their support and commitment to ensure the consolidation of

democracy and good governance in Member States in line with the relevant respective normative instruments.

The joint AU-COMESA mission will have a mixture of about 90 observers drawn from AU and COMESA Member States. The mission will be assisted by technical staff from both AU and COMESA.

Prior to the deployment of the election observer mission, COMESA in collaboration to the AU and International IDEA has been providing technical support to Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) and other stakeholders to better prepare them to deliver

a credible and peaceful election. The request for support was made by MEC when COMESA and AU conducted a Pre-Election Assessment Mission to Malawi in April 2025.

"These elections are key in consolidating democracy and rule of law in the Republic of Malawi and is in line with Article 6(h) of the COMESA Treaty which commits all COMESA Member States to the promotion of democracy and the rule of law," said Dr Oita Etyang – Head of the Governance, Peace and Security Unit at COMESA Secretariat

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## Malawi Peace Declaration Signed



H.E President Lazarus Chakwera (middle in red tie) with other presidential candidates after the signing of the Peace Declaration in Lilongwe

Eleven Presidential candidates representing various Political Parties contesting in the 16 September General Elections in Malawi have signed a peace pledge securing a solemn commitment from all candidates to ensure a peaceful and credible electoral process.

The signing took place in Lilongwe on Monday 8th September 2025 at the Bingu International Convention Center at a ceremony organised by the Public Affairs Committee.

Representatives from the United Nations, African Union, and COMESA joined by officials from the Malawi Electoral Commission, the Malawi Peace and Unity Commission, faith

and religious leaders, and His Excellency President Lazarus Chakwera all witnessed the signing.

The event, titled "Peace Declaration Our Basis for Inclusive Dialogue and Mediation for Peaceful Political Settlements," aimed to foster unity, tolerance, and respect for the democratic process through a formal peace pledge.

The United Nations Resident Coordinator Rebecca Adda Dontoh described the peace pledge as a "moral and political act," emphasizing that it is more than a signed document but a symbol of accountability and

trust.

H.E. Ruhakana Rugunda representing COMESA and the African Union expressed solidarity and unity with the people of Malawi, urging all participants to prioritize national interests above personal ambitions.

He underscored the importance of tolerance, mutual respect, and dialogue and informed them that the joint AU and COMESA would deploy election observers to various regions and districts across the country.

More Photos at <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjCtreB>



*Participants at the BASA Validation Working in Djibouti*

## **Aviation Experts Validate Model Document to Advance Air Transport**

Aviation Experts from 19 countries representing five African Regional Economic Communities (RECs) met in Djibouti from 2 – 4 September and validated the Draft Model Bilateral Air Services Agreement (BASA) – a key instrument that will accelerate the full implementation of the Yamoussoukro Decision and, in turn, the operationalization of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM).

With support from the European Union, SAATM is being implemented in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the East African Community (EAC), the Intergovernmental Authority for Development (IGAD), the Indian Ocean Community (IOC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The RECs believe that the model BASA will serve as a powerful tool to fast-track the implementation of Yamoussoukro Decision and the SAATM programme, breaking down barriers and fostering a seamless air travel environment.

The meeting noted that the story of African aviation and air transport is a narrative of resilience which over decades, has faced and overcome profound challenges, from global financial crises to pandemics. Each time, it has not only survived but has rebounded

with renewed vigor, demonstrating its fundamental role in economic prosperity and development.

Speaking during the opening of the workshop, COMESA reiterated its commitment to ensure that Member States are provided with the necessary support to develop and implement the model BASA document.

"Today, as we look to a future where passenger traffic is projected to double by 2040, we must ensure that this growth is inclusive and benefits all of our citizens," said Dr Zacharia Kingori, Senior Transport Economist at COMESA Secretariat.

Speaking at the same event, the Director General of the Djibouti Civil Aviation Authority, Mr Daoud Ali Abdou added that by developing a model BASA, the RECs are creating a template for a more integrated, prosperous and connected Africa.

He urged the delegates to focus and develop a refined document, which will be robust, fair and effective once implemented.

"We are here to develop a document that will directly impact the lives of millions of Africans, facilitating trade, tourism and social connections," he added.

Speaking on behalf of the Intergovernmental

Authority for Development (IGAD) Mr Ismail Garo Head of Trade, Industry and Tourism has a good platform for institutional synergy needed—between COMESA, IGAD, the African Union, and all stakeholders—to ensure all frameworks in air transport are not fragmented, but rather mutually reinforcing.

"Let us engage today's discussion with clarity, collaboration, and shared purpose. Because when we open the skies, we open opportunities for trade, for tourism, for jobs, and most importantly for our people," he added.

Signed in 1999, the Yamoussoukro Decision, was a landmark achievement which promised a liberalized air transport sector for Africa. However, its full potential has been hampered by a lack of consistent implementation, particularly regarding the granting of unrestricted traffic rights. The absence of a standardized, harmonized model BASA has led to a patchwork of bilateral agreements, making progress slow and inefficient.



Participants at the 4th Intergenerational Dialogue Forum for the Island States region from 1 to 3 September 2025 in Belle Mare, Mauritius.

## 4th Intergenerational Dialogue Forum – Island States Region

COMESA in collaboration with the African Union (AU), Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and other partners, convened the 4th Intergenerational Dialogue Forum for the Island States region from 1 to 3 September 2025 in Belle Mare, Mauritius.

This year's Forum focused on strengthening intergenerational collaboration to address key challenges across the Island States region, including maritime insecurity, climate crises, democratic governance and electoral instability, and conflict resolution. Through inclusive and multi-dimensional dialogue, the event aimed to advance peacebuilding efforts and promote long-term regional stability.

Under the theme "Building Peace, Healing Divides: Intergenerational Action for Conflict Prevention, Democratic Governance and Gender Justice", the Forum sought to primarily foster an open dialogue between youth and the seasoned generations to strengthen mutual understanding and cooperation on peacebuilding and governance issues in the island region.

It also equipped youth with the knowledge to address maritime insecurity and climate crises while promoting sustainable use of the blue economy as a peacebuilding strategy. Other topics discussed included the need to

raise awareness of gender-based violence as a systematic barrier to peace and advocate for the integration of gender justice into peacebuilding initiatives.

To kick start the forum, COMESA Assistant Secretary General – Administration and Finance, Dr Dev Haman described the gathering as timely as youth are playing a key role in society.

"The heart of this Forum is dialogue. Intergenerational dialogue is about breaking stereotypes, challenging mistrust, and building understanding across age groups. It creates spaces where ideas and wisdom meet, where youth energy merges with decades of elderly experience and wisdom," he said.

African Union Chairperson of the Panel of the Wise, Hon. Justice Effie Owour said:

"The experience of Island States offers lessons for the entire continent. We see resilience in how communities create ways to thrive with limited resources".

The Dialogue Forum brought together youth representatives and stakeholders from Comoros, Seychelles, Mauritius, Madagascar, and La Réunion.

Participation also included the African Union

Panel of the Wise, members of the COMESA Youth Advisory Panel, the FEMWISE, African Union Youth Ambassador for Peace for East Africa, Horn of Africa Youth Network and the Indian Ocean Regional Youth Parliament among others.

The dialogue forum produced an Action Plan Document with programmatic and policy recommendations including among others, the need to intergrate awareness of Gender Based Violence into school curricula and community programmes, utilising local languages and cultural contexts to ensure resonance, a call to Member States to ratify and fully implement existing regional agreements, and Introduce conflict resolution, values techniques and reinforce civic education in schools.

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# Zimbabwe Hosts Experts for a AFCAC-COMESA Sustainable Aviation Fuel Technical Working Group



Aviation Experts at the working group meeting on Aviation Environmental Protection and Sustainable Fuels in Harare, Zimbabwe

Aviation experts convened in Harare, Zimbabwe from 26 – 28 August 2025, for a working group meeting on Aviation Environmental Protection and Sustainable Fuels, specifically focusing on Annex 16. Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) on behalf of East African Community (EAC), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) are collaborating to assist Member States in developing regulatory and policy frameworks that promote environmentally sustainable aviation Fuels (SAF).

The meeting aimed to draft model regulations to implement ICAO Annex 16 regulations for enhanced environmental oversight, establish a continental template policy on Sustainable Aviation Fuels (SAF) and Low-Carbon Aviation Fuels (LCAF) and define capacity-building frameworks for Member States.

Mr. George Mashababe, Director General of the Civil Aviation Authority of Zimbabwe (CAAZ), while opening the meeting emphasized the significance of SAF as a promising solution

for decarbonizing the aviation sector and achieving the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) net-zero carbon emissions goal by 2050. "Sustainability drive is essential to ensuring that our region does not merely participate in, but actively leads, the global energy transition in aviation. By embracing SAF, we are enhancing regional competitiveness, improving energy security, and contributing to our collective climate resilience," he said

Dr. Bernard Dzawanda, Director of Infrastructure and Logistics at COMESA, underscored the significance of the Technical Working Group Meeting as a testament to the power of collaboration of institutions and shared commitment to sustainable development in African aviation. "Draft inclusive, comprehensive, practical and adaptable model regulations and policy templates considering the diverse capacities and contexts of their Member States," he urged experts

Speaking at the same event, the African Union Commission (AUC) Head of Division for Transport and Mobility, Eng. Eric Ntagengerwa emphasized the need for

African states to leverage aviation not only as a driver of connectivity, trade, and integration under Agenda 2063, but also as a champion of climate action.

In response to the ICAO Assembly Resolution and its Global SAF/LCAF Framework, the region has developed a comprehensive strategy to position Africa as a global leader in sustainable aviation. "Our ambitious goal is to achieve 2-5% of all aviation fuel consumption in Africa by 2030, thereby positioning us on the path to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050."

With the support of the European Union (EU), COMESA is implementing the Support to Air Transport Sector Development (SATSD) program in the Eastern Africa, Southern Africa, and Indian Ocean (EA-SA-IO) region on behalf of EAC, IGAD, IOC and SADC. The program's overall objective is to contribute to the development and growth of the air transport sector within the EA-SA-IO region.



## COMESA Staff Join a weekend of wellness, fun and collaboration

The streets of Lusaka turned vibrant red this past Saturday 6th September 2025 as COMESA staff joined thousands of participants in the annual Absa Bank Marathon.

For COMESA, the marathon served as a timely reminder of the importance of physical health and mental wellbeing in building a thriving workforce. COMESA Staff took on

the challenge in numbers with enthusiasm, reflecting the organization's commitment to promoting wellness as a cornerstone for productivity and excellence.

Beyond the race, the event also underscored the value of collaboration. The Absa Marathon provided a strong example of how corporate entities and regional institutions can work

together to foster community spirit while advancing shared values. COMESA's presence highlighted its dedication to not only regional integration but also to creating spaces where health, fun, and unity can flourish.

COMESA staff left their mark on Lusaka's most anticipated marathon.

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