

Zambia and Zimbabwe Strengthen Economic Ties with Common Agro-Industrial Park

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Participants at the High-Level Meeting of Permanent Secretaries on the CAIP in Livingstone, Zambia

Under their Joint Industrialization Programme, Zambia and Zimbabwe are set to strengthen their economic cooperation by establishing a Common Agro-Industrial Park (CAIP). This initiative aims to promote industrial development, increase intra-regional trade and enhance food security in the two countries.

On 20-21 October 2025, the COMESA Secretariat, led by Assistant Secretary General for Programmes, Amb. Dr. Mohamed Kadah facilitated a High-Level Meeting of Permanent Secretaries on the CAIP in Livingstone, Zambia. This meeting brought together Permanent Secretaries in charge of Industry, Agriculture and Finance as well as senior government officials from both countries, representatives from regional and international organizations, and financiers, to discuss the implementation of the CAIP project.

The CAIP is anchored in the Common African Agro-Parks Programme (CAAPs), an initiative under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the African Union's Agenda 2063. The

project is expected to enhance agricultural transformation, promote industrialization, and improve livelihoods in the region.

In his opening remarks, ASGP Kadah commended the two Member States for collaborating in the flagship programme under CAAPs. He stated that the CAIP project has a potential to deliver impact to both Member States such as job creating, innovation and promoting regional integration.

Sharing his remarks, the Permanent Secretary for Industrialization and Investment of Zambia, Mr Crusivia Hichikumba expressed his gratitude to the COMESA Secretariat for convening the meeting and continuing to support the two Member States. He reaffirmed Zambia's commitment to the implementation of CAIP. To demonstrate this, Zambia will provide resources such as staff and office space for CAIP.

The Principal Secretary at the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Zimbabwe, Dr Thomas Wushe reiterated the government's commitment to CAIP project. He stated that

given that CAIP is a flagship project of the African Union, the government will ensure it becomes a success.

The meeting focused on several key issues, including the CAIP roadmap, resource mobilization for pre-implementation, site identification, and institutional arrangements. The two countries also discussed ways to leverage funding from development partners and financial institutions.

The establishment of the CAIP is seen as a significant step towards promoting economic integration and cooperation between Zambia and Zimbabwe. The project is expected to generate new opportunities for industrial development, job creation, and poverty reduction in the region.

With the CAIP, Zambia and Zimbabwe are poised to unlock new potential for economic growth and development, while strengthening their bilateral relations and contributing to the regional integration agenda.



EU-Zambia Lobito Corridor Business Forum – A Game Changer for Regional growth

COMESA was privileged to be represented at the EU-Zambia Lobito Corridor Business Forum, which officially opened on 12 November 2025 at the Ciela Resort in Lusaka. This landmark event brought together high-level political leaders, private-sector representatives, and development partners to advance sustainable growth along one of Africa's most strategic transport and economic corridors.

The Forum was officially launched by His Excellency President Hakainde Hichilema of Zambia, alongside Mr. Jozef Síkela, Commissioner for International Partnerships (European Commission); Mr. Pasi Hellman, Vice-President of the European Investment Bank; and the Deputy Minister for International Development of Finland, among other distinguished guests.

The Lobito Corridor, one of 12 priority corridors under the EU's Global Gateway initiative, stretches approximately 600 km across Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Zambia, with around 400 km within Zambia. The corridor aims to transform

regional trade flows, connect resource-rich areas to global markets, and catalyse value-added investments in energy, agriculture, logistics, and critical raw materials.

A major highlight of the Forum was the signing of €500 million in new contracts, supporting initiatives that will enhance the energy-water nexus in Zambia's provinces, improve agricultural market access, and promote green enterprises adopting circular-economy technologies.

During a plenary session titled "Lobito 360", participants discussed the strategic vision for the corridor and the pivotal role of the private sector in driving regional transformation.

COMESA's Assistant Secretary General Ambassador Dr Mohamed Kadah,

participating as a panellist, underscored the organisation's role as a REC in ensuring collaboration among corridor states and leveraging regional instruments, such as the Simplified Trade Regime (STR), to strengthen cross-border trade and integration along the Corridor.

Amb. Kadah congratulated the Government of Zambia for its exemplary leadership in advancing regional integration, and the European Union for its continued partnership and investment towards sustainable and inclusive growth.

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COMESA Legal Chiefs Deliberate on Reforms and Regional Integration



Delegates at the 28th meeting of the COMESA Ministers of Justice and Attorneys General in Lusaka, Zambia

Ministers of Justice and Attorneys General from the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) met in Lusaka on 14 November for their 28th meeting, following the 30th meeting of the COMESA Committee on Legal Affairs. The high-level discussions focused on reviewing key legal frameworks essential to regional integration and economic cooperation.

Prior to the ministers' session, the Committee on Legal Affairs examined draft revisions to the Rules and Regulations of the COMESA Competition and Consumer Commission (CCCC) and the Rules of the COMESA Court of Justice. These drafts aim to strengthen regulatory oversight and judicial processes within the region.

In his opening speech, COMESA Acting Secretary General Dr. Dev Haman urged Member States to accelerate the implementation of previously agreed legal instruments and decisions. He highlighted the importance of regularly reviewing and updating legal frameworks to support the bloc's integration agenda.

"It is imperative that we develop new legal instruments and enhance our institutional capacity to ensure the effective functioning of COMESA's regional initiatives," he stated.

Dr. Haman emphasized that the proposed

revisions to the CCCC's rules are designed to promote a fair and equitable trading environment across Member States, with particular attention to protecting consumers and fostering inclusivity for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). These measures are seen as vital steps toward creating a more integrated and competitive common market.

Meanwhile, Justice Lombe Chibesakunda, President of the COMESA Court of Justice, expressed her gratitude for the support received during her decade-long tenure,

which is nearing its end. She underscored that the strength and integrity of the Court rely heavily on the collective commitment of member states to uphold judicial independence and the rule of law.

Her remarks highlighted the critical role of judicial cooperation in achieving the regional bloc's broader integration goals.

The meeting urged Member States to continue working towards finalizing the legal reforms, aiming to foster a more unified, fair and prosperous COMESA region.



COMESA Hosts Regional Dialogue to Advance Food Trade and Investment



COMESA convened the Annual Public Private Sector Dialogues on Food Trade and Investment in Nairobi, Kenya, as part of the Regional Food Balance Sheet (RFBS) Phase II Programme. The high-level forum took place from 4–6 November 2025 and is a key milestone in COMESA's ongoing efforts to strengthen agricultural markets, enhance data accessibility, and build resilient food systems across the region. The RFBS Phase II initiative will run until 2027.

This year's dialogue raised a strong emphasis on expanding access to real-time agricultural data through a redesigned digital platform and a new mobile application. These tools aim to improve evidence-based decision-making for farmers, traders, policymakers, and private-sector stakeholders. A significant component of the project is the empowerment of women and youth agripreneurs, enabling them to leverage accurate market intelligence, increase productivity, and participate meaningfully in regional value chains.

Delegates from nine COMESA Member States, including government representatives, private sector actors, development partners, and technical experts participated in the meeting. Together, they reviewed updated RFBS analytics, assessed food availability patterns, evaluated cross-

border market conditions, and developed coordinated policy recommendations to improve food security and intra-regional trade.

Beatrice Nyamwamu, speaking on behalf of Kenya's Ministry of Agriculture, highlighted the platform's role in strengthening food security.

Mrs Provident Mavubi, Director of Agriculture and Industry at COMESA Secretariat added: "Let us prioritise actions that unlock trade and investment through improved data sharing, streamlined regulatory processes and stronger public-private collaboration" Other key stakeholders and partners in the food and nutrition security space were recognized for the central role they play in food production, processing, distribution, logistics and trade.

By bringing key actors together, COMESA reaffirmed its commitment to building integrated, data-driven, and market-responsive food systems that can withstand shocks, promote inclusive trade, and attract sustainable investment. The outcomes will play a critical role in shaping the region's future strategies on food trade, early warning systems, and agricultural resilience.

COMESA Member States Advance Regional AEO Programme

COMESA convened the 4th Meeting of the Technical Working Group on the Authorised Economic Operator (AEO) Programme to advance regional efforts in trade facilitation on the 27 October 2025. The aim of the meeting was to review the Draft COMESA Regulations for Mutual Recognition of AEOs, the Regional Customs Risk Management Strategy and the updated AEO Implementation Roadmap. Member States also shared progress, experiences and their readiness to join the regional pilot phase.

The meeting's conclusions will be part of key documents to be used by the 2026 Heads of Customs Sub-Committee, paving the way for the formal launch of the COMESA Regional AEO Programme. The AEO initiative strengthens supply chain security, boosts competitiveness, and promotes trust between Customs and the private sector by recognising compliant businesses and streamlining trade processes.

COMESA reaffirmed its commitment to support Member States through technical assistance, capacity building and a regional AEO automation platform. Member States were encouraged to align their national programmes with COMESA Guidelines and finalize readiness assessments. The Secretariat also thanked development partners for their continued collaboration in modernising customs and enhancing regional trade efficiency.



Arab Maghreb Union and COMESA Secretariat Strengthen Partnership



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The COMESA Secretariat received a delegation from the Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) on 29 October 2025 for a technical working visit designed to identify areas of collaboration, revive and operationalize the existing MoU. This visit also aimed to enhance cooperation and partnership in the implementation of activities in areas of mutual interest.

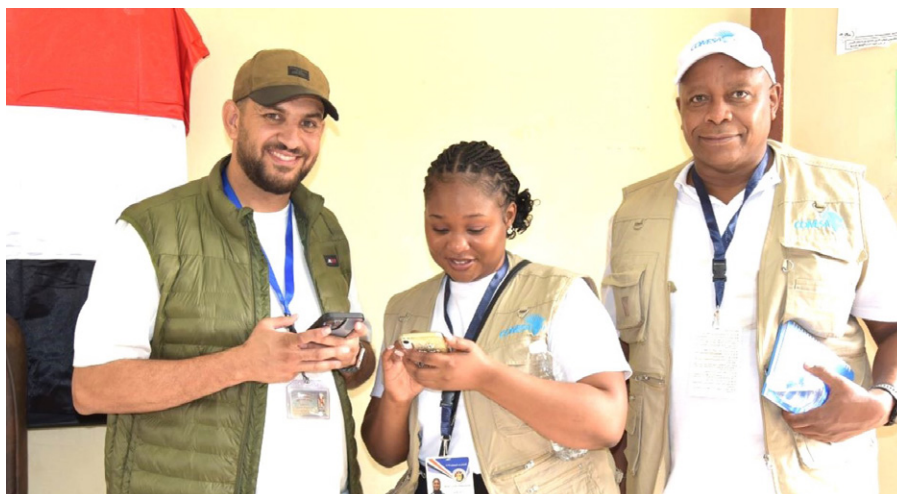
The UMA delegation held a meeting with the Governance, Peace and Security Unit to deepen partnership in the realm of

conflict prevention, democratic governance, mediation, early warning, climate change, peace, security and youth programmes. The meeting yielded a meaningful outcome in the form of identified areas of collaboration and a solid plan forward in the various GPS programmes. Moreover, deficiencies in the existing MoU, in terms of peace and security provisions, were identified and worked through.

The UMA delegation paid a courtesy call on Amb. Dr. Mohamed Kadah, Assistant

Secretary General for Programmes who emphasized the importance of conducting bilateral working visits between Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in order to collectively work towards advancing peace, security and development on the continent. The remaining day of UMA's visit will be dedicated to engaging with the Trade and Customs Division, as well as the Statistics Unit, in order to provide overviews of their mandates and identify areas of synergy amidst their ongoing and future planned initiatives.

COMESA and African Union Observe 2025 Egypt Legislative Elections



The African Union and COMESA deployed a technical team to observe the 2025 legislative elections in the United Arab Republic of Egypt. Polls opened on 10 November 2025.

The first phase took place on 10 and 11 November 2025 in 14 Governorates, notably Giza, Alexandria, Beheira, Minya, Assiut, Sohag, Qena, Luxor, Aswan, Fayoum, Beni Suef, New Valley, Matrouh and Red Sea. Campaigns took

place from 23 October to 6 November. In the event of a run-off for the first phase, this will take place on 3 and 4 December 2025.

Over 2,600 individual candidates are running in the 70 districts.

The second phase was set for 24 and 25 November 2025 in 13 governorates, including Cairo, Qalyoubia, Dakahlia, Menoufia, Gharbia, Kafr El-Sheikh, Sharqia, Damietta, Port Said, Ismailia, Suez, North Sinai and South Sinai. Campaign will take place from 6 to 23 November. In case of a Run-off, this is expected to be held on 17 and 18 December 2025.

The COMESA Team comprised of Raymond Kitevu Conflict Early Warning Expert and Claudia Masah Junior Expert from the Governance, Peace and Security Unit joined by Muzinge Nampito from Corporate Communications Unit.



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