

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ OF THE EAC SECRETARY GENERAL CONVENING, 2026

**THEME: "FROM SUMMIT DIRECTIVES TO ACTION: STRENGTHENING
REGIONAL INTEGRATION THROUGH STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT,
ACCOUNTABILITY, AND LEADERSHIP"**

23RD – 24TH APRIL, 2026

MOUNT MERU HOTEL, ARUSHA, TANZANIA

COMMUNIQUÉ

1. THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY SECRETARY GENERAL CONVENING 2026 WAS HELD BETWEEN THE 23RD AND 24TH OF APRIL, 2026, IN ARUSHA, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA. THE CONVENING WAS ORGANIZED BY THE REGIONAL DIALOGUE COMMITTEE (RDC) UNDER THE CHAIRSHIP OF THE EAST AFRICA LAW SOCIETY (EALS), IN PARTNERSHIP WITH DIALOGUE PARTIES.
2. THE CONVENING BROUGHT TOGETHER A BROAD RANGE OF STAKEHOLDERS, INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE EAST AFRICAN BUSINESS COUNCIL (EABC), EAST AFRICAN YOUTH NETWORK (EAYN), EAST AFRICAN COUNTY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (EACLGA), EAST AFRICAN WOMEN IN BUSINESS PLATFORM(EAWiBP), EAST AFRICA HEALTH PLATFORM(EAHP), EAST AFRICAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (EATUC), EAST AFRICAN EMPLOYERS ORGANIZATION(EAEO), EAST AFRICAN CHILD RIGHTS NETWORK(EACRN), EAST AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS FORUM (EACSO), EAST AFRICA LAW SOCIETY (EALS), EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA), EAST AFRICAN COURT OF JUSTICE (EACJ), MINISTRIES OF EAST AFRICA COMMUNITY AFFAIRS (MEACA), DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS, AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS.
3. THE CONVENING FORMALLY RECOGNIZED THE LEGACY AND CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE OUTGOING SECRETARY GENERAL, HON. VERONICA MUENI NDUVA, AND EXTENDED A CORDIAL WELCOME TO THE INCOMING SECRETARY GENERAL, HON. AMB. STEPHEN PATRICK MBUNDI, HIGHLIGHTING THE STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY THIS TRANSITION PRESENTS FOR RENEWED REGIONAL SOLIDARITY AND INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT.
4. THE CONVENING REFLECTED ON THE HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE EAC AND STRESSED THAT EFFECTIVE REGIONAL INTEGRATION SHOULD BE ANCHORED IN FAIRNESS, EQUITY, DISCIPLINE, AND THE RULE OF LAW. IT REITERATED THE IMPERATIVE TO STREAMLINE INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS AND TRANSITION THE COMMUNITY FROM DIALOGUE TO DELIVERY.

5. THE CONVENING TOOK NOTE OF, AND CONGRATULATED, THE SUMMIT OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY HEADS OF STATE SUMMIT ON THE DIRECTIVES ARISING FROM ITS 25TH ORDINARY SUMMIT.
6. THE CONVENING NOTED WITH CONCERN THE DELAY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY SUMMIT DIRECTIVES AND INSTITUTIONAL INITIATIVES SOME OF WHICH HAD BEEN PROJECTED FOR 2024 BUT NOW MOVED TO 2031.
7. THE CONVENING NOTED WITH CONCERN EXPANSION OF THE COMMUNITY WITHOUT ENABLING LEGAL FRAMEWORKS EXPANDING AT A SIMILAR PACE. IT ALSO TOOK NOTE OF PERSISTENT DEFAULT ON TREATY OBLIGATIONS BY SOME PARTNER STATES.
8. THE CONVENING HIGHLIGHTED THE PERSISTENCE OF NON-TARIFF BARRIERS (NTBS). IT PARTICULARLY NOTED THE DETRIMENTAL IMPACT OF UNHARMONIZED TRANSIT LICENSE REQUIREMENTS TO REGIONAL TRANSPORTERS AND TRADERS.
9. FOLLOWING ROBUST MULTI-SECTORAL DELIBERATIONS, THE CONVENING AGREED ON THE FOLLOWING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION BY THE EAC:
 - A. EAC TO EXPEDITE AMENDMENT OF THE EAC TREATY TO ALIGN WITH DIRECTIVES OF THE 25TH ORDINARY SUMMIT OF EAC HEADS OF STATES AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS.
 - B. EAC TO FULLY INSTITUTIONALIZE THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S FORUM IN LINE WITH THE TREATY ESTABLISHING THE COMMUNITY – INCLUDING ALLOCATION OF BUDGET, CONSISTENT HOSTING OF THE FORUM AND FULL UTILISATION OF EXISTING MECHANISMS FOR CONTINUOUS DIALOGUE.

- C. EAC TO FAST TRACK GRANT OF OBSERVER STATUS TO DIALOGUE PARTIES (CIVIL SOCIETY AND OTHER INTEREST GROUPS) AND TO CONSIDER REVIEW OF THE PROCEDURE FOR GRANTING OF OBSERVER STATUS.**

- D. EAC TO CREATE A LIAISON OFFICER POSITION WITHIN THE SECRETARIAT TO COORDINATE CITIZEN-CENTERED INTEGRATION AND WORK OF DIALOGUE PARTIES.**

- E. THE CONVENING PLEDGED (ALL DIALOGUE PARTIES) TO SUPPORT AND COLLABORATE WITH THE EAC IN FAST-TRACKING ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MONETARY UNION, POLITICAL CONFEDERATION AND OPERATIONALIZATION OF THE TRADE REMEDIES COMMITTEE.**

- F. EAC TO URGENTLY ADDRESS BACKLOG OF CASES AT THE EAST AFRICAN COURT OF JUSTICE (EACJ) AND EXPAND THE COURT'S MANDATE TO EXPRESSELY COVER HUMAN RIGHTS.**

- G. EAC TO DEVELOP, FUND, AND LEGALLY RECOGNIZE CROSS-BORDER ECONOMIC ZONES AND JOINT MUNICIPAL MARKETS (SUCH AS THE KOBOKO MARKET AREA AND BUSIA-STYLE MODELS) AS PRACTICAL, FAST-TRACKED INTEGRATION INITIATIVES, SUPPORTED BY INTEROPERABLE DIGITAL PERMIT SYSTEMS.**

- H. EAC SECRETARY GENERAL TO PROMOTE ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS THROUGH REGULAR (QUARTERLY) ENGAGEMENT MEETINGS WITH DIALOGUE PARTIES.**

- I. EAC TO IMPLEMENT A STRUCTURED PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (PPP) POLICY FRAMEWORK ENSURING MANDATORY, INSTITUTIONALIZED, AND EVIDENCE-BASED ENGAGEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING WITH CLEARLY DEFINED CONSULTATION PLATFORMS.**

- J. EAC TO FACILITATE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL COLD CHAIN AND AGGREGATION FRAMEWORK TO REDUCE CROP LOSSES AND HELP SMALLHOLDER FARMERS MEET THE QUALITY STANDARDS REQUIRED FOR CROSS-BORDER TRADE.**

 - K. EAC TO EXPAND AND REORGANISE DEDICATED TRACK PARKING AREAS TO REDUCE CONGESTION AND ENHANCE SMOOTH FLOW OF TRUCKS.**

 - L. EAC TO CREATE REGIONAL CENTERS FOCUSED ON MANUFACTURING AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES TO EQUIP YOUTH AND ENTREPRENEURS WITH THE PRACTICAL SKILLS NEEDED TO DRIVE INDUSTRIAL GROWTH AND JOB CREATION.**

 - M. EAC TO SUPPORT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVIEWED EAC YOUTH POLICY 2025-2030.**

 - N. EAC TO EMPOWER DECENTRALISED GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES TO TRANSLATE REGIONAL POLICIES INTO TANGIBLE GRASSROOTS BENEFITS.**
- 10. THE CONVENING CONCLUDED BY ENDORSING THIS COMMUNIQUE AS A CITIZEN CENTERED FRAMEWORK TO HELP THE LEADERHIP OF THE COMMUNITY REINVIGORATE A PEOPLE CENTERED INTEGRATION PROCESS. IT RESOLVED TO LEVERAGE RDC STRUCTURES TO SUSTAIN THE MOMENTUM OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION.**

DONE AT ARUSHA, TANZANIA ON 24TH DAY OF APRIL, 2026

EAST AFRICA LAW SOCIETY (EALS)

SIGNATURE:



24/4/2026

EAST AFRICAN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS FORUM (EACSO)

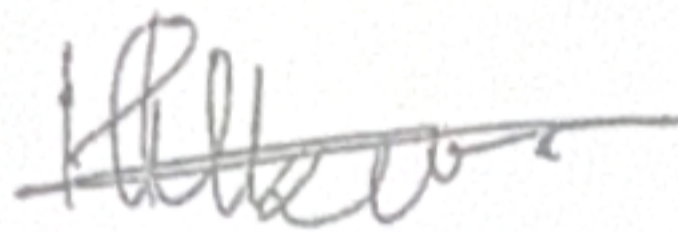
SIGNATURE:



24/4/2026

EAST AFRICAN BUSINESS COUNCIL (EABC)

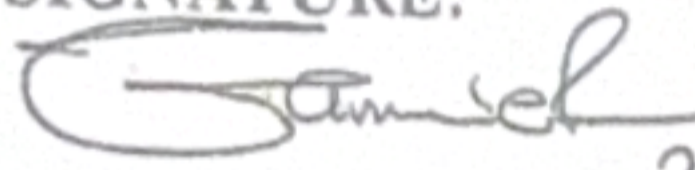
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24/4/2026

EAST AFRICAN COUNTY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ASSOCIATION (EALGA)

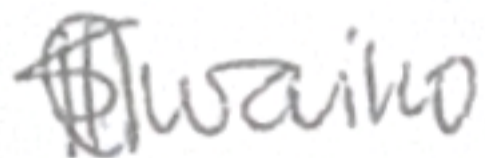
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24/4/2026

EAST AFRICAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (EATUC)

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24/4/2026

EAST AFRICAN YOUTH NETWORK (EAYN)

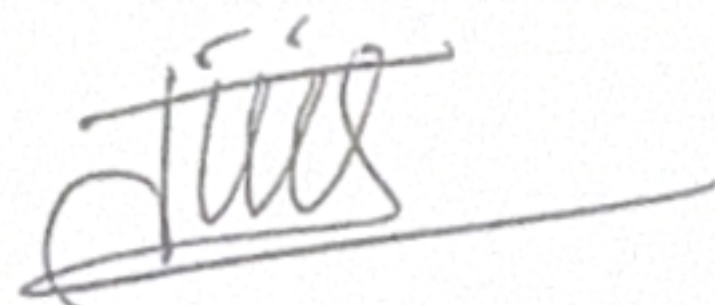
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24/4/2026

EAST AFRICAN HEALTH PLATFORM (EAHP)

SIGNATURE:



24/4/2026

EAST AFRICAN EMPLOYERS ORGANIZATION (EAEO)

SIGNATURE:

EAST AFRICAN CHILD RIGHTS NETWORK (EACRN)

SIGNATURE:

EAST AFRICAN WOMEN IN BUSINESS PLATFORM (EAWIBP)

SIGNATURE:  24/4/2026