

Capacity Building for Fast Tracking of East African Common Market Regional Conference, Nairobi, Kenya, 29-30 January 2006

Objective

*To provide a platform for the regional stakeholders, including policy-makers from members of the East Africa Community countries to discuss debate and share pertinent policy and practical issues by getting perspectives **from different stakeholders on the proposed East African common market.***

Background

One of NEPAD's principles in bringing sustainable development in the African continent is accelerating and deepening of regional and continental economic integration. Regional integration will help to accelerate growth and development through integrating the human, technical and physical resources of mostly small economies to create larger, more competitive and more successful economic space.

Thus, regional integration is viewed as a means to improve welfare of participating countries. Lowering of barriers to trade and investment is a condition for this to happen. Economic theory predicts that greater trade (including investment) integration will improve welfare by enabling citizens to procure goods and services from the cheapest source, leading to the reallocation of resources based on comparative advantage, which brings efficiency and productivity.

The African Union (AU), through the *New Partnership for Africa's Development* (NEPAD) is working on creating an enabling environment and supporting economic integration within the continent, which will be used as pillars in creating economic union in Africa as like the European Union.

Context

East African Community (EAC) is one of a number of economic communities that exists in Africa. It is a regional inter-governmental organisation of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, with its headquarters located in Arusha, Tanzania. The East African Heads of State signed the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community in Arusha on 30th November 1999. The EAC strategy emphasizes on economic co-operation and development with a strong focus on social dimension. The role of the private sector and civil society is considered as central and crucial to regional integration and development. The regional co-operation and integration envisaged in the EAC is broad-based, covering trade, investment and industrial development; monetary and fiscal affairs; infrastructure and services; human resources, science and technology; agriculture and food security; environment and natural resources management; tourism and wildlife management; and health, social and cultural activities. Other areas of cooperation include free movement of factors of production; and cooperation in political matters, including defense, security, foreign affairs, legal and judicial affairs.

Last year the East African Community Customs Union was launched. In April this year, the three Presidents of East African states of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda approved the commencement of negotiations on East African common market. They aim to conclude and sign the common market protocol by December 2008. June 2009 is the target date for ratification of the common market protocol and January 2010 for the official launch of this initiative. The Presidents have called for supporting measures from member states. One of the key aspects on which the success of this federation will depend on is the level of participation by local people, as this would go a long way in consolidating the EAC. Therefore, the three Presidents of East Africa reiterate the need for public consultation and sensitization before ratification of this protocol.

Keeping this in mind, this two-day conference will bring together various stakeholders, including policy-makers from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda to discuss and debate pathways

and milestones towards achieving the East African common market in the light of roles that different groups could and should play.

The Participants

- Government officials
- Representatives from regional bodies
- National business bodies
- Civil society organisations, including representative of farmers
- Representatives from regulatory agencies such as competition authorities, board of investment, bureau of standards
- Development agencies
- Donors
- Researchers

The Programme

DAY ONE 29/01/2007

- 0900 – 0930* **Registration with Tea/Coffee**
- 0930 – 1030* **Inaugural**
- 1030 - 1100* **Break**
- 1130 – 1300* **East African Integration - From Past to Present to Future**
- 1300 – 1400* **Lunch**
- 1400 – 1600* **Business Perspectives on East African Common Market**
- 1600 - 1630* **Break**
- 1630 – 1830* **Farmers Perspectives on East African Common Market**

DAY TWO 30/01/2007

- 0900 – 1100* **Civil Society Perspectives on East African Common Market**
- 1100 – 1130* **Break**
- 1130 – 1300* **The Way Forward**
- 1300* **Lunch and Departure**

Organisers

CUTS International
Africa Resource Centre
Co-op Trust Plaza, 1st Floor
Lower Hill Road, Upper Hill
P.O. BOX 8188, 00200 Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: +254.20. 2734925-6
Fax: +254.20.2734925
Email: nairobi@cuts.org/cutsnrc@wananchi.com
Web Site: www.cuts-international.org