



**FINAL COMMUNIQUÉ
OF THE THIRTEENTH SUMMIT OF THE COMESA AUTHORITY OF
HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

***“Theme: Consolidating Regional Economic Integration through
Value Addition, Trade and Food Security”***

***Victoria Falls Town, Zimbabwe
8 June 2009***

09(SK-FM-LG)

THE THIRTEENTH SUMMIT of the COMESA Authority of Heads of State and Government was held in Victoria Falls Town, Republic of Zimbabwe, on 7-8 June 2009 under the theme: ***“Consolidating Regional Economic Integration through Value Addition, Trade and Food Security”***.

The Summit was attended by the following COMESA Heads of State and Government:

- (a) His Excellency Mr. Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe
- (b) His Majesty King Mswati III, King of the Kingdom of Swaziland
- (c) His Excellency Mr. Mwai Kibaki, President of the Republic of Kenya
- (d) His Excellency Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda
- (e) His Excellency Mr. Omer Hassan Ahmed El-Bashir, President of the Republic of Sudan
- (f) His Excellency Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, President of the Republic of Djibouti
- (g) His Excellency Mr. James Alix Michel, President of the Republic of Seychelles
- (h) His Excellency Mr. Rupiah Bwezani Banda, President of the Republic of Zambia
- (i) His Excellency Mr. Marc Ravalomanana, President of the Republic of Madagascar

The following Plenipotentiaries represented the Heads of State and Government of the following COMESA member States:

- (a) Her Excellency Mrs. Joyce Banda, Vice President of the Republic of Malawi
- (b) His Excellency Mr. Gabriel Ntisezerana, Second Vice President of the Republic of Burundi
- (c) Honourable Mrs. Rosemary Museminari, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Rwanda
- (d) Honourable Mr. Arvin Boolell, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Mauritius
- (e) His Excellency Mr. Saleh Osman, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Eritrea

- (f) Her Excellency Mrs. Fayza Abolnaga Minister of International Co-operation of the Arab Republic of Egypt
- (g) His Excellency Raymond Tshibanda, Minister of Regional and International Co-operation of the Democratic Republic of Congo
- (h) His Excellency Mr. Ahmed Shide Mohamad, State Minister, Ministry of Finance of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
- (i) His Excellency Mohammed Siala, Secretary of Co-operation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

The following countries were represented at the Summit by their Special Representatives to COMESA: Brazil, China, Cuba, Finland, France, India, Japan, Russia and USA.

The following countries were also represented: Angola, Italy, South Africa and The United Republic of Tanzania,

The following represented their Organisations at the Summit: Dr. Donald Kaberuka, President of the African Development Bank (AfDB); H.E. Mr. Erastus J.O. Mwencha, MBS, Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission; Ambassador Juma Mwapachu, Secretary General of the East African Community (EAC); Dr. Tomaz Salomao, Executive Secretary of the Southern African Development Community (SADC); H.E. Sir John Kaputin, Secretary General, African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP); Mr. Andrew Kipruto Maiyo, Secretary General, African Regional Standards Organisation (ARSO)

The following represented the COMESA Institutions: Dr. Michael Gondwe, President, Eastern and Southern Africa Trade and Development Bank (PTA Bank); Dr. Kombo Moyana, Executive Secretary, COMESA Clearing House; Justice Nzamba Kitonga, President of the COMESA Court of Justice; Mr. Chalimba Phiri, Chairman of the COMESA Regional Investment Agency; and Mrs. Katherine N. Ichoya, Acting Executive Director of FEMCOM, Mr. Wilson Mazimba, Chairman, COMESA Leather and Leather Products Institute (LLPI).

The following Organisations were also represented: Commonwealth Secretariat (COMSEC); Food Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN); Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA); United National Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA); USAID/East Africa; United National Industrials Development Organisation (UNIDO); World Food Programme (WFP); and the European Union.

OFFICIAL OPENING

His Excellency Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, welcomed the COMESA Heads of State and Government, Ministers, Heads of Delegation and all invited guests to Zimbabwe and specifically to Victoria Falls Town, Zimbabwe's premier tourist capital, and to

the Thirteenth Summit of the COMESA Authority as well as the Fifth First Ladies Roundtable. He said that Zimbabwe was grateful for the honour the COMESA Member States had bestowed on the people of Zimbabwe to host this important event. President Mugabe took the opportunity to congratulate and thank his Brother, His Excellency Mwai Kibaki, President of the Republic of Kenya, on a successful tenure as Chairman of COMESA .

President Mugabe observed that the Customs Union will enable COMESA to grow beyond the free movement of goods and establish the foundations of an effective single market, particularly in the wake of the first COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Summit held in October 2008 in Kampala, Uganda where they directed that not only should the RECs harmonise their programmes but should ultimately merge into one market where decisions are taken on the basis of commercial reasons and not boundaries. He called for the speedy implementation of the regional integration agenda and free movement of factors of production establishment of the single currency as well as the single investment area. He urged the Secretariat to assist all the remaining member states to join the FTA and the COMESA Fund. Further he welcomed the participation of the business community underscoring that this was a desirable partnership, and assured them that COMESA would implement the recommendations of the business forum. Finally he thanked COMESA for choosing Zimbabwe to host the Summit.

In his keynote address, the Outgoing Chairman of the COMESA Authority His Excellency, Mwai Kibaki, President of the Republic of Kenya, welcomed Their Excellencies, Ministers, Heads of Delegations and all distinguished invited guests to the Thirteenth COMESA Summit. He thanked His Excellency Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, his Government and the people of Zimbabwe for the warm reception and hospitality extended to all delegates since their arrival to the beautiful country and the tourist resort of Victoria Falls.

President Kibaki recalled that at the twelfth COMESA Summit held in Nairobi, Kenya in 2007, COMESA set the following tasks: establishment of a Customs Union, operationalisation of the COMESA Fund and the Aid for Trade programme, adoption of a framework on Trade and Services, and organisation of the Tripartite Summit. He reported that all these tasks had been accomplished.

He underscored the importance of the Tripartite Summit and expressed hope that the COMESA Infrastructure Fund would be used in mobilising resources for the development of infrastructure in the region. He also reported that the Agreement establishing the COMESA Common Investment Area had been adopted, which would assist in the increasing investment flows into the region.

He reminded the Summit that the financial crisis was already having an adverse impact on the region and appealed to the Secretariat to monitor and advise on scenarios for cushioning the member States, and utilising the opportunities. Finally he expressed gratitude to all for supporting COMESA programmes including donors.

Vote of Thanks

His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda moved a Vote of Thanks on behalf of his colleagues and on his own behalf, in which he paid tribute to President Robert Mugabe, the Government and people of Zimbabwe for the exceptional hospitality and for the spectacular venue for the Summit.

In his remarks, he congratulated the Government of Zimbabwe for resolving the political crisis by forming the all-inclusive Government. He further congratulated President Mugabe for assuming the Chairmanship of COMESA Authority and pointed out that the President had important tasks to undertake, namely: to continue the Tripartite Agenda, the maintenance of Peace and Security in the region, and avoid reversals. Regarding the financial crisis, he called upon COMESA to find homegrown solutions for the region and called for courage in addressing all global challenges that face the region. Finally he assured the incoming Chairman that COMESA Member States will support him during his tenure.

President Museveni, further thanked the Outgoing Chairman of the Authority, His Excellency Mwai Kibaki, President of the Republic of Kenya for taking such dynamic and informed leadership over the agenda of the organization from May 2007.

In accepting the Chairmanship of the COMESA Authority, His Excellency, Robert Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, expressed gratitude at the honour bestowed upon the people of Zimbabwe and himself on his election as the Chairman of the Authority. He also thanked the outgoing Chairman, His Excellency, Mr. Mwai Kibaki, President of Kenya for his leadership of the organisation.

President Mugabe called for closer and intensified relations amongst member States to make COMESA a means towards collective development and a united voice in the international fora.

He highlighted the need for infrastructure such as good roads, rail, air and telecommunication, and energy generation and transmission networks, as a prerequisite for strengthening the regional integration agenda. He called on member States to pool resources to work on intra COMESA roads and rail links to reduce the cost of doing business in the region.

He further urged member States to address the supply side of regional integration through value addition to goods and services produced in the region to increase the benefits from the trade liberalisation programme.

The incoming Chairman undertook to lead COMESA member States through the coming year with resolve and purposeful commitment to the realisation of the goals of COMESA.

The Vice Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Erastus Mwencha MBS, also made some remarks. He pointed out that the launching of the Customs Union was another historic occasion that advanced African integration which was imperative for Africa. In this regard, he informed the Summit that the African Ministers responsible for integration have recently adopted the minimum integration programme. He commended the COMESA-EAC-SADC tripartite initiative as a critical step. He stressed the importance of cohesion in multilateral negotiations, the importance of infrastructure and regional integration in addressing global challenges such as the financial, energy, and food crises as well as climate change. Mr. Mwencha underscored the importance of peace and security and democratic governance as prerequisite for building a prosperous COMESA community that is at peace with itself.

The Secretary General of COMESA, Mr. Sindiso Ngwenya also delivered a keynote address to the Summit. In his maiden statement, he thanked the COMESA Authority for the trust and confidence reposed in him in appointing him as a Secretary General, he assured the Summit that he will build on the progress of his predecessor Mr. Erastus Mwencha. He stressed the importance of launching of the Customs Union, value addition, socio economic transformation and infrastructure. He also emphasised the importance of addressing climate change issues. Finally, he indicated that his vision was to make the COMESA Customs Union the envy and wonder of the world where goods and services are traded with ease.

The President of the African Development Bank, Dr. Donald Kaberuka also made a statement to the Summit. In his remarks, he highlighted key challenges arising from, the implementation of the decisions of the Tripartite Summit of October 2008, advancing the programmes on value addition and food security, development of the required infrastructure, climate change, and the global financial crisis. He assured the summit that the AfDB will continue its funding programmes with COMESA, and concluded by calling for enhancement of the integration and liberalisation programmes of COMESA as a key component of solutions to the global financial crisis.

After the formal opening of the Summit, the Authority:

ELECTED by acclamation the Republic of Zimbabwe as Chairman, the Kingdom of Swaziland as Vice-Chairman and the Republic of Kenya as Rapporteur.

NOTED with appreciation the Report of the Secretary General and the COMESA Annual Reports for 2007 and 2008.

CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED the Reports of the Twenty-Sixth Meeting of the Council of Ministers and the Thirteenth Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

ENDORSED the recommendations of the Fifth COMESA Business Summit underlined the need to strengthen public and private sector partnership.

ENDORSED the Communiqué of the Fifth Roundtable of the COMESA First Ladies, which took place concurrently with the Thirteenth COMESA Summit.

COMESA CUSTOMS UNION

ENDORSED the adoption by the Council of the legal instruments for the Customs Union namely, the Customs Regulations Governing the Customs Union and the Customs Management Regulations.

LAUNCHED the COMESA Customs Union in line with the principles of the Decision of the Twelfth Summit of the COMESA Authority of Heads of State and Government.

ENDORSED the establishment of the COMESA Task Force on the Customs Union for monitoring the implementation and operation of the Customs Union.

TRADE-RELATED ISSUES

ENDORSED the adoption by the Council of the Regulations on Trade in Services.

ENDORSED the decision of the Twenty-Fifth Meeting of Council of Ministers to extend the derogation to the Kingdom of Swaziland from reciprocating tariff preferences for a period of two years starting in January 2009.

NOTED with satisfaction the growth in intra-COMESA trade and urged Member States to implement the Simplified Trade Regime in order to deepen intra-COMESA trade.

EMPHASISED the need for the ongoing negotiations on the Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union as well as on the Doha Development Agenda to support the development of the COMESA region and to deepen of regional integration.

NOTED the progress made on the negotiation for the Economic Partnership Agreement with the European Union and directed Council to conclude the agreement by October 2009 on the basis of agreed issues.

TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS

DECIDED that the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Tripartite Task Force, should organise a High Level Conference for mobilisation of resources for the development of the Northern Corridor (from Mombasa to Goma via Kampala and to Kigali and Bujumbura), the Lamu-Southern Sudan-Ethiopia Corridor, the Djibouti to Addis Ababa Corridor and the Central Corridor from Dar es Salaam to Goma through Kigali and to Bujumbura and other corridors in the Eastern and Southern African Region.

DECIDED that the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Tripartite Task Force, should develop a programme to implement air and oceanic links between

island Member States and with the mainland Member States as well as to develop port infrastructure in order to enhance regional integration.

DIRECTED the Secretariat to implement Aid for Trade programmes on other regional corridors as was done under the North South Corridor.

DIRECTED the Secretariat to submit a report on the assessment being carried out on other corridors to the next meeting of Council of Ministers.

INDUSTRY AND ENERGY

URGED Member States to implement COMESA Energy Programmes and to cooperate in the development of energy generation and transmission infrastructure as well as in trade in energy services in order to alleviate the current energy crisis facing the region.

CALLED for the speedy implementation of the COMESA programmes on Regional Industrial Upgrading and Modernisation programme.

AGRICULTURE

CALLED for the speedy implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) at both the national and regional level.

ENDORSED the launch of the Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA) as a specialised agency of COMESA to promote the competitiveness and integration of small farmers in national, regional and international markets.

MONETARY AFFAIRS

COMMENDED Central Bank Governors and the COMESA Clearing House for coming up with the Regional Payment and Settlement System (REPSS), a home-grown solution to our regional payments requirements, that is fully compliant to all BIS Core Principles.

EXPRESSED appreciation to the Bank of Mauritius for acting as the Settlement Bank to REPSS.

LAUNCHED the COMESA Regional Payment and Settlement System (REPSS).

URGED all Central Banks to aggressively promote REPSS and commercial banks and stakeholders to make full use of this facility for the benefit of the region.

CALLED on COMESA Member States to show political will by implementing COMESA programmes towards deepening integration.

URGED COMESA member States to come up with measures to mitigate the effects of the financial crisis, play a role in the shaping of a new global financial order, and also take advantage of the opportunities that the crisis created and requested the Secretariat to formulate regional programmes on the new global challenges that the region faces.

CO-OPERATION WITH PARTNERS

COMMENDED the development partners for their financial and technical assistance to the COMESA integration programmes and **URGED** them to continue their support.

GENDER

URGED Member States to mainstream gender into their national policies and programmes and to establish gender focal points where there are none.

CLIMATE CHANGE

ENDORSED the COMESA Climate Change Framework, the African Bio-Carbon Initiative and the Common African Position on Climate Change.

URGED Member States to support the Common African Position at the forthcoming AU Summit and to enhance the cohesiveness of the Africa Group in the Climate Change negotiations

COMESA INSTITUTIONS

REITERATED the need for Member States to meet their financial commitments to the Court.

RENEWED the terms of office of the following Judges of the COMESA Court of Justice:

- (a) Honourable Justice Kheshoe P. Matadeen, (Mauritius, Appellate Division);
- (b) Honourable Justice Duncan G. Tambala, (Malawi, Appellate Division);
- (c) Honourable Justice Luke Malaba (Zimbabwe, First Instance Division);
- (d) Honourable Justice James Munange Ogoola (Uganda, First Instance Division); and
- (e) Honourable Justice Hortense Rabanjarivelo neé Rakotomena (Madagascar, First Instance Division).

AWARDED the hosting of the COMESA Institutions to the Member States indicated below:

- (a) COMESA Competition Commission – Republic of Malawi;
- (b) COMESA Telecommunications Company (COMTEL) – Republic of Djibouti; and
- (c) Federation of Women in Business (FEMCOM) – Republic of Malawi.

GOVERNANCE

CONGRATULATED His Excellency President Robert Gabriel Mugabe, Prime Minister Morgan Richard Tsvangirai and Deputy Prime Minister Professor Arthur Mutambara and the people of Zimbabwe for establishing an All Inclusive Government for the Republic of Zimbabwe.

CALLED upon the International Community to lift all declared and undeclared sanctions against the Republic of Zimbabwe for the economic recovery of the country.

URGED the people of Zimbabwe to continue consolidating the All Inclusive Government and support its programmes towards national economic recovery.

CONGRATULATED His Excellency Dr. Bingu wa Mutharika for his re-election as President of the Republic of Malawi

COMMENDED the people and Government of Malawi for successfully holding peaceful democratic elections.

CONGRATULATED the people of the Kingdom of Swaziland for holding peaceful democratic parliamentary elections.

CONGRATULATED His Excellency Rupiah Bwezani Banda on his election as President of the Republic of Zambia.

CONGRATULATED the People of the Republic of Zambia for holding Peaceful Democratic Presidential Elections.

CONGRATULATED the people of Rwanda for holding Peaceful Democratic Parliamentary Elections.

NOTED with regret the unconstitutional change of Government that has occurred in Madagascar.

UNCONDITIONALLY rejected and condemned in the strongest terms the unconstitutional change of Government in Madagascar and called for the return to constitutional rule.

EXPRESSED deep concern for the suffering of the people of Madagascar and called for an urgent solution to prevent the adverse social and economic implications particularly for the ordinary people of extended uncertainty.

WELCOMED and **AGREED** as pronounced by the AU to support SADC as they take a lead in their efforts to restore constitutional order in Madagascar by examining all options including the possibility of military intervention and pronounced its full support and backing to SADC in all options to resolve the matter.

CALLED for unity and solidarity among COMESA and SADC Member States to work together towards the restoration of constitutional rule in Madagascar and **URGED** COMESA, SADC and the AU member States not to have any interaction with the illegitimate regime in Madagascar.

PEACE AND SECURITY

REITERATED the importance of Peace and Security for creating an enabling environment for investment, economic development and a viable regional integration for the region.

COMMENDED the Governments of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Republic of Uganda, the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of Rwanda for working together in addressing negative forces bent on destabilising the Great Lakes Region.

URGED the Government and People of Sudan to continue working with the United Nations and the African Union in the search for a lasting peaceful solution to the conflict in the Darfur Region of Western Sudan.

EXPRESSED satisfaction with the improvement of the security situation in Burundi and **REITERATED** its support to the Government and People of Burundi for their commitment to durable and sustainable peace.

URGED COMESA Member States to enhance its conflict prevention mandate through the establishment of an effective Conflict Early Warning System as well as addressing post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation issues.

NOTED with deep concern the rising incidence of piracy off the Coast of Somalia and the Mozambican Channel that has a significant negative impact on the economies of COMESA Member States and constitutes a threat to peace and security in the region; and **CONDEMNED** these acts in the strongest terms.

CALLED upon the international community to adopt a coordinated approach to tackling the issue of Piracy in a holistic manner through the United Nations.

REITERATED its concern at the persisting tension at the border between Djibouti and Eritrea and in the relations between the two countries; and **CALLED UPON** Eritrea and Djibouti to exercise restraint and engage actively

in dialogue so as to defuse the tension, and find a peaceful and mutually acceptable settlement.

EXPRESSED deep concern on the indictment by the International Criminal Court (ICC) indictment against His Excellency Omar Al Bashir, President of the Republic of Sudan and **ENDORSED** the position of the African Union Peace and Security Council for the United Nations to urge the ICC to suspend the indictment.

EXPRESSED concern at the persisting tension at the border between Chad and Sudan and in the relation between the two countries and **CALLED** upon Sudan and Chad to exercise restraint and refrain from any actions that may increase the tension between the two countries and engage in dialogue to defuse the tension and find a peaceful and acceptable settlement.

REITERATED its concern at the continued impasse in the peace process between Sudan and Chad and **CALLED** for renewed efforts, including by the AU, and international community to assist the two countries overcome the current situation, normalise their relations and lay the foundation for a comprehensive and lasting peace between them.

ENDORSED the election of Madam Immaculee Nahayo of Burundi, Ambassador Mrs. Soad A. Shalaby of the Arab Republic of Egypt, Ambassador Bethuel A. Kiplagat of the Republic of Kenya, Ambassador Anund Priyay Neewoor of Mauritius and Mr. Atem Garang Deng Deduek of The Sudan as the Committee of Elders of the COMESA Programme for Peace and Security.

INTERNATIONAL MATTERS

ENDORSED the candidature of Dr. Mukhisa Kituyi, former Minister of Trade and Industry of Kenya, for the position of Secretary General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

CONDOLENCES

EXPRESSED Condolences to the Government and People of Zambia on the untimely death of His Excellency President Levy Patrick Mwanawasa, SC.

COMESA-EAC-SADC TRIPARTITE

ENDORSED the Decisions of the first COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Summit that was held on 22 October 2008 in Kampala, Uganda.

DIRECTED the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Tripartite Task Force, to expedite the completion of the study on the single FTA for COMESA, EAC and SADC.

CLOSURE OF THE SUMMIT

AGREED to hold the next Summit in the Kingdom of Swaziland in 2010.

EXPRESSED appreciation to His Excellency Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, the Government and people of the Zimbabwe for their warm and fraternal hospitality extended to all delegates and for hosting the Thirteenth Summit of the Heads of State and Government.

Before the closure of the Summit His Majesty King Mswati III, King of Swaziland, in moving vote of thanks expressed the gratitude of all the Heads of State and Government and their delegations to the President of Zimbabwe and his Government for the warm hospitality extended to all the delegations. His Majesty highlighted the main achievement of the Summit being the launch of the Customs Union. His Majesty also thanked the Secretariat for their excellent support to the Summit.

Finally, His Majesty King Mswati III invited all the Heads of State and Government to the next Summit to the COMESA Authority to be held in Swaziland.

In his closing speech, His Excellency President Robert Gabriel Mugabe, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe and Chairman of the COMESA Authority of Heads of State and Government said that he was happy that the Thirteenth Summit by launching of the COMESA Customs Union had demonstrated that Member States were serious and committed to implement the COMESA regional integration agenda. He stated that the Summit had also identified transport infrastructure and energy development as priority and that as Chairman he would work tirelessly together with his colleagues Presidents and Heads of State and Government to implement the agreed priority programmes. He thanked the Heads of State and Government for the trust bestowed upon him, the Government and people of Zimbabwe by electing him Chairman of the COMESA Authority and for hosting the Summit and for their attendance. He also thanked the COMESA Secretary General and his staff for the excellent arrangements made for this conference and also he thanked the staff from the Zimbabwe Government that had helped to make this Summit a successful event. He wished them all safe return journey to their respective countries.

The Authority **ADOPTED** its Final Communiqué as read by the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers, Honourable Professor Welshman Ncube, Minister of Industry and Commerce of the Republic of Zimbabwe.

DONE at Victoria Falls Town, in the Republic of Zimbabwe on 8 June 2009, in the English and French languages, both texts being equally authentic.