HIGH-LEVEL SIDE EVENT TO COMMEMORATE THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY 25TH ANNIVERSARY

LEVERAGING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TO FAST-TRACK INTEGRATION

EAC

JUMUIYA YA AFRIKA MASHARIKI

25

EAC ANNIVERSARY

1999 - 2024

Theme:
EAC@25: A Reflective Journey and Future Aspirations

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

HIGH-LEVEL SIDE EVENT TO COMMEMORATE THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY 25TH ANNIVERSARY

LEVERAGING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION TO FAST-TRACK INTEGRATION

ARUSHA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTRE (AICC)

29TH NOVEMBER, 2024

ARUSHA, TANZANIA

Theme:
EAC@25: A Reflective Journey and Future Aspirations

Welcome Note

Hon. Veronica M. Nduva, CBS
Secretary General, East African Community

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this High-Level Side Event to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the East African Community (EAC). As we celebrate this milestone, we honour the remarkable journey of regional integration that has been built on the foundation of unity, resilience, and shared vision.

This commemorative occasion is an opportunity to reflect on our achievements, reaffirm our commitment to the ideals of regional integration, and chart a bold path for the future. The EAC's 25-year journey is a testament to the power of collaboration in fostering development and improving the lives of our citizens.

The theme of today's discussions encapsulates our shared priorities and aspirations. In Trade Promotion, we celebrate our progress in creating a robust regional market through the Customs Union and the Common Market Protocols, driving economic growth and enhancing opportunities for businesses and individuals across our Partner States.

On Peace and Security, we recognize that the stability of our region is the bedrock of sustainable development. Our collaborative initiatives have strengthened conflict prevention mechanisms and enhanced the collective security of the East African people.

In the realm of Digital Integration, we embrace the transformative potential of technology to connect our communities, enhance service delivery, and unlock new opportunities for innovation and growth in a rapidly changing world.

As we commemorate this historic anniversary, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our Partner States, development partners, private sector, civil society, and citizens for their unwavering support and dedication to the EAC's vision. Together, we will continue to shape a prosperous and integrated East Africa that remains a beacon of hope and opportunity.

Let us use this platform to deliberate, inspire, and advance our shared objectives for the future. I wish you all fruitful discussions and an enriching experience.

Welcome and thank you for joining us!

1. INTRODUCTION

The East African Community (EAC) is celebrating 25 years of remarkable progress since its revival under the overarching theme, ***"EAC@25: Promoting Trade, Sustainable Development and Peace & Security for Improved Livelihoods."*** The theme underscores the EAC achievements and its commitment to fostering regional integration, enhancing socio-economic development, and ensuring peace and security in the region. The 25th Anniversary provides a perfect juncture to reflect on its achievements, highlight challenges and chart the way forward for the integration process in East Africa.

As the EAC moves into the future, **digital transformation** is recognized as a critical enabler across all its strategic areas, contributing to the promotion of **trade, peace and security**, and **sustainable development** among other priority sectors. By harnessing emerging technologies and digital connectivity, the EAC can build a resilient, competitive, and secure region, fully aligned with the **EAC Vision 2050** and **African Union Agenda 2063.**

2. BACKGROUND

The East African Community (EAC), re-established in 1999 (*first as a Tripartite Commission 1996 -1999*), has been instrumental in deepening integration among its eight (8) Partner States, namely the Republic of Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Federal Republic of Somalia, the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Rwanda, the Republic of South Sudan, the Republic of Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

2.1 The Treaty Establishing the EAC

The Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community (*the Treaty*) was signed on 30th November, 1999 and came into force on 7th July, 2000. The objective of the Community is *to develop policies and programmes aimed at widening and deepening cooperation among the Partner States in political, economic, social and cultural fields, research and technology, defence, security and legal and judicial affairs for their mutual benefit*.

In 1999, the Treaty was signed by the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. The EAC expanded in 2007 with the admission of the Republic of Burundi and the Republic of Rwanda; in 2016 with the admission of the Republic of South Sudan; in 2022 by the admission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and was further expanded in November 2023 with the admission of the Federal Republic of Somalia.

(L-R) President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of the Republic of Uganda, President Daniel Arap Moi of the Republic of Kenya and President Benjamin William Mkapa of the United Republic of Tanzania sign the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community on 30th November, 1999 in Arusha, Tanzania.

2.2 The Four Pillars of EAC Integration

In the Treaty, the Partner States agreed to establish a Customs Union, the Common Market, the Monetary Union and ultimately a Political Federation, the four (4) integration pillars. In March 2005, the Community established a Customs Union and in 2010, the EAC established a Common Market. The Protocol for the Establishment of the East African Community Monetary Union was adopted in November 2013. Over the past 25 years, the EAC has made significant strides under the four (4) key integration pillars.

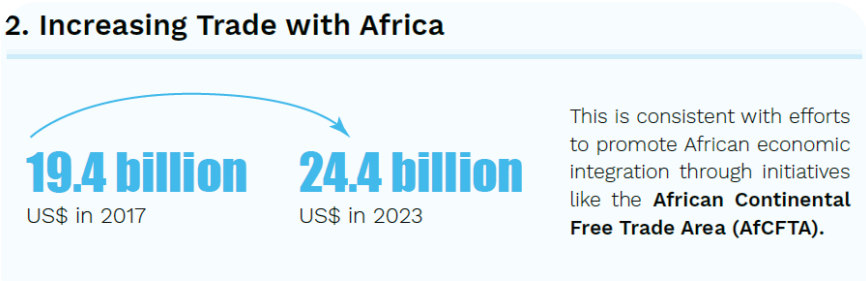
2.2.1 *The Customs Union*

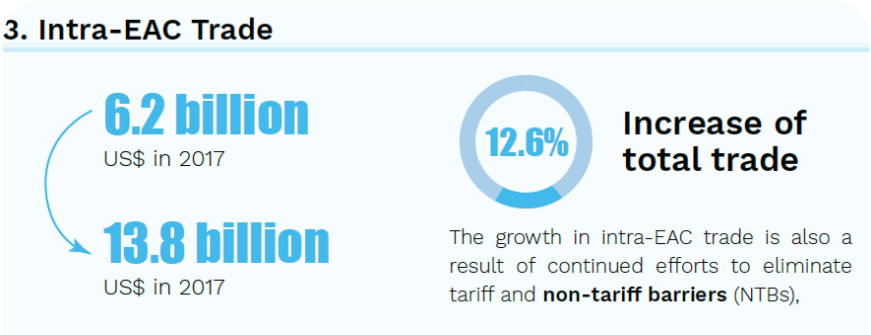
Under the First Pillar, the Customs Union, established in 2005, the provisions of the Protocol have been instrumental in advancing regional integration and trade facilitation within the EAC.

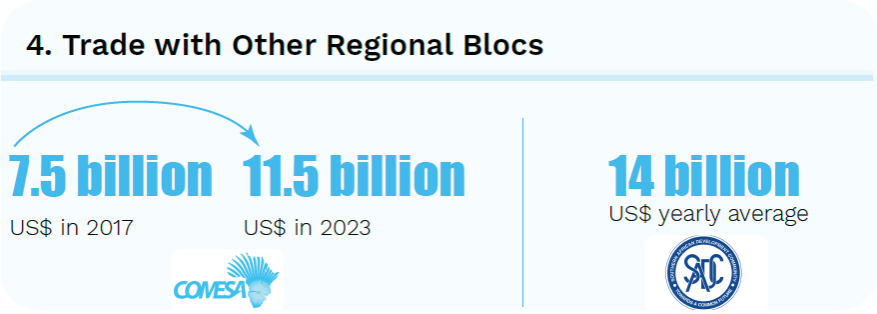
The Customs Union is one of the most significant achievements of the East African Community, driving remarkable progress in regional integration and economic transformation. By liberalizing intra-regional trade, the Customs Union has facilitated the seamless movement of goods across Partner States, reducing trade barriers, improving efficiency, and lowering transaction costs. This has promoted competitiveness and encouraged industries to optimize their production processes, enhancing productivity across the region.

The unified market created by the Customs Union has also attracted substantial domestic and foreign investment, offering a predictable and conducive business environment for investors. As a result, the region has witnessed significant economic growth, with expanded business opportunities, job creation, and improved living standards. Furthermore, access to a larger market has supported industrialisation and diversification, enabling Partner States to develop value-added industries and reduce reliance on traditional exports.

Overall, the Customs Union has laid a strong foundation for economic integration, fostering sustainable development and positioning the East African Community as a competitive economic bloc in the global arena.







2.2.2 *The Common Market*

Under the Second Pillar, the Common Market, whose establishment Protocol was signed in 2010, the progressive achievements in the five (5) freedoms and the two (2) rights, namely the free movement of goods, persons, labour, services and capital; and the rights of establishment and residence, has been pivotal in creating a more integrated regional economy in the Community. The progressive removal of non-tariff barriers and the mutual recognition of professional qualifications have enhanced labour mobility and investment opportunities across the region.

The establishment of the Common Market is progressing towards its goal of achieving accelerated economic growth and development across the region. Key advancements have been realized including the enhancement of services suppliers and capital movement, which is crucial for eliminating barriers to movement of goods and strengthening the two rights of establishment and residence. Significant strides have been made in removing barriers to trade and investment, expanding opportunities for the private sector, which is vital for uplifting living standards across the Partner States.

ıovements for educational purposes

6,250
student passes
Issued by Rwanda and Kenya between July 2023 and July 2024

3,454
Issued by Rwanda

2,796
Issued by Kenya

Remittances

9.3 bn US$
received within the EAC in 2022

2.8%
remittances represents the region's GDP for that year

These funds are essential for supporting households, enhancing living standards, and contributing to local development, particularly in rural areas where families often rely on remittances for basic needs, education, and healthcare

2.2.3 *The Monetary Union*

Under the Third Pillar, the Monetary Union, whose Establishment Protocol was signed in 2013, the EAC has laid the groundwork for a unified monetary landscape with a single currency as the eventual target. Progressive steps have been made towards macroeconomic convergence, the ongoing establishment of anchor institutions namely i) the East African Monetary Institute, ii) the East African Statistics Bureau, ii) the East African Surveillance, Compliance and Enforcement Commission; and iv) the East African Financial Services Commission, and the legal framework to support the Monetary Union. Programmes and Projects in this area including the EAC Payment Systems and capacity building are ongoing.

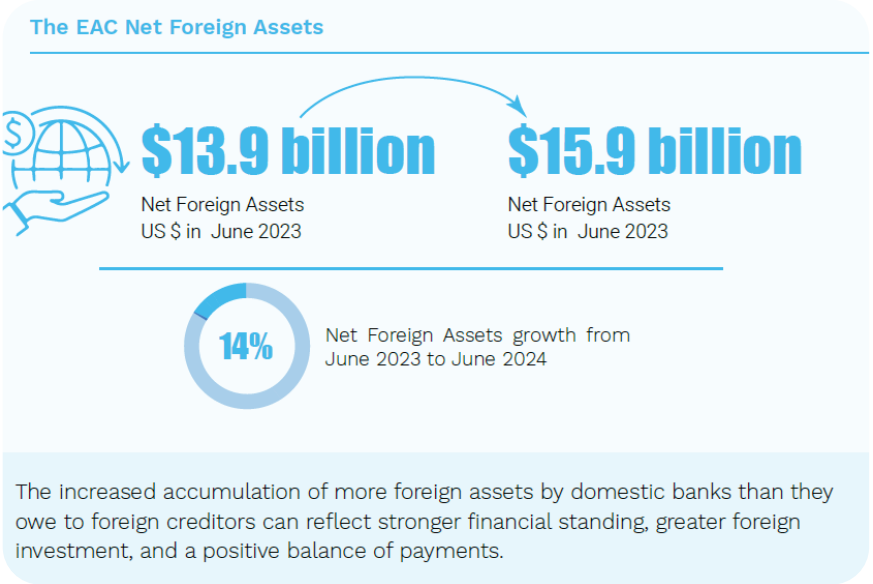
The EAC money supply

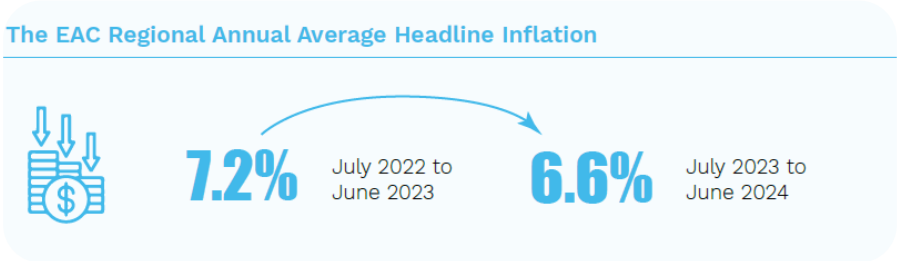
$74 billion
EAC money supply
US $ in June 2023

$81.7 billion
EAC money supply
US $ in June 2024

10.2%
increase in growth of money supply

Growth in the money supply indicates more money is available in the EAC economy for transactions, lending, and investment.
While it can stimulate economic growth, excessive growth without corresponding increases in the production of goods and services can lead to inflation





2.2.4 *The Political Federation*

Under the Fourth Pillar, the Political Federation is in progress, with the Political Confederation as a transitional model to the Federation. Deliberate steps and strategies are being undertaken with an aim of deepening political cooperation, with the EAC Partner States working together on shared governance and security matters, electoral processes and joint peacekeeping missions and harmonised policies on foreign relations, targeted at contributing to regional stability and unity. National consultations with the citizens on the drafting of the Constitution for the East African Confederation have already been undertaken in the Republics of Burundi, Uganda and Kenya. Plans for country consultations are underway for the other Partner States.

2.3 Enhancing Defence and Security Cooperation

Defense and Inter-State Security has remained a pace setter in the integration process that has witnessed enhanced inter-operability among the Regional Defence Forces. This was pre-tested with the successful deployment of the East African Regional Force in Eastern DRC. Other areas of security cooperation that have taken place in enhancing integration include: Police, Correctional Services Counter Terrorism, Intelligence, Small Arms and Light Weapons and Disaster Management sub-sectors. The Inter-Burundian Dialogue and the EAC-led Nairobi Process on Restoration of Peace and Security in Eastern DRC provided a template for institutionalisation of structures for solving complex inter- and intra-state tensions. These critical gains must be consolidated and locked in to underpin the integration process.

2.4 Digital Transformation for Economic Growth and Development

Economic growth and sustainable development in East Africa can be further accelerated through digital transformation. Key elements of digital transformation include the adoption of e-commerce platforms, digital payment systems and the expansion of digital infrastructure. By leveraging these technologies, the region can not only streamline trade processes but also enhance financial inclusion, improve market access for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), foster innovation and enhance peace and security. These advancements will strengthen the EAC capacity to among others compete in the global market while addressing socio-economic and political challenges.

2.4.1 *Flagship Digital Initiatives*

A number of flagship initiatives demonstrate the EAC's commitment to adapting digital transformation capacities in enhancing and deepening its integration process. Among the key initiatives are the following:

- The East African Payment System (EAPS), which facilitates cross-border transactions in local currencies, reducing dependence on foreign exchange and lowering transaction costs has been a key driver of regional trade. While there is still room for greater integration, the system is expected to have significant impact as it evolves.

- E-government platforms like Kenya's e-Citizen, which offers over 5,000 digital services, and Tanzania's TIPS platform for real-time financial transactions, have revolutionized how citizens interact with their governments.

- The Rwanda National Digital Payment System (RNDPS), also known as *eKash*, has significantly advanced financial inclusion within the country. The number of users in Rwanda has surged from 1.9 million in 2011 to 7.8 million as of 2024, demonstrating the impactful role of RNDPS in fostering a more inclusive financial landscape in the country.

- Mobile money services, such as Kenya's M-Pesa, with its 30 million users, and Tanzania's mobile money accounts standing at about 40 million, have further promoted trade and financial inclusion, with Uganda reporting daily mobile money transactions exceeding USD100 million.

- The East African Community is implementing a USD15 million grant under the flagship Eastern Africa Regional Digital Integration Project (EARDIP) funded by the World Bank, to advance regional digital integration in the region by increasing cross-border broadband connectivity, secure data flows and digital trade. EARDIP supports Eastern Africa towards the achievement of a dynamic, seamless 'single digital market,' including cross-border services and e-commerce in line with the African Union's Digital Transformation Strategy and its goals.

2.4.2 *EAC Digital Integration Policy and Strategy Frameworks*

The EAC is in the process of developing various frameworks to govern its digital integration. The EAC Data Governance Policy Framework, currently under development, seeks to regulate human-centered digital markets, ensuring inclusive and secure digital ecosystems that support trade and governance. At the inaugural Digital Leaders Forum on Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) in August 2024, Partner States reaffirmed their commitment to building interoperable and cross-border digital infrastructure to enhance regional stability and economic integration.

The EAC has adopted an EAC E-Commerce Strategy. Work is also ongoing towards the development of the EAC Payment Master Plan and the EAC Digital Transformation Strategy which will reflect the EAC commitment to fostering economic growth, sustainable development and peace. Through these initiatives, the EAC continues to provide a solid foundation for trade, prosperity and regional stability.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE HIGH-LEVEL SIDE EVENT

The High-Level Side Event is convened under the sub-theme ***EAC@25: A Reflective Journey and Future Aspirations***.

3.1 Overall Objective

The overall objective is to showcase the EAC 25-year journey and its future aspirations in promoting trade, peace and security, and the role of Digital Transformation as a key enabler of regional integration towards realising EAC Vision 2050.

3.2 Specific Objectives

The Specific Objectives will be to:

a. Facilitate discussions among key stakeholders on achievements and challenges in cross-border movement of goods and services, and actions to enhance their trade within the EAC;

b. Showcase the role of digital transformation in addressing the current limitations of cross-border payment systems and how innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence, mobile money, and digital currencies can play a crucial role in enhancing financial inclusion and economic integration in the EAC region; and

c. Reflect on the critical role of peace and security for sustainable economic and social integration in the EAC region.

4. KEY AREAS OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION: LEVERAGING DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

4.1 Promoting Trade

East African Community has been at the forefront in advancing intra-regional trade, driven by the successful implementation of the Customs Union and the Common Market pillars. Initiatives such as the Single Customs Territory (SCT), One Stop Border Posts, interconnectivity of systems and simplification of procedures have improved efficiency in trade flows and minimized customs clearance delays. To advance trade further, the EAC continues to address non-tariff barriers (NTBs) and align trade policies to ensure consistency and predictability. Investments in modern infrastructure, such as upgraded border facilities and enhanced transportation networks, are key to minimizing trade disruptions and improving access to regional and global markets. These efforts are geared towards leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) to boost intra-EAC trade and position the region as a competitive economic bloc.

4.2 Digital Transformation

The East African Community (EAC) is making significant strides in intra-regional trade and enhancing digital transformation across sectors. One of the key enablers of economic growth and integration in the region is the development of efficient, secure, and accessible cross-border payment systems. As Partner States advance their digital economies and see double-digit growth, there is an increasing need for harmonized digital payment infrastructures to facilitate seamless transactions across borders.

The current cross-border payment systems face challenges including high transaction costs, delays in settlement, lack of interoperability, and limited access for unbanked populations. Addressing these challenges through digital transformation is essential for fostering trade, boosting regional integration, and enhancing the overall economic resilience of the region.

The high-level side event will provide a platform for stakeholders to discuss opportunities, challenges, and solutions for accelerating cross-border payment systems within the digital transformation agenda. The forum will also address necessary steps towards harmonization and integration of payment systems to facilitate trade and financial inclusion in the region.

4.3 Peace and Security

Peace and security are a pre-requisite to social and economic development within the Community and vital to the achievement of the objectives of the Community. Therefore, there is need for Partner States to enhance cooperation in handling conflicts, cross border crime, provision of mutual assistance in criminal matters including the arrest and repatriation of fugitive offenders, and the exchange of information on national mechanisms for combating criminal activities.

Most of the contemporary crimes are committed on a platform of technology, therefore Digital transformation can be a vital tool in promoting peace and security in the region by enabling the development of interoperable digital systems and enhancing cross- border collaboration. By integrating digital platforms for real-time crime data sharing and communication between Partner

States, the EAC can improve its ability to monitor and respond to peace and security threats, such as Terrorism and Transnational Organised Crimes. Interoperable systems allow for more coordinated law enforcement efforts and efficient border management. Additionally, bolstering cybersecurity efforts across the region is critical to safeguarding national and regional infrastructure and information from cyber threats. By investing in digital methods of sharing information and multi-agency cross-border security collaborations, the EAC can foster a more secure, stable, and resilient region, promoting long-term peace, stability and development.

5. STRUCTURE OF THE HIGH-LEVEL SIDE EVENT

The High-Level Side Event is planned for the **29th November, 2024** and will constitute a Technical session and a Heads of State session. The Technical session will set the context for presentations on achievements in the EAC's 25-year journey. Following this, participants will engage in break-away discussions on the three (3) thematic areas. The outcomes of the break-away sessions will be presented during the plenary of the Technical session. The outcomes from the Technical session will be reported to the Heads of State session.

The High-Level Side Event will also incorporate an exhibition on the achievements of the Community over the past 25 years.

6. THEMATIC AREAS

6.1 Opening Session

The opening session incorporates remarks outlining the event's objectives, statements from Partner States' delegations, and opening remarks from the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers.

i. Plenary session - Keynote Address: Setting the Context

This session will provide a comprehensive overview of the 25-year journey with a focus on:

a. Reflections on the state of EAC integration including achievements and milestones in EAC 25-Year Journey.
b. Challenges and opportunities for the next phase of regional integration.
c. Future aspirations and strategies towards the deepening of the integration to attain the EAC Vision 2050.

The keynote address will provide a highlight on the broad issues as above and set the stage for more focused sessions to follow.

6.2 Break-away Sessions

The break-away sessions will constitute simultaneous breakout discussions on the three (3) thematic areas: trade integration, digital transformation and peace and security as highlighted below. The sessions will allow participants to choose a thematic area that align with their specific interests, facilitating focused engagement on various aspects of the broader agenda.

ii. A Reflection on Customs Union and Movement of Goods

The session will reflect on the substantial progress made in advancing intra-regional trade through the EAC's Customs Union and Common Market. It will showcase how these pillars have reduced trade barriers, modernised customs processes and increased the engagement of the private sector, paving the way for future development.

The dialogue will assess challenges, propose future strategies and align EAC objectives with the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and other regional trading blocs to ensure regional competitiveness. Further, the discussions will also delve into trade in services and the development of regional value-chains and related strategies.

Expected Outcomes:

a. **Enhanced Regional Trade Framework**: Action plans for further policy integration and harmonisation, consolidating the achievements of the Customs Union and Common Market to improve cross-border trade efficiency.
b. **Alignment with AfCFTA**: A roadmap for synchronizing EAC policies and standard with AfCFTA, other Economic blocs standards to enhance market positioning and encourage adoption of unified African trade standards.
c. **Private Sector Development**: recommendations on Innovative approaches to strengthen support systems for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and value- chains to capitalize on streamlined cross-border processes.
d. **Policy and Infrastructure Investments**: Insights on targeted infrastructure development and sustainable policy investments that foster eco-friendly logistics and ensure seamless movement of goods.
e. **Commitment to Digital Transformation**: interventions to enhance digital tools like the AI-based customs solutions for transparent, efficient trade facilitation.
f. **Resilience and Adaptability**: Approaches to enhance trade systems through strategic planning and response frameworks to manage unforeseen disruptions effectively.

iii. Leveraging Digital Transformation and collaborations to achieve EAC's Vision 2050

The session will focus on the impact of digital transformation in overcoming the challenges faced by cross-border payment systems. It will explore how innovative technologies—including artificial intelligence (AI), mobile money, and digital currencies—can enhance financial inclusion and promote economic integration within the East African Community (EAC) region. The following broad topics will be covered:

a. **Interoperability of Payment Systems:** Examining how Partner States can harmonize their payment infrastructures to ensure that systems are interoperable, enabling seamless cross-border transactions between Business-to-Business (B2B) or Business-to-Customer (B2C).
b. **Regulatory Frameworks:** Identifying the necessary regulatory changes and policy frameworks required to support digital cross-border payments including licensing, while ensuring compliance, security, and risk management.
c. **Emerging Technologies:** Discussing the potential of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), and mobile platforms in revolutionizing cross- border payments, reducing costs, and improving transaction speed.

Expected Outcomes:

a. Recommendations for creating EAC interoperable, secure, and inclusive cross-border payment system.
b. Policy proposals for international cooperation (such as "50 in 5" campaign) and regulatory harmonization across the EAC.
c. Insights on the adoption of emerging technologies in payment systems.

iii. Peace and Security in the Region

The session will delve into the critical role of the EAC in fostering peace-building and conflict resolution, with a focus on enhancing cross-border security collaboration to combat threats such as terrorism, human trafficking and smuggling. The discussion will also highlight the vital contributions of the youth and women in advancing peace and security efforts, emphasising their inclusion in conflict resolution processes. Additionally, the session will examine ways to strengthen the EAC's regional security architecture to ensure long-term stability, while exploring how digital developments and technological innovations can be leveraged to support peacekeeping initiatives and maintain security across the region.

The session will address the following topics:

a. Strengthening the EAC's Regional Security Architecture through integrating digital reporting systems for Long-Term Stability.
b. Deepening (enhancing) youth and women involvement in peacebuilding and security interventions in the region.
c. The role of peace and security in promoting integration in the region.
d. The role of regional, continental and international Community in addressing conflicts in the region and ensuring sustainable peace, security and development.

7. KEY EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE HIGH-LEVEL SIDE EVENT

i. Actionable proposals for trade facilitation using digital transformation to promote trade in the region;
ii. Concrete actions by Partner States and stakeholders to attract investments to advance digital infrastructure and cross-border payment systems in the next integration phase; and
iii. Commitments among Partner States, development partners, the private sector, civil society and academia to strengthen the EAC's Regional Security Architecture and promote peace and security through a digitally connected region.

8. HEADS OF STATE SESSION: OUTCOMES AND WAY FORWARD

i. Received key takeaways from the discussions under each thematic area.
ii. Dispensing on key regional integration matters.

9. PARTICIPANTS

The participation of the Technical Session of the High-Level Side Event will be drawn from Government officials from EAC Partner States, representatives from relevant Government Agencies, regional business leaders, Academia, Heads of Regional Economic Communities, Heads of International Development Agencies; and Ambassadors accredited to the EAC. Media and Development Partners will also be expected to attend the event.

EAC Organs, Institutions and Apex Organisations will also be part of the event. EAC Apex Organisations are the: East African Business Council (EABC); East African Law Society (EALS); East African Local Governments Association (EALGA); the East African Civil Society Forum (EACSOF) and the East Africa Health Platform (EAHP).

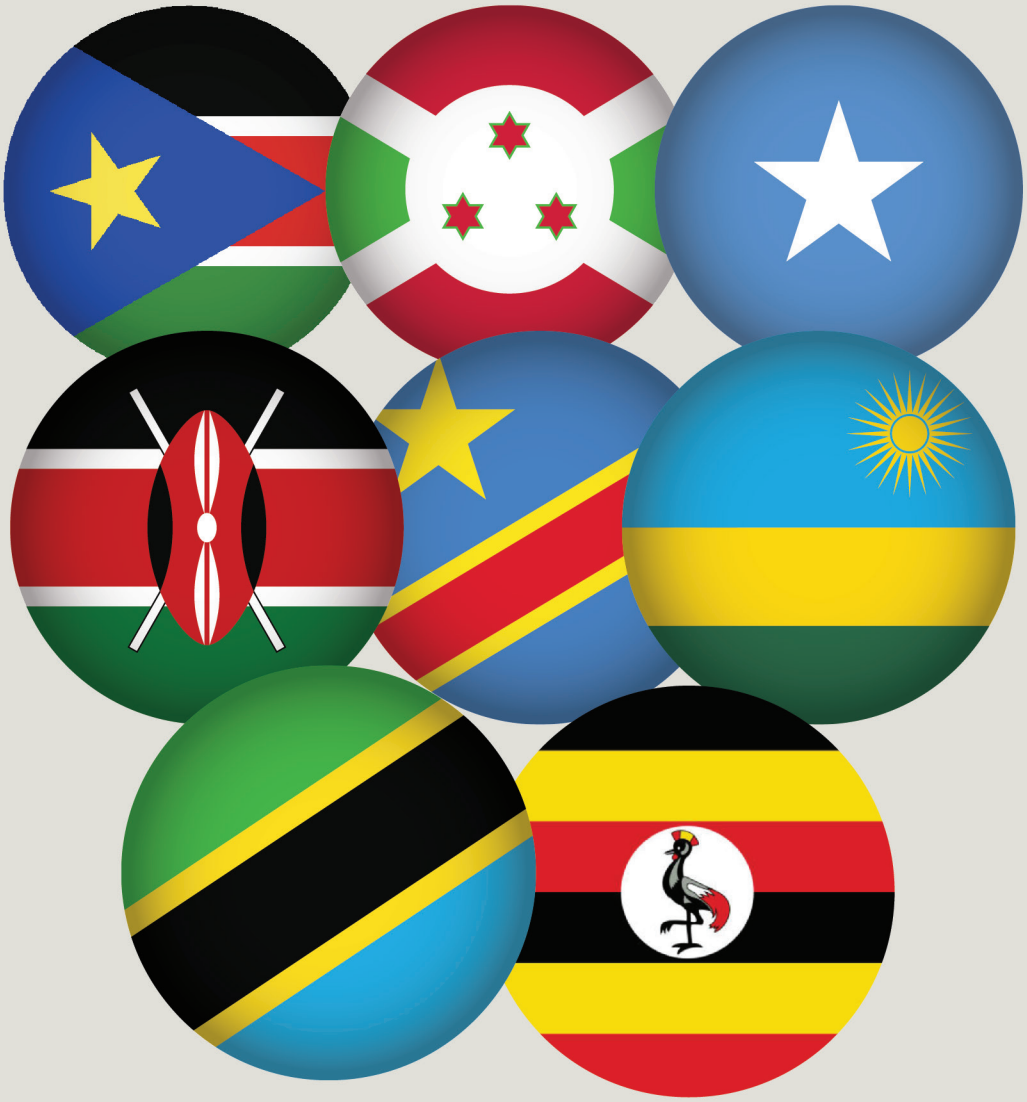
In addition to the participants of the Technical session in the morning, the afternoon session will also be attended by the EAC Heads of State.

The High-level Side Event is anticipated to be a significant gathering, reflecting the collective achievements and future goals of the EAC.

10. DATE AND VENUE

The High-Level Side Event is scheduled for **29th November, 2024**, featuring a two- part agenda: The Ministerial Session in the Morning and the Heads of States Session in the afternoon.

The venue for this event will be the **Arusha International Conference Centre (AICC), Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania.**



PROGRAMME

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE
08.00 - 08.30hrs	**Arrival and Registration**	
TECHNICAL SESSION		
08.30 - 09.00hrs	**Opening Session** • Prayer • EAC Anthem • Short video: EAC@25 – Borderless **Venue: AICC,** Simba Hall	**Moderators**: **Mr. Jean Baptiste Havugimana,** *Director Productive Sectors, EAC Secretariat* **Dr James Jowi,** *Deputy Executive Secretary, East African Kiswahili Commission*
09.00 - 09.45hrs	**Opening Remarks** • **Welcome & Objectives of the High-Level Side Event** Hon. Veronica M. Nduva, CBS EAC Secretary General • **Statements by Partner States Ministers Responsible for East African Community Affairs** • **Opening Remarks** Chairperson of the Council of Ministers **Venue: AICC,** Simba Hall	

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE
09.45 - 10.15hrs	**Keynote Address:** EAC@25: A Reflective Journey and the role of Digital Integration in creating a borderless East Africa **Hon. Amanya Mushega,** *Former Secretary General, EAC* **Panel Discussion:** **Panelists** • **Amb. Dr. Francis Muthaura,** *Former Secretary General, EAC* • **Judge Prof. John Eudes Ruhangisa,** *Former Judge, United Republic of Tanzania* • **Hon. Gideon Gatpan Thoar,** *Member of the East African Legislative Assembly* *(Republic of South Sudan)* • **Mr. Jaswinder Bedi,** *East African Business Council and Business Entrepreneur* • **Ms. Marion Stetchy,** *Youth Representative* **Rapporteurs:** *Mr. Aime Uwase, EAC Secretariat* *Mr. Stephen Analo, EAC Secretariat* **Venue: AICC,** Simba Hall	**Moderator**: **Mr. Phillip Wambugu,** *Consultant, East African Capacity Building Project, EAC Secretariat*
10.15 - 10.45hrs	**Reflections on the Keynote Address by Participants**	Moderator: **Mr. Phillip Wambugu**
10.45 - 11.00hrs	**HEALTH BREAK**	

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE
11.00 – 12.30hrs	**Breakout Sessions/Thematic Areas:**	
	Session A: Reflection on Customs Union and Movement of Goods **Setting the stage:** **Mr. Kenneth Bagamuhunda,** *Customs and Trade Expert* **Panelists** • **Mr. Sévérin Mbarubukeye,** *Permanent Secretary, East African Community, Youth and Culture, Republic of Burundi* • **Mr. Dennis Karera,** *Vice Chairperson, East African Business Council* • **Mr. Donald Omondi Deya,** *Chief Executive Officer, Pan-African Lawyers Union* • **Ms. Paulina Elago,** *Former Executive Secretary, Southern African Customs Union (SACU)* • **Mr. Daniel Lema**, *Board Member and Tanzania Chapter Coordinator, East African Civil Society Organisations Forum (EACSOF)* **Rapporteurs:** *Ms. Prilla Kabagambe, Customs Expert* *Ms. Flavia Busingye, EAC Secretariat* **Venue: AICC**, Simba Hall	Moderator: **Ms. Annette Mutaawe Ssemuwemba,** *Deputy Secretary General, Customs, Trade and Monetary Affairs, EAC Secretariat*

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE
11:00 - 12.30hrs	**Session B: Digital Transformation** **Setting the stage:** • **Presentation I: Digital Transformation and EAC Integration Agenda** **Eng. Murenzi Daniel,** *Principal Information Technology Officer, East African Community (EAC)* • **Presentation II: State of Inclusive Instant Payment Systems (IIPS) and the EAC perspectives** **Ms. Sabine Mensah**, *Deputy CEO, AfricaNenda Foundation* ***Panelists*** • **Ms. Angela Mwirigi,** *Director, Digital Financial Services, Kenya Commercial Bank Group* • **Mr. Elijah Mwandumbya**, *Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Finance, United Republic of Tanzania* • **Dr. Ali Yassin Sheikh,** *Deputy Governor, Central Bank of Somalia* • **Dr. Robert Ochola,** *Chief Executive Officer, AfricaNenda Foundation* ***Rapporteurs:*** *Ms. Hilda Mwakatumbula, Digital Advisor, GIZ;* *Dr. Pantaleo Kessy, EAC Secretariat* **Room: AICC,** Kololo Hall	**Moderator:** **Prof. Njuguna Ndung'u**, *Former Cabinet Secretary, Finance, Republic of Kenya*

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE
	Session C: Enhancing Peace and Security in the Region **Setting the Stage:** **Mr. Saidi Mwema,** *Former Inspector General, Tanzania Police Force, United Republic of Tanzania* **Panelists:** • **Mr. Huang Xia,** *Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region* • **Mr. Joseph Boinnet,** *Deputy National Security Advisor, Republic of Kenya* • **Mr. Hussein Sheikh-Ali Moallin Mahmoud,** *National Security Advisor to the President, Federal Republic of Somalia* • **Amb. Libérat Mfumukeko,** *Former EAC Secretary General, EAC* • **Hon. Beatrice Kiraso**, *Former EAC Deputy Secretary General - Political Federation* ***Rapporteurs***: *Mr. Leonard Onyonyi, Peace and Security Expert;* *Mr. Julius Mbati, EAC Secretariat* **Venue**: **AICC,** Mbayuwayu Hall	**Moderator**: **Ms. Razia Kimani,** *Peace and Development Practitioner*
12.30 - 12.45hrs	**EAC Tech Live:** A demonstration of the cross-border Instant Payment Switch between the United Republic of Tanzania National Switch (TIPS) and the Republic of Rwanda National Payment Switch (RSwitch) **Venue:** AICC, Simba Hall	**Eng. Daniel Murenzi,** *Principal Information Technology Officer, EAC Secretariat*
12.45 - 13.30hrs	**Plenary Session:** • Reporting back by Thematic/Breakout sessions • Discussion on the way forward for the integration process and takeaways from the Technical Session • Endorsement of Outcomes by Ministers **Venue**: AICC, Simba Hall	**Session Rapporteurs**

TIME	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE
13.30 - 14.30hrs	**LUNCH BREAK**	**All**
SESSION OF THE HEADS OF STATE		
14.30 - 14.40hrs	• EAC Anthem • Prayer (1 Min short prayers Muslim & Christian)	**Moderators:** *Deputy Secretary General, Customs, Trade and Monetary Affairs, EAC Secretariat* *Deputy Executive Secretary, East African Kiswahili Commission*
14.40 - 14.50hrs	Welcoming Remarks by the Secretary General	*Secretary General, East African Community*
14.50 - 15.15hrs	Remarks by the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers and Presentation of Outcomes from Discussions of the High-Level Side Event to the Heads of State	*Chairperson, EAC Council of Ministers*
15.15 - 16.30hrs	Interactive Session with Heads of State	*Secretary General, East African Community*
16.30 - 16.40hrs	Vote of Thanks	*Deputy Secretary General (Infrastructure, Productive, Social and Political Sectors)*
16.40 - 17:00hrs	Heads of State Group Photo	*Deputy Executive Secretary, East African Kiswahili Commission*
17.00 - 17.05hrs	EAC Anthem	
17.05hrs	Departure at Leisure	All

Opening Session:

EAC@25: A Reflective Journey and Future Aspirations

29 November, 2024

09:00 – 09:45 Hrs

SESSION ABSTRACT:

The Opening Session will officially launch the High-Level Side Event, providing a platform to outline its objectives and set the stage for impactful discussions. Delegations from the East African Community (EAC) Partner States will deliver statements reflecting their perspectives on the event's theme and shared regional priorities.

The session will culminate in opening remarks by the Chairperson of the EAC Council of Ministers, offering strategic insights and reaffirming the collective commitment to advancing the region's integration agenda. This session aims to establish a unified vision and energize participants for the engaging sessions ahead.

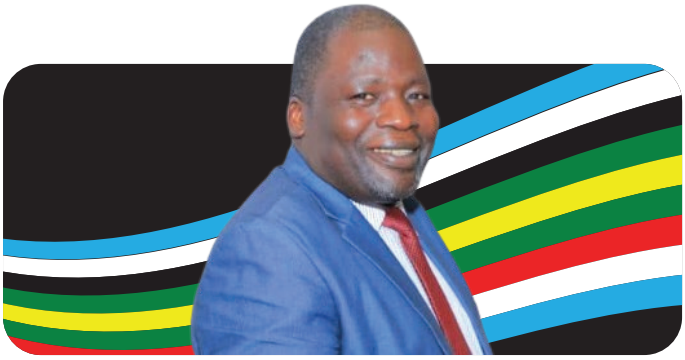
MODERATORS

Mr. Jean Baptiste Havugimana

Director, Productive Sectors
EAC Secretariat

Mr. Jean Baptiste Havugimana is the Director of Productive Sectors at the EAC Secretariat, with 27+ years in macroeconomic policy design, monetary policy, and modeling and forecasting. He holds a Master's in Macroeconomic Policy Management from the University of Tsukuba, Japan, and a B.A. in Public Economics from the National University of Rwanda. Havugimana has attended advanced trainings globally, enhancing his expertise and leadership in macroeconomic management and research.

He previously worked at MEFMI as a Macroeconomic Programme Manager and at the National Bank of Rwanda as Research Team Leader, contributing significantly to policy design, analysis, and capacity-building initiatives.



Dr. James Jowi

Deputy Executive Secretary
East African Kiswahili Commission

Dr. James Otieno Jowi is the Deputy Executive Secretary at the East African Kiswahili Commission (EAKC). Prior to this he served as Principal Education Officer at the East African Community (EAC) Secretariat. Before joining the EAC he was a Senior Lecturer at the School of Education, Moi University, Kenya. He attained his PhD qualification from University of Twente, Netherlands; a Masters in Education from University of Oslo, Norway; a Masters in Linguistics and a Bachelor of Education from Moi University, Kenya.

Kenote Address:

EAC@25: A Reflective Journey and the role of Digital Integration in creating a borderless East Africa

29 November, 2024

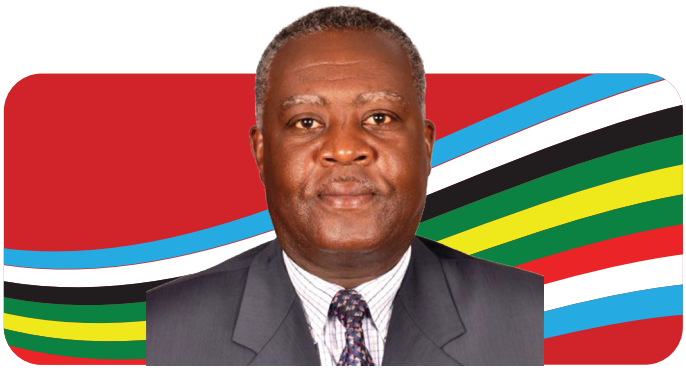
09:45 – 10:15 Hrs

SESSION ABSTRACT:

This session will provide a comprehensive overview of the 25-year journey with a focus on the reflections on the state of EAC integration including achievements and milestones in the Community's 25-Year Journey. The session will also deliberate on the challenges and opportunities toward attaining the aspirations of the EAC Vision 2050.

The session will further provide highlights on the trade dynamics in the region and the critical role of digital integration, peace and security for sustainable economic and social integration in the EAC and set the stage for more focused breakout sessions.

MODERATOR



Mr. Phillip Wambugu

Consultant, East African Capacity Building Project, EAC Secretariat

Mr. Philip Wambugu has over 40 years of professional experience, 35 of which are in infrastructure development. At the East African Community (EAC), he served as Transport Economist, Director of Planning and Infrastructure, and retired as Director for Infrastructure in 2017.

He was pivotal in establishing the East African Civil Aviation Safety and Security Oversight Agency (CASSOA), a groundbreaking initiative in the developing world. Mr. Wambugu spearheaded regional flagship projects in roads, railways, ports, civil aviation, logistics, and legal frameworks, many of which are still under implementation.

Currently, he is an independent consultant with the EAC, coordinating an African Development Bank-funded Capacity Development Project. He holds a BA in Economics (University of Nairobi) and an MSc in Transportation (Massachusetts Institute of Technology - MIT, USA).

SETTING THE CONTEXT

Hon. Nuwe Amanya Mushega

Former Secretary General East African Community

Nuwe Amanya Mushega, commonly known as Amanya Mushega, is a distinguished Ugandan statesman, lawyer, and seasoned public servant with an illustrious career that spans decades of impactful leadership. A stalwart in East African regional integration, Mushega played a pivotal role in the revival and consolidation of the East African Community (EAC), serving as its Secretary General from 2001 to 2006. During his tenure, he was instrumental in steering the Community through its foundational years following its re-establishment in 1999. His efforts significantly advanced the operationalization of key EAC protocols, laying a firm foundation for the region's integration journey.

Before joining the EAC, Mushega held several high-ranking positions in Uganda's government, including Minister for Education and Sports, where he championed educational reforms, and Minister for Regional Cooperation, where he honed his diplomatic and negotiation skills. His deep commitment to fostering unity and cooperation was reflected in his leadership style, marked by pragmatism, foresight, and a people-centered approach.

A lawyer by profession, Mushega is celebrated for his strategic thinking and dedication to the principles of shared prosperity and peace within East Africa. His enduring legacy in regional integration continues to inspire efforts toward a more cohesive and prosperous East African Community.

PANELISTS

Amb. Dr. Francis Muthaura

Former Secretary General
East African Community

Ambassador Dr. Francis Kirimi Muthaura has been a pivotal figure in East African regional integration, particularly during his tenure as the Executive Secretary/Secretary General of the revived East African Community (EAC) from 1996 to 2001. His leadership was instrumental in re-establishing and operationalizing the EAC following its collapse in 1977. Dr. Muthaura oversaw the negotiations and signing of the Treaty for the Establishment of the EAC in 1999, which provided the framework for deeper regional cooperation among the Republic of Kenya, the Republic of Uganda, and The United Republic of Tanzania, and paved the way for other Partner States to join later.

Dr. Muthaura's diplomatic acumen was evident in fostering collaboration across diverse areas, including economic policy, labour mobility, and trade harmonization. He was also a key architect of the foundational agreements, such as the Memorandum of Understanding with the International Labour Organization in 2001, which promoted decent work and social security across the region.

In addition to his role in the EAC, Dr. Muthaura held various high-profile positions, including serving as Kenya's Head of Public Service and Secretary to the Cabinet. His vast experience in governance and diplomacy underscores his enduring legacy in shaping East Africa's integration agenda.

Judge Prof. John Eudes Ruhangisa

Former Judge
United Republic of Tanzania

Prof. John Eudes Ruhangisa is a distinguished Tanzanian Judge, academic, and former Registrar of the East African Court of Justice (EACJ). With a career spanning decades, Prof. Ruhangisa has made substantial contributions to the development of regional legal frameworks and the judicial landscape of East Africa.

His tenure as the Registrar of the EACJ was marked by significant strides in strengthening the court's processes and enhancing its role in promoting regional integration. Beyond his work at the EACJ, Prof. Ruhangisa served as a High Court Judge in Tanzania, shaping legal jurisprudence in the country. His legal expertise and leadership were instrumental in fostering cooperation and ensuring effective legal practices within the East African Community.

Throughout his career, Prof. Ruhangisa has been a strong advocate for the rule of law, regional cooperation, and the development of legal frameworks that promote justice and peace across the East African region. He is a renowned scholar and has taught regional integration at various universities in East Africa and beyond, as an emerging area of international law.

His academic background and decades of experience continue to influence the legal field, and he remains a respected figure in the advancement of legal systems within the East African Community.

Hon. Gideon Gatpan Thoar
Member of Parliament
(Republic of South Sudan)

East African Legislative Assembly

Hon. Gideon is a Member of the East African Legislative Assembly, formerly served as State Minister of Information and Communication; and a Commissioner of Mayendit County in the Republic of South Sudan. Hon. Gideon also served in various capacities in the humanitarian sector including Country Director for the Relief Organization for South Sudan based in Nairobi Kenya; a Programme Manager of the Carter Center South Sudan Trachoma Control Programme; and a GIS Database Manager for the United Nations Children Funds. Hon. Gideon holds a Bachelor's Degree in Development Studies from Bugema University in Uganda, a Master's Degree in Governance from Tangaza University in Nairobi, and currently pursuing a PhD in International Relations at the United States International University-Africa specializing in foreign policy and diplomacy. His areas of interest include exile diplomacy, rebellion diplomacy, food diplomacy, parliamentary diplomacy, mediation, humanitarian diplomacy, wartime diplomacy, human rights diplomacy, counter diplomacy, governance, and peace and security.

Mr. Jaswinder Bedi

East African Business Council and Business Entrepreneur

Mr. Jaswinder (Jas) Bedi is a prominent business leader with a focus on promoting regional trade in East Africa. He serves as the Chairman of the Kenya Export Promotion and Branding Agency (KEPROBA), where he plays a key role in expanding Kenya's export market opportunities, particularly within regional trading blocs like the East African Community (EAC), COMESA, and SADC. He has also contributed to the African Cotton & Textile Industries Federation (ACTIF) and served as the President of the International Textile Manufacturers Federation, working on initiatives to enhance regional trade and competitiveness in the textile and apparel sectors.

Mr. Bedi's leadership extends to several other prominent organisations, including his roles as Vice Chairman of the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) and the East African Business Council (EABC). He has been instrumental in driving trade policies and partnerships that foster economic growth and regional integration. His advocacy has opened new markets for Kenyan products, particularly in China and the US, helping diversify export markets and promote sustainable trade practices across the region.

Ms. Marion Stetchy

Youth Representative

Marion is an Accredited Professional Mediator recognized by the Judiciary of Kenya and serves as the EAC Deputy Youth Ambassador for Kenya. As the Managing Director of Threshold of Hope Africa, she is a dedicated advocate for mental health, focusing on dismantling the stigma surrounding mental health issues and promoting access to resources, especially for leaders facing these challenges. Marion's work aligns with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Quality Education (Goal 4), Gender Equality (Goal 5), Climate Action (Goal 13), and Peace and Justice (Goal 16). She is the Advocacy Chair at Soroptimist International Tawi E-Club and has represented Kenya on the Pan African Advisory Board. Marion's training includes certifications from the UK Erasmus Mundus programme, the Netherlands Institute for Multiparty Democracy, and leadership development at Moi University. She is also fluent in English and French and is a certified scriptwriter, enhancing her communication skills in her advocacy efforts.

RAPPORTEURS

Mr. Aimé Uwase

Director of Planning,
East African Community

Mr. Aimé Uwase is a highly accomplished professional with extensive experience including 16 years of active involvement in the EAC integration process. Currently, he serves as the Director of Planning at the East African Community (EAC), where he provides technical leadership in coordinating and facilitating the implementation of initiatives related to the EAC Vision 2050 and Development Strategies. With a strong foundation in international business and strategic planning, Aimé is recognized for his significant achievements in coordinating various regional policy frameworks and programmes that foster integration and economic growth within the EAC. He has actively contributed to the formulation of regional policies and strategies, and he has coordinated the implementation of regional projects and programmes across sixteen areas of EAC cooperation. His efforts are aligned with the EAC's mission to promote sustainable development, regional integration, and prosperity across the East African Community.

Mr. Stephen Analo

Customs Capacity Building Expert, EAC Secretariat
Raportuer

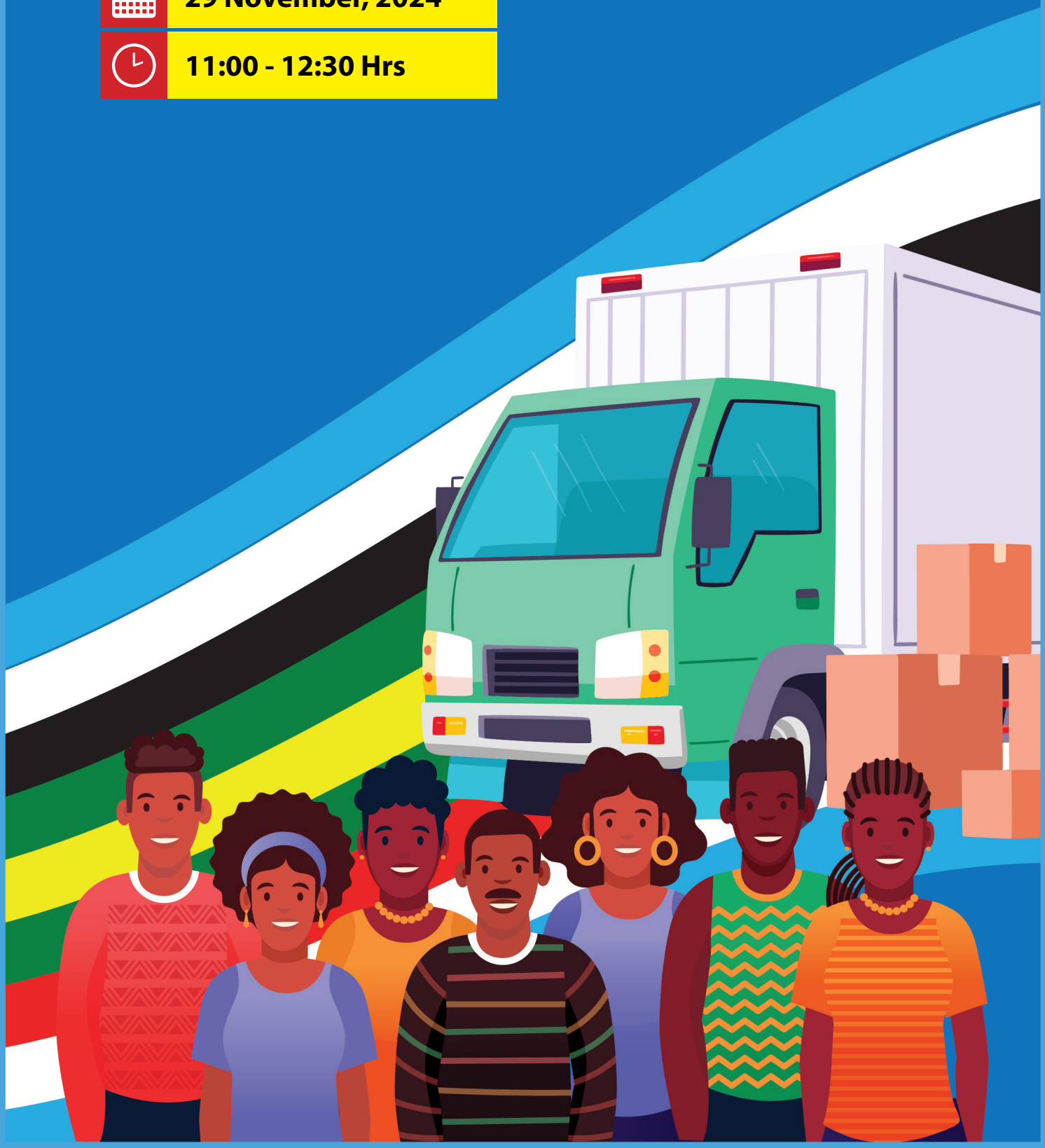
Mr. Stephen Analo is a well-respected trade expert within the East African Community (EAC), specialising in customs and trade facilitation. With extensive experience in capacity building, he has made significant contributions to the region's customs processes, particularly in the implementation and enhancement of the Authorized Economic Operator (AEO) program, aimed at streamlining trade and ensuring security across East Africa.

He has done extensive work on strengthening regional trade policies and promoting smooth cross-border trade operations. Analo is also involved in capacity building initiatives to improve customs compliance and efficiency across Partner States. His leadership continues to play a vital role in the EAC's efforts to promote intra-regional trade, aligning with the broader goals of economic integration within East Africa.

Session A:
A Reflection on Customs Union and Movement of goods

29 November, 2024

11:00 - 12:30 Hrs



SESSION ABSTRACT:

The Customs Union is a cornerstone of the East African Community (EAC) integration agenda, aiming to promote the free movement of goods, enhance intra-regional trade, and drive economic growth. However, despite notable progress, challenges such as compliance gaps, revenue management inefficiencies, and limited public awareness continue to hinder full implementation.

This session brings together distinguished experts and leaders from the public sector, private sector, regional organizations, and civil society to reflect on the EAC's journey in establishing and operationalizing the Customs Union. Panellists will share insights into key achievements, lessons learned, and practical recommendations to address existing barriers and accelerate the region's vision of seamless trade.

Discussions will focus on:

Strategies and factors enabling Partner States, such as the Republic of Burundi, to integrate successfully into the Customs Union framework.

- Milestones in regional trade facilitation and proposals to enhance the free movement of goods.
- Lessons from SACCU on revenue management and their applicability to the EAC context.
- Legal and institutional reforms to strengthen compliance and operational efficiency.
- Citizen engagement and perception of the Customs Union, and strategies for greater inclusivity and awareness.

This session aims to inspire actionable outcomes and foster collaboration to support the EAC's continued progress toward a fully operational and impactful Customs Union.

MODERATOR

Ms. Annette Mutaawe Ssemuwemba,

Deputy Secretary General Customs, Trade and Monetary Affairs, EAC Secretariat

Ms. Annette Mutaawe Ssemuwemba currently serves as the Deputy Secretary General in charge of Customs, Trade, and Monetary Affairs at the East African Community (EAC) Secretariat, With over 20 years of expertise in trade policy, regional integration, and capacity building, she previously served as Deputy Executive Director at the Enhanced Integrated Framework at the World Trade Organization (WTO) and as Chief Strategy and Results Officer at TradeMark East Africa.

A leader in international development, she has driven initiatives supporting least-developed countries and sustainable trade growth. Ms. Ssemuwemba holds a Master's in Business Administration and has dedicated her career to fostering sustainable trade development.

PRESENTER

Mr. Kenneth Bagamuhunda

Customs and Trade Expert

Kenneth Bagamuhunda is a distinguished expert in trade and regional integration, having served as the Director General of Customs and Trade at the East African Community (EAC). During his tenure, he played a pivotal role in advancing trade facilitation, regional standards harmonization, and the elimination of non-tariff barriers. Mr. Bagamuhunda was instrumental in the development and implementation of the EAC Export Promotion Strategy and contributed to regional projects like the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA). With 18 years of service at the EAC, he championed structured, sustainable expansion of the bloc, emphasizing compatibility and integration readiness for new member states.

Mr. Sévérin Mbarubukeye

Permanent Secretary
East African Community, Youth, Sports and Culture, Republic of Burundi

Mr. Sévérin Mbarubukeye is the Permanent Secretary for East African Community (EAC), Youth, Sports and Culture in Burundi. He champions regional integration by advancing youth and cultural initiatives aligned with the EAC's objectives. His leadership has facilitated Burundi's active participation in key EAC programs, including cross-border cooperation through One-Stop Border Posts and efforts to develop a regional refugee policy.

Committed to fostering unity, Mr. Mbarubukeye supports strategies promoting social and cultural integration within the EAC. He also prioritizes youth empowerment, advocating programs that engage young people in regional development. His work underscores the importance of cohesive policies in achieving the EAC's mission to deepen political, economic, and cultural ties among Partner States, fostering sustainable growth and regional cooperation.

Mr. Mbarubukeye holds a Master Degree in Public Administration with a specialization in International Administration from École Nationale d'Administration Publique, Québec, Canada. He has held various key positions as such Permanent Secretary Ministry of Interior and National Coordinator of the National Training Center for Devolution/Decentralization Actors.

Mr. Dennis Karera

Vice Chairperson
East African Business Council

Mr. Dennis Karera is a distinguished entrepreneur based in Kigali, Rwanda. He serves as the Managing Director of Kigali Heights, a landmark real estate development, and leads Gold Capital Investments. With over two decades of expertise, Karera has significantly contributed to Rwanda's real estate and business sectors, creating employment opportunities and enhancing infrastructure. As the Vice Chairman of the East African Business Council (EABC), he champions regional economic integration and policy advocacy, including initiatives like the EAC Single Tourist Visa. A vocal proponent of investment in Rwanda, he emphasizes the nation's potential as a hub for growth and innovation. Karera's leadership reflects his commitment to fostering business collaboration and driving sustainable development across East Africa.

Ms. Paulina M. Elago

Former Executive Secretary Southern African Customs Union (SACU)

Ms. Paulina Mbala Elago the former Executive Secretary of Southern African Customs Union, SACU, has extensive professional and executive leadership experience in international trade and development, where she navigates complex trade and regulatory environments and fosters international collaborations to drive economic growth. She boasts a credible history spanning more than 30 years of negotiating trade agreements, developing international trade policies and strategies, and advising and working with developing countries across the Commonwealth and Africa, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) States. Adept at providing policy advice to key policymakers on international trade policy, customs, logistics, and investment reforms, she drives regional integration and trade-related infrastructure development.

A skilled development practitioner, she has managed and successfully delivered multi-million-dollar, multi-country trade-related development projects. As Executive Secretary of SACU, she played a key role in

advancing regional integration, trade policy and facilitation initiatives, and the negotiation of trade agreements with strategic partners, including the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

A firm believer in Africa's integration, she is a sought-after speaker and leader in the field of international trade and economic development. She holds an MSc in International Trade and Finance from Lancaster University in the UK.

Mr. Donald Omondi Deya

Chief Executive Officer Pan-African Lawyers Union (PALU)

Mr. Deya is a seasoned Advocate of the High Court of Kenya with extensive expertise in law and regional integration. He previously served as the CEO of the East Africa Law Society (EALS), where he was instrumental in strengthening the organization's role as a champion for good governance, rule of law, and access to justice within the East African Community (EAC). Under his leadership, the EALS actively engaged in shaping EAC policies, fostering civil society's involvement in regional integration processes and promoting legal harmonization among Partner States.

As the founder of the East African Civil Society Organizations' Forum (EACSOF), Mr. Deya advanced the participation of civil society in regional decision-making. His influence extended beyond the EAC, serving as Chair of the Pan African Citizens' Network (PACIN) and the African Court Coalition, where he promoted accountability and human rights across Africa. Additionally, he has held roles with the African Forum of the International Bar Association and the International Institute of Law Association Chief Executives.

Mr. Deya's leadership has left a lasting impact on strengthening governance frameworks and enhancing the EAC's integration agenda, particularly through his efforts to link legal professionals, civil society, and policy development for a unified and sustainable regional bloc.

Mr. Daniel Naftal Lema

Board Member and Tanzania Chapter Coordinator East African Civil Society Organisations Forum (EACSOF)

Mr. Daniel Naftal Lema is a Tanzanian legal professional and governance expert with over 17 years of experience in human rights, legal aid, and public policy. He is the Chief of Party at Freedom House Inc., where he oversees initiatives aimed at promoting democracy, rule of law, and human rights in the region. As a Board Member and Tanzania Chapter Coordinator at the East African Civil Society Organizations Forum (EACSOF), he plays a pivotal role in advocating for civil society's involvement in advancing the East African Community (EAC) agenda.

Mr. Lema has been instrumental in fostering legal and institutional reforms aligned with the EAC's vision of regional integration, focusing on justice, equity, and governance. He also coordinates Tanzania's National Legal Aid Secretariat, enhancing access to justice through legal aid programs. His work extends to research on maternal and child health in partnership with Aga Khan University, reflecting his holistic approach to sustainable development and social justice.

RAPPORTEURS

Ms. Flavia Busingye

Director Customs and Trade EAC Secretariat

Flavia Busingye is a seasoned professional currently serving as the Director of Customs and Trade at the East African Community (EAC). With over 18 years of leadership in customs, trade law, and regional integration, she has played a crucial role in advancing the EAC's trade and economic agenda. Flavia has been instrumental in fostering an enabling environment for seamless cross-border trade, including leading initiatives on data harmonization and policy frameworks to enhance intra-regional commerce.

Her contributions extend to international trade negotiations, where she has represented the EAC in crafting agreements that promote economic integration and competitiveness. Flavia's academic credentials include specialized training in Law and International Economic and Business Law, equipping her with the expertise to navigate complex trade and legal systems. A passionate advocate for regional integration, she continues to contribute to the EAC's vision of a unified, economically vibrant East Africa.

Ms. Prilla Kabagambe

Manager, Strategy and Planning Customs
Uganda Revenue Authority

Prilla is an accomplished strategist with a strong background in customs management, regional trade facilitation, and leadership development. Holding a Master's degree in Economic Policy and Planning from Makerere University, she is currently pursuing an Executive MBA at Eaton Business School, Dubai. As the Manager for Strategy and Planning at the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA), Prilla has been at the forefront of major initiatives, including the successful implementation of the Single Customs Territory (SCT) clearance processes.

Her expertise extends beyond national borders, where she has contributed to the East African Community (EAC) as a member of the SCT Technical Working Group and the Eastern and Southern Africa (ESA) Regional Steering Committee. Prilla is also a Professional Associate of the World Customs Organization (WCO), an accredited trainer in Leadership, Management, and Risk Management. Her work continues to impact regional trade and enhance leadership capacity across the customs and trade sectors.

Session C:

Session B: Digital Transformation - Leveraging Digital Transformation to Fast-Track Integration

29 November, 2024

11:00 - 12:30 Hrs

SESSION ABSTRACT:

Session Abstract: Leveraging Digital Transformation and collaborations to achieve EAC's Vision 2050

The session is expected to highlight the role of digital transformation in addressing the current limitations of cross-border payment systems and to discuss how innovative technologies such as artificial intelligence, mobile money, and digital currencies can play a crucial role in enhancing financial inclusion and economic integration in the EAC region.

Discussion will focus on:

i. how EAC Partner states can harmonize their payment infrastructures to ensure that systems are interoperable, enabling seamless cross-border transactions.

ii. identifying the necessary regulatory changes and policy frameworks required to support digital cross-border payments.

iii. the potential of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), and mobile platforms in revolutionizing cross-border payments, reducing costs, and improving transaction speed.

MODERATOR

Prof. Njuguna Ndung'u
Former Cabinet Secretary
Finance, Republic of Kenya

Njuguna Ndung'u is a former Cabinet Secretary for the National Treasury and Economic Planning of Kenya. He has also previously been the Executive Director of the African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), a Pan African premier capacity building network. He is also the former Governor of the Central Bank of Kenya, where he served from 2007 to 2015.

He is an associate professor of economics at the University of Nairobi, Kenya (on leave of absence). He has been a member of Global Advisory Council (GAC) of the World Economic Forum. He holds a PhD in economic from the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Currently he is a Member of the Brookings Africa Growth Intiative (AGI) Distinguished Advisory Group, a Member of the Advisory Committee of the Alliance for Financial Inclusion, AFI, that coordinates financial inclusion policies in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and a Senior Advisor for the UNCDF-based Better Than Cash Alliance.

PRESENTERS

Eng. Murenzi Daniel

Principal Information Technology Officer
EAC Secretariat

Eng. Murenzi Daniel serves as the Principal Information Technology Officer for the East African Community (EAC), bringing over 20 years of expertise in digital transformation and innovation. A seasoned Computer Engineer, he holds an MSc in Communication Management and has led groundbreaking digitalization projects in Enterprise Architecture, E-Government, FinTech, E-Agriculture, Digital Trade, E-Customs, Cybersecurity Systems, and Digital Health. His work integrates cutting-edge technologies to enhance efficiency and foster sustainable development.

As the Technical Lead for the EAC Digital Agenda, Eng. Murenzi drives the integration of digital solutions into EAC programs, advancing regional connectivity and economic growth. He is a visionary leader committed to leveraging technology to propel regional integration and deliver impactful results for East Africa.

Ms. Sabine Mensah

Deputy CEO
AfricaNenda Foundation

With over 27 years in financial inclusion, digital payments, and mobile money, Sabine Mensah serves as Deputy CEO at AfricaNenda Foundation, leading policy, advocacy, and capacity-building efforts across Africa. Previously, she managed UNCDF's inclusive digital economy programs in West and Central Africa, advancing global digital infrastructure. She has also consulted in mobile money and directed remittance services for 15 years at Western Union in Africa, US and Canada.

Sabine is a Certified Digital Finance Practitioner, with degrees from the Institut Franco-Américain de Management in France and Central Michigan University in the US. She is fluent in English and French.

PANELISTS

Ms. Angela Mwirigi

Director, Digital Financial Services
Kenya Commercial Bank Group

Angela Mwirigi steers digital product offerings and forging crucial partnerships in the banking and FinTech sectors. Her role includes expanding payment ecosystems and ensuring governance best practices in financial service innovations. With two decades in branding, sales and distribution, she's been behind multiple award-winning campaigns and innovations at companies including KCB Group, EABL, Haco Tiger Brands and Henkel E.A. Dusseldorf. Mwirigi has served on the Advertising Standards Board of Kenya, the board of the Marketing Society of Kenya and has also been a board member of the KCB Foundation.

Her education credentials include a Senior Executive Program — Africa Certificate from Harvard Business School, an MBA in Strategy from the United States International University and a Bachelor's degree in Commerce from the University of Nairobi.

Mr. Elijah Mwandumbya

Deputy Permanent Secretary Ministry of Finance, United Republic of Tanzania

Mr. Elijah Mwandumbya is the Deputy Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Finance, United Republic of Tanzania. He has had a distinguished career in public service, including his role as Commissioner of the Department of Policy Analysis at the Ministry of Finance and Planning. His work has significantly contributed to Tanzania's economic management strategies, helping shape policies that support national development goals.

Appointed in 2023, Mr. Mwandumbya's new position enables him to influence financial management practices across the government. His expertise is essential in coordinating development plans and ensuring effective implementation of national priorities. His appointment marks a crucial step in the restructuring of the Tanzanian government's financial and planning sectors, strengthening the nation's economic planning capacity.

Dr. Ali Yassin Sheikh

Deputy Governor Central Bank of Somalia

In the fields of inclusive economic growth, governance, and social development; national development planning; inter-government working arrangements; political-economic analysis; and participatory public expenditure management (PPEM), Dr. Ali Yassin Sheikh has over 15 years of practical experience and extensive knowledge.

Dr. Ali has extensive experience in the private and public sectors of Somalia, and he has a strong foundation in financial reform. He is currently engaged in research and knowledge production, with a particular emphasis on human capital development and fiscal federalism.

Dr. Ali Yassin Sheikh is an academician who holds a master's degree in Economic Policy and Planning and a Doctorate in Business Management. He was the Macroeconomics and Research Department Director for the Central Bank of Somalia before assuming his current position as Deputy Governor and Deputy Chair of the CBS Board of Directors.

Dr. Robert Ochola

Chief Executive Officer
AfricaNenda Foundation

Dr. Robert Ochola is the Chief Executive Officer of AfricaNenda, an organization dedicated to advancing financial inclusion across Africa through digital payment solutions. With a career spanning strategy, innovation, and financial systems, Dr. Ochola has been instrumental in initiatives promoting inclusive and interoperable digital payments.

Before leading AfricaNenda, he served as Director of Strategy and Innovation at Afreximbank, where he contributed to developing the Pan-African Payment and Settlement System (PAPSS), designed to facilitate cross-border trade in local currencies. He also held leadership roles at Safaricom and KCB Bank Group, focusing on strategic growth and the roll-out of mobile payment solutions in Africa and the Middle East.

Dr. Ochola's academic background includes studies at the University of Cape Town, Warwick Business School, and Imperial College London. Under his leadership, AfricaNenda collaborates with stakeholders to enhance payment infrastructures, aiming to simplify capital transfers, reduce transaction costs, and empower businesses, particularly SMEs, in leveraging the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and East African Community (EAC) protocols to boost trade and economic growth.

RAPPORTEURS

Ms. Hilda Mwakatumbula

Digital Advisor
GIZ

Dr. Hilda Jacob Mwakatumbula, an expert in Digital Transformation with over a decade of experience in Digital Economy and Policy, currently serves as a Digital Transformation Advisor to the East African Community (EAC) at GIZ. She is also a Working Group Member of the Global Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) Safeguards at the Office of the UN Tech Envoy and UNDP, contributing to the governance of Digital Public Infrastructure worldwide.

Previously, at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), she supported countries in implementing the AU Digital Transformation Strategy 2020-2030, focusing on the governance of emerging technologies. Additionally, Dr. Mwakatumbula contributed as a Digital Development Consultant to the World Bank for the Digital Tanzania Project. Throughout her career, she has prioritized aiding developing nations in leveraging digital technologies to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Dr. Pantaleo Kessy

Principal Economist - Fiscal and Monetary Affairs
EAC Secretariat

Pantaleo Kessy is Head of Fiscal and Monetary Affairs Department at the East African Community (EAC). Before joining the EAC, he was an Assistant Manager of the Research Department at the Bank of Tanzania. He holds MA (Economics) from the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania and a PhD (Economics) from Colorado State University (USA), specializing in Monetary and Financial Economics. His research interest is in macroeconomic policies in developing countries.

His work has been on the analysis of fiscal, monetary and exchange rate policies in the economies of East Africa. Recently, he has been interacting extensively with the EAC central banks and Ministries of Finance in shaping the formulation and implementation of Macroeconomic Policies in the EAC region.

Session C:

Peace and Security in the Region - Building a Stable, Inclusive, and Integrated East Africa

29 November, 2024

11:00 - 12:30 Hrs

SESSION ABSTRACT:

The session will delve into the critical role of the EAC in fostering peace-building and conflict resolution, with a focus on enhancing cross-border security collaboration to combat threats such as terrorism, human trafficking and smuggling. The discussion will also highlight the vital contributions of the youth and women in advancing peace and security efforts, emphasising their inclusion in conflict resolution processes. Additionally, the session will examine ways to strengthen the EAC's regional security architecture to ensure long-term stability, while exploring how digital developments and technological innovations can be leveraged to support peacekeeping initiatives and maintain security across the region.

The session will address the following topics:

i. Strengthening the EAC's Regional Security Architecture through integrating digital reporting systems for Long-Term Stability

ii. Deepening (enhancing) youth and women involvement in peacebuilding and security interventions in the region

iii. The role of peace and security in promoting integration in the region

iv. The role of regional, continental and international Community in addressing conflicts in the region and ensuring sustainable peace, security and development.

MODERATOR

Ms. Razia Kimani
Peace and Development Practitioner

Ms. Razia Kimani is a peace, security, and development practitioner with 20+ years of experience in 21 conflict, fragile, and post-conflict countries in Africa, where she has been instrumental in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and preventing violent extremism. She is the Founder of The Peace and Security Advisory - a bespoke consulting firm registered in Kenya. The firm offers paid advisory services, technical assistance, facilitation, and training to contribute to evidence based, resourced, timely, citizen-responsive, and peace-sensitive: problem solving and decision making, peacemaking and peace agreements, policies, programmes, and investments of governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental entities, development partners, and the private sector. Prior to this, Ms. Kimani held senior advisory and leadership roles with the United Nations in Eritrea, UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), UN Women, USAID/Kenya and East Africa, USAID/Kenya, the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), ActionAid International, and the Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes Region and Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA). She is passionate about mediating and breaking cycles of violence and conflict; co-creating viable states with increasing self-reliance; and redefining balanced, principled, and coherent multilateralism.

PRESENTER

Mr. Saidi Mwema

Former Inspector General
Tanzania Police Force
United Republic of Tanzania

Said Mwema, former Inspector General of Police (IGP) of Tanzania, is renowned for his pivotal role in advancing regional peace and security within East Africa. As IGP, he championed initiatives targeting cross-border crime and collaborated extensively with regional organizations, including the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation (SARPCCO) and the Eastern African Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation (EACPCCO). His efforts significantly enhanced joint operations and security coordination across Partner States, laying a foundation for regional stability.

Mwema's leadership extended to addressing critical challenges such as drug trafficking, terrorism, and human trafficking. His contributions were instrumental in aligning Tanzania's security initiatives with broader East African Community (EAC) goals, particularly under Article 124 of the EAC Treaty, which emphasizes peace and security as cornerstones of integration. His efforts earned him recognition from SARPCCO for exemplary service and fostering collaboration among police forces in the region. Even in retirement, Mwema remains a strong advocate for peace and security, contributing his expertise to regional strategies and operations, ensuring the safety and stability that underpin the success of the EAC's integration agenda.

PANELISTS

Mr. Huang Xia

Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General for the Great Lakes Region

Mr. Xia brings over 30 years of diplomatic experience across the world, with experience in Africa, having served in several high-level positions. He was the Ambassador of China to Niger (2009-2012), Senegal (2012-2015) and the Congo (2015-2018).

Most recently, he has served as the Ambassador at large of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China. In earlier postings, he served in the Embassy of China to Gabon, in the Embassy of China to France, and as Deputy Mayor of the People's Government of Jiamusi, Helongjiang Province, in China. Born in 1962, Mr. Xia is married and has a son.

Mr. Joseph Boinnet

Deputy National Security Advisor Republic of Kenya

Joseph Kipchirchir Boinnet is a seasoned security expert and public servant in Kenya. He served as the Inspector General (IG) of Police from 2015 to 2019, where he played a pivotal role in restructuring the National Police Service, notably merging the Administration Police and Kenya Police units to enhance operational efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness. Before this, he worked as an Assistant Director in Kenya's National Intelligence Service (NIS), contributing immensely to national security.

Post his tenure as IG, Boinnet transitioned to the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife as Chief Administrative Secretary (CAS) in 2019, where he supported initiatives to bolster Kenya's tourism sector. In 2023, he was appointed Deputy National Security Advisor, reflecting his ongoing commitment to national safety and strategy.

Mr. Hussein Sheikh-Ali Moallin Mahmoud

National Security Advisor to the President
Federal Republic of Somalia

Mr. Hussein Sheikh-Ali Moallin Mahmoud is the National Security Advisor to the President of the Federal Republic of Somalia. He plays a critical role in shaping and implementing Somalia's national security strategies, focusing on stabilizing the country amid complex challenges posed by extremist groups.

Under his leadership, Somalia has taken significant steps in assuming greater responsibility for its security, as demonstrated by the handover of key facilities from African Union forces to Somali Security Forces in 2023. His expertise extends to counterterrorism efforts, where he has emphasized the need to address threats such as those posed by Al-Shabaab and ISIS, with a focus on reducing their influence within Somalia's borders.

Amb. Libérat Mfumukeko

Former EAC Secretary General, East African Community

Ambassador Libérat Mfumukeko is a Burundian diplomat and civil servant, currently serving as an IDA/World Bank Borrowers' Representative where he co-chairs the Africa Group 1 (22 countries), and Chargé de Missions at the Office of the President of Burundi. He was Secretary General of the East African Community (EAC) from 2016 to 2021, where he also chaired the Tripartite EAC-COMESA-SADC (2016–2017).

Previously, he held key roles including EAC Deputy Secretary in charge of Finance and Administration, Director General of REGIDESO, and Principal Advisor to Burundi's President. With over 20 years in France and the USA, he also worked with the UNDP and FAO. Amb. Mfumukeko holds degrees Economic and Management from Clark University, University of Tours, Harvard, and Moscow State University. Amb. Mfumukeko is a founder of Bujumbura International University.

Hon. Beatrice Kiraso

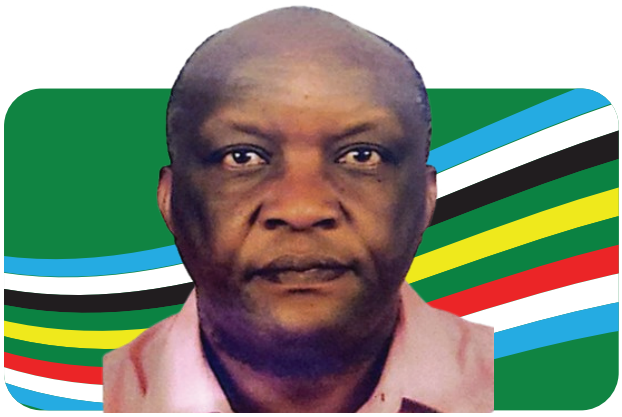
Former EAC Deputy Secretary General - Political Federation

Hon. Beatrice Kiraso is a distinguished Ugandan leader and advocate for regional integration, particularly through her extensive work with the East African Community (EAC). As the EAC Deputy Secretary General in charge of Political Federation from 2006 to 2011, she played a pivotal role in advancing the integration agenda, focusing on fostering political dialogue and good governance across Partner States. Her leadership was instrumental in organizing the first EAC Political Integration Dialogue in Kampala in 2011, aimed at engaging diverse stakeholders and enhancing the inclusiveness of the integration process.

Hon. Beatrice Kiraso's expertise in governance and strategic development has been reflected in her efforts to link national and regional political frameworks, helping to align policies that strengthen regional cooperation. Her work emphasized critical areas such as political will, public awareness, and inclusiveness, contributing significantly to discussions on the EAC's roadmap towards political federation.

Hon. Beatrice Kiraso holds a Bachelor's degree in Economics from Makerere University, Uganda and a Master's degree in Public Policy and Administration from Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government. She continues to be a prominent voice in policy advocacy, highlighting the importance of democratic governance and collaboration among East African nations. Her efforts have left a lasting impact on the EAC's vision for deeper political and economic integration.

RAPPORTEURS



Mr. Leonard Onyonyi

Peace and Security Expert

Leonard Onyonyi is a seasoned Peace and Security Consultant with 38 years of experience, including 20 years in government service with the Government of Kenya in various field and headquarters roles. He was the founding coordinator of key initiatives, including the Kenyan National Focal Point on Small Arms and the National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management.

Mr. Onyonyi also led the Conflict Early Warning and Response Unit and has expertise in areas such as small arms control, anti-money laundering, counter-terrorism, maritime security, chemical emergency response, and mediation. He played critical advisory roles in the Inter-Burundian Dialogue under the late President Benjamin Mkapa and the Nairobi Process. Holding a Master's in Project Management and other conflict management qualifications, Leonard served 18 years as a Peace and Security Expert at the EAC, where he coordinated the EAC Protocol and Regional Strategy on Peace and Security.

Mr. Julius Mbati

Police Liaison Officer
EAC Secretariat

Julius Muthwii Mbati currently serves as the Police Liaison Officer at the East African Community (EAC) Secretariat. In this capacity, he facilitates collaboration between regional police forces, enhancing law enforcement and security initiatives within the EAC partner states.

His role is pivotal in strengthening the region's capacity to address Transnational Organized Crimes and promote peace and security. Prior to this role, Mbati has contributed significantly in policing, strategic leadership and management, and forensic investigations through his expertise in law enforcement and inter-agency coordination.

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