The Secretary General WEEKLY NEWS

Deepening Integration, Widening Cooperation.

9TH MAY 2022

KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE EAC SECRETARY GENERAL's OFFICE

- EAC Ministers adopt 35% as the EAC CET 4th Band
- East African Court of Justice new deputy registrar sworn in
- East African Community steps up readiness for health emergency response

EAC MINISTERS ADOPT 35% AS THE EAC CET 4TH BAND

East African Community (EAC) Ministers / Cabinet Secretary in charge of Trade and Finance have adopted 35 percent as the 4th Band of the EAC Common External Tariff (CET).

The Ministers, during a retreat on the comprehensive review of the CET, held on 5th May 2022, in Mombasa, Kenya, decided that implementation of the reviewed EAC CET shall commence on 1st July, 2022.

The meeting further agreed on flexibility in implementation of the revised CET, particularly on products currently affected by the current global economic realities.

The Chairperson of the EAC Council of Ministers, Hon. Betty Maina, who is also the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Trade, Industrialization and Enterprise Development, Kenya hailed the move, dubbing it beneficial to the promotion of industrialization and in safeguarding consumer welfare on products where the region is net importing.

"The reviewed CET will address the requests for stays of application, which distort the EAC CET," she said.

The meeting further directed EAC Partner States to identify products which are affected by the current global trade disruptions for consideration during the Pre-Budget Consultations meeting scheduled for 9th to 13th May, 2022.

In his remarks, EAC Secretary General Hon. (Dr.) Peter Mathuki, termed this as a positive step towards the promotion of industrial sectors and realization of the benefits of the AfCFTA.

"The move is set to spur intra-regional trade by encouraging local manufacturing, value addition and industrialization," said Dr. Mathuki.

The Secretary General said the CET is one of the key instruments under the Customs Union pillar which justifies regional integration through uniform treatment of goods imported from third parties.

EAC MINISTERS ADOPT 35% AS THE EAC CET 4TH BAND

Among the tariff lines in this 4th band include: dairy and meat products, cereals, cotton and textiles, iron and steel, edible oils, and beverages and spirits.

In addition; furniture, leather products, fresh-cut flowers, fruits and nuts, sugar and confectionery, coffee, tea and spices, textiles and garments, head gears, ceramic products and paints, among others.

The meeting was informed that the maximum tariff band at 35% was the most appropriate rate, as in the long run, it has the most positive impact to regional growth.

They noted that in its application, a welfare loss is expected, but would be cured from generated added employment opportunities from the switch of local production.

The meeting, held in a hybrid format was attended by attended by the respective Ministers and Principal / Permanent Secretaries from the Partner States.

The Republic of Burundi was represented by Hon. Marie Chantal Nijimbere, Minister of Trade, Transport, Industry & Tourism.

The United Republic of Tanzania was represented by Hon. (Dr). Mwigulu Lameck Nchemba, Minister of Finance and Planning; the Republic of Uganda was represented by Hon. Francis Mwebesa; the Republic of Rwanda was represented by Hon. Beata Habyarimana.

In addition, the EAC Deputy Secretary General Eng. Stephen Mlote was in attendance, while the private sector was represented by the Executive Director of the East African Business Council (EABC) Mr. John Bosco Kalisa.

EAC MINISTERS RETREAT ON THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE CET

EAC Technical Experts and Ministers of Trade/Finance at the Retreat on the Comprehensive review of the CET in Mombasa, Kenya.

EAST AFRICAN COURT OF JUSTICE NEW DEPUTY REGISTRAR SWORN IN

The new Deputy Registrar at the East African Court of Justice (EACJ), Ms. Christine Mutimura-Wekesa, has formally assumed office.

Ms. Wekesa took the Judicial Oath during a special session of the Court held at the EACJ Appellate Division Courtroom at the EAC Headquarters in Arusha with the Judge President of the EACJ, Justice Nestor Kayobera, presiding, assisted by other Judges.

Administering the judicial oath on behalf of the Counsel to the Community, was the Principal Legal Officer at the EAC Secretariat, Mr. Michel Ndayikengerukiye.

Before her new appointment, Ms. Mutimura previously served in the EAC Secretariat as Senior Legal Officer of the Counsel to the Community, the principal legal adviser to the Community.

The primary role of the Registrar is to perform judicial functions in addition to administrative functions.

Article 45(1) of the Treaty for the Establishment of the EAC creates the position of the Registrar of the Court to be appointed by the Council of Ministers "from among citizens of the Partner States qualified to hold such high judicial office in their respective Partner States."

Rule 8(2) of the EACJ Rules of Procedure allows the Registrar to delegate his functions to a Deputy Registrar.

The position of the Registrar of the Court is currently vacant after the previous occupant, His Worship Yufnalis Okubo, retired from the position on 31st March, 2022 after attaining the mandatory retirement age of 60 years. The recruitment process for the Registrar is currently underway.

The Judge President, Justice Nestor Kayobera said that the Court would uphold its independence by ensuring adherence to law in the interpretation and application of and compliance with the EAC Treaty.

EAC STEPS UP READINESS FOR HEALTH EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The East African Community Secretariat held the first simulation exercise (SIMEX) since the onset of COVID-19 pandemic, in order to strengthen preparedness and bolster response to future public health emergencies in the Partner States.

The exercise was set to strengthen national capacities for exercise operations at ports of entry and is a follow up on Table Top exercise conducted in Arusha in 2018 and the cross-border field simulation exercise at the Namanga border between Kenya and Tanzania in June 2019.

The simulation exercise, which took place at Kilimanjaro International Airport, United Republic of Tanzania, was intended to test the knowledge and skills acquired by the participants during the training workshop.

The aim of the exercise was to link early warning with preparedness and response.

To better prepare for public health emergencies, the EAC Secretariat, with support of WHO and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, conducted a training of 60 emergency response experts and officials from Burundi, Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda on management of public health emergencies at ports of entry.

The participants were selected from various One Health sectors including health, environment, agriculture and animal heath, trade, tourism and defence.

The Manager of the EAC/GIZ Support to Pandemic Preparedness in the EAC Region project in Arusha, Tanzania, Dr Irene Lukassowitz, emphasised on the need for future outbreaks preparedness, to help withstand the shock of disaster and potential damage from emergencies.

PICTORIAL

A delegation from the Media Institute of Southern Africa - Tanzania Chapter held discussions with EAC Deputy Secretary General, Eng. Steven Mlote, representing EAC Secretary General Dr. Peter Mathuki, on the role of the Media as a key stakeholder in realising the EAC vision

EAC Deputy Secretary General,Eng. Steven Mlote, making remarks on behalf of EAC Secretary General, Dr. Peter Mathuki, at the World Press Freedom Day celebrations in Arusha, Tanzania.

NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

- Meat, alcohol imports to cost more after 35pc EAC tariff increase
- East Africa's industrial sector to gain from revised import tariff
- Uhuru Kenyatta's scorecard at the helm of EAC
- East African Community steps up readiness for health emergency response
- EAC, EU seek enhanced trade ties as exports hit $2.8 billion
- Christine Mutimura-Wekesa Is New Deputy Registrar Of EAC Court Of Justice
- Uganda, Tanzania sign defence, security pact for crude oil pipeline project
- Kenya: Uhuru Kenyatta set to launch expressway this month
- Commonwealth anti-corruption meet kicks off in Kigali
- South Sudan: S. Sudan experiences sharp hike in food prices
- Burundi Set to Establish Financial Intelligence Unit

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Ministerial Session of the 13th Meeting of the Sectoral Council of Ministers on Finance and Economic Affairs (SCFEA) and the Pre-Budget consultations.

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

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