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**COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN
AND SOUTHERN AFRICA**

**TWENTY FOURTH SUMMIT OF THE COMESA AUTHORITY OF
THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

Nairobi, Kenya
9 October 2025

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

*Theme: “Leveraging Digitalization to Deepen Regional Value Chains for Sustainable
and Inclusive Growth”*

THE TWENTY FOURTH SUMMIT OF THE AUTHORITY OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA (COMESA) was held at the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC), Nairobi, Kenya on 9 October 2025, under the theme: ***“Leveraging Digitalization to Deepen Regional Value Chains for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth”***.

The summit was attended by the following Heads of State and Government and/or their representatives:

His Excellency Dr. William Samoei Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya and Chairperson of the COMESA Authority

His Excellency Dr. Emmerson Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe and Vice Chairperson of the COMESA Authority

His Excellency Mr. Évariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi and Rapporteur of the COMESA Authority

His Excellency Mr. Azali Assoumani, President of the Union of Comoros

His Excellency Dr. Abiy Ahmed Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

His Excellency Mostafa Madbouly, Prime Minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt

Right Honourable Russell Dlamini, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Eswatini

Her Excellency Maj. (Rtd) Jessica Alupo, Vice President of the Republic of Uganda

Excellence M. Mohamed Ali NAFTI, Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, de la Migration et des Tunisiens à l'Etranger, Republic of Tunisia

Honourable Mulambo Haimbe, SC MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Republic of Zambia

Excellence Monsieur Floribert Anzuluni Isiloketshi, Ministre de l'Intégration Régionale Democratic Republic of Congo

Se M. Mohamed Warsama Dirieh, Ministre Du Commerce Et Du Tourisme Djibouti

Honourable Prudence Sebahizi Ministry of Trade and Industry of the Republic of Rwanda

His Excellency Mr. Emhemed S A Zedan, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for International Cooperation Affairs or the Republic of Libya

Hon. Hambyrajen NARSINGHEN, State Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade Republic of Mauritius

His Excellency Isaak Mohamud Mursal, Deputy Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Federal Republic of Somalia,

Mr. Allison M'bang'ombe Solicitor General of the Republic of Malawi

Ambassador Beyene Russom, Eritrean Ambassador to Kenya and Permanent Representative to COMESA

Ambassador Conrad Mederic, Seychelles Ambassador to the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and Permanent Representative to the African Union

Ambassador Mohamed Osman Akasha Elhussian, Chargé d'Affaires ai, Permanent Representative to International Organizations in Nairobi, Embassy of the Republic of Sudan in Nairobi,

Also in attendance were:

H.E Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe, Secretary General of COMESA

H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC)

H.E. Wamkele Mene, Secretary General of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

PARTNERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The following organizations and development partners also attended the Summit: The African Development Bank, FCDO, AGRA, the European Union and the World Bank. In attendance also were: Transform Africa Development Agency (TADA), UN WOMEN, The Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International (CABI).

OPENING OF THE SUMMIT

His Excellency Dr. William Samoei Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya and incoming Chairman of the COMESA Authority welcomed the Heads of State and Government to the Republic of Kenya.

His Excellency Mr. Evariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi and outgoing Chairman of the Authority called the Summit to order and presented his keynote address.

His Excellency Mr. Evariste Ndayishimiye presented and announced the new Bureau of the COMESA Authority.

ELECTED by acclamation His Excellency Dr. William Samoei Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya as incoming Chairman of the COMESA Authority.

His Excellency Dr. Emmerson Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, was elected Vice Chairman and His Excellency Mr. Evariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi, was elected Rapporteur of the COMESA Authority.

His Excellency Dr. William Samoei Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya **RECOGNISED** and **EXPRESSED** gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Evariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi for the service of Burundi as Chairman of COMESA Authority since October 2024.

His Excellency Dr. William Samoei Ruto thanked the Authority for the honour bestowed upon the Republic of Kenya as Chairman of the Authority and pledged to provide full support to advancing COMESA's integration programmes.

The following Heads of State and Government made maiden statements:

1. His Excellency Mr. Azali Assumani, President of Republic of Comoros
2. His Excellency Dr. Emmerson Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe
3. His Excellency Dr. Abiy Ahmed, The Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

The following Heads of delegations also addressed the Summit:

4. His Excellency Mostafa Madbuly, Prime Minister of the Arab Republic of Egypt
5. His Excellency Russell Dlamini, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Eswatini
6. Her Excellency Jessica Alupo, Vice President of the Republic of Uganda

A statement was submitted on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Hakainde Hichilema, President of the Republic of Zambia.

The meeting was also addressed by the following:

H.E Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe, Secretary General of COMESA
H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC)
H.E. Wamkele Mene, Secretary General of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

AFTER THE FORMAL OPENING OF THE SUMMIT, THE AUTHORITY

CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED the Report of the Twentieth Meeting of the COMESA Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED the Report of the Priority Issues of the Forty-fifth Meeting of the COMESA Council of Ministers.

CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED the Report of the Secretary General on the State of Integration in COMESA.

CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED the Recommendations of the Discussion Papers on the Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA), Free Movement of Businesspersons and Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRAs).

CONSIDERED AND ADOPTED the Recommendations of the Eighteenth COMESA Business Forum.

A. ON THE COMESA ANNUAL REPORT

LAUNCHED the 2024 COMESA Annual Report.

B. ON THE COMESA FREE TRADE AREA AND DIGITALIZATION

NOTED the efforts being undertaken by the Secretariat to engage with the five (5) Member States that are not participating or participate only partially in the COMESA FREE TRADE AREA (FTA) and **URGED** them to expeditiously and fully join the FTA.

URGED the Member States to enhance the beneficiation from the COMESA FTA and to further advance and deepen COMESA's regional integration mandate to boost their collective resilience to shocks.

APPRECIATED the efforts of Secretariat towards the digitalization of various trade facilitation instruments and **URGED** Member States to adopt and implement these instruments to increase efficiency and reduce the costs of trade: including the Electronic Certificate of Origin, Electronic Cargo Tracking System, Online Non-Tariff Barriers System, National Single Windows among others.

NOTED the progress in the implementation of the Simplified Trade Regime (STR) in the region, which bolsters the inclusivity of regional trade by supporting small-scale traders and vulnerable groups, including women, youth and people with disability to generate incomes and improve their livelihoods; and **URGED** all COMESA Member States to implement this regime.

C. ON THE COMESA-EAC-SADC TRIPARTITE ARRANGEMENT

ENCOURAGED the Member States that have not yet ratified the TFTA to do so as soon as possible;

URGED the Member States to spare no effort to operationalize the TFTA as a stepping stone towards the full implementation of the AfCFTA Agreement and the realization of the single Africa Economic Community (AEC) stage of continental integration.

URGED COMESA Member States that have not yet signed and ratified the TFTA to do so as soon as possible to enable the three RECs to embark into an integrated development planning and resource mobilization.

ENCOURAGED COMESA Member States to accelerate the domestication and implementation of instruments that have been adopted by the Tripartite TFA Council of Ministers including the harmonized road transport policies, laws, regulations, systems and standards which govern drivers, loads, vehicles and road infrastructure.

EMPHASISED the advantages of close collaboration between the TFTA structures and the AfCFTA Secretariat to upscale and build upon the instruments already developed by the Tripartite Member/Partner States at the continental level.

NOTED the offer by the Republic of Kenya to host the 4th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Tripartite FTA during the second quarter of 2026 and **URGED** COMESA Member States to participate actively in this Summit.

D. ON INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

APPRECIATED the support extended by the European Union towards supporting the aviation sector development particularly the operationalization of the Single African Air Transport Market (SAATM) and the and the enhancement of governance and enabling environment for the ICT sector.

ENCOURAGED Member States to domesticate the regional transport regulations, policies and guidelines developed by the African Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC) applicable under SAATM;

APPRECIATED the support extended by the World Bank towards infrastructure development through the Regional Infrastructure Finance Facility (RIFF) program; access to renewable and clean energy through the transformative Accelerating Sustainable and Clean Energy Access Transformation (ASCENT) project; and inclusive digitalization through the Inclusive Digitalization in Eastern and Southern Africa (IDEA) program;

APPRECIATED the efforts made by the Regional Association of Energy Regulators of Eastern and Southern Africa to establish regional guidelines for renewable energy integration in the Eastern Arica-Southern Africa-Indian Ocean (EA-SA-IO) region;

ACKNOWLEDGED the support from the African Development Bank towards development of the Regional Electricity Regulatory Frameworks and **DIRECTED**

REARESA to mobilise resources to support the domestication of these frameworks in Member States.

E. ON AGRICULTURE, INDUSTRY AND PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

NOTED the progress in the implementation of the Regional Pharmaceutical Sector Development project, supported by the African Development Bank (AfDB).

URGED the Member States to commit resources to support the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Plan (CAADP) Malabo commitments for a sustainable and inclusive agricultural transformation.

EXPRESSED concern over poor product-quality infrastructure, inconsistent sanitary and phytosanitary measures (SPS) and divergent technical barriers to trade (TBTs), which hamper the free flow of goods across borders;

CALLED FOR strengthening the capacity of Member States to test and certify products and the adoption and implementation of Mutual Recognition Agreements (MRA) to avoid the duplication of related technical processes.

EMPHASISED the potential of COMESA/EAC Horticulture Accelerator (CEHA) to boost horticulture trade of the region from US dollar 4 to 10 billion by 2031.

F. ON INVESTMENT

NOTED the efforts of the COMESA Regional Investment Agency (RIA) in collaboration with the Secretariat to support investment promotion, facilitation and protection in the region, as required to increase foreign direct investment (FDI) as well as intra-regional investment;

G. ON GENDER AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

APPRECIATED the work of the Secretariat to strengthen gender and social integration through capacity building, support to more than 700,000 women and youth using the 50 million African Women Speak Digital Platform, and then efforts to enhance the availability of gender statistics.

NOTED the advancement of market access for women and youth-led small and medium enterprises (SMEs) through trade fairs, exhibitions and business linkages reaching over 2700 participants and more than 100 exhibitors across the Member States at regional trade fairs.

NOTED the efforts of the Secretariat to support the development of the healthcare sector in the region and to enhance the resilience of Member States against pandemics and diseases.

H. ON MOVEMENT OF PERSONS

EXPRESSED concern over the existing restrictions on the movement of persons across the region which hinder the growth of intra-regional trade and investment in the COMESA region,

URGED COMESA Member States to further facilitate the free movement of persons to enhance cross border trade and investment and overall regional integration.

URGED COMESA Member States to eliminate visa restrictions to facilitate trade, investments, tourism and support value chain development in the COMESA region and the Africa Continent.

DIRECTED the COMESA Business Council (CBC) in collaboration with the COMESA Secretariat to implement the decision of the COMESA Council of Ministers on development of COMESA Business Visa Scheme,

I. ON COMESA INSTITUTIONS

EXPRESSED appreciation to the contribution that COMESA Institutions are making to support implementation of the COMESA strategies and Integration agenda and **URGED** these institutions to continue and further enhance their efforts to deepen regional integration;

URGED COMESA Member States to strengthen home grown financial institutions to invest and support Africa regional integration efforts.

URGED Member States to continue maintaining COMESA Financial Institution's Preferred Creditor Status (PCS), to enhance the institutions abilities to operate effectively across COMESA, increase investor confidence, and de-risking regional trade and investment for COMESA Member States.

ENCOURAGED COMESA Financial Institutions to promote digital financial solutions and forge partnerships with Development Finance Institutions (DFIs), Insurers and FinTech to

expand access to affordable financing for women, youth and SMEs along regional value chains.

J. ON DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE

CONGRATULATED the Republic of Burundi, Republic of Mauritius, Arab Republic of Egypt, the Republic of Mauritius, the Republic of Malawi and the Republic of Seychelles for holding successful elections recently.

URGED the Member States to continue strengthening democratic processes, structures and institutions.

CONGRATULATED H.E Dr Navinchandra Ramgoolam upon his election as the Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius.

CONGRATULATED H. E. Professor Arthur Peter Mutharika upon his re-election as the President of the Republic of Malawi.

K. ON PEACE AND SECURITY

REITERATED the centrality of peace, security and stability for creating an enabling environment for investment, sustained economic development and a viable integration for the region;

COMMENDED the Government of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia for extending the National Dialogue Process and **URGED** the Ethiopian National Dialogue Commission to continue making all needed efforts towards ensuring an all-inclusive and participatory dialogue process;

COMMENDED the representatives of the Libyan Parliament, the High State Council and the presidential candidates who signed the Peace and Reconciliation Charter that seeks to address political differences and promote national unity and **URGED** all stakeholders to commit to its implementation;

CALLED on all parties in Libya to avoid actions that can trigger escalation of violence and result in renewed clashes;

STRONGLY CONDEMNED the Al-Shabab terror attacks targeting civilians and AUSSOM forces and **STRONGLY CONDEMNED** the attempted assassination of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud;

APPRECIATED the troop and police contributing countries to AUSSOM, namely Egypt, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya and Uganda for the sacrifices they continue to make to restore

peace and stability in Somalia and **COMENDED** Burundi for its contribution and sacrifices made and Zambia for its continued contribution to the police component.;

STRONGLY CONDEMNED the continued attacks on civilians and the unprecedented humanitarian crisis in Darfur and other areas in Sudan and **URGED** for the cessation of hostilities, ensuring safe and unhindered humanitarian access to the population in Sudan in line with the Jeddah Peace Agreement;

REAFFIRMED COMESA's commitment to respecting the sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity of Sudan and **STRONGLY REJECTED** any external interference in the internal affairs of Sudan;

STRONGLY CONDEMNED the killing of civilians and peacekeepers of SAMIDRC and the UN, extend condolences to the affected families and countries and **CALLED** for those responsible to be held to account for their heinous actions;

EMPHASISED its support to the current mediation efforts aimed at finding durable peace in Eastern DRC;

Emphasized on the need to support the Member States to focus on strengthening African-led peace initiatives as they provide foundations for locally owned and driven solutions to the challenges facing the region and reinforce Africa's resilience and collective voice in global affairs.

L. ON DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

EXPRESSED appreciation to COMESA's development partners for their continued support to **URGED** them to continue and further enhance their support;

M. ON SUPPORT FROM COMESA MEMBER STATES,

NOTED the commitments on Member States to the fulfilment of their financial and non-financial obligations to COMESA.

URGED COMESA Member States that are yet to settle their financial obligations to do so within the prescribed timeframes.

N. ON AWARDS

CONGRATULATED and conferred awards upon the following categories of service provision

- a) Presentation of the **COMESA Media Awards**;

O. ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW COMESA HEADQUARTERS

APPRECIATED the Government of Zambia for providing land for the construction of the new headquarters and the continued **DEDICATED** support of the project

NOTED the signing of the Framework Agreement between COMESA Secretariat and China State Construction Engineering Company and **PROPOSED** shortening of the stipulated implementation period.

P. ON COMESA DIGITAL RETAIL PAYMENT PLATFORM

COMMENDED the progress made on development of the COMESA Digital Retail Payment Platform.

Q. VENUE OF NEXT SUMMIT

The 25th Summit of the Authority of the Heads of State and Government will be held in the Republic of Zimbabwe.

The 26th Summit of the Authority of the Heads of State and Government will be held in the Kingdom of Eswatini.

R. CLOSING OF THE SUMMIT

The Authority **ADOPTED** its Final Communiqué as read by the Secretary General of the Common Market.

S. VOTE OF THANKS

The Vote of thanks was **GIVEN** by the Vice Chairperson of the COMESA Authority, His Excellency Dr. Emmerson Mnangagwa. President of the Republic of Zimbabwe

T. CLOSING STATEMENT

The Chairperson of the COMESA Authority, His Excellency Dr. William Samoei Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya, thanked his fellow Heads of State and Government for their attendance and participation in the Summit. He re-assured them of his and the Kenya Government's commitment to steer COMESA's regional integration agenda and the fulfillment of the aspirations of its peoples. He wished the Heads of State and Government and their esteemed delegations safe travels back to their respective countries and closed the Twenty-Fourth Summit.

DONE at Nairobi, Kenya this Ninth day of October 2025 in the English, French and Arabic languages, all texts being equally authentic.

