



Biznet Weekly Issue 15

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COMESA Connect



E- Commerce



Manufacturing Drivers



Strong Trade Ties

30 Days to GO!! COME and Dialogue with Renowned Industry Doyens at COMESA – Connect-Industry Dialogue



BILL & MELINDA
GATES foundation



The COMESA CONNECT Industry Dialogue will be held from 21st to 22nd June 2018, in Kigali, Rwanda. The event will be held under the theme; **“Smart Technologies, Sustainable Industries”**.

region. It is in this regard, that **COMESA Connect** seeks to bring together businesses in goods and services on one hand and digital services players on the other hand, to provide solutions that will create smarter, sustainable, innovative, efficient and profitable businesses in Africa. Integrating ICT into business is a cross

cutting advocacy and business facilitation agenda under the CBC. It is a call from the membership to respond to the need for industries to harness digital services solutions as a means of improving company operations.

- Establish a collective understanding and strategic focus on the potential of blockchain and other technologies for supporting trade and trade facilitation as well as the other business and industry within the African region.
- Address the constraints that affect business competitiveness in the region and promote synergies between industry

and IT to promote the use of technology and growth of African private sector.

- Structure policy recommendations to ensure the use of technology address digital financial inclusion, industry competitiveness and revolutionary innovations for competitive sustainable enterprises.
- Address the ideal structures that to ensure data protection policies in the region
- Increase awareness and strengthen the national and regional intellectual property framework.

How to attend

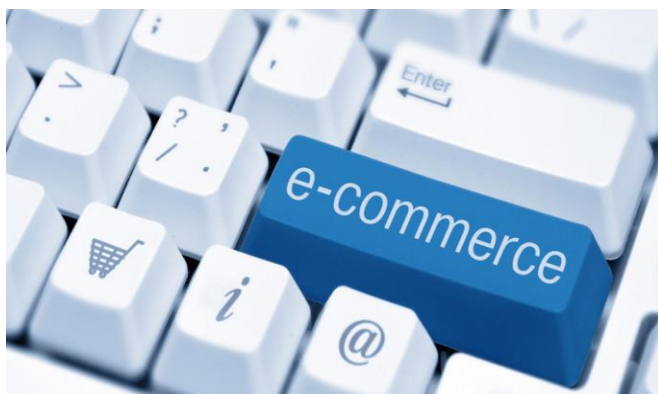
REGISTER NOW;
INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPANTS- 300 US\$
REGIONAL PARTICIPANTS- 200US\$
LOCAL PARTICIPANTS- 50US\$
EXHIBITION- SHOWCASE YOUR INNOVATIONS- REGISTRATION APPLIES

NOW!! Kindly submit your name and business profile to – kmadzivanyika@comesa.int , or GTembo@comesa.int.

To participate in this meeting, contact CBC or visit our website and follow the link <http://comesabusinesscouncil.org/wordpress/> . Please note the meeting offers a limited number of seats- on a first come, first serve basis. Register



E-Commerce Service Launched to Promote Local Operators



The E-Commerce service of the tax - free shopping digital portal, an online platform to promote and showcase products of Tax Free shopping operators and handicrafts operators of the Creative Mauritius on a 24/7-hour basis, was launched on Friday 11 May 2018 at the seat of the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (MCCI) in Port Louis.

The Minister of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives, Mr Soomilduth Bholah, the

Chairman of SME Mauritius Ltd, Mr Peter Neubert, and other personalities were present at the event.

In his address, Minister Bholah stated that this platform marks a milestone for the local handicraft sector while adding that the initiative which is a joint collaboration of the private and public sector will promote the local handicraft sector. The E-Commerce service will provide an unparalleled visibility to local talent and know-how, with an access to the tourist market which will represent a significant advantage for craftsmen. He commended the dedication, vision and resilience demonstrated by MIPSIT Digital Ltd, the e-commerce partner who will provide the e-payment system on the Tax Free Digital Portal, and the Mauritius Post Ltd, the logistics partner, who will provide courier service to shop operators.

Mr Bholah emphasized that the e-commerce service on the Tax- Free Shopping platform will support the shops and the handicrafts operators to deliver seamless shopping experiences locally as well as internationally. Operators, he underlined, will have the opportunity to sell a large selection of products at competitive prices to an unlimited market at any time. He underpinned that the new service is a source of national pride as Mauritius is now positioning its rich handicraft culture on the global market via the Tax - Free Shopping Portal.

Currently, he pointed out, some 126 artisans from Mauritius and Rodrigues have been selected by the SMEs to join the platform and provisions are being made for more operators. The Craft operators will have a webpage of their own with a description of their products, a photo gallery, and their contact details, he added.

The Chairman of SME Mauritius Ltd, Mr Peter Neubert, highlighted that the objectives

of the e-commerce service on the digital portal are to support the genuine creative industry of Mauritius and Rodrigues, and help unveil craftsmen's talents to tourists. He recalled that the MCCI launched the Tax Free Digital Portal www.taxfreeshopping.mu in 2014 with the aim of facilitating tourist shopping with a network of operators engaged in VAT Refund and downtown duty-free activities. He expressed optimism that the e-commerce service on the digital portal will boost sales of all operators on the platform, increase tourist spending as well as contribute to economic growth.

E-Commerce Service

The E-Commerce service of the [taxfreeshopping.mu](http://www.taxfreeshopping.mu) digital portal provides a wide range of opportunities for Tax free shopping and Creative Mauritius operators to sell their products online. It will also allow tourists, the Mauritian Diaspora as well as local citizens to buy products online and get their goods delivered anywhere around the island or at the airport. Passengers in transit at the airport will also be able to buy online and get delivery from the MCCI Tax Refund Counter at the airport.

Read more on:

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201805140782.html>

What Manufacturers Need to Drive Kenya's Big Four Growth Agenda



Manufacturing has been identified as one of the sectors that could offer sustainable solution to Kenya's mass youth unemployment. President Uhuru Kenyatta has picked the sector, whose contribution to Kenya's gross domestic product (GDP) dropped to 8.4 per cent in 2017, as one of the pillars of growth during his second term in office under the 'Big Four Agenda'.

The goal is to push its share of the national wealth to 15 per cent in the next five years and reap the accompanying benefits such as employment creation. Industrialists say that to realise this goal, there will have to be investment in strategic long-term systems. The Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) vice-chairperson Sachin Gudka spoke to the Business Daily on the industry's view of its role in Kenya's economic advancement and what must be done to meet the ambitious targets.

The Incentives needed to jumpstart the industry towards the 'Big Four Agenda' targets? – Views by Mr. Sachin.

We must urgently address competitiveness because when you look at Kenya in terms of global benchmarks, cost levels are at least 10 per cent higher. We need to address that cost imbalance because foreign investments will flow into countries that have the lowest cost of production. The reality today is that we have too many levies, including IDF (Import Declaration Fees) and RDL (Railway

Development Levy) that have lowered our competitiveness straightaway by two per cent and 1.5 per cent respectively. These should be removed for manufacturers bringing in raw materials and increased on finished goods coming in. Secondly, there should be incentives for exporters just like East Asian markets did.

Looking at the export volumes and growth in the past 10 years does not offer so much inspiration. Our exports, especially to the region, are down because there are no export incentives and we don't even get our VAT refunds on time. The third one is to deal with illicit, un-customed, under-invoiced and counterfeit goods that enter through our porous borders. There are so many goods coming in through the port of Mombasa and the Eldoret International Airport in this category and, frankly, the government is not doing anything about it.

Raw materials are the lifeblood of industry. How are we going to ensure the supply is sustainable?

The focus is on regeneration and sustainability of production. We also need to ensure we use all utilities in an effective and sustainable manner because we are living on limited materials. The key topic right now is how we reduce single-use plastics. Industry and manufacturers are starting to take on what we call Extended Producer Responsibility (ERP) and take-back schemes.

Essentially, we have a serious problem in Kenya where consumers just drop bottles out of cars and buses on to the streets. There's no civic responsibility because people look at bottles as worthless. What we must do is put a value to the bottle so it encourages better disposal, collection, recycling and upcycling.

When bottles are collected, they are taken to a recycler, who can either recycle them back to flakes that produce new pet bottles or upcycle them and start making different products out of it. It is a big area of focus for now, and we are working closely with the Environment ministry and Nema (National Environment Management Authority) to realise that goal.

What's new in KAM's approach since plastic recycling schemes are already in place, although at a small scale?

Manufacturers will now be brand owners. They will be paying levy, say Sh2,500 per tonne, to subsidise recyclers to make a payment to the collectors and, essentially, creating a value for the bottle. And that's driven by the industry. It has worked in many countries, including South Africa. The other area of focus is packaging. There's an initiative driven by global multinationals called Forestry Stewardship Council (FSC). People need to be FSC-certified to produce labels for big multinationals such as East African Breweries. This means having a proper chain of custody from the origin to the paper mills through the converters and right through to the end-users.

Read more on

<https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/corporate/industry/4003110-4568002-ebow69/index.html>

Seychelles, Turkey Look to Increase Business Ties

Seychelles and Turkey will focus on improving cooperation in trade and the economy, said the newly accredited Turkish ambassador to Seychelles. Ahmet Cemil Miroğlu made this statement after presenting his credentials to President Danny Faure at State House, Victoria.

“I have a business delegation accompanying me and we are planning to meet with the **Seychelles Chamber of Commerce** and the Investment Board. We will listen to our friends from the Seychelles' side, to see what we can do work on it,” said Miroğlu.

Talking about the tourism industry, the new ambassador said that since both countries are popular tourist destinations, the Turkish government is “ready to share [its] experience and work together with Seychelles” in this sector.



Tourism is the main pillar of the economy of Seychelles – a 115 island archipelago in the western Indian Ocean. In October 2016, **Turkish Airlines** started operating thrice-weekly flights to the island nation.

“Because of the flight of **Turkish Airlines**, Seychelles is becoming a more important and beautiful touristic destination for Turkish tourists. I am sure that there will be an important bridge between our countries,” said Miroğlu.

Other areas discussed between the two diplomats at State House were cooperation in the field of combating drug trafficking and piracy. The ambassador added that his country is also ready to support Seychelles with infrastructure projects. Seychelles and Turkey established diplomatic relations in

1995, a bilateral relationship that Miroğlu described as “promising with big potentials.” He told the press present that these potentials need to be developed.

<http://www.seychellesnewsagency.com/articles/9106/Seychelles%2C+Turkey+look+to+increase+business+ties%2C+new+ambassador+says>

Private Sector Pour Cold Water on Malawi’s Budget: Nothing on Electricity



Malawi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) Chief executive Officer Chancellor Kaferapanjira has described 2018/19 financial blueprint which has been pegged at K1.5 Trillion as a financial plan that will not translate into any gains for the poor Malawians. In an interview, Kaferapanjira said the budget is the emptiest finance Minister Goodall Gondwe has ever presented in his career as the nation’s purse keeper. The budget has nothing on electricity, this is a great joke, he said.

Kaferapanjira accused the government of disregarding the private sector because of its failure to have a budget on the power improvement saying it is less inspiring for the growth of the private sector which is key for economic growth. We have been complaining

about electricity and there was literally nothing said about what government is going to do about electricity. You will recall that the minister said what government is working on will only come into reality in 2021. Who will wait up to 2021 when we know that the businesses are shrinking due to lack of electricity and there is no immediate attention to this.

Mr. Keferapanjira also faulted Gondwe over his decision to stop giving incentives to companies. Among other things Gondwe said the government intends to reverse that it had given to spur investments in the country. He said customs procedure codes will be amended to include a provision requiring full payment of taxes from change on intended purposes that made the project qualify for the tax concession. “overtime, government has been putting in place targeted tax exemptions to manufacturers but these concessions have not trickled down to the local masses through reduced prices.

In this regard , government will review the tax concessions that were granted tp these companies and will reverse the earlier decision to grant them concessions.

Read more on <https://www.nyasatimes.com/chakwera-private-sector-tear-apart-mish-mash-budget/>

Chamber of Commerce urges Government to Rethink of Small Businesses Policy



THE Zambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ZACCI) has called on Government to realign its micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) policy in line with the Seventh National

CBC Biznet – Get Connected to the Region Now.

The COMESA Business council has upped the game for regional buyers and suppliers by widening the online interactive market portal. The portal currently has more than 2000 buyers and suppliers that are transacting from across the region in more than 34 sectors. Be part of the winning team and get integrated in regional markets by signing up for the CBC Biznet TO

Visit our website on <http://comesabusinesscouncil.org> and look out for BIZNET in the main menu of the website.

Development Plan (7NDP). Last year 2017, Government launched the 7NDP, which is the country's blueprint for development for the next five years. It is aimed at attaining the long-term plans to transform Zambia into a prosperous middle-income country by 2030.

ZACCI research officer Kampamba Shula said in an interview that the MSMEs policy needs to be in tandem with the 7NDP for the sector to effectively contribute to the country's economic growth.

A screenshot of the CBC BizNet portal interface. At the top, the logo reads 'BiZNeT A COMESA market hub'. Below the logo, a text box explains: 'The CBC BIZNET is an online portal set up to address the information gap between buyers and suppliers and to promote market linkages in the region. The aim of the portal is to provide buyers with access to credible information on suppliers in the region and also give them a platform to inform suppliers on their purchasing requirements including specific products, quantities, documentations/records, quality and standards-certifications required. It also provides suppliers with a platform for marketing the products. More than 2000 buyers and suppliers are hosted on the portal from the region.' Two aspects of the portal are highlighted: 01 Business Linkages Portal: 'Online portal with features to facilitate suppliers and buyers to buy, sell, market, feature products, get quotations and company profiles, network, chat etc. in real time.' 02 Enterprise Intelligence: 'Database - This will accommodate exhaustive details of buyers and suppliers. This is useful for provision of credible information on buyers and sellers to facilitate market linkage.' Benefits for suppliers: 'Increased visibility, Increase in sales, Increase in revenue.' Benefits for the buyers: 'Increased visibility, Better priced produce, Consistency/reliability in supplies, Time saved sourcing for produce.' At the bottom, there is a 'Business Portal Login' section with fields for 'Email address', 'Password', and 'Remember me', and a 'Log in' button. Below the login section, it says 'COMESA Login / Registration Search for suppliers and buyers' and 'How to use the portal Useful tips and tricks to use the portal efficiently'. A 'MADE IN COMESA' logo is visible in the bottom right corner.

Once you log onto the page sign up and follow through the simple and straight forward registration steps.

CBC MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

1 Principal Members	Private Sector national business association representing various sectors of national economies of member states and other corporate companies. The annual subscription fee is USD 2000
2 Honorary/ Corporate Members	National and multi-National corporate companies and other interest groups. The annual subscription fee is USD 5000
3 Associate Members	Eligible are national business associations, investment and Export promotion agency, trade support institutions, regional associations and other associations directly or indirectly related to private sector issues. The annual membership fee is USD 2500
4 Emerging Businesses	Business startups, Small and Medium Enterprise. The Annual membership fee is USD 1000.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

1. Advocacy excellence in the region – influence decisions at the highest levels of policy decision makers in COMESA.
2. Regional brand recognition as a business through CBC
3. Market intelligence and analysis to inform trade, investment and joint venture decisions.
4. Increased partnerships in regional and global markets.
5. Business facilitation in regional and global markets through trade promotion, linkages and advisory services.
6. Industry collaboration through CBC memberships for efficiency and sustainability of enterprises and associations.

Sign up for CBC Membership today.
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