

Inside this Week's Issue – 12/03/18.



KAM Goes Digital



ZIM Eyes China



Ethiopia ready for Business



Egypt Welcomes CBC

Kenyan Manufacturers Go Digital

Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) has partnered with Safaricom Limited and British American Tobacco Kenya (BAT Kenya) to promote sustainable economic growth through digitization of business processes.



Speaking during the forum, KAM Vice Chair, Mr. Sachin Gudka noted that Kenya is experiencing a paradigm shift as new innovations are replacing old ways of doing business in order to provide solutions to the challenges affecting industry. KAM has positioned itself as a leader in the manufacturing space through effective utilization of ICT for business needs, using it to raise the level of awareness of manufacturers on the legal environment, economic and trade statistics as well as other related areas.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT's) have become crucial enablers of socio-economic development mainly through reduced transaction costs and enhanced efficiency in connectivity", added Mr Gudka

British America Tobacco East & Central Africa Area Director and BAT Kenya Managing Director, Mrs. Beverley Spencer – Obatoyinbo noted that, “Fundamentally, digitization has had a positive impact on industry. Beyond impacts on mobile interaction and payments, digitization has enabled more efficient management of field force, increased productivities in our manufacturing processes and created new opportunities to track our sustainability initiatives.

This notwithstanding, there is opportunity to further address critical aspects, including affordability for commercial business solutions and use of digital integrated systems to harmonise government platforms, such as the KRA excise stamp and the KEBS import standardisation mark (ISM) sticker. This will further facilitate business growth and ultimately, economic growth,” added Mrs. Beverley-Obatoyinbo.

Speaking during the event, Director of Enterprise Business Unit at Safaricom, Ms. Rita Okuthe noted that through digitization, companies can continuously improve and optimise their businesses processes.

“Companies that digitize their processes can improve their bottom lines and delight

customers. For example, the use of data analytics can help manufacturing companies create value by improving operational effectiveness and product innovation, as well as unlock new sources of revenue. We believe that for Kenya’s economy to grow, digital transformation must take the lead,” added Ms. Okuthe.

This partnership will provide industry with necessary tools to leverage on data acquisition that is critical for decision making needs that will transform business operations and trade. The government hopes to raise the contribution of manufacturing sector to GDP from the current 9.2 percent to 15 percent by the year 2022 that will in the process increase jobs by more than 800,000.

Kenya’s appetite for technology is growing with mobile penetration at 80% against 60% globally and 14% in Africa. Manufacturers are keen on leveraging on this to reduce operational costs and risks as well as boost business to business relationships.

Read more on <http://www.kbc.co.ke/manufacturers-partner-promote-digitization-business-processes/>

Zimbabwe Eyes China



President Mnangagwa of Zimbabwe will in April 2018 lead a high-powered delegation including captains of industry to China for the State visit. Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI) chief executive officer Mr Clifford Sileya said the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Enterprise Development has invited captains of industry to accompany President Mnangagwa on his State visit to China next month. Mr Sileya said local manufacturing companies should seize this opportunity to seek business opportunities and attract investment partners from China.

“We have received an invitation from the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Enterprise Development for captains of industry to accompany the State President on a visit to China in April 2018.

“The programme of the visit includes hosting the 10th Session of the Zimbabwe-China Joint Permanent Commission of Cooperation and holding of a Zimbabwe- China Business Forum. “The Business Forum is intended to present opportunities for cooperation between Zimbabwe and China in the fields of trade and investment and will allow for business-to-business (B2B) engagements with Chinese companies.

China and Zimbabwe have strong bilateral relations dating back to the days of the liberation struggle. The Asian country has stood by Zimbabwe in the face of the illegal sanctions imposed by Western countries.

Read more on:
<https://www.herald.co.zw/local-firms-invited-to-china/>

Ethiopia Ready to Close Public Private Partnership Loopholes

Creating enabling environment for boosting the economy is the overall responsibility of a given government. However, making use of the favorable investment opportunities is up to the investors. Thwarting bureaucratic hurdles for businesspersons has been an uphill battle for the developing countries like Ethiopia.

For the Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce and Sectoral Association President Engineer Melaku Azezew, the prevalence of bureaucratic red tape in public offices discourages businesspersons not to do business efficiently. "Redundant instructions and directives also make day -to- day business activities sluggish."



He, therefore, says the absence of well established system make doing business harder, opening the door for red tape.

Yossef Alemu, Head of Trade and Sectoral Association Department at the Ministry of Trade, says the government has been doing everything in its power to tackle bureaucratic hurdles. There has been series of discussions

between the government and the private sector to create conducive business environment apart from exerting efforts of improving the existing Commercial Registration and Business Licensing Proclamation and promulgating a new Public Private Partnership Proclamation, he adds.

As incentives, he notes that the government has allowed investors to import some goods tax free and has been also offering tax holidays and land at lower price for anchor investors.

Nevertheless, from the very beginning, the proclamation has loopholes, says Endalkachew Sime, the Secretary General of Ethiopian Chamber of Commerce. "For example, it does not go along with the ever changing business environment in the country, hence, the law has to be improved."



In the efforts to address the loopholes, he says, for many years, the chambers have been conducting extensive discussions with government officials including the Prime Minister.

Some of the ideas of the members of the chambers have been positively accepted by

the state officials and utilized as inputs for the amendment of the tax laws, he adds.

<http://allafrica.com/stories/201803060534.htm>

Egypt Welcomes COMESA Business Council.



On 6th March, 2018 various captains of industry from the Egyptian business community gathered during the COMESA-Egypt Business Dialogue that was held at Conrad Hotel in Cairo. The dialogue was hosted in partnership with the Federation of Egyptian Industry under the theme ***“Local Sourcing, Trade Facilitation and Accessing Regional Markets.”*** The meeting provided a platform for CBC to engage with the business community in Egypt and as a way of introducing CBC and the opportunities within COMESA for increased regional partnerships and trade.

CBC Biznet – Get Connected Now.

The COMESA Business council has upped the game for regional buyers and suppliers by widening the online interactive market portal. The portal

The trade facilitation instruments available in COMESA were shared during the meeting, as well as impediments faced by Egyptian industries and the meeting provided expertise and guidance on the issues. During the dialogue basic standard training on food safety management systems for growth enterprises was conducted thereby help building their capacity to meet national and regional standards requirements which is condition for market access.

The one-day dialogue brought together industry players from the Corporate world and industry business associations.

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For media enquiries please contact:

COMESA Business Council
COMESA Secretariat
Ben Bella Road, P.O. Box 30051, Lusaka, Zambia
Phone: +260 211 229725/32
Fax: +260 211 225107
Email: info@comesabusinesscouncil.org;



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