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MEACA UMOJA FY 2026/27:

From Policy to Progress: How the 48th SCTIFI is Advancing Regional Integration



Regional Leaders Chart New Course for East African Integration at the 25th Summit

UGANDA'S BOLD BET ON REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Trading Across Borders, One Conversation at a Time

FACTS AND FIGURES: **Key Facts, Myths & Figures On the EAC**



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East African Community Head Office in Arusha



RT. HON. REBECCA

Alitwala Kadaga

1st DPM and Minister of EAC Affairs

FOREWORD

As we reflect on the progress made during the Financial Year 2025/26, it is evident that the East African Community continues to move steadily towards the aspirations set out in the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community. While challenges remain, significant strides have been registered across the pillars of integration, particularly the Customs Union, Common Market, Monetary Union, and Political Federation.

Uganda's tenure as Chair of the EAC has presented a unique opportunity to advance regional priorities while ensuring that integration delivers tangible benefits to our citizens. During the year, we witnessed notable progress in customs cooperation, trade facilitation, the elimination of non-tariff barriers, and efforts to deepen regional value chains. These developments are strengthening intra-EAC trade and creating new opportunities for businesses, farmers, professionals, and young entrepreneurs across the region.

The Ministry remained committed to ensuring that East African integration is not confined to policy discussions alone. Through public sensitisation campaigns, stakeholder engagements, cross-border dialogues, and participation in regional forums, we continued to bring the integration agenda closer to the people it is intended to serve. The growing participation of women, youth, and MSMEs in regional trade demonstrates that integration is increasingly becoming people-centred and market-driven, in line with the vision of the EAC founders.

As we look ahead, our focus remains on accelerating the implementation of agreed regional commitments, strengthening awareness among citizens, and supporting the attainment of a prosperous, competitive, secure, and politically united East Africa.

I commend the Ministry's leadership, staff, and all stakeholders whose dedication has contributed to the achievements highlighted in this publication. Together, we shall continue working towards a stronger and more integrated East African Community.

HAPPY READING



East African Community New Head Office in Arusha, Tanzania



FOREWORD

Hon. James Magode Ikuya

State Minister for East African Community Affairs

The story of East African integration is ultimately a story about people. It is about neighbours working together, communities reconnecting across borders, and nations choosing cooperation over isolation in pursuit of shared prosperity.

Throughout the Financial Year 2025/26, the Ministry of East African Community Affairs continued to engage citizens across Uganda, creating platforms for dialogue and awareness on the opportunities presented by regional integration. These engagements reaffirmed an important reality: integration cannot succeed without the active participation and ownership of the people.

The East African Community was established on the belief that our common history, culture, aspirations, and destiny are stronger than the borders that separate us. Through increased trade, cultural exchanges, educational opportunities, infrastructure development, and people-to-people interactions, we are steadily rebuilding the bonds that have long connected the peoples of East Africa.

This publication highlights some of the milestones achieved during the year. From empowering cross-border traders and supporting MSMEs to strengthening regional cooperation and promoting awareness of EAC programmes, each initiative contributes to the broader vision of a united and prosperous East Africa.

As we move forward, I encourage all citizens to embrace the spirit of integration, to learn about the opportunities available within the Community, and to play their part in building a region founded on unity, cooperation, and mutual respect.

Together, we are not merely implementing a regional agenda; we are shaping the future of East Africa.

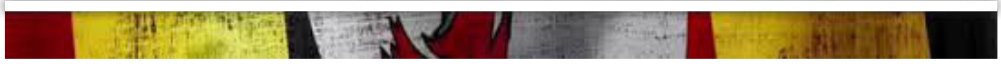


Uganda Anthem
in Kiswahili

Ah Uganda, Mungu imarisha
Twakupa ujao wetu
Kwa umoja na uhuru
Tusimame imara.

Ah Uganda, nchi huru
Pendo juhudi twakupa
Pamoja na majirani
Tutaishi kwa amani.

Ah Uganda, nchi itulishayo
Kwa jua ardhi ya rutuba
Tutalinda diama
Lulu ya taji l 'Afrika.





Mrs. Edith N. Mwanje

Permanent Secretary / Editor-in-Chief
Ministry of East African Community Affairs

PREFACE

It is my pleasure to present this publication highlighting the key achievements, milestones, and activities undertaken by the Ministry of East African Community Affairs during the Financial Year 2025/26.

As the national focal point for East African Community affairs, the Ministry plays a critical role in coordinating Uganda's participation in the regional integration process and ensuring the effective implementation of EAC programmes, policies, and decisions. Throughout the year, the Ministry remained focused on strengthening institutional coordination, enhancing stakeholder engagement, and increasing public awareness of the benefits and opportunities arising from regional integration.

Particular emphasis was placed on advancing the pillars of the EAC integration agenda. Through engagements with government institutions, the private sector, local governments, academia, civil society, and communities, the Ministry continued to promote the implementation of the Customs Union, Common Market, Monetary Union, and Political Federation. These efforts were complemented by sustained participation in regional meetings and technical processes aimed at harmonising policies and removing barriers to integration.

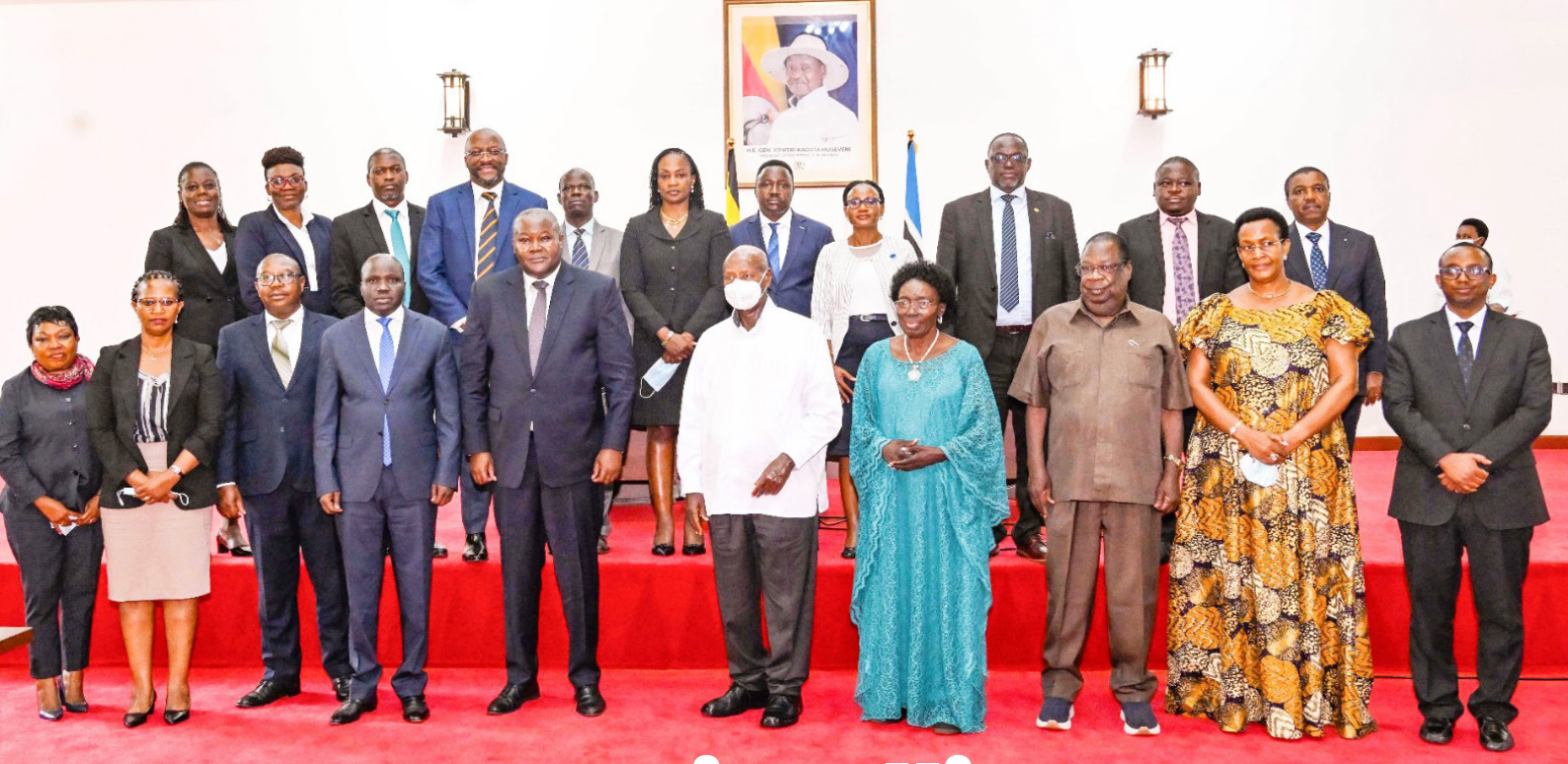
The Ministry also leveraged technology, strategic partnerships, and targeted sensitisation programmes to improve service delivery and expand outreach. These initiatives have strengthened public understanding of regional integration and enhanced Uganda's contribution to the EAC agenda.

The achievements reflected in this publication are the result of collective effort and collaboration among our political leadership, development partners, stakeholders, and dedicated staff. I extend my sincere appreciation to all who contributed to advancing the Ministry's mandate during the year.

As we look to the future, we remain committed to delivering on Uganda's regional obligations and ensuring that the benefits of East African integration are realised by all citizens.



H.E.Yoweri Kaguta Museveni touring the Kiira Vehicle Plant during the Official Commissioning in Jinja, September 2025



Museveni Rallies EAC Leaders to Fast-Track Regional Integration



By Pius **Mwinganisa**

On 9 June 2026, Chairperson of the East African Community (EAC) Summit, H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, met with EAC Secretary General Stephen Patrick Mbundi and his delegation at State House, Nakasero, to discuss key issues shaping the future of the Community.

The meeting focused on a range of priority areas, including trade, infrastructure development, staffing, health, financing, and regional integration. It provided an opportunity for both sides to review progress on regional programmes and explore ways to address emerging challenges affecting the Community.

During the discussions, President Museveni underscored the importance of strengthening cooperation among EAC Partner States and institutions to accelerate the implementation of programmes aimed at advancing economic growth, regional connectivity, and improved livelihoods for East Africans.

As Chairperson of the EAC Summit, the President emphasized the need to fast-track initiatives that promote regional integration and shared prosperity, noting that stronger collaboration was essential to unlocking the region's full potential.

The engagement reflected the continued commitment of EAC leadership to advancing the Community's integration agenda and fostering a more prosperous, competitive, and interconnected East African region.

FROM POLICY TO PROGRESS:
How the 48th SCTIFI is Advancing Regional Integration



Ojara Leo Kizito
Commissioner / Economic Affairs

The East African Community convened the 48th Meeting of the Sectoral Council on Trade, Industry, Finance and Investment (SCTIFI) from 29th May to 4th June 2026 in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania. The meeting, chaired by Mrs. Edith N. Mwanje, Minister of East African Community Affairs of the Republic of Uganda, brought together delegates from all EAC Partner States to deliberate on a wide-ranging agenda covering customs, trade, investment, standards, and competition matters.

The Council opened by reviewing the implementation status of directives from the 47th SCTIFI. Of 75 directives, 34 (45.3%) had been fully implemented, 25 (33.3%) remained ongoing, and 15 (20%) were yet to be implemented. Recognising the need for a more reliable tracking system, the Council directed the Secretariat to analyse the relevance of all directives from the 1st to the 48th SCTIFI and convene a virtual experts meeting to update the compendium by 30th September 2026.

Significant progress was recorded on the customs front. The EAC Customs Bond, piloted in Uganda in August 2025 and officially launched at the 25th Ordinary Summit of EAC Heads of State in March 2026, is now fully operational in Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi, with operationalization underway in Tanzania and Kenya. The Council directed Partner States to complete all technical and administrative preparations for the transit regime under the Single Customs Territory by 30th September 2026.

On cargo scanning, the restoration of scanner image transmission between the Kenya Revenue Authority and the Uganda Revenue Authority was noted with satisfaction, while Rwanda confirmed readiness to join the regional framework following successful end-to-end integration testing. The Council directed the Secretariat to mobilise resources for the development of a regionally tailored Artificial Intelligence model for Scanner Image Analysis and Comparison.

The Council also adopted a framework for monitoring the implementation of the Protocol on the Establishment of the EAC Customs Union and directed the Secretariat to digitize the framework for timely updating and information sharing by 30th August 2026.

The Council reaffirmed the directive of the 25th Summit that all outstanding Non-Tariff Barriers be resolved by 30th June 2026. Of the 28 NTBs currently outstanding, the United Republic of Tanzania accounts for the highest number at 11, followed by Kenya with 5. The Council adopted a Draft Action Plan for resolving issues affecting intra-EAC trade and directed the convening of a multi-sectoral meeting to monitor implementation by October 2026.

In a notable development in external trade relations, the Council decided to proceed directly to negotiations on a Free Trade Agreement with Pakistan, bypassing the earlier proposed Joint Trade Committee. The Secretariat was directed to develop a zero-draft text of the Free Trade Agreement by September 2026. The Council also directed the Secretariat to engage the European Union on re-opening negotiations of the EAC-EU Economic Partnership Agreement by 30th June 2026.

The Council took note of Uganda's hosting of the upcoming EAC-EU Trade, Competitiveness and Investment Summit scheduled

for February 2027, an event expected to generate a pipeline of investment opportunities and strengthen EU-EAC trade and value chain partnerships. Partner States were urged to submit bankable projects to the Secretariat by September 2026.

On industry, the Council adopted the report on EAC Partner States' readiness to comply with international certification requirements for exports of fruits, vegetables, and nuts, and established the Terms of Reference for the EAC Jumuiya Nuts Forum, recognising the nuts sector as a high-value priority for regional growth.

The East African Standards Committee presented 90 Final Draft East African Standards and 46 international standards, all of which were declared and endorsed by the Council. The Council also directed the EAC Competition Authority to initiate a review of the EAC Competition Act, 2006 to align it with emerging market dynamics and international best practices. As the EAC deepens its integration agenda, the outcomes of the 48th SCTIFI reflect a Community steadily advancing on multiple fronts, tightening its customs architecture, broadening its trade partnerships, and building the institutional foundations for a more prosperous and connected East Africa.



Courtesy photos: Moments from the 48th SCTIFI Meeting in Arusha, where leaders and technical experts charted the next phase of East Africa's trade, customs, and investment integration agenda.



Ministry officials, local leaders, and Kikagati community members during the stakeholder engagement at the Uganda-Tanzania border.

Trading Across Borders, One Conversation at a Time

By **Sarah Nakate**

What does regional integration look like in everyday life? At the busy Kikagati Border Post on the Uganda-Tanzania border, it looks like trucks, traders, baskets of matooke, and conversations about opportunities and challenges.

On 17 December 2025, the Ministry of EAC Affairs, through the Department of Economic Affairs, brought together cross-border traders, local leaders, and government agencies for a stakeholder engagement to assess how the EAC Customs Union and Common Market Protocols are working on the ground.



One thing quickly became clear: matooke remains the lifeblood of trade at Kikagati, with many small-scale traders relying on it as their primary source of income.

The engagement was far from a one-way discussion. Traders openly shared the realities they face, including the requirement for a USD 100 business pass for those travelling beyond the immediate border areas into Tanzania,a cost many described as burdensome for small-scale operators. Others sought clarity on cross-border travel requirements, particularly Tanzania's yellow fever vaccination regulations.

Responding to these concerns, officials provided guidance on EAC trade facilitation measures and encouraged traders to make greater use of the opportunities available under regional integration. The Uganda Revenue Authority's Regional Manager for Western Uganda urged traders to diversify their product offerings and formalize

their businesses by registering for a Tax Identification Number (TIN) to unlock additional benefits and improve business resilience.

Local leaders also underscored the importance of lawful trade. The Resident District Commissioner of Isingiro District applauded the spirit of regional cooperation between Uganda and Tanzania and encouraged traders to reject smuggling and other illegal activities in favor of peaceful and productive cross-border relations.

More than just a meeting, the sensitization exercise served as a bridge between policy and practice, giving traders a voice, answering pressing questions, and reinforcing the EAC's vision of a more connected and prosperous region.







Matia Etedu (Frame 2) and Sarah Nakate (Frame 3) engaging traders on EAC trade opportunities and cross-border facilitation measures, while sensitizing stakeholders on regional integration and cross-border trade requirements.

Beyond Borders:

How the EAC MSMEs Trade Fair Brought Regional Integration to Life

Sarah **Nakate**
(Principal Regional Integration Officer - MAECA)



Twenty-five years after the revival of the East African Community (EAC), regional integration is no longer just a policy aspiration; it is creating real opportunities for entrepreneurs across the region.

This reality was on full display at the 25th EAC Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Trade Fair, held from 7-16 November 2025 at Uhuru Gardens in Nairobi, Kenya. Organized under the theme, "25 Years of EAC Integration: Advancing Innovation and Regional Value Chains for Competitive MSMEs Towards Sustainable Development," the exhibition brought together more than 3,000 exhibitors from all eight EAC Partner States, creating one of the region's largest platforms for enterprise development, innovation, and cross-border trade.

Uganda made a remarkable showing, fielding 305 exhibitors from 39 districts across the country. From agro-processing and leather products to herbal medicines, textiles, renewable energy technologies, and crafts, Ugandan entrepreneurs showcased the diversity and growing competitiveness of locally made products. Notably, 80 percent of Uganda's exhibitors were women-led enterprises, and 70 percent were participating in the regional exhibition for the first time, indicating that the benefits of integration are increasingly reaching grassroots entrepreneurs.

The EAC Customs Union, established to facilitate the free movement of goods within the region, came to life through the hundreds of products displayed and marketed during the exhibition.

For many Ugandan exhibitors, the Trade Fair served as a gateway to regional markets. Businesses connected directly with distributors, suppliers, and buyers across East Africa, creating opportunities that would have been difficult to access otherwise. The presence of institutions such as the Uganda Revenue Authority (URA) and the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) further enabled enterprises to understand customs procedures, standards requirements, and certification processes necessary for regional trade.

The impact was immediate. Romegas Passion and General Enterprises, a first-time participant, reported receiving five orders shortly after the exhibition, two from Kenya, one from Tanzania, one from Burundi, and another from within Uganda. Such outcomes illustrate how the Customs Union continues to reduce barriers and create new commercial opportunities for East African businesses.

Beyond trade in goods, the exhibition highlighted the practical benefits of the EAC Common Market, which promotes the free movement of persons, services, labor, and capital across Partner States.

Over ten days, entrepreneurs exchanged ideas, explored partnerships, and learned from one another's experiences. The exhibition became a marketplace not only for products but also for knowledge,

innovation, and business networks.

Napas Agro Processors described the exhibition as a "game-changer," citing valuable exposure to the Kenyan market and new connections with potential distributors and suppliers. Sacred Essence Wellness Center secured two business-to-business partnerships, while Soul Soles Sandals established contacts with potential partners from Kenya and Tanzania.

For Banadda Organic Products, the experience went beyond commercial transactions. The entrepreneur returned home inspired by interactions with participants from across the region and acquired new agricultural varieties, including dragon fruit seedlings, grapes, and improved fodder grass, which are already being cultivated. Such exchanges demonstrate how regional integration continues to facilitate the movement of ideas, technology, and innovation across borders.

While the Trade Fair celebrated the achievements of regional integration, it also highlighted areas where further progress is needed.

Several exhibitors cited challenges related to cross-border payments and differing transaction systems. Kenya's widespread reliance on mobile money, for example, presented difficulties for some participants unfamiliar with local payment platforms.

These experiences underscore the importance of the EAC Monetary Union agenda, which seeks to deepen financial integration and facilitate seamless transactions across Partner States. As regional trade volumes continue to grow, interoperable payment systems and greater financial connectivity will be critical in enabling MSMEs to fully benefit from the opportunities created by integration.

The success of the exhibition was reflected not only in sales and partnerships but also in the confidence and visibility it provided to entrepreneurs.

Three Ugandan enterprises received recognition among the best exhibitors at the fair. Raw Organic emerged as Uganda's Best Exhibitor, while Hannie Chocolate and Simon Sharp Products were recognized as first and second runners-up, respectively, showcasing Uganda's growing capacity to compete in regional markets.

For many participants, the greatest achievement was the opportunity to test products, gather market intelligence, establish business contacts, and gain a deeper understanding of consumer preferences across East Africa. The exhibition strengthened regional value chains, increased visibility for locally made products, and fostered collaboration among entrepreneurs from diverse sectors.

As the East African Community marks 25 years of integration, the 25th EAC MSMEs Trade Fair served as a powerful reminder that the success of regional integration is ultimately measured not by protocols and agreements alone, but by the opportunities it creates for ordinary citizens.

From new export orders and business partnerships to technology transfer and market expansion, the exhibition demonstrated how the EAC's integration pillars, the Customs Union, Common Market, and Monetary Union, are gradually transforming East Africa into a more connected, competitive, and prosperous region.



Permanent Secretary Edith Mwanje joins members of the MEACA delegation in showcasing Uganda's commitment to regional integration and enterprise development at the 25th EAC MSMEs Trade Fair. The Uganda Tent comes alive during Uganda Day as State Minister for Trade, Industry and Cooperatives, Hon. Wilson Mbasu Mbadi, interacts with exhibitors and officials at the regional showcase.

Regional Leaders Chart New Course for East African Integration at 25th Summit



By Paul Basudde
(Principal Policy Analyst, MEACA)

The 25th Ordinary Summit of the East African Community (EAC) Heads of State convened in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, on 7 March 2026, bringing together regional leaders to assess progress, address emerging challenges, and set the course for deeper integration across the Community.

The Summit was attended by Their Excellencies Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda, Samia Suluhu Hassan of Tanzania, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud of Somalia, William Ruto of Kenya, and Évariste Ndayishimiye of Burundi. Rwanda, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo were represented by senior government officials on behalf of their respective Heads of State.

A key item on the agenda was the restoration of peace and security in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Summit received a progress report on the EAC-led Nairobi Process and took note of ongoing efforts under the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), led by President Museveni. Notably, the Heads of State agreed that recommendations arising from the ICGLR framework should be channelled through the African Union.

The Summit also reviewed the report of the Council of Ministers covering the period from November 2024 to December 2025, commending the Council for the progress made in implementing Community programmes and projects.

Among the most consequential decisions was the adoption of a new financing formula for the EAC. The Summit replaced the previous arrangement with a 50:50 model, combining equal Partner State contributions and assessed contributions. Partner States were directed to implement the new formula effective 1 July 2026, without further consultations.

Additionally, the Summit approved a one-off waiver of 50 percent of arrears owed by Partner States, provided the remaining balance is settled within two years. The Council of Ministers was further directed to finalise a schedule of sanctions aligned with the new financing framework and report back at the next Summit.

Recognising the importance of regional trade, the Heads of State instructed Partner States and the Council to eliminate all reported non-tariff barriers within the Community by 30 June 2026.

In a move aimed at strengthening compliance with regional obligations, the Summit resolved that nominations for key Community positions, including Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly, Judge President, Secretary General, and Deputy Secretaries General, shall be guided by Partner States' performance in ratifying Community legal instruments, domesticating the Treaty, and implementing agreed integration roadmaps.

The Summit also decided that members of the East African Legislative Assembly will, beginning after the tenure of the current Assembly ends in December 2027, be remunerated by their respective national assemblies.

On appointments, the Heads of State renewed the terms of Hon. Andrea Aguer Ariik Malueth as Deputy Secretary General responsible for Infrastructure, Productive, Social and Political Sectors, and Ms. Annette Mutaawe Ssemuwemba as Deputy Secretary

General responsible for Customs, Trade and Monetary Affairs.

Nevertheless, perhaps the most symbolic outcome of the Summit was the transition of Community leadership. The Republic of Uganda assumed the Chairmanship of the EAC, while the Republic of Rwanda took on the role of Rapporteur, effective 7 March 2026.

As the Community advances its integration agenda, the decisions reached in Arusha underscore a renewed commitment to strengthening regional cooperation, enhancing institutional effectiveness, and delivering tangible benefits to the citizens of East Africa.

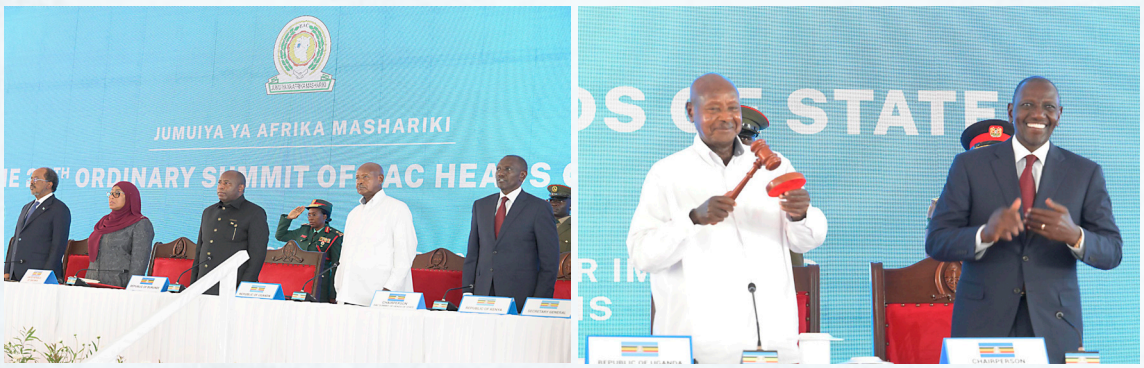
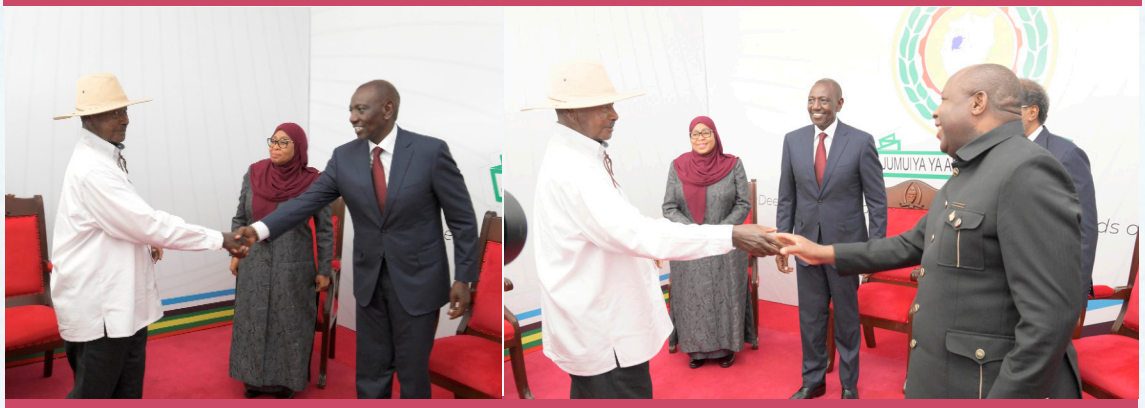
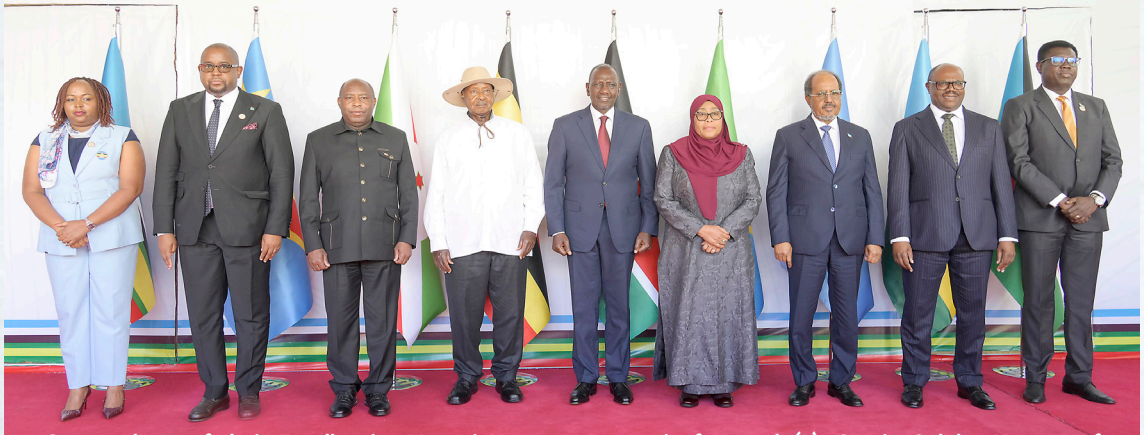


Photo Credit State House PPU: Presidents Museveni, Ruto, Samia, Ndayishimiye, Hassan Sheikh Mohamud during the 25th ordinary summit of EAC heads in Arusha 2026. H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni raises the ceremonial gavel received from H.E. President William Ruto, marking the official handover of the East African Community (EAC) Chairmanship during the 25th Ordinary Summit of EAC Heads of State in Arusha, Tanzania.



H.E Museveni greets H.E President Ndayishimiye of Burundi with a handshake during the summit.



Group photo of their Excellencies Yoweri Kaguta Museveni of Uganda(L), Samia Suluhu Hassan of Tanzania(R), Hassan Sheikh Mohamud of Somalia(1R), William Ruto of Kenya(C), and senior delegates on behalf of their respective Heads of State.



Bridging the Infrastructure and Energy Gap for a Borderless East Africa

Fredrick **Wabwire**
Principal Regional Integration Officer, Production & Infrastructure Services

Imagine a borderless East Africa, a seamless economic powerhouse where goods, services, and innovators move freely across sovereign lines. For the Ministry of East African Community Affairs, this is not just a dream; it is the fundamental blueprint for our region's prosperity and long-term stability. That prosperity is directly proportional to the seamless flow of goods, services, and electricity across our borders. However, that seamless flow demands physical arteries and veins, which are roads, railways, and power grids, to connect our people and power our industries.

Our sole mandate as the Ministry responsible for East African Community Affairs (MEACA), is to ensure that Ugandans directly benefit from this integration. To achieve this, we aggressively champion regional frameworks that turn geographical barriers into vital trade arteries. For instance, the Customs Union Protocol, the Common Market Protocol, and the strategic transboundary Transport and Spatial Development Corridors (Northern Corridor Transit Agreement (NCTA) and Central Corridor Transit Transport Facilitation Agency (CCTTFA)) operate by replacing physical and administrative borders with seamless logistics systems. The Ministry remains dedicated to coordinating such efforts that drastically reduce transit times and operational costs for Ugandan traders. For example, by harmonizing axle load controls, eliminating non-tariff barriers, and upgrading key transit corridors, the cost of doing business in East Africa is steadily declining.

The Power Grid: Lighting Up the Community and Powering East African Industry

Historically, reliance on isolated national grids and varied energy sources has led to high costs and supply volatility. Today, we are transforming East Africa into a harmonized energy powerhouse. Through the EAC Power Master Plan, we are driving cross-border interconnections that allow partner states to trade surplus power. For instance, as a Country, we export surplus



electricity directly to neighbouring countries, including 60 MW to Kenya, 80 MW to Rwanda, and 35 MW to Tanzania. The construction of a high-voltage 400kV interconnector from Olwiyo (Uganda) to Juba (South Sudan) is ongoing expected to transmit up to 260 MW of electricity to South Sudan once completed. By sharing hydroelectric, geothermal, and solar energy, we lower the cost of doing business. For the everyday East African (small-scale agro-processor in Kampala to a major manufacturer in Nairobi) this means reliable, affordable electricity. It guarantees that our region can support value-added production, create jobs, and industrialize without being bottlenecked by energy deficits.

Joint investments in cross-border power projects like the 14MW Kikagati/Murongo Hydro Power Project between Uganda and Tanzania and the planned 35MW Nsongezi Hydro Power Project to be executed by a tripartite of Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania is a critical step toward cross-border energy sharing, regional power grid integration, and sustainable, low-carbon economic development.

With Uganda's progression into commercial oil production, the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) stands as a prime example of infrastructure that will mutually benefit partner states through job creation, technology transfer, and energy security.

Connecting the Region: Corridors of Commerce

Beyond energy, transport infrastructure remains the backbone of regional trade. The development of Standard Gauge Railways (SGR), one-stop border posts (OSBPs), and the rehabilitation of major transnational highways are fundamentally changing how we move.

These massive undertakings are more than just construction projects; they are instruments of unity. By reducing transit times, cutting transport costs, and eliminating logistical bottlenecks, we are empowering our local business communities, especially the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). A seamless transport network means a trader from the Democratic Republic of Congo or South Sudan can easily access the Port of Mombasa or Dar es Salaam, ultimately boosting intra-EAC trade.

Digital and Multimodal Transport

In the modern economy, digital infrastructure is as critical as physical roads. The integration of One-Network Area and the digitalization of customs processes at border posts, such as those at Busia, Malaba, Elegu, Mutukula and Katuna have cut clearance times from days to hours. Combined with the on-going modernization of railway networks like the construction of the Tororo-Kampala Standard Gauge railway and the rehabilitation of the Tororo-Gulu Meter Gauge railway, East Africa is positioning itself as a premier, hyper-connected investment destination. With less than 5% of regional freight currently moving via water, the EAC is prioritizing inland waterways like Lakes Victoria and Tanganyika. Initiatives like the introduction of Roll-on/Roll-off (Ro-Ro) freight vessels are drastically cutting water-crossing times from days to hours. Modern inland transhipment facilities, such as the rehabilitated Port Bell and Bukasa Port (under construction) in Uganda, and enhanced lake ports like Kisumu and Mwanza, act as vital gateways where rail, road, and water networks meet. Integration of Internet of Things (IoT) and cloud logistics platforms allows logistics operators (and single Multimodal Transport Operators) to manage end-to-end cargo movement under a single contract, mitigating schedule surprises

To wrap it up, infrastructure development requires immense capital and steadfast political will. Through the EAC Regional Strategy for Scaling Up Infrastructure, MEACA continues to champion the streamlining of regulatory policies, and harmonization of technical standards across the East African Region.

The integration agenda is no longer just a policy on paper; it is happening on the ground in the power lines crossing our borders and the tarmac roads linking our capitals. As we march toward a Political Confederation, building robust infrastructure and sustainable energy systems ensures that every East African benefits from the dividends of unity

We encourage all citizens, scholars, and business leaders to utilize the Ministry's Resource Centre to learn more about ongoing infrastructure projects and how you can benefit from the EAC integration agenda. Together, we are building a seamless East Africa

NAVIGATING OUR SHARED WATERS:
Lake Victoria Day as a Catalyst for EAC Integration

By Fredrick ***Wabwire***



The East African Community (EAC) continues to champion a vision of a prosperous, competitive, and politically united region. While much of the dialogue surrounding regional integration centres on trade, customs unions, and infrastructure, our shared natural heritage remains the bedrock of East African solidarity. The commemoration of Lake Victoria Day serves as a profound reminder that the destiny of the EAC Partner States is inextricably linked by the waters of Africa's largest freshwater lake.

Shared primarily among Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda, Lake Victoria is far more than a geographical landmark, it is a vital economic engine. It supports millions of East Africans through fisheries, agriculture, maritime transport, and energy generation. For the EAC, this transboundary resource represents a microcosm of what regional integration aims to achieve: shared prosperity derived from unified, cooperative governance.

The effective management of Lake Victoria requires breaking down artificial territorial borders in favour of harmonized policies. Through the mandate of the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC), Partner States are actively aligning their environmental standards, water transport safety protocols, and fisheries monitoring.

When Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania collaborate on data-sharing platforms or joint maritime security, they are laying the operational groundwork for the broader EAC Common Market. Unified management frameworks ensure that economic activities such as cross-border fishing and trade operate seamlessly, reducing transaction costs and unlocking the full commercial potential of the basin.

Ecological challenges, including climate change, pollution, and invasive species, recognize no national boundaries. A unilateral approach to protecting Lake Victoria is fundamentally flawed. By commemorating Lake Victoria Day, Partner States reinforce the need for collective responsibility. Preserving the ecosystem directly boosts the region's resilience to climate shocks, ultimately protecting biodiversity and local livelihoods. Joint conservation frameworks promote better health outcomes and sustainable sanitation for the millions of east africans who depend on the lake.

Beyond economics and ecology, the integrated management of transboundary resources acts as a vital tool for conflict prevention. When Partner States work together to establish standardized usage guidelines and resolve resource-based disputes diplomatically, it builds institutional trust. Lake Victoria Day fosters a shared East "Africanness", a collective consciousness that the lake is not "yours" or "mine," but a "Community asset" entrusted to all.

As the EAC advances its strategic objectives, including the Vision 2050 goal of a politically united East Africa, the integration of our natural resources is paramount. Lake Victoria Day is not merely a ceremonial observance, it is a strategic platform to evaluate environmental milestones, reinforce transboundary treaties, and celebrate our shared heritage. It marks the dawn of a unified, region-wide approach to environmental stewardship. While the lake sustains our present, its health determines our future. Therefore, our continued solidarity, coordinated transboundary investments, and citizen engagement, we can ensure that this magnificent body of water remains a driver of prosperity, peace, and regional unity for generations to come

The success of the EAC relies on the active participation of every East African. By championing the sustainable management of Lake Victoria today, the Ministry of East African Community Affairs and its regional counterparts are safeguarding the socio-economic foundation of future generations. Our shared waters are the true lifeblood of East African integration

UGANDA'S BOLD BET ON REGIONAL INTEGRATION



CHRISTIANA
Ampeire
*Communications Officer, **MEACA***

Uganda is entering an acceleration phase rather than gradual growth. With H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni chairing the East African Community (EAC), the country sits at the center of regional integration, a strategic mandate that the Ministry of East African Community Affairs (MEACA) is translating into economic reality.

The figures are beginning to tell a consistent, unified narrative of an economy growing not only in size but also in structure, ambition, and reach. GDP has grown by 8.5 percent in the second quarter of FY 2025/26. Over two decades, Uganda's economy expanded sevenfold from USD 9.8 billion to over USD 68.4 billion, while GDP per capita rose from about USD 570 to above USD 1,278, bringing the country closer to lower middle-income status.

Referring to the IMF's regional outlook, Uganda has been identified as having high growth within the EAC, averaging 6.9 percent annually from 1990 to 2009, a record that compares favorably with that of Asia's fast-developing economies.

But beyond the figures, something deeper is shifting, and Uganda is growing beyond its borders.

In early 2026, Uganda recorded a trade surplus with EAC partners, driven by strong demand from the DRC, South Sudan, Rwanda, and Burundi for agricultural and manufactured goods. The Uganda Securities Exchange All-Share Index rose 10.3 percent, while migrant worker arrivals increased by 14.7 percent, reflecting free movement protocols. Inflation fell to 2.9 percent, creating a stable environment for trade, investment, and regional opportunities.

Behind this shift towards integration lies coordination between national and regional systems to ensure policies translate into outcomes. Uganda is also engaging regional frameworks such as the Northern Corridor Integration Projects (NCIP), where member states are focusing on transport, digital, and energy systems. Digital infrastructure is advancing through initiatives like ClimCam, a communication and broadcasting satellite launched to the International Space Station to expand

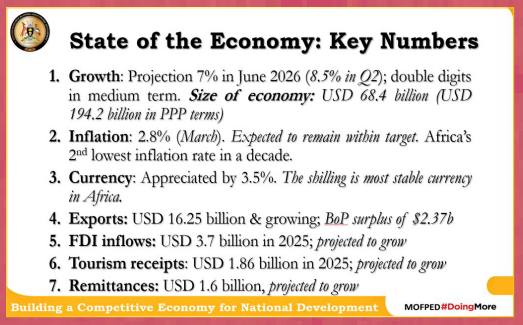
connectivity across East Africa. Uganda is further committed to coordinating and monitoring implementation of Heads of State directives under NCIP, including 21 ICT-related directives from the 14th Summit, reflecting rapid progress in digital integration.

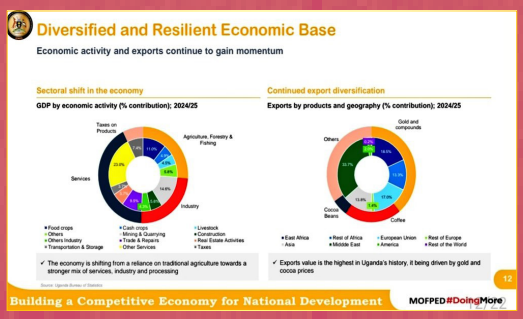
Uganda's Ten-Fold Growth Strategy sets a target of expanding GDP from USD 50 billion to USD 500 billion by 2040, built on export growth, tourism, minerals, oil and gas, and a knowledge economy powered by science, technology, and innovation. Real GDP is projected above 7 percent, with oil production starting in Q4 2026 and peaking by 2028.

Uganda is at a turning point, marked by macroeconomic stability, accelerating growth, and deepening formalization, and is increasingly shaped by regional rather than domestic dynamics. Exports are diversifying into gold, coffee, and manufactured goods, while regional markets are expanding, labour mobility is rising, and investor confidence is strengthening.

Every track of Uganda's strategy has a regional dimension that MEACA is positioned to activate.

President Museveni's call for Uhuru na Umoja at the EAC summit underscored that unity drives industrial transformation, warning that fragmented markets limit East Africa's potential. From trade gains to satellites, MEACA turns this vision into action, making regional integration tangible for entrepreneurs, investors, and underserved communities.





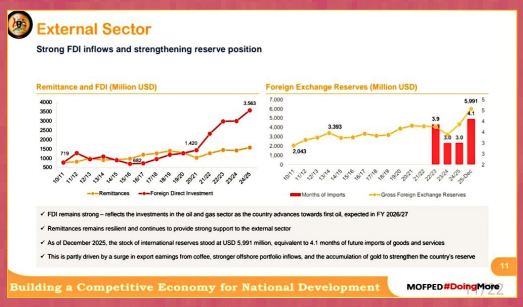


Photo Credit: Ministry of Finance, Planning & Economic Development

Captions: Graphical illustration Status of Uganda's economy



Photo Credit Perfect Daily Grind: Snapshot of harvested Ugandan Coffee Beans



Photo credit- State House Uganda : Captured Kiira Vehicle Plant in Jinja a testament to Uganda's economic growth expected to exceed 10 percent once oil production begins

EAC MOVES CLOSER TO SEAMLESS SKILLS RECOGNITION WITH REVIEW OF REGIONAL TVET QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK

George Lwevoola
Principal Regional Integration Officer - Social Affairs



Efforts to create a more connected and competitive East African workforce gained momentum from June 1-5 2026, as the East African Community (EAC) convened a technical meeting in Nairobi to review the Draft Regional TVET Qualifications Framework, a landmark initiative designed to enable qualifications earned in one Partner State to be recognised and valued across the region.

The meeting drew together a broad constellation of stakeholders, including officials from Ministries of Education and EAC Affairs, National Qualifications Authorities, TVET regulatory bodies, development partners, and representatives from the African Continental Qualifications Framework (ACQF), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the European Training Foundation (ETF).

At its core, the gathering was about removing the invisible walls that still divide East Africa's labour market. The Framework under review was designed as a common regional reference system, one that would make it possible for qualifications earned in Burundi or Uganda to be understood, trusted, and recognised in Kenya or Tanzania. By harmonising qualifications systems, it sought to clear the path for learners, workers, and professionals to move freely across borders, unlocking new opportunities for employment, career growth, and lifelong learning across the region.

Participants were clear-eyed about the stakes. They noted that the Framework would contribute directly to the operationalization of the EAC Common Market by promoting workforce mobility, enhancing skills recognition, and creating clearer progression pathways throughout the region.

Opening the meeting, the Ag. Director of Social Sectors at the EAC Secretariat, Dr. Dorcus Omukhulu, set the tone by describing the Framework as a major milestone in implementing the Harmonized EAC TVET Strategy (2023). It was, she said, a step toward establishing a common approach to qualifications, competencies, learning outcomes, and quality assurance across the Community.

Development partners added their weight to that message. The European Training Foundation called for stronger skills portability to enable East Africans to work and study seamlessly across borders. The ILO made the case that a harmonised qualifications system would sharpen employability, lift workforce productivity, and strengthen regional competitiveness.

Country presentations painted a picture of momentum. Delegations from Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan,

Tanzania, and Uganda revealed a growing convergence toward competency-based, outcome-oriented qualifications systems. Most Partner States were building frameworks that supported learner progression, recognition of prior learning, and quality assurance, all while aligning with regional and continental initiatives.

Yet participants were frank about the headwinds. Shared challenges included resource constraints, limited industry participation, institutional and regulatory gaps, and the pressing need for stronger digital qualifications infrastructure.

On the Framework itself, the meeting reviewed its revised structure and found it capable of transforming the regional skills landscape. Participants identified a range of practical gains it would deliver, from mutual recognition of qualifications and enhanced labour mobility, to competency-based training, recognition of prior learning, and digital verification of credentials across borders.

One concrete outcome emerged from the deliberations: participants agreed to expand the proposed qualifications structure from eight to ten levels, a move designed to improve alignment with emerging national frameworks and strengthen cross-border comparability.

The meeting closed with a forward-looking recommendation. Partner States were called upon to continue aligning their national qualifications systems with the regional framework, and the EAC Secretariat was asked to convene a regional validation meeting in July 2026 to finalize it.

When fully adopted, the EAC TVET Qualifications Framework will stand as more than a technical instrument. It will be the foundation of a more connected, skilled, and competitive East Africa, one where qualifications travel with their holders, talent flows without friction, and human capital becomes the engine of regional prosperity.



Group photo of various stakeholders at the Draft Regional TVET Qualifications Framework engagement in Nairobi

PROCUREMENT AS A CATALYST FOR EAST AFRICAN INTEGRATION



Obadiah **Muhanguzi**

As East Africa advances toward a more integrated regional market, procurement is increasingly becoming a strategic driver of economic growth, trade facilitation, and institutional efficiency. This was one of the key takeaways from the 10th Annual Procurement Summit and Exhibition organized by the Institute of Procurement Professionals of Uganda (IPPU) on 15 May 2026 at the UMA Multipurpose Hall in Kampala.

Held under the theme, "Deepening Procurement Outcomes, Building Resilience and Leveraging Technology," the summit brought together policymakers, accounting officers, procurement professionals, regulators, development partners, and private sector actors to explore how modern procurement systems can contribute to national development and regional integration.

Mr. Pius Mwinganisa, Principal Communications Officer walked participants through the Ministry's mandate, centering his presentation on Uganda's participation in the EAC integration agenda and the practical opportunities it opens up cross-border trade, investment facilitation, labour mobility, education exchanges, and regional cooperation frameworks that touch virtually every sector of the economy. His core message was that awareness and communication is the first frontier: many Ugandan institutions and professionals remain underinformed about the direct benefits that EAC membership places within their reach.

Mr. Obadiah Muhanguzi Senior officer of the Procurement and Disposal Unit, complemented this with an operational perspective, detailing how MEACA's own procurement function, anchored in planning, transparency, and strict regulatory compliance, supports the Ministry's strategic mandate. The presentation made a quiet but important point: that a Ministry championing regional integration must itself model the governance standards the region aspires to.

The IPPU summit itself was rich with insight. The Chief Guest, Mr. Godfrey Ssemugooma, Acting Accountant General, challenged procurement professionals to treat accountability and prudent resource utilisation not as bureaucratic obligations but as instruments of national development. His remarks reinforced a growing consensus that public procurement must be strategic, not merely compliant.

The Keynote Address was delivered by Mr. Sam Achampong FCIPS, Regional Director of the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) for Africa and East Asia. Drawing on global trends, he pointed to digital transformation, professionalism, sustainability, and supply chain resilience as the defining priorities of modern procurement, a message that landed with particular force in a room grappling with the aftermath of recent global supply disruptions.

Sessions on sustainable procurement, led by Mr. Kiyingi David, Head of Sustainable

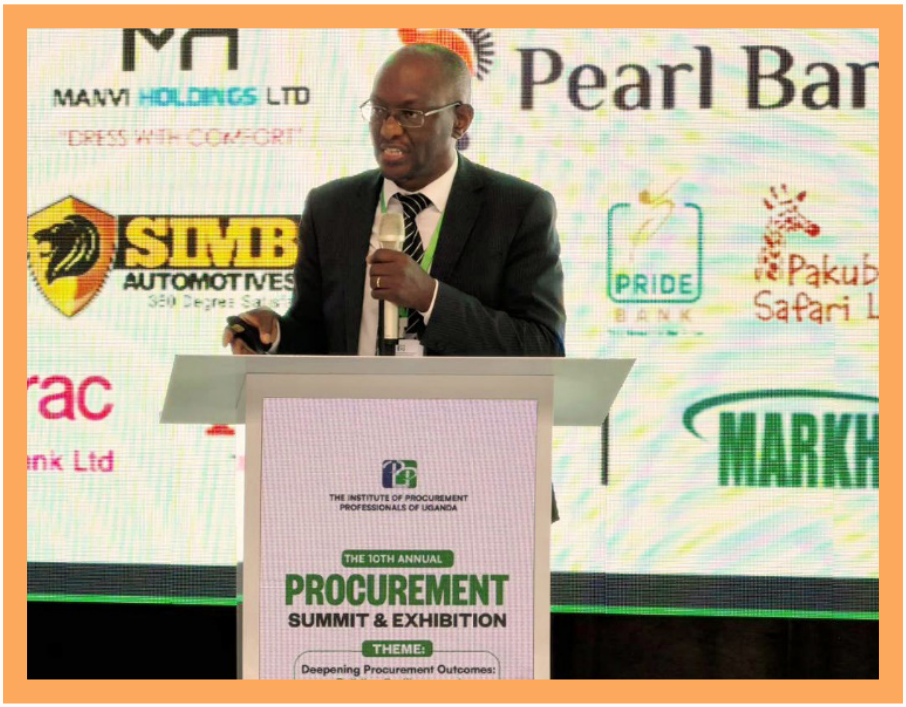
Procurement, added an important dimension to the day's deliberations making the case that environmentally and socially responsible procurement is no longer optional but a strategic imperative for institutions serious about long-term impact.

For MEACA, the summit represented more than a professional development opportunity. It was a reminder that the EAC integration agenda lives and breathes in the everyday decisions of institutions including how they buy, who they buy from, and whether their procurement systems are resilient enough to support a regionally connected economy.

As Uganda continues to deepen its participation in the East African Community, the conversation between procurement professionals and integration advocates will only grow more important. The 10th IPPU Summit offered a glimpse of what that conversation can look like when both sides are at the table.



Muhanguzi delivering his remarks during the summit



Mwinganisa delivering his remarks during the summit

THE DIGITAL BACKBONE OF REGIONAL INTEGRATION



Mary **Nakaggwa**

Ministry of East African Community Affairs

In an era defined by digital transformation, the Information Technology Unit at the Ministry of East African Community Affairs (MEACA) stands as a quiet but indispensable engine of regional integration. By connecting people, systems, and information across borders, the unit plays a pivotal role in advancing the EAC's vision of a seamless, digitally connected East Africa.

At the heart of the unit's work is the facilitation of efficient information sharing, collaboration, and coordination among EAC Partner States. From supporting virtual meetings that bring together stakeholders across the region, to managing the Ministry's data infrastructure and maintaining critical digital platforms such as the MEACA website, the IT unit ensures that the flow of information remains uninterrupted and secure.

Beyond connectivity, the unit is a frontline defender of the Ministry's digital assets. Through robust cybersecurity measures, it safeguards sensitive information and maintains the integrity of government systems, ensuring that data remains protected in an increasingly complex digital landscape.

Equally important is the unit's commitment to building human capacity. By training staff on the effective use of digital tools, it cultivates a workforce that is informed, confident, and technologically empowered, qualities that are essential for delivering on MEACA's mandate.

Through these efforts, the IT unit strengthens service delivery, promotes transparency, and deepens the Ministry's ability to support regional integration, one digital connection at a time.





Award-Winning Staff

Outstanding Employees Recognized for Exceptional Service in FY 2025/26

The Ministry proudly recognized the following officers for their exemplary performance, dedication, and outstanding contribution to service delivery during the Financial Year 2025/26:



Mr. Ocaya Ojara Leo Kizito,
Commissioner for Economic Affairs
– Best Commissioner in the category of officers at U1SE–U1E level.



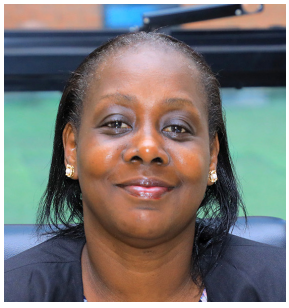
Ms. Sarah Nakate,
Principal Regional Integration Officer
– Best Officer in the U2 category.



Mr. Kiiza Rogers,
Senior Assistant Secretary
– Best Senior Assistant Secretary in the category of officers at U3 level.



Ms. Koburunga Allen,
Human Resource Officer
– Best Officer in the category of officers at U4 level.



Ms. Atim Rhoda,
Assistant Records Officer
– Best Officer in the category of officers at U5–U7 level.



Ms. Jackie Achieng,
Office Attendant
– Best Officer in the Office Attendant category.



Mr. Byamukama Sam, *Driver*
–Best Officer in the Driver Category.
- Overall Best Employee

THE PUZZLE


UMOJA
PUZZLE CORNER
PLAY • LEARN • CELEBRATE EAST AFRICA!
Stronger Together for a Prosperous East Africa
1 EAC WORD SEARCH CHALLENGE
Can you find all the EAC words hidden below?
E A C T R A D E P Q
F E D E R A T I O N
U G A N D A L M N O
R W A N D A E P Q R
B U R U N D I S T U
K E N Y A X Y Z A B
T A N Z A N I A C D
S O M A L I A E F G
C O N G O D R C H I
M A R K E T J K L M
I N T E G R A T I O
FIND THESE WORDS:
• EAC • FEDERATION • BURUNDI
• TRADE • UGANDA • TANZANIA
• MARKET • KENYA • SOMALIA
• INTEGRATION • RWANDA • CONGO
2 DID YOU KNOW?
TRUE or FALSE?
1. The EAC currently has 8 Partner States. True False
2. The Customs Union was the first pillar of EAC Integration. True False
3. The EAC headquarters are in Arusha, Tanzania. True False
4. Citizens of EAC countries can benefit from easier regional travel. True False
5. The Political Federation is the ultimate goal of EAC integration. True False
3 SPOT THE ODD ONE OUT
Circle the word that does NOT belong.
A Uganda • Kenya • Tanzania • Nigeria
B Trade • Tourism • Agriculture • Volcano
C Customs Union • Common Market • Monetary Union • Olympic Games
D Arusha • Kampala • Nairobi • London
4 UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS
Can you unscramble these EAC-related words?
1. DACRET
2. KETMAR
3. EAC
4. NIOITARGETN
5. YEKNA
6. DUNARW
7. OTMCUSS
5 EAC PILLARS MATCH
Match the Pillar with its Purpose
PILLAR
PURPOSE
1 Customs Union
2 Common Market
3 Monetary Union
4 Political Federation
A Single Currency
B Free Movement of People, Goods, Services & Capital
C Political Unity
D Reduced Trade Barriers
6 EAC PHOTO CHALLENGE
Find and Circle:
One EAC Flag
One Road Project
One Border Post
One Farmer
One Student
One Tourist
How many did you find?
7 EAC FACT OF THE MONTH
DID YOU KNOW?
The East African Community represents a market of over
300
MILLION PEOPLE,
making it one of the largest regional blocs in Africa.
ONE PEOPLE • ONE DESTINY
Pamoja Tunaweza – Together We Can
#EACIntegration

ONE DESTINY, DIFFERENT SPEEDS: Unlocking EAC's Path to Political Confederation



Dr. Andrew
MUSIIME

The Vision of a Politically United East Africa

A politically united East Africa stands as the ultimate crown jewel of the East African Community (EAC) integration agenda. This vision was significantly advanced during the Ordinary Meeting of the Summit of the EAC Heads of State in Dar es Salaam, where regional leaders made a historic structural decision. Recognizing the complexities of going straight into a full federation, the Summit adopted a Political Confederation as a pragmatic transitional model.

To give this model legal life, the Council of Ministers was directed to constitute a team of Constitutional Experts to draft its foundational constitution. This marked the birth of a structured, law-led path toward a shared destiny, establishing an ambitious roadmap that initially envisioned a signed, comprehensive constitutional framework.

However, to ensure the confederation constitution truly reflected the authentic aspirations of East Africans, a distinguished regional committee was assembled. The Constitutional Experts nominated Uganda's Chief Justice Emeritus, Dr. Benjamin Odoki, as their Chairperson, alongside Kenya's Attorney General Emeritus, Amos Wako, as Deputy Chairperson. Regional leaders also designated H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni to provide vital, overarching political guidance to the process. The monumental task of national stakeholder consultations was officially launched in Entebbe, kicking off an expansive exercise to harvest citizen views.

Over the subsequent years, these rigorous national consultations were successfully conducted and concluded across the Republic of Burundi, the Republic of Uganda, and the Republic of Kenya. The next consultations will be in the Republic of Rwanda in June, 2026

However, an expanding geography and differing internal national priorities began to stall the momentum of the original roadmap. The regional landscape shifted with the historic and welcome admission of new partner states, including the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Federal Republic of Somalia.

While this expansion enriched the community, it required repeated revisions of the constitutional roadmap to ensure new members could nominate experts and integrate their

citizens into the dialogue. Despite successive Summit directives urging outstanding partner states to conclude their national dialogues, the process became severely bottlenecked. The integration machinery found itself stuck at the consultation stage, unable to transition into the actual drafting of the constitutional model because the speed of the entire bloc was tethered to its slowest-moving components.

The experience of the Political Confederation process underscores an enduring reality of regional integration: unity is not measured by uniformity of pace, but by the strength of a shared purpose. While Partner States may advance along different timelines, the collective commitment to a politically united East Africa remains firmly intact. As consultations continue and consensus deepens, the region has an opportunity to refine its approach while remaining focused on the ultimate goal—a stronger, more cohesive East African Community built on cooperation, inclusivity, and a common destiny.

Dr. Andrew Musiime
Commissioner Political Affairs, MEACA



President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, President Ruto of Kenya, Hon Rebecca Kadaga, Minister of East Africa Community Affairs and other senior officials pose for a group photo during the launch of SGR in Kisumu



SADC Meeting in February 2025

SPOTLIGHT ON
MEACA STAFF

Behind every milestone at MEACA is a team of dedicated professionals whose passion, expertise, and commitment keep our work moving forward. While it may not be possible to feature every member and department in these pages, the individuals highlighted here proudly represent the collective spirit, hard work, and excellence of the entire MEACA family. To all our colleagues, whether pictured or not, this celebration is as much yours as it is theirs."

Working Towards One Vision: Representatives from various MEACA departments engage in a strategic planning session to align the Balanced Scorecard with the Ministry's Strategic Plan.









Representatives of Political Affairs

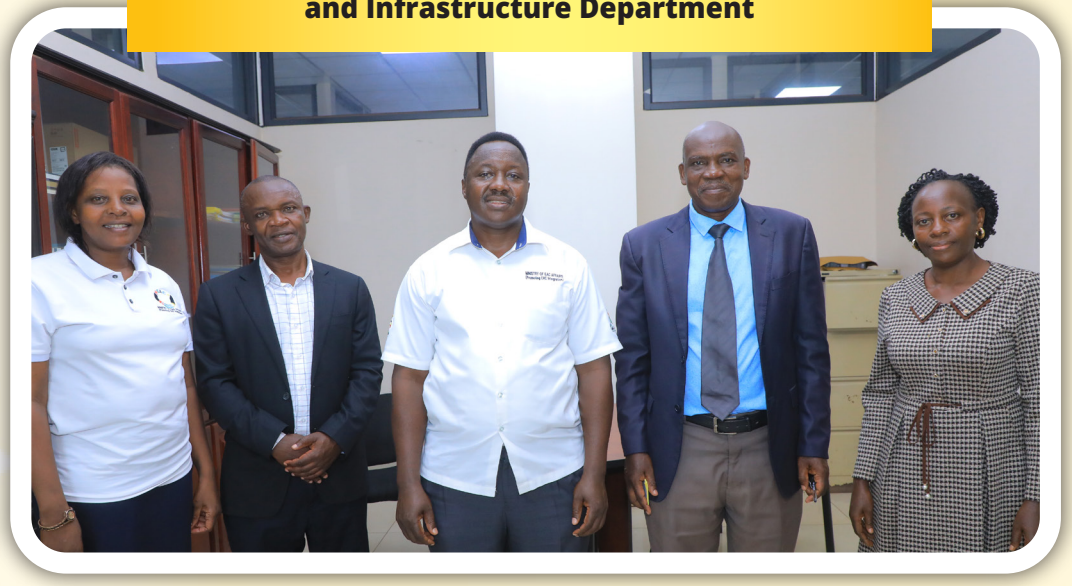




Representative of Policy Unit



Representatives of Production and Infrastructure Department



Representatives of Finance and Administration



Representatives of Social Affairs



Representatives of Economic Affairs



Congratulatory MESSAGE



Congratulatory MESSAGE





UGANDA NATIONAL ANTHEM

1.
Oh Uganda! may God uphold thee,
We lay our future in thy hand.
United, free, For liberty
Together we'll always stand.

2.
Oh Uganda! the land of freedom.
Our love and labour we give,
And with neighbours all
At our country's call
In peace and friendship we'll live.

3.
Oh Uganda! the land that feeds us
By sun and fertile soil grown.
For our own dear land,
We'll always stand:
The Pearl of Africa's Crown.



EAST AFRICAN ANTHEM

1.
Ee Mungu twaomba uilinde
Jumuiya Afrika Mashariki
Tuwezeshe kuishi kwa amani
Tutimize na malengo yetu.

Jumuiya Yetu sote tuilinde
Tuwajibike tuimarike
Umoja wetu ni nguzo yetu
Idumu Jumuiya yetu.

2.
Uzalendo pia mshikamano
Viwe msingi wa Umoja wetu
Na tulinde Uhuru na Amani
Mila zetu na desturi zetu.

3.
Viwandani na hata mashambani
Tufanye kazi sote kwa makini
Tujitoe kwa hali na mali
Tuijenge Jumuiya bora.

EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

- Republic of Burundi
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Republic of Kenya
- Republic of Rwanda
- Federal Republic of Somalia
- Republic of South Sudan
- United Republic of Tanzania
- Republic of Uganda

