

**EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY**

**STATEMENT TO THE WORLD SUMMIT ON  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**Johannesburg, South Africa  
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# **THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY STATEMENT TO THE WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. The East Africa Community (EAC) is an Intergovernmental Organisation currently comprising three countries of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. A Treaty signed by the three Heads of State on 30<sup>th</sup> November 1999 established it. It came into force on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2000 after ratification by all the three countries.

The EAC aims at widening and deepening co-operation among the Partner States in, among areas, political, economic, social, cultural health, education, science and technology, defence, security, legal and judicial affairs for the mutual benefit. This will be achieved through the establishment of a Customs Union as the entry point of the Community, a Common Market subsequently a monetary Union and ultimately a Political Federation of the East African States.

In the pursuit of this cause, the Community shall for the Partner States, and on the basis of its stated fundamental principles and operational principles ensure inter-alia, the promotion of sustainable utilisation of natural resources and the taking of measures that would effectively protect the natural environment.

In particular, the Community would undertake, through environmental management strategy, coordination of regional policies and actions for the protection and conservation of the natural resources and environment against all forms of degradation and pollution arising from developmental activities. It would also integrate environmental management and conservation measures in all developmental activities in the community such as trade, transport, agriculture, industrial development, mining and tourism.

## **ACHIEVEMENT, REAFFIRMATION AND RENEWAL OF COMMITMENT**

2. The EAC re-affirms its commitment to the Rio principles and the full implementation of Agenda 21 for the achievement of sustainable development and the Millenium Development goals. We reiterate our commitment to addressing all the three dimensions of sustainable development namely the social, economic and environmental protection. The three EAC countries have established and strengthened policy, legislation and regulatory frameworks, geared to the ratification of global, regional and sub-regional environmental conventions and agreements. Further action plans geared towards implementation have been formulated.

## **CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS**

3. While there has been significant progress in establishing sustainable development policies, plans, legislation and institutional frameworks within the three EAC Partner States, we note that limited progress has been made in the implementation of Agenda 21. This stems from several factors, particularly inadequate financial resources, technology and capacity building. The debt situation remains one of the major constraints while poverty continues to accelerate degradation of natural

resource and desertification continues to spread. Need essential infrastructure such as access to clean water and sanitation and energy; and provision of adequate and modern information and communication and technologies, are major challenges for the region. On the other hand effects of globalisation, regional conflicts and terrorism and the refugee problems are among the constraints for sustainable development.

**With respect to the above, the EAC wishes to call upon the International Community for support in addressing the following:**

#### **POVERTY ERADICATION**

4. Poverty is prevalent in East Africa where 53% of its people live below the poverty line. As noted above poverty is a primary constraint to sustainable development. The reduction of poverty levels as indicated in Agenda 21 and the Millennium Declaration and the income generation strategies of the three Partner States, will require a comprehensive approach and strategic partnerships in addressing priority areas such as debt cancellation, access to affordable energy, access to safe water, education and health facilities. Favourable terms of trade, revitalised agriculture, industrialisation and sustainable use of natural resources are key elements in income generation efforts.

**The EAC calls for increased support for funding of the Poverty Reduction Strategies, which are in place in the Partner States.**

#### **EDUCATION**

5. The East African Partner States have developed policies, formulated and implemented programmes geared toward the promotion of human resources development. Among such policies are: Primary, Secondary, Tertiary and University education. The East African Partner States have made significant progress in providing education to its peoples, these include.
  - Reorienting education towards sustainable development;
  - Increasing public awareness to combat poverty, environmental degradation; and
  - Increased budgetary allocations to the sector

Generally, there are several constraints that need to be addressed by the East African Partner States, these include:

- Inadequate financial resources;
- Increasing number of children that have no access to education particularly primary education;
- Inadequate training material and increasing training costs;
- Inadequate physical infrastructure and human resources; and

The East African Partner States call for support from the international community to:

- **Provide adequate financial resources for the sector to be able to implement the Millennium Declaration of Universal Primary Education;**
- **Promote and enhance formal, informal education and public awareness for sustainable development;**
- **Assist in building education infrastructure;**
- **Enhance information gathering and dissemination; and**
- **Implement African regional initiatives in education and research**

## **HEALTH AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

6. The East African Partner States have developed policies and formulated measures and strategies to address the issue of health and sustainable development. Among these are measures and strategies for communicable diseases like HIV/AIDS, TB, Malaria and Pneumonia.

The prevalence<sup>3</sup> of HIV/AIDS and Malaria presents a major health and development challenge to the Partner States. A considerable number of people infected with HIV/AIDS fall in the group of trained and productive manpower. Furthermore the presence of HIV/AIDS has increased the infection cases of TB. Another major threat to the people in the East African Partner States is the prevalence of Malaria, which has increased the mortality rate of adults and children.

The prevalence of these diseases has increased health budgetary expenditures of the Partner States. The poverty has increased while life expectancy has drastically declined in the region. Many people have no access to the appropriate drugs. The hospitals are not well equipped. Human resources development is inadequate and there is inadequate research on traditional medicine to combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Waterborne diseases.

However, the three East African Partner States have made significant achievements in improving health facilities, immunisation and primary health care and have established HIV/AIDS and Malaria programmes. Implementation of these programmes continues. The EAC however, notes with concern the emerging health hazards caused through pollution by chemicals and chemical residues from industrial and agricultural activities.

**The East African Partner States urge the international community to provide financial and technical support to:**

- **Carry out research on traditional medicine and the establishment of database on traditional medicine, recognising that traditional medicine is environmentally sustainable;**

- **Improve primary health care;**
- **Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other communicable diseases; and**
- **Combat emerging diseases caused by pollutants.**

## **AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY**

7. East Africa is one of the most food insecure regions in the world despite the proportion of land under cultivation. Agriculture serves many socio-economic areas including provision of food, economic activities, employment, prime provider of industrial raw materials and foreign exchange earner. The sector, however, suffers growth setbacks due to various factors, including: land degradation; frequent and severe droughts/flood disasters; inadequate technology and facilities for crop production and storage; inadequate land use and conservation practices and policies; water use policies; lack of credit; international agricultural products markets, trade, subsidies and selective commodity protection, invasive weeds and pests; loss of genetic materials; insecurity; high costs of inputs and technology; lack or inadequate information on various aspects of agriculture and food security including early warning information; poor and inadequate infrastructure dependence on rain fed agriculture, under utilisation of irrigation potential and general agricultural policies and strategies.

The continued decline in agricultural production due to the above factors exacerbates the poverty situation, land degradation/desertification and general environmental degradation due to opening up of more land for cultivation and continued inappropriate cultivation of land; and brings about a sense of hopelessness and insecurity. Alleviation or solutions to the above problems will hopefully solve the major problems facing the region. The World Community and specifically the developed partners need to join in genuine partnerships with the EAC to address the constraints through:

- **Access to markets and value addition to agricultural products;**
- **Creation of employment through alternative employment opportunities;**
- **Support in the implementation of the UNCCD, NAPs of the East African Partner States;**
- **Provide adequate and assured financial and technical resources through NEPAD initiative and multilateral agreements;**
- **Adequate replenishment of GEF funds;**
- **Support the development of enabling and robust policy; legal and institutional frameworks of the EAC by provision of adequate financial resources to enhance governance frameworks;**
- **Removal of subsidies on agricultural produce in the developed countries;**

- **Adequate research and development; and**
- **Support for irrigation technology.**

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

8. The East African Community emphasises co-operation in infrastructure to involve coordinated, harmonised, and complementary transport and communication. The policies in this area shall aim at improving the existing transport and communication links and establish new ones as a means of furthering the physical cohesion of the Partner States and to facilitating and promoting the movement of traffic within the Community.
9. Modern, reliable and efficient infrastructure facilities would accelerate development in productive and social services through movement of goods and people. Financial assistance and investment is, therefore, being sought from development partners to cover the following key areas which have been identified by the Partner States.

## **ENERGY**

10. Energy is a very critical factor in stimulating the development in the entire region. The quantity and quality of energy used determines the quality of life while energy services contribute substantially to the national economies. Inadvertently, energy use is also associated with adverse effects on environment

The East African region, while being endowed with enormous natural energy resources like hydro, geothermal, wind, solar and natural gas most of which are yet to be fully exploited, is highly dependent on biomass energy to meet a large part of the primary energy demand with a per capita consumption of less than 100 kg of oil equivalent (Koe). This phenomenon is attributed to the following challenges:

- i. Lack of accessibility to reliable and efficient energy;
- ii. Heavy capital intensity of Commercial energy infrastructure;
- iii. High up front costs for alternative energy especially renewable energy technologies, which are more appealing especially for rural areas;
- iv. Low level technology transfer and diffusion into the region; and
- v. Unsustainable consumption of energy resources.

These challenges require concerted efforts primarily to address the current regional supply demand imbalance while protecting the environment from harmful effects of energy use and harnessing.

The Partner States would like to emphasise a few areas that require specific attention and support:

### ***Accessibility to reliable and efficient energy***

- **Improving access to energy implies finding ways and means by which energy services especially the modern forms of energy can be delivered reliably, efficiently and in an environmentally sound manner to all sectors of our regional economies including rural populations at an affordable cost.**
- **Financial resources, technology transfer, capacity building and development of appropriate policy framework are necessary to address accessibility and affordability of energy and specifically of supply.**

### ***Role of Biomass Energy***

The three Partner States recognise the dominant role played by biomass energy to meet the primary needs of the region. The unsustainable use of the biomass energy is increasingly being associated with land degradation, loss of soil fertility, soil erosion, deforestation and loss of biodiversity and desertification process especially in fragile econ-systems and mountain forests, which in the region form the main water towers for the regional hydrology.

**Special attention, therefore, should be focused on improvement of efficiency in the production and consumption of biomass energy. Thus there is need therefore to promote accelerated shift to other modern forms of energy with special emphasis on:**

- **Accelerated provision and extension of electricity grid to reach at least 80% of the population by the year 2005;**
- **Support the progressive transition to the use of liquid and gaseous fossils fuel, which are considered socially acceptable, cost effective and environmentally sound; and**
- **Technology transfer.**

### ***Rural Energy Supply***

The majority of the population in the region are found in the rural areas, which are characterised, by energy poverty, poor accessibility to energy services, lack of market infrastructure and poor planning.

The challenge of improving rural energy situation revolves around the following issues:

- Improving access of the rural population to commercial energy such as liquid and gaseous fuels for basic needs, as well as income generating activities;
- Promoting diverse options for rural electrification, including decentralised systems, and developing as well as promoting innovative financing mechanisms for such energy systems; and
- Improving services and maintenance skills.

**The East African Community, therefore, seeks to strengthen long-term capacity building in human resources and institutions for the formulation, monitoring, assessment and development of appropriate policies and secure adequate supplies of modern energy in the context of sustainable development.**

### ***Renewable Energy Technologies***

Renewable energy can play an important role in helping to meet energy needs through the use of modern technologies. It is noted that there are also several emerging technologies like bio-diesel and fuel cell technology, which hold tremendous potential for the region.

**The East African Community has included renewable energy in the Regional Energy Master Plan and calls for financial support international for this plan.**

### **LAKE VICTORIAN BASIN**

11. The Lake Victoria is the heartbeat of the East African Community and it is the most significant resource for the region. The EAC Partner States clearly recognise this immense value of entire lake basin. The basin has consequently been designated as an economic growth zone and as an area of common economic interest, which should be exploited jointly but in a coordinated framework so as to maximise economic and social benefits to its people while at the same time providing for an effective natural resource management and practices.

The natural resource base of the Lake Victorian Basin is very extensive. Recent study investigations in the Basin clearly demonstrated the huge potentials and great opportunities for investment and utilisation of natural resources in the Lake Basin. The resources base includes: land and its soils, forests, fisheries, wildlife, energy, water and the people. Other sectors where there are huge potentials and real investment opportunities include tourism, trade, transport and telecommunication sectors. The Partner States have at the country levels introduced measures aimed at harnessing these resources.

At the regional level, the East African Community, using the experience applied in the management of shared waters in other parts of the world, has put in place an institutional and legal arrangement for the Lake Victoria Basin management under the auspices of the Lake Victoria Development Programme based at its Secretariat. This is essential for the regions' objective of joint sustainable exploitation of the resources in the Lake Basin.

The East African Community signed a Partnership Agreement on Promotion of the Sustainable Development of the Lake Victoria Basin with five Development Partners namely the governments of France, Sweden and Norway and, the World Bank and the East African Development Bank. The agreement provides a framework and mechanism for promoting investment and overall sustainable utilisation of the resources mentioned above. These initiatives are overall expected to contribute significantly towards income generation and uplifting the living standards of the people of the region.



There are many challenges including the new menace of invasive weeds such as water hyacinths that need to be surmounted if the goals and aspirations of the governments and people of Community are to be met.

**The international community should forge partnership with the East African Community by supporting the initiatives already put in place. To drive the process further, the international community should exploit investment opportunities that exist in the Lake Basin in the following areas.**

- 1) **Agriculture;**
- 2) **Tourism;**
- 3) **Fisheries; and**
- 4) **Transport**

**International support to East African Community initiatives in environmental and natural resource management is vital for sustainable development. Specific support is sought for the management of invasive aquatic weeds.**

## **WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT**

12. Water is life and indeed the basis for sustainable development and its use and protection underpins the development of the East Africa Community Partner States and the achievement of the goals established in the Millennium Declaration 2000. Water can make an immense difference to the development of the East African Partner States if is managed well and used wisely.

**The Community therefore, calls for the support from the international community to:**

- **Improve access to safe water supply and sanitation to reduce proportion of people without access to basic water supply and sanitation by 50% by 2015 and 75% by 2025;**
- **Promote integrated water resources management policies and programmes;**
- **Invest in watershed management, water quality monitoring and pollution control;**
- **Invest in water storage in order to minimise the impacts of stress and climate variability in the region;**
- **Support regional initiatives such as AMCOW, AMCEN, and NEPAD;**
- **Promote cooperation in sustainable management and utilisation of trans-boundary waters; and**

- **Support capacity building.**

## **RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

13. The rural economy provides the backbone for development efforts in the EAC. About 90 percent of the population lives in agriculture being the key enterprise of the rural economy, which has experienced a steep decline in the last decade. Besides, agriculture, other rural non-farm, activities include: artisan activities, tourism, quarrying mining, forestry, fishing and small-scale trading and manufacturing. The performance of the rural economy mirrors that of the overall economy such that any decline in performance of the rural sector results in poor performance of the overall economy.

Deterioration of the rural economy calls for a critical evaluation of past development efforts and the need for alternative shared vision and strategy for inclusive rural development. Individual EAC States have tried some efforts at rural development with some good outcomes while in other cases the experiences have been discouraging.

An examination of the successful ones shows that where support services and access productive resources coupled with the transfer of decision making responsibilities were availed, farmers and the rural population responded well and production increased.

**The East Africa Community therefore, seeks assistance from the international community to provide the necessary technical and financial resources for inputs, capacity building, and transfer of appropriate technology, rural development plans and investments to complement efforts by the EAC Partner States.**

## **BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION**

14. The East African Partner States have high biodiversity in terms of fauna and flora. The three Partner states are signatories of the Biodiversity Convention and the Cartagena Biosafety Protocol. The overall objective for the conservation of biodiversity of biological resources and to ensure that regional and national resources are rationally utilised and protected for present and future generations. The East African Partner States have developed and formulated policies, instruments and strategies geared towards the promotion of biodiversity conservation. A majority of those policies cover key areas such as Environment, Fisheries, Forestry and Wildlife.

These policies have a bearing to the development of tourism industry. The EAC recognises the importance of sustainable tourism in poverty reduction. Increased benefits accrued from Tourism Industry should be directed to the communities while maintaining their cultural and environmental integrity and enhancing the conservation of the ecological areas and natural heritage sites in East Africa. International actions are needed to help establish and strengthen EAC regional plans for development and implementation of sustainable Tourism and Wildlife Management.

The Partner States have made significant progress in the conservation of biodiversity by implementing the East African Cross Border Biodiversity Project, Lake Victoria Environmental Project, Coastal Forests and Mangroves Conservation Programmes and establishment of Marine Parks and Reserves in Marine Coastal areas.

The major areas of concern in biodiversity conservation are high dependency of local communities of fauna and flora resources, increasing uses of unsustainable harvesting practices, inadequate financial and human resources to enforce the national laws, the need to curb international trafficking of endangered species and scanty information on endangered, threatened and endemic flora and fauna species.

**The East African Partner States therefore, call upon the international community to support their efforts in carrying out survey, research and inventory of endemic and endangered flora and fauna species, harmonise policies and laws, implement national biodiversity strategies and Action Plans and develop regional and national capacities for biodiversity conservation including protection of wild, domesticated and agro-biodiversity and taking special attention to bio-safety and bio-technology issues. This could be achieved through global efforts particularly by increased GEF resources.**

## **SUPPORT TO REGIONAL INTEGRATION ORGANISATIONS**

15. Regional Integration Organisations (RIO) are increasingly becoming a vital vehicle for accelerated development and in solving regional conflicts. It is important that these organisations should be assisted in terms of tools and capacities through strengthening of institutional frameworks and market structure. Whereas the globalization was to promote sustainable development, the process has marginalised the East African countries because the regional is unable to compete in the world market leading to increasing incidence of poverty.

**In this respect the EAC urges the developed countries should also increase resources to support access and use of information technology to close the digital divide between developed and developing countries. In addition, multilateral trading systems e.g. WTO should ensure that issues of development are addressed adequately and special and preferential treatment in favour of developing countries are instituted to increase their competitiveness. This should include technical and financial support.**

## **DEBT CANCELLATION**

16. The EAC acknowledges the measures taken in this respect to the Partner States including the HIPIC initiatives. EAC also notes that high debt and debt servicing obligations divert needed resources for enhancing economic growth and improving delivery of social services such as health, education and water. Debt service costs contribute to the increasing incidence of poverty, which is reflected in low literacy level low enrolment rate of primary school pupils, over exploitation of natural resources and unemployment. **In order to arrest this situation, the EAC calls upon the developed countries to rededicate their commitments towards**

**established of a multilateral debt relief fund and increasing ODA assistance in line with the target of 0.7% flow of their GNP.**

## **DISASTER MANAGEMENT**

17. The East African region is prone to frequent natural and man made disasters, mainly droughts/famines, floods, fires, tremor, conflicts and industrial accidents. With increased industrial development, oil spill hazards are becoming more and frequent. The region has also experienced international terrorism. The EAC Partner States appreciate the support already received to mitigate and recover from these disasters.

The region, due to increasing population, poverty, urbanisation, land degradation climate variability, inadequate capacity, deforestation and industrialisation remains extremely vulnerable.

**The EAC therefore, call for support to strengthen vulnerability assessment, monitoring systems, prevention, preparedness and management of the disasters. In particular support is needed in capacity building and establishment of early warning systems that are user friendly to the common man and the policy maker alike. The early warning information will be used to cultivate the culture of preparedness especially at the community and household levels.**

## **CONFLICTS AND REFUGEES**

18. The East African sub-region is endowed with various natural resources whose distribution is spatially uneven. With exponential growth of population resources have diminished and this has brought about intensive competition for resources and conflicts.

Thus the region is replete with inter and intra-national conflicts resulting from misunderstandings on rights of access, use and benefit sharing of the various resources. The conflicts have resulted in large number of refugees in the sub-region. Refugees cause tremendous environmental degradation in their settlement. Other than environmental degradation conflicts cause social tension and cultural upheavals. **EAC urges the international community to help in conflict prevention and fully assist in their management when they occur. Support is needed for the countries of asylum particularly assistance for post conflict development programmes.**

## **TERRORISM**

19. The EAC has been a victim of terrorist attacks, which have resulted into loss of life and destruction of property. In response to these attacks, the EAC has prepared and is implementing a regional programme for the combat of terrorism. The Community therefore supports measures being taken regionally and globally in the fight against terrorism, which is a great threat to sustainable development. Terrorism does not only hamper economic development, it does also affect social and cultural fraternity among the peoples of the world. No development activity would flourish in a state of fear.

## TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

20. Technological advances made in various fields of play hold tremendous opportunity for the region in terms of leapfrogging the gaps existing today in the national developments. In many ways harnessing of science and technology will improve the regional capacity to cope with various dimensional issues like sustainable agriculture, energy systems, sanitation and health among others.

A major area of concern in the region is the low level of technological capabilities in all sectors. In order to implement programmes for substantial development, access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies as well as development of indigenous capacity to absorb, modify such know how is very important. **In addition the EAC urge our partners in developed countries to facilitate and finance technology transfer and capacity building on favourable terms in line with their commitments taken in Agenda 21.**

## CAPACITY BUILDING

21. The transfer of environmentally sound technologies is key to sustainable industrial development in the Partner States. The use of information technologies in business, schools and health care institutions improves efficiency. The East African Partner states have made significant progress in capacity building, which include: Training industry personnel and government officials in the area of environmental management, advising policy makers on the promotion of environmental friendly technologies, establishment of cleaner production centres and strengthening legal regime for impact assessment auditing.

**However, there are several constraints that need to be addressed by the Partner States including inadequate financial and human resources to access and develop environmentally sound technology. The East African Partner States seek to increase awareness creation on the link between environmental quality and sustainable development; strengthened environmental assessment regime and partnership with private sector particularly in the introduction of cleaner production technologies and promote environmentally sound waste management practices.**

## CONCLUSION

22. In conclusion, the EAC urge the Summit to agree on the **“Johannesburg Vision”** which is a practical expression of the political commitments made by the international community within the framework of the Rio principles and Agenda 21, as well as the Millennium Declaration. These commitments envisage a global consensus on the **eradication of poverty, global inequality, and sustain able development.**

For the effective achievements of this programme, concrete global partnerships between governments on one hand, and business and civil society on the other hand, are required. The EAC believe that, through these outcomes, the Summit will provide practical meaning for the achievement of the hopes of the world generally and East African Community in particular.

**The EAC re-emphasises that the Johannesburg Summit should not renegotiate the outcomes of Rio but should result in a concrete programme of actions with time-bound and well-specified sources of funding to implement them.**

**JOHANNESBURG  
SEPTEMBER 2002**