



MINISTRY OF EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

**REMARKS AT THE LAUNCH OF THE 22ND EAC MICRO, SMALL
AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSME)/JUAKALI TRADE FAIR**

AT IMPERIAL ROYALE HOTEL

BY

MRS. EDITH N. MWANJE
PERMANENT SECRETARY
MINISTRY OF EAC AFFAIRS

29TH SEPTEMBER, 2022

- **Hon. Minister of State for EAC Affairs;**
- **Hon. Minister of State for Trade;**
- **The Permanent Secretaries in attendance;**
- **The Chief Executive Officers;**
- **Commissioners from different government ministries;**
- **The Private Sector including the business community and the Juakali;**
- **Members of Civil Society Organizations;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is a great pleasure and honor to be here this morning at this important occasion where we launch the 22nd Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (formerly; Jua Kali/Nguvu Kazi) Trade Fair.

Allow me to start by sharing a brief history of Juakali trade fair.

In November, 1999 the first EAC Jua Kali/Kazi Nguvu Exhibition was held in Arusha and this coincided with the historic event of signing of the Treaty for Establishment of the East African Community. After the success of the premier Exhibition, the Heads of State directed that the Exhibition be held annually on rotational basis among Partner States to enhance and revamp the socio-economic integration of the peoples of East Africa.

The directive by the Heads of State was in recognition of Article 7.1 (a) of the Treaty that emphasizes people-centeredness and Private Sector driven integration as one of the principles that govern the practical achievement of the objectives of the community.

Every year, on a rotational basis, the EAC celebrates the Jua Kali/Nguvu Kazi; now under the new name **“THE EAC MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (MSMEs) TRADE fair.”**

The purpose of this exhibition is to bring together MSMEs from the EAC region who trade in textiles, fabrics, food stuffs, ornaments, crafts & handy-work, machinery, furniture among others; allowing them to interact, identify new markets & make sales of products across borders. The last edition of the Trade fair was held in Mwanza, Tanzania in December 2021.

This year's Exhibition will be the 22nd since inception of the event and will attract Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) from all the Partner States: Uganda, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and DRC. It will be hosted by the Republic of Uganda from 8th to 18th December, 2022. Uganda has so far hosted this Trade Fair 3 times and this will be the 4th time.

Today, as we are excited to launch the 22nd EAC MSMEs Trade Fair, let us remind ourselves of how these Trade Fairs are influential in strengthening the EAC integration agenda. As we are all aware, regional integration has been hailed by several scholars and institutions as a solution to accelerating economic growth and intra-regional trade to foster national and regional prosperity.

We need to take note that our MSMEs need support in capacity building in areas such as standards, cross border trade regulations, metrology, business licensing and registration, and the elimination of Non-Tariff Barriers to Trade (NTBs) in order to enable them develop their production capacity.

If the MSMEs in Uganda and the EAC region are managed well and with supportive policies and regulatory environment, they will continue to promote value addition to our natural and agricultural resources thereby increasing our region's share in continental and global trade.

This trade fair will bring together over 1,000 exhibitors from across the EAC, promoting cross-border trade of regional products and services. Key regional trade facilitation topics will be discussed in side events such as forums and symposiums. Topics usually range from increasing value addition to cross-border trade to the EAC Simplified Trade Regime.

MSMEs continue to enormously benefit from knowledge sharing, technical transfer, and the formation of new partnerships and markets. This trade fair is an action packed event for everybody, with traditional and cultural performances from all EAC Partner States, delicious local foods and lots of entertainment.

The Trade Fair is organized by the East African Community in collaboration with the EAC Partner States and the East African Confederation of Micro & Small Enterprises Organization (CMSEO). To participate in the fair, exhibitors from the region have to register with their respective chapters of the Confederation of Micro and Small Enterprises Organisations (CMSEOs).

Ladies and Gentlemen, as I conclude; allow me at this time to congratulate the technical officials in the Ministry of EAC Affairs, Ministry of Trade and the Confederation of Micro and Small Enterprises Organisations (CMSEOs) who are working with other MDAs and Private Sector in ensuring that come December 2022 this trade fair is a success. I am aware of the dedication and work that has gone into preparing to host the trade fair so far and I wish to encourage you to continue with that spirit of hard work and selflessness.

Lastly and most importantly, today we are here to learn from each other and get inspired about the future of our MSMEs. So, I would like to close my remarks by once again expressing my excitement for a lively, fruitful discussion.

FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY