



Republic of Kenya

Ministry of Cooperatives
and Micro, Small and Medium
Enterprises (MSME)
Development



OVER 300 KENYAN MSMEs SHOWCASING PRODUCTS AT THE 23RD EAC MSMEs TRADE FAIR IN BUJUMBURA, BURUNDI

Bujumbura 11th November 2023... Over 300 MSMEs from all 47 counties are representing Kenya during the ongoing 23rd Edition of the East African Community (EAC) Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) Trade Fair, formerly known as the Jua Kali/Nguvu Kazi Exhibition at Cercle Hyppique grounds in Bujumbura, Burundi. The theme for this year is “**Connecting East Africa MSMEs to enhance Intra EAC Trade** and has drawn over 1500 MSMEs in trade, manufacturing, agribusiness and services sectors from the seven (7) EAC Partner States. The EAC Trade fair was officially opened by Vice President of Burundi H.E Prosper Bazombanza officially on 8th December 2023. In his remarks, the Vice President noted that the trade fair has been a vital platform in enhancing and revamping the socio economic integration of the people of East Africa. It also provides a platform and opportunities for MSMEs to showcase their products, facilitate business to business engagements and information sharing on trade related matters. The opening ceremony also doubled up as the as the launch of the EAC Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) App that was developed by EAC secretariat and Trade Mark East Africa with an aim of easing the reporting, monitoring, and elimination of NTBs in the EAC community. The App will also provide different access levels for traders and the NTB Focal Points in each partner states.

Kenya celebrated its country day with a showcase of its unique products and innovations, patriotic songs, fashion showcasing creative designs, apparel, artifacts and dances from all the cultures represented. Speaking during the Kenya day celebrations at the trade fair, the **Cabinet Secretary at the Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Development Hon. Simon Chelugui, EGH** said that the Trade fair presents an opportunity for over 300 Kenyan MSMEs to create business linkages for increased trade. “This trade fair will not only avail a forum for showcasing what Kenya has to offer to the regional market but also play a leading role in facilitating trade and business exchanges among participating countries while at the same time offering an exciting platform for launching new and improved technologies targeting both the local and regional markets.

Burundi is a virgin market with immense unexploited opportunities and i encourage Kenyan MSMEs to take advantage of the excellent relations between the two countries to establish a foothold and exploit the emerging opportunities in terms of trade and investment. Possible areas of investment include the following: Agro-processing; Education that will improve the gap in language barrier; Infrastructure to assist the present transport and logistical challenges; Finance and banking to enhance a common currency; Energy /fuel solutions; Light Manufacturing, telecommunication and the construction industry which aligns with the governments Agenda,” said CS Simon Chelugui.



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Addressing the MSMEs and delegates present, the CS noted that statistics show EAC members are trading more with countries outside the bloc than partner states, becoming importers of products and services that ideally should be sourced in the region. He further called on the partner states to consider integrating language, currency, transport, infrastructure and mobile networks to better link regional growth and sustainable development.

Speaking at the same event, **Principal Secretary State Department for MSMEs Susan Mang'eni** said that the Government is keen on leveraging on international markets to create market linkages between producers, aggregators/off-takers and the final consumers "The Government is keen on leveraging on Kenya's international engagements to create opportunities for its citizens, businesses and investors. It is high time that the EAC MSMEs Trade fair organizing committee widened the scope to include the investor angle that will bring together different investors to support MSMEs scale up to become big manufacturers, said PS Susan Mang'eni. She also stressed on one language integration for easier trading for economic growth.

Present during Kenya day celebrations was Minister of Commerce, Transport, Industry and tourism in Burundi Marie Chantal Nijimbere, Deputy Secretary General East African Community Ms. Susan Mange'ni , Ambassador of Kenya to Burundi Daniel Wambura CBS, Uasin Gishu Governor Jonathan Bii and Dr. Eric Mutai from Uasin Gishu, MSEA board, Machakos Deputy Governor, Strathmore Business School small business project manager Elisha Buteti , MSEA board Chairman James Mureu, MSEA CEO Henry Rithaa among other dignitaries

NOTES TO EDITORS

About The Micro and Small Enterprises Authority (MSEA)

The Micro and Small Enterprise Authority (MSEA) is a state corporation established under the Micro and Small Enterprises Act of 2012. The Authority is domiciled in the Ministry of Cooperatives and Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises Development. For more information about the Trade Fair please visit: www.msea.go.ke social media platforms