

## السادة أعضاء جمعية رجال الأعمال المصريين الأفارقة المحترمين

تحية طيبة وبعد،

استكمالاً للجهود والأنشطة المعمول بها والعلاقات المتميزة التي تربط جمعية رجال الأعمال المصريين الأفارقة بشركائها الاستراتيجيين، والذي تحرص فيه بعض الجهات الخارجية على التعاون مع الجمعية وأعضائها، فقد ورد إلينا كتاب مكتباً التجاري بلوساكا والمتضمن المذكرة المفاهيمية المحدثة الخاصة بالمنتدى والمعرض الـ 18 لأعمال الكوميسا ، والمتضمنة مسودة جدول أعمال المنتدى الواردة للمكتب من مجلس أعمال الكوميسا، سيجمع المنتدى ممثلي رفيعي المستوى من القطاعين العام والخاص لمناقشة ابرز الحلول الرقمية المبتكرة التي من شأنها تعزيز الانتاجية ، وتعزيز القدرة التنافسية التجارية داخل الكوميسا.

### مرفق المنشور

وتقضوا بقبول فائق الاحترام،

رئيس مجلس إدارة جمعية  
رجال الأعمال المصريين الأفارقة

د/ يسري الشرقاوي

جمعية رجال الأعمال المصريين الأفارقة  
مشهرة رقم ٦٧٧٩ لسنة ٢٠٢٠  
Egyptian African Businessmen's Association  
6779/2020

الأمين العام لجمعية  
رجال الأعمال المصريين الأفارقة

مصطفى الامير  
م/ مصطفى الامير



# 18<sup>th</sup> COMESA Business Forum & Exhibition **Nairobi, Kenya**

## SAVE THE DATE

BUSINESS FORUM

**07 October, 2025**

COMESA - EU HORTICULTURE CONNECT

**06-08 October, 2025**

EXHIBITION

**07-09 October, 2025**

Leveraging  
Digitalization to  
Deepen Regional Value  
Chains for Sustainable  
and Inclusive Growth.



## CONCEPT NOTE

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The 18<sup>th</sup> COMESA Business Forum, Exhibition and the COMESA – Europe Horticulture Connect will be held on the margins of the 24<sup>th</sup> COMESA Heads of State and Government Summit in October 2025 in Nairobi, Kenya. These activities will run from the **6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025** and is co-convened by the COMESA Secretariat, the Government of Kenya, the COMESA Business Council, and the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM).

The activities will be held under the theme ***“Leveraging Digitalization to Deepen Regional Chains for Sustainable and Inclusive Growth”***.

The **COMESA – Europe Horticulture Connect** (*6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025*) will bring together EU Buyers and Horticulture producers in the COMESA Region. The aim of the intervention is to support SMEs through trade missions to EU-COMESA Business Partnership Dialogues, including women-owned enterprises, enhances market access by connecting SMEs with European buyers, investors, and trade facilitators, helping them secure export deals and expand distribution networks. These engagements help to strengthen capacity by providing firsthand knowledge of EU market requirements, certification processes, and quality standards, ensuring SMEs remain competitive in international trade.

The **18<sup>th</sup> COMESA Business Forum** (*7<sup>th</sup> October 2025*) will bring together high-level private sector actors, Associations, service providers, partners and the public sector to discuss and adopt solutions that will propel and transform the COMESA region into a competitive and sustainable economy. This high-level public-private dialogue will unlock the region's potential through digital innovation, agricultural modernization, and strategic partnerships. The recommendations of the Business Forum will form part of the COMESA Business Declaration to be presented at the 24<sup>th</sup> Summit of COMESA Heads of State and Government.

The **Exhibition** (*7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025*) will be multi-sectoral and seeks to promote quality products and services that are currently breaking ground in terms of high value, high demand in regional and international markets. In summation, we seek to showcase and encourage more consumption of quality African products in the COMESA market space. The exhibition will host pavilions for exhibitors to promote linkages and partnerships, supporting value for business within the African market. For businesses, it will promote engagement on new markets, potential business partnerships and showcasing and sampling of new products from the region.

## 2.0 CONTEXT

The 18<sup>th</sup> COMESA Business Forum represents a pivotal moment for Africa's largest regional economic community. With 682 million people, a GDP of \$1.094 trillion, and trade worth \$454 billion, as at 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2024, COMESA stands at the threshold of unprecedented transformation. The convergence of digital technologies with agricultural systems represents one of the most transformative opportunities for Africa's economic development in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As global food demand is projected to increase by 70% by 2050, driven by population growth and changing consumption patterns, traditional agricultural methods alone cannot meet this challenge while ensuring environmental sustainability and economic viability for farmers. Digital innovation has emerged as the critical bridge between Africa's agricultural potential and global market demands, offering unprecedented opportunities to revolutionize processing, industry, logistics and connectivity across COMESA.

In the COMESA region, where agriculture employs over 70% of the population and contributes approximately 40% to regional GDP, digital transformation is not merely an option, it is an economic imperative. The integration of Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, satellite imagery, artificial intelligence, blockchain technology, and mobile platforms is enabling farmers to make data-driven decisions that optimize resource use, increase yields, and reduce environmental impact. Precision agriculture technologies allow farmers to monitor soil conditions, weather patterns, and crop health in real-time, while predictive analytics help anticipate market demands and optimize planting schedules. Mobile payment systems and digital marketplaces are connecting smallholder farmers directly to regional and international buyers, eliminating intermediaries and ensuring fairer prices. Digital agriculture has become a strategic priority for food security, economic growth, and job creation.

The sustainable trade dimension of this digital revolution is equally compelling. Blockchain-enabled traceability systems provide end-to-end visibility in agricultural supply chains, allowing consumers to verify the origin, quality, and sustainability credentials of products. This transparency is increasingly demanded by international markets, particularly in Europe where food safety and sustainability standards are stringent. Digital certificates of origin, electronic phytosanitary certificates, and automated customs systems are reducing trade transaction costs by up to 30% while accelerating the movement of perishable goods across borders. For COMESA, which exports over \$3.37 billion worth of horticultural products annually to the EU

alone, these digital trade facilitation tools represent a pathway to capturing greater value from existing trade relationships while opening new markets.

Furthermore, digital innovation is democratizing access to agricultural finance, insurance, and technical expertise. Satellite-based crop monitoring enables micro-insurance products that protect smallholder farmers against weather-related losses, while digital credit scoring systems use mobile phone data and farming history to extend loans to previously unbanked farmers. The digital ecosystem is particularly powerful for empowering businesses, women and youth in agriculture, providing them with tools and platforms to participate more effectively in value chains and decision-making processes.

Maximizing digital innovation in agriculture requires coordinated regional action. Issues such as digital infrastructure gaps, technology, regulatory harmonization, skills development, and cross-border data flows cannot be addressed by individual countries alone. The COMESA Business Forum provides a crucial platform for aligning public and private sector strategies, sharing successful digital agriculture models, and creating the enabling environment for scaled adoption of transformative technologies across the region. In addition to harnessing the region's digital capacity, the Forum will advocate for the free movement of businesspersons across the COMESA region by supporting the gradual relaxation and eventual removal of visa requirements.

### **3.0 OUTLAY OF EVENTS**

The Business Forum will be in three parts as follows:

- a) COMESA – Europe Horticulture Connect (6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> October 2025)
- b) COMESA Business Forum- High level Dialogue (7<sup>th</sup> October)
- c) COMESA Exhibition (7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> October 2025)

**A summary of the events is below:**

Date	ACTIVITY
5 <sup>th</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	Exhibition set up and arrival of EU Buyers
6 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	COMESA-EU Horticulture Connect Seminar (KICC) B2B; B2G, B2C
7 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	18 <sup>th</sup> COMESA Business Forum-High Level Dialogue
8 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	COMESA-EU Horticulture Connect (Cont.)
7 <sup>th</sup> - 9 <sup>th</sup> October 2025	COMESA Exhibition

### 3.1 COMESA International Trade Exhibition

#### "Showcasing COMESA's Best to the World"

- A comprehensive showcase of COMESA's finest products and services, featuring:
- Innovation Pavilions: Agritech, fintech, and digital solutions
- Country Pavilions: Each member state's flagship products
- COMESA Institutions Pavilion
- Partnership Hubs: B2B meeting spaces and deal-making zones
- Future Tech Showcase: Industry 4.0 demonstrations

#### Target Sectors:

- Agriculture & Agro-processing (primary focus)
- Digital Technology & ICT
- Manufacturing & Industrial Equipment
- Financial Services & Fintech
- Tourism & Hospitality
- Mining & Energy
- Textiles & Leather Products

### 3.2 COMESA – EU HORTICULTURE CONNECT

The horticulture value chain stands as one of COMESA's most dynamic and economically vital sectors, generating over \$3.37 billion annually in exports to the European Union alone while employing millions of smallholder farmers across the region. The horticulture value chain's unique combination of high value-addition potential, climate resilience, and capacity for inclusive growth makes it an essential pillar for COMESA's economic transformation, offering pathways for rural development, foreign exchange earnings, and regional integration through harmonized quality standards and cross-border trade facilitation.

Building on the successes achieved under the EU-funded COMESA Regional Enterprise Competitiveness and Access to Markets Programme (RECOMP), the COMESA EDF Institutional Capacity Building Programme (ICBP) will promote strategic partnerships with selected regional organizations that can create opportunities to accelerate progress in various areas of regional trade and economic integration, adopting a rights-based approach. RECOMP has successfully

supported trade and learning missions aimed at boosting the productive and technical capacities of SMEs, including notable missions to the Netherlands and Germany that connected EU buyers directly with COMESA producers.

The **COMESA-EU Connect** platform, supported by ICBP, will build on these achievements by facilitating Business-to-Business meetings, farm visits, Business-to-Government engagements, and partnership dialogues, further strengthening market linkages and fostering inclusive economic growth.

#### **Key Outcomes:**

- Direct B2B partnerships between COMESA producers and EU buyers
- Technology transfer for cold chain and quality systems
- Market access facilitation through European networks
- Investment commitments for agricultural modernization

**Target COMESA Countries:** This will bring several horticulture producing countries in COMESA particularly: Kenya, Egypt, Tunisia, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Uganda, Madagascar, Zambia, Rwanda, Mauritius, Burundi.

**EU Delegation:** Netherlands, Germany, France, Italy (representing 75% of EU-COMESA horticulture trade).

#### **4.0 18<sup>th</sup> COMESA Business Forum**

This annual dialogue brings together Ministers, CEOs, Associations and innovation leaders to chart COMESA's transformation pathway. It provides a platform for the public and private sectors to discuss the challenges and opportunities in the COMESA region, agree on the measures to address them and opportunities to exploit, and subsequently present the findings to the 24<sup>th</sup> COMESA Heads of State and Government Summit. The meeting will feature a high-level opening from the Government of Kenya, COMESA Secretariat and the COMESA Business Council. The sessions will consist of a mix of private sector, public sector and partners from the region and beyond.

## Sessions Overview

### **Session 1: Boosting Agricultural Productivity Through Smart Agriculture to Enhance Agro-Processing and Value Addition**

"From Subsistence to Sustainability: Agritech's Role in Feeding COMESA"

- ❖ Precision agriculture and IoT applications
- ❖ Blockchain for traceability and market access
- ❖ Climate-smart farming solutions
- ❖ Public-private partnerships for agricultural financing

### **Session 2: "Breaking Barriers: Digitalization of Trade and Promotion of Investment**

- ❖ Enhancing business/Investment environment through harmonisation of policies
- ❖ Electronic certificates of origin (eCO) implementation
- ❖ Single window systems and customs digitalization
- ❖ E-commerce frameworks and digital payments

### **Session 3: Enhanced Trade Through Digital Transformation, Focus on Logistics, Transport and Movement of Businesspeople**

- ❖ Implementing digital solutions for supply chain management.
- ❖ Cargo tracking.
- ❖ Port efficiency to optimize the movement of goods and
- ❖ Facilitation of Movement of Businesspeople.
- ❖ Appropriate and Effective Logistics Solutions

### **Case studies – showcasing leading products and companies**

- ❖ Leather
- ❖ Horticulture
- ❖ Digital technologies

COMESA's Institutional Impact will be demonstrated through videos to be played throughout the event

## 5.0 Partnerships

In organising these events and activities there will be cooperation with other COMESA Institutions which include;

- ❖ COMESA Federation of Women in Business (COMFWB)
- ❖ Africa Leather and Leather Products Institute (ALLPI)

- ❖ Trade Development Bank (TDB)
- ❖ The COMESA Re-Insurance Company (ZEP-Re)
- ❖ African Trade and Investment Development Insurance Agency (ATIDI)
- ❖ COMESA Yellow Card
- ❖ Alliance for Commodity Trade in Eastern and Southern Africa (ACTESA)
- ❖ COMESA Clearing House (CCH)
- ❖ CMI
- ❖ COMESA Competition Commission (CCC)
- ❖ COMESA Regional Investment Agency (RIA)

## 6.0 REGISTRATION, SPONSORSHIP AND ENQUIRIES

For further enquiries please contact:

### COMESA Business Council

- ❖ Gallina Tembo, Program Manager, CBC  
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- ❖ Salome Phiri, Communications and Membership Officer, CBC  
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- ❖ Domisa Musonda, Business Policy Advocacy Assistant, CBC  
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### Kenya

- ❖ Mr. Arthur Gichuki, Market Development Manager,  
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**DRAFT PROGRAMME**  
**COMESA -EU HORTICULTURE CONNECT SEMINAR**

**06 OCTOBER 2025**

<b>0800hrs – 830hrs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Accreditation</b></li> <li>• Arrival of Participants.</li> <li>• Coffee and networking.</li> </ul>
<b>0830hrs – 0900hrs</b>	<b>Welcome</b>
<b>0900hrs – 1000hrs</b>	<p><b>OPENING CEREMONY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Director of Ceremony and Welcome Address:</b> Mr. Muai Kunyiha, CBC Board Vice Chairperson, Kenya Association of Manufacturers.</li> <li>• <b>Remarks:</b> Lana Žutelija, Team Leader, Environment &amp; Climate, Rural Development, Trade Cooperation Section, Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Zambia and COMESA.</li> <li>• <b>Remarks:</b> H.E. Chileshe Kapwepwe, Secretary General, COMESA.</li> <li>• <b>Remarks:</b> Hon. Lee Kinyanjui, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry, Kenya.</li> <li>• <b>Remarks:</b> H.E., Dr. Hassan Kibeya, Chairperson, COMESA Council of Ministers, Burundi</li> <li>• <b>Keynote Address:</b> Hon. Mutahi Kagwe Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Kenya.</li> </ul> <p><b>Photo Session</b></p>
<b>1000hrs – 1030hrs</b>	<b>TEA BREAK</b>
<b>1030hrs – 1140hrs</b>	<p><b>Panel Discussion:</b> Overview of the COMESA Horticulture Sector and Challenges faced by Horticulture Farmers accessing EU Market</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Providence Mavubi, Director, Industry and Commerce, COMESA Secretariat.</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Hosea Machuki, CEO of FPEAK.</li> <li>• Mr. Oluwaseun (Seun) Rasheed, Managing Director, SOAK Farms.</li> <li>• EU Company (TBA) (PUM)</li> <li>• Tewodros Zewdie, EHPEA Executive Director.</li> </ul> <p><b>Q &amp; A</b></p>
<b>11400hrs – 1200hrs</b>	Horticulture Market Insights - Dr. Chagema Kedera - Programme Coordinator, COLEAD

<b>1200hrs – 1300hrs</b>	<p>Moderator: Mr Nsangwa Ngwira, Industry and Agriculture Division, COMESA Secretariat</p> <p>Presentations and discussions with EU Companies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. Tom Postma, CEO, Technimex (15 min).</li> <li>• Mr. Wilco Verkuil, CEO, Photondancing (15 min).</li> <li>• Mr. Johan Troost, CEO, Ithaka Organic (15 min).</li> <li>• Mr. Peter van Duijn, Expert horticulture, PUM (15 min).</li> </ul> <p><b>Q &amp; A</b></p>
<b>1300hrs – 1400hrs</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>
<b>1400hrs – 1530hrs</b>	<p><b>Case studies:</b> Showcasing Leading Agro-products and companies in COMESA</p> <p><b>Moderator:</b> Mr. Apollo O. Owuor, CEHA Regional Coordinator, ACTESA.</p> <p><b>Companies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr Seifeldin Mohamed Abdelfattah Abdelmagid Salama, Chief Executive Officer - Geneina: Egypt</li> <li>- Mr. Bruno Mweemba, Managing Director and Founder - Panuka AgriBiz Hub Limited, Zambia</li> <li>- Kenya- the farm to be visited</li> </ul>
<b>1530hrs – 1600hrs</b>	<p><b>CLOSING SESSION</b></p> <p><b>Vote of Thanks</b> - Amb. Dr. Mohamed Kadah, COMESA – Assistant Secretary General (Programmes).</p> <p><b>Closing Remarks</b> - Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry, Kenya.</p>
<b>1600hrs – 1630hrs</b>	<b>COFFEE BREAK</b>
<b>1630hrs – 1800hrs</b>	<b>Business Networking</b>

**DRAFT PROGRAMME**  
**COMESA BUSINESS FORUM HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE**

**7<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2025**

TIME	SESSION
	<b>Accreditation</b>
	<b>7<sup>th</sup> October 2025</b>
<b>0800hrs – 830hrs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrival of Participants.</li> <li>• Coffee and networking.</li> </ul>
<b>0830hrs – 0900hrs</b>	<b>Welcome</b>
<b>0900hrs – 1000hrs</b>	<p>Director of Ceremonies – (TBC)</p> <p><b>OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY:</b></p> <p><b>Anthems</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kenya National Anthem</li> <li>• COMESA Anthem</li> </ul> <p><b>Opening Statements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Welcome Remarks:</b> Ms. Jane Karuku, Chairperson, Kenya Association of Manufacturers</li> <li>• <b>Welcome Address:</b> Mr. James Chimwaza, President, COMESA Business Council (CBC)</li> <li>• <b>Remarks:</b> H.E. Chileshe Kapwepwe, Secretary General, COMESA.</li> <li>• <b>Remarks:</b> Hon. Lee Kinyanjui, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Investments, Trade and Industry, Kenya.</li> <li>• <b>Remarks:</b> H.E., Dr. Hassan Kibeya, Chairperson, COMESA Council of Ministers, Burundi.</li> <li>• <b>Guest of Honour:</b> H.E., Prof. Kithure Kindiki, Deputy President, Government of the Republic of Kenya</li> </ul> <p><b>Photo Session</b></p> <p><b>High Level Tour of the Exhibition</b></p>
<b>1000hrs – 1030hrs</b>	<b>TEA BREAK</b>

<p><b>10.30hrs-10.50hrs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ensuring economic justice by bringing justice to the Common market, <b>COMESA Court of Justice</b>.</li> <li>▪ <b>Kenya Trade and Investment Opportunities:</b> Mr. John Mwendwa, CEO, Kenya Investment Authority (KenInvest).</li> <li>▪ <b>Trade Finance Opportunities:</b> Mr. Michael Awori, CEO, Trade and Development Bank.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1050hrs – 1150hrs</b></p>	<p><b>SESSION 1: Boosting Agriculture Productivity Through Smart Agriculture to enhance value chain competitiveness</b></p> <p><b>Session Chair:</b></p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <p>(a) Mr. Eli Pollak, CEO - Apollo Agriculture - Innovative Start-Up company in Kenya    (b) Ms. Debra Mallowah, Head of Africa, Bayer    (c) Mr. Stephen Muchiri - Eastern Africa Farmer Federation (EAFF)    (d) Representative – Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, Kenya    (e) Dr. John Mukuka, Chief Executive Officer, ACTESA</p> <p><b>Questions, Discussions, Recommendations</b></p>
<p><b>1150hrs – 1300hrs</b></p>	<p><b>SESSION 2: "Breaking Barriers: Digitalization of Trade and Promotion of Investment</b></p> <p><b>Session Chair:</b> Mr. James Ojiambo, Chairperson, CBC Manufacturers Workgroup</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <p>a) COMESA Secretariat, Amb. Dr. Mohamed Kadah, COMESA – Assistant Secretary General (Programmes).    b) Mr. David Ngarama, CEO - Kenya Trade Network Agency (KenTrade).    c) Mr. Jean-Guy Afrika, CEO, Rwanda Development Board.    d) Mr. Vinod Goel, CEO, Jumia Group E-Commerce Platform.    e) Dr. Drishtysingh Ramdenee, Secretary General, Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry    f) African Export-Import Bank    g) Dr. Christopher Onyango, Director, Trade and Customs</p> <p><b>Questions, Discussions, Recommendations</b></p>
<p><b>1300hrs – 1400hrs</b></p>	<p><b>LUNCH</b></p>

<p><b>1415hrs – 1530hrs</b></p>	<p><b>SESSION 3: Enhanced Trade Through Digital Transformation, Focus on Logistics, Transport and Movement of Businesspersons</b></p> <p><b>Session Chair:</b> Mr. Tobias Alando, CEO, Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM)</p> <p><b>Panelists</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Mr. Phil Daka, Trade Kings Group.</li> <li>b) Mr. Charles Mwebembezi, Chairperson, Federation of East African Freight Forwarders Associations (FEAFFA).</li> <li>c) Mr. Calven Mutyavaviri, Chief Executive Officer, Council of Bureaux Yellow Card.</li> <li>d) Trade Mark Africa.</li> <li>e) Ms. Adefunke Adeyemi, Secretary General, Africa Civil Aviation Commission (AFCAC)</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions, Discussions, Recommendations</b></p>
<p><b>1530hrs – 1600hrs</b></p>	<p><b>Words from our Partners/Sponsors</b></p>
<p><b>1600hrs – 1640hrs</b></p>	<p><b>COMESA 30 Years of Impact: Institutional Innovation for Regional Growth- COMESA Institutions</b></p> <p>COMESA Federation of Women in Business (COMFWB)      Africa Leather and Leather Products Institute (ALLPI)      African Trade and Investment Development Insurance Agency (ATIDI)      COMESA Re-Insurance Company (ZEP-Re)      COMESA Competition Commission (CCC)      COMESA Regional Investment Agency (COMESARIA)</p>
<p><b>1640hrs – 1700hrs</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>COFFEE BREAK</b></p>
<p><b>1700hrs – 1730hrs</b></p>	<p><b>CLOSING SESSION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) <b>Resolutions of the Forum</b> - Mr. James Chimwaza, President, CBC</li> <li>(b) <b>Vote of Thanks</b> – Government of the Republic of Kenya</li> <li>(c) <b>Closing Remarks</b> - Dr Dev Haman, Asst. Secretary General - Admin &amp; Finance, COMESA</li> </ul>