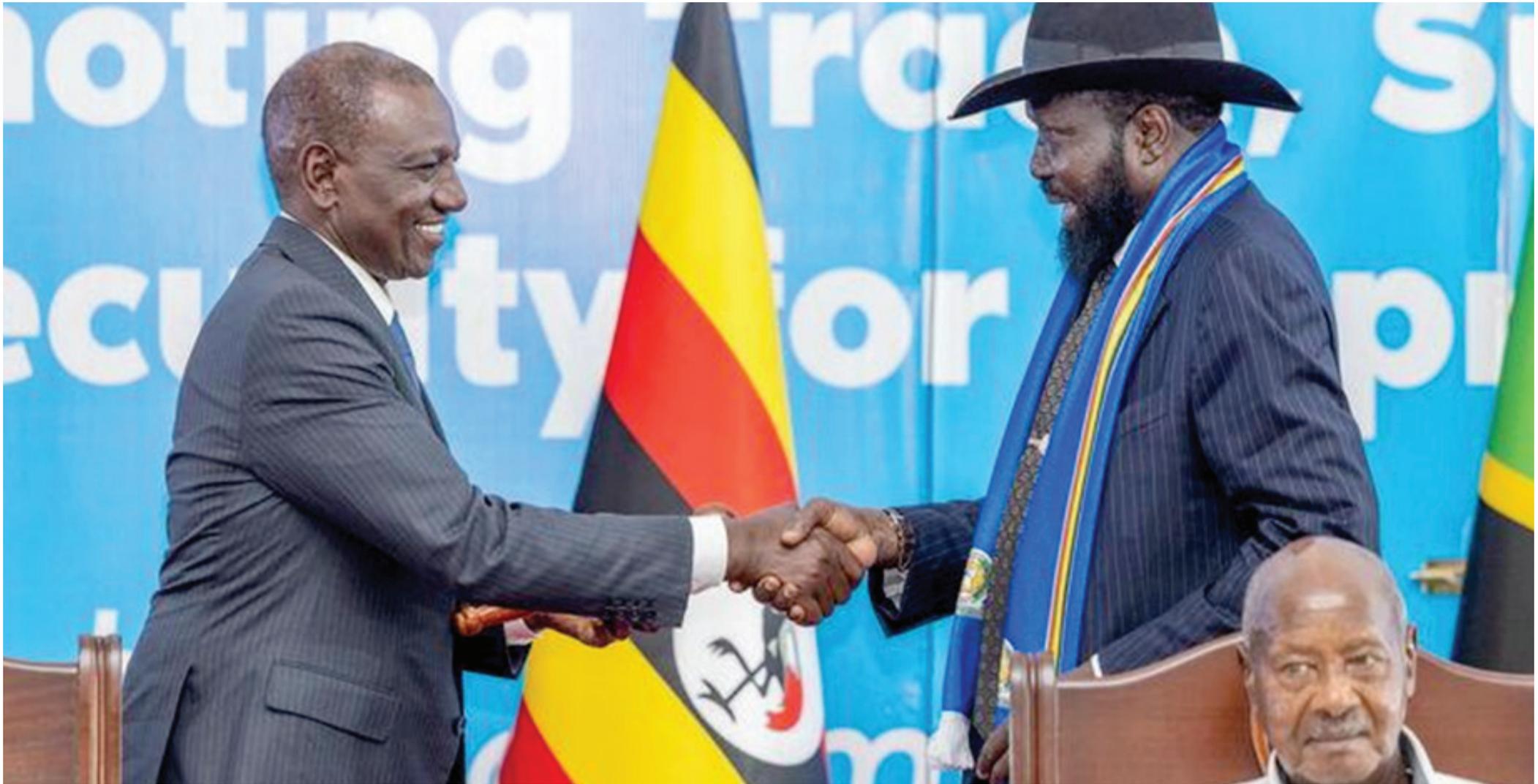




REGIONAL PROGRESS AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

A stronger, interconnected East Africa is not an aspiration but an unfolding project built through sustained collaboration



H.E. President Dr William Ruto, PhD, EGH, when he was elected EAC Chairman, succeeding H.E. President Salva Kiir.

East African Community Integration Agenda: Scorecard of Kenya's One-Year Stewardship

Regional Progress and Shared Responsibility: The year was shaped by a deliberate effort to consolidate regional unity, expand economic opportunity, strengthen institutional credibility, and safeguard peace and stability

From November 30, 2024 to November 30, 2025, Kenya's Chairmanship of the East African Community (EAC) unfolded as a defining chapter in the bloc's integration journey. Anchored in the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community and guided by the vision of H.E. Dr William Samoei Ruto, the year was shaped by a deliberate effort to consolidate regional unity, expand economic opportunity, strengthen institutional credibility, and safeguard peace and stability. The scorecard of this period reflects a Community in motion – confronting structural challenges, expanding its footprint, and reinforcing its collective voice on the continental stage.

At the heart of Kenya's stewardship was a six-pillar agenda focused on expanding the regional market, deepening economic

and socio-cultural ties, advancing trade facilitation, strengthening private sector leadership, enhancing representation and strategic dialogue, and building institutional capacity. These priorities were not pursued in isolation. They were interconnected strands of a broader ambition: To nurture a resilient, competitive and people-centred East African Community capable of delivering tangible benefits to over 300 million citizens.

Representation and diplomacy featured prominently throughout the year. The region rallied behind the candidature of Rt. Hon Raila Odinga as the EAC's sole nominee for the African Union Commission Chairmanship. Although the bid did not succeed, the unified endorsement by Partner States demonstrated a shared determination to amplify East Africa's influence in shaping continental priorities,

from transboundary infrastructure to climate resilience and private sector development. The moment underscored the bloc's maturity in presenting a common front in global affairs.

Kenya's assumption of the rotating chairmanship of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) further elevated the region's strategic standing. By pledging to harness digitalisation to deepen value chains and unlock shared prosperity, Kenya positioned itself as a bridge between regional blocs, reinforcing synergies among EAC, COMESA and broader continental integration frameworks. The Chairmanship also demonstrated diplomatic responsiveness in moments of tension.

President Ruto's decision to appoint Raila Odinga as Special Envoy to South Sudan signalled Kenya's proactive commitment to mediation and stability, reaffirming the principle that economic integration flourishes only where peace prevails.

Unlocking Regional Commerce

The year also consolidated the significance of expanded membership. The

accession of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and South Sudan continued to reshape the Community's geographic and economic landscape. With a span stretching from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic corridor, the EAC strengthened its strategic positioning, broadened its market base, and enhanced its attractiveness to investors.

Somalia's integration, in particular, boosted trade flows and expanded access to the common market framework, while South Sudan advanced professional mobility through regional agreements.

Trade facilitation emerged as one of the most visible markers of progress. The EAC recorded a trade surplus in the first quarter of 2025, driven by a surge in exports and increased competitiveness among Partner States. Growth in domestic exports and re-exports reflected improved value addition and production capacity. Intra-African trade contributed significantly to this performance, reinforcing the bloc's internal economic dynamism even as inflation remained a concern re-

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Statement by the Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of East African Community Affairs, Republic of Kenya



Over the past year, Kenya has had the distinct honour of serving as Chair of the East African Community at a defining moment in our region's history. This period has reaffirmed our collective commitment to the ideals enshrined in the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community and to the shared vision of a prosperous, peaceful and people-centred bloc.

Our stewardship has focused on accelerating integration in practical, measurable ways. We have advanced strategic infrastructure projects that connect our markets, strengthened cross-border trade facilitation frameworks, and deepened collaboration in energy, digital connectivity and transport corridors. From the continued expansion of the Standard Gauge Railway network to enhanced operations at regional ports and one-stop border posts, we have prioritised connectivity as the backbone of economic transformation. These investments are not merely national undertakings; they are regional enablers designed to unlock opportunity for businesses, farmers, manufacturers and youth across Partner States.

We have also strengthened our collective diplomatic voice. The unified endorsement of a single regional candidate for continental leadership demonstrated the maturity and solidarity of our Community. Our engagements on regional peace and security, particularly in addressing developments in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan, reaffirm that economic integration cannot thrive without stability. Kenya remains committed to dialogue, mediation and principled engagement in pursuit of lasting peace.

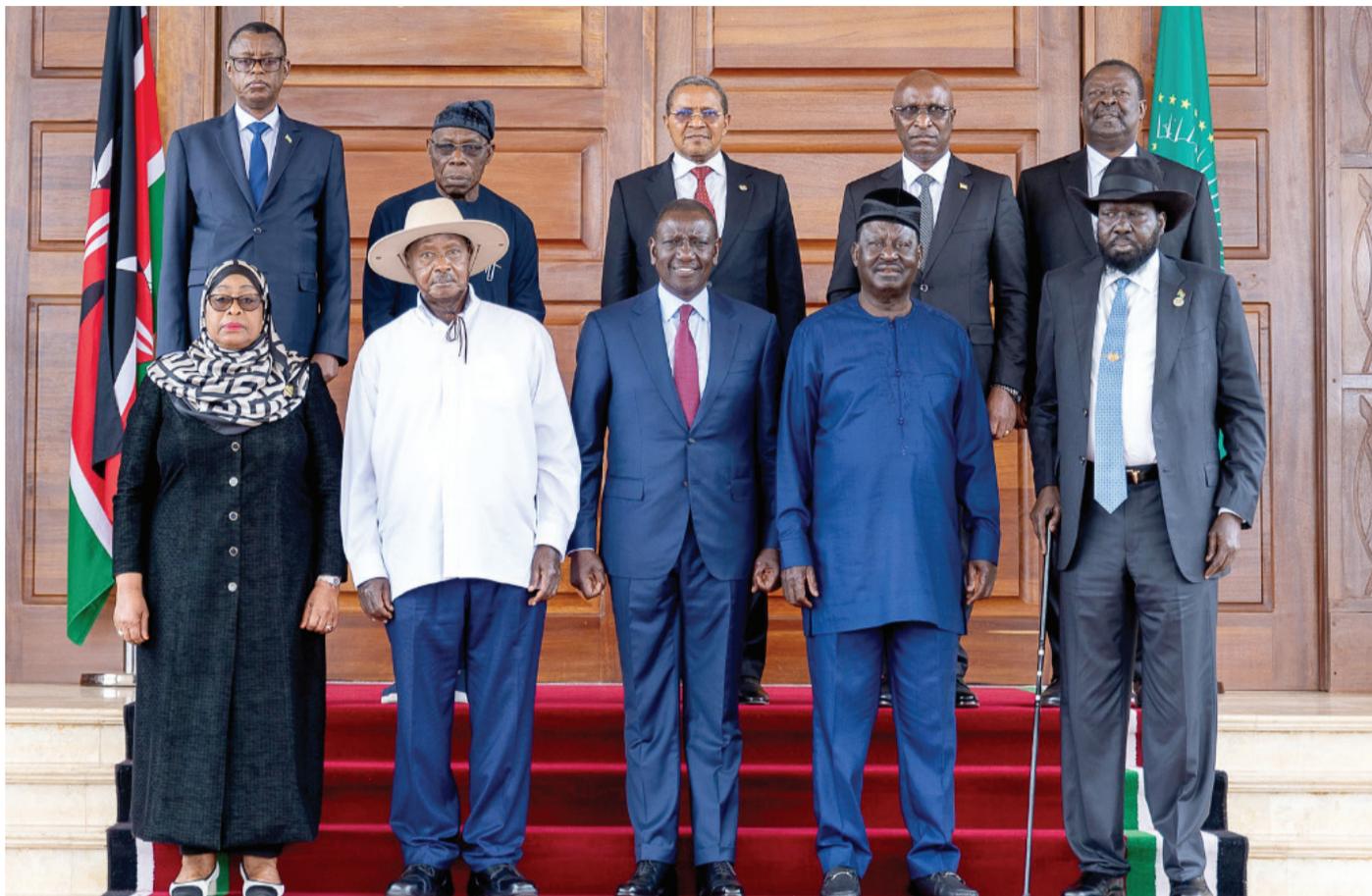
Digital transformation has equally been central to our agenda. Through the expansion of the One Network Area and harmonised regulatory frameworks, we are moving steadily toward a more integrated digital single market. This complements ongoing reforms aimed at enhancing the movement of people, goods and services within our region.

As we conclude our Chairmanship, we recognise that integration is a continuous journey. The progress made over this period provides a strong foundation, but it must be sustained through disciplined implementation of Summit directives, strengthened institutional accountability and deeper private sector participation.

Kenya stands ready to continue working closely with all Partner States and the EAC Secretariat to ensure that our Community remains resilient, competitive and responsive to the aspirations of our citizens.

The future of East Africa lies in unity of purpose and shared action. Together, we will continue building a stronger Community that delivers inclusive growth and lasting prosperity for all.

Hon. Beatrice Askul Moe
Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of East African Community, THE ASALS and Regional Development Republic of Kenya



Presentation of Rt. Hon Raila Odinga as EAC's Joint AUC Candidate.

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requiring coordinated macroeconomic management.

Digital integration strengthened these trade gains. The One Network Area initiative, by harmonising roaming charges and reducing communication costs, stimulated cross-border connectivity and economic activity. Expanded participation among Partner States moved the region closer to a unified digital single market.

Complementing this progress, Tanzania's introduction of satellite-to-phone guidelines expanded connectivity to underserved areas while ensuring domestic participation in the evolving telecommunications ecosystem. Together, these reforms underscored the centrality of digital infrastructure in unlocking mobility, commerce and financial inclusion.

Infrastructure development remained the backbone of integration. The Standard Gauge Railway projects in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania advanced steadily, with coordinated commitments to parallel completion timelines between Kenya and Uganda signalling a shift from fragmented national efforts toward harmonised regional execution.

Uganda secured financing and commenced construction on its SGR segment, linking to Kenya's existing network and strengthening access to the port of Mombasa. Tanzania reinforced its SGR operations through the establishment of a dedicated electricity supply region, ensuring reliability and safeguarding investment.

The joint Tanzania-Burundi electrified railway project further exemplified cross-border infrastructure collaboration.

Ports and logistics transfor-

mation complemented rail expansion. Dar es Salaam Port recorded historic growth in cargo handling and container throughput, enhancing its capacity to serve landlocked neighbours and cementing its role as a regional logistics hub. Investments in automation and efficiency reduced vessel turnaround times and strengthened competitiveness.

In Kenya, the Suam One-Stop Border Post approached completion, promising faster customs clearance and reduced cargo processing time, while the Kenya-Tanzania electricity interconnector went live, embedding both countries into the broader Eastern Africa Power Pool framework and deepening energy trade.

Road corridors advanced integration across multiple

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HIGHLIGHTS

- The year consolidated the significance of expanded membership. The accession of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Somalia and South Sudan continued to reshape the Community's geographic and economic landscape.
- With a span stretching from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic corridor, the EAC strengthened its strategic positioning, broadened its market base, and enhanced its attractiveness to investors.



Kenya, Uganda Embark on Parallel Finish of Their SGR Lines.



Uganda Signs \$800m Financing Deal with Saudi Bank for SGR



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Presidents Salva Kiir (South Sudan), Paul Kagame (Rwanda) and Yoweri Museveni (Uganda) launching construction of SGR

East African Community Integration Agenda

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fronts. The Tanga-Bagamoyo Road, part of the East African Coastal Transport Corridor, progressed with support from development partners, reinforcing connectivity between Tanzania and Kenya. Legislators called for expedited completion of the transnational coastal highway linking Bagamoyo and Malindi, recognising its potential to boost tourism and cargo movement.

The Kampala-Juba-Bangui corridor initiative illustrated commitment to connecting East and Central Africa through phased, jointly financed road development.

Meanwhile, Kenya's feasibility approval for the Nairobi-Mombasa Expressway marked another step toward modernising the Northern Corridor, with anticipated reductions in travel time and enhanced efficiency for cargo destined for inland Partner States.

Maritime integration also gained renewed momentum. The arrival of a record-length container vessel at Lamu Port signalled Kenya's ambition to establish the port as a premier transshipment hub in the West Indian Ocean region. With expansion plans envisioning multiple berths and substantial cargo capacity, Lamu's emergence complements the enduring centrality of Mombasa Port and strengthens East Africa's maritime competitiveness. The Mombasa-Nairobi SGR marked its eighth anniversary, continuing to transport millions of passengers and significant freight volumes, symbolising modernisation and regional connectivity.

On Lake Victoria, the revitalisation of Kisumu Port and the operationalisation of MV Uhuru I and MV Uhuru II reshaped inland water transport. Increased cargo volumes and coordinated upgrades by Uganda and Tanzania signalled a collective revival of the lake as a functional regional transport corridor. These investments illustrated how in-

tegration extends beyond highways and rail to blue economy infrastructure that directly transforms livelihoods.

Powering Integration

Energy cooperation deepened in parallel. The Kenya-Tanzania interconnector enabled bilateral electricity trade, while Tanzania's policy shift to open electricity transmission to private participation marked a new phase in energy sector reform. Regional hydropower collaboration among Rwanda, DRC and Burundi advanced with renewed momentum for the Ruzizi III project, reinforcing energy security and integration. Cross-border power trade, supported by expanding transmission infrastructure, strengthened resilience and industrial capacity.

Integration Beyond Economics: Peace and Security Diplomacy

Beyond infrastructure and trade, the Chairmanship placed equal emphasis on socio-cultural and political cohesion. The 24th Extra-Ordinary Summit addressed developments in Eastern DRC, reaffirming Treaty principles of peace and regional stability.

Military chiefs convened to coordinate responses to security challenges, while diplomatic engagements between DRC and Rwanda reflected progress toward dialogue and economic cooperation. In health, cross-border malaria control initiatives, kidney transplant advancements, and regional health institutions demonstrated integration's human dimension.

Sports and cultural events further reinforced unity. The co-hosting of CHAN tournaments and preparations for the Africa Cup of Nations 2027 showcased collective readiness and shared infrastructure development. Tourism cooperation expanded through international showcases and policy reforms, with Partner States securing recognition and nom-

inations on global platforms. Kenya's decision to expand exemptions under its Electronic Travel Authorisation system signalled responsiveness to continental calls for greater mobility, advancing travel freedom for EAC citizens and African nationals.

Broadening the Economic Frontier

The expansion of regional markets remained a central ambition. Uganda leveraged AfCFTA export facilities, while East Africa's rising position in global coffee trade highlighted agricultural competitiveness. MSME Trade Fairs fostered cross-border partnerships and innovation, reinforcing small business participation in integration. Agricultural transformation efforts spanned agro-ecology initiatives, beekeeping innovation, poultry expansion, and diversification strategies in DRC. Despite insecurity challenges, exports to DRC continued to grow, underscoring resilience.

Institutional capacity development underpinned these achievements. Discussions advanced on amendments to the EAC Treaty and frameworks to deter non-compliance with regional obligations. Judicial conferences, strategic dialogues among Heads of Public Service, and strengthened Lake Victoria conservation commitments reinforced governance and sustainability. Somalia's fulfillment of financial obligations under the Treaty signalled institutional consolidation within the expanded bloc.

Private sector participation was deliberately elevated. Structured dialogues with the East African Business Council and the EAC Secretariat ensured that market-driven integration informed policy. The African Grain Trade Summit underscored agriculture's role in food sovereignty and value chain transformation, while horticulture ambitions in Tanza-

Statement by the Principal Secretary, State Department for East African Community Integration



The past year has been marked by steady progress in advancing Kenya's integration commitments within the East African Community framework. Our work at the State Department has focused on ensuring that regional decisions translate into tangible national implementation while aligning domestic policies with Community obligations.

We have prioritized coordination across ministries, departments and agencies to strengthen compliance with EAC protocols and directives. Through structured inter-ministerial engagements and continuous liaison with the EAC Secretariat, we have enhanced policy harmonization in trade, customs, infrastructure development and the movement of persons. Particular attention has been given to operationalizing commitments under the Common Market and Customs Union pillars to ensure that businesses and citizens experience real benefits from integration.

Infrastructure connectivity has remained a core area of engagement. We have supported regional coordination on transport corridors, cross-border energy interconnections and digital integration initiatives that reduce transaction costs and stimulate trade. At the same time, we have deepened collaboration with the private sector to ensure that integration is market-driven and responsive to enterprise needs.

Institutional strengthening has also been central to our efforts. We continue to support reforms aimed at enhancing the effectiveness, accountability and sustainability of EAC organs and institutions. Our engagement extends to public awareness initiatives that promote understanding of integration opportunities at both national and county levels.

As we move forward, our focus remains on accelerating implementation, resolving non-tariff barriers, and ensuring that Kenya fully leverages the expanded regional market. Integration is not an abstract policy objective; it is a practical pathway to economic transformation, job creation and regional stability. We remain committed to delivering on this mandate with diligence, collaboration and strategic foresight.

Dr. Caroline W. Karugu, PhD,
Principal Secretary,
State Department for East African Community.

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President William Ruto officially assumed the role from President Évariste Ndayishimiye of Burundi during the 24th COMESA Summit.

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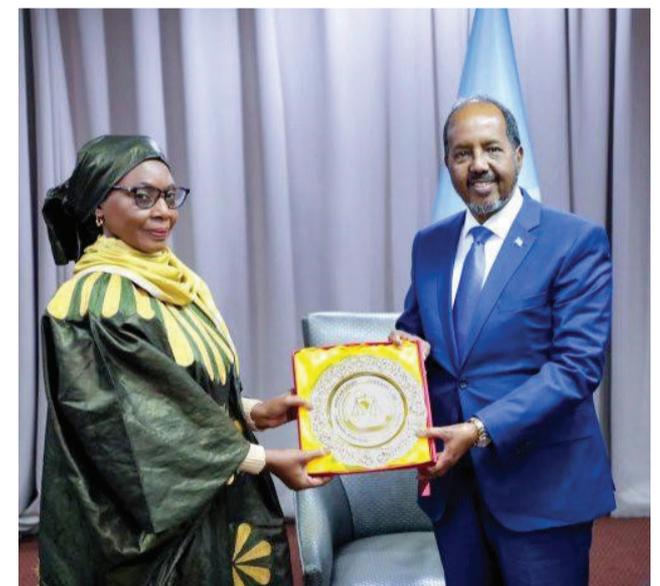
nia reflected sectoral confidence. Challenges, however, remained. Cross-border traders faced disruptions linked to insecurity in parts of the region, freight logistics encountered strain, and humanitarian pressures persisted in Somalia. These realities highlighted the complexity of integration within dynamic geopolitical and socio-economic contexts.

As Kenya concluded its Chairmanship, the narrative was one of progress grounded in collective resolve. Infrastructure connectivity strengthened, digital integration advanced, trade expanded, institutional frameworks matured, and regional diplomacy intensified. Yet the work ahead remains substantial. Deepening and widening integration requires accelerated implementation of pending directives, inclusive growth strategies that reach grassroots communities, and responsiveness to evolving global economic realities.

The year's stewardship reaffirmed a central truth: A stronger, interconnected East Africa is not an aspiration but an unfolding project built through sustained collaboration. The foundation laid during this period stands as a platform for accelerated integration, shared prosperity and enduring peace. The journey continues, – undertaken together, guided by Treaty principles, and driven by a collective determination to realise the full potential of the East African Community.



US Firms Back \$760 Million Congo-Rwanda-Burundi Hydropower Plant.



New Partners States Reap Benefits following EAC Accession.



President Samia Suluhu Delivers: The JP Magufuli Bridge As Tanzania's New Transport Marvel



MV Uhuru Powers East Africa's Lifeline in Lake Victoria.