HIGHLIGHT OF THE WEEK

6th May 2020
TradeMark East Africa Board Chair Amb. Erastus Mwencha and Chief Executive Officer Frank Matsaert, jointly wrote an opinion piece highlighting the importance of continued regional trade during the Covid-19 crisis. An excerpt of it reads; "Continued trade at this time is crucial for three main reasons. First, trade is essential in ensuring people and governments have what they need to weather the pandemic, from food to medical supplies and hygiene products. Efficient and expedited trade is critical to solving problems the region is facing given the high levels of unanticipated demand for related products and the speed at which Covid-19 has spread in many countries." Read more.

TRADE AND COVID-19 NEWS UPDATES

Impacts of COVID-19 on Eastern Africa Trade, Transit and Borders
TradeMark East Africa works closely with Government and Private Sector partners across the Eastern Africa region. As information about the Coronavirus pandemic rapidly changes, TMEA is committed to supporting Safe Trade and providing the most recent information on COVID-19 impacts to trade in Eastern Africa, responses by private sector and the measures taken by governments. Every week, we compile reports detailing the
Some of the information in this brief may have changed after publication. For the latest COVID-19 information related to health, readers are encouraged to use resources from WHO and national public health department. Read more.

** Rwf800 billion to accelerate Rwanda's economic recovery**

Fixing the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic could cost the Government over Rwf800 billion over two fiscal years. The spending would propel economic growth rate to an average of 8 per cent by 2022. With the recent partial lifting of the lockdown allowing resumption of economic activity, all eyes are on the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning strategy to accelerate recovery. Read more.

** Truck drivers to be issued with Covid-19 free certificates before travelling**

Truck drivers will first have to obtain a certificate from the Ministry of Health confirming that they are Covid-19 free before being allowed to travel outside the country, Transport Cabinet Secretary James Macharia has said. Mr Macharia, during the daily briefings on the current coronavirus situation in the country at Afya House on Wednesday, further said that the drivers will be tested 48 hours before their scheduled travel. Read more.

** EAC promotes 'build, buy East Africa'**

The private sector associations and corporates in the East African Community (EAC) are pushing for the six countries to embrace a recovery strategy in post Covid-19 pandemic dubbed BEABEA (Buy East Africa Build East Africa). That is a medium- and long-term approach as states have been called upon to provide support to key industries to expand their capacity and establish new industries to manufacture import substitutes in the region. Under the East African Business Council (EABC), the sector has called for partner states to consider improving the business and regulatory environment to ensure formalization of businesses in the region so as to spur improving the economy of partner states. Read more.

** Nigerian official confirms new date for AfCFTA’s take-off**

The Acting Chief Trade Negotiator/Director General, Nigerian Office for Trade Negotiations, Mr. Victor Liman, has said that the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) is now expected to commence from January 1, 2021. Speaking on Nigeria’s Channels Television programme on Thursday, Liman said that the AfCFTA, which was earlier scheduled to kick-off on July 1, 2020, was postponed due to the ravaging impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Africa. Read more.

** PUBLICATIONS CORNER**

**The AfCFTA Year Zero report**

The AfCFTA Year Zero report aims to provide a baseline of the continent’s preparedness towards Start of AfCFTA Trading. This part one report focuses on the preparedness of governments. The next series of reports will continually provide a baseline assessment and projections of other ‘critical success elements’ of the AfCFTA. Read more.