

## Meeting with African Desk Group

EBA has received a delegation from African Desk Group, on Tuesday the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2023, at EBA premises. The meeting was headed by Dr. Mohamed Youssef, EBA Executive Director, and the delegation was headed by PATIENT SAYIBA TAMBWE, the Executive Chairman of African Desk Group, and BARNABE KIKAYA BIN KARUBI the Chief Executive Officer.

In the beginning, Dr. Mohamed Youssef started by welcoming the delegation and gave a brief introduction about EBA.

As well he gave an introduction on “Africa in Focus” conference that was recently organized by EBA and attended by 25 African Ambassadors.

He highlighted on 2 main recommendations that came out of the conference where there will be room for cooperation between African Desk Group and EBA on implementing them.

1. Creating a comprehensive and informative Data Base about African countries
2. Establishing an African shipping line that can be initiated by the financial participation of the African countries

### ▪ PATIENT SAYIBA TAMBWE

Tambwe started his speech by giving an introduction about the African Desk Group, he said that it is an advisory, consultancy and implementation organization, trying to gather many African patrons to share their visions in order to promote and expand business in Egypt and in all Africa by providing business analysis and facilitating the contacts.

He added that the African economy has faced a lot of challenges and obstacles from other powerful economies, and it is time for it to rise.

Due to the lack of information in Africa, he assured that EBA and African Desk Group could collaborate to achieve their ambition to be the main reliable source of information in Africa to promote the trade and investment between the African Countries.

He pointed out that the African Desk Group has to implement 4 important main steps in order to achieve its goals:

- 1) Remove all the barriers between the African Countries, that face and hinder the business flow.
- 2) Facilitate transport and logistics supply chain and establishing an African maritime line in cooperation with both private and public sector.
- 3) Promote the implementation of African continental free trade agreement.
- 4) communication and advocacy on issues of concern

▪ **BARNABE KIKAYA BIN KARUBI**

Karubi said that Africa is facing lot of obstacles to transform the African integration into reality, so that to solve the challenge of the transportation and logistics between the Countries, he suggested to establish an African shipping line, cooperation of all African Countries. He added that this idea needs more research and contribution of all the African parties to be implemented.

FARAJA MGWABATI mentioned that providing feasibility studies and research would help the organization to achieve its goals.

▪ **Chris Landsberg**

Lansberg said that the Ambassador of China referred to the capacity of the African population (1.5 billion), that it is near to the capacity of India and China, but China and India each are acting as one country, but Africa contains 6 regions and many countries, so we should unify all these regions to act as one unit.

He called for the harmonization between the African Countries and having one comprehensive data base despite of different policies and challenges, he assured also on the importance of solving the logistics and transportation challenges as they cost lot of money.

▪ **Zaida Dinaully**

Dinaully said that the 54 countries in Africa should find the common issues between them and moving forward in solving all the obstacles, despite of all the differences between them.

▪ **Dr. Mohamed Youssef**

Dr. Youssef clarified that the African Free Trade Agreement are facing lot of challenges, there are problems in transferring goods between the African countries.

In addition, He assured on the importance of creating awareness to all the African countries in order to act as one continent with same visions, also the private sector in Africa should lead the development by giving it the chance to gather and have a direct contact

During the discussions the below points were raised:

1. Agreeing on the importance of having a comprehensive data base
2. Regarding the shipping line, the African desk group mentioned that this decision was taken by the leaders of the states back in 1975 , but there should be a political will to implement the idea after doing the necessary studies and it can be financed through the main financial institutions in Africa in addition to governments' shares.

**At the end of the meeting, EBA and African Desk Group agreed on Signing a MOU between them, on the second half of May 2023.**