

**41st Annual Conference of East, Central and Southern Africa Employers'
Organisations**

**Walvis Bay, Namibia
14 – 15 February 2017**

THE WALVIS BAY DECLARATION

Namibian Employers' Federation



International Organisation of Employers
Organisation Internationale des Employeurs
Organización Internacional de Empleadores
The Global Voice of Business



jobsforafrica



Co-funded by the European Union

41st Annual Conference of East, Central and Southern Africa Employers' Organisations

Walvis Bay, Namibia
14 – 15 February 2017

THE WALVIS BAY DECLARATION

We, the leadership of the most representative national employers' organisations from East, Central & Southern Africa, members of Business Africa and the International Organisation of Employers, and supporters of the Jobs for Africa Foundation, gathered in Walvis Bay on 14 and 15 February 2017, hereby reclaim, and commit to fully exercising, our role as contributors to sustained growth and creators of jobs in our region, especially for the youth.

Conscious of the challenges with which we are confronted in our countries in relation to this mission and recalling our determination to act decisively and in partnership at national, regional and international level, we dedicated our 41st annual meeting to the theme of ***Skills Development for Youth Employment*** and resolve to build upon the deliberations of this meeting in advancing our mission;

Recalling the Casablanca Declaration (2015) and the Blueprint for Jobs in Africa (2015) and the commitment of employers to creating employment opportunities;

Recognising that unemployment, especially among the youth, is reaching devastating proportions in the sub-region, representing a risk to the realisation of United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 8 "*to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all*", to the eradication of poverty, as well as to security, and enterprise, social and economic development;

Appreciating the need for co-operation and coherence between employers, workers and governments to address this issue;

Understanding that employers cannot create employment without an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises as set out in the 2007 International Labour Conference Conclusions on the promotion of sustainable enterprises and within the ten recommendations of the Blueprint for Jobs in Africa;

Recognising the work being undertaken to identify national needs for creating sustainable enterprises leading to sustainable employment;

Further recognising the need for enhancing education and training among the youth to bridge the skills gap and to meet the needs of the labour market now and into the future;

Further understanding that internationally recognised approaches to youth development and employability include work-readiness programmes, such as apprenticeships, on-the-job training, artisan training, remote-learning courses, among others, as promoted, inter alia, through the Global Apprenticeship Network (GAN);

We hereby declare that we will:

1. Commit to working with all employers in the East, Central & Southern Africa region to advance the empowerment and employment of young people;
2. Promote investment in skills development, including in “soft” and STEM skills, and vocational training in line with our respective competitive advantages, the current needs of the labour market and anticipating the needs of the future world of work in our countries;
3. Embrace an inclusive approach to the design and implementation of educational curricula/training programmes that includes the private sector, workers’ representatives, education and training institutions and young people themselves;
4. Work with governments and workers’ representatives to further promote each member state’s ILO Decent Work Country Programme;
5. Cooperate closely with governments to find avenues, in the form of incentives among others, which will encourage employers to take on apprentices;
6. Advocate for the fair and decent treatment of apprentices in line with the ILO’s fundamental principles and rights at work;
7. Promote and acknowledge vocational training as a means to entrenching skills and learning and elevate vocational work as an aspirational and valuable career path;
8. Raise awareness of the job creating and development potential of self-employment and entrepreneurship and advocate for conducive regulatory and institutional frameworks that support and empower young entrepreneurs;
9. Provide support and advice services that meet the needs of start-ups, particularly by young people, and optimise their viability and sustainability;

10. Collaborate closely with governments and workers' representatives to encourage job-intensive enterprise development;
11. Encourage the development of sustainable large, small and micro enterprises, which will lead to sustainable employment;
12. Support the Jobs for Africa Foundation in its mission to sustain growth and accelerate the pace of job creation, particularly for the youth, by working towards and advocating for the realisation of the 10 recommendations set out in the Blueprint for Jobs in Africa;
13. Undertake to report annually in a harmonised, detailed and measurable manner on progress made and provide venues for the sharing of information, experiences and outcomes.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The participants wish to extend their heartfelt thanks to the leadership and staff of the Namibian Employers' Federation for their hospitality and warm welcome. Their commitment, enthusiasm and organisational skills in hosting this event have made possible the rich exchange of expertise, information and experience that will contribute to the implementation of the Blueprint for Jobs in Africa and make a real difference in the development of skills and the creation of jobs for the youth of East, Central and Southern Africa.

The presence of the Hon. Bro-Matthew Shinguadia, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation, Republic of Namibia; the Hon. Cleophas Mutjavikua, Governor of Erongo Region; and of His Worship, Mr Immanuel Wilfred, Mayor of Walvis Bay, highlights the level of priority which they too accord to the urgent matter of sustaining growth and accelerating the creation of jobs, particularly for our youth at national and regional level. Sincere thanks go to them for taking the time from their busy schedules to deliver their words of welcome, encouragement and support for the work and objectives of the East, Central and Southern Africa Employers' Organisations.

Sincere thanks are due also to the International Organisation of Employers, Business Africa, the International Labour Organization, the Jobs for Africa Foundation, and the European Commission for their various forms of support to this Conference.

Finally, the interventions of all the panellists and participants must also be acknowledged. Their valuable insights, contributions to the deliberations, and collaborative and resolute approach have made possible this Declaration of commitments endorsed today.

Walvis Bay, Namibia

15 February 2017

SIGNATORIES TO THE DECLARATION (ALPHABETICAL BY COUNTRY)

EAST, CENTRAL & SOUTHERN AFRICA EMPLOYERS' ORGANISATIONS			
COUNTRY	SURNAME	FIRST NAME	ORGANISATION
BOTSWANA	MOATSHE	RACIOUS	Business Botswana
D.R. CONGO	VERINGA-GIESKES	PATRICIA	Fédération des Entreprises du Congo (FEC)
LESOTHO	TSOLO	HLALELE	Association of Lesotho Employers (ALEB)
MADAGASCAR	ANDRIAMAMONJIARISON	JOSÉPHINE SOANORONDRIAKA	Groupement des Entreprises de Madagascar (GEM)
MALAWI	MUNTHALI	BEYANI	Employers' Consultative Association of Malawi (ECAM)
NAMIBIA	SHIKONGO	ELIAS	Namibian Employers' Federation (NEF)
NAMIBIA	PARKHOUSE	TIM	Namibian Employers' Federation (NEF)
SOUTH AFRICA	JACK	BEVERLY	Business Unity South Africa
SWAZILAND	MASEKO	MUSA	Federation of Swaziland Employers and Chamber of Commerce (FSE & CC)
TANZANIA	MLIMUKA	AGGREY	Association of Tanzania Employers (ATE)
UGANDA	SSENABULYA	ROSEMARY	Federation of Uganda Employers (FUE)
ZAMBIA	CHISAMBO	TYSON BRUNO	Zambia Federation of Employers (ZFE)
ZIMBABWE	KAHWEMA	JOSEPHAT	Employers' Confederation of Zimbabwe (EMCOZ)

ADDITIONAL CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

REGIONAL & INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS		
BUSINESS AFRICA	MDWABA	MTHUNZI
BUSINESS AFRICA	MUGO	JACQUELINE
INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION, ACT/EMP (SOUTH AFRICA)	MACHAILO-ELLIS	MARIA
INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION, ACT/EMP (EAST AFRICA)	NJUGUNA HM	HEZRON
INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION (HARARE)	PHORORO	HOPOLANG
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION OF EMPLOYERS	MUIA	FREDERICK
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION OF EMPLOYERS	AWUKU	ANETHA
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION OF EMPLOYERS	HOTHAM	LINDA

REGIONAL, LOCAL & GOVERNMENT DIGNITARIES FROM THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA		
GOVERNOR OF THE ERONGO REGION	MUTJAVIKUA	CLEOPHAS
MAYOR OF WALVIS BAY	WILFRED	IMMANUEL
PERMANENT SECRETARY, MINISTRY OF LABOUR, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION, REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA	SHINGUADJA	BRO-MATTHEW

ENTERPRISE & OTHER REPRESENTATIVES		
CO-FOUNDER & MANAGING DIRECTOR, LEAP, NAMIBIA	ANGULA	ALLY
MANAGING DIRECTOR, XWAMA CULTURAL VILLAGE	KADHIKWA	TWAPEWA
CEO, NOMAD SPA	AKWENYE	MARIANNE
DIRECTOR, BANKING SERVICES, BANK OF NAMIBIA	SHIVUTE	SAM
EXECUTIVE CHAIRPERSON, NATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL OF NAMIBIA	KAPERRE	MANDELA
COSDEF, NAMIBIA	MULLER	JEREMY
YOUNG AFRICA (NAMIBIA) TRUST	BELLENS	DIRK
YOUNG AFRICA (NAMIBIA) TRUST	BELLENS	YVETTE