

NEWS & FEATURES

Norway: ‘Proud to Work with SAGCOT to Boost Agricultural Productivity’

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At the opening of REPOA’s 28th Annual Research Workshop, the Norwegian Ambassador in Tanzania, H.E. Ambassador Tone Tinnes, underscored the critical role of regional trade, sustainable growth, and agricultural transformation in Tanzania’s development. She also expressed pride in Norway partnering with SAGCOT and other Tanzanian initiatives, underscoring the collaborative commitment to increase productivity in agriculture and other sectors.

"We are proud to work together with partners, SACCOT, and others to increase productivity in agriculture and other sectors. And we are proud, all of us, for bringing in companies with the competence and capital needed for building sustainable and sustained growth, productive capacities and trade. Partnership, like friendship, should be dialogue, non-standard," she noted.

The global price surge for energy, food, and fertilizers in February 2022 triggered economic disruptions worldwide. H.E. Ambassador Tinnes highlighted the severe repercussions felt in East Africa, stating, "In Tanzania and neighboring countries, the cost of inputs went up, living costs rose, and government expenses escalated." Even as some immediate effects started to recede in 2023, she warned that the experience emphasizes the importance of resilient, climate-friendly production practices to buffer against potential future disruptions.

Tanzania and Norway’s Joint Climate Efforts and Pre-COP29 Exchange

In response to these challenges, Tanzania and Norway engaged in a pre-COP29 exchange to strengthen climate resilience and support a green economic transition. Ambassador Tinnes acknowledged the urgency of sustainable climate action, noting, "Climate change is affecting nature and societies globally." Through this collaborative initiative, Tanzania is deepening its commitment to environmentally friendly production, with East Africa demonstrating leadership on climate action and structural economic transformation for sustainable growth.

East Africa Leads Regional Integration for Economic Growth

Ambassador Tinnes celebrated East Africa’s role as a leader in regional integration, recognizing frameworks like the East African Community (EAC), COMESA, SADC, and the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) as vital tools for unlocking the region’s economic potential. "The ongoing three-partite efforts of the EAC, COMESA, and SADC, and finally the AfCFTA for the entire continent, represent exciting opportunities to further boost integration," she remarked, noting that this will "significantly increase value addition and

benefits accruing to Tanzania and Africa overall in the international economy.” For these benefits to reach everyone, she emphasized that trade policy must be people-centered and include the empowerment of women, who make up half of the labor force.

Strengthening Africa-EU Trade Relations

Highlighting the importance of African-European trade, Ambassador Tinnes shared that since 2013, trade between Africa and the EU has grown by 27%, with the EU remaining Africa’s top trading partner and largest exporter. She expressed hope for further expansion and emphasized collaboration between the EAC Partner States and European countries, including those in the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), to pursue a Joint Declaration on Cooperation on Trade and Investment. “Let’s work together on this,” she urged, underscoring that deeper cooperation will foster economic resilience and sustainable development across the continent.

Norway’s Commitment to Tanzania’s Vision 2050

As Tanzania advances toward its Vision 2050, which sets ambitious national development goals, Ambassador Tinnes affirmed Norway’s dedication as a trusted partner. “We are proud to work with SAGCOT and others to increase productivity in agriculture and other sectors,” she said, specifically referencing Norway’s support for initiatives like SAGCOT (Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania) that boosts agricultural productivity and promote sustainable development. Highlighting the strength of this collaboration, she stated, “We are proud, all of us, for bringing in companies that bring competence and capital needed for building sustainable and sustained growth, productive capacities, and trade.”

Partnerships as Foundations for Sustainable Progress

Ambassador Tinnes emphasised the importance of partnerships rooted in open communication and genuine collaboration. “Partnership, like friendship, should be rooted in dialogue,” she noted, reinforcing the need for inclusive, adaptable communication as the foundation of successful international cooperation. As Tanzania and Norway work toward shared goals, she emphasized that Norway and other Nordic countries are dedicated to supporting sustainable and inclusive growth across East Africa, helping Tanzania achieve its ambitious Vision 2050 and positioning the region as a global leader in resilience and economic progress. Ambassador Tinnes reiterated Norway’s commitment to supporting Tanzania’s trade aspirations and called for renewed momentum in the EFTA-EAC dialogue on a Joint Declaration on Cooperation in Trade and Investment.

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