

**THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS**



PRESS RELEASE

**Africa-IMF Conference Changes: Successful Partnerships for
Africa's Growth Challenge in Dar es Salaam**

The President of the United Republic of Tanzania, H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete will officially inaugurate a high-level IMF-Africa conference in Dar es Salaam which will aim at forging a new partnership for growth in Africa.

More than 300 participants to the conference, including finance ministers and central bank governors from all of Africa and representatives of development partners, private sector, civil society, media and academics, will discuss ways to boost Africa's development and confront its growth challenges.

Jointly hosted by the President H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete and the IMF Managing Director, Mr. Dominique Strauss-Kahn, the March 10 to 11, 2009 conference will examine the need for strengthening and renewing partnerships and potential new approaches to development financing. The President of the Global Humanitarian Forum and former UN Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan, will be the keynote speaker, with the remaining sessions focusing on the themes of change, partnership, success and growth.

During the conference, to be held at the Bank of Tanzania Conference Centre (BOTCC), a special session between the African delegates and the IMF management will discuss how to strengthen the relationship between the Fund and Africa, touching on such issues as the role and nature of IMF-supported economic programs, the representation of African countries within the IMF, and the support countries in the region need from the IMF.

Commenting on the upcoming conference, the Minister for Finance and Economic Affairs, Hon. Mustafa Haidi Mkulo, appreciated the IMF's assistance in making the meeting happen. He described it as a very important conference, not just for Tanzania but for Africa as a whole.

The conference is expected to provide a forum for Africa to learn from good performances within the continent and beyond; to consider the economic policy challenges that we face, and to put squarely on the table the issues that are important to Africa going forward, he said.

For the last five years, many countries in sub-Saharan Africa have achieved high rates of economic growth, averaging 6 to 7 per cent and rising income levels. Furthermore the countries recorded significant improvements in health and education as well as enhanced quality of life in general.

In Tanzania, for instance, enrolment in primary schools has increased from 59 per cent in 2001 to 84 per cent in 2007 and 97.2 per cent in 2008. There have also been sharp reductions in infant and under-five mortality rates. Sustaining these achievements, will require continued strong economic performance and a careful balance between social and growth-oriented investments, which are, however, being threatened by the current global crisis.

A decline in world growth of 1.0 percentage point is estimated to lead to a 0.5 percentage point drop in Africa's gross domestic product (GDP). A 1.0 per cent decline in developing countries growth rates has the

potential to trap an additional 20 million people into poverty. So the effects of the global turmoil on Africa, via trade, foreign direct investment and aid, would be high.

The volatility of fuel prices, the disruptions in food markets and concerns on food security as well as the current global financial turmoil all serve to emphasize the economic challenges countries in the region are facing and also the need to re-examine the partnership between Africa and the rest of the world.

It is against this background that President Kikwete and IMF Managing Director, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, decided in February 2008 during a meeting in Tanzania, to convene the March conference.

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Ramadhan M. Khijjah

PERMANENT SECRETARY

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