



**EACSOF SECRETARIAT MEETING WITH THE EAST AFRICA SECRETARY GENERAL:
HON. AMB. DR. LIBERAT MFUMUKEKO ON THE 28TH-April-2017.**



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The meeting commenced at 1730HRS in the evening and we began with brief introductions, whereas the people who attended this meeting included:

- 1) The Secretary General; Hon. Dr. Liberat Mfumuokeko
- 2) Generose Minani - EAC Principal Gender and Community Development Officer
- 3) Martha Makenge – EACSOF AG. CEO
- 4) Lilian Alex – Program Assistant
- 5) Robert Ainebyona – Communication Officer

Having given brief introductions, the SG began by posing a question to EACSOF, that is; what is EACSOF doing in ensuring that the rule of law is upheld in the East African Community and how is Good Governance and Democracy portrayed in East Africa Community?



The above questions, curved a map around the main discussions and deliberations that went on in this brief meeting, among many other discussions, the Political environment in Burundi was very much discussed and the SG was very much interested to understand EACSOF's stand on the venue of the 5th SG's forum that is yet to happen in June. He was concerned why EACSOF was not comfortable to attend the SG forum in Burundi?

In our reply, Ms Martha explained that the civil society feels insecure to visit Burundi, they feel that their well-being is threatened due to the information they have on the political environment in Burundi. More so, the other concern of EACSOF, is that, the fact that the Rwanda civil society is not willing to set foot in Burundi, calls for much concern and attention from the civil society from other partner states, that they should all work in solidarity as one and choose not to attend the 5th SG Forum, as long as it is being held in Burundi.

Discussions went on and the SG had a number of recommendations that he urged EACSOF to look at and work on them, such as;

First EACSOF should analyze on how are the Civil Society in East Africa actively engaging in affairs happening at the EAC.

Secondly EACSOF should play a major role to bring all the people/citizens together and form one voice as citizens of EAC.

In addition, he also stated that, he is very much interested in having a collaboration that is working together with EACSOF, if only it is of valuable impact.

Furthermore, he also emphasized that EACSOF should take the obligation to bring together the Burundi Civil Societies in exile in a round table discussion with the main land civil societies and discuss on how they can work together and ensure the reinstating of the exiled CSOs back to Burundi.

He finally urged that as civil society, we should make an effort to advocate from the inside, meaning that, he urges that EACSOF will find it much simpler and fruitful if EACSOF could go to Burundi for the SG's Forum and advocate to the Burundi Government while in the country.

With that note, he emphasized that EACSOF Secretariat should table the Burundi Venue issue to its members once more and deliberate on way forward since the EAC is not willing to change the venue for the SGs Forum believing that there is peace in Burundi. To attest to that he mentioned that there have been more than two EAC big meetings that were hosted in Burundi peacefully.

Therefore, The SG is inviting CSOs to be part of its efforts in making the EAC work for all Citizens and he finally accentuated that he will be waiting to get feedback from CSOs in a little while as possible.



EACSOF also had a number of suggestions to the SG, which included:

The problem of the back-load of the recommendations forwarded during the SG forum to the EAC Secretariat. EACSOF asked the SG, if the recommendations could be prioritized and at least discussed and followed upon timely so that solutions are quickly found and addressed.

With no any other business, EACSOF handed over EACSOF Strategic Plan and the Communique on the Burundi Situation that was developed during its 9th Annual General Meeting to the Secretary General for information and to take further action.