



KEPSA HOSTS THE SENATE LIAISON COMMITTEE ROUNDTABLE ON ACHIEVING GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS FOR ECONOMIC TURNAROUND AND INCLUSIVE PROSPERITY

Mombasa, Kenya - Friday, 28th April 2023: The Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) hosted the Senate Liaison Committee Roundtable in Mombasa, bringing together the business community and the Legislators of the Committee, Chaired by Sen Kathuri Murungi, MGH, MP, the Deputy Speaker of the Senate.

The Roundtable sought to establish a collaborative partnership between KEPSA and the Senate's Liaison Committee on working together to improve Kenya's business environment to support the transition into a production-driven, globally-competitive country and economy and to mobilize the private sector's participation in the realization of the government's Economic Recovery Agenda (ERA) 2023-27.

While making his opening remarks, the Speaker of the Senate Rt. Hon. Amason J. Kingi, EGH, MP appreciated the vibrant and flourishing private sector as essential to achieving Kenya's Vision 2030, noting that the 4th Medium Term Plan (2023-2027) was launched under the theme "accelerating the socio-economic transformation to a more competitive, inclusive and resilient economy".

"As a country, we cannot talk of economic growth and prosperity, improved livelihoods and additional revenue streams to replenish our financial coffers, without mentioning in the same breath, the critical role of the private sector. The government's Plan recognizes the pivotal role of the private sector as a key driver of investment, technological advancement and employment creation. The core pillars in the Plan are Agriculture, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise Economy, Housing and Settlement, Healthcare and Digital and Creative Economy." emphasized Hon. Kingi.

His remarks were echoed by the Committee's Chairperson, Sen Kathuri Murungi. *"This event provides a level platform where the Senate and the private sector can have a candid conversation not just about unlocking its huge potential, but how to maximize its contribution to achieving sustainable development, redefining productivity and creating positive outcomes for the citizens of Kenya. We recognize that the growth of the private sector is intricately linked to the growth of the economy."*

The roundtable provided a platform to set annual legislative agendas and helped Senators appreciate the nexus between legislation, business, competitiveness and inclusive prosperity, which were the key reflections of KEPSA's Chair Ms Flora Mutahi as she noted that KEPSA had increasingly engaged the Senate on several pieces of legislation to support businesses in the counties, but that more work was still needed to spur investments.

"We need to channel investments equivalent to 32% of our current GDP each year over the next 5 years into key productive sectors such as agribusiness, value-adding manufacturing, energy, financial services and infrastructure development to spur business growth when the term of this house expires," Ms Flora Mutahi - Chairperson, Kenya Private Sector Alliance.

The Roundtable received a presentation by the KEPSA CEO, Ms. Carole Kariuki on the progress made on some of the legislative work KEPSA had worked on together with the Senate and resolutions made during the 6th Roundtable in 2021 as well as a brief on key projects KEPSA has been implementing to support SME growth and youth employment that have continued to support inclusive prosperity over the recent years. Further, she reiterated that the Senate remains crucial in policy and legislative entrepreneurship that are critical in improving the County and the country's ease of doing business, competitiveness, inclusive growth and shared prosperity. KEPSA, through its Sector Boards, has therefore been engaging various Departmental Committees to achieve increased revenue growth from a dynamic, rapidly growing, thriving, profitable, employment and wealth-creating private sector.

“Our economic manifesto is centered on five broad Thematic Areas: Spurring jobs and inclusive wealth creation, deepening social transformation to bridge inequalities; enhancing governance and economic stability; investing in cutting-edge innovation and competitive human capital; and enabling business environment and global competitiveness respectively. The themes are anchored on achieving Vision 2030, inspiring transformational growth and inclusive prosperity, thus providing a backdrop for today's discussions,” noted KEPSA CEO Ms Carole Kariuki.

Through the various engagements with the Senate, KEPSA has achieved numerous outcomes among them the initiation of the development of the Prompt Payment System and Regulation to ensure the timely settlement of supplier bills for goods, works and services. KEPSA also supported the digitization of development approvals for Nairobi and Kiambu Counties to hasten approvals of development projects, thus reducing the cost of projects. Digital approval is to be implemented in all counties. We similarly engaged with the County Executive Committee Members (CECMs) to distil cross-sectorial issues and interventions for county competitiveness, among others.

The Kenya Private Sector Alliance has identified five key competitive drivers that will continue driving the engagement with the Senate. These include the cost of raw materials, the cost of utilities (energy, water, telecoms), comparative wages and labour productivity, the cost of logistics and the cost and tenure of finance.

Now in its 7th iteration, the Roundtable between the Senate and KEPSA has over the years grown to be an avenue for advancing and promoting the growth of private enterprises by creating a platform for voicing emergent concerns, and challenges and sharing opportunities the sector has to continually grapple with. The roundtable also serves as a basis for inclusive consultations and dialogue by ensuring that appropriate consensus is achieved around legislative initiatives and oversight guidelines that are necessary for having a conducive and thriving environment for businesses.

About KEPSA

KEPSA is the apex organization of the private sector in Kenya. KEPSA brings together local and foreign business associations, chambers of commerce, professional bodies, corporates from multinational companies, medium, SMEs, and start-ups from all sectors of the economy to enable them to speak with one voice when engaging government, development partners and other stakeholders on cross-cutting policy issues and programs for Social - Economic Development of the Country.

It also supports businesses with opportunities for training, networking, financial linkages, mentorship and coaching, access to markets, value chains, and access to investment

opportunities inbound and outbound globally. Through its widespread membership categories that represent over 1,000,000 businesses, KEP SA brings these businesses under one umbrella.

About the Senate Liaison Committee

The Senate Liaison Committee is comprised of the Chairpersons of all select committees of the Senate and is chaired by the Deputy Speaker of the Senate. The Committee is tasked to, among others, guide and coordinate the operations, policies and mandates of all committees; deliberate on and apportion the annual operating budget among the Committees; consider programmes of all Committees; ensure that Committees submit reports as required by the Senate Standing Orders; determine, whenever necessary, the committees that should deliberate on a matter; and give such advice relating to the work and mandate of select committees as it may consider necessary. In carrying out its work, the Committee engages with key actors involved in policy and legislation including the Cabinet, the Council of Governors, the private sector, civil society, and other special interest groups.