

The

Eastern Africa

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Weekly Insights

Monday 8th - Friday 12th December, 2025

Regional Ball Juggling: Energy Intergration, Water Security and Trade Agreements

Eastern Africa is entering a pivotal moment of regional cooperation as countries work to link their power systems, strengthen shared management of the Nile, and prepare for new trade dynamics with the United States. Growing collaboration with China is helping the region build skills, modernize industries, and support greener growth. At the same time, renewed support for AUSSOM offers a chance to improve security coordination and stabilize Somalia ahead of its 2026 elections. Together these developments create a rare window for Eastern African states to deepen trust, attract investment, and shape a more resilient and prosperous future.

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Accelerating Power Market Integration in Eastern Africa

Eastern Africa is entering a critical window in regional energy cooperation following the election of Kenya as the Chair of the Eastern Africa Power Pool (EAPP) Independent Regulatory Board. Kenya's leadership strengthens the push for a regional industrialization strategy through shared regulations, compatible grid standards, and cross-border electricity tariffs as the region prepares to launch its power market in early 2026. Opportunity lies in guiding countries toward aligned rules and investor-ready transmission frameworks. These reforms are key in unlocking energy investments and supporting a greener, more reliable

regional power system, accelerating Eastern Africa's transition to an integrated energy future.



Toward an Institutionalized and Cooperative Future for the Nile Basin

The forthcoming Nile Basin states' meeting in Bujumbura marks a pivotal opportunity for Eastern African states to consolidate a more balanced and institutionalized model of hydro-political governance. The potential ratification of the Cooperative Framework Agreement and creation of a permanent Basin Commission would anchor a rules-based order grounded in equitable utilization. This shift encourages cooperation rather than reinforcing historical divides. For Eastern African states, including those advancing major projects such as the GERD, institutionalization offers a platform to strengthen infrastructural sove-

reignty and coordinate sustainable development. It also enhances collective bargaining power and builds stability through transparent, beneficial basin-wide planning.



Wednesday 10th December 2025

Navigating U.S. Trade Policy Changes: Opportunities for Eastern Africa

The United States' (U.S.) decision to extend AGOA by one year, alongside its strong emphasis on bilateral economic agreements, presents Eastern African states with a unique chance to recalibrate their trade approach. While power imbalances in bilateral deals can limit collective bargaining, countries can strengthen regional coordination to maintain leverage. By diversifying export destinations, enhancing commodity competitiveness, and harmonizing regional trade regulations, Eastern African states can build economic resilience and reduce reliance on a single market. This period

offers an opportunity to deepen regional integration, improve labour and production standards, and establish mutually beneficial trade partnerships with the U.S.



Photo Credit: independent.co.uk

Thursday 11th December 2025

Eastern Africa-China Innovation Synergies: A Strategic Window for Regional Modernization Transition

Eastern Africa is entering a pivotal innovation window as China deepens high-value cooperation centred on skills transfer, digital innovation, green development, and the expansion of zero-tariff trade. Insights from the Hong Ting Forum in Nairobi on 4th December 2025 highlight a shift from hardware investments to software-driven modernization. This creates space for Eastern Africa to strengthen industrial capabilities, upgrade infrastructure, and accelerate low-carbon transitions. China's development experience can help build stronger value chains, expand manufacturing, and support governance reforms. Aligning

national priorities with long-term capabilities will boost regional competitiveness and shared prosperity across key economic sectors over the next five years.



Photo Credit: majorwavesenergyreport.com

Friday 12th December 2025

Enhancing Eastern Africa's Counter-Terrorism Efforts through AUSSOM Support

The UN Security Council's renewal of AUSSOM's mandate by the end of December presents a significant opportunity for Eastern African states to strengthen regional security coordination against violent extremism. Reliable funding can empower operations against Al-Shabaab and stabilize liberated areas in Somalia. It will also support timely troop salaries, efficient logistics, and robust intelligence-sharing. With Somalia's 2026 elections approaching, the EAC can seize this moment by mobilizing member contributions, deepening regional intelligence cooperation, and advocating sustained UN and AU support. Predi-

ctable and sustainable funding is essential to consolidate peace, counter violent extremism, and secure long-term stability across Eastern Africa.



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