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## PRESS RELEASE

### Front line staff at Mombasa Port protected from Covid-19 with provision of Personal Protective Equipment by the European Union

**Mombasa, 20<sup>th</sup> August:** The European Union (EU) Ambassador to Kenya H.E. Simon Mordue conducted a two-day visit of Mombasa during which he handed over Personal Protective Equipments (PPEs) to Kenya Ports Authority to support its fight against COVID-19.

The Ambassador was hosted by Mombasa Governor H.E Ali Hassan Joho, Permanent Secretary Ministry of East Africa Community (EAC) Kevit Desai, Kenya Ports Authority Managing Director Rashid Salim, and TMEA Kenya Country Director, Ahmed Farah.

Today's PPE's delivery will meet the needs of 2,730 Kenya Ports Authority staff, Port Police, Kenya Revenue Authority staff, Port health staff and sustain them for 60 days. The 2730 staff were prioritised as they are the first responders and most vulnerable dealing with port health, first aiders and handling of cargo as it arrives. The PPE's include Reusable masks, Hand sanitisers, Hand washing points, Disinfectant spray, Infrared Thermometer, Reusable Safety Boots, Full protective PPE for front line health workers, N95 face masks and face shields, as agreed with KPA in consultation with KRA and port health and advice from medical agencies at regional and international levels.

The European Union is the largest donor to Kenya's component of TMEA's Safe Trade Emergency Facility (STEF) programme with a contribution of KES 600 million (EUR 5 million). Its under this programme that the PPE delivery has been made as part EU's wider support for mitigation against the spread of COVID-19 and promotion of continuous safe trade in Kenya.

The delivery to Port of Mombasa is critical as the port is the main entry point into East Africa through the Northern Corridor. Soon after Kenya experienced its first COVID-19 cases in March 2020, Kenya Ports Authority, which has about 7000 employees was identified as the epicentre of infections in Mombasa prompting a series of tough measures including scanning of people entering the port and also ships docking.

Making his remarks at the event, EU Ambassador to Kenya Simon Mordue said: *"The port of Mombasa is the most important gateway to East Africa. To make this port a safe place to work is yet another important step to ensure the flow of goods to support the economy and livelihoods of all people involved. The EU is happy to contribute to this."*

Ministry of Health Chief Administrative Officer Dr. Rashid Aman appreciated the EU's continued support to Kenya's fight against COVID-19. There were 31,015 COVID-19 confirmed cases as of 19<sup>th</sup> August. He said *"If this pandemic teaches us anything, it is that we do not have a choice between preserving life and reviving our economy. It is apparent that we must acknowledge the linkages, intricacies and synergies between the **economy and the public health**. We may not have appreciated until now that public health must be at the centre of how we structure our economy. The PPEs delivered today demonstrate that indeed considerate measures to*



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*protect our frontline workers at the ports and borders will also ensure that trade continues, and our economy bounces back.”*

On his part, Kenya’s Permanent Secretary to the East Africa Community Dr. Kevit Desai commended KPA for measures put in place to ensure Mombasa Port is safe for trade. He thanked the EU for promoting safety at other Kenya border crossing points including Namanga, Isebania, Malaba, Busia and Moyale. *“We are indeed pleased about this partnership which we have strengthened with TMEA and the EU in the recent past. We have benefited a lot from this partnership in trade facilitation programming through which we are enabling uninterrupted flow of essential commodities during the COVID-19 period. The government is committed to continue enhancing efficiency of the corridor starting from this point of entry, so that the land linked countries continue to maximise the potential of international trade. We will continue being responsive to the needs of all stakeholders through policy reforms and uptake of innovative solutions in the operations of all our frontline regulatory staff at the points of entry,”* said Desai.

KPA Ag. Managing Director Rashid Salim said, *“The management of KPA acknowledges the support accorded today as timely and crucial in ensuring the Port of Mombasa continues to offer world class services and operations that largely contribute to the regional economy.”*

Mr. Salim said that the Port of Mombasa has established 147 hand washing points, mass testing of staff and port users, online cargo documentation processes, fumigation of port premises, distribution of PPEs to staff, release of staff aged above 58 years and those with pre-existing medical conditions to work from home.

*“So far, no crew of any ship calling at the Port has tested positive. This demystifies the misconception that COVID-19 at the Port is being transmitted by cargo ships,”* he added.

At the time of delivery, Mombasa Port was running short of supplies of masks for its front line staff. Inadequate or no PPEs for frontline staff, especially for port health and security personnel, is causing delays in port entry and exit procedures.

During his visit the Ambassador visited other projects that are contributing to the fight against COVID-19, including the ongoing implementation of the Regional Cargo and Driver Tracking System (RECDTS) which the EU among other donors is funding. RECDTS has an inventory of driver’s COVID-19 tests and issues EAC regional recognised digital health certificates to registered long distance drivers. This ensures they can cross East African borders without delays thus regulating flow of trade across the region.

Other interventions funded by the EU under the STEF include: the installation of smart gates at the border; reengineering import and export process and procedures; the development and implementation of relevant protocols to enhance efficient and safe trade; supporting trade policy, standards and sanitary and phytosanitary standards; policy advocacy and improving e-commerce; and the development of safe trade zones to support formal and informal traders at the borders. This support is complemented by a grant from Ireland of more than KES 10 million focusing on the establishment of a Safe Trade Zone for female cross border traders in Busia. Other members of Team



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Europa in particular, The Netherlands, Denmark, and Finland support TMEA activities across Eastern Africa region.

TMEA Kenya Country Director, Ahmed Farah said, *“What we have learned through this crisis is that it is important to take quick action to protect the people ensuring critical supplies reach where they are needed; that coordinated action at the regional level is possible and that the pandemic could accelerate regional integration. It has revealed importance of trade facilitation in times of crisis and especially in that supplies like food and medicine reach consumers. This crisis has magnified the importance of trade in ordinary development.”* **-ENDS-**

### NOTES FOR EDITORS

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#### 2. About European Union in Kenya

To find out more about EU development cooperation with Kenya, please visit: [https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kenya\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kenya_en)

#### 3. About Kenya Ports Authority

To find out more about Kenya Ports Authority, please visit: [www.kpa.co.ke](http://www.kpa.co.ke)

#### 4. About TradeMark East Africa

TradeMark (**Trade** and **Markets**) East Africa is an aid-for-trade organisation that was established in 2010, with the aim of growing prosperity in East Africa through increased trade. TMEA operates on a not-for-profit basis and is funded by the development agencies of the following countries: Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, United Kingdom, United States of America as well as the European Union. TMEA has its headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, with successful operations and offices in EAC-Arusha, Burundi (Bujumbura), Tanzania (Dar es Salaam), Democratic Republic of Congo (Bukavu), Ethiopia (Addis-Ababa), Malawi, Zambia, South Sudan, Uganda (Kampala) and Rwanda (Kigali).

To find out more, please visit our website [www.trademarkea.com](http://www.trademarkea.com)

#### 5. About Safe Trade Emergency Facility (STEF) Programme

Eastern and Southern African governments have recognised an immediate need to mitigate the impacts of Covid-19 on trade for the good of the economy and their citizens. As a result, TMEA has



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created a US\$23 million Safe Trade Emergency Facility (STEF) to support Eastern African governments to undertake critical measures along the transport and trade routes that will ensure trade continues safely while protecting livelihoods.

STEF components: 1) Making the ports, borders and critical supply chains safe for trade; 2) Ensuring food security and access to critically required medicines; and 3) Supporting measures that reduce jobs losses and supports exports. **To find out about SAFE trade programme, please visit [www.trademarkea.com/safetrade](http://www.trademarkea.com/safetrade)**