COMESA Extra Ordinary Summit Appoints Secretary General and Assistant Secretary General

An extra-ordinary Summit of the COMESA Heads of State and Government that took place at Sharm El Sheikh in the Arab Republic of Egypt, on 30 June 2008, has appointed Mr Sindiso Ngwenya of the Republic of Zimbabwe, as the COMESA Secretary General, and Mr Stephen Karangizi of the Republic of Uganda as the Assistant Secretary General in charge of Programmes.

Mr Ngwenya becomes the third Secretary-General of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) since it was transformed from the PTA in 1994. He brings to his post over 27 years of service both in the industry, regional and multilateral levels covering the public and private sectors, as well as quasi-government institutions.

Mr Ngwenya has been the Interim Secretary General since May, this year, following the departure of Mr Erastus Mwencha, who has been elected as the deputy Chairperson of the African Union.

Prior to his appointment, Mr. Ngwenya was the COMESA Assistant Secretary General (Programmes) a position he had held since 1998. Prior to this, he acted in the same position for a period of a year. He also held different positions in COMESA and its predecessor the PTA, between 1994 and 1998: namely: the Acting Director - Transport and Communications, Senior Transport Expert for PTA and COMESA.

Prior to PTA/COMESA (1980-1983) he worked as the Planning Officer, National Railways of Zimbabwe. He also worked as Corporate Planning Officer, for Ethiopia Airlines, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia between 1979 and 1980.

Mr. Ngwenya holds a Master of Science (MSC) in Transportation and Traffic Planning from the University of Birmingham, UK, a BA degree in economics and
geography from Middlesex Polytechnic – UK, and has Post Graduate Certificates in Airline Corporate Planning, and Railways Administration.

The new Assistant Secretary General (Programmes) Mr Stephen Karangizi, equally brings over 25 years of experience both in Legal and regional integration. He becomes the 2nd Assistant Secretary General (Programmes) since the creation of COMESA.

Until his appointment Mr Karangizi was the Director of Legal and Institutional Affairs of COMESA from 1998 to 2008. He was acting in the same position between 1996 and 1998.

Previously he worked as legal Draftsman for the Government of Antigua and Barbuda (West Indies) from 1990 to 1993, legal advisor to the National Assembly of Uganda from 1988 to 1990; and Senior Legal Officer with Attorney General’s office of the Republic of Zimbabwe from 1983 to 1988. He also worked briefly in private legal practice between 1981 and 1982.

Mr Karangizi, Holds a Master of Law (LLM) degree from the University of Zimbabwe, and Bachelor of law with honours, LLB (hons) from Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda.

Both appointments have been made for an initial five year term and can be renewed for another five year period.