



Tanzania, Rwanda sign three pacts

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By Simon Kivamwo

Tanzania and Rwanda yesterday signed three cooperation agreements at the climax of the three-day state visit of the Rwandan President, Paul Kagame.

The signing ceremony was witnessed by President Benjamin Mkapa and his counterpart Kagame at the State House.

The documents signed include the Agreed Minutes of the 12th Session of the Tanzania/Rwanda Permanent Joint Commission of Cooperation.

Others were a Framework on Trade and Economic Cooperation, and a Memorandum of Understanding between the Rwandan Investment and Export Promotion Agency and the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC).

Reading the Joint Communiqué, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, said the two presidents reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen and consolidate the excellent relations that exist between the two countries.

The two presidents also underscored the need to enhance cooperation in the areas of investment, trade, agriculture, transport and communication, research, tourism and culture.

They expressed satisfaction with the work of the revived Tanzania-Rwanda Joint Permanent Commission (JPC).

They urged the private sectors of the two countries to play a leading role in the promotion of bilateral economic cooperation and serve as the driving force for economic growth and sustainable development.

Asked by the press to explain the introduction of traditional courts (gacaca) in trying the perpetrators of the 1994 genocides, President Kagame said it was a challenging move that Rwanda was experiencing.

He said the challenge was prompted by the fact that, on one side, survivors were trying to eliminate the suspects while, on the other, the suspects were trying to eliminate survivors.

“In a real sense, it is a complex issue...It is a situation whereby, you are dumped if you do, and you are dumped if you do not,” said Kagame.

- SOURCE: *SUNDAY OBSERVER*