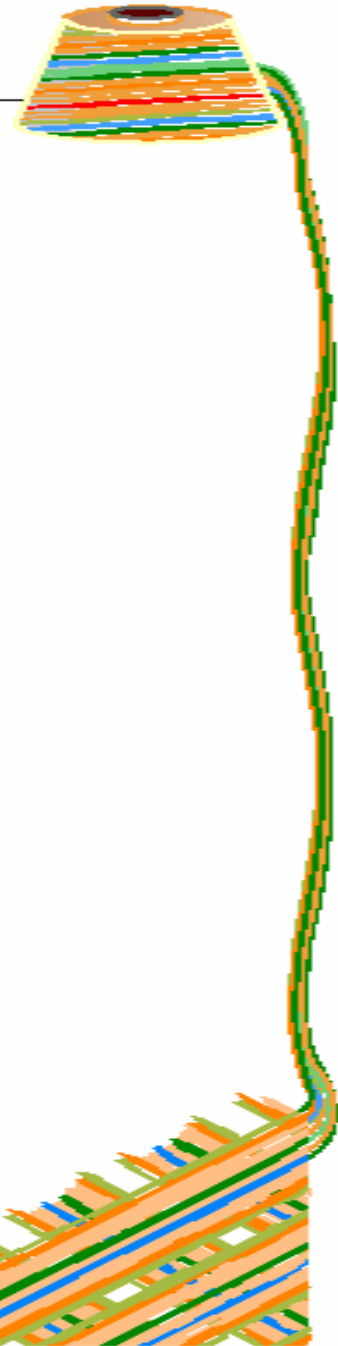


## Session 9

# Summit Conclusions and Way Forward

Chair: Thomas Carr, RATES

Presenter: Barry Fisher, RATES



# Key Issues

1. Post ATC impact
2. AGOA third-country fabric
3. Improve productivity through skill training
4. High cost of capital; limited credit options
5. Lack of investment
6. High transaction costs (e.g. utilities, inland transport, machine output)
7. Competing trade agreements
8. Regional policy constraints –tariffs, NTB
9. Cotton subsidies

# In addition...

1. No regional system for market data
2. Limited information exchange
3. Limited regional interaction and linkages
4. Absence of regional strategies
5. And so on...

# How do we address these issues?

...to improve regional competitiveness?

...to retain and increase current global market share?

....to promote a regional supply chain?

## Conclusion – Regional Body to be Formed

1. It was recognized and agreed that individual countries within the region could no longer act in isolation and remain fragmented in the face of current and future global challenges and that a regional integration policy had to be adopted with some urgency.
2. It was unanimously agreed that a regional trade federation (or such other descriptive name that may be adopted) be formed to increase competitiveness in the global post-quota environment, address key policy issues, build a platform for reducing constraints in regional trade, exchange information, collect market data, share regional expertise, promote a regional supply chain and to build partnerships, alliances and networks. This initiative was fully endorsed by the COMESA and EAC representatives present.
3. It was agreed that RATES would act as the initial secretariat for the new entity and an interim steering committee will be set up to immediately start building cooperation, interaction and linkages within the region and to start addressing the key issues that arose from the summit.