

Opening of Africa21 “circular economy workshop for journalists and communicators”

Date: Monday 10th March 2025

Venue: Maru Maru Hotel – Stone Town

Remarks by Consuelo Natale, Head of Governance, Embassy of Switzerland in Tanzania

Hon. Captain Hamad Hamad, Principal Secretary Ministry of Blue Economy and Fisheries,

Mr Henrique Pacini, Economic Affairs Officer, United Nation Trade and Development,

Mr Julien Chambolle, Secretary General, Africa21

Distinguished representatives of the authorities and organizations here present,

Dear Journalists,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Mabibi na Mabwana,

Good morning

Habari za asubuhi,

It is a privilege and a great pleasure for me to be here with you all today – *in Zanzibar* –, for the opening of this workshop dedicated to the journalists and the circular economy.

Switzerland is pleased to co-fund this initiative organized by Africa21. By fostering such exchanges, this workshop contributes to the development of a network of journalists equipped with the necessary knowledge and expertise to effectively report on issues of public relevance, such as climate change and sustainable development.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Evidence indicates a clear link between quality journalism and financial sustainability. Media outlets that produce high-quality content and attract a loyal audience are better positioned to secure advertisers and generate revenue. This underscores the necessity for journalists to develop expertise in specialized fields to ensure accurate and impactful journalism.

Many media outlets face financial constraints, which hinder their ability to invest in emerging advanced technologies and produce high-quality news content—both of which are essential for building a successful and sustainable media organisation.

Recognizing the vital role of the media in fostering an informed society, Switzerland has been supporting the media sector in Tanzania since 2008 in some key strategic areas.

Currently, we support BBC Media Action in strengthening the media sector's ability to produce high-quality public interest content while also enhancing financial sustainability through the development of alternative revenue sources.

We also collaborate with the International Media Support organisation, IMS, and several local organizations that work towards enhancing the regulatory framework for journalists and public interest media.

Let me also highlight our engagement with the University of Dar es Salaam's School of Journalism and Mass Communication, which has been producing the annual Yearbook on Media Quality Report since 2019. In this regard, I am pleased to announce that the 2024 edition of the report will be presented this week in Dar es Salaam.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We all recognize the vital role of the media sector in raising awareness and informing citizens on matters of public interest, in this case climate change and sustainable development.

We have gathered here this week to reflect on the opportunities presented by the development of the circular economy, as well as the challenges posed by climate change and its impact on the environment—particularly on the Indian Ocean, a rich yet fragile ecosystem.

The Government of Zanzibar is playing a commendable role in advancing the blue economy, a sector that is vital to the island's economic growth and development. In this respect, seaweed farming has become an important source of income for many coastal communities, creating new livelihoods opportunities and promoting gender equality.

Switzerland, via the Daraja Impact Fund, supports social enterprises like Mwani Zanzibar -a seaweed processor that will be visited this week- to empower local women seaweed farmers by increasing sourcing, creating jobs, and providing training in improved farming practices. This highlights the private sector's vital role in driving growth, value addition and women empowerment.

Despite these progresses, the effects of climate change present a serious threat to the fragile coastal ecosystem and the livelihoods that depend on it. Addressing these challenges requires a

coordinated response to advance sustainable practices and strengthen the long-term resilience of coastal communities.

Communities themselves play a crucial role in resource management, ultimately contributing to environmental preservation. In this context, the media serves as a vital instrument in disseminating quality information, raising awareness, and empowering citizens to engage in sustainable practices.

**Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear Journalists,**

I would like to conclude by wishing you all an enriching and productive discussion. I hope that this workshop will serve as a foundation for building a strong network of climate change expertise and that the exchanges among participants will continue beyond this week.

Ultimately, we also hope that a broader audience will benefit from the high-quality information and insights shared throughout this workshop. We aspire for the knowledge gained during this training to be further disseminated within the various media houses represented here, ensuring that the public receives improved and more informed coverage on key topics related to climate change.

Thank you.

Asanteni sana.