

## SADCAS CEO Represents AFRAC at TUNAC'S Joint Celebrations to Mark 25 Years of Service and World Accreditation Day

The SADCAS CEO Mrs Maureen P Mutasa, in her capacity as the Vice Chair of AFRAC participated in a forum held by the Tunisian Accreditation Council (TUNAC) to mark 25 years of accreditation service and to celebrate 2019 World Accreditation Day. The forum was held on 27 June 2019 in Tunis under the theme "TUNAC Accreditation: At the Service of Tunisian Economy". The forum which was attended by 250 guests was held at the El Mouradi Gammarth Hotel in Tunis, Tunisia and was graced by Honourable Mr Slim Feriani, the Tunisian Minister of Industry and SMEs. Guests included representatives of AFRAC, Arab Accreditation Cooperation (ARAC) represented by Mr Metaab Mezini, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) representative, Mr Rafik Fekih, Belgium Accreditation Body (BELAC) represented by the Director, Ms Maureen Logghe, former directors of TUNAC including Mrs Dorsaf Zangar LABIDI and Mr. Anouar ZOUARI, industry associations and conformity assessment bodies mainly from Tunisia. Although PTB Germany was not represented at the forum they congratulated TUNAC on the occasion of the 25 years anniversary over a video conferenced message and presented a bouquet of flowers.



Some of the delegates at the TUNAC Forum to mark 25 years of accreditation service and World Accreditation Day

The Director General of TUNAC, Mr Yassine Wali welcomed guests and thanked all guests for their presence at the forum and cooperating partners UNIDO, SIDA, SWEDAC, PTB Germany for their contributions towards TUNAC success over the years and in sponsoring the forum. This was followed by a series of congratulatory addresses and well wishes by the invited guests starting with Mr Metaab Mezini, ARAC Vice Chairman, Mrs Maureen Mutasa AFRAC Vice Chair, Mr Rafik Fekih, UNIDO Representative and Mr Bechir Boujdai, the Vice Chairman of the Tunisian Association for Industry, Trade and Handicraft. This session of the forum ended with an address by the Honourable Mr Slim Feriani Minister of Industry and SMEs.

In her address, the AFRAC Vice Chair Mrs Maureen Mutasa congratulated TUNAC for 25 years of credible accreditation service and for 2019 World Accreditation Day. She then informed about the purpose of World Accreditation Day which is to raise awareness of the importance of accreditation which she said has an impact on every aspect of our daily lives, health, economic and social development, facilitating trade, in protecting the environment in which we live etc. She informed about the past themes of World Accreditation Day and the theme for 2019 World Accreditation Day which is Accreditation: Adding value to supply chains and articulated the role of accreditation in helping to deliver value to supply chains. She then briefly reminisced on the establishment of AFRAC and progress to date with AFRAC having achieved international recognition in the International Accreditation Forum Multi-Lateral Arrangement (IAF MLA) and the International Accreditation Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation Mutual Recognition Arrangement (ILAC MRA) in May 2018. This international recognition of AFRAC MRA is a key milestone enabling the full integration of Africa into the world trading system" she said. She noted that the recognition could not have come at a more opportune time

following the signing of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) by 52 countries and ratification by 24 countries. “Technically the AfCFTA is now in force unlocking a market of 1.3 billion people across African Borders” she remarked. She noted that TUNAC a founding member of AFRAC, one of the 3 first signatories of the AFRAC MRA, was working with other accreditation bodies in Africa in developing accreditation infrastructure. It is with the foregoing that Mrs Mutasa expressed AFRAC desire that TUNAC re-joins the AFRAC as an Arrangement member so that Tunisia benefits from the opportunities presented on the continent, one of the few regions in the world that is growing.



From Left to right Mrs Maureen P Mutasa AFRAC Vice Chair giving her address, Mr Fekih, Mr Mezini, Mr Boujdai, Honourable Mr Feriani and Mr Wali

In the key note address, the Honourable Minister welcomed the special guests the ARAC and AFRAC Vice Chairs, BELAC and UNIDO representatives. He noted the remarkable progress made by Tunisia over the years including the achievement of signatory status in international accreditation arrangements which was contributing towards economic and social development of Tunisia and TUNAC’s participation in regional accreditation activities by ARAC, AFRAC and the European Accreditation (EA) with the Honourable Minister confirming the decision by TUNAC to extend its scope of signatory status for which applications would be selectively submitted to ARAC and AFRAC. He then highlighted the importance of accreditation to national economic and social development and thanked all who had contributed to TUNAC’s success and the cooperating partners UNIDO, PTB Germany and SIDA for their support. After the key note address the Honourable Minister presented plaques to the guest speakers and accreditation certificates to the first 10 testing laboratories accredited to the revised version of ISO/IEC 17025 published in November 2017. A certificate was also presented to the only medical testing laboratory accredited by TUNAC so far.



Honourable Mr Slim Feriani presenting a plaque of appreciation to Mrs Mutasa



From Left to right: Mr Boujdai, Honourable Mr Feriani, Mrs Mutasa and Mr Wali

The second session of the forum started off with a presentation by Mrs Noura Haddaoui, TUNAC who reminisced on the establishment of TUNAC highlighting the key milestones and achievements of date. This was followed by presentations by representatives of National Union Chamber of Testing Laboratories, National Union Chamber of Metrology, Office of the Upgrade and Tunisian Export Promotion Center (CEPEX) on the various programmes in place to assist conformity assessment bodies to work towards accreditation. A series of testimonials were then presented by various accredited conformity assessment bodies during which they shared the challenges faced and how these had been addressed and also highlighting expected service improvements by TUNAC.

Guests were treated to a sumptuous lunch to celebrate the 25 years' milestone and World Accreditation Day.

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