



## News Release

### **Banking Research Conference to Focus on Deepening the Industry through Crossing of Boundaries**

*Kenya Bankers Association 2nd Annual Banking Research Conference to be Officially Opened by Cabinet Secretary of the National Treasury, Henry Rotich and Feature Keynote Address by EAC Secretary General Amb. Dr. Richard Sezibera*

**Nairobi, September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2013...**The endeavour to deepen the financial services sector is associated with measures aimed at promoting stability and competition within the banking industry. The issue of competition is conventionally taken as market contestation amongst banks. Increasingly, however, emerging developments have motivated the consideration that new frontiers in banking will be driven by an element of synergy.

In light of this, the umbrella body of the banking industry in Kenya will hold its 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Banking Research Conference next week, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> September at The Stanley Hotel. Themed as *Deepening the Banking Industry through Crossing of Boundaries*, the conference will bring together stakeholders from the banking and financial services sector, academia, policy formulation organs as well as representatives of the public and private sector.

Making the announcement, the Kenya Bankers Association Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Habil Olaka noted that the annual research conference has quickly become a key calendar event in the local banking industry, and was increasingly attracting the attention and participation of more researchers.

“This year’s edition of the Annual Banking Research Conference is hinged on the success of the inaugural banking research conference held a year ago. The discussions and conversations that arose from last year’s forum continue to lay a solid foundation for the advancement of the banking industry and we can only expect better as this conference continues to gain traction.”

The conference will be officially opened by The National Treasury Secretary, Mr. Henry Rotich and will feature a keynote address by the East African Community Secretary General, Ambassador Dr. Richard Sezibera. In attendance will be representatives from KBA member banks and other invited stakeholders including representatives from the private and public sector.

A total of seven papers will be presented in the conference and are clustered in three categories as below:

- Synergistic relationship between banks and Mobile Network Operators (MNOs) to improve efficiency in payments and promote financial inclusion,
- Embracing capital market operations in an increasingly harmonized regulatory regime, and;
- Cross-border expansion of Kenyan Banks.

Researchers participating in the conference are drawn from the Central Bank of Kenya, Kenya Bankers Association, International Finance Corporation, the University of Nairobi, University of Warwick, Strathmore University and the University of Witwatersrand.

“This annual research forum provides a platform for empirical inquiry and intellectual engagement that provides crucial insights used to inform the banking and financial services sector”, said Mr. Olaka.

The need for banks and financial institutions to reach out and diversify away from the ‘traditional’ models of operation towards technology-driven service provision is now imminent. A gradual shift in consumer attitude and growing demand for anytime-anywhere access to service has characterized the banking sector in the recent past. In Africa, the patent influence of mobile technology, the evolution of mobile solutions, as well as the upsurge of new technology in commerce has transformed the banking industry, he added.

The KBA Centre for Research on Financial Markets and Policy held the first edition of the Annual banking Conference which attracted a host of researchers drawn from the academia, the international financial community and the Central Bank of Kenya. Out of the 10 papers presented during the conference, five were selected and published in *the KBA Working Paper Series*. The working papers are published to stimulate discussion and contribute to the advancement of the banking industry’s knowledge on matters of markets, economic outcomes and policy.

**About the KBA Centre for Research on Financial Markets and Policy®**

The Centre for Research on Financial Markets and Policy was established by the Kenya Bankers Association in 2012 to offer an array of research, commentary, and dialogue regarding critical policy matters that impact on financial markets in Kenya.

The Center sponsors original research, provides thoughtful commentary, and hosts dialogues and conferences involving scholars and practitioners on key financial market issues. Through these activities, the Center acts as a platform for intellectual engagement and dialogue between financial market experts, the banking sector and the policy makers in Kenya. It therefore contributes to an informed discussion that influences critical financial market debates and policies.

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