

metres above sea level.

Through locally-based Tanzania Gender Networking Programme (TGNP), the women's intention was to make all government consider reinforcement of land policies and laws, which seemed to be dormant in every participating

The land is an important resource and big impetus towards economic development which contributes about 10 per cent of the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in developing countries including Tanzania. The agriculture sector employs over 75 per cent

African countries, according to TGNP. During the Kilimanjaro Initiative feedback press conference in Dar es Salaam, one of the mountain climbers, Eva Daudi explained further that all about the exercise was presenting cries over land conflicts in two scenarios.



A group of Maasai tribesmen marches towards the Handeni district commissioner's office yesterday to call for the release of their tribal leaders who are reportedly under police custody for unnamed reasons. Photo: Correspondent Bahati Mhina

## # EU business group seeks clarification on VAT on tourism services

By Rose Mirembe and Baraka Masha

THE European Union Business Group; a union of some 95 companies doing business in Tanzania, yesterday asked the government for clarification on new tax policies, raising concerns on multiple taxation and VAT on tourism which they say was introduced without consultation.

Issues such as the recent legislation and regulations which made the European companies pay multiple taxes such as on tourism sector. The concerns were raised in a workshop held in Dar es Salaam yesterday.

The executive director of European Union Business Groups (EUBG), Rose

Blackie said: "Stakeholders in sectors such as tourism are paying multiple different levies and taxes to many different people in which it's quite complicated and time consuming."

She also added that with the latest value added tax (VAT) Act in some sectors it had affected them not to be competitive within the business arena. Blackie explained that lack of consultations seemed to be a great challenge to them because in the process they are not aware on how much it will affect them.

"What we are hoping is that when they are going to change the law we can have a dialogue which can propose the way forward and reach consensus,"

Blackie said.

Director of Business Development for Virtual Companies and ASKARI maritime Logistics, Michel Lanfrey said that they were facing problems with the junior officials when conducting their businesses.

Lanfrey said: "We shouldn't be taken negatively because we are definitely investing, employing people and paying taxes."

"With that we should be taken as good partners," Lanfrey noted. The Executive Director for EUBG indicated that they have closed to partner with TRA in creating a good business environment between European business stakeholders and the

government.

"EUBG exists to support companies to be compliant with the law and understand new legislations and also to support the government sector dialogue," Blackie said.

"We believe that with stronger dialogues between the government and private sector there is more opportunity for economic growth, where good decisions can be made between both sides," Blackie added.

She further supported the current government under President Magufuli. Tax is a very important element in bringing up the country's economy that is why EUBG took an initiative in organising the workshop.

"An opportunity like this gives our members confidence that they are in partnership with TRA, understand to be compliant and know who to consult in case of any problems."

For his part, the principal taxpayer education officer TRA, Gabriel Mwangosi, said that they met with the EUBG companies to educate them on the new Tax administration Act which started in August, last year.

"This workshop's major aim was to clarify and initiate them and make them understand on the tourists' taxes and the uplift of customs," Mwangosi pointed out.

Mwangosi denied that due to the introduction of VAT levy on tourism

sector, the number of tourists had dropped the number of tourists entering the country.

"Some statistics I read earlier indicated that even after imposing levies in the tourism sector still the influx of tourists had remained the same in the country," Mwangosi added.

Mwangosi said, "Tourism in their (Europeans) countries was levied in such a way that they were surprised to learn that tax was not imposed in our country."

"Currently the government is not focused in exempting tax, it will only exempt tax in serious issues that will drive them to reach that decision of exempting tax," Mwangosi clarified.