

How Dar could solve its port congestion woes by following the Senegal example

By FARAJA MGWABATI

THE port in Dar es Salaam, registration of businesses throughout the country, the judicial system, construction permits, fake goods, customs duties, the taxation system – all these were on the agenda yesterday at the opening meeting of the Investment Climate Facility for Africa (ICF).

These areas have already been identified as needing urgent reform if Tanzania wants to stimulate economic growth, make business more efficient and attract foreign and local investors.

The meeting attended by 200 delegates including former Tanzanian president Benjamin Mkapa, Festus Mogae of Botswana and business executives from around the globe, was looking at the progress that has been made in addressing these problems.

Many of the delegates will be attending the World Economic Forum which starts here tomorrow.

The meeting highlighted the reforms in the commercial court. Now the court proceedings are recorded and printed and made available within minutes. This means that the whole procedure can be speeded up and more cases heard. It also reduces costs because time and money is saved. Another benefit is accuracy which clearly gives the



public confidence in the legal system.

But there are still areas where much has to be done.

"In Tanzania there are still many bottlenecks," said Omari Issa, CEO of the ICF, adding that "the business and investment environment in Tanzania keeps on worsening.

"Even the government has realized this and they came to us and asked for help.

"We have spoken to them about which areas we should tackle first, because there are many areas to be addressed.

"This is not about helping foreign investors at the expense

of helping local investors. It is actually helping even small businesses because they are important. They create jobs," he explained.

"In Africa small businesses plays only a small part in the overall economic picture compared to the rich nations. There they contribute between 50 to 60 %."

But Africa does have its success stories. Mr Issa spoke about how the ICF had worked with the Rwandan government to modernize the judicial system particularly the commercial court. Now in Rwanda, he said, they backlog of 3,000 cases

had been wiped out. Now the court was running to time and this was good for business and confidence.

"In practical reform of the commercial court had allowed small businesses to register their companies more quickly and to deal with disputes more efficiently. It had also put them in a position where credit was easier for them to access."

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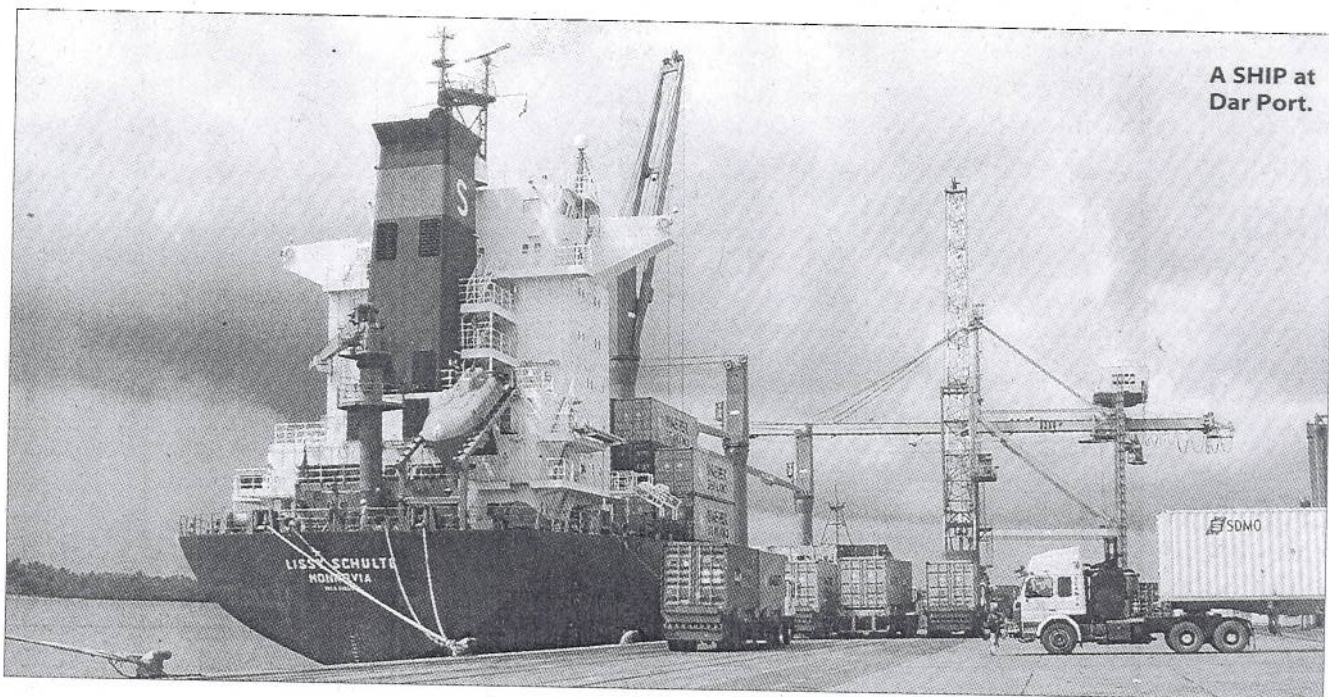
THE port in Dar es Salaam, registration of businesses throughout the country, the judicial construction permits, roads, customs duties, tax system - all these were on the agenda yesterday at the opening meeting of the Tanzania Climate Facility for (TCF).

Several areas have already been identified as needing reform if Tanzania wants to achieve economic growth, attract more efficient investment and business more efficient relations with foreign and local

The meeting attended by representatives including former president Benjamin Mkandawire of Botswana and other business executives from around the globe, was focused on the progress that has been made in addressing these

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A SHIP at Dar Port.

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Mr Issa was asked why the Senegal reform had not been implemented at Dar es Salaam's port.

"We need the commitment of all parties involved," he explained. "For example there are more than seven players involved at the port. There is the TRA, the police, clearing and forwarding companies, the banks, and this is too many.

"These players need to get together with the government and come to us and we can guide them to a solution which is beneficial to all and to the economy."