

## EAC Social partners move jointly to a lobby plan

The East African region (EAC) is moving to a common market. Free movement of workers is one of the pillars of this common market. In that framework, the regional social partners, the East African Employers Organization (EAEO), and the East African Trade Union Congress (EATUC), published end December 2016 jointly a position paper with concrete proposals to speed-up the process.

This paper -which was remarkable because achieved for the first time a joint position at EAC level- needed now further operationalization and planning for implementation, to ensure that the momentum, linked with the publication, also will be maintained for further implementation via concrete advocacy and lobbying both at EAC and at national level.

This was the major theme of a workshop jointly sponsored and organized jointly by DECP and Mondiaal FNV.

In the workshop, the social partners of the region discussed the concrete steps which were needed to get their proposals effectively realized on the textbook: which decision makers to approach at EAC level; which arguments to develop, which stakeholders are in play, which research still has to be done etc. etc.

The group also determined a number of short term priorities which are rather feasible and achievable in the short term: extension of the list of functions which can move freely, limitation of procedures and costs to obtain work- and residence permits; the setting up of an institutionalized structure for social dialogue at EAC level. They are convinced that these priority steps are feasible, and also that these steps will show the importance of furthering with the free movement in the region, as it generally supportive of growth and employment within the region.