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ADHESION OF THE DRC TO THE EAC DOING BUSINESS AND IP RIGHTS

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ADHESION OF THE DRC TO THE EAC

- **June 2019** – Expression of interest from DRC's President to be a member of the EAC
- **27 February 2021** – Summit of the EAC's Heads of State opened the admission process
- **15 to 24 January 2022** – Negotiations between the EAC and the DRC in Nairobi
- **29 March 2022** - Summit of the EAC's Heads of State admitted the DRC into the EAC.
- **11 July 2022** - the DRC has deposited the instruments of ratification with the EAC Secretary General.



AND NOW, INTEGRATION

- Development of roadmap by the Council for the **integration** of the DRC into the EAC, detailing how the DRC will implement the Customs Union, Common Market, Monetary Union and Political Federation
- Integration includes the ratification of the EAC texts to ensure their entry into force in the DRC.

WHAT THE EAC WILL BRING TO THE DRC AND ITS INVESTORS

- A single common market: free movement of goods persons, labour, services and capital
 - A customs union : free internal trade and common external tariffs
 - Facilitating cross-border trade and transport (better access to strategic ports of Mombasa and Dar es Salaam)
 - Instrument safeguarding peace between partner states
- > Crucial to be part of a strongly integrated bloc for a country like the DRC.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY IN THE DRC

- IP rights are legally enshrined in the DRC : Law No. 82-001 on Industrial Property in 1982, and Law No. 86-022 on the Protection of Copyright and Neighbouring Rights in 1986.
- Legislations have not been updated to take into account new technologies or developments of the market as well as the country's adhesion to TRIPS and WIPO
- Enforcement is almost inexistent due to the lack of judiciary power and control from the local administration.
- There is certainly a need for more IP protection in the DRC, especially over the medium and long term.

IMPACT OF THE ADHESION TO THE EAC ON IP ENFORCEMENT AND PROTECTION

- Founding texts include commitments towards partner states to cooperate to harmonize IP laws and to enhance IP protection
- Up till now, no laws and policies that have been enacted to harmonize IP laws within the EAC
- >< European Union (EU trademark and EU unitary patent)
- EAC Customs Union and Customs Management Act – increasing control over counterfeit goods at the borders.

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- Up till now, no laws and policies that have been enacted to harmonize IP laws within the EAC
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- EAC Customs Union and Customs Management Act – increasing control over counterfeit goods at the borders.

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