



1 July, London: the Business Council for Africa UK (BCA UK) has been launched today to represent the interests of the 500 members of the Eastern Africa Association, and the newly-named Business Council for Africa West and Southern, in Brussels. BCA UK, formerly the British African Business Association (BABA), is one of eleven national business associations making up the European Business Council for Africa and the Mediterranean (EBCAM) involving 4,000 private sector organisations across Europe.

“The change will build on the increasing levels of collaboration between the member associations of EBCAM while engaging, in the UK, with other private sector organisations looking to expand their involvement with Africa,” says the outgoing Chairman of the former BABA, Charles Cullimore. “We believe that, despite the financial crisis, this is a time of opportunity for Africa. Many African governments have, over the last decade, put in place the foundations for sustainable economic development.”

The new Chairman of the Business Council for Africa UK is Patrick Orr, co-founder of the London-based public affairs company, Raitt Orr & Associates. Having lived and worked in Kenya through the 1970s, he has provided a range of services to African governments, UN and other international organisations as well as to the private sector.

Patrick Orr is the London representative of AWEPA (European Parliamentarians for Africa), which works to strengthen parliamentary democracy in Africa; The Nippon Foundation and its subsidiary, the Sasakawa Africa Association, which demonstrates improved agronomic practices for small-scale farmers in Africa; and the Rhino Ark, a conservation project in Kenya. He also advises the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the world’s largest bilateral development agency, and the Caine Prize for African Writing, described as Africa’s leading literary award.

He is a director of the Eastern Africa Association, sits on the UK board Windward Isles Research and Education Foundation (WINDREF); and is Deputy Chairman of the Kenya Society in London, which he helped to found in 1989.

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