



**Introduction by
Rt Hon Lord Hurd of
Westwell CH CBE PC
Chairman of the FIRST
Advisory Council**

I have great pleasure in introducing this special report on the East African Community (EAC) which FIRST is delighted to publish to mark the 10th Anniversary.

The EAC was established by Treaty in 1999 and was ratified on 7th July 2000 by the original three Partner States – Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The Republic of Rwanda and the Republic of Burundi subsequently became full members with effect from 1st July 2007.

This strategic partnership has a combined population of 125 million people, a land area of 1.82 million km² and a combined GDP of US\$73 billion representing an important grouping of both economic and political significance.

The EAC is now focused on fulfilling its aim of widening and deepening co-operation among the Partner States in the political, economic and social spheres and, with this in mind, the organisation established a Customs Union in 2005 and subsequently a common market in 2010. Monetary union and ultimately a Political Federation of the East African States is now in prospect.

The EAC's vision of a prosperous, competitive, secure, stable and politically united East Africa is to be applauded. The EAC's objective to promote greater integration in order to improve the quality of life of the people of East Africa through improving competitiveness, value-added production and increasing trade and investment is also to be welcomed.

The formation and work of the EAC has helped focus attention on the many opportunities of East Africa – especially in trade and investment – and this work is producing tangible results with foreign direct investment increasing across the board.

The 10th Anniversary of the EAC provides an opportunity to assess the progress of the organisation, to analyse its important role and to weigh carefully the opportunities for further co-operation.

We at FIRST are delighted to have been asked to produce this official publication and hope that it contributes, in a small way, to the success of the EAC's work and promoting the objectives and aspirations of this important organisation. **F**