Rwanda marked a new milestone in its industrialization journey on October 2, 2025, with the inauguration of Silverback Glass Factory, the country's first producer of safety glass. The facility, located in Kicukiro District's Gahanga Industrial Zone, was launched in a ceremony officiated by Sudanese Ambassador to Rwanda Khalid Musa Dafalla, alongside senior government officials and community leaders.

Silverback Glass symbolizes the strengthening of Rwanda–Sudan economic ties and the growing confidence of international investors in the country's business climate.

Mohamed Aboul Gassim, the Managing Director of the company before an audience of partners and officials called the launch "a great honor and a deeply humbling experience."

"This is not just a factory," he said. "It is the first of its kind in Rwanda, producing tempered and laminated safety glass to world-class standards. More importantly, it is a symbol of international confidence in Rwanda."

Mohamed Aboul Gassim, the Managing Director of Silverback Glass Factory

Driving the Made-in-Rwanda Vision

The investment aligns directly with Rwanda's Made-in-Rwanda strategy, which seeks to reduce imports, boost local production, and strengthen industrial capacity. Gassim credited Rwanda's stability and long-term vision as the key enablers of the project.

"When we began this journey, we were inspired not only by market opportunity but also by Rwanda's commitment to transformation," he noted. "Here, governance is strong, policies are predictable, and Made-in-Rwanda is not just a slogan—it is a real platform for industrialization."

Silverback Glass brings state-of-the-art technology, skilled jobs, and added value to Rwanda's economy. By producing safety glass locally, the factory is expected to cut dependence on imports while supplying the fast-growing construction, real estate, and infrastructure sectors. Plans are also underway to position Rwanda as a regional hub for high-quality safety glass.

"We are not here just to employ, but to empower. Not just to manufacture, but to

build capacity. And not just to profit, but to truly partner with Rwanda," Gassim said.

Safety Glass: Protecting People, Supporting Growth

Gassim highlighted the importance of safety glass, drawing an analogy to seatbelts:

"You cannot build a structure in any way you want—there are codes to ensure people's safety. Just as we wear a seatbelt in a car, we should use safety glass. It is an essential building material."

Previously, Rwanda imported all safety glass. "Today we are producing it locally with Rwandan hands," he said. While safety glass costs slightly more than ordinary glass, he stressed its value to human life: "How much is your family's safety worth? Can you put a price on it?"

Though Gassim declined to disclose the total financial cost, he acknowledged it was a major investment in machinery, which is why Silverback is the first of its kind in Rwanda. The factory currently employs 23 staff, including 21 Rwandans, with plans to grow to 50 as operations expand.

He also noted challenges, particularly the landlocked nature of Rwanda, which can slow the importation of equipment. "Sometimes things move a little slowly, but overall, it has been a good journey, and we are adapting," he said.

Sudanese Investment and Economic Partnership

Ambassador Khalid Musa Dafalla praised Silverback as a model of Sudanese investment and business diplomacy in Rwanda.

"This is an example of successful Sudanese investment, where young Sudanese entrepreneurs brought expertise and capital to Rwanda," he said. "It is a milestone for our community and a boost to Rwanda's industrial growth."

Ambassador Khalid Musa Dafalla

The Ambassador highlighted two reasons for the project's success: Rwanda's enabling policies and skilled Rwandan labor. "This would not have been possible

without Rwanda’s zero-corruption environment, ease of doing business, and welcoming policies for African investors,” he said.

Sudanese private investment in Rwanda already exceeds US$20 million, spanning construction, agriculture, poultry, education, health, and manufacturing. Ambassador Dafalla also highlighted the 6,000-strong Sudanese community, including 3,000 students, as cultural ambassadors strengthening bilateral ties.

“What makes me most proud is seeing young Rwandan graduates working in this factory. This investment is in both machines and people—the backbone of Rwanda’s future,” he said. In a striking metaphor, he called Silverback a “baby boom” that skipped the normal teething problems of startup operations.

Local Government Support

Mutsinzi Antoine, Executive Administrator of Kicukiro District, welcomed the project, emphasizing Gahanga’s transformation over the last decade.

“Gahanga is now an industrial zone of nearly 200 hectares. Every company here needs materials like glass,” he said. “Investors used to struggle importing from China or elsewhere. Now, they can access locally produced glass.”

Alphonse Kwizera, a business analyst from the Ministry of Trade and Industry (MINICOM), described the factory as “a symbol of Rwanda’s continued industrialization and value addition.” He noted that Silverback would reduce import dependency, stabilize supply chains, boost exports, create jobs, and equip youth with technical expertise.

Empowering Youth and Building Skills

For employees, Silverback has already provided life-changing opportunities. Bisanukuri Uwamuhoza Clémence, a factory technician, said she joined with little knowledge of machinery but received extensive training.

“Now we can cut, wash, drill, and finish glass with confidence,” she said. The factory has also enabled financial independence: “We earn, save, and support our families.”

She praised the factory’s gender balance and mentorship programs: “Management

respects our dignity, mentors us, and ensures equal opportunities for men and women. We are on the path to becoming professional engineers."

As Rwanda's first safety glass manufacturer, Silverback fills a critical gap in the local market while also positioning the country for regional export potential. It is both an industrial and diplomatic bridge, showcasing what happens when Rwanda's investment-friendly environment meets international capital and expertise.

"Action speaks louder than words," Ambassador Dafalla concluded. "This factory is proof of Rwanda's vision, Sudan's commitment, and Africa's ability to invest in itself."