



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

IN THE EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)

The Official Report of the Proceedings of the East African Legislative Assembly 40TH SITTING: THIRD ASSEMBLY - SECOND MEETING - SECOND SESSION

SPECIAL SITTING

Tuesday, 22 October 2013

*(The East African Legislative Assembly met at 2.30 p.m. in the Burundi National Assembly,
Bujumbura, Burundi.)*

(Burundi National Anthem was played)

(The EAC Anthem was played)

PRAYER

(The Speaker, Ms Margaret Nantongo Zziwa, in the Chair)

(The Assembly was called to order)

PROCEDURAL MOTION

The Chairperson, Legal, Rules and Privileges Committee (Ms Dora Kanabahita Byamukama) (Uganda): Your Excellency, the President of the Republic of Burundi, Pierre Nkurunziza, the Rt. Hon. Speaker of the National Assembly of Burundi, Pie Ntavyohanyuma, Madam Speaker, honourable members and distinguished guests;

I beg to move_

THAT, the resolution to hold sittings in the republic of Burundi be adopted.

Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker: Seconded by Hon. Hafsa Mossi and Christopher Bazivamo. Proceed hon. Byamukama

Ms. Byamukama: Madam Speaker,

WHEREAS Clause 1 of Article 55 of the Treaty provides that, the meetings of the Assembly shall be held at such times and places as the Assembly may appoint

WHEREAS Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure provides that, the seat of the Assembly shall be at Arusha in the United Republic of Tanzania

AND WHEREAS Sub-Rule 7 of Rule 11 provides that the Assembly may on a resolution adopted by the majority of its members decide to hold one or more sittings elsewhere within in the Partner States other than at its seat.

NOW THEREFORE, This Assembly do resolve as follows:

THAT, pursuant to the provisions of Sub-Rule 7 of Rule 11 cited above, the Assembly shall hold its sittings in the Chamber of the Burundi National Assembly from today Tuesday, 22nd October 2013 up to Thursday, 31st October 2013.

Madam Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker: Thank you very much hon. Byamukama. Hon. Members the motion on the floor is that this House pursuant to the provisions of Article 55 (1) of the Treaty and Rule 11 of the Rules of Procedure do resolve to hold sittings in Bujumbura in the Republic of Burundi.

(Question proposed)

The Speaker: Hon members, I now put the question.

(Question put and agreed to)

- (Applause -)

The Speaker: Hon. Members, amidst us today is His Excellency Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic of Burundi. *(Applause)* I have, in accordance with the provisions of Article 54 of the Treaty invited him to address this Assembly.

I would now like to make the following proclamation to welcome the presence, in the Assembly, of the President of the Republic of Burundi.

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS Clause (1) of Article 54 of the Treaty provides that the Speaker of the Assembly can invite any person to attend the Assembly notwithstanding that he or she is not a Member of the Assembly; if in his or her opinion the Business of the Assembly renders his or her presence desirable.

AND WHEREAS in the opinion of the Speaker, the attendance and presence in the Assembly of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Burundi is desirable in accordance with the Business now before the Assembly.

NOW THEREFORE, It is with great pleasure and honour, on your behalf, Hon. Members, that I welcome in this Assembly, the presence of the President of the Republic of Burundi.

- (Applause) -

WELCOME REMARKS BY THE SPEAKER OF EALA TO WELCOME THE SPEAKER OF BURUNDI NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The Speaker (Rt. Hon. (Dr) Margaret Nantongo Zziwa):

Your Excellency, Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic of Burundi,

Rt. Hon Pie Ntavyohanyuma, Speaker of the Burundi National Assembly,

His Excellency Bernard Busokoza, 1st Vice President of the Republic of Burundi,

His Excellency Gervais Rufyikiri, 2nd Vice President of the Republic of Burundi,

Hon Members of the Bureaus of the Parliament of Burundi

Your Excellency, Ombudsman of Burundi,

Your Excellencies, Former Heads of State of Burundi

Hon. Shem Bageine, the Chairperson, EAC Council of Ministers,

The Hon. Ministers and Members of the Council of Ministers,

Amb Dr. Richard Sezibera, the Secretary General of the East African Community,

Hon. Members of the East African Legislative Assembly and the Parliament of Burundi,

Your Excellencies Ambassadors and Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This evening I want to take this opportunity to welcome you all to this important sitting. I wish to first of all thank Rt. Hon. Pie Ntavyohanyuma, Speaker of the *Inama NshingamateKa* (Burundi National Assembly) and indeed also express gratitude to the entire Government of the Republic of Burundi for accepting to host EALA at the Occasion of the Second Meeting of its Second Session of the Third Assembly. (Applause)

We are grateful to you Rt. Hon Ntavyohanyuma for graciously offering EALA the use of the Parliamentary facilities; a magnanimous courtesy you have always extended.

I wish to acknowledge the support rendered by the Speaker to my Members and to myself since our election to the Third Assembly. As a result, the relations between EALA and Burundi National Assembly continue to be warm and cordial. We take particular interest in the strengthening of effective partnerships between Burundi National Assembly and EALA in the maintenance of strengthened regional integration.

Parliament is an embodiment of democracy, a demonstration in any country or region that its people have a voice, and that there is accountability as well as checks and balances. We must at all times ensure we nurture parliamentary democracy and that we collaborate as equals for the common good of our peoples.

I wish to affirm to Rt. Hon Ntavyohanyuma and to pledge EALA's collaboration and co-operation in fulfilling the mandate of integrating the citizens of East Africa. This forms the basis for a strengthened legislative focus, oversight and representation on the part of both Assemblies.

It is important that the two Assemblies build ties and that they continue to enhance performance to continuously play the fundamental role in ensuring a floundering democracy, good governance and national reconciliation in the region.

As the Presiding Officer of the House, the Speaker continues to spearhead reforms within the Assembly. The Burundi National Assembly is also implementing its Strategic Plan in line with its vision and focus. I am sure we can expect more progress to be recorded in the near future.

At the regional level, the contribution of Rt. Hon Ntavyohanyuma has been immense. As our senior colleague in the EAC Speakers' Forum, we will continue to bank on your wisdom and counsel in order for Parliaments to continue to exhibit the vibrancy of our democracies.

My salutations go out to Rt. Hon Ntavyohanyuma as you proceed to direct and conduct the Burundi National Assembly into building of national democracy. I wish the Burundi National Assembly and Speaker Ntavyohanyuma well.

With these few remarks, I now take this opportunity to invite my colleague, the Rt. Hon. Pie Ntavyohanyuma to make his remarks. I thank you for your kind attention. (*Applause*)

Speaker of the Burundi National Assembly, Rt. Hon Pie Ntavyohanyuma:

Your Excellency, Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic of Burundi;

Rt. Hon. Gabriel Ntisezerana, Speaker of the Senate of Burundi;

Rt. Hon. Margaret Nantongo Zziwa, Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA);

Your Excellency, Bernard Busokoza, First Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi;

Your Excellency, Gervais Rufyikiri, Second Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi;

Hon. Members of the Bureaus of the Parliament of Burundi;

Your Excellencies, Former Heads of State of Burundi;

Honourable Members of EALA and the Parliament of Burundi;

Honourable Shem Bageine, Minister of East African Community of Uganda and Chairperson East African Community Council of Ministers;

Honourable Ministers and Members of the Council of Ministers of the East African Community (EAC);

Ambassador Dr. Richard Sezibera, East African Community Secretary General;

Your Excellencies Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Heads of Missions and International Organizations;

Distinguished Guests;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is a great pleasure and single honour for me to address this August Assembly, on behalf of the Parliament of Burundi and on my own behalf.

May I first of all salute and welcome warmly His Excellency Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic of Burundi, to Kigobe. We are very grateful to Him, because He has accepted to grace the opening ceremony of the Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Third East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) and address this Assembly.

Allow me to extend my warm welcome to the Right Honourable Margaret Nantongo Zziwa, Speaker of EALA, and all EALA Members to Burundi and to our National Assembly Headquarters.

May I also welcome and thank very sincerely all the distinguished guests who have come to participate in this ceremony.

I wish to express our sincere thanks to the EALA in general and the Right Honourable Speaker of EALA in particular for granting Burundi and her Parliament the privilege of hosting the Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Third East African Legislative Assembly.

For Burundian Members of Parliament, our wish is that this Sitting will be an opportune time to discuss issues of mutual interest for the East African Community Partner States and all East Africans. Some of these issues, which are of great concern today, are illegal immigration, cross-border crime and terrorism.

Dealing with these issues is timely, especially after the tragic attack on the Westgate Shopping Mall, the toll of which amounted to a lot of people dead and wounded, in Nairobi, in the Republic of Kenya.

I seize this opportunity to express our heartfelt condolences, sympathy and solidarity with the people of Kenya and Kenyan Parliament, after such a heavy loss caused by terrorism.

Terrorism, illegal immigration and cross-border crime are first to be dealt with through permanent dialogue and consultations among all national and regional stakeholders, in view to take decisions which are implemented both at national level, collectively and in full co-operation.

Probably, meetings of the EALA Regional Affairs and Conflict Resolution Committee planned on the agenda of this Sitting will address, among others, the above-mentioned issues.

Our hope is that the proceedings of this Committee and this Sitting will come up with political and legal mechanisms conducive to peace, security, stability, mutual trust, good neighbourliness, peaceful prevention and settlement of disputes and sustainable development.

Your Excellency, the Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Third East African Legislative Assembly is also offering another favourable time to strengthen contacts between

EALA on the one hand and, on the other hand, the Parliament and the people of Burundi, in accordance with article 49 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community.

This provision of the Treaty reminds us that EALA shall liaise with the national Assemblies and Parliaments of the Partner States on matters relating to the EAC, and that EALA shall discuss all matters pertaining to the EAC and make recommendations to the EAC Council of Ministers as it may deem necessary for the implementation of the Treaty.

I therefore invite the Honourable Members of EALA to tell the people of Burundi how EALA is providing legislation and oversight required by the EAC integration. In our understanding, by holding this Sitting in Burundi, the Honourable Members of EALA want to remind Burundians that they are here to interact with them because Burundians' views, fears, concerns and different challenges are to be addressed and taken into account in the EALA legislation process.

This is the approach that can guide legislators of EAC Partner States in their efforts to adopt required bills and to popularize them, so that the implementation of such bills can effectively and truly be people-centred.

It is our sincere hope that this shall be done across the board in the EAC Partner States in general and in Burundi in particular, so as to live as and really mean "One People and One Destiny" in the Region.

It is with these words that I humbly invite His Excellency Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic of Burundi, to address this August Assembly.

Thank you for your kind attention. (*Applause*)

WELCOME REMARKS BY THE SPEAKER OF EALA TO WELCOME THE PRESIDENT OF BURUNDI, H.E. PIERRE NKURUNZIZA

The Speaker: Your Excellency, Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic of Burundi,

Rt. Hon Pie Ntavyohanyuma, Speaker of the Burundi National Assembly,

His Excellency Bernard Busokoza, 1st Vice President of the Republic of Burundi,

His Excellency Gervais Rufyikiri, 2nd Vice President of the Republic of Burundi,

Hon Members of the Bureaus of the Parliament of Burundi

Your Excellency, Ombudsman of Burundi,

Your Excellencies, Former Heads of State of Burundi

Hon. Shem Bageine, the Chairperson, EAC Council of Ministers,

The Hon. Ministers and Members of the Council of Ministers,

Amb Dr. Richard Sezibera, the Secretary General of the East African Community,

Hon. Members of the East African Legislative Assembly and the Parliament of Burundi,

Your Excellencies Ambassadors and Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your Excellency, it is with profound humility that I stand before this *august* House to warmly welcome you to address the 2nd Meeting of the 2nd Session of the 3rd Assembly. I wish to sincerely thank you for once again, accepting to host the session in Bujumbura. (*Applause*)

Your Excellency, today, we are honoured to have you in our midst, exemplifying the importance that your Government attaches to the Assembly and indeed to the entire EAC integration process. (*Applause*)

Bujumbura continues to be an attractive capital and one that EALA Members often find to very enticing, owing to its pleasant weather and hospitable people. (*Applause*)

I thank your government and the people of this beautiful country for your warm reception at all times.

The 3rd Assembly began the series of its 2nd Session in July 2013 and I am happy that the 2nd Meeting is again being held in Bujumbura.

(*Applause*)

This Session is taking place at a time when our region is on an irreversible movement towards deeper integration and increased socio-economic prosperity. Today, the EAC can bask in glory owing to successful realisation in the Customs Union and the Common Market even though we still have existing bottlenecks.

Your Excellency, we are pleased that you and your colleagues at the Summit shall in a matter of weeks sign the Monetary Union Protocol thus ushering in the third tier of the integration process. The people of East Africa have patiently waited as the process of weaving through the complex processes of bringing the hitherto disparate economies together so that we continue to move together as one economy. We remain confident that after years and months of the complex negotiations and boardroom trade-ins, the people of East Africa shall in the near future be able to hold on to a single currency and similarly benefit from wide range of economic gains that the Monetary Union offers. As EALA, we are very supportive of this pillar and shall do all that is within our domain to ensure the Monetary Union succeeds.

It is imperative that we do more with regards to realizing the tenets of the Common Market Protocol which is now in the 3rd year of implementation. A week ago, I and a few of my Members were privileged to participate in the 129th Inter-Parliamentary Union Conference in Geneva, Switzerland. Aside from the usual courtesies that come along with meetings of such magnitude, the one thing that we witnessed as outstanding concerned the actual free movement of persons within the Schengen area. The ease of movement typically means one can transact business and enjoy dynamic provision of services across a number of countries without hindrance. One can easily move from Geneva, have dinner in France and return back to Geneva to 'retire in bed' as some of my colleagues experienced. We could only but admire this kind of

arrangement and hope that at one point in our history at the EAC, we shall duly replicate the same.

(Applause)

Generally, for such opportunities to be realized, Partner States need to review their domestic laws to conform to the commitments and undertakings made in the Protocol. We must also deliver on all the promises including issuance of machine readable cards, mobility of workers/opening of the labour market and in the harmonization of social benefits. A framework for monitoring and evaluation of the Common Market Protocol has been rolled out in the Partner States. I am happy to note that the Republic of Burundi has also established the National Implementation Committee in respect to a directive from the Council of Ministers and that it has started work. The Republic of Burundi has also agreed to the use of Identity Cards for their nationals to travel between four Partner States and we salute that.

(Applause)

The Customs Union on its part has led to significant increase in intra-regional trade. In 2011, intra regional trade in the region rose to 23% of the total values of exports – according to the *Doing Business Report of 2012*. This is by far the highest increase in African economic blocs and we need to take pleasure in the fact that it is happening in one of the fastest growing and reforming economic blocs of the world. However, the region should now operationalise the single Customs Union territory. This is expected to eradicate barriers to trade by adopting a central model of clearance of goods, whereby taxes and other assessments shall be done at the first point of entry and thus ensure faster clearing of goods and reduction in the costs of doing business.

Your Excellency, I am pleased to share with you our scorecard since we last met in Bujumbura in January 2013 for the 4th meeting of the 1st Session. Since that period, EALA has held three other plenaries in Kigali (April 2013), Kampala (May-June 2013) and Arusha (August 2013) respectively.

The Assembly has enacted 4 critical Bills (One Stop Border Post Bill 2012, EAC Vehicle Load Control Bill, 2012, EAC Appropriation Bill, 2012 and the EAC Public Holidays Bill, 2013). We have further adopted 5 Reports and 8 Resolutions – all key to the integration dispensation.

The EALA Committees have also continued to engage the region, in useful meetings and stakeholder hearings. The constant dialogue has given EALA an opportunity to enact relevant legislation and to ensure that we all move together and collectively share our achievements.

In August this year, the Assembly held a very successful conference on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Conference that also served as an occasion to mark the silver jubilee for the Global Parliamentarians on the Habitat (GPH) reiterated the need to re-double efforts in meeting the MDGs and the HABITAT agenda.

In as much as EALA and other stakeholders continue to play their part, we have to ‘walk the talk’. We should strive ‘to take integration a notch higher’. We should strive to see to it that the citizens of the region enjoy the real benefits of integration. In this regard, Your Excellency, the need for further sensitization of key stakeholders: the Parliamentarians; Academia; Youth;

Women; Media and Civil Society is paramount. It is time to ‘shore up’ the numbers of ambassadors for the EAC who can then market the benefits of integration and become our emissaries to the rest of the citizens.

Indeed your Excellency, my Members and I are alive to “constructive criticism” coming from the citizens that we touch base with regularly. Many of the citizens constantly lay claim to the fact that the EAC is ‘merely a talk-shop’ and that they are yet to see any tangible benefits. I share in the school of thought – that the EAC has realized enormous progress. However, we have fallen short and are perhaps handicapped when it comes to cascading the benefits to the citizens. This is perhaps an area we must re-double our efforts to achieve. It is thus in the best interest of the implementing Ministries of EAC of the five Governments, EALA, National Assemblies and the civil society to spur the realization of this enviable task. The Chair of the Summit, H.E. President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni urged the EALA to focus on sensitization and this we are committed to realizing in the coming year.

The same zeal it is necessary when it comes to addressing and resolving some of the challenges such as the menacing Non Tariff Barriers and the speed of implementation of agreed decisions by the Partner States if the regional bloc is to be seen to be pulling together in the same direction.

Since the last infrastructure Summit in November 2012 in Nairobi, discussions have commenced around the construction of the Railway and Ports especially those to serve the hinterland of EAC and beyond. We call for speed in these activities in order to realize the desired goal of access of our agricultural products to wider markets and to enhance linkages between the cities and regions. The One Stop Border Post 2012 Bill is further envisaged among other things to facilitate transport at border posts. The Bill has already started its process for assent to some Partner States and we expect that in a few days time, it shall be brought before Your Excellency.

Your Excellency, EALA has recently completed its Strategic Plan (2013-2018). The new Strategic Plan is seen as a tool that shall facilitate EALA to address some of the integration challenges including enhanced oversight to tackle the NTBs, enhancing linkages with other Parliaments as well as promoting and branding the corporate image. I thank Your Excellency for accepting to launch the Strategic Plan at this Sitting.

Your Excellency, permit me also take this opportunity to congratulate you and your government for the progressive development in this great Republic. It is our prayer as a people of the region that your continued wise and pragmatic leadership will continue watering the tree of peace in Burundi and in laying the foundation for democratic governance.

Yesterday, EALA joined Burundians in commemorating the assassination of President Ndadaye and many other leaders of Burundi. While we condole with you and condemn those atrocitic brutal acts, we salute those democratic leaders of Africa and Burundi who have shed their blood to plant the seed of democracy in our countries.

(Applause)

This seed has now fully germinated and we are certain that now East Africa is on its right path.

When we were last here in Bujumbura, we were saddened by the fire tragedy that gutted the *Marché Central de Bujumbura* (Central Market of Bujumbura) resulting in casualties and destruction of property worth millions of francs. We note the steps being taken by the Government in providing an alternate market for its citizens in the interim. EALA further supports efforts by the Burundi Government to alleviate suffering including efforts to work with financial institutions to prepare financial facilities to restart their livelihoods.

Mid-last year, Burundi celebrated 50 years of Independence. It now has a steady economic growth and is a peaceful country. Today, to name but a few successes, Burundi stands as an 'icon for investments in the region according to the *Doing Business Report, 2012*.

(Applause)

The landmark achievements of this beautiful country, a few years after the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement have been hailed far and beyond and it is only natural that we too add our voice in heralding this great achievement. Allow us therefore to celebrate with you the achievements for choosing peace. We constantly see new developments around Bujumbura that did not exist before, the fruits of peace. We commend the people of Burundi for putting their country first and working for peace and stability.

We also salute the wider efforts of the Summit of EAC Heads of State including that of collaborating with the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) headquartered here in Bujumbura that has seen the scaling up of peaceful efforts. Today, Burundi has some refugees of the region owing to instability in the neighbouring region and we must ensure we do not digress further into turmoil. We recall during your speech to the House at our last sitting here, you were emphatic that we must transform our region into a peaceful region so we may be united and prosperous.

EALA wishes you the best and assures you of its unequivocal support in building the Republic of Burundi and the EAC.

Finally, Your Excellency, it is with great pleasure and honour that I execute my humble duty to welcome Your Excellency to address this August Assembly, today, Tuesday, the 22nd of October, 2013.

Karibu Mheshimiwa Rais!

(Applause)

The President of the Republic of Burundi, H.E Pierre Nkurunziza:

The Right Honourable Pie Ntavyohanyuma, Speaker of Burundi National Assembly,

The Right Honourable Gabriel Ntisezerana, Speaker of Burundi Senate,

The Right Honourable Margaret Nantongo Zziwa, Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA);

Your Excellency, Bernard Busokoza, First Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi;

Your Excellency, Gervais Rufyikiri, Second Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi;

Your Excellency, Mohammed Rukara, Ombudsman of Burundi;

Your Excellencies, Former Heads of State of Burundi;

Honourable Members of EALA and the Parliament of Burundi;

Honourable Shem Bageine, Minister of East African Community of Uganda and Chairperson of the East African Community Council of Ministers;

Honourable Ministers and Members of the Council of Ministers of the East African Community (EAC);

Ambassador Dr. Richard Sezibera, East African Community Secretary General;

Distinguished Ministers;

President of the Supreme Court of Burundi;

The Chiefs of Civil and Police Staff at the Office of the President;

High Officials of Judiciary; Minister Judge to the EAC Court;

Senior officers of the Defense and Security Forces

Your Excellencies Ambassadors, High Commissioners and Heads of Missions and International Organizations;

The Mayor of the City of Bujumbura

Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen;

First and foremost, allow me to praise the Lord who has brought us together to this important gathering.

(Applause)

On behalf of the People and Government of Burundi and on my own behalf, I would like to extend a warm welcome to you all, on the occasion of "the Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Third East African Legislative Assembly".

(Applause)

I would like to welcome the Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly, the Right Honourable Margaret Nantongo Zziwa and all of you, Honorable Members of the East African Legislative Assembly from East African Community Partner States, and brothers and sisters of Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania.

(Applause)

Have a pleasant stay and feel at home in Burundi. Welcome. Karibuni Saana. Kaze.

On my part, I personally, my Government and the People of Burundi, we can assure you that we will spare no effort to make your stay in Burundi both useful and enjoyable.

(Applause)

Before I go any further, I would like to extend my heartfelt condolences and support to the government and the People of Kenya, following the recent terrorist attack that claimed 67 lives in Nairobi. Our thoughts and prayers are with you brothers and sisters of Kenya. For those loved ones who lost their lives during the Nairobi mall attack, let us stand up and pay tribute with a moment of silence. *(A moment of silence was observed)*

I am pleased to welcome the Honorable Members of Parliament of Burundi, Members of the Government of Burundi, Members of the Diplomatic Corps and Consular Missions who are here, and all of you, Distinguished guests, who have agreed to grace with your presence the solemn opening of the Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Third East African Legislative Assembly.

Holding the Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Third East African Legislative Assembly in Burundi is a great honour to my country.

(Applause)

It indeed gives the People of Burundi an opportunity to follow closely, and understand the functioning of the Organs and Institutions of the Community in general and the EALA in particular.

In doing so, and more to the mandate conferred by Article 49 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community, EALA definitely works with Burundi National Assembly on matters relating to the Community. I do commend EALA for its performance.

(Applause)

I take this opportunity to express my satisfaction over the decision of rotating the East African Community Meetings in all Partner States.

(Applause)

This Session comes at a time when Burundi is ending its one year term as Rapporteur of the Community. I highly appreciate the support of the Partner States while exercising this Community commitment and mandate. I have noted that there is a need to focus more on implementation of EAC projects and programmes, and the Common Market in particular. It is imperative that the Council of Ministers and legislators work on this, in view to make the difference for our respective countries and the People we represent and stand for.

(Applause)

It is equally important that we tell our People what the Community is up to, and be able to track progress about the integration agenda, and also to share best practices between countries. In Burundi, we have just completed an awareness campaign in all the country provinces on the integration process within the East African Community, in order to inform People on the steps and stakes of integration, the projects and programmes, as well as tangible benefits of joining the East African Community.

(Applause)

It is my strong conviction that we can consolidate our integration and move to even higher stages of integration. I am informed that negotiations on the Protocol on the Monetary Union are almost over, and it is planned that the East Africa Memorandum of Understanding Protocol under review will be signed at the next Ordinary Summit of East African Community Heads of State in November 2013.

(Applause)

I do believe that we can accelerate the Political Federation, a federation to which the Burundian population and the other Partner States have overwhelmingly responded positively.

(Applause)

Honourable, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen; while we commit ourselves to the integration agenda, it is our duty to strengthen peace and security within our Community, so as to be able to answer the queries of our national economic operators and various stakeholders. I firmly believe that all that is good for economic operators is especially good for Burundi, and good for the East African Community in general.

(Applause)

In our vision, EAC is a community of common destiny for a sustainable economic and social development in an environment of peace and security for all. We have got to believe in the Community with indeed one People. Whatever we undertake, and whatever we do, this motto must be the corner stone and building block.

(Applause)

With this in mind, there is no doubt that the integration agenda will move ahead for the benefit and well-being of our respective countries and Peoples.

Honourable members, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen; I am informed that there is a heavy agenda for this Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Third East African Legislative Assembly. Therefore I would like to wish Members of EALA fruitful deliberations.

(Applause)

There is no doubt that they shall come up with resolutions and recommendations that, if implemented, shall make the difference for our Peoples.

It is with this conviction that I solemnly declare open the Second Meeting of the Second Session of the Third East African Legislative Assembly.

(Applause)

Kabla ya kumaliza, ningependa kuwashukuruni Wabunge wa Bunge la Jumuiya ya Afrika Mashariki kwa kazi nzuri mliyofanya mwaka jana.

(Applause)

Tulienda pamoja Kibitoke kufanya kazi kwa kujitolea. Raia wa Kibitoke wamenituma niwaambie ya kwamba walishukuru sana kazi yenu. Kama itawezekana, Ijumaa hii tunaweza kuruda tena huko, kukagua jinsi wanavyoendeleza kazi mliyoanzisha.

Zaidi ya shukrani kwa kazi mliyofanya, walinitumwa pia kuwashukuru kwa mchango wa fedha mliotoa.

(Applause)

Tunawangoja sasa mwaka kesho tukimaliza kujenga ile stadium tulikubaliana kwamba tutacheza mpira.

(Applause)

Tuko tunafanya maandalizi, nina omba Mungu wakati tutacheza niwafunge goli tatu tu.

Asanteni sana na mungu awabariki. Welcome to Burundi.

Thank you very much.

(Applause)

**THE OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE EALA STRATEGIC PLAN 2013-2018 BY H.E
PIERRE NKURUNZIZA**

The Speaker: Your Excellency thank you very much for officially opening our second meeting of the second session here in Bujumbura. We are so happy and we are gratified that you have invited us to come and play football and netball. We are so happy.

(Applause)

We shall give you a full brief about the strength and power of EALA football and netball teams. Allow me your Excellency to thank you most graciously for allowing to officially launch our strategic plan.

Your Excellency, on behalf of EALA and on my own behalf, I thank you and congratulate you for delivering the address at the start of the 2nd Meeting of the 2nd Session of the 3rd Assembly. Your speech was not only informative, and inspiring-*(applause)* - but it also imparted wise counsel to the EALA Members, officials of the EAC and all stakeholders in attendance.

I have the pleasure of inviting you to this brief but important function marking the official launch of the EALA Strategic Plan (2013-18).

As aptly stated by the Summit of the EAC, the task of building the EAC is not the exclusive responsibility of the Governments and the Executive, but it extends to the legislative, private sector, and the civil society among others.

The launch of the EALA Strategic Plan is therefore crucial and a key tool for the Assembly. Its release is timely taking place against a background when the momentum to strengthen integration is at a pedestal.

The process of formulation of the Strategic Plan has been all-inclusive. The EALA Commission and Members have been fully engaged in the development of the Strategic Plan. Specific meetings have been held to review and digest the content; paragraph by paragraph. Our staff have also been heavily engaged in the process. As we formulated the Strategic Plan, our minds, eyes and ears were constantly opened up to new ideas and critique and through this approach; we have learnt and benefited a lot. We also benefited from the expertise of a Consultant who was called in to further fine-tune the document.

Your Excellency, distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen;

The theme of the Strategic Plan is “*A People-Centered Approach to Widening and Deepening of the EAC integration by a Strong and Effective EALA*”

In line with the overall goal and the overarching theme of the Strategic Plan, the six major strategic issues for the Assembly over the Plan period are:

1. EALA’s Administrative Autonomy, Capacity and Efficiency.
2. Negotiations for the EAC Pillars of integration.
3. EALA’s Corporate Image and Institutional Status, Growth and Development.
4. Capacity Building in Regional Parliamentary Practices.

5. Effective, Sustainable and Results-Oriented Communication and Sensitization on EAC Integration and
6. Robust and Effective Monitoring and Evaluation.

The effective and successful execution of the stated interventions will also require the employment of a number of activities and appropriate strategies taking cognizance of the key critical assumptions that each strategic objective of the Plan intends to achieve.

Your Excellency, allow me to take the opportunity to wholeheartedly thank all stakeholders who have in one way or another participated in the success of the Strategic Plan. EALA is particularly indebted to the Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA) and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) for their support in the publication of the Strategic Plan. WFD has further agreed to support the publication of a pocket friendly and popular version.

It is my singular hope that with such gesture and support from various stakeholders, EALA shall make its contribution towards qualitative change in the lives of the people in the region.

It is now my singular pleasure to invite Your Excellency to officially launch the EALA Strategic Plan 2013-2018. I thank you very much Your Excellency!

(Applause)

The President of the Republic of Burundi, H.E Pierre Nkurunziza:

Rt. Hon Pie Ntavyohanyuma, Speaker of the Burundi National Assembly,

Rt. Hon. Gabriel Ntisezerana, Speaker of the Burundi Senate

Rt. Hon. Dr. Margaret Nantongo Zziwa, Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly;

His Excellency Bernard Busokoza, 1st Vice President of the Republic of Burundi,

His Excellency Gervais Rufyikiri, 2nd Vice President of the Republic of Burundi,

Hon Members of the Bureaus of the Parliament of Burundi

Your Excellency, Ombudsman of Burundi,

Your Excellencies, Former Heads of State of Burundi

Hon. Shem Bageine, the Chairperson, EAC Council of Ministers,

The Hon. Ministers and Members of the Council of Ministers,

Amb Dr. Richard Sezibera, the Secretary General of the East African Community,

Hon. Members of the East African Legislative Assembly and the Parliament of Burundi,

Your Excellencies Ambassadors and Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to join you in the launch of the EALA Strategic Plan (2013-2018), which is the second such Plan for the Assembly.

I thank you once again for choosing the Republic of Burundi as a suitable venue for the launch of the Strategic Plan, which is a key and crucial tool for the Assembly.

(Applause)

I wish to say that this is a milestone in the history of EALA, and an achievement to be proud of. I thank the entire fraternity, the EALA Commission, Members and staff for their hard work, excellent facilitation and invaluable input into the Strategic Plan. I further express my gratitude to the Development Partners, Civil Society and Private Sector, all of whom may have contributed useful ideas and offered constructive critique during the development of this Plan.

The main achievements and lessons learnt in the last five years have no doubt played a fundamental role in helping EALA to develop and embrace its strategies for the future. The next five years should thus see the Assembly become more innovative, pro-active and focused towards ensuring its remains on the cutting edge of regional integration.

(Applause)

It is within this period that the EAC shall consolidate on the gains and progressively strengthen the pillars of integration. The role of the Assembly which entails legislation, oversight and representation shall continue to be absolutely fundamental in the dispensation. This mandate needs to be ideally and strategically guided to ensure that programmes and projects that are of good quality, and that meet the needs of the region, are implemented.

The process of formulation and completion of the Strategic Plan by the 3rd Assembly is therefore only just the beginning. The real work starts now. The real test comes in the implementation of the set objectives. I am further pleased that EALA has anchored its main theme in the next five years on people-centredness.

(Applause)

Ideally, the citizens of the region must be at the core and the centre stage of the process. The Strategic objectives as mentioned by the Right Hon Speaker in her brief remarks are achievable, for so long as commitment and focus continue to be the mainstay of the process. I am confident that we shall be able to achieve substantial progress in the programmes planned taking into consideration the critical assumptions.

I wish to assure you of my personal support and that of my government as you undertake the initiative.

(Applause)

Madam Speaker, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen; it is now my singular pleasure to officially launch the EALA Strategic Plan 2013-2018.

(Applause)

I thank you very much and God bless you.

(Applause)

VOTE OF THANKS

The Speaker: Your Excellency tonight we are so privileged and we have a lot of words to express our happiness. I know there are other people who are sharing with us this joy. Who we invited and they honoured us with their coming. Allow me before invite the member who is going to express our gratitude to you that I acknowledge them and your able also recognise them.

Your Excellency, we do have Rt. Hon Pie Ntavyohanyuma, Speaker of the Burundi National Assembly,

(Applause)

We have the President of the Senate. May I invite you to stand up so the people behind can see you and know that you are here to share our happiness.

(Applause)

We also have the 1st Vice President of the Republic of Burundi. Allow me also to congratulate you Sir, because where I come from, the new person in an office or the braid is called *mugole*. You're a *mugole*. I do not know whether that is right in Kirundi but allow us to congratulate you Sir.

(Applause)

Allow me also to recognise the 2nd Vice President of the Republic of Burundi. He's not here.

(Applause)

Allow me also to recognise and welcome the former president of the Republic of Burundi. Thank you very much Sir for coming.

(Applause)

Allow me also to welcome and recognise the Mayor of Bujumbura. Most welcome, my Lord.

(Applause)

Let me also recognise the hon. Members of the Parliament of Burundi. Thank you for receiving us very well.

(Applause)

Let me also now turn to our own, the hon. ministers of the government of Burundi. Thank you for being here.

(Applause)

Let me also introduce Ambassadors and Members of the Diplomatic Corps. Thank you for joining us.

(Applause)

Let me also introduce the members of the Defence forces and the members of the Police Force. They are beautifully dressed in their regalia up there. Thank you for joining us.

(Applause)

Let me also introduce the members of the Judiciary who are present.

(Applause)

Also amidst us are members of Parliament of Uganda. They are from the Committee of the EAC, the Committee of Government Assurances and the Committee of the Natural Resources and they chose to come to Burundi to study and bench mark the achievements Burundi has done in those areas.

(Applause)

Before I invite hon. Kidega, I wish to invite hon. Members of EALA, the Chairperson Council of Ministers and all the Ex-Officio members of the Assembly to stand up.

(Applause)

We are so honoured Your Excellency that you have allowed us to be amidst you and now, I invite hon. Dan Kidega to come and say words of appreciation. Please come and take the front podium.

Mr. Dan Kidega(Uganda): Thank you Rt. Hon. Speaker.

Your Excellency, Pierre Nkurunziza, President of the Republic of Burundi,

Rt. Hon Pie Ntavyohanyuma, Speaker of the Burundi National Assembly,

Rt. Hon. Gabriel Ntisezerana, the Speaker of the Senate

His Excellency Bernard Busokoza, 1st Vice President of the Republic of Burundi,

His Excellency Gervais Rufyikiri, 2nd Vice President of the Republic of Burundi,

Hon Members of the Bureaus of the Parliament of Burundi

Your Excellency, Ombudsman of Burundi,

Your Excellencies, Former Heads of State of Burundi

Hon. Shem Bageine, the Chairperson, EAC Council of Ministers,

The Hon. Ministers and Members of the Council of Ministers,

Amb Dr. Richard Sezibera, the Secretary General of the East African Community,

Hon. Members of the East African Legislative Assembly and the Parliament of Burundi and the Senate,

Hon. Members from the Parliament of Uganda,

Your Excellencies Ambassadors and Members of the Diplomatic Corps,

Religious leaders, if they are present,

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today is a very unique day to us as an Assembly. I would like to salute the honour accorded to me by the Rt. Hon. Speaker to move a vote of thanks to the President for gracing this occasion. It is indeed a unique vote of thanks to the President because many times we move vote of thanks for opening our session. Today we are moving a vote of thanks to the President for doing two things; opening our session in this great republic and also launching our strategic action plan.

(Applause)

Rt. hon. Speaker I thank you for giving me this chance to move of thanks to a leader. Your Excellency, in the world today we have many presidents presiding over their nations. Some of those countries and nations are in dire confusion. In conflicts, wars, tribal clashes, confusion of different sorts where women and children are regarded as secondary citizens but this country where we are sited today, does not belong to the above description.

(Applause)

And that is why I refer to you as a leader and that marks a distinction between you and many presidents. I congratulate you for offering leadership to this country.

(Applause)

Your Excellency, people wider and far in this country many times refer to you as *'umuhuza'*.

(Applause)

For those of us who understand Kirundi very well, we know what it means.

(Laughter)

But for those of you who comprehend Kiswahili well it means *'mpatanishi'*.

(Applause)

And for those of you who have bothered to do the queens language or who speak good English he is called a 'mediator'.

(Applause)

Your Excellency, the three adjectives refer to you. We are very proud of you for the unity you have brought to this nation.

(Applause)

We salute your reconciliation and peace processes which you have initiated in this country. You have brought this country from a difficult history to where it is today, rooted on the path of prosperity. We salute you and the people of Burundi.

(Applause)

You have developed and consolidated a strong force called the National Defence Forces of Burundi which is defending the people of Burundi and Africa-*(applause)*-developed from a difficult history to now supporting and defending people around the world. Your gallant forces are in Somalia, we salute you for that.

(Applause)

Your gallant forces are in Darfur, Sudan. We thank you for that.

(Applause)

Your forces are doing a good job in the Central African Republic. We thank you for that.

(Applause)

We are cognisance of your presence in Haiti.

(Applause)

We know the good work you are doing in Chad.

(Applause)

We know that soon you will be in Mali. That is the force I am talking about. It takes a leader to develop such a gallant army from the history came from. We congratulate you upon that great work. Your Excellency, I and the Parliament of East Africa are aware of the struggle you launched against ignorance by starting Universal Primary Education. The fruits of the struggle are being felt by the Burundians and the east Africans by the education many Burundians are acquiring freely. We salute you and we congratulate your government and we encourage you to continue with the same.

(Applause)

I am a proud East African to associate myself with your health care system. In the United States, they have the *Obamacare*; in Burundi we have the *Nkurunzizacare*.

(Applause)

A care well thought of and well coined giving free maternal care to all mothers who are pregnant.

(Applause)

What else do you request for or expect of a leader? It provides free health care to babies born until the age of 5. What better leadership do you demand from a leader? Your Excellency, we are proud of your government and the people with whom you're working with.

Your Excellency, the memory in the minds of the EALA members in what we did in Ngozi is still very fresh. The community work you started as a government.

As a parliament we cannot wait for Saturday to come so that we engage in the same. We are proud of this initiative. We are aware that you have so far constructed about 3000 schools without contribution of foreign aid.

(Applause)

Hundreds and thousands of health centres, stadium for sports. I was itching when you were talking about sports because I am a striker for EALA. We salute your efforts in support of sports, specifically football where you are a star. We are aware of your action oriented leadership. You have developed football academies throughout this country. His Excellency even owns an academy and a football called Messenger FC and that is leading by example. We thank you for giving sports and specifically football a different face of looking at it rather than an entertainment but more of a health issue and also a foreign earning for the country. We salute that vision.

(Applause)

Your Excellency, we are grateful for the challenges you have put before us on the issues relating to the EAC integration. We would like to salute your unwavering support to the integration process and the people of Burundi. We would like to salute you deeply for your strong and clear statement that east African integration can be fast tracked.

(Applause)

We as an Assembly shall spare no time to translate your vision and your thinking in actionable points in terms of legislation. We will work with the Council of Ministers to make sure your wise guidance from the Summit is translated into laws that implements the integration process. We will follow through our oversight function to make your plea to us on the issue of implementation of the EAC projects are undertaken and we shall thereby report to you again.

We will not let down the entire Summit on the matter of sensitisation of the East African people about the integration. We will do our best to make sure we sensitise the East Africans about the integration process. At this point, I would like to salute the wise leadership of the Speaker of EALA-*(applause)* - who has made it possible for this Assembly to rotate in all the Partner States.

(Applause)

You have commended this effort, we are in it together. We will rotate and sensitise our people and interact with our members of Parliament. We gracefully thank you hon. members of Burundi National Parliament.

(Applause)

Your Excellency, we have been coming to Bujumbura many times, but every time we come we see a new face. We congratulate you and the local leadership for the cleanliness of the city. The lighting, the infrastructure development and all that you have undertaken.

In conclusion Sir, allow me to quote one of the most celebrated sons of the world Martin Luther King Junior. He said “the ultimate measure of a man or a leader is not where he stands in the moment of comfort and convenience but where he stands at the time of challenges and controversy”. We have measured you and found you standing on the right side of everything pertaining the integration. You have put your country on the right path of progress and development. We thank you so much; we salute your leadership and the Government of Burundi. May God gracefully give you good health, good life and inspiration to lead your people more and more. I say this in the name of Jesus Christ.

Thank you.

(Applause)

ADJOURNMENT

The Speaker: Your Excellency, I can't add anything to those very many words to which our striker hon. Dan Kidega has struck in order to make our feelings and our hearts reach out to you. We are so grateful and thank you very much for this gracious time. You have accorded us.

Hon. Members, we have come to the end of our sitting today. Before we adjourn, I want to make two important announcements. The first we are going to have a group photograph. This is traditional but it is very important. So when we retire from the chamber, I urge you members to move a little bit fast so that we are able to assemble at the entrance of the august House.

Secondly, I want to invite all of you, including all our invited guests to a cocktail just outside the premises. With those few announcements, I want to take this opportunity to adjourn the house to tomorrow Wednesday, 23rd October at 2.30 p.m. House stands adjourned.

(The Rwanda National Anthem was played)

(The EAC Anthem was played)

(The Assembly rose at 16:06 p.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 23rd October at 2.30 p.m.)