



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

IN THE EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)

The Official Report of the Proceedings of the East African Legislative Assembly

FIFTH MEETING – SECOND SESSION – THIRD ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 25 March 2014

SPECIAL SITTING

The East African Legislative Assembly met at 10:40 a.m. in the EALA Chambers, EAC Headquarters, Arusha, Tanzania

PRAYER

EAC Anthem

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

(The Assembly was called to order)

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

The Speaker: Hon. Members, amidst us today is His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya, – *(Applause)* – and he is also the Chairperson of the Summit of the EAC Heads of State. I would now like to make the following proclamation to welcome his presence in the Assembly.

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 of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Kenya and current Chairperson of the EAC Heads of State 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, to welcome His Excellency in this Assembly.” (Applause)

THE STATE OF THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY ADDRESS

WELCOME REMARKS BY THE SPEAKER

The Speaker: Your Excellency Uhuru Mwigai Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya and Chairperson of the Summit of the EAC Heads of State, Hon. Phyllis Jepkosgei Kandie, Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of East African Affairs, Commerce and Tourism and also the Chairperson of the EAC Council of Ministers, hon. Ministers and members of the Council of Ministers, honourable Secretary General of the East African Community, my Lord, Judge President of the East African Court of Justice, Justice Harold Nsekela, the Principal Judge, Justice Bosco Butasi, hon. Members of the East African Legislative Assembly, heads of the Organs and Institutions of the East African Community, Your Excellencies High Commissioners, government officials, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It is with profound humility that I stand before this august House to welcome you warmly to deliver the State of the EAC Address at the commencement of the Fifth Meeting of the Second Session. I wish to sincerely thank you for responding to our invitation, this being your first official engagement with EALA as the Chairperson of the Summit. *(Applause)*

I wish to take this opportunity, Your Excellency, sir, to congratulate you following your elevation to the Chair of the Summit of the EAC Heads of State. This took place on 30th November 2013, and I want to assure you of the Assembly’s unequivocal support as you lead the East African Community.

In a very special way, I salute you for finding time, particularly yesterday, March 24th, to meet and dialogue with the EAC Executives and staff. That session was very motivational, and it inspired all of us as a Community, but mainly the staff and the people of the East African Community, and Arusha specifically.

Permit me also to appreciate greatly your support, which you gave to EALA to facilitate the Kenya tour, which we undertook recently. *(Applause)* Your Excellency, the tour enabled us to appreciate the potential of East Africa. We were able to note the tremendous progress at the Mombasa Port that is today completely decongested following your policy directive to allow Uganda Revenue Authority and the Rwanda Revenue Authority to directly handle cargo destined for their respective Partner States. *(Applause)*

Allow me also to congratulate you for the opening of the 19th berth at the Port, which is a further testimony of your desire to facilitate trade in the East African Community. Indeed when we were last in Nairobi for the Third Sitting, we travelled to Kisumu and Kampala by road, and that enabled us to see for ourselves that the Northern Corridor is an important route into the hinterland.

I want to say that the testimony, which we were able to see, is a great improvement in the movement of goods on this corridor, and we saw no road block. We want to salute you, sir,

because even the weighbridges vanished when we were on that route; we did not see any. We want to congratulate you sir. (*Applause*)

The visit to the Ulkaria Geo-thermal energy project, which is the largest in Africa, was an eye-opener to all of us as Members of EALA, and it showed Kenya's commitment to the implementation of the East African Energy Master Plan. Therefore, we want to congratulate you sir.

The Kenya tour gave us, as EALA, an opportunity to interface with the people's representatives, and mainly with the members of the Senate, the Members of Parliament, and with the governors and county council representatives. We were able to seek their support in the integration dispensation. This was a unique opportunity under Article 49 of the Treaty, and we thank you.

Finally, as EALA, we were also able to interface with the representatives of the civil society as per our mandate under Article 127 of the Treaty, and we were able to consult with them on the activities that can promote the integration.

Allow me also to say that we were able to hold very useful deliberations with key institutions in Kenya, including the Vision 2030 Secretariat, the Konza Techno City, and the Kenya Private Sector Alliance, among others, all of which gave us testimony to the steady path of growth that Kenya is taking. We are indeed grateful to Your Excellency.

We are also grateful to the Cabinet Secretary who is also our Chair, Council of Ministers, hon. Phyllis Kandie, her Permanent Secretary and her whole team because they were able to put together this very rewarding program, which enabled us to understand the East African Community and Kenya better.

In essence, as you noted in your remarks yesterday, sensitisation is a key component of the integration process. We as legislators have to continuously play our part and put our energies on this mobilisation. We shall thus redouble our sensitisation efforts by reaching out to university students and faith based community leaders. We shall reach out also to our parliamentarians, the media, the women groups, the youth and others in the diaspora. We think that together we will be able to take forward the integration agenda. Your Excellency, I call on your support in this area. We require funds as EALA. (*Applause*) The budget we have is so limited that we cannot do many such activities. So, this is our humble plea to you, our Chair of the Summit.

Today's State of the EAC address is a fundamental activity on the calendar of the Community. The address sets the momentum and impetus for the integration process by reflecting on general policies that relate to the Community's progress by outlining the strategic challenges, which require attention.

His Excellency President Yoweri Museveni made the first such address to this Assembly in 2008 here in Arusha. The state of the EAC address has since been institutionalised, and we are grateful that all Heads of State have continuously honoured their respectful invitations. (*Applause*)

Your Excellency, sir, I wish to congratulate you and the Summit for the support and direction that ensured the successful negotiations of the Monetary Union Protocol, which was signed on 30th November 2013. In many ways, the Monetary Union is the logical culmination of the

integration efforts as it seeks to harmonise fiscal and monetary policies leading to a single currency. Many of the benefits we seek shall be multiplied under the Monetary Union for there shall be strengthened competition among the respective business communities, and we shall see efficiencies in our respective domestic markets arising out of greater economies of scale. We now look forward to the eventual ratification of the protocol, come 1 July 2014, so that the implementation commences in time.

With regard to the Common Market Protocol, which is in its fourth year of implementation, Your Excellency, I am happy to report that the Republics of Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda have already opened up their capital accounts, thus removing the barriers and restrictions on the movement and payment of capital. There is significant progress in the processes in the Republic of Burundi and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Your Excellency, the protocol sets to accelerate economic growth and development of the Partner States through the attainment of free movement of goods, persons and labour, as well as rights of establishment and free movement of goods, services and capital. While substantial progress has been made, the region also faces considerable challenges.

Allow me, Your Excellency, to mention that at the outset it was perceived and understood that free movement of persons and that of the workers would initially apply to certain professionals with an increased and widening scope over time. The protocol further envisaged opportunities for business and entrepreneurs to flourish the given and associated freedoms. However, one of the biggest challenges realised over time concerns the slow pace at which Partner States are opening up.

Although EALA and several stakeholders have intensified sensitisation campaigns to the East Africans on the Common Market Protocol, citizens continue to bear the brunt of restrictions with Partner States taking cover under the pretext that their respective national laws are still being amended.

As an Assembly, we even passed a resolution on the removal of fees on work permits as a further way of facilitating movement of labour. We are of the view that the legal processes need to be hastened. Our earnest appeal, Your Excellency, sir, in your capacity as the Chair of the Summit of the EAC Heads of State, is that you cause the region to implement fully and fervently the provisions of the Common Market Protocol.

Let me reiterate the call on the Council of Ministers to be more progressive in bringing Bills to the House. *(Applause)* We still await several Bills on the effective implementation of the Common Market as this was mentioned at the time of signing the Protocol. The failure on the part of the Council of Ministers to bring forth Bills has sometimes compelled Members to bring Private Members' Bills.

Your Excellency, sir, the Customs Union has significantly increased intra regional trade. In 2011, the intra regional trade in the region rose up to 23 percent of the total values of exports according to the doing business report of 2012, which by far is the highest increase in all other African economic blocks.

One of the expectations of the East Africans is the operationalization of the single customs territory, which includes reducing cargo-clearing costs by half. We think that this would be the ultimate in the free movement of goods in our region.

Your Excellency, sir, EALA applauds the significant steps taken to reduce the non-tariff barriers, and we acknowledge that the results thereof are beginning to be felt by East Africans. The timely reduction of the weighbridges and the removal of roadblocks have led to speedy transportation. Allow me to report as the Kenya Ports Authority reported to us that today it only takes between four and four and a half days for a trailer to move from Mombasa to Malaba, and this is a tremendous reduction because initially it was 21 days. Therefore, we want to salute you sir. *(Applause)*

The EAC infrastructure plan program has also registered a boost. I want to say that your commissioning of the railway line in Nairobi was very notable, and we want to offer our support in that area. The energy and ports and harbours sub sectors also continue to improve. We laud the infrastructure development in place and salute the bold decisions to introduce the modern standard railway gauge. We look forward to the time when this critical infrastructure system shall reach Kampala, Kigali and Bujumbura. This will further open the interior to greater trade and development.

Let me just add one little thing that the Briton Woods Partners, who still doubt the viability of the railway project, should be reassured that this is the new lifeline of trade for East Africans. So, go ahead, we support you, sir.

Your Excellency, sir, I wish to urge the Summit to direct stakeholders to conclude discussions on the liberalisation of the air space, which shall culminate in the reduction of costs for air travel. CASSOA, which is an institution of the EAC, has taken the lead in critical discussions to ensure liberalisation of the air space, among other areas, but it needs support from you, the Summit, so that the CASSOA mandate can be realised. And in this area they need a lot of funds, and of course, policy direction. Funds will help them to acquire the very expensive equipment for the air space.

EALA has recently launched her new strategic plan. Your Excellency will allow me to give you a copy. In here, we clearly spell out the strategies and approaches to realise our mandate. In the strategic plan, we seek to embrace our legislative, the representation and oversight agenda, and we know very well that this will hasten and help in the deepening and widening of the integration process.

Your Excellency, at this juncture, allow me to thank you and the Summit for the positive consideration of the improvement of the members' emoluments, which gave us the leverage to the level of the Deputy Secretaries General. *(Applause)* I recall your assurance on this matter when I paid a courtesy call on you together with the members of EALA, Kenya Chapter last year. I cannot thank you enough for keeping your word, Your Excellency. *(Applause)*

Maybe I should also take this opportunity to raise one other matter, which is of significance to the East African Legislative Assembly and to the Community. Your Excellency, the length of time it takes to finalise the process of enactment of the EAC legislations is very long. In

accordance with Articles 62 and 63 of the Treaty, the Assembly and the Heads of State of the EAC Partner States share the final process of the enactment of legislation.

As per the provisions of Article 62(2) of the Treaty, when the Assembly has passed a Bill, the Speaker of the Assembly is required to submit the Bill to the Heads of State for assent. By provisions of Article 63(2), every Head of State has up to three months to assent or withhold their assent to the Bill. As we stand at five Partner States, it means a Bill will take up to fifteen months, or one and a half years to be more exact, to be assented to. Of course, in the meantime the public is awaiting this passed Bill because immediately we pass it here, the public is informed and they continue to demand for it from us.

We have a humble proposal, Your Excellency. We would like the process of enactment of EAC legislation to be predictable. We therefore humbly propose- and you can discuss this with your colleagues, sir- that you discuss with them, maybe at the time of the EAC Summit sitting - maybe to have some time to look at these Bills.

We know very well that you can do that immediately you have consulted on the Bill so that you are able to know expeditiously that within a year we shall at least have two or three Bills signed. I think to date we have about four or six, which are still on their way to the respective capitals, and we think that it is not fair. They include the HIV/AIDS Bill, amongst others. We know very well that when you support this proposal, your distinguished colleagues will be able to buy it.

Your Excellency, looking outwards, I wish to reiterate the importance of a peaceful and secure region. The recent developments in South Sudan are worrying. I want to acknowledge -and we as EALA want to acknowledge the Protocol on Peace and Security, which was passed by the Community on 15 February 2013. We want to take this opportunity to call on the Partner States to ratify this important protocol.

We thank Your Excellencies for the profound work done to bring lasting peace to South Sudan. We salute you for the good leadership in ensuring zero sum politics. Our hope and prayer is that this zero sum politics does not undermine the negotiations and to encourage the Members who are included in those negotiations to remain steadfast.

Your Excellency, let me once again congratulate you, your government and the people of Kenya upon attaining 50 years of independence, which was marked on 12 December 2013. Let me say in Swahili, *hongera washehe za Jamuhuri*.

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, 25 March 2014. Your Excellency, Sir. (*Applause*)

The President of the Republic of Kenya, and Chairperson, Summit of EAC Heads of State (Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta): Thank you very much, Madam Speaker and hon. Members.

Madam Speaker, the Chairperson of the East African Community Council of Ministers, hon. Members of the EALA, fellow East Africans, ladies and gentlemen.

Let me begin first by thanking you, Madam Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to address members of the East African Legislative Assembly, but also at the very onset, to take this opportunity to also thank my brother, President Jakaya Kikwete, the government and people of the United Republic of Tanzania, for their very warm welcome and hospitality since we arrived in this great town of Arusha yesterday. *(Applause)*

Let me also, at the very onset, applaud the East African Legislative Assembly for upholding its tradition of inviting the Chair of the Summit for the State of the East African Community address. *(Applause)* The occasion affords the Chair a singular opportunity to inform the citizens of our Community, as well as our friends and partners, of the progress in our journey to full integration. I am gratified to have been asked to give a broad outline of our principle priorities while focusing on the part that the Assembly in collaboration with the Council and Secretariat must play if our destination is to be reached.

For my part, Madam Speaker, I must admit that it is a pleasure to speak to both the Assembly and to all East Africans wherever they may be. When I last spoke to you during the Assembly's sitting in Nairobi in November of 2013, I pledged that my country would arrange a tour of Kenya by members of the Assembly. I trust you found it useful in informing you and your legislature of its responsibilities. *(Applause)* We hope, Madam Speaker, to arrange further tours to other parts of Kenya in the coming months. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, let me begin by saying that Africa still slumbers, and indeed it is time for us to wake up. We have it within our power to assault poverty if only we can master the self belief. *(Applause)* In the last five years, our region in particular has seen discoveries of new minerals and fossil deposits, yet we have hardly scratched the surface of our wealth creation while the number of our people living below the poverty line remains unacceptably high. It falls to us to manage our natural bounty, and we must learn from best practices pioneered elsewhere, adopting them to our circumstances because our people demand no less. Madam Speaker, I wish to challenge the Council and this Assembly to seriously consider the complete harmonisation of the Community laws and regulations on the exploitation of natural resources.

The East African Community has made great strides over the past 13 years, and especially since the coming into effect of our Customs Union in 2005. Trade within the Community has indeed surpassed expectations. We have seen a deepening of cooperation across a number of sectors: in education, in our infrastructure, in our defence of our freedoms and rights provided for under the Common Market Protocol.

Madam Speaker, in the last year we have significantly reduced police roadblocks along the main East African Community transport corridors, but police blocks, irksome as they may be, do not exhaust our non-tariff barriers. They remain barriers to trade, movement of capital, labour and people, and that still frustrate the fulfilment of our potential so ably recognised by the framers of the Customs Union and the Common Market Protocols.

Vigilance in the removal of the bureaucratic red tape that chocks our trade and our movement of goods, services and people must therefore be the watchword. Last year, 2013, indeed marked another milestone in the Community's journey to full integration. You will recall, hon. Members, that we signed the Monetary Union Protocol. This, hon. Members, is no mere milestone, no mere

requirement ticked on the East African Community integration checklist. It was rather a critical stage, a challenging one even, but we will not tire in our efforts to bring it to completion. *(Applause)*

Our resolve, Madam Speaker, is expressed in the theme of the Financial Year 2014/2015 budget, which glories in the title, “*Consolidating the East African Community Common Market Protocol and Commencing the Implementation of the Monetary Union Protocol.*” It is the duty of this Assembly, therefore, to devote itself to guarding the gains that we have made.

Madam Speaker, the Assembly must also push for the prompt and effective enactment of the provisions of the protocols. It may be a cliché, but it is one worth repeating. The Community will never meet the aspirations of its youth if our comparative advantage in global trade remains that we are a primary commodity producer.

Our exports too often leave our shores with very little value added. Our economies are inadequately diverse and remain too loosely linked to make the most of our diverse strengths. We have no choice in the matter because we must industrialise to build the wealth that will bring dignified work to our people, sustain our growth and abolish poverty.

The Customs Union and the Common Market framework that we have put in place are but a first step to realising that objective. This Assembly and the Council are charged with converting the dream into concrete reality this decade. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, to secure our economy, social and political cooperation, the Community is on course to cement our political unity through the establishment of an EAC Political Federation. *(Applause)* Already we are seriously considering the suitability of various model structures against the political realities in our region. Though the East African Federation is the ultimate goal of the Community’s integration, I must emphasise that Political Federation is a process not an event. Our standing cooperation in our common life, in economic affairs, in good governance, in security, and in education, amongst many others, constitutes the foundation necessary for the federation that we desire.

I know that a committee of this Assembly has already expressed its views on the revised draft model structure, roadmap and action plan for the East African Political Federation that was developed by experts for consultation at the Partner States level. After several past studies of the alternatives available to us, I am confident that the Summit, after thinking carefully about our responses to the plan proposed, will issue clear directions for the road ahead. *(Applause)*

I must urge the Assembly to widen its consultations and infuse its spirit of solidarity into our citizens, especially our youth, our religious leaders, and indeed all our people. Let our integration be centred in the hopes of our people as we promised it would be.

Madam Speaker, it is also my duty to mention some challenges to our region. Few of these challenges fill me with such disgust as the recent upsurge of illicit trade in wildlife products, especially ivory and rhino horns. This is in spite of our firm new anti-poaching measures. Sadly, East Africa has been identified as a major source region and a favourite transit route for this callous commerce, and in the period between January and October 2013 alone, over 10 tonnes of ivory were intercepted at the port of Mombasa alone.

The latest Interpol reports, for instance, estimate a 68 percent increase in 2013 of the total tonnage seized in 2012. These developments represent a deadly threat not only to the livelihoods of communities that benefit directly and indirectly from wildlife, but also to our tourist industry, which in some of our Partner States contributes more than 10 percent of our gross domestic product.

Even more worrying is a reasonable concern that proceeds of this illicit trade may be feeding terrorist activities in our region. It is time for our security agencies and regional wildlife management authorities to tighten their cooperation and stem this menace. *(Applause)*

It will not have escaped all of us that terrorism remains a serious security threat to the Community. Keeping the Community safe will therefore remain a key priority. Any approach to the problem that concentrates on keeping an individual country safe offers only the illusion of security. The transnational nature of terrorism vividly illustrates that my neighbour's peace is my concern as much as hers. *(Applause)*

The Community is admirably placed to contribute to the joint search for peace and political stability in our neighbourhood, and especially in the Republics of Somalia, South Sudan, and in the Great Lakes states that are currently experiencing conflict.

In deepening our cooperation in Defence and Security, we have signed two protocols on cooperation and defence, peace and security which we expect to come into force this year. We are also establishing a panel of eminent persons, which, together with the EAC early warning mechanism, will complement our capacity to respond firmly and quickly to potential conflicts in our region. *(Applause)*

It is indeed my hope that these instruments will be finalised before the end of this year. I am equally glad that the Assembly initiated a Bill on disaster risk reduction management to mitigate the frequent loss of lives and property through natural and manmade disasters that have become a frequent occurrence in the Community. It would be to our advantage if that Bill were passed before the end of the year. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, as a poet reminds us, our Community is not an island entire unto itself. Attention to the Community's economic engagement with third parties is not idle. While we vigorously pursue integration, we remain equally aware of the great gains to be found in deeper Africa wide market integration, in infrastructure development to enhance connectivity, and in industrial development to unfetter our continent's productivity.

It is for this reason that our Community attaches great importance to the on-going tripartite negotiation for the Common Market between the RECs, namely: the East and Southern African Economic Organisation (COMESA), our own, the EAC, and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the proposed grand free trade area comprises 26 countries with a combined population of nearly 600 million people accounting for nearly 57 percent of Africa's population and a total GDP of about US\$ 1 trillion.

Once complete, which is my hope, it will be the engine of the continent's economic and political empowerment. I am satisfied with the pace of the negotiations, and I look forward, as I am sure we all do, to the conclusion of these negotiations before the last quarter of 2014. *(Applause)*

Similarly, we have been in negotiations with the European Union for over six years on an Economic Partnership Agreement. The negotiations we must hope will soon come to a mutually satisfactory agreement, and an agreement that will not -and I want to repeat, not put breaks on our own efforts to industrialise our region, which is critical for us.

I wish to sound, in reviewing our efforts here, that we are confident, and we hope that our partners will equally be as accommodative. The time when we were weighed down by pessimism is behind us. In engaging our external partners, we must look to the near future where the Community will be a vibrant and strong player in the global community.

Madam Speaker, the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community has served us well for more than a decade, but like our national constitutions, it is also a living document to be reviewed from time to time in tandem with the Community's progress. *(Applause)* It is my hope that the present examination of the Treaty will be hastened to align it to the realities of our present experience and our hopes for the future.

Likewise, I would urge you to weigh any legislation for the expansion and creation of new institutions against the Community's financial capacity. The lion's share of our resources must go to our development priorities not to our recurrent administrative costs. *(Applause)* Prudence will prefer the strengthening and improvement of existing Partner State institutions to the inauguration of new ones.

The same prudence also warns us against great temptation to peg our Community's performance on the number of decisions and directives made and laws passed by the Assembly. The decisions, directives and legislations will not serve the Community's interest if we neither enforce nor evaluate them. We must mean what we say.

This concern prompted the Summit decision in Kampala last year directing an audit of all directives and decisions pending implementation. It is my hope -and I commit myself to doing everything that I can during my tenure as Chair this year to be able to report that we have reduced the number of pending directives, decisions and Assembly legislation to near zero. *(Applause)*

Madam Speaker, allow me to reiterate the Summit's strong commitment to the unity of East Africa. We have learnt harsh lessons from our past missteps. Our great strength, perhaps our only real strength, is our unity and solidarity. *(Applause)*

Finally Madam Speaker, let me pay tremendous tribute to the East African Community Secretariat, our Secretary General Ambassador Richard Sezibera, and indeed his entire team for the sterling job that they are doing. *(Applause)*

This team is at the heart of our success as a Community. I encourage them to do even more as we strive to grow our Community and to realise our integration agenda. Madam Speaker, from my discussions with them yesterday, I am aware of the challenges the Secretariat staff team faces. As we move into the future, our pledge is to work with the Partner States to improve the Secretariat's financial standing. *(Applause)* We will also work together and be supportive of the institutional reforms necessary to deliver prudent and effective discharge of their duties.

Madam Speaker, I close by wishing you and all hon. Members a fruitful year in building our East African Community. I give you my own personal commitment to working together with you in this endeavour. Long live the East African Community, God bless the East African Community. *Asanti sana. (Appaluse)*

The Speaker: Thank you very much, Your Excellency for that powerful moving statement to the East Africans. As the East African Legislative Assembly, we are honoured to be the first ears for the East Africans, and we want to give you our support that we are going to follow every word that you have said to us so that we make our mandate a reality. Thank you very much, Your Excellency.

I will invite one of the Members to move a vote of thanks on our behalf, but I think before I invite her, allow me, Your Excellency, to briefly introduce to you some of the distinguished personalities of East Africa who have come to join us as EALA to receive you this morning.

Allow me to welcome hon. Amina Muhammed. She is the Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs in the Republic of Kenya. Allow me to welcome hon. Anna Tibaijuka. She is the Minister of Housing and environment of the Republic of Tanzania. With them is the Principal Secretary Mwanamaka Mambuki of the EAC Ministry Department, Kenya. There is Ambassador Abdul Faradi; you are welcome Your Excellency. There is Ambassador Matilda Onan, you are most welcome Your Excellency. There is Ambassador George Olago Awul, you are most welcome Your Excellency. We have our Regional Commissioner, who has looked after us all this time we are in Arusha.

Let me take the opportunity also to introduce our own. Amidst us is the Judge President of the East African Court of Justice, you are most welcome, Justice Harold Nsekela. We have the Principal Judge of the East African Court of Justice, and we also have the Deputy Secretaries General. They are seated at the rear. We also have the heads of the EAC institutions.

As I come home, allow me also to introduce to you our Council of Ministers. They are our policy directors; hon. Chairperson, Council with honourable ministers kindly stand up.

Last but not least, allow me to introduce your Assembly, our Assembly. Hon. Members, kindly stand up. This is the team of 45 men and women whom the East Africans entrusted with moving this agenda. Kindly sit down.

Allow me Your Excellency, to invite hon. Patricia Hajabakiga to say a word of thanks on our behalf. Hon. Patricia.

VOTE OF THANKS

Ms Patricia Hajabakiga (Rwanda): Thank you, Rt. hon. Speaker. Although you asked me to speak and say a few things, it is not going to be very easy.

Your Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta, the President of the Republic of Kenya and Chairperson of the Summit of the EAC Heads of State, Rt hon. Speaker of the East African

Legislative Assembly, heads of the EAC Organs and Institutions present, Chairperson, Council and honourable ministers for EAC Affairs, the Cabinet Secretaries from the republic of Kenya and our host ministers from the United Republic of Tanzania, honourable colleagues, all protocols observed. I would like to thank the Rt. hon. Speaker for giving me this opportunity to move this very important and unique vote of thanks.

Rt. hon. Speaker, His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta comes to our Assembly the second time in a span of less than six months - (*Applause*). This shows the importance he gives to this Assembly.

Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate His Excellency for the double elections; one as a great leader for the great nation of Kenya, and again in a span of less than eight months, he was entrusted by his colleagues and all East Africans to be at the head of this important Community of East Africa.

Rt. hon. Speaker, we wish good health and prosperity to His Excellency President Uhuru Kenyatta in his work and endeavour to bring this region to another level.

Your Excellency, we have followed with keen interest your promises to Kenyans and to East Africans during your different statements on different occasions, but let me single out a few, beginning with the Kasarani at your inaugural speech. During your inaugural speech Your Excellency brought out the issue of economic transformation being critical to the wellbeing and livelihood of our people, and today, right in this particular sitting, you have repeated it. That shows how important economic transformation is for advancing the development of this region and the development of the citizens of our Partner States.

During the same inaugural speech, you promised free maternal healthcare for all Kenyan, and at the Madaraka Day celebrations, you actually delivered that promise in order to save the lives of the children and mothers in Kenya. I believe all our Partner States are going to emulate and do the same.

Your Excellency let me also congratulate you because it was not only a Madaraka Day for Kenya, but it was also your birthday.

Again, recently, Your Excellency, I had opportunity to listen to the State of the Nation Address that you delivered to the Kenya Parliament, and you had this to say. You vowed to fight a tough war against corruption. Your Excellency, corruption is a terrible thing. If we cannot eradicate it in our region, we will never be able to progress. It hampers and limits whatever people want to do. So, I hope that it is not just a promise for Kenya, but it should be for the entire East African Community.

Your Excellency let me also congratulate you for your exemplary leadership when you decided to cut 20 percent of your salary along with your ... (*Inaudible*) ... in order to actually implement your promise to cut the wage bill as you addressed the Kenya Parliament. We need to cut down the wage bill and increase the spending on development as you have just said in your speech today, Your Excellency.

Your Excellency let me also point out that I understand -and I was told that you have managed as of this March to reach your target for the GDP expected for Kenya in 2013/2014, and you are a little bit above the expected GDP - (*Applause*).

In the heart of this, when I was reading Kenyan literature on economic growth, as you have already pointed out, tourism stands as the highest foreign exchange earner for Kenya, and I think it is for all the five Partner States. Regarding the question of the issue of poaching, which you raised in terms of how we can protect our own resources, which we have as a region in order to promote our tourism even more in this region, this Assembly did move a motion last year on Anti-poaching, and we hope that our resolution was able to reach your desk. We promise, Your Excellency, that we are going to do as much as we can to educate the population and to make sure that we become your ambassadors in this regard, as we move around East Africa.

Your Excellency let me congratulate the East African Community Partner States. Recently in Berlin at the Tourism Exhibition, four of our Partner States were among the first five countries in the whole of Africa, and that shows that based on what you said today, if we really work hard, we would be able to do better in the Tourism sector.

Let me also congratulate the three Republics of Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda for having launched a one-tourist visa, which will enhance the tourism sector in our region even more. I look forward, Your Excellency, to urging your colleagues in the remaining two Partner States of Burundi and Tanzania to join also as soon as possible.

Your Excellency, Rt hon. Speaker, we express our gratitude that when we managed to travel throughout Kenya...let me single out two important projects which are at my heart. One is the Ulkaria project, which you already pointed out, but on a different angle of energy. Let me go to the environment side. It is a renewable energy project, which cuts down greenhouse gase, and as such, we implement the climate change and the Kyoto Protocol as a promise to the entire planet.

Let me also inform you, Your Excellency, that the Meat Commission asked us to be their ambassadors. Your Excellency that project is very important for the poor people, and especially the pastoralists. For me it is insurance during the dry spells when they can sell their livestock, keep the money and buy livestock later when the season is good, taking into account that we cannot change the climate as Africa. The climate change issues are a reality, and there is nothing we can do about it but we can do as much as you are doing in the Kenya Meat Commission. However, as they were saying, they need support to make it better than what they are already doing.

Your Excellency let me also congratulate you for the sense of urgency you have demonstrated since you became both the President of the Republic of Kenya and the Chair of the Summit of the EAC Heads of State on fast tracking the removal of the notorious non-tariff barriers, and especially the weighbridges and roadblocks. I was also a member of the Second Assembly, and I have always sat in the Committee of Communication, Trade and Investment. This issue had become a song of this Assembly and of that committee for the past five, six years, and maybe even longer from before I joined the Assembly. We thank you very much and we congratulate you and hope that you will continue to do what you have promised today.

Going to today's statement to this Assembly, I do not need to repeat anything because all of us were here and we listened. The only promise we can give Your Excellency is that within our mandate - and I hope the Speaker is listening because I will not direct the Speaker but I only speak on behalf of my colleagues - we will do our utmost in whatever we can manage to do in order to support the Summit in its endeavour to push for the integration agenda as we move towards a political federation because as of today, we have already achieved - I would say- two, moving to the third, and also the fourth. I think we have already started that journey as you have very well elaborated.

Your Excellency lastly let me say something, which you touched on, and for which I want to thank you. I am the mover of that Bill on disaster risk reduction and management. I hope the Council of Ministers has heard that they will not...what you have given, Your Excellency, is a directive. I hope they will not delay it anymore because they have requested for time up to March. Today we are already in March and I hope that by the end of this month we will start the process once again. I look forward to working with the Council of Ministers and the whole Assembly on that important Bill.

Your Excellency, speaking about the Bills, there is another important Bill, which is at my heart; the reduction of the use of plastic in this region. I did move a similar Bill in the Second Assembly. Unfortunately, the time for signatures lapsed between Your Excellency and the former President Kibaki, and as per the regulation, we are required to bring it back to the House and do it again. I look forward, once again, for your support in order to manage the environment of this region.

Your Excellency, all the things you raised today; issues to do with review of the Treaty, issues to do with the implementation of Summit decisions, Council decisions and implementation of our own protocols which we have signed and the laws which we have done have always been the song of this Assembly.

Your Excellency, we are going to work hard as an Assembly to make sure that what you promised and what you decided in Kampala is actually implemented by all those who are supposed to implement it.

Your Excellency, the Rt. hon. Speaker is peeping at me and saying please stop, but before I do that, *naomba nikushukuru sana Mheshimiwa Rais mungu akubariki, abariki Kenya na abariki Jumuiya ya Afrika Mashariki. (Applause)*

Thank you so much.

The Speaker: Your Excellency, you can see the challenge I had. Although I had given you a commitment that although this is your home, you can stay as long as you want, you had a specific request that you wanted to hit the road by midday. Allow me to say that it was difficult for me to ask hon. Patricia Hajabakiga to stop because each of her words was a word of wisdom and she was speaking for and on behalf of us all. So I beg your indulgence about not keeping my promise, Your Excellency, sir.

As we come to the end of our sitting, sir, allow me to do this very important duty in the Chamber. As I mentioned during my welcoming remarks, allow me to hand to you a copy of our

strategic plan. This is a very important plan for which we seek your support, both in terms of funding and in terms of support, as you already started doing. So thank you very much Your Excellency, and allow me to hand over to you this very important strategic plan of the East African Legislative Assembly – *(Applause)*.

I have another small but very important present to give to you sir. This is an African basket. You may trace its origins either in Rwanda or in Burundi, but it symbolises that every African woman makes a basket. As the Speaker of the East African legislative Assembly, I am honoured to be a woman, the first woman. So, my present is in that form of a basket. In the basket, which normally is the food collection place for all Africans, allow me to present to you what we feel proud about as East Africans. I will present to you the beautiful coffee from Rwanda and Uganda in this basket. Allow me also to present to you the green leaves of tea which are from Burundi and Kenya in this basket and that aroma of coffee and the Kilimanjaro tea from the slopes of Arusha. Your Excellency, kindly accept this humble present from the East African Legislative Assembly. *(Applause)*

As we come to the end of our sitting today, allow me to make the following announcements. Hon. Members, as we recede from the Chamber, we are going to have a photo session. This is a very important opportunity for us. I have been asked by the security and the Sergeant-At-Arms to make this announcement. The first photo session will be for His Excellency the President, the Speaker, the Secretary General, ministers, Cabinet Secretaries and EALA members. The second one will be for His Excellency the President, the Speaker, the Secretary General, ministers, cabinet secretaries, EAL members and EALA staff. The third one will be for His Excellency the President, the Speaker, the Secretary General, ministers, DSGs, heads of EAC Organs and Institutions and the registrar.

The last one will be with His Excellency the President, the Speaker and the Clerk. The one for the EALA women will be the last.

I did not introduce the EALA staff and EAC staff. Kindly stand up. Some of you are in the gallery, just stand up for recognition. They keep our work; they make our work go on. Thank you very much, that is your team sir.

I want again to make another very important announcement. All of our guests are kindly invited for lunch at the EAC gardens. And as I finally conclude, I want to thank our Police Band for the beautiful music and thank you very much for playing the anthem so well. *(Applause)*

ADJOURNMENT

The Speaker: With those very many announcements, I want to announce that the House is adjourned to tomorrow 2.30 p.m. House stands adjourned.

EAC Anthem

((The House rose at 11:57 a .m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 26 March 2014 at 2.30 p.m.))