



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

IN THE EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)

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

108TH SITTING - THIRD ASSEMBLY: SECOND MEETING – FOURTH SESSION

Tuesday, 6 October 2015

The East African Legislative Assembly met in the Mini Chamber, County Hall, Parliament of Kenya in Nairobi.

PRAYER

(The Speaker, Mr. Daniel Fred Kidega, in the Chair)

(The Assembly was called to order)

PROCEDURAL MOTION

The Speaker: Hon. Peter Mathuki, Chairperson, Legal and Rules and Privileges Committee.

The Chairperson, Legal, Rules and Privileges Committee (Mr. Peter Mathuki) (Kenya): Thank you, Rt. Hon. Speaker. Rt. Hon. Speaker, I move that this House pursuant to the provisions of the Treaty Article 55 (1) Establishing the East African Community and Rule 10 (5) of the Rules of Procedure of this Assembly do resolve to hold sittings in Nairobi, the Republic of Kenya. I beg to move.

The Speaker: Seconded by Hon. Mwinyi, Hon. Kiangoi, Hon. Opoka, Hon. Hajabakiga, Hon. Bucumi, Hon. Nyirahabineza and all the Hon. Members standing. Hon. Mathuki, proceed.

Mr. Mathuki: Thank you, Rt. Hon. Speaker and Hon. Members.

“Whereas Clause 1 of Article 55 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community provides that the meetings of the Assembly shall be held at such times and places as the Assembly may appoint;

And whereas Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure of this Assembly provides that the seat of the Assembly shall be at Arusha in the United Republic of Tanzania;

And whereas Sub-Rule 5 of the Rule 10 provides that meetings of the Assembly shall be held at such times and places as the Assembly may appoint and shall meet at least once in every year at Arusha in the United Republic of Tanzania and at a time to be determined by the Assembly;

Now, therefore, this Assembly do resolve as follows:

That pursuant to provisions of Sub-Rule 5 of the Rules 10 cited above, the Assembly

shall hold sittings in the Chamber of Kenya National Assembly from today, Tuesday 6th October, 2015 to Thursday 15th October, 2015.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move.”

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Peter Mathuki, Chairperson of the Committee on Legal, Rules and Privileges.

Hon. Members, the motion before this House is that this House pursuant to the provisions of Article 55 (1) of the Treaty and Rules 10 (5) of the Rules of Procedure do resolve to hold sittings in Nairobi, Kenya. Debate is open.

Hon. Members, silence means acceptance and approval. There being no debate, there is no need to call Hon. Peter Mathuki to respond to any debate. I now put the question that this House pursuant to the provisions of Article 55 (1) of the Treaty and Rule 10 (5) of the Rules of Procedure, do resolve to hold sittings in Nairobi, the Republic of Kenya.

(Question put and agreed to.)

ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS

The Speaker: Hon. Members, following the successful general elections held in the Republic of Burundi and the appointment of ministers, H.E. Pierre Nkurunziza reappointed Hon. Leontine Nzeyimana as Minister for East African Community Affairs. *(Applause)* She has indicated her desire to participate in the proceedings of the Assembly.

You will also recall that Hon. Celestine Kabahizi tendered in his resignation as a Member of the East African Legislative Assembly. Therefore, I have received communication from the Speaker of the Rwandan Chamber of Deputies dated 15th September 2015 informing me that they have elected a new Member, Hon. Kalinda Francois Xavier. He is present and would like to take his seat in this House. However,

in accordance with Rule 5 (4) of the Rules of Procedure of this Assembly, he cannot sit or vote in the Assembly until he takes the Oath of Affirmation of Allegiance to the Treaty.

Rule 5 specifically states, *“When a Member first attends to take his or her seat other than at the first sitting of a New House, he or she be brought to that Table by two Members and presented by them to the Speaker who shall then administer the Oath of Affirmation of Allegiance to him or her.”* I, therefore request any two Members of the House who know the two Members to present them to the Speaker to take their oaths. We will start with the Hon. Minister.

The oaths were administered to:

(1) Ms. Leontine Nzeyimana;

(2) Mr. Kalinda Francois Xavier

The Speaker: Hon. Members, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate out two new Members and welcome them to the Assembly. *(Applause)* You are most welcome to this very noble duty and this powerful family of the East African Legislative Assembly. Feel at home.

PROCLAMATION

The Speaker: Honourable Members, amidst us today is Rt. Hon Ekwee Ethuro, the Speaker of the Kenya Senate *(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 his presence, in this Assembly:

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 House renders his or her presence desirable.

AND WHEREAS in the opinion of the Speaker, the attendance and presence in the Assembly of the Speaker of the Kenyan Senate 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 the Rt. Hon. Speaker of the Kenyan in this Assembly. (Applause)

ADDRESS BY THE RT. HON. EKWEE ETHURO, SPEAKER OF THE KENYA SENATE

WELCOME REMARKS BY THE SPEAKER OF EALA

The Speaker: The Rt. Hon. Ekwee Ethuro, Speaker of the Senate of Kenya representing H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya, Ministers and members of the Council of Ministers present, Hon. Members of the East African Legislative Assembly and Members of the National Parliament of Kenya present, Excellences, Ambassadors and members of the Diplomatic Corps, Rt. Hon. Speaker Emeritus and former Members of EALA present in the gallery, Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, invited Guests, good morning.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, I take this opportunity to thank H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta for delegation you the assignment to grace us with your presence at the commencement of the Second Meeting of the Fourth Session of the Third Assembly. This is a unique opportunity and first for the Speaker, Senate of Kenya and that of EALA to interact at an occasion of this magnitude.

I wish to thank your Government and the Parliament of Kenya for making our stay here comfortable. As an Assembly, we are internally grateful to you for extending to us all the courtesies whenever we meet in this great republic and the city of Nairobi. *(Applause)*

Rt. Hon. Speaker, at this session, we expect to deliberate on the following notable business:

- (1) The EAC Electronic Transaction Bill, 2014; Second and Third Reading;
- (2) The EAC Forest Management and Protection Bill, 2015; Second and Third Reading;
- (3) The EAC Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Bill, 2015; Second and Third Reading.

We will debate and adopt various reports of various committees of the House.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, we also expect the President of the Republic of Tanzania and Chair of the Summit of EAC Heads of State, H.E. Dr Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete to deliver a farewell address to this House on the 13th October 2015 - *(Applause)*.

In between the sittings, the Assembly shall, as part of its mandate hold consultations with a number of stakeholders from the private sector and civil society.

The Assembly is today much stronger and more united in serving East Africans, Rt. Hon. Speaker. *(Applause)* Indeed, since January 2015, the Assembly has held three Sittings in Bujumbura, in March 2015; Arusha, in May 2015; and in Kampala in August 2015, which is in line with the principle of rotation, which we cherish so much.

In totality, we have enacted seven Bills, passed seven resolutions and adopted 13 reports, Rt. Hon. Speaker - *(Applause)*.

EALA is cognisant of the fact that citizens of the region want more tangible benefits of the integration, coupled with a progressive environment. The Customs Union is fully fledged. We need to encourage products to be freely sold within the ambits of the Protocol so that trade without barriers is enhanced.

It is in this regard, that we as an Assembly are keenly watching the issue of sugar given that the Customs Union is now fully fledged and promote the intra EAC trade. We plead that a divide between politics and integration be weighed concerning the Common Market Protocol.

It should be highlighted with emphasis that EAC citizens have a right to move freely in search of opportunities and to work in any other Partner State as enshrined in the Common Market Protocol enforced in 2010 and yet until to date only a few of the EAC citizens would work in another Partner State because they feel and face very many obstacles.

The acquisition of work and resident permits are part of the major challenges and the process that need to be harmonised. Our citizens are still mishandled by immigration police in our various Partner States while they seek this opportunity. Rt. Hon. Speaker, this matter calls for all of us in the leadership of this region to address urgently.

Similarly deemed worthwhile is the determination with which the citizens attach to their full involvement in the success implementation of the integration process. In this regard, I laud the private sector and the civil society for demanding and rightfully so, their place within the fulcrum of integration and for their watchdog role in line with Article 127 and 128 of the Treaty.

Permit me, Sir to bring to your attention three issues that the region needs to address and to request you to transmit them to H.E President Uhuru Kenyatta; one, the desire by the stakeholders to see the EAC Treaty amended to reflect the status of implementation. *(Applause)* There is already some work in this direction, Sir. However, EALA pleads on behalf of the stakeholders that speeding up the process is of essence. Let us remain open to the hard

fact that integration is living and the process of amendments is also living.

Secondly, Sir, let me speak to the issue of full autonomy of this Assembly, which also I know is also the very intention of the Summit. At the moment, the Assembly is semi-autonomous; the ideal scenario would be full autonomy including direct funding by the Partner States. This is absolutely necessary for the betterment of the EAC. It is key that we sit down with the Executive in the near future and find permanent solutions to this long call that this Assembly has been making - *(Applause)*.

Thirdly, Sir and in an area where have already perceived positive response from H.E. Yoweri Museveni, the President of Uganda at the recent Sitting in Kampala, that was the First Meeting of the Fourth Session of the Third Assembly, is that of the assent to Bills. EALA has proposed a change in the mode of assent, that we should take advantage of the Summit's Sittings as an opportune moment for the EAC Heads of State to exercise their mandate of assent to Bills as stipulated under Article 63.

Such a move would help to reduce the time taken and logistical mode of moving the Bills from one Partner State to another. We look forward to a time when Summit shall make pronouncements on this aspect. EALA on its behalf has already prepared a policy paper on this matter and it is our prayer that this policy paper will find space on the agenda of Council in November.

Oliver St. John, an English statesman who lived from 1598 to 1673 made a tongue-in-cheek statement, and one that could have serious considerations, that: *"If a queen bee were crossed with a Friesian bull, would not the land flow with milk and honey?"* I am of the view that as a region let us cross-examine our options and confront the challenges collectively to give our citizens milk and honey. *(Applause)*

Rt Hon. Speaker, concerning Kenya, we are proud that the county continues to stir further economic growth under the minstrel of *Umoja, Uchumi na Uwazi*. East Africa is proud of the several major development projects in Kenya including the world's largest geothermal plant commissioned in Naivasha last year, which adds 100 megawatts of power to the national grid effectively bringing down electricity costs. *(Applause)* Energy is a strategic game changer and such an achievement will go a long way towards empowering citizens, creating employment and combating social ills.

We are proud of the contribution you are making to the EAC with the launch of The Standard Gauge Railway running from Mombasa to Uganda; to Southern Sudan, and to Rwanda. This is a transformation, which is bound to open up the region and promote intra-regional trade and, therefore, prosperity for all.

Further afield, under President Kenyatta's leadership, the Republic of Kenya has contributed tremendously to peace initiatives in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Burundi and Somalia, among others. We congratulate H.E., the Government and people of Kenya upon this contribution to the region.

Now, Rt. Hon. Speaker, before I invite you to address this Assembly, may I briefly introduce to you some of the dignitaries we have invited; close friends of the Assembly.

With pleasure, I would like to recognise and introduce Rt. Hon. Abdirahin Abdi, Speaker Emeritus of the Assembly. *(Applause)* Rt. Hon. Speaker, that applause tells you of the institutional memory of this gentleman - *(Applause)*.

I would also like to introduce Hon. Clarkson Otieno Karani, Hon. Gervase Akhaabi, Hon. Maxwell Shamalla, and Dr Canisius Kabungo Kanangire, the

Executive Director, Lake Victoria Basin Commission - *(Applause)*.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, the gentlemen I have introduced bear a permanent image of the Community and the integration wherever they go and in their various activities, they undertake in life. We thank them for their various contributions in the integration process.

It is now my singular honour and duty to invite you to address this august House. You are welcome, Rt. Hon. Speaker. *(Applause)*

The Speaker of the Kenya Senate (Rt. Hon Ekwere Ethuro): The Rt. Hon. Dan Fred Kidega, Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly, the Hon. Members of the East African Legislative Assembly, including the Ministers responsible for East African Community Affairs; and I definitely recognise our Kenyan Minister in the audience; the Honourable invited Distinguished Guests already recognised by the Speaker of EALA. Indeed, I cannot agree more, each and every one of them has made a very singular distinguished contribution to parliamentary practice - *(Applause)* - in particular my friend, Speaker Emeritus, Abdirahin. *(Applause)*; Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, good morning. You know East Africans should be alive. *(Laughter)* Anything to the contrary can dampen the spirit.

It is with great honour and pleasure that I join you this morning to address the Third East African Legislative Assembly at the commencement of this Session in our great Republic of Kenya. I am delighted that it is once again our turn as a Partner Member to host this Session of your Assembly. It is always our joy and we are truly grateful to host you continuously. As we say in this part of East Africa, *karibuni sana Kenya, hakuna matata* - *(Laughter)*.

Mr Speaker, it is customary for our respective Heads of State, of the host

Partner State, to grace and address the Assembly at its First Sitting of the Session. And indeed, this would have been the case in our republic, except that, as you have recognised, we have the visiting Head of State from our neighbour, the United Republic of Tanzania. So, the two are engaged in this kind of discussions. You will agree with me that it is good for East Africans; when they make an entry and when they make an exit to establish and maintain those contacts.

Permit me, therefore, at this juncture to convey H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta's greetings and on my own behalf and on behalf of Senate and by extension, Parliament of the Republic of Kenya, to extend a very warm welcome to you all for making time to come and participate in the Session of the Assembly in our republic.

I want to request the Hon. Members that as you deliberate on matters of mutual and regional importance during this Session, please, also spare some time, part of your very busy schedule, to also sample the rich Kenyan culture in form of the cuisine - of course I am sure you are all familiar with *ugali na sukuma wiki* - our national parks and game reserves, among others, and not just the Masai Market in the city of Nairobi. We would like you to explore beyond the city.

May I, therefore, note that the Kenyan culture is part of the common heritage of the larger East African Community culture but of the distinct and unique taste that you can write back home. You will find it worthwhile assembling and indeed the animals have been speaking for us. If you ever doubted that East Africa as a formal destiny, just look at that annual migration pattern of the wild beasts every August. You know, they move from Kenya to Tanzania and back.

Mr Speaker, we must count ourselves blessed and lucky as Members of the Distinguished Legislatures. The Heads of

State of the original three EAC Partner States formally inaugurated the EALA at its First Sitting in Arusha, Tanzania on 30th November 2011 with the Hon. Abdurrahman Kinana as the First Speaker - (*Applause*). More than 14 years later, I believe that the grace period is more than over.

We stand on the shoulders of great sons and daughters of this region who selflessly made significant contributions towards the actualisation of the East African integration dream in the past. They include the founding fathers of our Partner States; President Jomo Kenyatta, President Milton Obote and President Mwalimu Julius Nyerere and their successors who have each and every one played a critical role in the revival of the East African Community and have kept this dream alive until now.

Matters of institutional review should, therefore, be a thing of the past. We must learn from the past challenges and the mistakes that may have been made that led to the collapse of the Community in 1977. It is our duty to ensure that this Community shall not collapse again - (*Applause*).

I would just like to make a few quotes from Mwalimu Julius Nyerere in 1966. He says, "*Africa must change her institutions to make feasible and new aspirations. Her people must change their attitudes and practices to accord with the objectives. And these changes must be positive, they must be initiated and shaped by Africa and not simply be a reaction to events, which affect Africa.*" I think that statement was true in 1966 when it was made. It is true in the year 2015 as we meet in Nairobi today.

Hon. Members, the gains of the integration are clearly becoming evident and must not be lost on us. Just two days ago, our two presidents; President Uhuru Kenyatta of Kenya and President Jakaya Kikwete of Tanzania commissioned and important inter-country road that will connect Arusha to Mombasa in the next two to three years.

(Applause) This road will reduce the travel time from 14 hours to 2 ½ hours. *(Applause)* It will also open up the bordering areas whose huge potential was either completely untapped or was underutilised. I know similar flagships and projects are underway in the region and will soon make the economies and livelihoods of our people much better. Therefore, we must jealously guard the unity of East Africa in order to realise the attendant benefits.

Rt. Hon. Speaker and Hon. Members, I wish to observe that since the inception of the new EAC through the 1999 EAC Treaty, the EAC has made tremendous progress in terms of the implementation of the eight pillars. We have since adopted incremental approaches towards the realisation of the Customs Union, Common Market and the move towards a Monetary Union is properly on course. Talk of a Political Federation is also on the cards and I hope it will be realised in our lifetime - *(Applause)*.

I take into account the three issues you have raised Mr Speaker and I will definitely forward them to our Head of State, the President and make sure that we follow them as a Kenyan Legislature.

The talk of a Political Federation interests me in particular. As a young scholar, engaged in cross-border conflict, I had the opportunity of visiting the Karamoja Region of Uganda in 1995. And, you could get the feeling of the people between the two regions. In fact, my counterpart, the Speaker of Uganda, Rebecca Kadaga likes referring to me as a Karamajong. *(Laughter)* We had a conference in Kangole in Moroto, Uganda. That is one of the few conferences where I could speak in mother tongue in an international conference and the participants clearly understood me without any need for interpretation - *(Laughter)*.

Scholars have, therefore, suggested that the single precedence for the Community maybe the solution to some of our ethnicity problems. They argue that the problem of popular strifes in our respective countries dominating and determining the political agenda in those countries may become a thing of the past. Each of our Partner States has what is perceived to be a dominant tribe or community. As a federation, no ethnic group will lay any claim to dominance over all the other ethnic groups in our region. It is my firm belief that a political federation, therefore, is an idea worth pursuing. In any case, that is the trend. Can't Africa lead for once from the front?

Mr Speaker, the Summit of the East African Community has expressed tremendous good will and the Government of Kenya remains committed to the widening and integration agenda. This is evidenced by the enhanced and accelerated approach towards the development of infrastructure to make our social-economic relations more vibrant and fruitful.

The standard gauge railway line that you have already alluded to, which a few years back appeared to be only but a pipe dream is now a reality. There is increased focus towards the development of the Northern Corridor, which we call absent. There are also plans to develop an oil and gas pipeline from Uganda, through Northwestern Kenya to the Port of Mombasa to ease transportation of crude oils and to enhance exportation of mineral oils. I see, therefore, no waiver by our Summit towards this process and I am sure that in the near future, the fruits of these efforts will come to bear.

I cannot agree more with you in terms of assenting to the treaties instead of moving around. I am even sure that our ministers will find it much easier. They will just wait for the Summit and they are assented to there. I think it makes economic sense - *(Applause)*.

We have witnessed increased participation from stakeholders in our integration process. The stakeholders are beginning to realise the benefits of integration due to increased market volumes, the obvious benefits of increased economies of scale and our unlocked partners have exhibited increased interests due to the benefits accruing from increased access to the sea. I can assure you, as I visit our counterparts in the rest of the world, I sell Kenya as a package of the east African Community - (*Applause*). As a Community, it is, therefore, in our interest that we accommodate all the stakeholders in the process so that we collectively reap the long term benefits of cooperation.

Mr Speaker, the Customs Union, which was our entry point is up and running. The Common Market, which is at the transitional stage still experiences a few challenges. We need to be seen to be living and keeping to the temple of the Protocol on the Establishment of the East African Community Common Market, which came into force on 1st July 2010, following the ratification by all the five Partner States.

This protocol provides free movement of goods, labour, services and capital, and I hope our Immigration officers are listening to our voices - (*Applause*). This protocol was ratified and it came into force almost six years ago and yet the people of the region are still not enjoying these freedoms. The Non-Tariff Barriers, for instance, are one hindrance to the enjoyment of these freedoms. To zero in on one such Non-Tariff Barrier, Tanzania still requires citizens of Partner States to produce yellow fever vaccination certificates on entry apart from those carrying Diplomatic Passports and you may wonder if yellow fever only attacks persons without Diplomatic Passports - (*Laughter*).

We strive towards removal of Non-Tariff Barriers to ease movement of people and goods while adhering to the rules of origin.

As a Community, we are one and we need to be seen to be keeping the temple in the spirit and the letter of the Protocol. History will judge us harshly if we do not live up to the will of the people as espoused in this particular East African Protocol.

I am also glad to note that peace has largely prevailed in the region. The Summit is happy with the strides of EALA in taking towards the promotion and maintenance of peace initiatives and the avoidance of conflicts in our region. No one can underestimate the efforts EALA is making towards the realisation of peace and conflict resolution. I can say that although more needs to be done, *hongera sana* - (*Applause*). I urge you to continue doing the good job.

The life of this Third Assembly ends in June 2017. You have some time to catch up and cover any ground that you may have lost. You can be sure that even the Kenyan Parliament has the same timeline. So, do not feel that you are alone - (*Laughter*). You must all strive to leave a legacy that future generations will look back as you have appreciated the ones who went before you with admiration and aspire to emulate what they started.

Mr Speaker, turning to your legislative performance, I wish to commend you and the Hon. Members of EALA because in the last nine months or so, you have managed to pass seven Bills, published 13 reports and passed seven resolutions. (*Applause*) This is concrete evidence of hard work, considering that your sessions have shorter periods as compared to those of National Assemblies and Senates of the Partner States.

I can say for a fact here today that EALA is misconceived as an elitist club that does not mean much to the people that it is supposed to serve. Therefore, when you hold all these kind of functions in the respective States, you demystify some of these erroneous misconceptions. I, therefore, challenge you

to dispel this particular misconception by considering – actually civic education and creating awareness to bring EALA closer to the people of the EAC. This is true for EALA; this is true for National Parliaments.

Only last week, we organised what we call “Parliament Week” in Kenya and you cannot believe it that when you asked them, “Who is the Speaker of your Senate?” out of 10, I think only two could figure out the person. *(Laughter)* The people we represent, therefore, need to know what we do and that we exist in order for them to embrace and help in our institutions. I believe this is attainable during your tenure and it is my conviction, in partnership with the National Parliaments, that you are equal to the task.

Mr Speaker, the EAC Treaty is a 1999 document. We must keep up with the fast changing times courtesy of globalisation – technology is moving fast- probably faster than most of us imagine.

Sustainable Development Goals are now replacing the Millennium Development Goals without us realising most of them. The world leaders recently met at the United Nations General Assembly in New York and on 29th September 2015 adopted the Social Development Goals. The new post 2015, SDG development agenda is here with us.

Right here in Nairobi, from the 1st to 3rd of October, African National Parliamentarians met to strategize and to consider how best they would influence their governments and parliaments to play their due roles towards implementation and achievement of the SDGs in the next 15 years so that by the end of this period, the success rate would be better that were with the MDGs.

I would equally also want to urge and challenge our fellow Members of EALA, as a Regional Assembly, to play an active role

in ensuring that these Goals are achieved - *(Applause)*.

Mr Speaker, I am not in any way suggesting that the 1999 Treaty is obsolete but I believe it is time to consider some amendments, which you have already alluded to, in order to keep up with changing times. Amendments that we should consider include those that allow citizens to play a more active role in the management of the affairs of the region.

Public participation has become a critical pillar in our modern constitutions and in our democracy. For instance, access to the East African Court of Justice by the ordinary East African is among the critical matters that deserve serious consideration. I will be looking up to your Assembly to consider that. The Treaty as it is makes it impossible for the ordinary East African to access the court.

Mr Speaker, we are also aware that at times the EAC and EALA experience financial challenges due to lack of sustained funding. We realise that there is need for direct financing by Partner States for EALA - *(Applause)*. With this, we will support you; we have supported our county assemblies to get direct funding from our national treasury. Therefore, it is very consistent with our own thinking.

The Council of Ministers is working towards finalising proposals to actualise this need and the Summit is looking forward to deliberate upon the proposals and the final communication will be made at the appropriate time.

In conclusion, I wish to hail the progress that has been realised in the EAC during the leadership of the EAC Secretary General, Dr Richard Sezibera - *(Applause)*. The service you have rendered to the EAC during your tenure has been exemplary and for that I wish to tell you and to recognise your work. Thank you for the good work for

the Community. (*Applause*) I further wish you well in your future endeavours.

Let us now focus on strengthening the EAC, its Organs and Institutions for the prosperity of the people of our region. As we discussed, Mr Speaker when you had a delegation in my office a few years ago, we are also saying, one of the areas that the Treaty needs to be amended is to reflect the reality of the East African Community in terms of bi-cameral legislatures. Initially, we did not have many but now, three out of countries have a bi-cameral parliament. And that must be reflected in our Treaty.

Mr Speaker, Distinguished Guests and Members, with those remarks, I wish the Assembly fruitful deliberations during this Session in Kenya as we strive to build a prosperous East African Community.

Thank you all for your attention. God bless Kenya; God bless the East African Community *na Mungu ibariki* Africa. (*Applause*)

The Speaker: Thank you so much, Rt. Hon. Speaker for your kind comments. I would like to take this opportunity to, in a very special way, on behalf of my colleagues, extend my appreciation to H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta for affording us the opportunity to have you this morning. We are very grateful. We would like to ask you to extend our regards and all the pleasantries to him.

I would also like to thank our guests who have come. But, our appreciation can best be reflected to you and our guests plus the people of Kenya through one of our representatives. I now take the opportunity to invite Hon. Mike Sebalu to move a vote of thanks on behalf of the Assembly - (*Applause*).

VOTE OF THANKS

Mr Mike Sebalu (Uganda): Thank you very much, Rt. Hon. Speaker. I begin by thanking you, Rt. Hon. Speaker for

affording me an opportunity to move a vote of thanks on behalf of your office, Rt. Hon. Speaker, Members of the East African Legislative Assembly, the Clerk and the entire staff of the East African Legislative Assembly.

Rt. Hon. Ekwere Ethuro, Speaker of the Senate of the Republic of Kenya who is also representing the President, H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, you are very well appreciated and thanked and on behalf of the Speaker and my colleagues, I wish to move a vote of thanks to you for having gladly accepted to preside over this opening ceremony of the Second Meeting of the Fourth Session of the Third Assembly sitting in Nairobi, Kenya and representing H.E. the President of the Republic of Kenya - (*Applause*).

Rt. Hon. Speaker of the Senate, your presence here cannot be taken for granted. Given your very busy schedule as a Speaker of the Senate, we acknowledge with appreciation, the good work that you do for the Republic of Kenya and beyond, especially as a member of the East African Community Bureau of Speakers. That is a convergence point for all of us as Parliaments and your contributions are very vital in enhancing the visibility of Parliaments within the east African Community - (*Applause*).

Your good stewardship of the Senate has earned it a popular perception of being a House of the wise - (*Applause*). The success of devolution is synonymous with your Senate- the one that you preside over. That good and best practice can be replicated in all our Partner States.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, allow me also give special thanks to H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya, the Cabinet, the Parliament, the Senate and the entire people of the Republic of Kenya for the warm welcome extended to us since our arrival on Sunday - (*Applause*).

We have indeed enjoyed the usual Kenyan hospitality and the relevant courtesies that are extended as well. Further to that, we would like to thank our landlords - we call them landlords – in the names of the Kenya National Assembly and the Senate for putting sufficient facilities at our disposal in order for us to execute our mandate - *(Applause)*. And as your loyal ‘tenants’, we are always privileged whenever you extend our leasehold in your estate - *(Laughter)*.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, you have indicated that you really want us to go beyond Nairobi; go beyond the conferences; I would just like to say that you are preaching to the converted. *(Laughter)* Members of EALA are experts at integration more so when it comes to widening and deepening integration and they do it on a 24-hour basis. They are always integrating because to us, integration is now a way of life and we do it to the best of our ability. So, in terms of the culture; in terms of the food; in terms of all that goes with integration, be assured that we are going to do a good job - *(Laughter)*. And we are mindful of the fact that integration is people centred. So, the people are central in this integration arrangement.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, I also want to thank in a special way, our Speaker Emeritus. He has always been part of this family. He has always been there for us and he has always continued extending the mission of having East Africa integrated beyond the Chambers of EALA in Arusha. Wherever he is, he is an epitome of integration. We always thank you and whenever you are in our midst, we feel good; we feel proud to be associated with you and the support you keep giving us - *(Applause)*.

In the same spirit, I would like to extend the same words of appreciation to EALA Members Emeritus. We are always proud to interact with you whenever we are in different capitals, and in Nairobi, we always interface with you. You always support us. And in a special way, there is

one of us, an EALA Member Emeritus, who is also our landlord in one aspect of lives. He does a good job in ensuring that our stay in Nairobi is good and interesting. So, EALA Members Emeritus, we are a family and we should always keep that family spirit and interaction going.

I would also like to thank the Clerk and staff of the National Assembly of Kenya as well as the Senate for supporting our technical team in ensuring that this Sitting is successful. *(Applause)* They may not be in the House but they deserve our recognition and appreciation for the good work that they do in ensuring that we get an enabling environment for us to execute our mandate successfully.

In the same spirit, I would like to thank the Clerk and staff of the East African Legislative Assembly because they are part of the team. Without their technical support, you cannot talk of a successful session. So, join me in appreciating them as well. *(Applause)*

In a very special way, I would also like to thank the EALA, Kenya Chapter for the coordination and all the special arrangements that you have put in place to ensure that our Session in Nairobi is successful and our lives are comfortable. Thank you very much our colleagues, members of the chapter. *(Applause)*

I want to quote Martin Luther King when he said, “*Life begins to come to an end the moment you stop talking about things that matter.*” Now, we want to make a pledge that as EALA, we can never stop talking about integration. *(Applause)* We will always talk about it all the time; every time and everywhere because it is one way that the East African Community will achieve its aspirations of a prosperous, united, secure and politically united East Africa. So, we will always talk about it and it is one thing that we are committed to do until we meet our creator.

Finally, I just want on a light moment to say that Rt. Hon. Speaker, definitely we know you have moments of interaction with our own in your private and easy time. So, we would like to encourage that there are issues of mutual interest and mutual benefit over which you may have discussion with our Speaker over a cup of tea as you share experiences and you compare notes in terms of ensuring that both of your Houses move well; well facilitated and doing their work in a manner that allows them to perfect their act - *(Applause)*. That is for you to discuss at your leisure.

Once again, allow me to express how grateful we are as a House for you to have taken off time from your busy schedule to represent H.E the President and for the words of wisdom and counsel that you have given to us. We pledge that we shall follow them both in spirit and letter in view of ensuring that we come up with an East African integration arrangement, which we are proud of as East Africans. Once again, thank you for coming and enjoy your tenure as the Speaker of the Senate of the Republic of Kenya.

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

The Speaker: Thank you so much, Hon. Mike Sebalu for expressing our appreciation to our guests this morning.

Rt. Hon. Speaker, allow me to further recognise the presence of the Chair, Council of Ministers, Hon. Dr Saadalla. You are most welcome - *(Applause)*. We are firmly behind you in your election bid. May you win! *(Applause)*

We would also like, in a very special way, to recognise Hon. Gerard Kangwana, EALA Member Emeritus - *(Applause)*. Thank you for honouring our invitation and thank you for the rest- you know.

We would like, in a very special way, extend our appreciation and welcome to Hon. Hassan Umar, Member of the Senate

who is in the gallery and to any other Members who could be there. Thank you for being with us, Hon. Members - *(Applause)*.

Hon. Members, before I adjourn the House, we shall continue with our traditional photo sessions and the Sergeant-at-Arms will lead us in the process. After the photo sessions, you are invited to coffee made in Kenya, which will be in front of the plenary here. Thank you so much. With those few remarks, I adjourn the House to 2.30 tomorrow.

(The House rose at 11.25 a.m. and adjourned until Wednesday, 7 October 2015 at 2.30 p.m.)