



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**SPEECH BY RT. HON (DR) MARGARET NANTONGO ZZIWA,
SPEAKER OF EALA AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE EIGHTH
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY RELATIONS (NANYUKI VIII SERIES),
OCT 31ST – NOV 2ND 2014, KIGALI, RWANDA**

Rt. Hon Bernard Makuza, President of the Rwanda Senate

**Rt.Hon. Donatille Mukabalisa, Speaker of the Rwanda Chamber
of Deputies;**

**Rt. Honourable Speakers of the National
Assemblies/Parliaments;**

Honorable Members of EALA and the National Assemblies;

The Secretary General of the East African Community;

Excellences, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of EALA and indeed my own behalf, I welcome you sincerely and thank you for finding time to attend the 8th Inter-Parliamentary Relations Seminar (Nanyuki Series). I acknowledge that this being a weekend, ordinarily, a good number of you would have travelled to be

with your constituents and to address key matters in your areas of jurisdiction.

Your decision to be here with us therefore exemplifies the degree with which you attach to matters of regional integration of the EAC people which is our mission as EALA.

I wish to record my deepest appreciation to H.E. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, the Parliament of Rwanda, the Government and the citizens of Rwanda for granting to our request to hold the Seminar in Kigali.

Rt Honourable Speakers, Honourable Members, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The theme this year, which is "***Insecurity and Terrorism as Threats to EAC Integration: How can EAC Develop a Common Position?***" could not be more apt and timely than now.

Today, terrorism continues to pose a grave threat to international peace and security. Only a couple of days ago and in a worrying incident, terrorists attacked the Canadian Parliament, considered not only an unfortunate affront on democracy but an indication that no individual, institution or nation is safe. We stand by all Canadians in condemning this wanton act of violence against an institution that represents the will of the people.

We all also recall the tragedies that have befallen the region over the years, the latest incident, being the attack on the Westgate Mall in Nairobi leading to loss of lives, maiming, destruction of property and

citizens' peaceful co-existence. We can flash back memories to several similar attacks in Kampala, Uganda and the simultaneous episodes on the Embassy of the United States of America in Nairobi and in Dar es Salaam.

In effect, such unwarranted attacks should be a wake-up call that as a region we need to be vigilant at all times and that containing terrorism and ensuring peace must assume greater importance and significance in the agenda of Regional Economic Communities.

I am pleased that over the two days, we shall thus benefit from a rich discourse geared towards finding common solutions to our common problems. I am thrilled by the attendance and the mix of intellect we have in our midst – Parliamentarians, academicians and other stakeholders.

Peace and Security have been acknowledged as critical to creation of the right environment upon which to foster regional integration in line with objectives of the Community as envisaged in Article 5 of the EAC Treaty.

Partner States have further agreed to foster an atmosphere conducive to peace and security through co-operation and consultations to prevent, better manage and resolve any outstanding disputes between them.

This is anchored on Article 124 of The Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community spelling out wide-ranging approaches promoting a stable and secure environment and harmonious co-existence of East Africans.

I wish to congratulate the Partner States for appending their signatures to the Protocol on Peace and Security. I am informed thus far that, the Republics of Rwanda and Uganda have already ratified the Protocol. I call upon the rest of the Partner States to speedily follow suit.

Whereas the Chair of Council of Ministers, Hon Phyllis Kandie will expand more on the EAC's mandate on peace and security, let me urge Partner States to take it upon themselves to look inwards and to enhance good governance systems as envisaged under Chapter 23 of the Treaty. I say so because I believe that there is clear correlation between security and governance interventions in terms of cause and effect. Of essence hereunder are: a number fundamental areas including:

- a) Promoting rule of law and access to justice
- b) Adhering to democratic principles and strengthening of electoral processes,
- c) Protection and promotion of Human Rights
- d) and by strengthening Anti-Corruption, Ethics and Integrity institutions.

Legislation is another area and we need not spare any efforts to tighten laws that make the region secure.

In May 2012, EALA passed the East African Conflict Management Bill, 2011. The object of the Bill (which is still undergoing assent) is to establish a Conflict Prevention Management and Resolution Mechanism responsible for identification of potential sources of conflict and devising response options. It further seeks to ensure provision of pre-emptive measures to address conflict situations, develop capacity for mediation

and negotiations to forestall and diffuse conflicts and to propose modalities for intervention and stabilization of conflict resolutions.

In August this year, EALA in collaboration with the African Leadership Centre (ALC) held a conference on East African Societies and Regional Security. The conference was indeed the foundation for the institutional teamwork strategy to address security matters in the region.

Our work as legislators is cut out – that of enacting laws, appropriation, oversight and representation.

It is time for the region to develop instruments that effectively respond to terrorist attacks besides instituting mechanisms such as Crisis Coordination Arrangements which aim at coordinating responses to crises and exchange of information.

As you are aware no single nation, let alone, institution, possesses all the necessary means for effective security management. Be that as it may we live in an era where security challenges have become multi-dimensional, and in such regard, our responses should also be multi-dimensional.

This calls for concerted approach and institutionalisation of instruments in our operations.

This two day meeting of great minds, is therefore expected to enhance discourse while examining avenues of harnessing collaboration to take common positions in the aforementioned matters. I therefore wish you all fruitful deliberations.

With these few remarks, I feel privileged and honoured to invite the Chair of the Council of Ministers, Hon Phyllis Kandie to make her statement. I thank you for your kind attention.