



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**REMARKS BY RT. HON DANIEL F. KIDEGA, SPEAKER OF EALA
AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE SENSITISATION
WORKSHOP FOR EALA MEMBERS IN ADVANCING,
PROMOTING AND IMPLEMENTING POST 2015 SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

SEPTEMBER 6-9, 2015, NAIROBI, KENYA

**Hon Dr. Odette Nyiramilimo, Chair of the Committee on
General Purpose**

Colleagues, Hon Members of EALA

**Lead Researchers led by Dr. Ali Hersi, Regional Director,
Society for International Development (SID)**

Clerk and staff,

Good Morning!

I welcome and sincerely thank you for attending this Workshop called to share experiences and equip EALA in implementing the post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Agenda.

I wish to record my deepest appreciation to our Partners, the Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa (AWEPA), for their strong and unfettered support over the years. The relations between EALA and AWEPA are very warm and cordial. I thank Ms. Anoeck Van Der Vinne, Programme Manager, AWEPA, for working with the Secretariat to put this important workshop together. Kindly extend my deepest appreciation to the AWEPA President, Hon Ms. Miet Smet.

Permit me also to thank well in advance, our Resource Persons drawn from the consortium of leading institutions that continue to work round the clock to ensure the priorities of the African continent are considered at such time when the post 2015 Agenda is rolled out. I thank Dr Ali Hersi, Regional Director as well as the representatives of the African Leadership Centre (ALC), Akiba Uhaki Foundation, the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) and the State University of New York (SUNY) Kenya Parliamentary Strengthening Project. We look forward to benefitting a great deal from their expertise over the next two days.

Honorable Members, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

The theme of this workshop which is "***The Role of EALA in Implementing the SDGs: Promoting Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development***" could not be more apt and timely.

Time has ticked on the eight MDGs and the UN Millennium Declaration, which were adopted by Member States fifteen years ago in a global partnership to meet the needs of the world's poorest populations.

A number of successes have been realized though we have similarly fallen short of the anticipated expectations for the 2015 Agenda. While we celebrate the successes, there are a number of reasons for the challenges, part of which may be attributed to our very own shortcomings as Parliaments and perhaps ineffective Parliamentary action.

Parliamentarians speak on behalf of the poor and other vulnerable groups, ensure that development plans are informed by the real priorities on the ground, adopt requisite legislation, approve budget allocations and exercise oversight over expenditures.

There are many successful MDG elements relevant to Parliaments that the new SDGs must maintain. I can guarantee you that the fate of the SDGs will be equally sealed if Parliaments do not enact their own action plans and take up the mantle on some of the relevant areas to their mandate.

Later on this month, the UN shall hold a Summit in New York, USA where it is expected that Member States shall adopt the SDGs setting the basis for full roll out. As the momentum gathers pace, focus shall immediately thereafter turn to questions on how best to effectively implement them.

I see Parliaments focus on a number of priorities for the post-2015 development agenda such as fighting inequalities, ending poverty, instituting human rights-based approaches and a variety of social, economic, and environmental development issues. It is important that we are party to addressing the challenges.

Part of the solution to the challenge here lies in strengthening the ability of Parliaments to engage in planning and assessment of development policies and programmes.

As Parliaments, let us also look inwards and be open about strengthening our institutional advancements. Parliaments and Parliamentarians should be empowered to positively influence the architecture of the post-2015 development agenda. Parliamentary reform efforts need to recognize the fact that parliaments consist of multiple intersecting institutions and this should be reflected in project design.

On this score, it is important that we congratulate ourselves for taking such initiative to be equipped through this sensitization and capacity development exercise.

As we move towards the SDGs, permit me to quickly shed light on areas I believe EALA can make an impact;

1. At regional level, we should commit to hold Partner States accountable and to enhancing our oversight role in this dispensation. For example, on legislation, can we check if each of our Partner States have enacted laws in the areas on SDGs? If the laws are in place, are they being implemented? Has the public been sensitized about these laws? How much have we budgeted for the effective implementation of laws?
2. To undertake research and advocacy on status of preparedness of the region with regards to implementing SDGs.
3. To allocate and appropriate more resources in the area of the SDGs for the East African Community.
4. To advocate for regional targets through necessary resolutions especially for SDGs related areas that fall within the ambit of the Community, and to ensure that our Partner States fully implement these Resolutions.
5. Monitor the uptake of SDGs closely through relevant committees which shall be tasked to report back to the Assembly regularly.
6. Finally, enact relevant pieces of legislation which ensure realization of the SDGs.

This two day meeting of great minds, is therefore expected to enhance discourse while ensuring lessons and experiences are shared. I therefore wish you all fruitful deliberations.

With these few remarks, it is now my singular honour and privilege to declare the two day Sensitisation Workshop on SDGs for EALA Members officially open.

I thank you for your kind attention.