



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

**6TH MEETING OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE
3RD EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**Arusha, Tanzania
25th MAY – 6TH JUNE 2014**

**ORAL ANSWERS
TO PRIORITY QUESTIONS**

28TH May 2014

1.0. QUESTION : EALA/PQ/OA/3/42/2013 (By Hon. Susan Nakawuki)

As a means of safeguarding the standards of its products in the East African Community Market, the EAC enacted the SQMT Act, 2005. However, a number of counterfeit products usually in the form of imitations have flooded our regional markets. Such products, though cheap, are many at times substandard and environmentally hazardous as well as proven to be harmful to human health.

Could the Chairperson of the Council inform this August House:-

- (a) What the Council of Ministers is doing to ensure higher standards of consumer protection.***
- (b) Has the Council specifically and practically considered the harmonization of standard of goods entering the EAC Market now that the legislation to support any initiative on standards is in place?***
- (b) Could she give assurances that some Partner States are not used to convey such goods which could end up in another Partner States.***

Madam Speaker,

Consumer protection laws in the Partner States are at various stages of enactment or implementation. At the regional level, the Council of Ministers has considered an EAC Anti-Counterfeit Bill and referred it to the Sectoral Council on Legal and Judicial Affairs for legal input. The Sectoral Council will handle this at its next scheduled meeting expected to take place in June 2014. It hoped that the regional law once enacted will oblige the Partner States to exercise uniform control of counterfeits. The current SQMT laws do not fully address the proliferation of counterfeits.

Madam Speaker,

Regarding the issue of harmonisation, I wish to state that at the regional level the National Standards Institutions (NBSs) have put in place structures for collaborative operationalization of The EAC Standardisation Quality Assurance Metrology and Testing Act, 2006. Most of the Partner States have approximated and aligned their Standards Acts to The EAC Standardisation Quality Assurance Metrology and Testing Act, 2006.

Furthermore, recently the Council made the following regulations:-

- (a) EAC SQMT (Designation of Testing Laboratories) Regulations, 2013;
- (b) EAC SQMT (Product Certification Schemes in Partner States) Regulations, 2013; and
- (c) EAC SQMT (Enforcement of Technical Regulations in Partner States) Regulations.

The above regulations will fully operationalize The EAC Standardisation Quality Assurance Metrology and Testing Act, 2006 as required by the Common Market Protocol provisions on movement of goods.

Madam Speaker,

The East African Standards Committee which is charged with handling Standardisation Quality Assurance Metrology and Testing matters, invoked the provisions of The EAC Standardisation Quality Assurance Metrology and Testing Act, 2006 and formed a Technical Management Board comprising of Chief Executives of National Quality institutions as provided for in The EAC Standardisation Quality Assurance Metrology and Testing Act. The role of this Board is to address issues such as the control of sub standard goods from crossing borders. The Technical Management Board meets many times in a year. Furthermore a mechanism for notification of substandard goods among National Quality Institutions is in place. There is also a mechanism for notification for such goods among the National Quality Institutions.