



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

**1ST MEETING OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE
EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**Arusha, Tanzania
August 2013**

**PRIORITY QUESTIONS FOR ORAL
ANSWERS
(Referred from the 6th Meeting of the 1st
Session)**

August 2013

1.0 QUESTION : EALA/PQ/OA/3/02/2013 (By Hon. Christophe Bazivano)

The Council of Ministers in 2005 directed the Secretariat to work out modalities to internationalize the east African passport. The Immigration experts, mandated by the EAC Secretariat, designed a new generation EAC international passport which was adopted by the Council in 2006 with enhanced security features. This design was reviewed in 2012 in consideration of the accession of the Republic of Rwanda and the Republic of Burundi into the Community, and the launching of the above new generation passport was scheduled for March 2012.

Research by the EAC Secretariat towards securing international recognition of the East African passport has shown that there are no legal requirements to internationalize the East African passport, apart from Partner States to notify the international community through their various embassies/missions abroad about the introduction of the EAC Passport and its design and usage by their nationals.

Can the Chair of the Council inform this House;

- 1) Why the launch of the new generation East African Passport has been delayed until today.*
- 2) Which is the new schedule for the launching of the EAC Passport*
- 3) How will the passport be distributed and what will be required of the citizens in order to access the new generation EAC passports.*
- 4) What will be the relationship between the new EAC passports and the existing respective national passports?*

Madam Speaker

In January 2012, Immigration Experts met and updated the 2005 proposed new generation East African Passport design in order to enhance its security features and to conform to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) specifications.

In March 2012, the updated design was endorsed by the Chiefs of Immigration at a meeting held in Moshi, Tanzania. The updated passport design was presented to the 17th Meeting of the Sectoral Council of Ministers Responsible for EAC Affairs and Planning held on 9th November 2012 in Kampala, Uganda for consideration. The Sectoral Council directed the Secretariat to -

- a. prepare a background paper on the internationalization of the EAC Passport for consideration by the 18th Meeting of the Sectoral Council;**

- b. adopt a Multi –Sectoral approach in addressing the issue of the internationalization of the EAC Passport; and
- c. Invite the Chiefs of Immigration to make a presentation on the internationalization of the passport during the 18th Meeting of Sectoral Council of Ministers Responsible for EAC and Planning.

The EAC Secretariat convened a meeting of the Chiefs of Immigration in March 2013, in Bujumbura, Burundi to discuss and address the issues contained in the directives of the Sectoral Council. A report was prepared based on the directives and was presented to the 18th Meeting of the Sectoral Council of Ministers Responsible for EAC Affairs and Planning held from 18th -21st June 2013.

The Chiefs of Immigration made the presentation during the Sectoral Council Meeting.

The Sectoral Council;

- (a) Adopted the developed minimum basic technical specifications of the new generation EA passport.
- (b) Directed the Secretariat to prepare a computer generated graphic design of the new generation EA passport and circulate it to Partner States by 31st July, 2013 for comments.
- (c) Took note of the roadmap towards implementation of the new generation EA passport and directed the Secretariat to convene a multi-sectoral meeting of experts on the internationalization of the EA passport to finalize the roadmap and present it to the 19th Meeting of the Sectoral Council of Ministers Responsible for EAC Affairs and Planning.

Madam Speaker,

It is important to note that the launching schedule for the new generation East African Passport can only be done after the Council of Ministers has considered and adopted the proposed design of the EAC Passport and further pronounced itself on the way forward.

Madam Speaker,

Each Partner State will be expected to place an order of the number of passports required for issuance to her nationals at her cost. Printing of the Passports can be done centrally facilitated by a Council decision directing the EAC Secretariat to procure a vendor to print the passport.

Partner States Passport Issuing Authorities will be required to inform the international community of States, on the coming into use of the new generation East African Passport. They will provide detailed information on the security features of the passport and at least a specimen copy to all foreign nations. They shall also be obligated to provide a phase out program for the old generation of national passports.

The laid down procedures for acquiring a passport at national level will apply to the issuance of the EAC passport and there will not be a recall of national passports. The agreed upon Phase-out program of the national passports will provide a time frame for mopping up national passports and the issuance of the new generation e- passport.

The relationship between the new EAC Passport and the existing national passports will be outlined in the phase out programme. Each Partner State will have the obligation of informing the international community of States on the commencement of the usage by her nationals of the new EAC Passport and provide a phase out program of the old generation national passports.

2.0 QUESTION: EALA/PQ/OA/3/14/2013 (By Hon. Shy-Rose Bhanji)

- (a) Sensitization is very crucial for the EAC integration process. What strategy is there to involve EALA Members to participate in EAC sensitization activities?*
- (b) How effective has the EAC communication strategy been? Can the Assembly be told what exactly was planned and has so far been achieved?*
- (c) How much funds were allocated towards the implementation of the EAC Communication Strategy? How was the distribution done?*

Madam Speaker,

Sensitization is both a crucial and fundamental aspect in getting the citizens of East Africa to be informed and to enjoy the benefits that integration has to offer.

I want to laud the contribution of EALA Members who are already undertaking sensitization activities within their respective Partner States individually and collectively. On several occasions we have seen and read articles by

Hon. Members in the print media educating the citizens on integration issues. We have also seen and read about Hon. Members taking part in various outreach activities of the Community.

EAC plans to further engage with EALA Members in undertaking sensitization activities at least once every quarter across the border points.

The Community continues to undertake Outreach Programmes in the region by engaging with various groups including the Civil Society, Private Sector, youth and women among others. It is anticipated that EALA Members shall be involved in all programmes thereby not only giving leverage to the Assembly and raising its profile but also enabling Members to engage with the various groups who are in essence their constituents.

Members of this August House have a big role to play in expounding on the integration pillars of the Customs Union and the Common Market Protocols, the Monetary Union and the Political Federation to the ordinary citizens of this region. It is also anticipated that EALA Members shall be engaged in media programmes to enable further interface with the public. The Secretariat has already commenced on the initiative by rolling out radio programmes. We envisage that we shall see more Legislators engaged with the media during this Financial Year.

Madam Speaker,

Regarding the Communication Strategy, I wish to inform this August House that the Council of Ministers at its 23rd Meeting held in September 2011 approved the EAC Communication Policy and Strategy, which gives general direction for the Information, Education and Communication activities that should be pursued by the East African Community in accordance with Article 71 of the Treaty which mandates the Secretariat to promote and disseminate information on the Community to stakeholders, the general public and the international community.

The Policy provides the necessary guidelines for the overall direction of the Information, Education and Communication, while the Strategy spells out specific activities that the Community will undertake to promote awareness and foster broad participation by the various stakeholders in the integration process.

At its 25th Meeting held in August 2012, the Council of Ministers approved the Operational Plan for the EAC Communication Policy and Strategy which prioritizes and phases activities to be implemented within a period of five years i.e. 2012/2013 - 2016/2017 with effect from 1st July 2013.

The Council directed the Secretariat to mobilize resources from the Private Sector and Development Partners to implement the operational plan.

The Secretariat is in the process of implementing key components of the Communications Strategy that include; Media Relations, New Social Media platforms, Branding, Outreach activities and Monitoring and Evaluation.

Madam Speaker,

On effectiveness of the Communication Strategy, I wish to inform the August House that -

- a) Running of EAC Radio and Television Programmes using both the Private and Public Media Houses for education of the public in the Partner States is on-going;**
- b) Coverage by the Media has been enhanced. The EAC and the Media have a platform to engage and exchange ideas. The annual EAC/EABC Media Summit enables both media and the regional bloc to discuss relevant issues and priorities.**
- c) A Forum bringing together key implementers of the Policy and Strategy has been instituted which has seen Communication Officers from the Partner States' Ministries of EAC Affairs, EAC Organs and Institutions and affiliated Organizations coming together to consider key priority interventions and messages for the EAC communication and sensitization campaigns for the financial year 2013/14.**

The expected output of this Forum is a robust cooperation and participatory planning, organization and implementation of joint and harmonized communication and sensitization activities among the Organs, Institutions and the Ministries of EAC Affairs of the Partner States leading to increased public awareness and popular participation of all stakeholders in the integration process. The Forum meets twice a year to take stock of progress.

- d) Some Partner States have also developed National Policies and Communication Strategies on the EAC integration and are mainstreaming the integration agenda into their annual work plans.**

- e) Organizing Annual EAC Day/Week observance/celebrations and branding campaigns by the Partner States;
- f) Conducting Joint Cross Border consultations and sensitization activities for the border communities on EAC regional integration between some Partner States.
- g) Partner States are popularizing the East African Community symbols (Flag, Anthem, Tagline of One People One Destiny) and holding Public Rallies and putting up billboards. In the Republics of Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and Kenya it is a government directive to fly the EAC Flag alongside the National flag. The EAC Anthem is played at government and major functions.
- h) A major cultural event, the East African Arts and Culture Festival (JAMAFEST) was held in Kigali, Rwanda in February 2013 and attended by many people. This event truly enhanced cohesion and the spirit of East Africaness. We are planning for a major sports tournament this financial year to further deepen the cohesion among our ordinary people.
- i) There is increased knowledge by the public on the integration process – partially attributed to the rollout of the tenets of the Communications Strategy.

Despite the progress noted above, the EAC has also faced a number of challenges including; financial and human resources constraints which hamper full operationalisation of the Strategy.

Madam Speaker,

The indicative cost for implementing the operational plan in the next five years is approximately US\$ 15,460,560 which translates into approximately US\$ 3,092,113 per Financial Year.

During the Financial Year 2012/2013, the Council allocated US\$1,488,890 out of which Partner States contribution was US\$175,400 and US\$1,313,490 from the Development Partners. In the current Financial Year, the Council has allocated US\$832,750 out of which the Partner States will contribute US\$91,400 and the US\$741,350 from the Development Partners.

Most of the funds go to printing vital integration documents as well as the Information, Education and Communication materials; sensitization activities; enhancing the EAC media relations; and engaging short term staff to undertake the communication related activities.

3.0 QUESTION: EALA/PQ/OA/3/15/2013 (By Hon. Shy-Rose Bhanji)

- (a) What is the status of the EAC trade statistics in all Partner States for the year 2011-2012?*
- (b) Could the Chair of the Council elaborate on the fast moving goods/products from Tanzania to Member countries of the EAC?*
- (c) What is the status of the special list of goods that are exempted of the tax regime by each Partner States? Does it still exist?*

Madam Speaker,

The volume of intra-EAC trade grew by 22.0 percent to US\$ 5,472.9 million in 2012 compared to US\$ 4,485.9 million recorded in 2011. The development was driven by the increase of both imports and exports that went up by 20.7 percent and 23.0 percent, respectively. Tanzania and Rwanda recorded increases in their shares to total intra EAC trade while that of Kenya, Uganda and Burundi declined. Despite the decline of the share, Kenya continued to dominate, accounting for about 36 percent of total intra-EAC trade.

Since launch of the Customs Union, and subsequently the Common Market, intra-EAC trade has increased from about US\$2 Billion in 2005 to US\$5.8 Billion in 2012.

The total intra-regional exports increased from around US\$500 million in 2000 to US\$3.2 billion in 2012, an increase of over 600%.

The East African Community's total intra-regional trade increased from a total of US\$4.6 billion in 2011 to US\$5.8 billion in 2012, an increase of 26 percent, while the total intra-regional exports increased from US\$2.6 billion to US\$3.2 billion during the same period, an increase of 23 percent.

Kenya and Uganda accounted for an average of 37 and 24 percent of the total intra-regional trade during 2011 and 2012.

During the same period, Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi accounted for an average of 20, 12 and 8 percent, respectively. This intra regional trade is made up mainly of manufactured products and services.

Madam Speaker,

The fast moving goods/products from Tanzania to EAC Partner States are:-

- (a) Oil-cake and other solid residues of sunflower seeds,**
- (b) Maize,**
- (c) Oranges,**
- (d) Portland cement,**
- (e) Carboys, bottles, flasks, jars, pots, phials, ampoules.**
- (f) Thermometers/pyrometers,**
- (g) Black tea fermented/partly fermented, flavoured or not,**
- (h) Mosquito nets**
- (i) Liquefied Natural gas,**
- (j) Groats and maize meal (corn)**
- (k) Potatoes seed**
- (l) Maize seed**
- (m) Salt**
- (n) Unbleached kraft liner,**
- (o) Petroleum jelly**
- (p) Mineral or chemical fertilizers,**
- (q) Sacks and bags,**
- (r) Petroleum gases and other gaseous hydrocarbons,**
- (s) Cane or beet sugar,**
- (t) Unbleached sack kraft paper,**
- (u) Oil-cake and other solid residues of coconut or copra**
- (v) Knitted or crocheted rubberized textile fabrics,**
- (w) Seamless iron/steel casing used in oil/gas drilling.**

Madam Speaker,

The total exports from Tanzania in 2011 and 2012 amounted to US\$ 411 and US\$ 614 Million respectively, while the total imports from the region for the same period amounted to US\$ 376 and US\$ 678 Million respectively.

Madam Speaker,

The East African Community Secretariat has developed an application for the EAC trade statistics database which is a help desk that can be accessed on the

EAC website on the link <http://tradehelpdesk.eac.int/> and has all the statistics on trade flows. It is updated quarterly.

I take this opportunity to invite all Honourable Members of this August House and the general public to use this important site for updates on trade statistics.

Madam Speaker,

The exemption list of goods was harmonized under the EAC Customs Management Act and the exemptions regime is uniformly applicable in all Partner States. In this regard Partner States do not have separate exemption regimes. However, the Customs Union Protocol envisaged that some Partner States may experience peculiar negative effects by their manufacturing sector particularly the nascent industries that were enjoying incentives before the Customs Union came into force. The lists of raw materials and industrial inputs were allowed under the Articles 12, 19 and 36 of the Protocol. They are managed under the duty remission scheme to ensure control. In order not to cause distortion in the EAC market, the Council instituted measures such that finished goods of these manufactures are subject to full duties when sold in other Partner States.

I wish to report that the Uganda list of raw materials which was under this arrangement expired in June 2013 and goods hitherto on the list now attract full duties upon importation. Rwanda and Burundi have lists of raw materials and industrial inputs which will also expire in June 2014. This is because the two Partner States joined the Customs Union in 2009 and this measure was allowed to cushion their industrial base that would have been vulnerable to the established competitive firms of other Partner States. The gazetted manufactures are controlled under the conditions earlier on stated.