



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

WELCOMING SPEECH BY RT. HON. DANIEL F. KIDEGA, SPEAKER OF EALA AT THE ADDRESS OF H.E. DR JOHN POMBE MAGUFULI, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA DELIVERED BY THE PRIME MINISTER, HON KASSIM MAJALIWA – PARLIAMENT OF TANZANIA, TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2015, DODOMA, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

Rt Hon Kassim Majaliwa (Mb), Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania;

Rt. Hon. Job Ndugai, Speaker of Parliament of Tanzania;

The Chairperson and Council of EAC Ministers;

Hon. Ministers of United Republic of Tanzania;

The Secretary General of the EAC;

Hon. Members of EALA and Parliament of Tanzania;

Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners present;

Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen:

Rt Hon Prime Minister: Permit me as I welcome you to address EALA at the commencement of the 5th Meeting of the 4th Session of the 3rd Assembly, to wish you a belated but prosperous and progressive 2016.

I thank H.E. Dr John Pombe Magufuli for requesting you to engage with EALA. This is indeed your first official engagement with the Assembly since your appointment as the Prime Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania. I congratulate you for your appointment and wish you well in your endeavor to lead United Republic of Tanzania and the EAC region to greater heights.

Rt Hon Prime Minister: Kindly do pass the Assembly's congratulatory message to H.E. Dr John Pombe Magufuli, following his election as the 5th President of the United Republic of Tanzania. H.E. Dr Magufuli's victory in October 2015 is a step of great faith the people of the United Republic of Tanzania have in his leadership.

Today also presents the opportunity for you to deliver the State of EAC Address which is a unique and a fundamental activity on the calendar of the Community.

Similarly, the 3rd Assembly is for the very first time also holding its sessions in Dodoma away from its traditional base in Arusha. We are grateful to you and the Government for the continuous support to the Assembly.

Your Excellency: I wish to report that EALA has made major strides in its quest to serve East Africans. In 2015, the Assembly held five Sittings in line with its principle of rotation in Bujumbura (March 2015), Arusha (June 2015), Kampala (August 2015), Nairobi (October 2015), and Kigali (November 2015). This year, we have already held one Sitting in Arusha, Tanzania.

In totality, we have since 2015 to date enacted 9 Bills, passed 13 Resolutions and adopted 24 Reports in addition to a number of questions posed to the Council of Ministers. We have also received 5 petitions on matters of concern to East Africans, three of which have been dispensed with.

At this Plenary Session, EALA shall debate on the x Bill, 2014 and the y, 2013, analyze several oversight reports of its Committees, debate crucial Motions and pass Resolutions.

The State of EAC Address that you will shortly deliver, sets the momentum and impetus for the integration process by reflecting on general policies that relate to the Community's progress while outlining the strategic challenges which require attention.

The novelty of the State of EAC Address dates back to the year 2008 when H.E. President Yoweri Museveni made the first inaugural Address to this Assembly in Arusha. The State of EAC Address has since then been institutionalised and we are grateful that all Heads of State have continuously honoured their respective invitations.

What makes it the more important is the uniqueness of the occasion which is two-fold. First that the content of the Address as delivered often provides the EAC with the impetus and the direction from which all organs of the EAC pick their cue from.

The second concerns its rotational nature, which is very much a cardinal principal of EALA as well. In most instances, the occasion calls upon the Chairperson of the Summit of Heads of State to honour the delivery of the speech by traversing the region to a neighbouring State from where EALA is sitting. This exemplifies the positive measure of how progressive the EAC integration process has become.

Your Excellency: the EAC has since its re-establishment grown by leaps and bounds. Our good relations are however historical, for they started a long time ago with historians documenting that we were already trading with each other even before the yoke of colonialism trampled on us.

Today, the EAC can lay claim to be the fastest growing economic bloc in the continent and the world, the challenges notwithstanding.

On NTBs, the region has institutionalized the EAC Regional Forum on NTBs which quarterly considers reports of NMCs on NTBs and updates the Time Bound Programme (TBP). Generally, the reduction of Non-Tariff Barriers to the free movement of goods, the convertibility of the Partner States national currencies and co-operation in the development of infrastructure are good signs of strengthening integration.

I congratulate the Partner States for assenting to the One Stop Border Bill, and the Axle Weight Control Bill, which were passed by EALA. It is in the same vein that we laud the EAC Heads of State Summit for agreeing to a 10-year Infrastructure Development Strategy which among other things, lays emphasis on Public-Private Partnership investments in railways, roads, ports and energy in the region. This puts our Community in good stead to strengthen the operations of our Customs Union and the Common Market.

It is however necessary for the EAC to instill quick interventions when it comes to the Common Market Protocol. As politicians we feel the tenets of the Common Market Protocol have not been fully met over the last five years. One of the sticking areas concern that of free movement of persons and the rights to

residence. The EATUC and EAEO did petition EALA on the matter. It is comforting to note that the United Republic of Tanzania has committed to harmonise Work/Residence Permits, Fees, Forms and Procedures and some initiatives are being undertaken in the review of Immigration Regulations of 1997 by restructuring fees for the purpose of providing preferential treatment to the citizens of EAC Partner States. We pray that speedy interventions are undertaken to enable citizens of the region to wholly benefit from the opportunities.

I note with great encouragement that the Republics of Rwanda, Kenya and Uganda did abolish work permit fees thus encouraging workers to move freely in search of opportunities. Movement of citizens within the three countries have also been eased following the recent introduction of the Inter-State Passes. So far this is working well and it is my firm belief that the model should in due course serve as a case study that can be extrapolated in the entire region.

EALA hopes 2016 shall be a year of reflection where Partner States shall indeed commit to catching up with the lost ground on the one side while consolidating on the gains on the other side.

It is similarly necessary to deal with bureaucratic processes, administrative restrictions and misuse of the Rules of Origin principle among others, which hamper free movement of goods.

As EALA, we are doing all that is within our purview of Legislation, Oversight and Representation to strengthen integration. The Assembly has reached out to the Summit of Heads of State with a proposal to take advantage of the Summit Meetings as an opportune moment to Assent to Bills of the Assembly in line with Article 63 of the EAC Treaty. This mode, we feel, will speed up the processes and address the logistical issue of moving the Bills from one Partner State to another. Already we have received positive response from H.E. President Yoweri Museveni,

H.E. Uhuru Kenyatta and President Paul Kagame when we were in their capitals for the EALA Meetings. We request you to carry a similar message to His Excellency the President.

Rt Hon Prime Minister, May I take this opportunity to congratulate you for the progress in the United Republic of Tanzania since the new Government came into power in October 2015. In the first 100 days of your leadership, the country has realized major transformation. Revenue collection has doubled from Tshs 900 Billion to average of Tshs 1.4 Trillion per month while you have similarly enhanced efficiency in service delivery in government institutions. Further to this, we are appreciative of your Government's desire and the renewed spirit to tackle and fight corruption head on.

H.E. Dr Magufuli's leadership style under the mantra of *Hapa Kazi tu* continues to be an inspiration to many given its focus towards addressing national and regional issues. EALA too, adds its voice in heralding you for the great achievement.

Before I invite you to address this Assembly, may I briefly introduce to you some of the dignitaries present;

(LIST TO BE AVAILED)

Finally, Your Excellency, it is with great pleasure and honour that I execute my humble duty to welcome you, Rt Hon Prime Minister, to address this *August* Assembly, today, Tuesday the 8th of March 2016. I thank you for your kind attention.

