



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

**REMARKS BY RT. HON. DANIEL FRED KIDEGA, SPEAKER OF EALA AT
THE MEETING OF THE EAC SPEAKERS BUREAU
MOUNT MERU HOTEL, ARUSHA, TANZANIA – APRIL 29TH, 2016**

Rt. Hon. Justin Muturi, Speaker, Kenya National Assembly

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

Rt Hon Ekwe Ethuro, Speaker of the Senate of Kenya,

Rt. Hon Révérien Ndikuriyo, Speaker of the Senate of Burundi,

**Hon Jeanne d’Arc Uwimanimpaye, Deputy Speaker, Rwanda Chamber
of Deputies**

**Rt. Hon. Edouard Nduwimana, Deputy Speaker, Burundi National
Assembly**

Clerks to EALA and the National Parliaments

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good Morning. I wish to duly welcome you to the 11th Bureau of the EAC Speakers Forum taking place here in Arusha, Tanzania and to assure you we shall spare no efforts in ensuring your stay is as comfortable as can be. I thank you all for making the Forum a success in terms of attendance. On the same note, may I inform you that I have received apologies from the Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda, Rt. Hon Rebecca Kadaga. The Parliament of Uganda is however represented here by the Clerk’s designate who is also the Deputy Clerk of experience and long standing.

1.0 Welcome of New Members

I take this opportunity to welcome the new Speakers to the Bureau of Speakers.

1. Burundi National Assembly - Rt Hon Pascal Nyabenda elected in August 2015 (ably represented here by Hon Nduwimana Edouard)
2. Speaker of the Senate of Burundi - Rt. Hon Révérien Ndikuriyo
3. Parliament of Tanzania - Rt Hon Job Ndugai elected as Speaker in November 2015.
4. Hon Jeanne d'Arc Uwimanimpaye, Deputy Speaker, Rwanda Chamber of Deputies.

I duly welcome you and wish you well as you lead your respective Houses.

Distinguished Speakers:

1. I am also pleased to be part of the Bureau of Speakers having been in Office for 16 months now. I thank you for entrusting me with the Chair of the Bureau of Speakers and in the regard, congratulate the outgoing Chair, Rt. Hon Job Ndugai (his predecessor, Rt. Hon Anna Makinda) for guidance and vision during the last one year.
2. I also wish to give due credence to the EALA Speaker *Emeritus*, Rt, Hon Abdirahin Abdi and our predecessors for the distinctive role played in the establishment of the Bureau of Speakers leading to the inaugural meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, in May 2008. The Bureau of Speakers has contributed a great deal to strengthening the role of EAC Parliaments in the integration process in line with Article 49 (2) and 65 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the EAC.

3. I wish to register and appreciate the support received from you and your respective National Assemblies/Senates. I value the honour and support that you accord and extend to EALA during the Plenary Sittings in the respective Parliaments. Despite the fact that rotational sittings are very much a Treaty matter, your personal support in more ways than one, often make such Sittings successful.

2.0 PROGRESS REPORT

Rt Hon Speakers, there are a number of areas I wish to report on:

2.1 Progress of EALA

Since January 2015, EALA has realized steady progress. To date, the Assembly has held rotational Sittings in the Partner States and in total, passed 10 Bills, 16 Resolutions and 26 reports. The next Sitting is expected to be held in Arusha on May 23rd – June 3rd, 2016. During the same period, other developments were also registered.

2.2 9th Inter-Parliamentary Relations Seminar (Nanyuki IX Series)

The Nanyuki IX Seminar Series was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, on March 2nd - 4th, 2016 under the theme: "*Compliance with the African Union and Sub-Regional Blocs' Election Benchmarks: the case of the EAC,*". I thank all the Speakers for nominating legislators and for their effective participation.

2.3 Sensitization of the EAC citizens

As part of its mandate, EALA has been undertaking sensitization of various publics in March-April 2016. The sensitization activities targeted the civil society, private sector, women and youth groups and Parliaments in fulfillment of one of the operational principles of the Community; that of "*people-centeredness*". We shall embark on phase 2 of the same immediately after the EALA Sitting.

2.4 EALA's Initiatives in Republic of Burundi

As you may be aware, Burundi has faced challenges from the time it held its Presidential elections in 2015. In that regard, the EALA Committee on Regional Affairs and Conflict Resolution held a Public Hearing Workshop on the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Burundi on January 13th - 15th, 2016 in Arusha, Tanzania.

1. The Public Hearing sought to establish the facts as reported by a petition on the subject matter prepared by the Pan-African Lawyers Union (PALU) – principal petitioner and the East Africa Civil Society Organisations' Forum (EACSOF), Atrocities Watch Africa, Centre for Citizens' Participation on the African Union, East Africa Law Society (EALS) and the Kituo Cha Katiba (KCK). The petition was originally presented to the Speaker of EALA on November 25th, 2015 in Arusha, Tanzania.
2. This provided the Committee and indeed EALA an opportunity to listen to the contributions from stakeholders comprising of the representatives of Civil Society Organisations and the Opposition Parties in Burundi.
3. The Government of Burundi however requested to be allowed to make its rebuttal at a later date and the Assembly held a second Public Hearing workshop on January 25th, 2016.
4. The report of the Committee was debated and adopted in the House at the Plenary Sitting in February 2016 in Arusha, Tanzania. Copies have been deposited with all Clerks of national Parliaments.
5. The Assembly urged the EAC Summit to consider and support establishment of a credible investigative mechanism to independently investigate all allegations of human rights violations in Burundi. While supporting the work of the Office of the mediator, H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, EALA is emphatic that an all-

inclusive, participatory and credible process of dialogue in and outside of Burundi shall bring peace to the country.

6. The Assembly also urged the EAC Summit of Heads of State to affirm that EAC has a duty of care and responsibility to protect the people of Burundi from violence and to guarantee their safety and security.
7. Generally, the Assembly lauded the commitments taken by the African Union (AU) on the issue of sending a high level mission to Burundi to discuss deployment of an African Union preventive and protection force to secure the wellbeing of citizens. In the same vein, it underscored the need for AU to deploy a non-partisan preventive and protection force to secure the wellbeing of the citizens and to stop the gross human rights violations.
8. Bilaterally, we have also addressed matters affecting the Membership of four Members from Burundi with the Speaker of the Burundi National Assembly.

2.5 6th Inter-Parliamentary Games

1. The 6th Inter-Parliamentary Games Tournament was held in Kigali, Rwanda in December 2015. The Games which were preceded by a Pre-Tournament Conference were thrilling and exciting. In summary, the teams won the disciplines as follows:
 - Soccer – EALA
 - Netball – Parliament of Uganda
 - Tug of War (Men) – Parliament of Kenya
 - Tug of War (Women)- Parliament of Kenya
 - Athletics – Overall trophy - Parliament of Kenya
 - Men – Parliament of Kenya
 - Women – Parliament of Rwanda
 - Volleyball – Men -Parliament of Kenya

- Volleyball - Women - Parliament of Rwanda
- Golf – Parliament of Kenya

2. I wish to congratulate Rt. Hon Donatille Mukabalisa and the Parliament of Rwanda for the exceptional hosting. I note with satisfaction that the games are now an integral part and indication of the close collaboration between the Parliaments. We congratulate all the teams for their participation.

3. Essentially, there have been requests to broaden the sports disciplines to be more accommodating to the legislators. While this is encouraged, we must also look at the effort it takes to organise and resources available. There have been proposals flouted such as swimming, marathon and indoor Board games. The Forum should advise on the matter. We are open also to receive proposals from potential host country.

2.5 Parliamentary Elections

As EALA, we have continued to be part of the EAC Elections Observation Mission (EOM) and have observed elections in all the Partner States.

I am very pleased to note that Parliamentary elections generally have by and large been very democratic, contributing to the consolidation of democracy in EAC.

Last year, new Members were elected to the Parliament of Burundi and the Parliament of Tanzania. This year, citizens of Uganda elected their representatives to the Parliament of Uganda. In 2017, the cycle of elections shall continue. We expect citizens of the Republic of Kenya and the Republic of Rwanda to go through the same democratic process of giving their representatives fresh mandate.

In the regard, EALA passed the EAC Elections Act, 2012 and was assented to. The Act envisions formation of the EAC Elections Board whose function *inter alia* include: developing, setting standards and advising Partner States on best electoral practices.

The Board further harmonises electoral standards to be adhered to by the National Electoral Commissions. This is a fundamental contribution by EALA towards strengthening electoral processes in the region as a way to consolidating democracy.

2.6 Tenure of the 3rd EALA

While still on elections, as you may be aware, the tenure of the 3rd Assembly ends on June 4, 2017. We are exactly 13 months away. In actual fact, when I hand over the Chair of the Speakers' Forum next year, at about the same time, the process of electioneering shall probably have commenced in Partner States. The 4th Assembly is going to be a totally new Assembly. We expect a good number of Members to "retire" (myself included) having served the mandatory two terms while other faces may drop off due to the process of natural attrition. Then there is Republic of South Sudan which shall for the first time also elect representatives to the regional Assembly.

The EALA Elections Act 2011 is key in this aspect. The Act governs the framework the process of elections of EALA Members in line with respective Parliaments' Rules of Procedure.

I wish to express gratitude to the Parliaments under your visionary leadership and the Political Parties for sending individuals of high caliber, who are believers in the integration process first and foremost and who debate incisively. As Speakers, I request you to continue to guide your Parliaments so that we realise a successful process next year.

2.7 East African Parliamentary Institute

Another innovation of the Speakers' Bureau is its desire to see establishment of a regional Parliamentary Institute to provide a forum for training Members of

Parliament and staff in matters of Parliamentary practice to widen and deepen interaction. This discussion has been on-going since April 2004. I am pleased that after several years, we are beginning to see progress.

- the East African Parliamentary Institute (EAPI) Bill, 2011 was assented to by the Heads of State.
- The Council of Ministers have agreed to the operationalization of the Act and it is expected that it shall be realized in the coming Financial Year.
- Its enforcement is expected to see a vibrant institution that shall enhance capacity building for Parliamentarians, staff and stakeholders.
- I thank the Speakers for the push to have EAPI take-off. This is certainly a legacy of the Speakers' Forum. I urge the Forum to share ideas on the subject matter.

3.0 Other developments at the EAC

I wish to bring to your attention the following progress in the EAC generally;

- The Summit of the EAC at its 17th Ordinary Meeting held in Arusha on March 2, 2016, decided that H.E. Dr John Pombe Magufuli continues as the Chairperson of the Summit for a period of one year.
- The Republic of South Sudan was admitted into the EAC on March 2, 2016 at the 17th Ordinary Summit of the EAC Heads of State held in Arusha. The Treaty of accession was signed on 15th April, 2016 between H.E. Dr John Pombe Magufuli, President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Chairperson of the EAC Summit of Heads of State and H.E. General Salva Kiir Mayardit. The EAC population is now pegged at over 160 Million and the entry is expected to benefit the entire region. I did hold a meeting with the Speaker of the parliament of South Sudan, Rt Hon Magok Rundial

on the sidelines of the 134th IPU Conference held in March 2016 to look into the modalities of collaboration and their membership at EALA.

- Appointment of Hon Liberat Mfumukeko as the new Secretary General of the EAC replacing Hon Amb Dr Richard Sezibera. Hon Mfumukeko assumed office on April 26th, 2016. Hon Mfumukeko will be sworn in by the Speaker of EALA as an *ex-officio* Member of the Assembly at the next Sitting. I want to congratulate Hon. Amb Dr Richard Sezibera for a job well done.
- Their Excellencies at the Summit also launched the new International East African E-Passport and directed commencement of issuance takes place from January 1st 2017 while implementation of phase-out of national passports shall be between January 1st 2017 and December 2018. I believe Parliaments can play a key role in awareness and enhancing outreach of the new passports.

3.1 Challenges at the EAC

3.2 Funding

Funding to the EAC is increasingly becoming a challenge. Over the last Financial Year, Partner States have faced serious challenges in remittances (USD 8.37 Million per Year per Partner State).

The donor component has drastically reduced with little remittances and this is largely resultant from challenges in Europe.

In order to cushion this aspect, the EAC sought for an Alternate Financing Model (Alternate Financing mechanism) in which Partner

States were to contribute a portion of their annual tax collection (0.5%). The Summit has directed the Council of Ministers to finalise the matter including a hybrid of a levy and equal contributions with a commitment to increase budget that encompasses the principles of equity, solidarity and equality and to report at the next meeting. Perhaps, the Speakers can call on the EAC Minister/Cabinet Secretary in the Partner State to brief you more comprehensively on the matter as they conclude.

4.0 Congratulatory Message – Hon Rebecca Kadaga

Lastly, before I finish, I want to reserve some words for Rt. Hon Rebecca Kadaga (though in absentia), who is senior to some of us in terms of years of leadership at the helm of the Assembly. I note that the political life of the current Parliament ends next month. I have followed closely on some of the achievements during her tenure and it is only right that I recognize and laud Rt. Hon Kadaga for her exceptional leadership.

Rt. Hon Kadaga has diligently served the Parliament of Uganda and fervently supported the Speakers' Bureau. I wish her well in her future endeavour.

Rt. Hon Speakers, I submit.