



## **EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

### **TALKING POINTS OF EALA SPEAKER, RT. HON. DANIEL FRED KIDEGA, DURING HANDOVER CEREMONY BY THE OUT GOING SECRETARY GENERAL, AMB DR RICHARD SEZIBERA & WELCOME OF HON LIBERAT MFUMUKEKO**

**The Chairperson of the Council of Ministers**

**Hon Amb. Dr. Richard Sezibera, outgoing SG, EAC**

**Hon Liberat Mfumkeko, in-coming SG, EAC**

**Justice Dr Emmanuel Ugirashebuja, Judge President of the EACJ**

**DSGs, and Heads of Institutions of the EAC**

**EAC Directors and staff**

**Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen:**

1. Let me start by quoting Sir Benjamin Disraeli, a great novelist and a one-time Prime Minister of Britain in the 1880's who said; **the legacy of heroes is the memory of a great name and the inheritance of a great example.** This evening I stand here to thank my brother, Amb Dr Richard Sezibera for duly laying down his life for the betterment of the integration process and indeed as he leaves, the EAC is a stronger institution.
2. I have been given 5 minutes to make some remarks which in politics only serves to greet and make salutations. It also does not do justice in terms of

paying tribute to Amb Dr Sezibera, a regional integration enthusiast and a great son of the soil! But given the exigencies of time, I shall keep my remarks brief and within the time frame.

3. I congratulate Amb Hon Dr Richard Sezibera who in characteristic fashion went above and beyond the call of duty. Salient achievements during his tour of duty include the:

- Facilitation, entry and accession of Treaty by Republic of South Sudan as the 6<sup>th</sup> Partner State. This goes into the annals of history of annals as a significant achievement for the EAC right under your tenure
- Consolidation of the Protocols on the Customs Union and the Common Market respectively as well as the conclusion and ratification of the Monetary Union. The region also has semblance of a roadmap towards the Political Federation.
- Critical milestones along the way which include: commencement of a Single Customs Territory, the take-off of the Standard Gauge Railway, unprecedented advances in infrastructural investments and the recent introduction of the International EAC e-Passport.
- EAC has recorded major milestones in investment promotion and private sector development over the past five years.

4. In addition, it is during the tenure of Amb Dr Sezibera that the EAC navigated and successfully chartered some of the hitherto untested waters. Today, initiatives such as the EAC Youth Ambassadors Platform and the Secretary General's Forum with the Private Sector continue to endear the critical

groups to the integration process. More citizens are thus aware of the benefits of the EAC.

5. The EAC is also recognized globally. The recently released **African Regional Integration 2016 Index** lists the EAC as a top performing bloc across many variables. Africa's integration journey towards a more connected, competitive and business-friendly continent is underway and its roadmap is, in some areas, under construction.
  
6. The Assembly is also proud of a number of your achievements during the tenure. As an *ex-officio* Member, you have made significant contributions to the debates in the House. In terms of separation of powers, the recent granting of financial and administrative autonomy to the EALA and EACJ is a perhaps another sign of significant development for the EAC in its quest to take off.
  
7. Optimists always contend that any growing institution to realise its worth, it must have/address challenges – all in a day's work. The EAC has had its fair share largely revolving on the delay in finalization of the Institutional Review, NTBs, funding constraints as well as a number of bureaucratic issues that delay progress. Many are not insurmountable but call for consistent effort to address them. Despite the many challenges, we laud your dedicated effort to pursue integration to the hilt.

8. On a personal level, I have learned a great deal from you. Our frequent Monday morning meetings as Heads of Institutions (Yourself, Dr Ugirashebuja and myself) were worth the while.
9. As you pass the mantle to Hon Liberat Mfumkeko, it is only fair to toast you for the numerous advancements realized under your tenure and to recognize the numerous efforts you took to strengthen the EAC.
10. Today, we toast to a man of great courage, intelligence and wit! Amb Dr Sezibera, it was a blessing for you to lead the EAC over the past 5 years. Thank you for keeping to the faith in the path of integration and following in its lights.
11. I wish you well in your future endeavor and in whatever capacity you serve our great region, I am sure we shall all see you occasionally. May God fulfill every word he has put in your heart and make every desire and dream come true.
12. In similar vein, EALA Members and I welcome Hon Liberat Mfumukeko and assure him of our support as he takes over the mantle. We look forward to welcoming you to the Assembly as an *ex-officio* Member at our next sitting in May 2016.
13. I thank you for your kind attention.

