



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

IN THE EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)

The Official Report of the Proceedings of the East African Legislative Assembly 89TH SITTING – SECOND ASSEMBLY: FIRST MEETING – FOURTH SESSION

Tuesday, 14 September 2010

The East African Legislative Assembly met at 2.40 p.m. in the Chamber of Deputies of the National Assembly of Burundi, Bujumbura.

PRAYER

(The Speaker, Mr. Abdirahin Abdi, in the Chair)

(The Assembly was called to order.)

PROCEDURAL MOTION

The Chairperson, Committee on Legal, Rules and Privileges (Mr. Frederic Ngenzebuhoro (Burundi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move:

That, this House, pursuant to the provisions of Article 55 of the Treaty, and Rule 11 of the Rules of Procedure, do resolve to hold its sittings in Bujumbura, in the Republic of Burundi.

Ms Valérie Nyirahabineza (Rwanda): Seconded.

Mr. Ngenzebuhoro: Mr. Speaker, Sir;

Whereas Clause 1 of Article 55 of the Treaty provides that, the meetings of the Assembly shall be held at such times and places as the Assembly may appoint;

And Whereas Rule 2 of the Rules of Procedure provides that, the seat of the Assembly shall be at Arusha in the United Republic of Tanzania;

And Whereas sub-rule 7 of Rule 11 provides that the Assembly may, on a resolution adopted by a majority of its Members, decide to hold one or more sittings elsewhere within the Partner States, other than at its seat;

Now, therefore, this Assembly do resolve as follows:

That pursuant to the provisions of Sub-rule 7 of Rule 11 stated above, the Assembly shall hold sittings in the Burundi National Assembly from today, Wednesday, 14th September 2010 up to Thursday, 23rd September 2010.

Mr. Speaker, I beg to move. (Applause)

(Question proposed)

(Question put and agreed to)

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

The Speaker: Honourable Members, amidst us today is His Excellency Therence Sinunguruza, the First Vice President of the Republic of Burundi, and the hon. Pie Ntavyohanyuma, the Speaker of the Burundi National Assembly. *(Applause)* I have, in accordance with the provisions of Article 54 of the Treaty, invited them to address this Assembly. *(Applause)*

I would now like to make the following proclamation to welcome the presence, in the Assembly, of the First Vice President of the Republic of Burundi, and the Speaker of the Burundi National Assembly:

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS Clause (1) of Article 54 of the Treaty provides that the Speaker of the Assembly can invite any person to attend the Assembly notwithstanding that he or she is not a Member of the Assembly; if in his or her opinion the Business of the Assembly renders his or her presence desirable.

AND WHEREAS in the opinion of the Speaker, the attendance and presence in the Assembly of the His Excellency the First Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi and the Speaker of the Burundi National Assembly is desirable in accordance with the Business now before the Assembly.

NOW THEREFORE, It is with great pleasure and honour, on your behalf Hon. Members, to welcome the presence of the First^t Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi and the Speaker of Burundi National Assembly in this Chamber. (Applause)

Welcome Remarks to the Speaker of the Burundi National Assembly

Speaker, EALA: Your Excellency, Therence Sinunguruza, the First Vice President of the Republic of Burundi; Your Excellency, the Rt. hon. Pie Ntavyohanyuma, Speaker, Burundi National Assembly; hon. Dr. Diodorus Kamala, Chairperson of the Council of Ministers; honourable Ministers; hon. Members of EALA and the National Assembly of Burundi; the Deputy Secretary General, East African Community; Your Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corps; All invited guests; Ladies and gentlemen.

It is with great pleasure that I stand before you to welcome my good friend and colleague, the Rt. Hon. Pie Ntavyohanyuma, an accomplished and reputable politician, family man, academician, writer and a former top civil servant, to address you. *(Applause)* As a Member of the EAC Speakers Forum, I am grateful to the people of Kayanza for having re-elected him to continue his political career at the national level. *(Applause)* I am also grateful to Members of the Burundi National Assembly for having re-elected him to the high office of Speaker of the National Assembly. *(Applause)* His successful re-election is testimony of his astute service for his people and his country. We as Members of the EAC Speakers Forum view the Rt. Hon. Ntavyohanyuma as an elder of great vision, wisdom and foresight. I am therefore excited about his re-election to both positions. *(Applause)*

The EAC Speakers Forum stands to benefit a lot from his profile as it progresses towards positively influencing important decisions in the EAC, and towards enhancing relations between EALA and the national parliaments. These foundations were laid during his tenure as Chairperson of the Forum. *(Applause)*

In addition to his excellent profile, the hon. Ntavyohanyuma is also a backbone of community development ethos in his constituency, and in the country as a whole. *(Applause)* His participation in several community development and human rights initiatives has attracted a lot of support and resources for the people of Burundi. His achievements in the pursuit of justice, peace and human rights have also endeared him to regional peace initiatives with the Parliament of Rwanda and the Parliament of the DRC, and in 2009, he chaired a joint meeting of the Speakers from the three countries to lay strategies for peace in the parliamentary context. *(Applause)*

With those few remarks, I would now wish to execute my humble duty to invite the Rt. Hon. Speaker of the National Assembly of Burundi, the Hon Pie Ntavyohanyuma, to address this August Assembly.

You are most welcome. *(Applause)*

ADDRESS BY THE SPEAKER, BURUNDI NATIONAL ASSEMBLY

The Speaker, Burundi National Assembly (Rt. hon. Pie Ntavyohanyuma): Your Excellency Thérence Sinunguruza, First Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi; Honourable Abdirahin Haithar Abdi, Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly; Honourable Members of the Bureaus of the Parliament of Burundi; Honourable Parliamentarians; Honourable Ministers; Your Excellencies Ambassadors and Diplomats; distinguished representatives of international organizations; distinguished guests; ladies and gentlemen.

Allow me, first, on behalf of the Parliament of Burundi and on my behalf, to extend our warm welcome to His Excellency the First Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi, who is gracing with his presence the opening ceremony of the

Fourth Session of the East African Legislative Assembly. *(Applause)* I would also like to extend the same welcome to the Honourable Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly and all Members of this House. *(Applause)*

Allow me to welcome all Members of the different Delegations and wish them a pleasant stay in our capital city, Bujumbura.

I also would like to extend my welcome, once again, to all Members of the Bureaus of the Parliament of Burundi and all Burundian Members of Parliament who were trusted by the people of Burundi during the legislative and senatorial elections that took place in July 2010. I sincerely congratulate them. *(Applause)*

Welcome to Kigobe, all of you who have responded positively to this appointment. *(Applause)*

Your presence shows your interest in inter-parliamentary dialogue within our East African Community. The subjects discussed in our sessions are of paramount importance for the present time and the future of our institutions and our peoples.

This session is taking place in a special political context for the whole sub-region. Burundi has just completed an electoral process, which has renewed institutions through communal, presidential, legislative, senatorial, and local elections. In the Republic of Rwanda, presidential elections were held and crowned by a great success. The special feature of the electoral processes in both Burundi and Rwanda is that the Heads of State in office, Their Excellencies Pierre Nkurunziza and Paul Kagame, were re-elected. *(Applause)* On behalf of the Parliament of Burundi, I congratulate them and assure them of our strong support. As observers did witness, they won these elections with overwhelming majorities,

and they were fair, free, and transparent. For us, this is an eloquent sign that democracy is deep-rooted in East Africa. *(Applause)*

I avail myself this opportunity to express our deep appreciation to the Secretariat of the East African Community and the Secretariat of the East African Legislative Assembly for their attention and their multifaceted support to the Burundian electoral process. They sent many observers. We would like all Partner States of the East African Community to continue to be involved in all elections planned in the other sub-regional States and help these elections to be successful. *(Applause)* As for the Parliament of Burundi, we will make every possible effort and pass every Bill aimed at establishing a joint electoral Commission. *(Applause)*

We note that the United Republic of Tanzania, the Republic of Uganda, and the Republic of Kenya are gearing up for general elections during the year 2012. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the electoral campaign is underway. We wish this country a peaceful and transparent electoral process. *(Applause)* In Uganda, elections are scheduled for 2011. His Excellency Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, will stand for presidential elections. Our dearest wish is that these elections take place in calm, dignity, and transparency. *(Applause)* The Republic of Kenya has adopted a new constitution that will now be the basis for the elections to be held in 2012. Through the Kenyan parliamentary delegation here present, we extend our heartfelt congratulations to the Kenyan people, and encourage them to move forward. *(Applause)*

Holding this meeting in Burundi follows the relevant decisions and recommendations made during previous sessions in other Partner States of the East

African Community. This session is, therefore, being held with the purpose of evaluating the implementation of the programs and action plans agreed on during previous sessions. It is therefore an honour for the Parliament of Burundi to host such a meeting. I assure you that we will do everything we can to make your stay in Burundi pleasant: the work of this session will be done in a pleasant environment. *(Applause)*

I wish to conclude my remarks by inviting you to listen to the speech of His Excellency the First Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi. Long live the East African Community; long live co-operation among African parliaments! Thank you.

- *(Applause)* -

Welcome Remarks to the First Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi

The Speaker, EALA (Mr Abdirahin Abdi): Honourable Members, His Excellency Pierre Nkurunziza has graciously sent the First Vice President, His Excellency Thérèse Sinunguruza, to represent him at this Special Sitting and to address the Assembly. While the President very much wanted to address the Assembly, he had to attend to official engagements outside the country. He wishes all of you the very best in your deliberations and stay here in Burundi over the next two weeks. *(Applause)*

Your Excellency, I stand to first congratulate you for your appointment to the high office of First Vice President of the Republic of Burundi. It is reminiscent of the trust the President has placed in you to manage the public affairs of the Republic of Burundi. *(Applause)*

May I, also, through you, congratulate the President for his recent resounding re-election as President of the Republic of Burundi? *(Applause)* The elections, witnessed by the whole world, were

reported to have been peaceful throughout the country. I, therefore, on behalf of the East African Legislative Assembly, wish to thank the President, the Government and the people of Burundi for having conducted such peaceful elections, more so after the Republic of Burundi had gone through a troubled period in the recent past. *(Applause)*

Honourable Members, I was honoured to attend the swearing in ceremony of President Nkurunziza on 26 August 2010, here in Bujumbura, and in his acceptance speech, President Nkurunziza swore, among others things, to abide by the unity charter, the national constitution, national solidarity, and to promote social cohesion. Indeed, as promised, the new Government announced by President Nkurunziza comprises of Members from other political parties, a gesture which we must all applaud. It is our sincere hope that all the other parties support these initiatives for the sake of peace and development of this nation. *(Applause)* We have trust in the political leadership of Burundi to ensure stability and peace in this country, and I am sure the majority of the people of Burundi do so as well.

Under the stewardship of the President, major achievements have been recorded in the sectors of education, healthcare and infrastructure. The economy of Burundi is booming and continuing to attract both foreign and local investments. These are no mean achievements. *(Applause)*

We as an Assembly are happy to note that you have vowed to work closely with the President to continue on the path of reconciliation, the fight against poverty and zero tolerance for corruption. These are challenging promises, but the people of Burundi have demonstrated that they have trust in the country's leadership. It is our sincere hope that these facts will inspire Your Excellency to work for your country to take it to new heights. We pledge our support to you, the President and the

people of Burundi that we shall do everything possible to support this cause. *(Applause)*

Finally, Your Excellency, I thank you for once again accepting to address the Assembly today. By this, you have shown that you are a true friend of the East African Legislative Assembly - *(Applause)* - but before I call upon you to address the Assembly, your Excellency, I would like to recognise the presence of some of the dignitaries here present.

I would like to start with representatives of the business community - will you please stand up - the staff of the EAC, representatives from various religious denominations, international organisations, the Mayor of Bujumbura, members of the Diplomatic Corps, members of the judiciary, members of the security services, ministers from the government of Burundi, members of the National Assembly and Senate of Burundi, members of the Bureau of Senates, and the Second Vice-President. *(Applause)* Hon. Members, I think you all remember the Second Vice-President very well; he used to be the President of the Senate so we have worked very closely with him over the last two years.

(The dignitaries stood in their places for recognition respectively)

The Speaker: With those few remarks, it is my humble duty to invite Your Excellency to address this August Assembly, today Tuesday 14 September 2010. Welcome Your Excellency. *(Applause)*

The First Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi (H.E. Therence Sinunguruzi): Honourable Speaker of the National Assembly of Burundi; Honourable President of the Senate; Excellency Second Vice-President of the Republic of Burundi; Honorable Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly;

EAC Secretary General; Honourable MPs from EAC Partner States; Excellencies; Ladies and Gentlemen; members of the Government of the Republic of Burundi; Honourable Members of the EALA; Excellencies, Members of the Diplomatic Corp accredited in Burundi; Excellencies; Ladies and Gentlemen; Distinguished Guests, it is for us a moment of great joy and pride to be among you for this August Assembly, whose participants are coming from the four corners of the East African Community, to attend the opening of the activities of the "Fourth Session of the East African Legislative Assembly."

First, we would like, on behalf of the people of Burundi, their government and on my own behalf, to take this opportunity to wish, all of you who have come from the East African Community and other countries, a warm welcome to Burundi. *(Applause)* Our wish is that you feel sincerely at ease in Burundi, a Member State of our own beloved East African Community; a community of people. Today, our joy is very great since we are addressing the respected representatives of our Community.

As far as I am concerned, and together with all people of Burundi in general, we assure you that we will do our best to make your journey in Burundi useful and wonderful. *(Applause)*

Honourable Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished guests; we would like, once again, to express our happiness in taking part in this August Assembly of Members of the East African Legislative Assembly. You have come to hold this meeting in Burundi, at this particular period in the history of Burundi, a period of regional integration in Eastern Africa, and above all, a period when witnesses from the whole world are saying that the people of Burundi are now politically and democratically mature. *(Applause)*

In fact, you are meeting here after general elections, the first ones held in the history of the country, after a five-year rule well accomplished in compliance with democratic principles. *(Applause)* These elections were carried out in peace and freedom for all Burundians who have demonstrated independently and democratically their trust in daughters and sons of this nation whom they have judged capable and competent to represent and lead them during the next five years.

You have come to hold your meeting in Burundi during a special period in the history of the East African Community. We would like to take this wonderful occasion to hail the success of the presidential elections in Rwanda, and the referendum on the Constitution of the Republic of Kenya. This proves the outstanding fact of the maturity of our people, and that they have understood very well the unique and everlasting basis of their development and made useful choices for the future of democracy in our countries. We wish the same success to our sisters and brothers of the United Republic of Tanzania and the Republic of Uganda, which is preparing to organize similar great and patriotic activity next month, for their first elections, to be followed by the second ones in 2011. We are proud to confirm here that the East African Community integration process is on the right track. This track will bring about its construction, and honor its future generations with a Community of a people with a democratic and prosperous East Africa where East African citizens and those who will choose to live there as their second nation, will enjoy living. *(Applause)*

Honourable Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Distinguished guests; this Assembly is also meeting here two months after the implementation of the EAC Common Market Protocol. On the one hand we would simply name the successful functioning of this protocol as

the free movement of goods, persons and job opportunities, services and assets, and on the other hand, the right of establishment and residence, which will make the EAC an integrated and very prosperous area. It is our significant tool of integration and development; we should work for its great success. (*Applause*)

Our great wish is for this Assembly to be the best platform to make a contribution for our prestigious institution to succeed in operationalising all sectors of the EAC cooperation, namely, reform and harmonization of laws, adoption of best practices, abolition of tariff and non tariff barriers in commerce, and also in the sensitization of the different Partners States on national and Community plans. We have no doubt that this Assembly will take up this issue because the different activities and achievements of the Assembly have proved your strong commitment and determination to give your contribution in building our Community. (*Applause*) We are glad to note that the activities on your agenda respond to this wish.

We greatly appreciate the programme of an interactive meeting between the EALA members and the Burundi Members of Parliament. This is the right moment for this because an exchange on the achievements of the EAC and its future prospects, as well as on the mandate of the EALA and the EAC Court of Justice will be an occasion for our Deputies, almost new in the Chamber, to be aware of the realities of the Community, and its eminent role to carry out highly the highlight of the integration within the EAC.

Honourable Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests, we would like to come back, once again, to the phases of democratization that we have gone through in Burundi in order to thank all those, both at the Community level and at the Partner States level, who have

contributed to the strengthening of democracy and the peace process in Burundi. (*Applause*) We say “Thank you” for responding to our invitation, the first one having been made on 27 January 2010 during the official opening of the Inter-parliamentary Relations Seminar popularly known the “NANYUKI V” under the theme “*The EAC: Prospects, Challenges and Opportunities*”.

We would particularly like to thank Heads of State of Member States of the Regional Initiative for Peace in Burundi, led by His Excellency President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, who committed themselves so that Burundi can be all that it is today. (*Applause*)

We have also appreciated the role played by the EAC Elections Observation Missions, comprising among others some members of the EALA, which has been a privileged witness of the maturity of the people of Burundi in their determination to build a country of freedom and democracy, and for having turned a dark page of its history. (*Applause*)

We also wish to reassure Foreigners and Friends of Burundi that our country is committed to serve all Burundians, and all the initiatives that will be undertaken will be in the interest of all without discrimination. We shall work together and for all. (*Applause*)

With all these dimensions, our country is a country with a great potential, and with the commitment of each of the five EAC countries, there is space for all of us. In cooperation with the EAC countries, we will transform Burundi from a status of landlocked country to that of a land-locked country with many opportunities for development. (*Applause*)

The people of Burundi know the program of their government and its determination to work for the qualitative transformation of our country. We will go on working so

that our country has a new breath to impulse development and to reinforce the democracy we have acquired after struggle. With all efforts put together, and with God's help, we will succeed. *(Applause)*

During this five-year term, the program of the Government will focus on the consolidation of peace, security, reconciliation, sustainable social and economic development, and, the fight against corruption, so that each Burundian can enjoy living in his or her own country. *(Applause)*

We will consolidate all that was acquired in the different sectors of national life such as health, education, fight against hunger, unemployment, poverty, development of agriculture and livestock, infrastructures (roads, energy), protection of the environment and promotion of tourism, just to name a few.

In this determination of making Burundi a haven of peace and development for all, we will strongly lead all Burundians to change their behaviors and attitudes. We will consolidate good governance and we have already proclaimed "Tolerance Zero" for all perpetrators of corruption acts, economic and financial embezzlements, and other related infractions. We will also work for the effective protection of Human Rights and for the promotion of equal rights and justice for all. We would like impunity to be banned in Burundi, a country we wish to be lovable, livable, and reassuring for all. *(Applause)*

Honourable Excellencies, our most ardent wish is to see our country and all Burundians making significant steps with qualitative changes in several domains of national life: a stable country with a visible eradication of hunger and poverty, a country having a place of choice on the international chessboard. We need your support, and with God's grace to succeed

in this challenge, we trust in the future, we will succeed! *(Applause)*

Burundi, reinforced by progress achieved at the level of peace consolidation and democracy, will never fail to do all that may contribute, in a visible way, to the building of the EAC. We are committed to work in order to make profit of opportunities offered for our integration within the EAC. We will be ready to play our role and assume our rights and duties as an EAC Member State. *(Applause)*

The EAC becomes an everyday and livable reality to a part, more and more importantly, of our populations, and everyday it should constitute a supplementary motivation for working by giving us all pride in terms of fulfilled promises. The different actions undertaken at the different levels and the precise steps in the living history of our Community are witnesses that the East African Community is progressing. *(Applause)* You will therefore understand the importance of your presence in Bujumbura, the capital of Burundi.

This place should be a place of inspiration and conviction, so that at the end of this meeting, each participant becomes the apostle for the different corners of East Africa, to preach the good news of the progress of our Community. We all of us have to appreciate the progress of what we are doing individually and collectively. We have a good Community, and our countries have made remarkable achievements. We have the mission to see, accomplish, and to talk to others with great pride.

For our people who, from the high mountains, hills, valleys and plains of the member countries of our Community, observe us and wait for tangible results from us to enjoy the fruits of regional integration, the faith created by the stabilization and democratization, which is observed within the EAC, must be

consolidated. In the case of a contrary, history will never forgive us. *(Applause)*

Allow me to finish my address by wishing, sincerely, great success to this First Meeting of the Fourth Session of the EALA. And, once again, this session will allow us to take note of other achievements for the happiness of our countries and people respectively. *(Applause)*

It is on these words that we declare solemnly open, the activities of the First Meeting of the Fourth Session of the EALA. Long life and prosperity to our East African Community; long life to our parliaments and the EALA, God bless you. Thank you.

- *(Applause)* -

The Speaker: Hon. Members, before the Vote of Thanks, I would like to recognise a few people I forgot to recognise earlier. First is the Deputy Secretary-General, Finance and Administration of the EAC, Dr. Julius Rotich. *(Applause)*

Secondly, hon. Members, you will realise that about 80 per cent of the Members of the Burundi National Assembly are new. Therefore, it would also be good for them to see the faces of the EALA Members so that they know their colleagues. I can see Hon. Ngenzebuhoro straightening his jacket. *(Laughter)*

Therefore, I will start with the Hon. Counsel to the Community; followed by the Members from Tanzania; Members from Uganda; Members from Rwanda; Members from Burundi; I would also like to recognise the Assistant Minister for EAC from Kenya; Hon. Hafsa Mossi, the Minister for EAC from Burundi; hon. Eriya Kategaya, the First Prime Minister and Minister for EAC from Uganda; and the Chairperson of EAC Council of Ministers and Minister for EAC from Tanzania, Dr. Kamala.

(The respective Members stood in their places for introduction)

- *(Applause)* -

The Speaker: I now call upon Hon. Masha to move a Vote of Thanks on our behalf.

VOTE OF THANKS

Dr. F. Lwanyantika Masha (Tanzania): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, Sir.

Hon. Speaker of EALA; Your Excellencies Vice-Presidents of the Republic of Burundi; Speaker of the Burundi National Assembly; Chairperson, Council of Ministers; Hon. Members of the Assembly; Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen. Mr Speaker, let me first express my gratitude and sincere thanks for asking me on behalf of my colleague Members of EALA to give this vote of thanks.

We have heard two very moving statements from the Speaker of the Assembly and from the First Vice-President. Your Excellency Therenice Sinunguruza, we thank you sincerely for your words of welcome. We thank you sincerely for your commitment to the East African integration process.

May I say I was moved to hear you say that you are proud to confirm that the EAC integration process is on course? In fact, in your own words, you said, "it is going the right way". In this kind of process that we are in, it is not always easy for those of us on the inside to realise or even to know and appreciate that we are on the right course until we hear these kinds of words from distinguished delegates and leaders such as the Vice-President of one of our Partner States. Therefore, you have given us some heart, and we will continue in that "right way" and hope that we will reach that ultimate goal of political integration in East Africa. *(Applause)*

You have told us that your government, among other things, is focusing on the consolidation of peace, security and reconciliation. Mr. Vice-President, as indeed you have reminded us, from the recent experience of the elections, you now have the mandate to carry these things out, and with even greater vigour. We will be with you in these efforts, and we hope all elements in Burundi will appreciate the need for peace as our people develop, and as we move towards political integration. *(Applause)*

It has always been a very pleasant and welcome opportunity for us to return to the city of Bujumbura where we enjoy meeting the friendly people of Burundi. Your people and government, as indeed, has been acknowledged, have recently undergone renewal in your commitment to one of the cardinal guiding principles of our common journey to the political integration of our five countries. I wish, on behalf of my colleagues, to congratulate you personally, Mr. Vice-President, the government and your people for the successful and peaceful completion of your general elections. Allow me, even in his absence, to congratulate the President of the Republic of Burundi personally for his stunning victory, and the mandate that he has from the people. *(Applause)*

Mr. Speaker, turning to the address of the Speaker of the Burundi National Assembly, it is always very pleasant for us to come here because of the camaraderie and friendship we have always enjoyed when we are in Bujumbura. I noted that you indicated in your statement your support for a joint electoral commission for the five countries. I thought this was a very significant departure from the kind of hesitation and lukewarm approach to some of the essential elements to political integration. *(Applause)* I welcome, on behalf of my colleagues, that expression of commitment to a joint electoral commission, and I hope that we will get there one of these days.

On behalf of my colleagues, I share your wish that the elections coming in Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya will take place in a calm atmosphere, in dignity and transparency. This is what we look forward to, and that will give an honour to the leg remaining for the political integration of our countries. We share with you these sentiments, and we hope that it what will take place.

Before I conclude, I wish to note with great pleasure the appointment of one of our colleagues, Dr. Sabine Ntakarutimana, as a Minister in the new government - *(Applause)*. While we will miss her charm and contributions to the work of EALA, we appreciate that her special talents and commitment to public service have been recognised. We wish her great success in her new assignment.

May I interject here that Burundi's commitment to the integration process seems to be so strong that one of the former Vice-Presidents of Burundi, the hon. Frederic Ngenzebuhoro, is a Member of EALA and doing a great job. *(Applause)* I thought I should raise that since I am addressing a Vice-President. While I wish him better things, he will be most welcome to join us, too. *(Applause)*

Once again, I wish to thank the First Vice-President for his very important statement, and wish him the best in the years to come. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Hon. Members, I do not think I would want to add anything more because my command of French is not as good as hon. Masha's. I only want to say thanks a lot to the Vice-Presidents and the Speaker.

Before I adjourn the House, I would like to make the following announcement. After we adjourn, we are going to have a photo session with the First and Second Vice-Presidents, the Speaker of Assembly, the Deputy Speakers of the Senate, and the

Members of EALA, outside the building. You are also invited to a cocktail hosted by the Speaker of the National Assembly right within this building. The cocktail is for everybody.

ADJOURNMENT

The Speaker: Hon. Members, I would now like to adjourn the House until tomorrow at 2.30 p.m.

*(The House rose at 5.00 p.m. and
adjourned until Wednesday, 15 September
2011 at 2.30 p.m.)*