



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)

Official Report of the Proceedings of the East African Legislative Assembly

34TH SITTING – SECOND ASSEMBLY: SECOND MEETING – SECOND SESSION

Wednesday, 17 September 2008

*The East African Legislative Assembly met at 2.30 p.m. in the Chamber of Deputies,
Parliament of Rwanda, Kigali.*

PRAYER

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

The Assembly was called to order.

BILLS

Second Reading

The Inter-University Council for East Africa Bill, 2008

MOTION

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers (Ms. Monique Mukaruliza) (Ex-Officio, Rwanda): Mr. Speaker, sir, I beg to move that the Inter-University Council for East Africa Bill, 2008 be read a Second Time.

The Counsel to the Community (Mr. Wilbert Kaahwa) (Ex-Officio): Seconded.

(Question proposed)

Report of the General Purpose Committee on the Inter-University Council for East Africa Bill, 2008

The Chairperson of the General Purpose Committee (Ms. Lydia Wanyoto-Mutende (Uganda): Thank you very much honourable Speaker.

Hon. Speaker, sir, the General Purpose Committee considered the Inter-University Council Bill, 2008, together with the Council of Ministers and other stakeholders. We did make a report with our recommendations on enriching this piece of legislation before this august House.

Mr. Speaker, sir, I beg to lay on the table the report of the Committee.

(Ms. Wanyoto laid the document on the Table)

Ms. Wanyoto: Hon. Speaker, sir, on behalf of the Committee on General Purpose, I would like to mention that our report has only reached the other Members outside the Committee this afternoon, but this is due to circumstances beyond the Committee's method of work, and indeed the method of work of this august Assembly. I, therefore, beg your indulgence that I do my best to read the Committee report, and I hope that you will be able to follow the spirit and the recommendations that we made during the course of the meeting.

Hon. Speaker, before I go into the detailed text of our report, I just want to make a statement. With deep humility, I want to appreciate the spirit of the Council of Ministers for ensuring that the Bills that are pillars of the EAC being people centred are given priority attention, like this particular one. This Bill, like many others in the First Assembly, suffered a lot of setbacks because at that time it was difficult for us, as the First Assembly, to get Bills being generated from the Council of Ministers. So, as I have said earlier, it is very exciting, and I am really humbled that this particular Bill, which deals with education in the region, has come from the Council of Ministers, and that it is going to help us move forward as one of the ways that is people-centred because the education of the people of East Africa is one of those pillars that will create East Africans.

Hon. Speaker, just last week I was on a forum of panellists and each of the five of us was asked to give just one big challenge that we have in the integration process. When it came to my turn, I had to think very hard because we normally have very many; we have tariff and non-tariff barriers, but we were asked to give just one. I told the panel of interviewers that I think our biggest challenge, for those of us who are actors in the integration process, is having East Africans. We have people living in East Africa as Ugandans, Burundians, Kenyans, Tanzanians and Rwandans, so we need to build a cadre of East Africans, and one of the ways we can build East Africans is through education.

When people go through education, it is during the formative age of our minds: We make best friends in childhood as we grow up, we create trust, we share skills, we build intelligence and we appreciate each other's abilities as we grow up. If you did a little survey on our Heads of State or heads of any other institutions, you will find that cabinet ministers, or people who work in institutions, are people who went to school together. It is much easier to bring on board somebody with whom you grew up through school, because you need somebody you can trust and somebody you have confidence in, in order for you to perform as a leader.

Therefore, Mr Speaker, I would like to congratulate the Council of Ministers for this bold step because education is a sensitive matter, but, we need to face sensitive things because I

believe that we should not be in this East African Community as actors to do easy things. It is the most difficult things that are going to create the East African integration, and it would also be more gratifying for us when we break the difficult walls than the simple spongy walls that sometimes we encounter.

Honourable Speaker, I would now like to proceed and read through the text as it is from the Committee.

The Report of the General Purpose Committee on the Inter-University Council for East Africa Bill, 2008

1.0 Introduction

The Inter-University Council for East Africa Bill seeks to give legal effect for the creation of a supra-national institution to coordinate and regulate the activities of member universities and other registered institutions of higher learning within the EAC region.

Hon. Speaker, pursuant to provisions of Articles 49, 59 and 62 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community, and Rules 65 and 66 of the Rules of Procedure of this Assembly, the Bill was introduced for First Reading on 23 May 2008, by the hon. Eriya Kategaya, the then Chairperson of the EAC Council of Ministers during the First Meeting of the Second Session of EALA in Nairobi, Kenya. In accordance with Rules 67 and 79 (1) (a) of the Rules of Procedure, it was referred to the General Purpose Committee for consideration and report.

Hon. Speaker, the Committee met from 4th – 8th August 2008 in Kampala, in the Republic of Uganda, to consider the Bill, and now wishes to present its report in accordance with Rule 68 for purposes of debate for the Second Reading.

1.1 Appreciation

Special thanks go to the Members of the EAC Council of Ministers who travelled at short notice to give guidance on the Bill, the EAC Secretariat, the officials of the Inter-University Council and stakeholders from Universities in East Africa. They all made positive contributions and suggestions on the Bill, and most of their views were taken into account.

Specifically, we would like to thank the following: -

1. Hon. Amb. Venerand Bakevyamusaya, the Minister for Regional Integration and EAC Affairs, Burundi
2. Hon. Mohammed Abood, the Deputy Minister for East African Cooperation, Tanzania
3. Hon. Dr. Said Kibeya, the Minister for National Education and Scientific Research, Burundi
4. Amb. Julius Baker Onen, the Deputy Secretary General in charge of Projects and Programmes, EAC

5. Prof. Livingstone S. Luboobi, the Vice Chancellor of Makerere University, and the Vice Chairperson of the IUCEA Governing Board
6. Prof. Chacha Nyaigotti-Chacha, the Executive Secretary of the Inter University Council for East Africa
7. Prof. Moses L. Golola, the Deputy Executive Secretary, IUCEA
8. Prof. Gaston Hakiza, the Vice Chancellor of the University of Burundi
9. Mrs. Gertrude K. Lutaaya, the Internal Systems Control Officer, IUCEA
10. Mr. Lawrence Kamugisha, the Legal Draftsman, EAC
11. Mr. Michael Asheri Wimile, the Senior State Attorney, Ministry for East African Cooperation, Tanzania
12. Ms. Wilheimina Balyagati, the Corporate and Public Relations Officer, IUCEA

Special thanks also go to the Parliament of Uganda for accepting to host the EALA Committee on General Purpose, the EALA Speaker and Clerk for the arrangements made to enable us execute our mandate.

1.2 Methodology

While the cornerstone for the consideration of the Bill was to engage the EAC Council of Ministers and other stakeholders in a consultative process, the Committee also examined the following documents: -

- a) The Inter- University Council for East Africa Bill, 2008
- b) The Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community
- c) Literature detailing activities of the current Inter University Council for East Africa
- d) Policy briefs from IUCEA

Hon. Speaker, the IUCEA also undertook to avail to the Committee a copy of the protocol establishing the current institution, which the Committee is still waiting for.

2.0 Background to the Inter-University Council for East Africa

Mr Speaker, sir, prior to its establishment as the Inter-University Council for East Africa, the framework of agreement in the defunct East African Community, 1997, was modelled along that of a Committee on Education. Realising the benefits this would have for the future of education institutions in East Africa, the Inter-University Council for East Africa was established in 1980 by the universities in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda as a regional inter-governmental organisation with the aim of facilitating contact between the universities of East Africa and to provide a forum for discussion on a wide range of academic and other matters relating to higher education. It also aimed at maintaining high and comparable academic standards as well as confronting the challenges affecting member universities.

It was initially linked to Makerere University, with affiliates to the University of Nairobi and the University of Dar es Salaam. At the collapse of the EAC in 1977, the two became autonomous but agreed to cooperate through a Memorandum of Understanding (1980). The

MoU was later upgraded to a protocol, and the Bill now seeks to upgrade the protocol to an Act of the Assembly to give the Inter University Council of East Africa greater legal effect.

Hon. Speaker, over the years, the membership of IUCEA has increased to include, from the Republic of Kenya: Egerton University; Jomo Kenya University of Agriculture and Technology; Kenyatta University; Maseno University; Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology; Moi University; University of Nairobi; African Nazarene University; Daystar University; Kabarak University; Kenya Methodist University; Kiriri Womens University of Science and Technology; Scott Theological College; Strathmore University; St. Paul's University; The Catholic University of Eastern Africa; United States International University; University of Eastern Africa – Baraton; West University of Science and Technology.

And from the United Republic of Tanzania, the following constitute the membership: Ardhi University, University of Dar es Salaam, Mkwawa University College, Moshi University College, Muhimbili University of Health Science, Muzumbe University, Sokoine University of Agriculture, The Open University of Tanzania, State University of Zanzibar, Zanzibar University, University College of Lands and Architectural Sciences, International Medical Technology University, St. Augustine University of Tanzania, The Hubert Kairuki Memorial University, Tumaini University of Dar es Salaam College, University of Dodoma, University of Arusha, International Medical and Technological University, Ruaha University College,

Hon. Speaker, the following constitute the membership from the Republic of Uganda: Makerere University, Kampala, Kyambogo University, Gulu University, Busitema University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Makerere University Business School, Bugema University, Busoga University, Islamic University in Uganda, Lugazi University, Ndejje University, Nkumba University, Kampala International University, Uganda Christian University and the Uganda Martyrs University.

Mheshimiwa Spika, Universities and University Colleges in both the Republic of Rwanda and Burundi have been encouraged to apply for membership. However, the Committee was informed that the IUCEA has also sent explanatory missions to both Rwanda and Burundi who were not previously represented in the IUCEA. For a start, the last Annual General Meeting of IUCEA was held in Kigali as a mechanism of popularising the IUCEA in the two countries.

3.0 Consideration of the Bill

Mr Speaker, I now turn to the specific and general observations and issues raised during the course of our work as a committee.

3.1 Scope of the Bill

Mr Speaker, the object of the Bill is to establish the Inter University Council for East Africa as an institution of the EAC. It recognises the role played by the former Inter-University Council for East Africa in the defunct EAC. Hence, it seeks the revival and enhancement of its activities within the new cooperation arrangement. Within the framework of its current existence, the IUCEA is to become an effective regional advocate and catalyst for the strategic development and management of higher Education in the East African Community.

3.2 Harmonisation of Policies for Human Resource Development in the EAC Region

Hon. Speaker, the enactment of the Bill into law will be a major development in the EAC integration process aimed at harmonising and rationalising the Partner States policies in the higher education sector. Emphasis will particularly be placed on quality human resources development, technological advancement, establishment of centres of excellence and the promotion of quality assurance in universities, for the common good of the people of East Africa. Consequently the Inter University Council for East Africa will focus its attention on matters of accreditation, monitoring and evaluation, as well as offering guidance to the member institutions. Ultimately, this will make the education environment in the region more competitive and accessible, particularly in view of the EAC Common Market.

3.3 Membership and Accreditation of Institutions of Higher Learning

The law will accommodate both public and private qualifying universities. Honourable Members will remember that in the old Community most university institutions were Government owned, but the situation is different now with so many private universities. Levels of membership will be at two levels namely; full and associate members. This means that all institutions or higher learning are potential members as long as they meet the set criteria. However, the Committee is of the view that membership criteria should be subjected to a consultative process with the students as well in order to ascertain their needs.

3.4 Relationship between the IUCEA and the Partner State Institutions

The Committee was informed that the current policy environment on higher education in the EAC Partner States is governed by their respective institutions, which include the Ministries of Education and National Councils/Commissions of higher education. The IUCEA only exists to coordinate joint activities and initiatives among the member institutions in the Partner States. However, with the exponential growth of degree programmes and the number of students within the region, its stature and strength will be enhanced through its supra-national outlook.

3.5 Membership on the IUCEA Council and the Board

The Committee was informed that Partner State bureaucrats referred to in the Bill are there to give policy direction and to enhance ownership of the institution and its policies since they

play a vital role in the education system in the respective Partner States. The Committee was of the view that this will increase bureaucratic tendencies and as such they should be replaced by academics in the universities/institutions of higher learning.

3.6 Regulation of Fees Structures for the EAC Region Students

The Committee was informed that while the Council of Ministers had noted with concern and had therefore called on the authorities to abolish discriminatory fees for students from the East African region studying in any of the other Partner States other than the state of their origin, little had been done to effect this directive. The Committee demands enforcement of the Council of Ministers' directive on non-discriminatory fees for all students of East Africa undertaking similar programmes.

3.7 Regulation of Institutions of Higher Learning in Partner States

The Committee was informed that Acts of Parliament in Partner States already provide for arbitration mechanisms and sanctions for institutions which fail to comply with the relevant provisions. As such, the mandate of the IUCEA was not in conflict with national jurisdiction. It was however the view of the Committee that the IUCEA be given powers of enforcement with respect to standards to establish guidelines to regulate relationships between institutions. It was also the view of the Committee that the law should create an arbitration channel through the East African Court of Justice as one of the avenues for conflict resolution between the IUCEA and member institutions. We are looking at regional arbitration mechanism that is above the national jurisdictions.

3.8 Establishment of an EAC Examinations Board

Mheshimiwa Spika, while the IUCEA took note of the relevance of establishing an EAC examinations board to promote standards within the region, it informed the Committee that the request was not within the purview of its competence. However, the IUCEA is ready to create collaborative mechanisms in this respect.

3.9 Protection of Research Work and Technological Advancement as a vehicle for Industrialization

Great importance was attached to research and technological advancement as a precursor to industrialization, and, therefore, the role that the IUCEA can play in sustaining collaboration amongst its member institutions in the field of research. The Members were informed that the IUCEA attaches great importance to original research and therefore the need for promoting intellectual property rights and protection of patents.

3.10 Recommendations

The Committee urges Members to take note of the crucial role a supra-national institution in the integration process and therefore recommends that this Assembly do;

1. Urge the Council of Ministers to consider streamlining the membership of the Council and of the Board to include more academics than civil servants in ministries of the Partner States.
2. Urge the IUCEA to take progressive steps to fully integrate institutions of higher learning in both Rwanda and Burundi.
3. Request the Council of Ministers and IUCEA to work together to urge the Partner States and education institutions to eliminate discriminatory fees for students originating from Partner States of the EAC who are attending courses outside their countries.
4. Urge the IUCEA to take the initiatives to establish a research and technology fund to spearhead developments towards that end and to streamline such developments to promote industrialisation in the region.
5. Urge the IUCEA to take the initiative to establish a grant/fund to promote exchange of students and lecturers between member universities with a view to enhancing inter-university collaboration and quality assurance.
6. Urge the IUCEA to support private initiatives and sponsorships to facilitate university exchange for privately sponsored students who can afford the cost.
7. Direct the IUCEA to undertake continuous consultations with students to assess their needs.
8. Urge the Inter- University Council in collaboration with member institutions to develop a statistical students' website to profile all students and alumni of member institutions.
9. Amend the Bill to empower the IUCEA to regulate relationships between member universities and collaborating international institutions around the world to maintain the highest standards and to guarantee quality of education.
10. Amend the Bill to empower the IUCEA to create an arbitration mechanism for conflicts that may arise amongst and with collaborating institutions.
11. Urge the IUCEA to initiate moves towards the harmonisation of education standards and policies for higher education.
12. Urge the IUCEA to identify and build capacities for centres of excellence so as to make them competitive.
13. Urge the IUCEA to consider designating university colleges for specialised areas where they have comparative advantages.
14. Urge the IUCEA to establish practical avenues aimed at promoting intellectual property rights and patents for original research works.

3 Conclusion

In conclusion, once enacted, the EAC Inter – University Council Bill will give legal effect to a supra- national body called the IUCEA duly empowered to among other things create

linkages for cooperation among the Member universities hence the creation of an avenue which will be a stimulant for the development of networks as well as centres for excellence.

Mr. Speaker sir, I beg to report, and subject to the proposed amendments appended to this report, I beg to move that this Bill be enacted into law by this Assembly.

Honourable Speaker, sir, I beg to move.

Mr. Gervase Akhaabi (Kenya): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, sir. I wish to thank the Council of Ministers for bringing this Bill to this Assembly, though late. I believe that this is one piece of legislation that ought to have been presented and passed into law a long time back.

I also wish to thank, most sincerely, the General Purpose Committee for its serious consideration of this Bill, and the recommendations it has made.

In reading this Bill and debating it, we should have regard to the provisions of Chapter 16 of the Treaty, but when you read the Bill itself, it does appear like the drafters never paid much attention to what Chapter 16 of the Treaty invites and requires the Partner States to do. At this point in our development as a Community, and indeed as a people, we want to make advancement in the fields of science and technology. We are not going to industrialise as a region or even as individual nations within East Africa with a creation of a reservoir of knowledgeable and technically skilled manpower, properly trained to enable us to move. I regret to say that there is very little in this Bill as it is now that helps us in this direction.

Mr. Speaker, sir, one aspect of the requirements in this region has already been alluded to by the Committee, but there are other aspects. The problem that we have in this region is that we have extremely diversified and discordant educational systems, especially so at the higher education level. I will be urging honourable Members to seriously consider amending the Bill further by proposing the establishment of what has been called elsewhere a qualifications framework.

Regions like South Africa have established a national qualifications framework, where a system of qualifications is agreed upon so that there is a chance of entry and re-entry at any level; where education is not limited to the classroom; where acquisition of skills in the place of work would be considered in the qualifications. There is no better institution to do this than the one being proposed here, the Inter-University Council for East Africa. So, we have to charge this Council with the responsibility of helping in the development of a regional qualifications framework for the entire East Africa so that for a person coming from Tanzania and wanting to join a college in Rwanda, from the qualification framework, people will know what his competences are. Going together with that is a system of assessment.

The hon. Lydia Wanyoto has already referred to this: what is a degree programme, say, from some obscure university in Nairobi? What does it amount to in the East African context? If we had a regional assessment system, it would place that person at whatever level. What is a diploma certificate given out after two weeks supposed to mean in the East African context when there are other colleges that award diploma certificates after three years? Are these two

the same? I will be proposing an additional function of this Council, which is to help in the establishment of an original assessment system.

Mr. Speaker, sir, it has been suggested by the Committee, and I totally agree, that a university is not a place where civil servants should go and sit. This is a place where serious thinking should take place. I fully support the proposal that – (*interjection*) -

Mr. Sebalu: Mr. Speaker, sir, listening to the contribution of my colleague, I think he is making a very good argument in that direction, but I would like to benefit from his last statement that a university is a place where serious thinking is supposed to take place. Is that supposed to mean that other than academics, other people in other fields are not serious thinkers? I know we are not academics but I suppose we are serious thinkers as well - (*Laughter*).

Mr. Akhaabi: Mr. Speaker, sir, my statement should not be construed to mean that serious thinking does not take place elsewhere other than in universities. But, universities are specifically established for serious thinking! I would, therefore, support the proposal that the representation in the governance structures of this Council should consist of more of those serious thinkers than civil servants.

Mr. Speaker, sir, I would also like to propose that in the governance structures there should be representation of the academics. When you look at the First Schedule, for example, you have permanent secretaries, vice-chancellors, chief executives, representatives of Partner States and other people, but there is nowhere anything is stated about representation by the teaching community. I would suggest that the teaching group should be represented in these structures.

Mr. Speaker, sir, when you look at the very beginning of Clause 4 of this Bill, it says the purpose of the Council is to advise the Partner States on all matters related to higher education. Without limiting the generality of subsection (1), the Council shall help its members to contribute in meetings...and then it goes on to compose the Council.

Under Clause 5, the Council shall consist of universities, university colleges and other degree awarding institutions. Now, how does a university become a member of a Council? Membership in a Council should be of a person. We may talk about a representative of a university, but a university itself...especially when the Bill does not establish a mechanism for that representation in the Council, does not add up. It is my view that, that is a very serious inadequacy which should be addressed.

Mr. Speaker, also in the same clause, “*the universities, university colleges and other degree awarding institutions specified here under shall be member universities.*” I have no problem with that, but I would suggest that, that entire clause should be rephrased so that we make a distinction between the memberships in the Council, so that a policy making body is created, different from the board that has been created. That way, the board is for the management of the Council and another body, composed of representatives of the member councils, constitutes the policy making body. We should not mix them up the way it is.

Lastly, let me speak on the issue of the other functions of this Council. This is the issue of accreditation, which goes together with the qualifications framework. This is a very serious matter, especially in this region. Mr Speaker, we have all types of universities and colleges awarding degrees, pseudo degrees and certificates, therefore, there is a serious need for a proper accreditation system in East Africa. We cannot afford, as a Community, to have our people receiving degrees and diplomas that cannot be sold anywhere else in this world; we have to be internationally competitive, and to do that we need to establish an accreditation body that is properly structured. I think this proposed Council could very easily perform that function, but not in the manner that it is being proposed here.

I support the establishment of the Council, but subject to the proposals for amendment made by the Committee and my own proposals. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

Ms. Margaret Zziwa (Uganda): Mr. Speaker, I also want to start by congratulating the Council of Ministers for this very important Bill. But before I go any further, let me take this opportunity, first to appreciate the Republic of Rwanda and our distinguished colleagues from Rwanda for receiving us very well, and for making appropriate arrangements for our comfort in this country – (*Applause*).

Mr. Speaker, allow me also to congratulate the Republic of Rwanda and to salute the Rwanda Electoral Commission for the good work of conducting the elections, which we observed, not to mention the women elections that have been given a lot of due significance.

Mr. Speaker, going to the Bill, I want to congratulate the Chairperson of Council for the beautiful report which she has made regarding the Inter-University Council of East Africa Bill. I want, in a special way, also, to applaud the Inter-University Council of East Africa, because after the collapse of the EAC in 1977, the IUCEA remained operational. I want to say that when we had an opportunity to visit them in Kampala, we had a very meaningful interaction and we were able to learn that the IUCEA has consistently remained working and aspiring for the education of the peoples of East Africa.

The honourable Minister noted that this Bill brings in a paradigm shift from what the IUCEA has been doing, but I want to observe that the objectives entailed in the Bill are still the same, and they are very important. Notably, if I can borrow from the Committee report, the objectives as stated on page 3, namely, “to seek the revival and enhancement of the activities of the new cooperation arrangements”, I think, is a very important objective, and I think it mandates us to enact this Bill. It will also give an opportunity to the IUCEA to become an effective regional advocate and catalyst for strategic development and management of higher education in East Africa. Those two very important objectives will give us the important responsibility to have this Bill enacted.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also say that when we went to the IUCEA offices in Kampala, we were able to appreciate some of the challenges they have. Some of them have been alluded to by the hon. Minister, and one of them was a new legal framework to meet the new challenges. I am happy that this Bill proposes the establishments of a new legal framework. I

want to salute the observations made by the hon. Akhaabi in addition to those made by the Committee. It will help to enhance the objectives of the Bill.

The second challenge that was observed was the fact that the IUCEA was seeking for premises to put up a headquarters building. I had an opportunity to meet informally with Prof. Chacha, the Executive Director of IUCEA, and he mentioned to me that they have now secured a piece of land in Kyambogo, area in Kampala. I want to take this opportunity to salute the IUCEA and all those who facilitated their acquisition of this land. It is a very important facility as it will give them bigger room, and with the expanded council, they will be able to have a bigger area of operation.

Mr Speaker, the growth in institutions of higher learning is envisaged in the policies which the respective governments have made, namely, the opening up of the education sector and enabling the private sector to invest in education. That inevitably calls for this Bill to enable the IUCEA to regulate or supervise the activities of these institutions

Mr. Speaker, sir, I want to congratulate the Chairperson of the Committee for a good report, which has also given us an opportunity to see some of the areas which are crucial and when we do amend some of the clauses, it will give us a broader outlook.

Mr Speaker, when we look at the challenge of streamlining the membership of the Council, I want to salute the proposals given in the report, but I think we need to look seriously at some of the proposals by the hon. Akhaabi. The challenge of harmonising the fees for the institutions of higher learning came out very prominently. I think it is important that at this juncture even the challenge of the private institutions is also looked at critically because in most cases they do not receive any subvention from government, and they end up levying their fees according to their costs. So, as we look towards the harmonisation of fees, we should also look into that area so as to avoid exorbitant fees.

I want to support the proposal to enhance the specialisation of research. We acknowledge the fact that many of our governments do not put a lot of money to support research. For any development in any country, research is very important. I think that the IUCEA would be critical in this area.

In addition, the Minister mentioned that it would be important to have a database. In most cases it is evident that a lot of information on various important aspects of higher learning, leave alone education, at times, is not very well kept. So, it would be very good for the IUCEA to be given the chance to establish a very good databank in which information on qualifications, accreditation, among others, can be found.

The Chairperson talked about the challenge of building “East Africanism”. It is true that education plays a key role in enabling any region to be properly appreciative of its identity. So when we have East African oriented institutions, we shall be able to produce East Africans. I think the IUCEA will be able to help us in that respect and I support the enactment of this Bill from that perspective.

I also want to support the point raised on page four of the report concerning the review of the membership criteria, and more importantly, the consultative process. If you observe the number of universities which are members of the IUCEA, they are very many. In Kenya, I think they are about 23, in Uganda there are about 15, in Tanzania they are about 19 and we expect more from Rwanda and Burundi. This is a very big number. For that reason, consultations would be the most appropriate way of bringing on board many of those very important and vibrant ideas, which will help in the building of the education system in the East African Community. So, I want to support the idea of the consultations so that we are able to have better and well thought through suggestions which would lead to a better education system.

Mr. Speaker, I want to benefit from the contribution made by the hon. Akhaabi and seek clarification on Clause 19, which gives opportunity for making regulations. It vests power in the Council of Ministers, which may, by such instrument, after consultation with the governing board, make regulations for better carrying into effect the provisions of this Act. Considering the challenge that the hon. Akhaabi pointed out, I would like to know whether the representation of the teaching community and such other considerations can be taken care of in Clause 19. Either the Committee or the hon. Minister can give that clarification.

Mr. Speaker, I want to salute the proposal for the establishment of the qualifications framework, which will help many of the so-called educational institutions that are awarding the various qualifications to be equated so that as we move into the Common Market whereby free movement of labour is one of the activities we envisage, our people will be able to be readily mobile from one country to another to be able to fit within the respective systems of our respective countries.

I want to thank the Committee for the good work it has done. I want to applaud the hon. Minister, and request that the amendments suggested in the report are taken on board. I thank you. (*Applause*)

Ms. Safina Tsungu Kwekwe (Kenya): Mr. Speaker, I thank you for availing me this opportunity. First of all, let me congratulate the Council of Ministers for demonstrating that they are really serious thinkers by coming up with a document of this nature. Indeed, serious documents developed by serious thinkers appreciate that good things come after a process. That is why today we are debating this Bill, and that is why we are even looking at a report that was produced by the Committee that was charged with the responsibility of looking at this Bill. I wish to state that I am a Member of that Committee and, therefore, I agree with the report in its entirety.

Hon. Speaker, the principles of integration are articulated under Article 7 of the Treaty. Article 7(1) is a very simple four-worded sentence; “*people centred and market driven cooperation.*” Those are only five words, but very powerful words. That means every area of cooperation, education inclusive, should be people-centred. Therefore, I want to appreciate and associate myself with the recommendations of the Committee that there is a need to involve the consumers of the education system, the students.

Hon. Speaker, there was a time when in the university I went to – and it was a real university, with real thinkers, and there was a time when for anyone to get an undergraduate degree, which is a four-year course, it would take one between six and seven years. Why? Because students would spend three of those years on the streets making demands, which could have been met if there were a forum or a platform where those students could have aired their grievances and fed into the formal processes at the university. Therefore, even when we are talking about the IUCEA, there is a need to create room for interface between the suppliers and consumers of education.

Hon. Speaker, Article 9(3) of the Treaty recognises the importance of the IUCEA as a surviving institution of the Community. Therefore, we as an Assembly have a duty to ensure that this institution is given the credentials and legal backing for it to operate as such. However, it is one thing to have an institution like the IUCEA in place and another to have an institution that is efficient and functional. That is why the Committee, in its wisdom, felt it important to not only create the IUCEA, but to make it an institution that will deliver and even have the teeth to sanction or bite. We are giving the IUCEA the teeth to bite. That is why the proposed Clause 9 seeks to establish standing committees within the Council, which will assist the Council to carry out its functions, which include issues of quality assurance, compliance with standards and promoting technology. These are things that we as legislators must be able to mandate the Council to do. I concur entirely with the suggestion that we should find a place in the Bill to put this so that we have a Council that can be able to stand the test of time and be able to deliver.

Hon. Speaker, Article 102 of the Treaty gives us guidance for cooperation in the development of human resources. Article 102(2)(g) is very relevant today. It says: “*encourage and support the mobility of students and teachers within the Community.*” You cannot encourage and support when you are placing barriers. Therefore, the issue of having uniform fees is very critical. If I can access education anywhere in East Africa at a rate that is not discriminatory, then I can truly say that I am being supported to be mobile within the Community. But when we have discriminatory fees, then we are going against the provisions of the Treaty.

Hon. Speaker, going to the issue of people with special needs, this is not an issue of just good practice; it is an issue of the Treaty. Article 102(2)(i) says: “*collaborate in putting in place education and training programmes for people with special needs and other disadvantaged groups.*” Therefore, when the Committee makes a recommendation to have amendments under Clause 10 of the Bill, it is not doing so because it is good practice to do so, but rather because it is mandatory, under the Treaty, for us to ensure that when we make a law to govern education in East Africa, the interests of people with special needs and other disadvantaged groups are taken into account.

Hon. Speaker, let me now turn to the issue of intellectual property rights. This has been one of the areas that we as legislators have really been keen on. We know that intellectual property rights in the current era are an issue that everybody should be seized with. Article 103(1)(c) says: “*the encouragement of the use and development of indigenous science and technologies.*” (i) says: “*the harmonisation of policies on commercialisation of technologies*

and promotion and protection of intellectual property rights.” Therefore, it is our duty to ensure that as we create the IUCEA, we also mandate it to ensure that the products that come from those serious thinkers are also protected and safeguarded.

In conclusion, in my language we say, ‘*ukiweka majembe mengi kwenye kikapu lazima zitangona*’. This loosely translated means that when you put hoes in a basket as you go to the farm, they will always knock each other. Therefore, when we create an institution, which is a corporate body like the IUCEA, we expect conflict. We expect people will not always be merry making. There will definitely be areas of conflict. Therefore, it is prudent that within this Bill we create mechanisms that will ensure that conflict resolution is done in an amicable manner. In that respect, I concur and associate myself with the proposed amendment to have a Clause 7(g) that will take care of conflict resolution.

Hon. Speaker, sir, I wish to thank you for availing me this opportunity. (*Applause*)

Ms. Valerie Nyirahabineza (Rwanda): Thank you very much, honourable Speaker. First of all, I am greatly honoured to take the Floor in this Assembly. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the five Partner States, through the Council of Ministers, for bringing this important Bill. Mr. Speaker, I also want to express my gratitude to our dear colleagues for having appreciated all the arrangements the Government of Rwanda has set up to ease this Session.

Honourable Speaker, what we are witnessing today is the start of a fruitful undertaking that requires unreserved support. The current trend in higher education demands, as a matter of necessity, cooperation of this nature to enhance continuous search, dissemination and application of knowledge. Therefore, this discussion could never have come at a better time, and it is my strong belief that the support given to this Bill will go a long way in making university leaders rethink their strategies in the management of these important institutions in terms of accreditation, monitoring and evaluation, as well as offering guidance to the member institutions.

Mr. Speaker, sir, permit me to say a few words on the Bill. On the issue of funding, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the memorandum of the Bill, second page, second last paragraph which talks about “...*equal contribution by the Partner States*...” In the same memorandum, paragraph 16.1 talks of the financial provisions. I am therefore calling on the EAC to rethink the aspect of funding. Why? This is because the Partner States should not be obliged to commit themselves to such financial implications. So, my thinking is that the EAC Secretariat should take the burden of allocating the funds appropriately according to the needs of the organs and institutions. For this matter, I am very glad that the General Purpose Committee has made a recommendation so as not to put a very heavy burden on our Partner States. Otherwise, there should also be a way for the universities to make some contribution. And this will only be discussed in a forum created for that matter.

Honourable Speaker, a special vote of thanks goes to the General Purpose Committee for having recommended that we take progressive steps to fully integrate institutions of higher learning in both Rwanda and Burundi. I am saying this because by joining EAC, our

countries are hoping to gain and also bring to the table unique strengths and experiences painfully gained. For example, Rwanda is alive to and indeed, has been participating informally in some of the EAC initiatives, including harmonisation of policies and strategies, evolution of interconnection guidelines, harmonisation of spectrum management, universal service fund and e-application strategies, among others. We, therefore, look forward to benefiting abundantly from some of those matured initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, a number of events have unfolded in the realm of higher education in our region. We have witnessed, in the recent past, a proliferation of private universities. The growing number of students of varying age brackets has brought to the universities new challenges in academic and social spheres. That is why I really congratulate the General Purpose Committee for the recommendations.

I would also like to propose that this IUCEA be given a wider mandate for it to become really operational, and to be able to deliver as it was said earlier.

Mr. Speaker, I support the Motion and urge that the amendments proposed by the Committee and from the House be incorporated. I thank you, honourable Speaker.

Dr. Lwanyantika F. Masha (Tanzania): Mr. Speaker, let me also thank the distinguished Minister for her manner of presenting this Bill, and for her commitment to work with the Assembly. I also wish to thank the hon. Wanyoto for her very lucid report of the Committee.

May I start by indicating my association with some of the things that are in this Bill? I notice in the report of the Committee on page two, a list of universities from Tanzania that are or have been members of IUCEA. I wish to say that until two months ago, I was on the teaching staff of St. Augustine University of Tanzania; I am glad to see it listed here. I want to say that what I am going to say may, to some extent, be related to something practical that I have experienced in the academic world. Unfortunately, I just received the report of the Committee. Therefore, some of the comments that I will make may already be reflected in the report. I urge the Committee Chairperson to bear with me if that happens. But, I have tried to harmonise some of my comments with some of the things that are contained in the report of the Committee.

Basically, the Bill, in terms of functions and intentions, is very good. It reflects reasonably well the intent of the Treaty in Article 102. So, my comments, where they may appear negative, may not be related so much to the thrust of the Bill, but rather to the governance structures that are being proposed in it. Hon. Akhaabi has already made some references to that. I am going to explain this, perhaps, in a slightly different way, but addressing the same problem.

There is a governance problem in this Bill in connection with the institutions that are intended to be established. The Bill proposes to establish a Council in Clause 5(4), on page 6, and it also proposes to establish what it calls the annual meeting of the Council in Clause 8(3), on page 10. Now, this annual meeting of the Council, reading it in the Bill, reads very differently from the Council that is being established, and I will come to the details of this.

The Bill also seeks to establish a governing board, the structure of which is contained in the Schedule on page 20. The Bill also seeks to establish an Executive Committee of the governing board; this is in Clause 12(1) on page 14. There are these four entities being established as part of the governance structure for this institution. Now, the hon. Akhaabi has already made reference to the problem of the composition of the Council on page 6. I know he has said it, but let me repeat it. On page 6, item four reads: *“membership of the Council shall be open to universities, university colleges and other degree awarding institutions that fulfil the requirements under this section.”* The question is: who actually attends the meetings of the Council? Universities don’t attend these things; it is individuals. The lack of identification of the exact person to attend the meetings of the Council is a big gap, and it causes confusion in the governance structure of this Bill.

Then, when you go to the annual meeting of the Council on page 10, Clause 8(3) reads: *“the annual meeting of the Council shall be attended by the Chairperson, the Vice-Chancellors and the Principals of all member universities and all the members of the governing board, representatives of Partner States and representatives of the private sector.”* We are not told who or how many representatives of the private sector there will be; we are not told how many representatives of the Partner States will be for this annual meeting, and as already stated, the membership of the Council itself is unclear. So, we add another element of clarity to this second layer of management called the annual meeting of the Council. What are the functions of this annual meeting? They are contained in Clause 8 on page 11: the Council will be directing the governing board, electing the chairpersons of Council and governing board, and so forth.

On page 20, in the Schedule, we get the membership of the governing board. Here we are being told the membership of the annual meeting includes vice-chancellors, principals and so on. There is the membership of the governing board, with the addition of the Permanent Secretaries. Again, we have vice-chancellors representing both public and private universities, and a sleuth of several others. But if you go to the page in the Bill where the board is established, on page 12, Clause 10, it says: *“The governing board shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, carry out the following functions...”* Look at one of the functions in (a). It will act as the supreme operational organ of the Council. Now, who is supreme; the board or the council? Again, a governance muddle, which is contained in this report. Now if the board is supreme, it should be directing the council, but we are told the council directs the board and yet the board is supreme.

Then there is the Executive Committee of the governing board, on page 14. Who are the members of this Executive Committee? The permanent secretaries, who are already members of the governing board, we have Vice-Chancellors and the Secretary-General. I suppose by hon. Akhaabi’s definition, we will have to accept all these people as serious thinkers. But what are the functions of this Executive Committee? You have an Executive Committee in a body which is also executive, and the governing board, which is supreme, being directed by another body, which is the annual meeting of the Council, and on the side, you have the Council. But when you look at the functions, it is the governing board which approves the budget of this organisation, but the annual meeting of the council endorses the budget. I

would need a lawyer to help me understand who decides on the budget of this organisation; is it the one who endorses it or the one who approves it. Is this confusion deliberate? These are the same persons, so why this muddle in this set-up? Then you have the executive board in which among its members is a Permanent Secretary of a ministry. You are asking a Permanent Secretary, who probably has a lot of work already in the ministry to have executive authority over this institution with meetings three or four times a year! Are we not providing a set-up that will constrain and paralyse this organisation?

Mr. Speaker, my problem is the governance structure that is being proposed in this Bill. For the rest of the things, I have no basic problem.

The impression given by the report of the Committee, including the amendments which are being proposed in clauses 19 and 20 is the justification for the amendments being proposed to empower the council, which is the superior organ to the governing board. But the Bill says it is the board which is supreme. Now, something superior and supreme...my knowledge of English confuses me on this one to know which is higher than the other. Again, this poses a governance problem in this Bill.

Mr. Speaker, much as I would like to support this Bill, I am not sure whether we are setting up something that is workable or something that will have to come back to us very quickly because of the funny set-up of the governance system that is contained in the Bill. I would like to ask the minister to look at this again and see if they can give us something a little cleaner or more streamlined...and not streamlined only in the sense of what the Committee is requesting to include others, but streamlining the institutional organisation and capacity elements within the governance of this institution.

As I said, I support most of the functions to be performed. I am in total agreement that this is needed, even though not in this kind of governance setup, but, Mr Speaker, there is something that has happened in universities lately, and perhaps we should not blame the universities but individuals for it. There has developed an element of fake degrees. There are too many sources and opportunities for fake credentials in the academic world, and especially with the development of ICT. One can now go into the systems and literally pick up a degree of any level from any university they want, and just change the name! I want to say, and I don't think this is a secret, that some of our universities in East Africa have somehow been infested by such degrees, and there are now a lot of complaints about that.

There is also a problem about the credentials of the entering students, some of whom have managed to enter universities with fake credentials. I know it is true in Tanzania, and recently the University of Dar-es-Salaam had a problem with that. They had to throw out many students whom they found, after two or three years in the system that they came in with fake credentials. I am not sure it is only in Tanzania. With the framework we are setting up here on the standards and accreditation systems, I hope those who manage this organisation will look at this element very critically and save East Africa from people with such credentials running our educational systems.

Finally, the report of the Committee makes reference to a number of institutions which are currently members of this institution. But you have organisations on page two of the report. I will only mention two cases. In the case of the United Republic of Tanzania, you have Ardhi University and somewhere in there you have the University College of Lands and Architectural Sciences. I am not sure whether this is not the same university. In the case of Uganda, you have Makerere University Kampala and Makerere University Business School. Now, the nature of universities is that you have a university, schools, faculties, departments and so forth. Now, a business school of a university is an integral part of that particular university. Here, there is a suggestion that even these integral elements will be part of this structure here, which means the school of law at Makerere University will also be a member, the school of medicine will also be a member; they will ask why did you accept only the school of business? So, we will end up with a confused setup of this organisation. I think we should advise those who are working on these things to maintain the unity of these organisations in the Partner States as they are rather than their different departments as they exist.

Mr. Speaker, I am torn between supporting this Bill and not supporting it, because there is so much good in it, yet I am not convinced it can work with the kind of governance structure we are giving it. I am going to appeal to the Minister, if they can help me resolve this confusion in me by cleaning up the administrative structures so that I can support the Bill. I thank you.

Mr. Mike Sebalu (Uganda): Thank you, very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to state without fear of contradiction that you are, indeed, presiding over an institution where serious thinking is done, and the Committee's report is a reflection of that. I want to put a disclaimer to that statement by the hon. Akhaabi.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank the Committee for this report and likewise thank the Members who have come up with ideas of refining it. Specifically, the issues raised by the hon. Masha need to be given serious thought so that at the end of the day, we get an institutional framework that is workable and can be implemented without much ado.

I would also like to thank the Council of Ministers for considering it worthy to upgrade the status of the IUCEA in terms of legal framework, from a protocol to an Act of Parliament, which I think gives it a much better stature.

Allow me to thank, as per the contribution of the hon. Zziwa, the Ugandan government for meeting its host nation obligations and working out arrangements of providing land to the IUCEA so that its identity and visibility as a regional institution is enhanced.

Mr. Speaker, we are looking at this whole aspect of the IUCEA from a perspective of the bigger picture of the education system in our region. I think we have a challenge to ensure that we re-orient our education systems to answer the specific needs and challenges of our region, therefore, creating and enhancing this institution is one way of achieving that stated objective.

I would like to commend the Committee for ensuring that research and technology is an emphasised objective of this institution. A university without research can, at best, be looked at as an exaggerated secondary school because the clear distinction of a university from a secondary school is at the level of research and publication; contributing seriously to the generation of new knowledge and increasing the knowledge base of a given setting. So, by bringing this out clearly, I think we are making a serious contribution as a Parliament and it clearly shows that we are engaging in some serious thinking as well.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at the aspect of re-orientation, we are getting the IUCEA to deal with specific objectives which, in my view, should come out clearly. When you look at objective seven, it says: *“the council shall promote curriculum reform in order to equip graduates with the skills and knowledge which meet the needs of employers and conform to the development plans of the Community.”* I see that as coming up with our strategic needs as a Community. When you look at objective (o) it says: *“promote, through relevant activities in the member universities, the meaning and value of East African unity.”* I just want to look at those two and give a sum total of what I would wish to have in that direction.

Mr. Speaker, we are looking at cooperation in education as clearly spelt out in the Treaty and as referred to by the hon. Kwekwe. Now, this cooperation in the education sub sector should work to feed into the overall strategic objective of integrating the region. So, it should be seen as one of the vehicles of delivering the integration of the region. You are creating an environment and a basis for interaction that, at the end of the day, should help the integration process. It is against that background that I would wish to see us come out explicitly to give an objective that feeds directly into that aspiration.

Mr Speaker, I am looking at a situation where we can mandate the ICUEA to perhaps co-ordinate East African universities to design a curriculum that can avail an opportunity to all university entrants or students, as it were, to interface with issues of integration with specific reference to the EAC. I am looking at programmes like those we do have in some of the Partner States like in the United Republic of Tanzania, where you get national service at one level of your school system, which provides all the young Tanzanians with an opportunity to interface with issues of appreciating their country, building patriotism and nationalism, and with issues of feeling and creating a sense of belonging, thereby creating a national ethos and consciousness with which they can propel the country forward.

So, I am looking at a situation like that in our universities, whereby an arrangement can be put in place, to be coordinated by this Council, whereby some time is set aside in the first year for all students, regardless of what degree courses they are pursuing, to interface with issues of integration. That way we will be able to create a consciousness among the young generation of East Africans to carry out the process of integration forward. I think that is something we need to look at when we create this institution so that we build in mechanisms of fostering and helping the process of integration to be carried forward.

Mr. Speaker, I associate myself with the issues raised by different Members on the Floor in terms of supporting the Bill and having it refined so that at the end of the day this institution

is operational, with enhanced mandate and a better operational framework. The issues raised in terms of governance should be looked into so that at the end of the day, the institution is can work and it adds value to the process of integration.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I would like to thank you for availing me the opportunity and I beg to support the Bill. (*Applause*)

Mr Bernard Mulengani (Uganda): Thank you, very much, Mr. Speaker, sir. I am a member of the Committee and I fully support the report of the Committee, which I have also signed.

Mr. Speaker, there are various elements that people can use to either include or exclude participation of individuals in certain activities, be they social, economical or political, and one of them is education.

The reasons given by the hon. Masha as to why people find ways of getting credentials that they do not deserve either through the internet or through using other people's papers to attain levels that they are not supposed to have is because they are trying to fight against either the problem of exclusion or inclusion to participation in certain activities. It is for this reason that this Bill before us should be taken very seriously so that, it is able, as hon. Kwekwe has said, to operationalise the objectives of the Treaty.

Mr. Speaker, the Committee's position is that for the IUCEA to be able to do what the Bill is proposing, for example, in the area of standards, it would be good for the IUCEA to come up with a department within its setting to look into the possibility of a common examinations body for the region. There are similar structures that have been put in place by Acts of this Assembly like the Customs Union, although the implementation of the Act has been left in the hands of the institutions within the Partner States. We all know that there has been a problem of ceding sovereignty or power that has seen some of the things drag on and on. All the submissions of the Members on the Floor should be taken very seriously.

The Treaty says the implementing body will be the various examination bodies within the Partner States. Now these are parallel institutions that we are putting in place, and yet there is only one that the Treaty talks about. I would think that we would empower the IUCEA and give it the mandate to coordinate the various institutions. Otherwise, we may have a problem where the heads of those departments in the Partner States may fear to lose their jobs and, therefore, fail the attainment of the central examinations body.

Mr. Speaker, I want to turn to our recommendation number eight in which we made an emphasis on statistics. One of the weaknesses of developing countries is the absence of databases. I challenge any Partner State in this region to be able tell the number of human resources that we have in the region in terms of qualifications and numbers. It is for this reason that we are empowering the IUCEA to coordinate this.

Mr Speaker, given the nature of our economies, coupled with the issues of liberalisation and privatisation, there are a lot of institutions that have come up, and students are crossing borders to go and get education. But none of the Partner States can tell how many students from various countries are in a particular institution. We think that if the IUCEA is mandated

to handle the statistics and we empower it to be able to solicit for funds, it would be able to give statistics of students moving across borders.

Mr. Speaker, recommendation number 9, which talks about empowering the IUCEA to regulate relationships between universities and collaborating international institutions from around the world, is in the same line, which I would just like to echo from what the honourable Masha said. Whereas he concentrated on Tanzania, he highlighted it to bring in ICT. There are various qualification certificates that are coming from overseas. People are getting Masters, Doctorates and even undergraduate degrees, and they use them to successfully deprive the genuine qualified people to take over positions. In this line, I would propose that the IUCEA be mandated in its totality to also work retrospectively to look into the credentials people have attained. We need to produce quality for this region.

The reason I am saying this is that the level of the region, which is supranational, should be higher so that it can be emulated. These problems are happening in Partner States. I want to allay the fears of Hon. Masha. In Uganda, there have been culprits of people using others' documents and there have even been people losing Parliamentary seats on being found out. I presume – (*Interjection*) -

Mr. Sebalu: On a point of information, Mr. Speaker, sir...definitely I am not one of them – (*Laughter*). The information I would like to give is that the issue the hon. Mulengani is raising is a very important one because there are even some university dons who have some of these doubts cast on them. When you interact with them in their circles, there are some who have these problems and yet these are supposed to be serious thinkers. In Uganda, we even had a serious problem when we had a High Court judge who had a problem like this. This is someone who had sent people to jail! So, these problems are real. The issue the hon. Mulengani is raising is a very serious one. If this IUCEA is supposed to play a useful role, then these are some of the areas that also need to be looked into.

Mr. Mulengani: I want to thank hon. Sebalu for the information, and picking it from there I think the most vulnerable courses to forgery are the social sciences and business studies. I have not heard many people forging certificates in human or veterinary medicine. Given some elementary statistics, I believe it is for this reason that there are more students in the arts and the social sciences sectors. So, I think it will be good for what is contained within this Bill to be implemented.

Lastly, I also want to join my colleagues to applaud the Council of Ministers for considering education as an important area of integration by bringing the protocol to the Assembly to be transformed into an Act of the Assembly. I want to urge them to also bring the similar protocols that are yet to be turned into law as this is good practice.

I also want to remind the Council of Ministers that as we move into the Common Market, we would wish to see students suffer less. You may wish to move slowly in other areas, but as we talk now, whereas the Common Market is not yet on, students are easily crossing borders enjoying each others' universal primary education, specifically along the Kenya-Uganda

border. I would urge that before we finalise with the Common Market, the issue of the discriminatory fees for students is addressed very seriously.

I want to support the Committee's report and urge the Council to address the issue that the hon. Masha pointed out. We as a Committee also raised it. Since this Bill will be going to the Committee Stage, I will encourage hon. Masha to put together some amendments to the Bill in this respect and the House will benefit from his immense knowledge in the education sector. I thank you. *(Applause)*

ADJOURNMENT

The Speaker: Honourable Members that concludes our business for the day. I now adjourn the House until tomorrow at 2.30 p.m.

(The Assembly rose at 4.45 p.m. and adjourned until Thursday, 18 September at 2.30 p.m.)