



EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY

THE EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)

The Official Report of the Proceedings of the East African Legislative Assembly

THE EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)

36TH SITTING – FOURTH MEETING – SECOND SESSION – FIFTH ASSEMBLY

Saturday, 29 June 2024

The East African Legislative Assembly met at 2.57 p.m. in the EALA Chambers, Arusha

PRAYERS

(The Speaker, Mr Joseph Ntakirutimana, in the Chair.)

The Assembly was called to order.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

The Speaker: Good afternoon, honourable members. Today is a Special Sitting. One of our colleagues will no longer be with us. She has been appointed a minister. This is Hon. Dorothee. *(Applause)*

You may be aware that the women's caucus has its way of getting jobs. She had been appointed as a Minister for Finance at the South Kivu Local Government. *(Applause)*
She called me this morning to inform me that I should share with you the good news. She would like to thank you for the good relations she had with you and she wishes all of us well in our endeavours. For some of our colleagues who are businessmen, you should keep her contacts. Maybe you will need her. *(Applause)*

Mr Paul Mwasa Musamali (Uganda): Mr Speaker Sir.

The Speaker: Yes.

Mr Paul Mwasa Musamali (Uganda): Thank you for allowing me to catch your eye. I am very excited about the appointment and I am looking forward to working with this Minister of Finance to make money. However, I do not know which person you are talking about. You have not told us the name of this person so that we look for her. Thank you.

The Speaker: She is Hon. Dorothee from DRC. *(Applause)* She is in now in South Kivu, a province connected to Tanzania, Burundi and Rwanda.

The other information is that on this agenda, we have the Chairperson, Council of Ministers who will lay a paper on the Budget figures. That is the Communication from the Chair that I had this afternoon.

PAPERS LAID

The Speaker: Honourable Chairperson, Council of Ministers, lay your paper.

Ms Rose Akol Okullu (Uganda): Procedure, Rt. Honourable Speaker.

The Speaker: Yes, procedure.

Ms Akol: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Today is quite unusual that we are sitting on a Saturday. However, we need guidance because it may not be one of those days gazetted for official business of the Assembly. You may have to make some declaration so that our business is official. With guidance from the Clerk, we want our proceedings here to be recognised as such, but with your declaration, Mr Speaker. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, honourable member. As you know, I said that this is a Special Sitting. In our Rules of Procedure of the Assembly and Article 10(2), we are allowed to hold this meeting. That is why I started by saying that this is a Special Sitting. So, I invite the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers to lay the Paper.

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the following Paper on the Table:-

The EAC Appropriations Bill, 2024 by adding to it a sum of \$1,441,440 originally requested as Supplementary Budget for Financial Year 2023/2024.

As agreed upon with the Committee on General Purpose, the related activities will be undertaken in the Financial Year, 2024/2025. This leads to an amendment to the schedule and Vote 001- East

African Community Secretariat, of which the new figure becomes \$53,118,560. The total of the Appropriation Bill is, therefore, \$114,424,882. *(Applause)*

(Mr Deng Alor Kuol laid the document on the Table)

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Ms Fatuma Nyirakobwa Ndangiza (Rwanda): Mr Speaker, for procedure purposes, the honourable minister should lay the paper.

The Speaker: Yes, that is what he is going to do.

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay. *(Applause)*

PAPERS LAID

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON GENERAL PURPOSE ON THE EAC BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025

The Speaker: I now call upon the Chairperson of the General Purpose Committee to lay the Paper on the Table.

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Mr Speaker, Sir, I would like to lay on the Table the report of the Committee on General Purpose on the East African Community Budget estimates for revenue and expenditure for Financial Year 2024/2025. I beg to lay.

(Mr Mukulia laid the Report on the Table)

REPORT ON THE FIFTH EASTERN AFRICA PARLIAMENTARY ALLIANCE FOR FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION AND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING HELD IN NAIROBI, KENYA FROM 15TH-17TH OCTOBER 2023

The Speaker: Hon. Dr. Woda Jeremiah, please lay.

Dr Jeremiah Woda Odok (South Sudan): Mr Speaker, I beg to lay the following report on the Table:

Report of the Fifth Eastern African Parliamentary Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition (EAPA-FSN) General Assembly meeting in Nairobi, Kenya from 15th to 17th October 2023. I beg to lay. *(Applause)*

Dr Abdulla Hasnuu Makame (Tanzania): On a point of procedure, Mr Speaker. Usually, you are supposed to announce when strangers are in the House or gallery. You may want to announce that, Mr Speaker, for admission of strangers.

The Speaker: It will be done when I am advised. Clerks, you can work on it.

MOTION FOR THE ASSEMBLY TO RESOLVE INTO A COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY AND
A COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS TO CONSIDER THE EAC BUDGET FOR THE
FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025

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The Speaker: Honourable members, you remember that the Chairperson, Council of Ministers had moved and justified the motion. He had presented the Budget Speech but I interrupted the business on Tuesday, 25th June, 2024. It is now time for the Chairperson of the Committee on General Purpose to report. Chairperson, present your report.

Honourable members, what is happening? Do you have issues? There is some noise and movement; people are moving around. You can proceed.

Mr James Kinyasi Millya (Tanzania): On a point of procedure, Mr Speaker. We do not have the report on our tables. I heard someone saying that we have it in our phones but that is not the procedure. Could we have it so that we can follow up on when he is reporting? Thank you.

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Honourable members and Mr Speaker, if you may allow, as you have seen I have just arrived. We have just completed the report which will be sent to our emails. If you may allow, let me read but it is coming in the next one or two minutes, please. *(Applause)* Thank you so much.

The Speaker: You may proceed.

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Honourable Members, let us turn to page four right away. Page 1 is of course the cover page; pages 2 and 3 are for acronyms. We may turn to page 4.

The Speaker: You can lay it and proceed.

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): It is there on your phones; I sent it this morning.

The Speaker: Honourable Chairperson, since you have been allowed to proceed, just read your report. When the report comes, they will get it. Proceed. *(Applause)*

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the guidance. You can listen to me if you do not have the report. – *(Interruption)*.

Ms Francine Rutazana (Rwanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I want to state that this session is important since we are trying to vote for the Budget of the Community. For us who are not members of the General Purpose Committee, we do not have any idea about what we are talking about because we do not have the figures and programmes they are allocating those monies. So, what we are requesting is to, at least, have the report so that we move together with them.

Mr Speaker, I am asking because for us who are not members of the General Purpose Committee, we need to follow what the Chairperson is reading so that we are able to understand –(Interruption)

Mr Khalfan Ngole Mashaka (Tanzania): Mr Speaker, you have already ruled on this matter and we cannot argue with you. (Applause)

The Speaker: Honourable members, I know that we discussed this matter yesterday and you insisted that by midnight, you would have received this report on your emails so that you would have it. From that time, you would have started reading the report. They are printing the report now, but I know that you have read what he is reading and know some bits about it. These people went home yesterday at about 2.00 a.m. in the morning. Please, Chairperson of GP, I have ruled; you can proceed. (Applause)

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Thank you once again, Mr Speaker, for your wise counsel.

In accordance with the provisions of Articles 49(2) and 132 of the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community and Rules 74 and 75 of the Assembly Rules of Procedure, the Chairperson Council of Ministers laid on the Table the Annual Budget Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure of the East African Community for the Financial Year 2024/2025 on 30th April 2024. Accordingly, the Rt Hon. Speaker referred the Annual Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure of the East African Community for the Financial Year 2024/2025 to the Committee on General Purpose for consideration.

Pursuant to provisions of Article 49(2) and 132 of the Treaty and as further amplified by Rules 81(c), (e) and (g), Annex 5(f) of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, the Committee on General Purpose proceeded to consider the Annual Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the Financial Year 2024/2025. The committee hereby presents its report.

Methodology

During the consideration of the Budget estimates, the committee:

- a) Held meetings in Arusha and interfaced with the Chairperson, Council of Ministers, the Secretary-General, heads of Organs and Institutions, and other relevant officers of the Community;
- b) Scrutinised and considered the following documents:
 - The Policy Statement by the Secretary-General on the EAC Budget for the Financial Year 2024/2025;
 - The EAC Budget summaries for 2024/2025;
 - The EAC summary of activities which is named as MTEF for the Financial Year 2024/2025;

- The EAC Annex to the Budget for Financial Year 2024/2025, which is the detailed MTEF;
- The EAC Budget Performance for July 2023 to June 2024;
- The EAC Project Financial Statement for the Year 2024/2025;
- The EAC Annual Operational Plan for the Financial Year 2024/2025;
- The Pre-Budget Conference report for the Financial Year 2024/2025;
- The Progress Report for July 2023 to June 2024;
- Extract of the 53rd Extraordinary Meeting of Council of Ministers report;
- The Staff Recruitment Plan for 2024/2025;
- The Procurement Plan for 2024/2025;
- The EAC Budget Speech for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

The committee also made reference to the Treaty, the East African Community Budget Act, the East African Legislative Assembly Rules of Procedure and other relevant legal instruments of the Community.

Achievements During the Financial Year 2023/2024

According to the Budget Speech by the Chairperson Council and the policy statement by the Secretary-General during the Financial Year 2023/2024, the Community achieved the following:

- a. Strengthening of regional governance, political commitment, accountability and inclusivity to improve peace and security in the build-up to the EAC Political Confederation.
- i. The Federal Republic of Somalia deposited the instrument of accession to the East African Community;
- b. Increased visibility, knowledge, awareness and participation of the private sector, citizens and other stakeholders in the EAC integration process;
- c. Effective implementation of the EAC Customs Union and Common Market Protocols to increase EAC intra-trade, and enhance freedoms and rights under the Common Market Protocol.
- i. The Community harmonised 172 standards, in accordance with the Standardisation, Quality Assurance, Metrology and Testing (SQMT) Act, 2006 and reviewed the Regional Standardisation Plan with specific consideration to national and regional priorities and the African Continental Free Trade Area.
- d. Improvement of productivity, value addition, promotion of regional supply chains, local content and domestication of regional commitments to improve the socioeconomic welfare of East Africans;
- e. Leveraging new technologies to support the migration of production and service delivery to digital platforms and enhance e-business opportunities.
- i. The Community established an EAC E-commerce Engagement Platform called EEP to strengthen collaboration and coordination in the e-commerce ecosystem, and
- ii. The EAC Secretariat mobilised \$15 million from the World Bank for the implementation of the Eastern African Regional Digital Integration Project.
- f. Strengthening of the Global Health Agenda for the EAC Region.
- i. Developed and launched the digital version of the Zanzibar scorecard for tracking the progress of Reproductive, Maternal, New-born, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH)
- ii. Trained 150 young researchers under the Young East African Research Scientists in research ecosystem skills.

- g. Implementation of the roadmap for the attainment of the EAC Monetary Union
- i. Under the ongoing implementation of the revised roadmap for the East African Monetary Union, the EAC Monetary Policy Communication Strategy and the framework for monitoring the implementation of the EAMU Roadmap were developed and
- ii. Eight regional guidelines for the compilation of specific statistics domains were approved and the development of a compatible software for the compilation of the Consumer Price Index was completed.
- h. Improvement of quality multi-sectoral strategic infrastructure and related services to support and accelerate sustainable regional integration and competitiveness.
- i. Detailed designs of the multinational Tanzania/Burundi: Luhafe-Uvinva (132 kilometres); Uvinza-Kanyani (60 kilometres); Kumsenga-Kifura (25 kilometres); Mabamba-Kumsenga (19.5 kilometres); Gitega-Makebuko (25 kilometres); Cankuzo-Gahumo (50 kilometres) roads that link Tanzania and Burundi were completed;
- ii. Funding amounting to \$1.7 million was also secured for detailed designs on the multinational Burundi/Rwanda, which is Kanyaru/Akanyaru Belt Roads, Ngozi (Mwumbe)-Nyamurenza-Ntega-Kirundo (66 kilometres); Akanyaru Bas-Nyaruteja-Kibirizi-Gisagara-Nyamiyaga (110 kilometres) I think I am now 100 per cent correct.
- i. Strengthening the capacity of the EAC Organs and Institutions to effectively execute their mandate.
- i. The Community mobilised funding amounting to \$44 million to support the implementation of various EAC projects and programmes.
- ii. The East African Legislative Assembly passed the East African Community Supplementary Appropriation Bill, 2023; the East African Community Supplementary (No. 2) Bill, 2023 and the East African Community Appropriation Bill 2023; and
- iii. The construction of the Regional Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre commenced in December 2023.

Key Challenges

Despite the progress that has been made in the implementation of the Community's projects and programmes, a number of challenges still persist.

- i. Delays in disbursement of Partner States' contributions to the EAC budget, which resulted in delays in implementation of regional commitments;
- ii. Delays in backfilling of vacant positions for the EAC Organs and Institutions;
- iii. Lags in implementation of the Common Market Protocol by Partner States, mainly due to lengthy procedures of amending national laws and regulations to conform to the Protocol and inadequacy of resources to support the implementation of the Common Market Protocol; and
- iv. Lack of an effective mechanism for the enforcement of the Community's decisions and directives.

Strategies for mitigating the above challenges include the following:

- i. Adherence to the schedule of disbursement of contributions to the EAC Budget by Partner States, as stipulated in the EAC Financial Rules and Regulations, 2012;
- ii. Expedited implementation of the approved financial mechanism for the Community;

- iii. Expedite the finalisation and implementation of institutional review recommendations, especially filling of the vacancy positions; and
- iv. Comprehensive review of the EAC Treaty to enhance its robustness, align it to the current realities in the eight Partner States and include an enforcement mechanism.

Status of Contribution by Partner States

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I think we read this last time; we could skip it. On page 8, it is the same; we could skip it. This is the table of contributions for other self-accounting Organs and Institutions.

There is an urgent need for the disbursement of the contribution - Okay, let me go to the budget performance review for the Financial Year 2023/2024. There are also tables that indicate the budget performance of each Organ and Institution. Let me read the overall performance.

Vote 001: EAC Secretariat – 39 per cent

Vote 002: East African Court of Justice – 62 per cent.

Vote 003: The East African Legislative Assembly – 77 per cent

Vote 004: The Lake Victoria Basin Commission – 45 per cent

Vote 005: The Inter-University Council of East Africa – 53 per cent

Vote 006: The Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation – 59 per cent

Vote 007: East African Science and Technology Commission has an overall performance of 68 per cent.

Vote 008: Kiswahili Commission has an overall performance of 49 per cent.

Vote 009: East Africa Health Research Commission has an overall performance of 51 per cent.

Vote 010: East African Competition Authority has an overall performance of 50 per cent.

You will also note that the contribution from the development partners is lower than the contribution from the partner states in terms of budget performance. As we get money from development partners, disbursement of that money is also an issue that we should all note- *(Interjection)* - You may read from the report. *(Laughter)*

Budget performance for self-accounting institutions

The CASSOA has an overall performance of 67 per cent. On page 10, are summaries of comparisons between the Financial Year 2023/2024 which is ending tomorrow and the one that is starting after tomorrow. So, we can skip page 11. There is another small table up there.

The EAC Secretariat, I will leave the comparative ceiling for Partner States' contribution allocated for the Financial Year 2023/2024 and read the approved ceiling for the Partner States' contribution allocation for the Financial Year 2024/2025 and the percentage increase just to be quite faster.

The Secretariat will receive \$20,946,601, an increase of 9 per cent from the last financial year; The East African Court of Justice will now receive \$4,847,053, an increment of 9 per cent from this year, which is ending tomorrow; The East African Legislative Assembly will receive \$19,176,365,

an increment of 9 per cent; Lake Victoria Basin Commission will receive \$3,377,246, an increment of 5 per cent; The East Africa Science and Technology Commission will receive 2,177, 192, an increment of 8 percent; The East African Kiswahili Commission will receive \$1,641,445, an increment of 9 per cent; The East African Health Research Commission will receive \$2,370,818, an increment of 9 per cent; The biggest beneficiary is the East African Community Competition Authority which will receive \$ 1,525, 212, an increase of 29 per cent; The total for the Partner States' contribution towards the main EAC budget is \$56,061,932, an overall increment of 8.93 per cent; The Inter-University Council of East Africa will receive \$4,900,401, an increment of 9 per cent; Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation will receive \$1,862,192. They only increase by \$4, which is a 0 per cent increment.

The total for the Partner States' contribution towards the Inter-University Council of East Africa and the Lake Victoria Basin Commission will be \$6,762,593 with an increment of \$10,926.

Priority areas and programmemes for the Budget 2024/2025

The budget for the Financial Year 2024/2025 has been prepared in line with the global sector specific areas and targets agreed upon by the Pre-Budget Conference held from 23rd to 24th October, 2023 and adopted by the 53rd Extraordinary Meeting of the Council of Ministers as well as directives and decisions of the Council and Summit.

In the Financial Year 2024/2025, the Community will focus on the following key areas:

- i. Strengthening of regional peace, security, political and governance mechanisms to maintain stability in the Community;
- ii. Enhancement of intra-regional trade and investment through an enabling business environment;
- iii. Establishment of the requisite institutions and acceleration of harmonisation of fiscal and monetary policies towards attaining the prerequisite for the East African Monetary Union;
- iv. Development of multi-sectoral infrastructure to improve connectivity in the region's transport and ICT to facilitate timely services;
- v. Enhancement of the social and productive sector to increase productivity and raise the standards of living for East Africans; and
- vi. Enhancement of capabilities of the EAC Organs and Institutions to fulfil their mandates and raise awareness of the Community integration process.

Honourable members, the budget allocation for the Global EAC priorities for the Financial Year 2024/2025 is as follows:

- i. Strengthening regional peace, and securing political and governance mechanisms to maintain stability in the Community is allocated an amount of \$5,100,533;

- ii. Enhancing intra-regional trade and investment through an enabling business environment is allocated an amount of \$4,729,841;
- iii. Establishing requisite institutions and accelerating harmonisation of fiscal and monetary policies towards attaining prerequisites for the East African Monetary Union is allocated an amount of \$10,428,665;
- iv. Developing a multi-sectoral infrastructure to improve connectivity in the region's transport and ICT to facilitate timely delivery of services has been allocated \$6,167,238;
- v. Enhancing the social and productive sectors to increase productivity and raise the standards of living for East Africans has been allocated \$20,265,752, which is a plus;
- vi. Enhancing the capabilities of all EAC Organs and Institutions to fulfil their mandates and raise awareness on the EAC integration process has the biggest money of \$66,292,414.

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The total budget for the Financial Year 2024/2025 is \$112,984,442.

The above table summarises the budget estimates allocated to the global priority areas aimed at advancing the East African Community's goals and objectives. In total, the budget estimates allocated to the six global priority areas amount to \$112, 984,442. This allocation reflects the importance placed on various aspects such as peace and security, economic and social integration, infrastructure development and institutional capacity building within the East African Community. Expected Outcomes in the Financial Year 2024/2025

- i. Strengthened peace and security leading to improved inter-state relations and stability in the region;
- ii. Increased intra-trade and enhanced access to the international export markets;
- iii. Accelerated implementation of the roadmap for the attainment of the East African Community Monetary Union;
- iv. Improved quality infrastructure and increased level of e-business opportunities, leading to enhanced service delivery and competitiveness;
- v. Increased efficiency in the production and distribution of products and services, and improved social welfare for the EAC citizens; and
- vi. Effective implementation of the EAC projects and programmes and increased awareness of the EAC integration, leading to a greater sense of ownership and inclusiveness of the East African citizenry.

Proposed budget allocation and planned activities/outputs for the FY 2024/2025

EAC – Secretariat

Honourable members, the EAC Secretariat requests the approval of \$51,677,120 for the FY 2024/2025

The East African Legislative Assembly	– \$20,469,040
The East African Court of Justice	– \$4,858,553;
The Lake Victoria Basin Commission	– \$7,787,519;
The Inter-University Council of East Africa	– \$17,287,618;
The Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation	– \$3,109,586;
The East African Science and Technology Commission	– \$2,177,192;
The East African Kiswahili Commission	– \$1,641,445;
The Health Research Commission	– \$2,451,157; and

The East African Competition Authority – \$1,525,212.
Therefore, let me move to the observations on page 20.

According to the Budget Estimates for the FY 2024/2025, out of the initial total budget of \$112,984,442, a sum of \$62,824,573 will be contributed by Partner States which represents 55.6 per cent of the total budget. Other sources of the funds will be Development Partners amounting to \$43,936,292, General Reserve Fund amounting to \$1,262,631, arrears from the Inter-University Council of East Africa Fund at \$2,932,841, Member universities' contribution will be \$506,680. Road agencies from the Partner States will be \$107,660 and miscellaneous income amounting to \$1,413,765.

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Whereas the budget of the Community may seem to have increased from \$103,842,880 in the FY 2023/2024 to \$112,984,442 in the FY 2024/2025, it should be noted that this increase is largely attributed to the contribution of \$7,853,071 from the Federal Republic of Somalia, a new Partner State of the EAC. The joining of the Federal Republic of Somalia places additional responsibilities and obligations to the EAC Organs and Institutions.

The Committee reviewed the programmes and projects of the Organs and Institutions and noted the following:

- i. A substantial number of programmes/activities are not linked to the four pillars of the EAC integration.
- ii. There is also duplication of some programmes and activities.
- iii. Some programmes/activities are not aligned with the core mandates of the Organs and Institutions.
- iv. The cost of most of the planned activities is on Daily Subsistence Allowances (DSAs), tickets, hire of conference facilities and ushers.
- v. Some Organs and Institutions deliberately split their programmes into micro-activities for the officers to earn DSAs, yet these activities will not have any impact on our integration process. These institutions or departments include EASTECO, Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation and the Virtual Office of the Political Federation. Some officers are going to travel for 500 days in a year, which is way above the 365 days in a year.

Arising from the above and in line with Article 132(5) of the Treaty and Sections 4(3) and 5 of the EAC Budget Act, 2009, the Committee in consultation with the Heads of Organs and Institutions made some reallocation and reprioritization of some programmes and projects within some Organs and Institutions as indicated in Annex 1 of this report.

The committee, therefore, recommends to the Assembly to approve the reallocations and reprioritized programmes and projects as provided in Annex 1 and accordingly appropriate funds for the implementation.

During the consideration of the EAC Supplementary Budget for 2003/2004, the Assembly deferred the appropriation of \$1,441,400 for a number of programmes and projects under the EAC Secretariat which could not be implemented in the course of the financial year due to time constraints as in Annex 2. The Assembly agreed with the Council that the funds for these programmes and projects be included in the budget for the FY 2024/2025.

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The Committee recommends that the Assembly appropriates an additional sum of \$1,441,400 to Vote 001, the EAC Secretariat to cater for the implementation of programmes and projects, details of which are also attached as a corrigendum and in Annex 2.

Page 10 of the Secretary General's Policy Statement highlights the allocations of the EAC budget in the FY 2024/2025 along the six global priority areas whereby \$66,292,413 is allocated for enhancing capacities of all EAC Organs and Institutions to fulfil their mandate and raise awareness on the EAC integration process. However, the committee noted that the council did not approve EALA's request for \$810,000 for public outreach and sensitization, which is a core mandate of the Assembly.

The committee recommends that the Assembly urges the Council to approve EALA's request of \$810,000 for public outreach and sensitization to enhance the visibility of the community. This funding should be accommodated in the supplementary budget for the FY 2024/2025.

1. Whereas the Assembly has severely urged the Council to approve the appointment and remuneration of Aides to the Members with disabilities- (*Applause*)- this request has been ignored. The late Hon. Mathias Kasamba of Uganda and Hon. Alex Bahati of Rwanda were elected to the 4th Assembly from 2017 to 2022.

In the same vein, Hon. Alex Bahati of Rwanda and Hon. David Ole Sankok of Kenya were elected to the 5th Assembly to run from 2022 to 2027 on the persons with disabilities' ticket. The Treaty, the UN Conventions, the African Charter and other labour laws recognise the rights of persons with disabilities, besides warranting affirmative actions for persons with disabilities.

In 2028 the Council appointed an aide to Hon. Ndahiro, a member of EALA then. However, it has not accorded the same treatment to the aforementioned Members of the Fourth and Fifth Assembly.

The committee recommends that the Assembly urge the Council to:

- i. Approve the retrospective appointment of the Aides to the late Hon. Matthias Kasamba, Hon. Alex Bahati and Hon. David ole Sankok.

- ii. Approve the outstanding arrears of emoluments for these Aides and an extra-budgetary requirement for emoluments for the Aides of the two Members in a supplementary budget for the FY 2024/2025.

2. It was noted that within some Organs and Institutions, some programmes/activities were either erroneously or deliberately placed in cost centres that do not relate to their mandates. In consultation with the relevant officers, these programmes/activities were realigned to the mandates of the appropriate departments.

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3. The committee registers its displeasure over the deliberate refusal by some of the relevant officers of the EAC Secretariat to appear before the committee to defend their budgets despite the invitations and numerous reminders extended to them. The officers who did not show up were from the Directorate of Productive Sector, the Directorate of Infrastructure, Internal Audit and the Head of Political Federation. This action of these officers is tantamount to the contempt of the Assembly.

The committee urges the Assembly to resolve that in the event that a responsible officer of the Community refuses to appear before the committee during the consideration of the budget, the Assembly should stay the approval of the budgets for that respective department.

- 4. It was also noted that some Organs and Institutions had budgeted for activities for the integration of the Federal Republic of Somalia into the Community. Whereas the committee appreciates the need to expeditiously integrate the Federal Republic of Somalia into the EAC, the Organs and Institutions are doing it in a disjointed manner without a comprehensive roadmap to guide the process.

It was noted that the Republic of South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo which joined the Community before the Federal Republic of Somalia are not yet fully integrated into the Community.

- i. The committee recommends to the Assembly to urge the Council of Ministers to develop a comprehensive roadmap for the full integration of the Republic of South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Federal Republic of Somalia.
 - ii. However, the committee recommends that the Assembly resolves that the implementation of these roadmaps shall be subject to these Partner States honouring their financial contribution to the Community.
5. It was noted that every financial year, the Council of Ministers presents a supplementary budget for the consideration and approval of the Assembly. However, there is no budget line for consideration of the same by the Assembly. The Assembly has always had to plead with the Council and the EAC Secretariat to avail funds for this activity. This explains why at times it takes longer for the Assembly to convene meetings to consider supplementary budgets.

The Committee recommends that the Assembly urges the Council of Ministers to always provide funds to the Assembly in time for the consideration of supplementary budgets.

6. During the Third Plenary Session of the Assembly held in March 2024, in the famous Nairobi place, the Council presented a supplementary budget to consider Council Bills that were returned and the following were the Bills for reconsideration: The East African Community Statistics Bureau Bill; The East African Community Financial Service Bill; and The East African Community Surveillance, Compliance and Enforcement Bill. However, no funds have been provided for consideration of these Bills.

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The committee recommends to the Assembly to urge the Council of Ministers to provide \$376,000 in a supplementary budget in the Financial Year 2024/2025 to enable the Assembly to process the aforementioned Bills.

Something I need to add on this matter is that some of these Bills were passed by the Assembly in 2018-(*Applause*). However, the situation has changed.; DRC and Somalia have come on board. We do not know whether these Bills still stand as they were. Probably the Counsel to the Community (CTC) will have to guide us because the Treaty says that when Bills that are not signed within three months- I think they elapse. I am doing my work. (*Laughter*) Okay.

7. It was noted that the Assembly convened the ongoing Fourth Plenary from 23rd June, 2024 for nine days, yet it made a request of \$753,600 for this sitting to the Council but it was not approved. Instead, EALA and the Secretariat were requested to effect internal reallocation within their respective budgets to cater for only nine days. However, there were no budget lines from which these funds could be reallocated.

The committee recommended to the Assembly to urge the Council of Ministers to approve \$574,000 in a Supplementary Budget in the FY 2024/2025 to enable the Assembly to defray the expenses for the Fourth Session held in June, 2024.

8. It was also noted that in February 2021, the Summit of the EAC Heads of State approved Kiswahili and French as additional official languages of the Community. In November, 2023, the Summit also approved a model for the sustainable financing mechanism of the Community. On both occasions, the Summit directed the Council to expedite the operationalization of these decisions. The committee noted that there has been minimal progress in the amendment of the Treaty.

The committee recommends that the Assembly urges the Council of Ministers to prioritise and expedite the process of amending the Treaty to give effect to the above Summit decisions and directives in the FY 2024/2025.

9. It was also noted that the Office of the Council to the Community has not been able to process a number of Bills due to underfunding. The office requires a sum of \$112,500 to process six Bills in

the FY 2024/2025. The inability of the office of the CTC to process the Bills due to underfunding negatively impacts the legislative management of the Assembly.

Council members, you may be aware that in the FY 2023/2024, the Assembly only passed the Appropriation Bills; that is really not a good thing. So, we expect that you give us Bills so that we can be able to provide legal instruments for the Community. Maybe in your discussion, in the event that you see that we only have two Bills, it is from your side. *(Applause)*

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10. Articles 49(2)(a) and 65 of the Treaty obligate the Assembly to establish functional relations with the national parliaments of the EAC Partner States. To achieve this, the Assembly devised an annual Nanyuki Series and inter-parliamentary liaison committees as well as the East African Parliamentary Institute, the annual EAC Parliamentary Games and the biannual EAC Speakers Forum. This serves as an opportunity for EALA to interact with national parliaments to deepen the EAC integration agenda and to further entrench the EAC Partner State levels. A budget of United States \$291,000 is therefore required for the Assembly to undertake this activity in four days.

The committee recommends that the Assembly urges the Council of Ministers to provide \$291,000 in a supplementary budget for the FY 2024/2025 to enable the Assembly to convene the annual EAC/EALA Inter-Parliamentary Relations Seminar, named the Nanyuki Series.

11. Section 4(3) of the Budget Act requires that the Committee of the Assembly that is charged with the consideration and review of the EAC Budget present its report to the Assembly no later than the 30th day of May in each financial year. However, due to the liquidity challenges, this statutory obligation has not always been complied with by the Assembly.

The committee recommends to the Assembly to direct the Secretary-General to always ring-fence the funds for the consideration of the budget to enable the Committee on General Purpose to comply with its statutory obligation.

12. Clause 6.4 of the Operational Manual for the Implementation of the Quota Systems in the Recruitment of Staff in EAC enjoins the Secretary-General to make proposals to review and amend the guidelines therein at least once every three years. However, this requirement has never been fulfilled since the manual came into effect in 2012.

The committee recommends to the Assembly to direct the Secretary-General to comply with the provision of Clause 6.4 of the Operational Manual for the Implementation of the Quota System in each financial year.

By the way, to amplify that further, sometimes during the recruitment process, the time of adverts of the jobs, certain Partner State – A, may have a point but when it reaches the time of recruitment, they might have already consumed their points simply due to the fact that the recruitment process takes almost two years. This disadvantages some Partner States- *(Applause)*- we believe the review

should be able to consider that and make sure that every three months probably the quota system is updated.

13. The committee also recommends that the Assembly directs the Secretary General to:

- i. make appropriate adjustments in the EAC Budget Management System to accommodate the rationalisation/reallocation as approved by the august House in the budget.
- ii. submit and lay before the Assembly the final signed copy of the approved budget at the first sitting of the Assembly in the FY 2024/2025.

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Madam Secretary General, this has not been complied with; new beginning, new things.

14. The Assembly adopts the committee reports and passes the EAC Appropriation Bill, 2024 to provide for a sum of \$114,425,842 to the various Organs and Institutions of the Community for the implementation of the various programmes and projects in the financial year 2024/2025 as indicated above. There is a correction to be made there.

1. Vote 001 – The East African Secretariat an amount of \$53,118,520
2. Vote 002 – The East African Court of Justice \$4,858,533

This is page 25.

Mr James Kakooza (Uganda): On a point of information. Since we are going to appropriate the same, in the interest of time, this table is in the schedule and that schedule will be amended. I thought it would be read at that time so that we capture it well. The figures he is reading first have been amended in the corrigenda. Therefore, we should summarise.

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Honourable member, I am reading the committee report. I am not on the Appropriation Bill, that is a different thing. The committee report is different from the Appropriation Bill. Let me begin.

1. Vote 001 – The East African Secretariat \$53,118,520
2. Vote 002 – The East African Court of Justice \$4,858,533 – there is a corrigendum, maybe the honourable member is looking for it. There is a corrigenda for that.
3. Vote 003 - The East African Legislative Assembly \$20,469,040 – you know I did not sleep. I was also working on this report so -
4. V0te 004 - Lake Victoria Basin Commission \$7,787,519
5. Vote 005 – Inter-University Council of East Africa \$17,287,618
6. Vote 006 – Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation \$3,109,856
7. Vote 007 – The East African Science and Technology Commission \$2,177,192
8. Vote 008 – The East African Kiswahili Commission \$1,641,445
9. Vote 009 – East African Health Research Commission \$2,451,157
10. Vote 010 – East African Competition Authority \$1,525,212

The total is \$114,425,842.

Mr Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Committee on General Purpose for their tireless effort in making sure that this report is done. I also want to take this opportunity to thank your office for according us the opportunity. I want to take this opportunity to thank the clerks of the committee: Mr Tugume, Ms Olivia Nantaba and our Secretary, Ms Elizabeth Gitonga and some other members of the staff from the EALA that were called upon to help.

We had a very good interaction with the Council and the Secretary General and even the CTC in terms of how we should move on. Before I submit the report, Rt Hon. Speaker, I request that members of the General Purpose Committee do not debate this report. We have to give the opportunity to others.

May I also request honourable members that in the interest of time, since the report is short, that we restrict our time of debate.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move.

Mr Speaker, I beg to report not move.

The Speaker: Thank you, honourable Chairperson of the General Purpose Committee. I now propose that this House constitutes itself into:

- a) A Committee of Supply to consider and approve the estimates of expenditure for the Financial Year 2024/2025 and;
- b) A Committee of Ways and Means to consider and approve the financial statement for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

Debate is open but honourable members, let us be brief in our contributions –

(Question proposed)

Mr David ole Sankok (Kenya): Procedure, Mr Speaker, before you open the debate.

Mr Speaker, I rise on a motion, Rules of Procedure 36 which talks about limitation of debate. There may be, on any motion made by the member, order to impose limit to the motion in terms of contribution.

Mr Speaker, I beg to move:-

THAT, we limit the number of members to contribute to this Motion to 10 with each of them being granted three minutes so that we can finish. I have moved the motion.

The Speaker: Honourable members, take your seat. We will come back to you later.

Mr Kim Gai Ruot (South Sudan): On a point of procedure, Mr Speaker Sir.

The Speaker: Take your seat. I will give you the floor. What is going wrong? I know we have been here from this morning but it does not mean that we should not behave. Everyone will be given the floor if needed. As I said, debate is open and I invite the Members to be brief and as we have the motion, I have to proceed to the motion. Does he have seconders? Yes, you have hon. Kakooza, hon. Musamali, and others. Now I have to put the question.

Mr Kim Gai Rut (South Sudan): On a point of procedure, Rt Hon. Speaker. Before you put the question, the motion has been raised and we need to understand it especially regarding the limitation of debate. Is it for 10 minutes, 30 minutes, with five people? The motion needs to be justified. How many minutes? When you say limitation of debate, the time must be indicated. How much time are we going to limit the debate? Is the limitation for one hour or to five to 10 Members to speak? Let the motion be very clear before you put a question. Thank you very much.

Ms Jacqueline Amongin (Uganda): Rt Hon. Speaker, I know that we are time barred but this is a Parliament. As far as I am concerned, whereas I support Hon Sankok's motion, rose on a procedural matter and then raised the motion. That is why most Members are not able to understand his motion. I kindly request, for purposes of proceedings that the honourable member states his motion properly. We second and then debate so that even when we are limiting the debate, it should be clear to what time frame, and how many people so that we proceed properly. Rt Hon. Speaker, I beg to move.

The Speaker: We are speaking the same language. We just need the motion to be moved properly. Please Hon. Sankok, for all of us –

Mr David ole Sankok (Kenya): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker and I think they were making noise because I rose on Rule 36; limitation of debate and I said, I beg the guidance of the Speaker so that we can limit the debate to 10 Members, three minutes each.

The Speaker: Are you supporting 10 members, three minutes each? (*Applause*) I have to put the question on the motion.

Honourable members, I put the question to the motion moved by Hon. Sankok.

(Question put and agreed to.)

The Speaker: I will take 10 members, three minutes each. We have 10 members but the members of GP are not allowed so all the members who are – They are 11. Who is a member of GP? Hon. Kim Gai, I am sorry, I will give the floor to only Members who are not from the GP Committee

and there are 10. Hon. Francine, you delayed – Okay, we take – Give me the list. We will start with hon. George Odongo, Gideon, Clement, Amongin, Blacks, Woda, Mathias, Kakooza, Francoise and Francine. Three minutes.

Mr George Stephen Odongo (Uganda): Thank you very much, Rt Hon. Speaker. I know that three minutes will not give justice to this debate, given that this is the first time that we are having a Secretary General here coming to preside over this debate on the Budget but let us respect the three minutes. I am going to be pretty fast.

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Rt Hon. Speaker, the Budget Speech of the Chair Council was very powerful and it outlined priorities. Priority number one of the Budget Speech was that in the year 2024/2025, this budget is going to focus more attention on peace and security.

Rt Hon. Speaker, this House considers three statutory reports that are presented to this House by the Council. There is the report on the audited accounts, there is the report on budget and there is a report on peace, security and foreign policy coordination.

Mr Speaker, at the end of this year, we have not had the opportunity as a House and as provided for, to be presented with a report of Council on foreign policy coordination, peace and security and yet in the Budget for the next financial year, it is provided for as a priority area.

All of us here are aware that this Community has put substantial effort into the peace and security situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo. These are efforts that require substantive debate in this House. I have frustrations with this House. When it comes to heavy weight lifting, the Council backtracks. When is the Council going to gain the necessary courage to table into this House matters that affect East Africans?

We had a deployment of the standby forces; we had the withdrawal of our troops and this House has not been given a status report on the peace and security situation in the eastern DRC and yet we invested substantial amounts of resources and people continue to die. It is affecting trade.

Rt Hon. Speaker, I would wish that the Council begins to invest substantial amounts of time in matters that are going to be the key drivers and enablers of our integration and security is that indispensable component of our integration.

Mr Speaker, the Budget Speech also talks about – I want to first of all congratulate the Council for coming up with a regional strategy for the implementation of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA). There is a common strategy that has been developed by the Council. However, in the report of the Council, in the last financial year, we had sixteen (16) non-tariff barriers. Out of the sixteen, (16), only six have been resolved and the others are still in the process.

This House passed the Non-Tariff Barriers Act but there is non-compliance with this Act in our Partner States and this has sustained non-tariff barriers in our different Partner States. Our business people continue to complain about the difficulties they face in doing business and yet we are trying to project East Africa as a single investment destination and a very good business environment has got to prevail in our communities in order for us to deepen our trade.

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Mr Speaker, as I conclude, there are so many things that I wanted to talk but there is a budget increment of 29 per cent on the East African Community Competitions Authority. One of the cardinal functions of the Competitions Authority is to protect the interests of our ordinary citizens during acquisition. There is a public interest case in Uganda where a huge brewery was bought off by a foreign company- British-owned with a subsidiary in America. They cancelled the contracts of the local truckers in Uganda and contracted DHL as the trucker for their products. This has impacted the ordinary citizens who were relying on the trucking of the breweries across the country.

Mr Speaker, our EAC Competitions Authority needs to interest itself and provide us with a public interest report that will allow this Assembly to oversee and to protect the ordinary citizens whose livelihoods have been affected by the cancellation of these contracts.

I want to congratulate the Secretary General and in doing so, let me just remind her that this institution is only an institution when it is driven by a powerful individual who has some value systems. I was taught that institutions are more powerful than individuals but, in this Community, we have seen an individual cause almost a multiple organ failure of the East African Community.

You come at a time of high expectations and there are people within your system who are key enablers. I want to give you my personal advice, the same way I advised the Secretary General who left; focus on the objective of regional integration and try to make sure that you balance so that you are able to provide leadership.

The key implementer of this Budget is Council and you are the chief accounting officer of this Community. We want value for money. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: You took nine –

Mr Gideon Gatpan Thoar (South Sudan): Thank you, Rt Hon. Speaker for this opportunity. I rise to support the report and congratulate the Committee on General Purpose, the members of the Council and the Secretariat.

This is the first time that we have got a report that is straightforward and shows that a lot of diplomacy, consensus and dialogue has been done by both the General Purpose Committee and the Secretariat. I think that is the spirit that we need to commend and it should continue in our Community. We shall be heading in the right direction and we shall be realising the aspirations of our citizens.

Mr Speaker, I want to comment on page five of the report, linking it to the overall Budget aspect. The achievements of the 2023/2024 Budget including increased visibility, knowledge creation, awareness and all that.

When I read the Budget and the report together, I found out that we do not have sufficient funding for the Budget for the creation of awareness. In this matter, I would like to focus on the progress made by the Community, and the sensitisation that is done by the Members of EALA. It is very vital and important that we engage with the public because a lot has been done by the East African Community and our communities are not aware. It is only the institutions in the EAC and also some of our Partner States' institutions and organs that know about the integration agenda.

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Mr Speaker, the other component of the sensitisation and awareness is on climate change and climate change resilience activities. Our Partner States have all subscribed to the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). These are national programmes to alleviate the impact of climate change. We do not know how best the East African communities interact with the Partner States to be able to see to it that the programmes that are geared towards alleviating the impact and effect of climate change are achieved by our Partner States. That would require the Secretariat to have funding to engage with the relevant institutions in our Partner States to see that our Partner States have delivered on that item. These are the matters that would need funding in the next financial year. Now that they have not been captured on this, the Council of Ministers and Secretariat should be able to take care of that so that we plan accordingly as a Community. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, well done. Three minutes.

Mr James Millya Kinyasi (Tanzania): Rt Hon. Speaker, I would like to congratulate our own, Hon. Dorothee Masirika for having been appointed a Minister.

Secondly, the submission by the Council Chair on the report of the Budget Speech was extremely good and I congratulate him. We have learned a lot from him; wisdom and experience and that should be the spirit. I was moved by the speech and I thank you, honourable Chair. Again, I congratulate the committee for having done a good job. The report is very brief, very good and I support it.

I have a few issues to highlight. One, is about committee. I want to congratulate the countries that have contributed well including Tanzania. The President has been committed to this Community, President Samia Suluhu Hassan is so supportive of the Community and that is why Tanzania, Kenya and others are doing very well in terms of contribution. I also want to applaud countries that are struggling to contribute. They are actually doing very well, I heard reports yesterday that DRC and others are now committed to contributing. Without finances, we cannot move. We should show that we really mean business and we should support this Community.

Mr Speaker, my concern is about salaries and the good thing is that the Secretary General and the Chair, Council are here. I have been told on the streets that it has taken more than 10 years and this Community has never had an increase in terms of salaries. Please, Council Chair and the Secretary General, consider friends who are working. At least we, Members of Parliament, are paid slightly better than the people working within the Community. Think of your own friends.

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Mr Speaker, we should consider this issue. We have staff that have not had an increase for 15 years. Think of them, it is not okay. I just urge the Council and the Secretary General to think about this.

Mr Speaker, the other thing is a peace fight. Without peace in this region, we cannot do any business, we cannot trade. Please, I urge this Parliament to see that we have had an issue in Nairobi. Could you please guide this Parliament to form a select committee to deal with these issues that have come up within the Community? We have a report that there is a lot of corruption within the Community. If you only form a select committee, we will deliberate on these issues seriously and we will save this Community from embezzlement and mismanagement of the little funds that we are getting.

Mr Speaker, the three minutes are extremely few, I am struggling but climate change is an issue and a threat to humanity. Let us do something about it. I have not seen it in the report. In the next report, we should consider climate change and global warming. We are suffering from it, if you go to northern Kenya, northern Uganda, and Maasai land in Tanzania, you will see that most places are getting drier. We should focus and give more energy to it. Thank you and I support the report.

Mr Clement Musangabatware (Rwanda): Thank you Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to make my observations on the report of the EAC Budget Estimates for Revenue and Expenditure for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

First and foremost, I support the report and I would like to congratulate my brother, Hon. Mukulia Kennedy Ayason, Chairman of the General Purpose Committee and all honourable members of this committee. You did a great job.

Mr Speaker, I am very happy that there are Budget estimates allocated to the global priority areas aimed at advancing the EAC goals and objectives. Just to mention a few, budget for peace and security, governance, harmonisation of fiscal and monetary policies towards attaining prerequisite for the EAC Monetary Union. The total budget is on page 12 and the following one.

Mr Speaker, during the meeting of the Accounts Committee, we noticed *inter alia* two points. One is the understaffing of institutions of EAC. That is one of the reasons given during the meeting as to why they are not achieving their goals. We also noticed the misuse of funds in the procurement process and the violation of some laws.

Mr Speaker, I take this opportunity to request the Council to speed up the recruitment of staff to enable institutions to achieve their goals. I mentioned some key areas – there are some institutions, which do not have procurement officers, internal auditors, and even accountants. I also request the Council to apply a strong sanction regime to the leaders and the staff who will misuse the funds of this Community after investigations. *(Applause)*

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I support the report. I submit. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. Clement. Dr Woda, please?

Dr Jeremiah Woda Odok (South Sudan): Thank you, Mr Speaker. On the onset, I would like to congratulate the Council, the SG, and the Frontbench for their full participation. I also would like to congratulate the Committee on GP under the able leadership of Hon. Mukulia and the clerks.

Let me start by the theme of the budget itself, which includes climate change mitigation and adaptation. As a climate change activist, I appreciate that this time the Council has considered putting the agenda of climate change at the top. The region has really been affected. We have witnessed a lot of floods in Kenya and other areas. Also, the heat waves, which struck my country, South Sudan. They were very bad. We know that climate change is affecting our region.

I would like to urge the Council and the House that if the Climate Change Bill is not brought, I think we, as Members of this august Assembly, will bring it ourselves as a Private Member's Bill as we stated in 2019 when I moved the motion. I have asked the Council of Ministers and the last Plenary in Nairobi, I asked my good honourable minister Peninah who gave us an assurance that before the end of this year, this Bill would be brought.

Mr Speaker, let me appreciate the fact that there was an increase in the GDP despite the challenges in our economy. There was an increase of 2.8 to 8.1. In this financial year, there is a concentration, which will be on the meteorological services and this is really appreciated. This is because if we have accurate meteorological services and good weather forecast, we will avoid many of these climate change effects.

I also appreciate that the region is concentrating on eliminating hunger in this region. With all the efforts put in by this Community, we still have hungry people. And it is a shame upon us as leaders when we stand here and we have half of the East African people hungry. I think the Council of Ministers should work very hard to enhance the sector of agriculture and food security.

From my position as the Secretary General of the Eastern African Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition, I urge all the national alliances to work very hard to alleviate hunger from our people. I come from South Sudan. I have seen that last year in the 2023/2024 budget, there was a lot of road connection in between the Partner States but I never saw South Sudan being connected. Since there

is this retreat, which will be for the Heads of State for infrastructure development and financing, I really urge that this should be considered.

The sensitisation and the full integration of South Sudan and Congo should be on top of the agenda. This is because as mentioned in the report, we are allocating budgets for Somalia, which joined just recently. What about South Sudan, which is still not fully integrated? What about the Congo, which is not fully integrated?

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As the honourable Secretary General is here, I also want to tackle the issue of recruitment and the issues of finance. Yesterday, we debated on the Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC) whereby the quality of water management has no officer, yet the lake is very polluted. I have the percentage of metals polluting our lake. They are very worrying but I will not go into it. You see, I am not even breathing because I have to speak very fast.

We really need recruitment. We need to finance this organisation and institution. Most of the financing for the Lake Victoria Basin Commission and the Lake Victoria Basin Organisation comes from development partners. That is why they cannot even – it is not sustainable and these are funds, which are oriented. So, they have to do whatever the partner wants.

Lastly, I want to support the report and urge the Members to also support this very good report. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Dr Woda. Who is next? You have the Floor.

Mr Gerald Siranda Blacks (Uganda): Mr Speaker, I would like to appreciate the Hon. Mukulia, the Chairperson of the very powerful Committee on General Purpose and the entire membership of GP. I also appreciate the Council - the Budget Speech by the Council Chair is properly aligned to the report of the GP.

My Chairperson and senior brother, Hon. George, has picked a few of my notes. However, allow me to say this as the Chair of the Committee on Regional Affairs and Conflict Resolution, that, whatever we do, peace is absolutely essential to development. It is a centrepiece for the Community. For us to achieve whatever pillars we want to achieve, there should be an ingredient of peace.

I have been a Chairperson for a year and a half now. I want to report that I engaged the former acting Secretary General, the Hon. Annette Mutaawe, and I appreciate her. She gave me confidence that this report is ready and it would be ready for the Council that has been sitting. I want to believe that after this budget process, starting next week, this report will be laid to this House because it is our mandate as a committee. We have done everything through our clerk to ask for this report. I want to appreciate that the Hon. Mutaawe gave me the confidence that the report would come.

When you look at the priority areas, they talk about security as a key essential area. This region is full of insecurity everywhere that somehow we do not even see eye to eye. We talk about Political Federation, Customs Union and Common Market. These cannot be a reality if we do not have peace in this region. The most important aspect of why we are here is the question of peace. We know why our Community collapsed at first. It was because the areas of peace were lacking an ingredient of how to solve disagreements.

Mr Speaker, we also want to design a mechanism of peace and conflict resolution and issues of mediation. They are going to be a central pillar for us to achieve what we want. As a committee, we have asked for the progress of former President Uhuru Kenyatta initiatives. We do not have the progress report. What is happening? I have looked at this budget but I have not seen the alignment on the status of the East African Standby Force. What is the progress of the East African Standby Force? Where are we? We last knew that some of our forces were being withdrawn, even after spending a lot of resources on it. East Africans spent money. Where is the East African Standby Force? What is the status of this initiative?

I know that this budget in priority two talks about issues of trade. What is the progress of the Trade Remedies Committee - the Tribunal? We have been waiting for the East African Trade Remedies Tribunal. Up to today, as we speak, there is no progress on the Trade Remedies Tribunal. I will talk about Kampala City Traders Association (KACITA), which I know very well. I talk about the common people, the market people, in Busia, Malaba, wherever you go and in Gitega. The Trade Remedies Tribunal will solve many aspects in terms of how much money and the time we waste going to formal courts and all the processes we have to follow. If we have the people involved, the East Africans will take the initiative in the matters of solving their trade conflicts.

Finally, for me, information is power. You now have a full Council. Maybe, I will say except for the Rt Hon. Kadaga, the rest do not understand the Community. You have a frontbench that does not understand the Community. You have Members of Parliament, in my own view, that is my own mind, and when I speak, sometimes I want to speak my mind. We have some Members of Parliament, except those that were here, that do not understand the Community. The Chairperson was talking about awareness. When the Council stubbornly refuses to allocate resources for the Members of Parliament to go across the Community and understand it, it is going to be very difficult for us to appropriate and do oversight on what we do not understand.

Mr Speaker, it would be important that all of us, as Members of Parliament, including the Frontbench, go across this region to understand the issues of the region and where the region is. This is to assist us to speak about a region that we understand. I beg to submit by supporting the report.

The Speaker: Thank you, honourable Chairperson. After you, who is the next? Hon Amongin, then Mathias. *(Sound technical hitch)* [Ms Amongin: "I have a problem with my microphone."] Let us go to Hon. Mathias, then we will come back to you.

Mr Mathias Harabemungu (Rwanda): Thank you, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity extended to me. I also want to thank the Frontbench for their participation in this valuable activity. Allow me to highlight that teamwork spirit will save us from the kind of tornado that hit this Community last financial year, where we experienced a number of ping-pongs between the Assembly and the Council, and between the Assembly and the former Secretary General. This was due to a selfish agenda of misappropriation of the funds already approved by this august House.

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I would recommend that during the mid-term review of the budget implementation, the institutions in charge seriously scrutinise the issue of underspending. There is also the issue of overspending and the issue of recurrent supplementaries that are always above five per cent of the entire budget as per Section 7 (1) of the Budget Act 2009. Accountability should be the backbone of our institutions when it comes to the expenditure of our taxpayers' money. I do support this report and thank the General Purpose Committee members for their tireless efforts. I beg to submit. Thank you.

The Speaker: Thank you, hon. Mathias. Now, we give the Floor to hon. Amongin.

Ms Jaqueline Amongin (Uganda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. Speaking in two minutes about this report is definitely impossible but I will now make priorities on what to say.

One, I would like to mention that, in this Budget there is a huge allocation on the proceedings of this Assembly. We spend a lot of money on paper. Going forward, in the next financial year, I think it is important that we budget, reduce on the cost of paper and go paperless and have an e-parliament where we all have laptops. *(Applause)* That is what I am proposing for the next financial year.

Two, I am looking at this budget and I want to go to page 13, on the global priorities; budget allocation to EAC global priorities 2024/2025. I have looked at the global priorities and I have also listened keenly to the minister chairing the Council of Ministers when he was making a budget speech. He was very passionate about the issues of climate change.

Mr Speaker, as you are aware, apart from the other challenges— today, we are celebrating International Day of Parliaments globally. According to the research that was made in 91 parliaments by IPU, the top challenges that were raised by the parliaments globally, considering that we are not working alone as East Africa, most of the parliamentarians raised the global issues and challenges that they are experiencing relating to climate change. And in the EAC alone, people were recently displaced in Burundi. In the Eastern part of Uganda, people have been moved from the Mbale Region to the West. It is likely that by 2050, we will have 1.2 billion people being refugees globally, either displaced internally or globally. And you know, Mr Speaker, the East African region hosts the biggest number of refugees.

It is estimated, therefore, that by 2030, if we do not put our priorities right in trying to address the climate change effect, we will have more IDPs and more refugees due to climate chaos.

Therefore, the EAC Member States including Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and DRC, all are centred on the Paris Agreement in terms of reducing the NDCs and including the national adaptation plans in their national adaptation plans by different percentages. Therefore, this being a regional economic community of the East African region, and we call ourselves the EAC - I think we are not any different if we realign our priorities in the coming budget. We may not be able to do much with this because we are left with only two hours, and I know it will pass.

In the future, however, it is important that the EAC acts strategically in allocating and coming up with a strong climate change unit here at the East African Community that can coordinate with the rest of the Member States in ensuring that adaptation and mitigation measures in our Member States is given key interest and indicated here as one of the global priorities because climate change is one of the challenges of our time.

Mr Speaker, I said that I would prioritise. Even if I stopped here, I would have already supported this Budget that was read by Hon. Mukulia. Thank you very much.

Mr Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Amongin. Now Francoise.

Ms Francoise Uwumukiza (Rwanda): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I would like to highlight two aspects on page five of this report. They are anchored under the achievements in this Community. As I applaud them, I also applaud the collaboration that we observed that came out from the support of working together among organs, the Council of Ministers, the Secretariat, and also the Assembly. I can see that we make a good team.

Even as I have said that, I would like also to say that not all is white in this report, not in terms of reporting but in terms of the budget implementation. Since I applaud what they are saying. They are saying that there is effective implementation of the EAC Customs Union and the Common Market Protocols to increase EAC intra-trade and enhance freedoms and rights under the Common Market Protocol.

You know the issues we have with our citizenry. However, despite these efforts I have just mentioned, I can see intra-trade within the EAC is facing challenges. I can see trade is attracting the attention of Members today but we have to emphasise this because it is very key to mention non-tariff barriers. I am not going to explain them but you know they are about restrictions that hinder the flow of goods. It is very important that Members know about this; without mentioning the bureaucratic processes and length of trucks at the borders and also how they are affecting the economy of this Community.

Mr Speaker, for your information, I consulted online reports under EAC Intra-trade, and I found that a report of 2023 estimates that NTBs cost the region \$16 million and have led to a trade decrease by 58 per cent. This is a big number. This is because EAC countries prefer to do their

own trade with other non-EAC countries. This is decreasing the intra-trade benefits that the countries of EAC could have been benefiting from. I am talking on behalf of citizens.

Then there are competing interests. We have got the competition authority but it is not the competition I am talking about here. It is the competition of self interest in Partner States. This is where countries prioritise their own interests over regional integration. It is creating what we call protectionist policies in the Partner States. So, we need oversight on this, especially the committee on trade. They are calling for their industries not to be touched.

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We are having issues with infrastructure gaps because they are not allowing the free movement of goods. We are also having issues related to energy. For instance, renewable energy as we talk about climate change.

Poor transport links. We are also having issues with the One Network Area. The roaming issues here are killing us because I cannot even send a message now; yet, I was not too long ago. I was making phone calls and they were going through very well. Since I do not have a local line, I experience issues staying in touch with transporters. I run late sometimes because I call for 30 minutes. If they are not picking, they use their local number, and yet I do not have a local number. So, we have issues with the One Network Area.

Mr Speaker, lack of trade remedies was tackled. I am not going to repeat that. It is very important that you know, as far as the Assembly is concerned. We are still on page five. The Assembly is a part of the enhancement that was done by the Council of Ministers under organ and institutions strengthening. However, I have realised that under this component, the Assembly is still lacking funds – our first function is legislation.

The Bills that were moved here – I also commend the Chairperson of General Purpose Committee and the entire group. I mentioned that two Bills were brought here at the Assembly. They are Council Bills. Last year, 2023/2024, there were three Council Bills regarding money only. This money is not even used well.

Mr Speaker, therefore, we need other alternatives of priorities to make sure that the EAC citizens are taking advantage. For instance, we need our autonomy. Mr Speaker, there is a Council directive saying that EALA autonomy can be granted. I am wondering what is missing. We have been talking about EALA autonomy and how it can support the other side of the Private Members' Bills, which is missing funding.

Since we have a new Secretary General, I again welcome and congratulate our fellow woman and powerful leader. Private Members' Bills need support. I am talking as the Chairperson of the Committee on Agriculture now, under this particular component. We have been in Moshi with a Bill that was called the EAC Livestock Bill, moved by Hon. Dr Woda. We went there to see the possibility of having this Bill as a Private Member's Bill but the comments from the Partner States

seemed to suggest that this component is called “don't touch by EALA”. And then it was changed and minimised to being just about animal diseases and nothing more.

Additionally, it is not supported because we agreed to have a roadmap for that Bill, but now, even the roadmap cannot be followed because there are no funds. We thank FAO that supported up to that level. At least, it got up to the point of having the Bill minimised. I am saying this because it was a bigger domain but now, it has narrowed to trans-boundary diseases.

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Another issue, Mr Speaker, is that you referred some Bills to committees. There is a Bill called the EAC Cultural Heritage Bill. I moved it and now it is under General Purpose Committee. You know the workload of General Purpose Committee as far as the Budget is concerned. They do not have time and if they have the time, they have no funds for that Bill.

As I wind up, I want to bring it to the attention of the honourable Secretary General that the Bill I am talking about has the high interest of the Secretary General emeritus. This is because it talks about our cultural heritage. As far as we talk about cultural heritage, cultural industry here in the Community is an interest that is attractive and I would appeal to the new honourable Secretary General to interest herself in it, take it up and support it. It was also referred to the *Chef de Cabinet* of the EAC to make sure he finds possibility for that Bill to be supported and be fast-tracked.

As far as cultural heritage is concerned, we need to try and see how to link up with the European Union Parliament to see how we can work together to make sure our artefacts that were taken are repatriated. Thank you very much. I beg to submit. I would like to support the report.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Francoise. Now the last one. We still have two. Hon. Kakooza.

Mr James Kakooza (Uganda): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I will go to the report. I also appreciate the members of the GP.

On the report, page 20, observation and recommendation - the first paragraph; our budget is being sponsored by 55 per cent and 45 per cent is by development partners. I request the Council that immediately, within the next budget year, alternative financing of our budget is quite critical.

I would like to inform you that when you wait for donor funding, that distorts the alignment of your budgeting process. For instance, when you look at the Budget Act, Section 4 says, “*the Council shall not later than the 30th day of April in each financial year have met and laid before the Assembly the Budget of the Community for the next financial year.*” Because we did not have finances before, this report could have been laid on the Table. This is the distortion of not aligning to the budget process.

The budget process starts with the circular call in October. The annual reports are laid here and we can easily pass the Budget before even the end of 30th June. Therefore, I seriously request the Council to look into this.

Secondly, when you look at Section 8, on reports, grants and loans. Section 2, *“the Secretary General shall, at the time of presentation of the Budget, at any time before the 30th of June, each financial year, cause to be presented to the Assembly information relating to the total indebtedness of the Community in the financial year showing...”* Since I came here, I have never had any declaration of indebtedness of this House. I have spent two years here. Therefore, Secretary General, please, look into it because by the time you go to process a budget, you must know your incomes and expenditures. That gives you the leeway of how you can prioritise what you want to do in a financial year.

Lastly, Section 10 of the Budget Act. *“The Secretary General shall make an annual report on non-exemption of tax of the Assembly, which shall be all before the 30th day of June in each financial year. A report under sub-section 1 shall include, among other things, the institutions affected, the reasons for non-exemption and the amount of tax involved.”*

I would like to give information to the Secretary General that there are some exemptions and tax remissions which are retained by the Organs. However, they do not submit them. Spending at source without our financial rules and regulations is an abuse of the system. So, you should look into it, so that we know those who are exempted within a financial year and that money, which can be appropriated in the next year.

Mr Speaker, let me go to observation 12 on page 23 of the report. This is serious because our work as an Assembly is to make laws. When you read observation 12, you will see that, *“During the 3rd Plenary Session of the Assembly in March 2024, the Council supplementary budget to reconsider Council Bills returned Bills for reconsideration...”* I can leave it at that. *“The committee recommended to the Assembly to urge the Council of Ministers to provide \$376,000 in a supplementary to enable the Assembly process the aforementioned Bills”*.

I warn the Council that there is no way - When you look at page 10 of the Budget Speech, you want to join the ACFTA but before you go to another area, the pillars of integration must be concretised with a legal framework. We still have a problem with the Common Market and the Customs Union; Non-Tariff Barriers are still growing. We need to deal with the Political Federation. We need to be a bloc to join another bloc, be strong and we are fully funded by our remittances. These Non-Tariff Barriers must also be looked at.

Lastly, Mr Speaker, the world has turned digital. You have seen the mess we have been having here. You should plan for iPads. It is cost-saving *–(Applause)–* and even cheaper. I have seen a serious observation here on the corrigenda. The Budget is going to pass today but they are laying on the Table a corrigendum today. A corrigendum must be laid first before it goes to the committee. When you discuss it in the committee, it is smuggling documents. Any document must be laid on the Table before it is committed to the committee. I beg to submit.

The Speaker: Thank you, Hon. Kakooza. The last one is Hon. Francine.

Ms Francine Rutazana (Rwanda): Thank you Mr Speaker for allowing me to speak about this important Bill. Allow me to start on the global priorities and expected outcomes of the Financial Year 2024/2025. It is on pages 13 and 14, where we talk about priorities, then page 14 where we talk about outcomes.

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I think it is wise to have indicators for the implementation to be measured. I am glad that the General Purpose Committee - and I commend them – has started overseeing the implementation of the budget in every financial year. When there are no indicators for the outcomes, there is no way of measurement on the performance.

Mr Speaker, I recommend that for this specific budget, indicators should be put for each programme and activity which the institutions and departments of the EAC are implementing, as far as performance is concerned. That is one of the recommendations. Secondly, when you get to page 21, it talks about activities. The committee reviewed the programmes and projects of the organs and institutions and noted that there are some activities which are not aligned with the priorities of integration. So, I am wondering how we can cater for those activities when they are not aligned with the pillars of integration of this Community.

My recommendation is for those institutions and departments; where there is no alignment, they should go back and review their activities and programmes, so that they are aligned. Otherwise, where are we going if we are now implementing without any roadmap to align with the Community pillars? I do not see any impact of those activities.

Mr Speaker, under audit accounts, we saw some institutions, which are implementing their programmes without strategic plans. Among them – if you allow me to talk about them - is Kiswahili Commission and also EAC Health Commission. They do not have their strategic plans. In the activities of this current financial year, I do not see their strategic plans to be implemented.

How can we have an institution implementing activities without aligning them to the strategic plan? I think that is a serious problem and we need to recommend the General Purpose Committee to see how we can help those institutions to have a strategic plan, so that they will be able to support their programmes and align them with their strategic plan.

Lastly, we are talking about the theme of the financial year but when you go through the activities of all the departments and institutions, I have not seen any alignment with the theme. So, I am wondering; why do we put in place a theme and emphasise it but then, when you go through the programme, you do not see any sign or emphasis on it? I wonder how we are going now to remedy on this kind of problem, because it is really a problem. Why do we emphasise on a theme but do not emphasise on it in our programmes throughout the financial year implementation?

So, I recommend that throughout the implementation, the General Purpose Committee, the Secretariat and all related organs, should put emphasis on alignment of the theme and also the

pillars of integration of the Community. I support the report but also recommend that those observations be considered. I submit. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you. Thank you, honourable members. I now give the Floor to the ministers who may wish to debate.

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5.06

Mr George Stephen Odongo (Uganda): Mr Speaker, I am seeking clarification from the Council of Ministers, this being a House of record. Yesterday, debate was interrupted for the swearing-in of our minister from DRC and in your communication, Mr Speaker, you said he was coming with good news. The good news was that there is going to be remittance.

Just for purposes of the record, we would want to hear from the Council of Ministers what the status is. How much has arrived. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Yes, Honourable Minister? Honourable Chair?

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): Mr Speaker, I want, first of all, to thank Members of this Parliament for the very fruitful debate. I want to thank the Committee on General Purpose for the report and recommendations that they have made.

The Council is very happy about some of the issues that have been mentioned, like the amendment of the Treaty. The amendment of the Treaty definitely needs to be expedited. The amendment of the Treaty is very important because a number of countries are coming in. Some of them have already joined the Treaty.

A number of issues have been mentioned. Some of them are very important but all in all, the Council has the responsibility to implement all the issues that have come up in your discussions and deliberations. The Council is going to meet next week and some of the issues that have come up in your discussions will definitely be discussed. Hopefully, some positive recommendations will come out of that meeting.

The important thing in all this is the implementation of what we have discussed on the Budget and projects. All the recommendations that you have made are important for the Secretariat and the Council to implement. I do not want to talk much.

There was an issue on tariff barriers. It is a problem in the region and the trade and mobility of business within the region is being hindered by some of this behaviour. There are still problems within the region where there is imposition of tariffs. Maybe, people have not correctly understood. Someone said that maybe we have not informed our people enough about the East African Community, the policies and recommendations. That is why these issues come up, even within Government ministries, from time to time. It is important for us to inform our people about the

institutions that are supposed to implement the policies of the East African Community. You said you have been moving. In your budget, there is a lot of money appropriated or apportioned to inform the region about some of the policies and cooperation that is supposed to take place within the region.

The Council is very grateful for this debate and all the recommendations that you have made. The most important thing is the implementation of what you have said and discussed by the Secretariat, together with the Council of Ministers and the leadership of the East African Community. I think most of what you have said is very important and we all need to implement what we have said.

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Somebody talked about insecurity within the region. It is true that we have a lot of problems within the region and it is a joint responsibility for all the Governments of the region, particularly you, the members of Parliament. You have a very big role to try to help us and the region to reduce the insecurity that is happening now in the region. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: Honourable Chairperson, there was a question raised by Hon. George Odongo.

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): About the DRC, they did not attend one or two meetings for reasons that they came and explained to us. At the beginning, some people thought that DRC was trying to leave the Community but this was not the case. They had to resolve some internal issues which I think they have managed to do. They are not leaving this region. I would like to advise - do not try to create a situation where somebody will make wrong decisions. The DRC is a very strong member. They have come back; they are going to have a talk with the Speaker, the Secretary General and myself. They are going to pay their dues like any institution or country. They will pay their money as soon as possible.

The Secretary-General and I will go to DRC. They have committed themselves to pay the money, just like any other country in the region. So, we should not single out DRC. Every country has its own internal problems. We are not doing it deliberately. They have not paid yet for quite some time; we did not pay for quite some time. The DRC is a full member of this Community. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Honourable SG?

The Secretary General of the East African Community (Ms Veronica Mueni Nduva): Thank you very much Mr Speaker and honourable members. Mine is just to say a very warm “thank you” to the committee and, indeed, the whole House for a very insightful debate, where I have noted everything that has been said. There are a lot of insights for me coming on board at this time; to learn and I really appreciate the thoughts. I will maybe talk about two or three issues.

One, I would like to reiterate what the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers has talked about regarding the DRC and the repayment. Indeed, I had a very precise conversation with both the minister and the Ambassador, who is a Permanent Representative to the EAC. At the end of the

deliberations, we sent them a proper invoice of how much they owe. We tabulated from the Financial Year 2021 to 20 – They are three financial years in a nutshell. They will make good their promise. I was very convinced by the conversation we had because it was not limited to the contributions.

We also discussed the upcoming opportunities for the country, in terms of the positions they might benefit from in the coming recruitment season and also other engagements, including inviting us to their capital to meet His Excellency, President Tshisekedi. So, we are convinced and as the Chair says, let us give that country the benefit of doubt from what they say. We stand together with them and continue to encourage them to meet their costs.

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On peace and security, I think it is a very important matter that has been discussed here. I wish to confirm that, indeed, the Council deliberated on that report and adopted it in the meeting that ended early this morning. We will be submitting it to the Assembly, as the requirement is there. So we will focus on that.

On the issue of the Trade Remedies Tribunal, we do realise that there was an amendment to the Protocol and therefore, by the Rules of Procedure, that has to be ratified by all Partner States. As we stand, this has been ratified so far by only one Partner State, so it means it has to be done by the rest of the countries. As the Secretariat, we will be moving towards that.

Lastly, I have noted all the issues that have been brought up in this debate. We will strive to ensure that we have better Budget implementation and a better performance of budget, in terms of absorption. I have noted the low absorption because I think it is quite an oxymoron to say that on one hand, we have low budget funds and then on the other, the absorption is also low. So, something really needs to happen.

We look forward to the continued support of this House and interaction, which has been very collegial and collaborative, and quite a positive start. The honourable Minister from Burundi had to leave and he had a flight to catch. Mr Speaker, we also have the honourable Minister from Uganda with us. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you. Honourable Minister, you have the Floor.

The First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of East African Community Affairs, Uganda(Rt. Hon Rebecca Alitwala Kadaga): Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, members of the Council and members of the Assembly. I will speak very briefly on the issue of the matter raised by Hon. Odongo, concerning Nile Breweries. I think that is a matter which I will need to take up. I was not aware about this but I will take it up.

About the trade remedies, I think you have been informed that my country did ratify but it is the responsibility of the Minister of Trade to name the members of the Trade and Remedies

Committee. So, I encourage our colleagues to complete the ratification and then, appoint the officials because it is a matter of grave concern among our traders and the population.

On the issue of the deployment of the East African Regional Force, we have not had time to share with my colleagues. Briefly, what is speaking to me is that we need to meet more often and share more information. Without going into much detail, the deployment lasted seven months and it had three major objectives:

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1. To ensure the territorial integrity of the DRC and I think the integrity is still there;
2. To secure the airport at Goma and ensure that aviation is not disrupted; and
3. To establish and maintain a humanitarian corridor to support the communities in that area.

For the period they were there, it was largely successful, In the North and South Kivu had become pacified and people had gone back to their homes. But of course, Ituri region remains volatile. I think there was a misunderstanding in the nature of deployment and engagement, which resulted in the departure of the East African Regional Force. Now there are the SADC forces.

Of course, it is a matter of concern that civilians continue to suffer but I hope that sooner than later, all the leaders will get together and ensure that that issue is handled. As I was saying, we may need to review the way we work so that we can actually incorporate other issues, which are important to the region, so that we are able to pass them on to the members. Thank you, Mr Speaker. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: Thank you, Honourable Minister. I will now give the Floor to the Chairperson of the Committee.

The Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Thank you, Mr Speaker and colleagues for the contribution you made to the debate. I just want to take this opportunity to thank the following members.

1. Hon. George Odongo
2. Hon. Gideon Gatpan
3. Hon. James Millya
4. Hon. Clément Musangabatware
5. Hon. Woda Jeremiah
6. Hon. Leader of Opposition, Hon. Gerald Siranda Blacks
7. Hon. Jacqueline Amongin
8. Hon. Amb. Mathias Harabemungu
9. Hon. Francoise Uwumukiza
10. Hon. James Kakooza
11. Hon. Francine Rutazana
12. Hon. Secretary-General
13. Rt Hon. Rebecca Kadaga
14. Hon. Deng Alor, Chairperson Council of Ministers and

15. Any other person whose name I have not mentioned, plus myself. *(Laughter)*

I thank the able members of the Committee on General Purpose who did a very great job – *(Applause)*– led by the senior advisor, Hon. Dennis Namara, Hon. Fatuma, Hon. Kanini Kega, Hon. “Youth Caucus” –*(Interjection)*– I am on the Floor. Hon. Paul Musamali “David”, that brought down Goliath and then Ambassador Fatuma.

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Where are the rest? Hon. Rose Akol, Hon. Alodie, Hon. Goreth, Hon. Alex Bahati, Hon. Manirambona, Hon. Victor, Hon. “Papa Gate”, Hon. Stella, Hon. Kim Gai, incoming Governor, Hon. Gai Deng, Hon. Kachwamba; I think that is all. Hon. Winnie Odinga has been always online, despite the fact that these games caused her problems. *(Laughter)*

Honourable members, I also wish to inform you that in this Budget, you will sit next year for 80 days. Thank you. *(Applause)*

The Speaker: I now invite the Chairperson of the Council; if you have been here, it is fine. If you do not have any more contributions, I can put the question.

Honourable Members: Yes, put the question.

The Speaker: Thank you, honourable members, now I have to put the question that this House constitutes itself into a Committee of Supply to consider and approve estimates of expenditure for the Financial Year 2024/2025 and a Committee of Ways and Means to consider and approve the financial statement for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

(Question put and agreed to.)

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY AND COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS

(i) COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

APPROVAL OF THE EAC BUDGET ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR THE FY 2024/2025 VOTE-BY-VOTE

Vote 001: East African Community Secretariat

The Chairperson: Mr Speaker Sir, I propose that a sum of \$53,118,560 under Vote 001 be provided for expenses of the East African Community Secretariat including the Defence Liaisons Office and the Directorate of Customs for the Financial Year 2024-2025. Are you in accordance? I now put the question that a sum of \$53,118,560 - Yes, procedure -

Ms Fatuma Ndangiza (Rwanda): Mr Chairperson, I remember at the beginning of our session, the Chairperson of the Council presented a corrigendum. I thought it would be captured in our

deliberations. Maybe you might wish to call upon the Minister if he has any amendments before we proceed. Thank you.

The Chairperson: It is true. I have proposed the question that a sum of \$53,118,560 under Vote 001 be provided - Yes-

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Mr Gideon Thoar Gatpan (South Sudan): We have the Bill that has been published and I think the correct way would be to read the figure of \$51 million and then the Chairperson of the committee shall amend it.

The Chairperson: But it can be amended in the Bill.

Mr James Kakooza (Uganda): I think what is happening now, this is a schedule that is going to be captured and it will be a record on the *Hansard* but remember, there was a corrigendum brought by the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers and the committee itself recommended a figure for Vote 001 in its report, which we adopted in the report to be \$53,118,560. I do believe that since this corrigendum was discussed in the committee, they harmonised the figure and this would be the final figure that would be captured on the *Hansard*.

Ms Rose Akol Okullu (Uganda): Thank you, Mr Chairperson. We have a Bill that is already printed and the figures here definitely read differently. Since there is a corrigendum, as much as it was brought to the committee, it was not captured in the Bill. I propose and I believe that the figure that the Chairperson is going to read is the figure on the Bill and then either the committee Chairperson or the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers will read to amend that figure and it is captured on record because there is a corrigendum that was brought that also needs to be captured since it was brought after this Bill was printed.

Vote 001- The East African Community Secretariat

The Chairperson: I now propose the question that a sum of \$51,677,120 under Vote 001, be provided for the expenses of the East African Communities Secretariat including the Defense Liaison Office and the Directorate of Customs for the Financial Year 2024/2025. Chairperson, Committee on General Purpose.

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Mr Chairperson, I propose an amendment to Vote 001 that additional resources of \$1,441,440 be added to Vote 001 to make a total of \$53,118,560. I beg to submit.

The Chairperson: I now put the question that the figure as proposed by the Chairperson, Committee on General Purpose under Vote 001 be provided for expenses - Yes

Ms Ndingiza: I think it should be the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers because they are the ones who brought the corrigenda.

The Chairperson: Has he accepted.

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs
(Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): Yes, I agree. *(Applause)*

The Chairperson: For the record, let us start by proposing. I now propose the question that a sum of \$1,441,440 be added to the Secretariat.

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(Question put and agreed to.)

The Chairperson: I now propose the question that a sum of \$53,118,560 under Vote 001 be provided for the expenses of the East African Community Secretariat including the Defense Liaison Office and the Directorate of Customs for the Financial Year 2024/2025. Are you in accordance?

I now put the question that a sum of \$53,118,560 be provided for the expenses of the East African Community Secretariat, including the Defense Liaison Office, and the Directorate of Customs for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Vote 002 - East African Court of Justice

The Chairperson: I propose that a sum of \$4,858,553 under Vote 002 be provided for the expenses of the East African Court of Justice for the Financial Year 2024/2025. Are you in agreement?

I now put the question that a sum of \$4,858,553 under Vote 002 be provided for the expenses of the East African Court of Justice for the Financial Year 2020/2025.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Vote 003 - East African Legislative Assembly

The Chairperson: I propose that a total sum of \$20,469,040 under Vote 003 be provided for the expenses of the East African Legislative Assembly for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

I now put the question that a total sum of \$20,469,040 under Vote 003 be provided for the expenses of the East African Legislative Assembly for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Vote 004 - Lake Victoria Basin Commission

The Chairperson: I propose that a sum of \$7,787,519 under Vote 004 be provided for the expenses of the Lake Victoria Basin Commission for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

I now put the question that a total sum of \$7,787,519 under Vote 004 be provided for the expenses of the Lake Victoria Basin Commission for the Financial Year 2024/2025

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(Question put and agreed to.)

Vote 005 - Inter-University Council for East Africa

The Chairperson: I propose the question that a total sum of \$17,287,618 under Vote 005 be provided for the expenses of the Inter-University Council of East Africa for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

I now put the question that a total sum of \$17,287,618 under Vote 005 be provided for expenses of the Inter-University Council of East Africa for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Vote 006 - Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation

The Chairperson: I propose the question that a total sum of \$3,109,856 under Vote 006 be provided for the expenses of Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

I now put the question that a total sum of \$3,109,856 under Vote 006 be provided for the expenses of Lake Victoria Fisheries Organisation for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Vote 007 - East African Science and Technology Commission

The Chairperson: I propose that a total sum of \$2,177,192 under Vote 007 be provided for the expenses of the East African Science and Technology Commission for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

I now put the question that a total sum of \$2,177,192 under Vote 007 be provided for the expenses of the East African Science and Technology Commission for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Vote 008 - East African Kiswahili Commission

The Chairperson: I propose that a total sum of \$1,641,445 under Vote 008 be provided for the expenses of the East African Kiswahili Commission for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

I now put the question that a total sum of \$1,641,445 under Vote 008 be provided for the expenses of the East African Kiswahili Commission for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Vote 009 - East African Health Research Commission

The Chairperson: I propose the question that a total sum of \$2,451,157 under vote 009 be provided for the expenses of the East African Health Research Commission for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

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I now put the question that a total sum of \$2,451,157 under vote 009 be provided for the expenses of the East African Health Research Commission for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Vote 010 - East African Competition Authority

The Chairperson: I propose the question that a total sum of \$1,525,212 under Vote 010 be provided for the expenses of the East African Commission Authority for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

I now put the question that a total sum of \$1,525,212 under Vote 010 be provided for the expenses of the East African Commission Authority for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

(Question put and agreed to.)

The approved total is \$114,425,882 taking into account the amendment.

(ii) COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS

MOTION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE EAC BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2024/2025

(The Speaker (Mr Joseph Ntakirutimana) left the Chair)

(The Chairperson (Mr Joseph Ntakirutimana) took the Chair)

The Chairperson: The Chairperson, Council of Ministers, please, move the motion.

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): I beg to move:-

THAT, this House approves the Financial Statements for the Revenue of Expenditure for the EAC Budget for the Financial Year 2024/2025.

The Chairperson: I propose that the financial statements for the Financial Year 2024/2025 as amended be approved.

I now put the question that the financial statement for the Financial Year 2024/2025 as amended be approved.

(Question put and agreed to.)

MOTION FOR THE HOUSE TO RESUME

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The Chairperson: Chairperson, Council of Ministers, please, move the motion.

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): I beg to move:-

THAT, the House do resume and the Committee of Supply and the Committee of Ways and Means reports thereto.

The Chairperson: The motion is that the House do resume and the committee reports thereto. I now put the question that the House do resume and the Committee of Supply and the Committee of Ways and Means report there to.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(The House resumed)

(The Speaker(Mr Joseph Ntakirutimana,) in the Chair.)

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY AND COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): I beg to report that the Committee of Supply and Committee of Ways and Means has considered and approved the budget of the East African Community for Financial Year 2024/2025 along with the financial statements.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE SUPPLY AND COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS

The Speaker: Honourable minister, please, move the motion.

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): Mr Speaker Sir, I beg to move:-

THAT, this House adopts the report of the Committee of Supply and Committee of Ways and Means.

The Speaker: The motion is that the report of the committee be adopted. I now put the question that the report of the Committee of Supply and Committee of Ways and Means be adopted.

*(Question put and agreed to.)
Report adopted.*

BILL
Second Reading

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THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY APPROPRIATION BILL, 2024

The Speaker: Honourable minister, please, move the motion.

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): I justify the Bill the House has just-

The Speaker: You move the motion.

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): I beg to move that the East African Community Appropriation Bill, 2024, be read a second time.

The Speaker: Do you have seconders?

Members: Yes.

The Speaker: (*Members rose*) The whole House; Hon. Sankok, the Secretary-General. Now Honourable minister, justify your Bill.

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): Mr Speaker, to justify the Bill, the House has just concluded an important exercise of passing the budget of the East African Community for the Financial Year 2024/2025. What the Appropriation Bill, 2024 does is to provide legal effort to support the funds that have been voted.

The Appropriation Bill, 2024 is, therefore, intended to appropriate a sum of \$124,425,882 out of the budget of the East African Community to meet the expenditure for the organs and institutions of the Community for the financial year ending 30 June 2025 as amended.

The Speaker: I propose the question that the East African Community Appropriations Bill, 2024, as amended, be read for the second time. Chairperson, Committee on General Purpose, present your report.

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Thank you, Mr Speaker. I wish to report to the House that the East African Community Appropriations Bill, 2024, be amended to read a total sum of \$114,425,882. I beg to report.

The Speaker: Thank you. Honourable members, the debate is open. Chairperson - there is no debate? I now put the question that the East African Community Appropriation Bill, 2024 be read a second time as amended.

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(Question put and agreed to.)

BILLS

COMMITTEE STAGE

THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY APPROPRIATION BILL, 2024

Clause 1

The Chairperson: I propose the question that clause 1 be part of the Bill. Chairperson of Council of Ministers and the - no objection?

I put the question that clause 1 be part of the Bill.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 1, agreed to.

Clause 2

The Chairperson: I propose the question that clause 2 be part of the Bill. Chair –

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Mr Chairperson, I would like to make an amendment to clause 2 which will read, “An appropriation of the sum of \$114,425,882 be allowed out of the Budget of the Community to meet the expenditures for the organs and institutions of the Community as specified in the Schedule for the Financial Year 30 June 2025. I beg to submit.

The Chairperson: I now put the question that clause 2 be part of the Bill as amended.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

The Schedule

The Chairperson: I propose the question that the Schedule be part of the Bill. Are you in favour?

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Mr Chairperson, I propose an amendment to the Schedule on Vote 001 and subsequently the total.

Mr Chairperson, on Vote 001, I propose an amendment that in addition to the amount of \$51,677,120 an additional amount of \$1,444,440 be supplied to Vote 001 to make a total of \$53,118,560. I beg to submit.

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The Chairperson: And the total?

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Subsequently, the total amount on the Schedule will now read \$114,425,882. I beg to submit.

The Chairperson: I now put the question that the Schedule be part of the Bill, as amended.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(Schedule, as amended, agreed to.)

The Preamble

The Chairperson: I propose that the Preamble be part of the Bill.

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Mr Chairperson, I would like to present an amendment to the Preamble of the Bill that it should now read that, “The object of this Bill is to appropriate a sum of \$114,425,882.” I beg to submit the amendment.

The Chairperson: I put the question that the Preamble be part of the Bill as amended.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(Preamble, as amended)

The Title

The Chairperson: I propose the Title to be part of the Bill. Are you in favour?

Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Mr Chairperson. I also wish to provide an amendment to the Title of the Bill to read, “An Act of the Community to appropriate a sum of \$114,425,882 out of the Budget of the Community to meet expenditures for the organs and institutions of the Community for the Financial Year ending 30 June 2025.” I beg to submit.

The Chairperson: I put the question that the Title be part of the Bill as amended.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(Title, as amended, agreed.

MOTION FOR THE HOUSE TO RESUME

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The Chairperson: Chairperson of the Council, move the motion.

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): I beg to move:-

THAT, the House do resume and the Committee of the whole House do report thereto.

The Chairperson: Honourable Members, I put the question that the House do resume and the Committee of the whole House reports thereto.

(Question put and agreed to.)

(House resumed, the Speaker presiding.)

REPORT FROM THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

The Chairperson: Chairperson of the Council -

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): I beg to report that the Committee of the whole House has considered the Appropriation Bill, 2024 and passed it with some amendments as the case may be.

MOTION FOR ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE HOUSE

The Speaker: I propose that the motion for adoption of the report of the Committee of the whole House be adopted.

I now put the question that the report of the Committee of the Whole House be adopted.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Motion adopted.

The Chairperson, General Purpose Committee (Mr Kennedy Ayason Mukulia): Procedure, Rt Hon. Speaker. I think it is procedurally right to be on record that the report of the Committee of the Whole House is adopted with amendments.

The Speaker: Let us go back to this for the record. I put the question that the report of the Committee of the whole House be adopted, as amended.

(Question put and agreed to.)

Reported, as amended, adopted.

BILLS

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Third Reading

THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY APPROPRIATION BILL, 2024

The Chairperson, Council of Ministers and Minister of East African Community Affairs (Mr Deng Alor Kuol) (South Sudan): I beg to move that the East African Community Appropriation Bill, 2024 be read the third time and do pass.

The Speaker: Do you have seconders? *(Members rose_)* The whole House. Thank you.

I propose that the East African Community Appropriation Bill, 2024 be read for the third time and do pass.

I now put the question that the East African Community Appropriation Bill, 2024 be read the third time and do pass as amended.

(Question put and agreed to.)

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED, “THE EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY APPROPRIATION ACT, 2024”

AN ACT OF THE COMMUNITY TO APPROPRIATE A SUM OF \$ 114,425,882 OUT OF THE BUDGET OF THE COMMUNITY TO MEET EXPENDITURE FOR THE ORGANS AND INSTITUTIONS FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2025

The Speaker: Honourable members, this is the end. Allow me to thank everyone in a special way. The Chair, Council of Ministers, I have to thank you. You have been with us from the beginning and it has been fruitful.

ADJOURNMENT

I also have to thank all the ministers. It has been the first time that we have seen this bench completely busy and occupied by seven ex-officio members. We have had ministers from Kenya, Tanzania, DRC, the SG, the CTC and today the Minister of Burundi and the minister from Uganda.

I also have to thank the Secretary General and the Deputy Secretary General Andreas. They have assisted our committee in the proper way.

Members of EALA, my colleagues, I have to thank you for the effort that you have undertaken and your mandate – How can I say it? You have exercised your mandate well.

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I also have to thank the Chairperson of General Purpose Committee and the other members; the Clerk and the assistant and the secretary. Yesterday, you burnt the midnight oil when processing this Budget. Thank you for that.

Of course, I have to thank my Clerk, the Deputy Clerk and the secretaries. They have also been here supporting everyone, ready for everything. I also recognise the job well done by the other staff, the Hansard office, the sergeant, research, finance - Abella. I heard that Abella has good news. Hon. Sankok - I thank them for working so hard to ensure that the Assembly delivers its mandate.

I also have to recognise the service providers and the security team for supporting us.

Finally, I extend my appreciation to those in the gallery; Amb. Anne and staff of UG Mission. Thank you for the job well done. We have managed to pass the budget before the end of June. Thank you, Secretary General, and thank you everyone, God bless you.

Honourable members, the House is adjourned sine die.

(The House rose at 6.13 p.m. and adjourned sine die.)