



## **EAST AFRICAN COMMUNITY**

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### **THE EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY (EALA)**

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

**25<sup>TH</sup> SITTING - THIRD MEETING - SECOND SESSION- FIFTH ASSEMBLY**

**Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

*The East African Legislative Assembly met at 2.42 p.m. in the County Hall, Nairobi, Kenya*

### **PRAYER**

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

*(The Assembly was called to order)*

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## COMMUNICATION FROM THE CHAIR

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, good afternoon. This is the first time we are convening. Before I start with this communication, I would like to inform you that I have adjusted this Order Paper and dropped item number 3 because I have taken into account that we set a time limit and that the Chair needs to give guidance that a Member shall debate for not more than five minutes.

Honourable members, I take this opportunity to welcome you back to the House. You remember that the last time we met was in December 2023 in Kigali. I welcome you all to this House and wish you a progressive new year, 2024. I also welcome you to this beautiful city of Nairobi in the Republic of Kenya.

I once again wish to salute and thank His Excellency, Dr William Samoei Ruto, the President of the Republic of Kenya, for accepting to grace and officially open our sitting, despite his busy schedule and for the words of wisdom delivered to us yesterday. We look forward to his continued guidance as we carry out our legislative mandate.

I also thank our host, Rt Hon. Dr Moses Wetang'ula, Speaker of the Kenya National Assembly and the Rt Hon. Jeffah Amason Kingi, Speaker of the Kenya Senate, Members and staff of the Parliament of Kenya for the very warm reception that we have received since our arrival in Nairobi.

I further wish to express our gratitude to the host for granting us unconditional access, not only to the precincts of Parliament, but also for excellent facilities such as this Chamber, committee rooms and offices. We also thank our colleagues of the Kenya Chapter for all their support. They have attended to our requests and inquiries with love and humility, to make us comfortable and feel at home in Nairobi. *(Applause)* We appreciate you; thank you colleagues for that.

The approved programme for this meeting and the business to be transacted, as approved by the Commission, has been circulated to you all. I, therefore, implore all committees to ensure that they finalise all business before them and report to Plenary, as per the programme.

Honourable members, on your behalf, I attended the signing ceremony of the Treaty for Admission of the Federal Republic of Somalia into the East African Community on 15 December 2023 at State House in Entebbe, Uganda. Secondly, I represented EALA at the 27<sup>th</sup> Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> January 2024. We were hosted by the Parliament of Uganda, where I also had a closed session with His Excellency, Yoweri Museveni, the President of the Republic of Uganda, to update him on the progress of the East African Community integration agenda.

We held mid-term review meetings for the Commission and the committee chairpersons from 24<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> of January 2024 in Nairobi, Kenya. We represented the Assembly at the burial of the late Hon. Edward Ngoyai Lowassa, former Prime Minister of the Republic of Tanzania on 7 February 2024 in Monduli, Arusha.

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I also, on behalf of the Assembly, delivered a condolence message to Her Excellency, Samia Hassan Suluhu, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania and His Excellency, Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi, the President of Zanzibar, upon the demise of His Excellency, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, the former and second President of the United Republic of Tanzania.

Honourable members, let us rise for a moment of silence in honour of the departed leaders.

*(Members rose and observed a moment of silence.)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable members, this afternoon, I am pleased to welcome and introduce to you, the Rt Hon. Belinda Amany, Speaker of the East African Youth Parliament. *(Applause)* She is here to observe our sessions, as well as preside over the 3<sup>rd</sup> EAC Youth Seminar at the University of Nairobi on 8 March 2024. I was present during her election in Arusha; she is an aspiring young and future leader. *(Applause)*

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION OF THE ASSEMBLY EXPRESSING GRATITUDE TO HIS EXCELLENCY, PRESIDENT WILLIAM SAMOEI RUTO, CGH, PHD, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA, FOR THE IMPETUS, GUIDANCE AND CLEAR VISION ON THE EAC INTEGRATION AGENDA DURING HIS ADDRESS TO THE EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

*(Moved under Articles 11(1), 49 and 59 (1) of the Treaty and Rule 26 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Hassan Omar, move the motion.

2.54

**MR HASSAN OMAR HASSAN (KENYA):** Mr Speaker, before I move the motion, I beg to lay on the Table the speech of His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Kenya, Dr William Samoei Ruto, CGH, (PhD) –

**THE SPEAKER:** No, I want to know if you have seconders; I am not sure that you have seconders.

**MR HASSAN:** I am now moving the motion.

**THE SPEAKER:** Have you moved?

**MR HASSAN OMAR:** No, I have first laid the speech. I now want to move the motion. That this Assembly do resolve to record its comments to appreciate His Excellency, Dr William Samoei Ruto, CGH, (PhD) President of the Republic of Kenya, for the impetus, guidance and clear vision on the East African Community Integration Agenda during his address to the East African Legislative Assembly on Tuesday, 5 March 2024.

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**THE SPEAKER:** Do you now have seconders? Oh, the entire House. You can now justify your motion.

*(Motion seconded)*

**MR HASSAN OMAR :** Mr Speaker, first and foremost, I should acknowledge that this House was my first chamber of politics, when I was elected Senator of Mombasa. I sat here for about one and a half years before I finally moved to the main Senate, where we were addressed by the President yesterday. For those one and a half years, I sat exactly where Hon. Dennis Namara is seated. May God guide you to be like me. *(Laughter)*

*“WHEREAS the East African Legislative Assembly is holding its Third Meeting of the Second Session of the Fifth Assembly from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024 in Nairobi in the Republic of Kenya;*

*AND WHEREAS His Excellency, President William Samoei Ruto, CGH, PhD, President of The Republic of Kenya and Member of the Summit of the East African Community Heads of State, graciously agreed to officially open the Third Meeting of the Assembly and address the Assembly during a Special Sitting of the Assembly, held in the Chamber of the Senate in the Parliament of Kenya on 5 March 2024;*

*RECOGNISING THAT the roles of Members of the Summit include providing impetus and direction to the Community;*

*GRATEFUL to His Excellency, President William Samoei Ruto, for the clarity of vision and guidance on the optimal policies, strategies and frameworks required to drive the vision for a prosperous, competitive, secure, stable and politically united East Africa, which was contained in the address of the President to the Assembly;*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY THAT, the Assembly appreciates and expresses gratitude to His Excellency, President William Samoei Ruto, CGH, PhD, President of the Republic of Kenya for the impetus, guidance and clear vision on the EAC integration agenda during his address to the Third Meeting of the Second Session of the East African Legislative Assembly, held on 5 March 2024 in the Chamber of the Senate, Parliament of Kenya.”*

Mr Speaker, the speech made yesterday by His Excellency, the President brought to fore the historic challenges that the East African Community had faced, including the eventual collapse of the East African Community –*(Interjections)*– there are no seconders yet!

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Hassan Omar. Honourable members, I now propose the motion that this Assembly do resolve to record its comments to appreciate His Excellency, William Samoei Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya, for the impetus, guidance, and clear vision on the EAC integration agenda during his address to the East African Legislative Assembly on Tuesday, 5 March 2024. Debate is now open.

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**MR HASSAN OMAR:** Mr Speaker, let me start, first and foremost, by thanking the Commission for having brought this Assembly or particular sitting to the Republic of Kenya. I am greatly honoured, as a Kenyan and the Chapter, to have had this extraordinary opportunity to host this Assembly here.

I know many of you are interchangeably Kenyans. Some of you reside here, have taken refuge here, have grown up here, have related to Kenya in one way or another and Hon. Ayasson Mukulia Kennedy has married here. I do believe this is an opportunity to come in as a legislature and showcase to the Kenyan public the work of the East African Legislative Assembly.

Mr Speaker, I want to thank most profusely my Chapter members who, from the time it was communicated to us that this Assembly would be held in this great Republic of Kenya, went the extra mile to ensure that anything in our powers and capacity to deliver on the successful sitting of this Assembly was done to the best of our ability. *(Applause)* We left nothing to chance.

I want to appreciate both Speakers of the Houses of Senate and the National Assembly, and equally the two Clerks of both Houses. I also appreciate our two Clerks, Mr Alex Obatre and Mr John Mutege, who have worked tirelessly to ensure that this Assembly was successful.

I think all of you know that when a President is to go into any event, the levels of preparedness are much higher. Therefore, I want to appreciate all those who took part in making sure that the President's official opening of this Assembly was meticulous and up to the expectations of the Kenyan public and all East Africans.

I thank our new minister – she is no longer new now - Hon. Peninah Malonza, who is here with us, who has also taken up, with a lot of zeal, the work of the East African Community Affairs and has delivered a partnership to us so far as a Chapter that we only can aspire for greater things.

Therefore, when the President accepted to come and speak to us, it was quite a celebratory mood for us because we knew the President's potential to actually ensure that he locates the mandate of EALA in the psyche of the Kenyan people. This Assembly is one that we are robustly asked about all the time in our national states on what it does. I think there is important advocacy in Presidents coming to validate these sittings by making sure that they address the official opening.

Two, Mr Speaker, I always laud our President for the content and very transformative remarks he usually has. When he was elected, as some of you noted – Hon. Musamali, you said you were not sleeping with your wife - in terms of watching the election results; not that you were not sleeping with your wife. You were awake. *(Laughter)* I think it was with all of us because we believed Kenya needed a leader who had the courage out of populism to steer the country into a new path.

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We were inheriting a country that was in a recession, an economy that was badly battered and I think an integration that we needed to give more impetus to. Our President has stood firm to cast the net to steer the country in a new direction. He has taken bold steps locally in our endeavours to take bold steps internationally.

When he came, he had the courage to drop subsidies on consumption and fund production. Our low-hanging fruit as a country is to be an agriculturally sufficient country and ensure food security. He, therefore, supported farmers by ensuring that they were able to get subsidised fertilisers. By God's grace, a lot of rain did follow and we have enough food right now to feed the nation. We hope that East Africa in its entirety will be a self-sufficient region, in terms of food security.

He ensured security of supply, in terms of our petroleum products, by getting into that contract called the Government-to-Government (G2G) that has had some controversy with our neighbours, which I believe we will be able to resolve. In doing so, we were able to have a six-month credit window which ensured that we stabilised the Kenyan shilling and ended the demand on the dollar. Therefore, the oil marketing companies that were rushing constantly to pay for oil on a cash basis eased the pressure on the Kenyan shilling.

Equally, the President has taken other measures locally to ensure that we bolster manufacturing by reducing certain taxes, in terms of raw materials for manufacturing. The President has taken robust steps to locate the climate agenda in Kenya. The President has equally tried to locate the regional agenda.

I am happy that you, Mr Speaker, did acknowledge - and I have no contempt to people before us - that this time, Kenya did nominate to EALA an extraordinarily astute group of politicians. This is also recognition that Kenya takes this Community very seriously and we do not only look at you as a market, but as brothers and sisters.

If I was to look at the broader sense of the East African Community, we are told that - I personally say that I am a Bantu here in Kenya; so does Hon. Kanini, Hon. Maina Karobia and others. I was told from history that a long time ago, both Hon. Maina, Hon. Kanini and I came from Cameroon and Nigeria and settled in this belt. *(Laughter)* We found ourselves in this Eastern African Community space and so did the other Bantu in other countries of East Africa.

I keep saying this as a joke. Both the leaders, the President of Kenya and the Leader of Opposition in Kenya came from Sudan. Therefore, you can see how we have had South-South migration for a very long time. There is no basis right now to respect colonial borders; that I cannot go to live in Burundi, Kinshasa and Kigali, and be able to be as prosperous in any of these countries or capitals.

To finalise, Mr Speaker, the President says this time and again, and this was echoed by the late Mwalimu Nyerere. "We have been created into small, unviable and little states that are trying to compete with global economic forces like the United States and the European Union. Integration and unity are our only solution. It is the only salvation to Africa's economic progress."

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So, Mr Speaker, as we transit from Kenya and continue to build the East African Community, my request to all of you is to carry a passport, as I have said in my committee, written on “East African passport” but only issued by the Government of Kenya. All of you carry East African passports nowadays that are issued by your respective Governments. So, we are East Africans.

We must drop our pseudo-nationalism to hate others so that we create an East African identity and eventually an African identity. Of what issue is it to me if Hon. Gai Deng comes to Kenya and becomes the richest woman here? By stopping Hon. Gai Deng from being and working in Kenya, it does not mean another Kenyan will be rich. God does not work that way.

God does not work in a way that you stop the fortunes of others to build yours. Why would a South African hate a Nigerian? These are partitions that were created against us and have been extremely detrimental to the cause of African unity and our solidarity. It is, therefore, inherent that we become one nation, one people and one destiny.

When I came to this East African Parliament, some of us thought it was just an accidental journey, but I actually believe destiny has brought me here. I have become so East African. Sometimes, my brother, Hon. Ngwaru says we might not see a federation in our life time; I believe we will see it. We will see a common President, be it Hon. Gideon – When I say “Gideon”, I am talking to three of you; one from Kenya, one from Uganda and one from South Sudan.

Be it Hon. Makame or his sons or daughters, I am confident that one day, we will have an East African State where I can settle in Kinshasa and become the Governor there; where I can settle in Kampala and become the Governor there. Some of you can settle in Nairobi and become the Governors here, like Hon. Namara who has already asked to be the Governor of Westlands. *(Laughter)*

Therefore, that is the East Africa we need to build, where we can go to Burundi and Tanzania. Actually, Hon. Makame and I are people of the same country, if we are to go historically. We were part of the Sultanate of Zanzibar - Mombasa, Pemba and Zanzibar.

We were divided at the time of Independence. Hon. Makame was thrown to that side and I to the other, but we have gotten an opportunity now, through East Africa, to become one country and one people. You can now come back to Mombasa if you want to get married; I am told most Swahilis like to get married. We also have supplies of women who could be of your taste –*(Laughter)*- and vice versa, isn't it?

Therefore, let us look at it that way and I am looking forward to that very integrated community; that is the argument our President made. All this is to ensure we exploit African resources for the benefit of Africans and end exploitation of the African people. We must secure our minerals, our people and our future.

I wanted to re-echo, in my own words, the speech of His Excellency, William Ruto. He has made us all East Africans. He wants to make us all particularly African. For that reason, I believe this East African Community and all of you should be ambassadors to each other. I am not trying to bring an example but I remember when one of the young DRC students died in Kenya, Hon. Dorothee called us immediately. Hon. Shahbal told me, *“This is our daughter and we have to act like she is our own.”*

With those many words, I beg to move this motion on the speech of His Excellency the President, William Samoei Ruto. *(Applause)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Honourable members, I advise that we use five minutes to give a chance to others. As you can see, we now have red, green and yellow signals. Hon. Hassan, you have reached red many times. Honourable members, please note that when the red signal shows, you have exceeded five minutes.

The debate is open; you have the Floor. Let us take Hon. Namara, Hon. George, sorry Hon. Clement, then Hon. Dr Makame.

**HON. MEMBERS:** Gender balance.

**THE SPEAKER:** Sorry! Oh! Gender balance, yes, I was considering chapters to give a chance to all partner states – I will come back to gender balance later on. Maybe let us stop there, but please, clerks, get the list, and then you advise me. Consider all those who have asked for the avenue and come back to me. So, honorable members, remember that we have five minutes for everyone.

3.14

**MR DENNIS NAMARA (Uganda):** Thank you so much, Mr Speaker. I want to say that I support the motion moved by the Hon. Hassan. In the same spirit, I want to congratulate H.E Dr William Ruto, CGH PhD, President of the Republic of Kenya and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, for the well-articulated speech he delivered to this Assembly, yesterday regarding the East African integration.

He was very clear that EALA as, a Parliament, is the vanguard of the East African transformation by making legislation and policies that are going to anchor our integration agenda to greater horizons.

He touched on a lot of the progress made by the Community, particularly, in the areas of trade, like the intra-EAC trade at 25 percent, the one-area network, the issues of the e-passport, showing how we are more integrated than before.

He also re-echoed the feelings and the voices of so many people that integration is not a matter of luxury, as put by the Hon. Musamali, but is about the survival of the black race. Because if we are not careful, the way things are going, he put it clearly – these *Wazungu* will come back to colonise us, and now they have come back in software and controlling us virtually, as Hon. Musamali said. Therefore, it is our sole responsibility, as a Parliament, to ensure that we foster the integration agenda of East Africa.

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However, I would like to put it, as Hon. Musamali said – I am referring to what the Hon. Musamali said because he also gave a very good address. That is why I am mixing both.

So, as Hon. Musamali said, human resource is very important as far as integration is concerned because without having ideological people, and people who are clear, and mission-oriented, we cannot go far. We may run, but we may not reach where we want to go because it will make us crash. If you go with a pilot who spent the night drinking or is still drinking alcohol, not water, and you are flying in the skies, I can assure you, however big and sophisticated that plane may be, you have higher chances of crashing. So, that's how we see East Africa going forward if we do not change the human resource.

I want to urge the administrator from Kenya to urge His Excellency, President Ruto, and the Government of Kenya, and the EAC Summit that it is not too late to liberate the East African Community. The Secretary General, you gave us from Kenya - Kenya has so many potential people – in fact, I was wondering, is this the best Kenya could send to the Community? The way we know Kenya, with visionary people, people of calibre, and people of high intelligence. Honourable minister, is that the best export, in terms of human resources, you could bring to the Community? And I will give my reasons - and I'm saying so because human resource is critical.

Honorable Minister, Honorable Speaker, Honorable Members, there is money, which was given by so many countries - our partner states - called the Peace Fund. The financial rules, the Treaty, the Budget Act, and all legislations provide that every money coming into the Community must be appropriated. Over \$6 million that has been collected, as far as I'm concerned, has been spent but has never gone through appropriation. I do not know whether the Council of Ministers is executing its mandate or it has also decided to go into slumber land. You cannot watch money for the people of East Africa being squandered. Otherwise, what is the reason for the Secretary-General to come up with his budget?

He brought a budget, can you imagine, before the Council of Ministers, how he intended to spend that money. The Council of Ministers approved that budget. He never brought it to Parliament for appropriation. He decided to implement that budget without going through Parliament. Which level of thuggery is that? Six million dollars that I know of. The expenditure of money has never gone through appropriation. I want to request that before we go for another Plenary - because yesterday we talked about it here before His Excellency, President Ruto - in Kampala, His Excellency Museveni will be there, and it will be worse. It is wise for him to resign immediately because *-(Member timed out)-* just one minute to finish.

I want to inform you, honourable members, that the next Plenary, for your information, will not take place. Now I'm informing you, as the Chairman F&A of the Commission, because the Secretary-General informed us last time that he was going to bring a supplementary for some activities of Parliament to go through. He decided not to bring a supplementary. Some of that money was used for the Inter-Parliamentary games because there was no money for games but with the understanding that he would bring a supplementary.

Honourable Minister, there is no money for the next Plenary. Meaning the Community will not have a budget. That is the Secretary-General you have. With those few words, I, therefore, support the motion as moved by Hon. Hassan. I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I advise you that the personal conduct of a member or any other person can only be debated through a substantive motion. So, let us remain on the motion, which is there otherwise, it should be lost. We have the speech, the great one that was delivered by His Excellency, President Ruto. Let us act on that. Otherwise, we shall spoil everything. The next is Hon. Kennedy; you have the floor.

3.22

**MR KENNEDY AYASSON MUKULIA (South Sudan):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. Just to begin with the communication you have made. I want to say that some of our submissions are based on the speech of the President.

Mr Speaker, I want to refer you to paragraph 25 of the speech by the President, when he said that it is the resource constraint, which persistently hampers our progress. This Assembly has the cardinal role of making sure that we do not have resource constraints in the committees. Mr Speaker, just immediately from what Hon. Namara said, I want to lay before this House, an amount of six million dollars as evidence of what we are saying – *(Interjections)* - yes, I'm laying papers - it's not counted - an amount of USD 6,600,009,711 –

**THE SPEAKER:** That is which document?

**MR MUKULIA:** It is my document to lay before this House as evidence of what we are saying. The resources of this community -

**THE SPEAKER:** What is the title of the document so that we can -

**MR MUKULIA:** It's a Council's consideration with the EAC Community Peace Facility Financial Report of August 2022 –

**THE SPEAKER:** August 2022 to?

**MR MUKULIA:** August 2022 to 2023. Just from what Hon. Namara is saying that six million dollars has been squandered and it has been squandered by none other than the Secretary General of this Community. If \$6 million can be squandered in that nature of which he took his budget to the Council and the Council clearly said it - if you look at the last page, which is page 10, it directs the approval of this expenditure and this expenditure should be coming to the Parliament for approval, which has not happened. The Council gives somebody directives to spend \$6 million. The person spends this money.

The President says the meager resources we have should not be spent yet we are spending them that way - what are we doing, honourable members? For us to rescue this Community, we have an individual or individuals in the service of this Community to vacate their offices with immediate effect if this Community does not collapse. I do not have where to pass to lay this paper – *(Interjections)* - you can pass it on.

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Mr Speaker, I have another piece of evidence to produce before this Assembly of an amount of money close to \$31,000 that has been paid to an individual illegally recruited to this Community when the position was already filled by a substantive staff. A very alarming situation, yet we continue to say that we need staff in this Community.

When you employ your son to the service of this Community, that is corruption of the highest order. I have the evidence, and by the way, honourable members, this individual was paid \$31,000. When we want to come here to Nairobi, we are denied access to funds.

**THE SPEAKER:** Do you mean his son?

**MR MUKULIA:** He is here! Mr Speaker, a son of people in service of the Community. Mr Speaker, another piece of evidence I want to produce in response to the President's speech – (*Interjections*) - to fight corruption in this Community, is that we have 17 staff of the EAC Secretariat who have travelled to Nairobi purportedly for the budget hearing session. Where is the budget hearing session? And I have evidence of some of them that have come here.

Mr Speaker, the Council directed a moratorium on the recruitment of staff and an advert appeared in some of the dailies but we are continuing to recruit. With a standing order of the Council, this has never been done. How will this Community progress if we have such kind of things? (*Applause*) The Human Resource Department advised against that recruitment. I'm providing evidence of that nature. And this is the kind of Community that we are talking about, our heads of state are relying on us to save this Community from collapsing.

Mr Speaker, if this matter is not taken into consideration, the excellent speech given by His Excellency, President Ruto will fall into the River Nile and it will be swept to the Mediterranean Sea via Khartoum.

Mr Speaker and Members, if we want to save this Community, what do we do? One destiny, one people! How many people to go?

**HON. MEMBERS:** One!

**MR MUKULIA:** I submit. (*Applause*)

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, honorable member and Chair of the General Purposes Committee for providing all of these documents. We will have to look into them but thank you. Now we give the floor to Hon. Clement.

3.28

**MR CLEMENT MUSANGABATWARE (Rwanda):** Mr Speaker, I support the motion moved by the Hon. Omar Hassan. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to express my gratitude to His Excellency, President William Samoei Ruto, the President of the Republic of Kenya, for the guidance and clear vision on the EAC integration agenda during his address to the East African Legislative Assembly.

Mr Speaker, I take this time to thank also the members of the Kenya Chapter, the Assembly, the Senate, and the population of Kenya, for the warm welcome and hospitality as well.

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During our stay in Kenya, from the arrival date up to now, we are enjoying special treatment and hospitality in Kenya, and we appreciate it.

When H.E William Ruto, the President of the Republic of Kenya, was addressing the august Assembly, he said, “Our people's journey to a prosperous, competitive, secure, stable, and politically united East Africa entails the implementation of policies, the establishment of institutions under the four well-known pillars of integration, namely the customs union, the common market, the monetary union, and the political federation.”

Mr Speaker, a lot has been achieved in terms of integration, but we still have some challenges. Just to mention a few, we have an EAC travel document facilitating the movement of persons. That is very good. But we don't have, so far, one currency. I hope we will achieve our goals as expressed by H.E William Ruto, CGH PhD, the President of the Republic of Kenya.

He said, “There is no denying that our vision to be a prosperous, competitive, secure, stable, and politically united East Africa is taking shape at a higher rate than before.”

Mr Speaker, once again I support the motion moved by Hon. Hassan Omar. I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Now I will give the Floor to Hon. Makame.

3.30

**DR ABDULLA HASNUU MAKAME (Tanzania):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. First of all, I would like to thank our hosts - the colleagues from the Republic of Kenya, the Members of the Kenya Chapter, and the honourable minister but in a very special way H.E Dr William Samoei Ruto - for graciously hosting and giving us a speech that was very educative and that we are deliberating on now.

Mr Speaker, I would like to declare that I support - with all my hands and legs and even my head - (*Laughter*) - the motion moved by my brother, the Hon. Hassan Omar.

Mr Speaker, I wouldn't like to speak much on the issue of the peace fund and the non-appropriation because we had already discussed these issues earlier but I would point out that we had a problem during the budgeting session relating to the interpretation of Article 132, and specifically, on Article 132(5) - because, Mr Speaker, if you allow me I can read it out verbatim.

**THE SPEAKER:** Of the Treaty or what?

**DR MAKAME:** Of the Treaty.

**THE SPEAKER:** Okay.

**DR MAKAME** It says, “The resources of the Community shall be utilized to finance activities of the community and shall be determined by the Assembly on the recommendations of the Council...” But these resources under Article 132 – and I am talking about it entirely - are supposed to be appropriated by the House if you read it together with Article 133. Mr Speaker, we are in a space where the powers and jurisdiction of this House

are being jeopardized. And I would say that we need to stand firm so that we take into account and we hold all those people who are accountable, accountable.

At this point, let me also raise the concern about the failure of this House to have considered and debated reports of the audited financial statements as required by law for years: 2021, 2022, and 2023, which have not yet been considered in this House. So, for the ones for 2021 – *(Interjections)* oh, 2021, thank you for the corrections - those ones need to be considered and deliberated upon. There are some issues in those financial statements that we need to look into.

Mr Speaker, now, let me direct myself to the President's speech specifically paragraph number 12 where he spoke about the Monetary Union. The President informed us of his desire for this Assembly to expedite the monetary union process. However, let me say – and this should be on record – that the Council needs to really assist the Community because they are the ones who brought the Bills to the House and those Bills were cleared, but they are now returning them. And when we see it, it's very costly to the Community.

We anticipate that the Council deliberated and had internal extensive discussions. So, why are they returning their Bills? Why is the Council returning the Bills, which they brought to the House? They are the ones who cleared and brought them to the House but now they are returning them. It means that they are not actually – they didn't conclude their discussions. If they didn't conclude, why did they bring them to the House?

Mr Speaker, I saw the green light, but let me thank my brother, Hon. Paul Mwasu Musamali. Yesterday, he did a very good job for the – on behalf of all of us when he managed to engage our member of the Summit. We saw him very happy with us, and for that we applaud him. Thank you, Mr Speaker. I beg to submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, hon. Makame. And now we give the Floor to hon. George Odongo.

3.36

**MR GEORGE ODONGO (Uganda):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me the chance to debate the speech of H.E President Dr Samoei William Ruto.

Mr Speaker, every time we have an opportunity to be addressed by a member of the Summit, they provide us with a compass. They provide us with an insight into where we are going as a Community because they are at the cockpit of decision-making and the rest of us are institutions and organs of the Community and our work is to granulate the visions of our Summit members into the nuts and bolts that put together our ambition of regional integration. So, I want to thank very much, the President, for coming out with very bold proposals and challenging the Assembly to play its rightful role of ensuring that we have the right pieces of legislation, but also to ensure that we provide the right leadership and amplify the voices of the people that we lead; the citizens of East Africa.

Mr Speaker, I have a few areas that the speech of His Excellency touched, which are very important for our regional integration. The President, in his address, talked extensively about the indispensable role of peace and security.

**THE SPEAKER:** Which paragraph?

**MR ODONGO:** Mr Speaker, if I have to go paragraph by paragraph, the minutes are going to run away but I know that paragraph 19 talks about peace, stability, and security as an enabler of our integration.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**MR ODONGO:** Peace and security are enablers of our integration. They are an integral part and provide the foundations on which our countries integrate.

In that respect, therefore, Mr Speaker, our history serves us very right that the region has grappled with providing homegrown solutions to tensions that arise between our different partner states. The speech of the President underscored the need for us to develop a robust architecture; a peace and security architecture and have the right tools within the tool box of our peace and security architecture to be able to respond, at the right time, and to respond appropriately, to matters of peace and security in the region.

As we speak, Mr Speaker, we know very well that the Democratic Republic of Congo is not at ease, and the mandate of the East African Standby Force was not renewed. These are critical matters that we, as an Assembly and the region, need to deliberate very intentionally with the ambition of creating a very responsive peace and security mechanism.

Mr Speaker, the President also talked about climate change and challenged us to look at climate change as the challenge of our times. I would like to persuade this House to look at climate change from a climate justice standpoint and avoid the trap of the weaponisation of climate change, the same way we fell hook, line, and sinker to the prescriptions of the World Bank and the other institutions when they imposed on us the Structural Adjustment Programme. Most of our countries fell into it, and we took a long time to recover from those prescriptions that were cut, copied and pasted for every country without understanding the context of our development.

In pursuing and trying to address climate change issues, our countries have got to address it from a climate justice standpoint.

The President also talked about good governance, issues of investment - I will be moving, in this House, a motion seeking the resolution of this House to harmonise our investment policies and taxes so that we do not begin to compete within ourselves but to position the East African Community as a single investment destination, and in this way, attract the necessary capital investment and promote the region as an attractive investment destination.

Mr Speaker, I have other issues to address, but I will allow, for the sake of this debate, that other colleagues intervene. However, before I do that, before I sign off, the issue of public debt is a question of public debt governance. If you interrogate the matter of public debt in our partner states, it comes down to matters of transparency in contracting of sovereign

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public debt. And that's a matter that we need to seek not only legislation but also to employ our partner states to look at coming up with public debt management strategies that allow for the participation of the public.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Odongo, for your contribution and I now give the Floor to Hon. Kanini Kega.

3.43

**MR JAMES MATHENGE KANINI KEGA (Kenya):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to add my voice in congratulating His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Kenya, Dr William Samoei Ruto, for the speech that he gave yesterday.

As I make that contribution, I would also like to join my chapter chair, Hon. Omar, in welcoming all of you to Kenya. We are happy to host you. In fact, Mr Speaker, when His Excellency was making his speech yesterday, he directed Hon. Omar to make sure that he takes you to all the licensed areas. I am also offering myself –

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Omar, where are you? Please come in.

**MR KEGA:** He was directed to make sure that he takes you to all the licensed areas and I am also offering to take you to the off license ones and also upcountry. *(Laughter)* We are all delighted as Kenyans to host you. We are very happy. Every new day comes with various challenges but also with very many opportunities and we are ready to exploit those opportunities.

If you look at His Excellency, the President's speech, it was very clear. I believe his mind is very clear on where we were, where we are and where we are going as EAC. He was very clear in enumerating the four pillars; the Common Market, the Customs Union, the Monetary Union, and the Political Federation. He was very clear on the critical role that EALA is playing.

If the Head of State is very aware of the role that is played by EALA, why then would we have any other institution or agency not recognising and appreciating the role that is played by EALA? He matched the words with his deeds. You have seen that even as a country, in terms of contributions, Kenya has done its 100 per cent contribution. It is something to be proud of because we cannot achieve this if we do not have resources.

I also join my chair in saying that – also being a former Chair of Budget in the National Assembly – we have to make sure that resources are properly utilised. Resources are very limited and they must be properly utilised. People must account for the resources that they have been given.

I would like to almost conclude by saying that he talked about us going digital. Mr Speaker, we have our e-passports internationally recognised. Now you can go anywhere in the world with the East African passport and we are proud of it. The world is going digital. However, EAC and EALA are still in the Stone Age. We are still analog.

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We are in these chambers. It is not the chamber that is normally used. When you look at the gadgets that are before us here - digital. The other chamber that we went to, the Senate, is also digital. The National Assembly is digital. However, when you see a Member of Parliament from EALA coming to the Chamber, you might think that they are carrying a lot of money because they have huge bags full of papers.

Mr Speaker, if you are able to go digital and have these gadgets, there is no need for Hon. Karobia to come with two bags, one full of papers, the other one – the other day I saw our chair budget, coming to the budget meeting with huge documents. At some point I thought that he was giving us some money. We cannot be saying that we want to go digital yet we are not utilising that.

Mr Speaker, if we can get simple gadgets like this iPad here, we will be able to be on time. You remember, even when we are virtual, you see some individuals, some honourable members, struggling with their small gadgets. However, if they have this one, it will make our work easier.

Finally, the African Union chairmanship is coming up and it is designated for East Africa. If we do not go as a united front, that position might go elsewhere. I remember His Excellency, the President, without even identifying or mentioning a particular person, said that they are going to make sure that they front one candidate. That is the East Africa that we want. We want where we match the talk, where we say that this is what we are doing and we do it as East Africa.

Therefore, with those very many remarks, I believe that when that position falls vacant, East Africa will walk together and present one candidate who will be the chair of the African Union. From there, Mr Speaker, I want to assure you that East Africa will move from one height to another. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Kanini. Now we go to Hon. Kayonga and Hon. Rose Akol. Thank you.

3.48

**MS CAROLINE KAYONGA (Rwanda):** Thank you Mr Speaker for giving me the opportunity to add my voice to the other Members, to congratulate His Excellency, President William Ruto, for an excellent speech, and to appreciate the guidance that we have received from him.

I would also like to take this opportunity to appreciate the people of Kenya for the warm hospitality that has been accorded to us in this beautiful city of Nairobi. Indeed, we have seen that Kenyans are true masters of hospitality. I know everyone can agree with me.

Mr Speaker, I would like to use my three minutes well by only speaking to two points in the presidential address. The first point that I would like to speak to is what His Excellency, President Ruto, reminded us about the ultimate aim of the East African integration agenda being to transform and translate economic, political, social, and cultural integration for a

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positive impact on the well-being of every citizen of East Africa. It is very important for us as an Assembly when we are going about our business, our legislative role, our representation role, and our oversight role, to remember that everything we are doing is aimed at transforming and translating economic, political, social, and cultural integration into a positive impact on the well-being of every citizen of East Africa.

The second point that I would like to speak to is the challenges that our community is facing. His Excellency, President Ruto, urged us to work on existing challenges to trade and investment such as non-tariff barriers, which we are seeing in our oversight. While a lot has been addressed, but several show up. Some are dealt with and others still show up. We see it in our oversight - distracting and costly trade disputes. To also stay on top of emerging threats in the digital space, which some colleagues have already spoken about.

The other is climate change, and that is where I would like to focus. Hon. Odongo has spoken about climate change, but it is a clear and present danger for us. I was fortunate to be here some time during the Africa Climate Summit. There were so many sessions that we attended. President Ruto has urged us to support the African Leaders' Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and call to action. Climate change is present. We, as an Assembly in the different committees where we belong are urged to mainstream climate change. As Hon. Dr George said – I give you the doctor – it should not be driven by others.

His Excellency, said it clearly in the call to action and the Nairobi Declaration sets it clearly. It should not be driven by others. We should own it, understand it. We assure you, Mr Speaker, that we, as a Committee on Agriculture, Tourism and Natural Resources are going to do what we can to mainstream climate change. We are going to actually capacity build this Assembly in climate change and mainstream it in all that we do. Whether it is in the energy sector, infrastructure sector, agriculture – we are talking about food security. It is a clear and present problem that we have to deal with.

We are assuring His Excellency, the Summit and the citizens of East Africa that we will do the best we can to deal with this challenge that is now even becoming bigger as time goes on. I can see that I am still in green. I support the motion. Thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Now I give the Floor to Hon. Rose, then Hon. Mathias and then Hon. Ole Sankok. Where is Hon. Rose? Oh, good, you have the Floor.

3.53

**MS ROSE AKOL (Uganda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to thank and also talk about this great speech that the President of this great Republic of Kenya, gave us yesterday.

First of all, I want to start by thanking the brothers and sisters of Kenya for the warm welcome and the good reception they have given us so far. We are very grateful and we thank you for that.

The speech we were given by His Excellency, the President, Dr William Ruto of the Republic of Kenya yesterday was a very great speech. He spoke with a lot of enthusiasm and with knowledge of the subject matter he was talking about.

He gave us assignments as an Assembly. And he took us round to say that we must know where we are, we must know our next obligations that we have to perform. He also positioned us vis-à-vis the African free trade area, what we are supposed to do, and also positioned us vis-a-vis the global community and what we should do.

There is a lot to talk about. Given the time that we have been assigned here, I just want to talk about one point, which was touched by Hon. Makame. That is on point number 12, where His Excellency spoke with a lot of passion about how we should actualise the East African Monetary Union by 2031 and what we should provide as an Assembly. That we should provide a framework to anchor full implementation of the customs union, common market protocols, and also other vital organisations, such as the Monetary Institute, in order to actualise the Monetary Union.

I was a Member of the fourth EALA where we passed all these Bills, which required a legal framework, definitely, for the establishment of these institutions the President was talking about. The monetary institute, the statistics bureau, the enforcement compliance commission, and also the financial services body. Some of these institutions should have been established a long time ago, because there are provisions in the Common Market Protocol and also the Customs Union, which require to be fully implemented before we move on to the Monetary Union.

However, today as we speak here, I am yet to know from Council, we have asked quite a number of questions to Council - when they are bringing amendments to the current legal framework in order for this Community to actualise the full implementation of the customs union and also the common market protocol.

This is because there are issues that are very clear and very specific about what we need to do. For example, the trade remedies committee. In the protocol, it talks about three countries, each with three members, that is the total membership of nine for this trade remedies committee. But where are we, Mr Speaker? We are now eight member states.

There is need for this to be amended, but up to now, the council will come with a generic answer. They say things like, "We have heard what you have said. We are going to look into it. We shall come with a Bill." It is generic. This has been going on since EALA four, up to now.

We have passed the Bills. A lot of money was used by this Assembly to pass those four Bills – legal frameworks which are necessary for the establishment of the monetary union. It is about two to three years since we passed those Bills. Yet the Treaty is very clear, that if there is any dissenting view, the Bill should be returned to the Assembly within 90 days. This is two to three years down the road. It was in the fourth EALA, now it is fifth EALA. We have to go through the process again and spend more money. The little money that we are able to

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get from our tax payers is being wasted - we are going through a vicious cycle because there are some people who have decided to sit or sleep and forget the role they are supposed to play in the integration process.

There is a lot to say, but I want to thank His Excellency the President for his great speech and you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to speak on this. I hope there can be another opportunity where we can expound on this speech even further because there is a lot to say about it. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Rose. Now, Hon. Mathias.

4.00

**DR MATHIAS HAREBAMUNGU (Rwanda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to express my gratitude to His Excellency, Dr William Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya, upon his wonderful address to this august Assembly yesterday, 5 March 2024.

Allow me to start by thanking His Excellency, the President, the people of Kenya and Kenya EALA chapter for their warm welcome. *(Applause)*

The very great speech made by His Excellency, the President is of very deep wisdom. It is elaborate, coherent and consistent. It clearly underlines the fundamental and key pillars of the EAC regional integration and it challenges us as EALA parliamentarians.

The President calls on us to reflect on the following points;

We as EALA, as EAC and ultimately the Continent, where do we come from? Where are we today? And of course, where do we want to go? This will guide and inspire us in developing real strong and tangible milestones for the acceleration of the EAC regional integration.

We would like His Excellency, Dr William Ruto, to champion the reforms within the Community. This is what I wish and highly support. However, at the same time, we should be ready and supportive to drive and spearhead the innovative ways in which to do things differently, for example, when it comes to accountability.

I commend this great and inspiring speech. As for the vote of thanks by Hon. Musamali - he elaborated well the deep and persistent malaise within the institution. His grievances are ours and deserve our full, unreserved support until things are done in one way or the other. I beg to submit. Thank you. *(Applause)*

4.03

**MR DAVID OLE SANKOK (Kenya):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity to contribute to the President's speech given yesterday. I thank Hon. Hassan Omar for moving this motion. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all chapters to Kenya. Feel at home. Visit Nairobi National Park, the only game park that is within the city in the world. You are highly welcome.

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The President's speech was one of a real Pan-African who knows where we are, where we have come from and where we are going. I am very proud to be a Kenyan at a time when President William Ruto is the President because he is a PhD holder, meaning he is book smart, and he is also a hustler, meaning he is street smart. The combination of being book smart and street smart brings up a super human and that is what our President is.

Moving on to the issues that he touched upon; there was the issue of social economic neocolonialism where we are enslaved to a single currency named the dollar. I can give an example; if Kenya took a loan of USD 10 billion in 2013, it was equivalent to almost KShs 800 billion. At the moment, the same USD 10 billion, because the exchange rate has changed is now worth almost KShs 1.5 trillion. This means that in 2024, we have to pay an extra KShs 600 billion simply because of the fluctuation of the dollar. That is how we are enslaved by that particular currency.

Mr Speaker, if you recall, I had a motion on the issue of using local currencies in inter-country trade within East Africa. Since I see my time is up; on the issue of our local currencies, my proposal is not to go to Uganda and exchange Kenya Shillings to the dollars at a fee and then from dollars to Uganda Shillings at a fee. This fee ranges within 10 per cent. This means that we lose 10 per cent in our intercountry trade.

Lastly, the President talked about our economic bloc being one of the best. We have 1.4 billion acres of land, 5,500 kilometres of coastline and this land is arable. We have a population of 310 million people. It is a very big market.

On the issue of AU Commission chairmanship, he spoke of us being united and supporting one candidate. I would like to vouch for Rt Hon. Raila Odinga as a solar light I believe can carry the aspirations and the dreams of our Pan African forefathers of uniting Africa into the United States of Africa. I submit. *(Applause)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Sankok. I now give the Floor to Hon. Blacks.

4.07

**MR GERALD BLACKS SIRANDA (Uganda):** Mr Speaker, I would like to join the House in seconding the motion moved by Hon. Hassan Omar, and also in appreciating and supporting the energy, the vigour and the motivation of the speech by His Excellency the President William Ruto.

In it, you saw a speech of a person that believed in the East African Community growth. In the speech, you saw a person that was speaking about unity and uniting this region, but not only this region, but Africa. I have been persuaded by the Hon. Kanini and Hon. Sankok to consider withdrawing my candidature for the African Union Commission chairperson. *(Laughter)*

My chief campaigners, Hon. Maina and Hon. Odongo will sit together to agree on whether we withdraw our candidature to allow East Africa present – of course, we will speak at a cost *(Laughter)* – when I saw my leader, my President, saying that he is going to be the proposer –

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in that spirit, I will consider withdrawing my candidature so that East Africa proceeds with one candidate for us to take that seat.

Mr Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to paragraph 5 on page 3; in the speech of His Excellency, the President – he clearly says that the Assembly is a key pillar for us to achieve what we want within this East African Community – the pillar is the Assembly. That goes back to what we have been singing about on the question of autonomy. The Assembly that the President believes has a key role to play cannot deliver the mandate that we expect it to deliver in ensuring that every benchmark that was set out in the Treaty becomes a reality.

I would like to urge the council of ministers – I know that we have representation here – that we speed up the process of making sure that this Assembly becomes autonomous so that the commission that is chaired by the Speaker is in position to draw agendas.

Autonomy includes issues of finances - that there would be no point at which you draw out an agenda for the Assembly and then you are worried that you have no resources or funding. Sometimes, when you only depend on a requisition as a clerk, you have no say on when the money would be available for you because you may not be the priority for those that drive the Community.

When you go to page 5, specifically I will start with paragraph 11. It is on the question of ensuring that we speed up the process of supporting our partner states that have not fulfilled the question of the East African e-passports. My committee has been urging this Parliament and the Community in general to make sure that we speed up the processes and the deadlines that have been set that all the partner states fulfill the agenda of having one document so that all of us speak as one Community.

Paragraph 13 of the same page 5 is about the pillar of the East African integration and of course the question of the political federation. The President referred to a transition to a political federation which is a political federation.

Mr Speaker, the President urged all our partner states that have not fasttracked this process - we urge the Council of Ministers, whether it requires support or engagement, that they speed up the processes so that at least for the first time, we have the East African Confederation Constitution which determines how we move.

Finally, we believe that we should also support the committee led by Justice Odoki and Justice Amos Wako so that this process is fast-tracked, funded and supported for us to have a hope that whatever our forefathers dreamed and came up with this East African Community, becomes a reality. I beg to support the motion.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Blacks. Now, we have Hon. Kakooza, Hon. Dr Woda, Hon. Maina, Hon. Kim Gai and Honourable - which name did you give me? Honourable members, can you please come back so that we can catch your eyes. For those who are not on this list, clerks, can you please get the names and then give me the order. Consider left, right and the gender.

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Let us start with Hon. Kakooza. Remember, five minutes. We have been going beyond. It is not easy but please try to confine yourself within five minutes.

4.16

**MR JAMES KAKOOZA (Uganda):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I want to add my voice to those who have thanked the President addressing us and highlighting the key components of the integration agenda.

Mr Speaker, I think the President was precise. Really, we need to take a key note of the Assembly and the Council of Ministers that the only way we have to integrate and enforce the four pillars of the Treaty, is that we must work together with a focused mission.

On page 23, he said, “We must provide a strong framework of achieving rapid leap-frogging and development of sustainable competitive advantage in emerging hi-tech fields like the digital economy in general...”

As we talk today, when you look at the data given by the World Bank in operations of intra-trade within the community, the cash transfers through the common market is the most expensive in the whole world – remittance from one country to another. I can give an example. If you transfer \$200 from Tanzania to Kenya, you have to pay 35 percent. That translates into \$70 per \$200. If you transfer \$2,000, it becomes \$1,400. If it is \$10,000, you got \$3,000.

What is needed here? In the whole world, to transfer money from USA to, let us say Rwanda, you need only one percent. What does it take to do this? It is for the Council of Ministers to bring a legal framework that harmonises the transmission of money across the borders. We have the technology, we have the networks.

Why don't we take interest in those non-tariff barriers that prohibit member states from transacting business and continue the economic growth of the partner states? Why should you wait to be told when we know what we are supposed to do?

Secondly, it is simple. We create an effective policy environment, which will allow for cross-border payment to benefit from advances of digital technology while guarding against macroeconomic risks, like illicit finance and money laundering. It does not take long if you want to make a common market that is one of the pillars to succeed.

There is no way we can transit into the African trade area without solving those non-tariff barriers. It would be a waste of time. Even if it is a dream to achieve a monetary union when we do not deal with non tariff barriers, I think it is now high time we got a legal framework, which does not take long that we can solve.

Two, I would like to supplement what Hon. Odongo said about the peace and security. As much as we focus on the markets and customs union, we must include focus on human beings' security and safety.

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The most important duty of any internal government entity is to protect lives and handle those lives with dignity. Leaders should not behave like emperors of Rome. When Rome was burning, they were playing their fiddle. They did not know that it would affect Rome.

Therefore, we need a serious discussion on the conflicts within the region. This one cannot be done by external players because the interests of external players are totally different. It is only we, partner states in the region, whose leaders must sit and discuss what the problem is and get to the root of it. Otherwise, the economic growth we are talking about and all these pillars, people will not transact business.

I would like to beg that the members of the Summit sit and discuss these candid solutions, which are simple and cannot be taken anywhere else. I would like to end by asserting that “There can be no peace without justice. There can be no justice without truth. There can be no truth unless someone rises up to tell you the truth.” We need a candid discussion about the conflicts within the region. I beg to submit. *(Applause)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Kakooza. Now we go to Hon. Dr Woda. Please, five minutes.

4.22

**DR JEREMIAH ODOK WODA (South Sudan):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. From the onset, I would like to thank the Kenyan Government under the leadership of His Excellency, Dr William Ruto. I also thank the Kenyan Chapter under the leadership of Hon. Hassan Omar for the hospitality making it possible for us to have the sittings here.

Mr Speaker, in his remarks, His Excellency, Dr Ruto commented and affirmed that he is with the East African Community and its objective. He also stressed the importance of the Assembly. Let me quote from his speech that, “For a prosperous, competitive, secure, stable and politically united East Africa, we need a strong Assembly.”

The Assembly is not autonomous. It is being tied down by powers, which are not letting it to do the mandate it is supposed to do. From this point of view, I call upon the Council of Ministers to avail the autonomy to the Assembly so that we are able to execute our mandate. Everyone, including the Head of the Summit, is looking at us as a saviour. However, when that saviour is stripped of its powers, we cannot accomplish much.

His Excellency also, as a climate change champion, alluded that we have to support the Nairobi Declaration. I was among the members who were lucky to attend the inaugural African summit, which was held here in Nairobi, I think in September 2023. This summit was very important for the head of the state and all the African leaders to put their heads together so that we face this elephant called climate change. Climate change is real and it is affecting our communities and our countries.

Mr Speaker, His Excellency also called upon us to invest and budget for the green economy and green industrial revolution. I call upon the members of the Council - and I cannot see one - that as a Community, we have to budget and also invest in the green economy.

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I would like also to take the opportunity to congratulate the Government of Kenya upon the success of the African Climate Summit, which was held here, as I mentioned. It was something big, which makes effect especially for us as climate activists.

His Excellency also called upon the Assembly to reflect on the opportunities and more resources for regional integration. The Assembly cannot do this if it is not supported by all the arms, which are supposed to support it. That is why I will call upon the heads of state to look at this problem of the Assembly not having its autonomy.

Mr Speaker, I will not take much of the time because most of the remarks, which I wanted to deliberate on, have been discussed by my colleagues. I submit and hereby support the motion. Thank you.

4.26

**MR MAINA MWANGI (Kenya):** Allow me to start by thanking you, Mr Speaker, together with the Community for bringing the plenary session this time to Kenya. You are most welcome. Thank you, for considering this partner state to host the plenary session.

I rise to support the motion by my chairperson and my good friend, Hon. Hassan Omar, and also to congratulate the President for the elaborate speech and address that he gave yesterday. It was a great honour by the President to come and address us.

Mr Speaker, I saw the kind of elaborate military parade that we were given yesterday and this is only given to Parliament and the Senate. I know *Mheshimiwa* Sankok and *Mheshimiwa* Falhada have celebrated this in the past. Yesterday, when I saw the military parade, I was happy.

In fact, when I was getting through the gate, I was telling *Mheshimiwa* Makame, because we were using the same car, that I would never imagine two years ago that I would be walking together with the military on a parliamentary session. Therefore, it was great and I would like to congratulate the President. I would like to also urge our minister to convey these thanks from us.

Mr Speaker, there were fundamental issues raised from the speech, particularly on the issue of debt management. I think we can never over emphasise the issue of debt, particularly from the third-world countries and the Global South. I think the speech that was delivered yesterday by the President was a speech of solutions. It was a speech of where we should go as countries.

It was a speech of us as the parliamentarians, right from the regional level as the EALA members and also in our respective nations, that the parliamentarians have a role to solve the debt question that is continuing to bedevil our countries. We know our respective shillings and other currencies have been under pressure from the foreign currencies, the last four months. I think it is only during a crisis that we should look at each other in the eye and ask ourselves, "How can we solve this challenge?"

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The East African Community serves a great opportunity to solve the debt question that we have been having. How do we solve it? First of all, it is by coming up with a currency that is going to be competitive. As of now, our respective currencies are undergoing pressure from foreign currencies. We need to take charge.

I would like to quote what *Mheshimiwa* Hassan said that we can change things. We can change the debt question in our life time. We can only change that by making sure that we implement the third pillar of our community - the monetary union.

Therefore, I like how experienced parliamentarians like *Mheshimiwa* Makame and *Mheshimiwa* Rose Akol raised the issue that in the Fourth EALA, they passed the legal framework around this question. I would like to urge parliamentarians here and the Council of Ministers that we need to work together so that we can ensure that at least in this Fifth EALA, we achieve something.

The one thing that we should give the East Africans is the issue of the monetary union. Over the weekend, we saw East Africans from all walks of life imagining how we can be as an East African with one currency. We might have dismissed what was going around in social media as a hoax but looking at it from a positive angle, the person who was designing that note was actually speaking to us as parliamentarians. He was speaking to the Council of Ministers and to the Heads of State - the Summit - that “We, as East Africans, want this and you the political elite, stop derailing us”.

I dare say, Mr Speaker, that it is we, the political elite, that are denying East Africans the opportunity to have a strong currency.

I would like to congratulate President William Samoei Ruto for opening our eyes that we need to take the bull by its horns and address the debt question through the Monetary Union. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Maina. After you, we have a long list. We have Hon. Kim Gai, Hon. Thomson, Hon. Dr Ng’waru and Hon. Sadia. Hon. Umukiza, Hon. Gideon, Hon. Burikukiye, Hon. Ngate and Hon. Francine. Hon. Shahbal, Hon. Mary Mugenyi and Hon. Kering Zipporah.

Honourable members, considering five minutes to each, with this list we will go to 6 O'clock. If you agree, as all chapters have been represented –(*Interjection*)– you will have the Floor. You did not follow. I was reading the list of those who will have to speak. You are among them. If you do not mind, we can maybe close with this list. Thank you. Now give the Floor to Hon. Kim Gai.

4.33

**MR RUT KIM GAI (South Sudan):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. This House is a House of Rules and Procedure. I think some Members are laying documents on the Table, which are not part of the speech of His Excellency.

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Based on the rules of procedure, I think you should transfer those documents to the Committee on Legal, Rules and Privileges for further investigation and report to the House.

We cannot say it more that when we are talking about \$6 million and other allegations with evidence - we cannot make a resolution without further investigation from the Assembly. Therefore, I think it will be possible that this document should be referred to the committee.

As regards the speech of His Excellency on the matter of peace and security, as you are aware, His Excellency, Dr Somoei Ruto, is the chairman of the peace negotiation of the Sudan crisis. As you are aware, our brothers and sisters in Khartoum have a crisis. The EU initiated the peace process through IGAD. IGAD selected His Excellency Somoei Ruto to mediate between our brothers.

Also, we know that all our partner states are hosting our brothers from Sudan. We even opened our universities for hosting them. I think, with that spirit, we are still engaging our President to bring lasting peace for our people in Sudan. With these few remarks, I beg to submit.

**MR TENY THOMSON:** I donate my time to my colleagues.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. We go to the next.

4.35

**DR JUMANNE MAGHEMBE NG'WARU (Tanzania):** Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you for the opportunity. I would also like to thank the Commission and the planning meeting for hosting this Plenary in Nairobi. Everyone who knows me knows that Nairobi is my second favourite venue, the first one being Dar es Salaam, of course, for obvious reasons but I love Nairobi. I love the food and the people. They are very friendly people. I also spent part of my primary school here at Muthaiga Primary School, so I am at home. I am very happy.

As my fellow Members have made brilliant submissions with respect to the President's speech and have dissected it paragraph by paragraph, I am going to focus my short time on congratulating my fellow doctor, His Excellency, Dr William Ruto, on an excellent speech. I have been a Member of this House for six years now and we have had the pleasure of having speeches by five members of the Summit.

I remember His Excellency, Dr Magufuli - may God rest his soul in peace - giving a very strong speech about how we should be self-reliant as East African nations. We should not rely on international loans. I also remember when His Excellency, Yoweri Museveni talked with great passion about crops and food stuff and how they should not be subject to restrictions within the Community.

Bearing in mind these great speeches that we have heard, I think this is one of the best speeches. It is very rare, my fellow honourable colleagues, to be in the presence and to hear from a visionary. I believe that Dr Ruto is a visionary and it was very clear from his speech that he is a proponent of Africa's financial freedom.

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He talked at great length about the need to do away with arbitrary international credit rankings for Africans. Knowing how the world is, it takes a man who is not only a visionary, but a man of great and strong convictions to take on the current world order. Therefore, we congratulate him on that and wish to encourage him to continue in the same spirit.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remind the honourable members that today, we only have three years, ten months, 24 days and three hours left in our term and I think that we have not done enough as a House. If you listened to the speech of His Excellency yesterday, the summit has a lot of faith in us. We need to do more. We need to pass more Bills. We need to be stronger in oversight to justify the faith that is placed upon us by our leaders.

With that being said, Mr Speaker, I would like to thank you again for this opportunity and thank my colleagues in the Kenya chapter for being excellent hosts. Every time I see my brother Sankok, I cannot help but smile. We are looking forward to going to his place over the weekend. Everyone knows my sister is smiling because she knows on weekends, I usually run away to Dar-es-Salaam, but I am looking forward to coming to your place, explore and enjoy the Maasai culture.

4.40

**MS JAMES SEBIT SADIA (South Sudan):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity. I thank the Kenyan chapter for having handsomely received us to the city of Nairobi. I am really very happy.

Mr Speaker, I would like to get briefly to the speech of the President. The speech was very remarkable. I really thank our talented, gifted President. However, my remarks will be on how it will be practically applied to our larger population of East Africa.

The President talked about us as Africans. As an African woman or person, it humbled my heart for us to rewrite our history; a history, which is not intense, conflict, disease and poverty ridden. When we reflect on our larger population of East Africa - our region as a whole - we could see the frustration that our citizens are going through.

Mr Speaker, if we are to rewrite our history as Africa – with no poverty in it, disease and conflict, we have to be so practical on our deliberate course of action that is taking place in our own partner states.

He also emphasised a digital economy. As a leader, I would ask myself, how much of our population is having electricity? When we look at our rural communities, they are suffering. When you talk about digital economy - I have been to China. A rural farmer who is in his farm cultivating can reach out to the larger population because he has the internet and electricity. However, when we look at our population, the majority are under stress. There is no enabling environment. Therefore, I would ask the Council members; the Ministers around to urge our Partner States – for sure, we have to be realistic to ourselves.

I have taken one year in this Parliament. We had a resolution on the Malabo Declaration. I do not know whether it has been taken into consideration. When we look at our agricultural sector, it is really down. We also heard in the beginning about supporting women and young

people in the economic sector to boost the private sector so that it can better their lives but I do not know whether it is really taking shape in our Partner States.

We should not talk about Kenya only. Let us consider all the eight partner states practically in our actions. Are we really debating for the sake of talking? I am a person who does not like talking too much. We have so many resolutions and Bills but are they really taking effect? It is a question of responsibility. How much does the responsibility that carries along with this take? He has really touched our hearts. With all the resources that we have, we should have a story of our forefathers that liberated us but when we look at ourselves, do the laws that we make affect the projects that we are undertaking?

We are really in problems and we have to be realistic. We have to be the leaders of integrity if we want to take East Africa – if we talk about one people, one destiny, it is really a problem.

I can see the rising social classes between people. We have the rich - how do you have a slogan of “One People, One Destiny” when you have social classes? I can give you an example. India could have been better than China if they had policies that lift people out of poverty. When we have such nice speeches, we have to be very serious about the actions that we are taking. We need to uplift the majority of our people out of poverty. When we uplift them, that is when we will talk about “one people, one destiny.”

Mr Speaker, I was also one of the persons who attended the Nairobi Summit that was talking about the transition to clean energy. So, what is the implication? Let us look at the purchasing power of our population. How much are they getting? So, when you talk about transition to clean energy, we need to have policies that support that.

Also, we have to make sure that the purchasing power of our larger population is able to meet that need. It is not about us, the class that can afford. What about the population of EAC? Imagine 310 million people and you have only 20 percent who can achieve that, what about the 80 percent? I urge the Chair of the Council to take the resolution seriously. It should not be a matter of debating; let us see action on the ground. Mr Speaker, with this, I beg to stop.

**MR MUSAMALI:** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker. I did not intend to make any contribution because I believe that I did enough yesterday. However, I have been disturbed by the statements made by Hon. Kim Gai about the documents which were presented by Hon. Kennedy Mukulia.

I am rising on this procedural matter and it is in line with this very debate. Hon. Mukulia presented documents here, alleging that there are things which are not going on well in the Community, and that those documents form part of evidence. The person who he is alleging is also a member of this House. I do not know why he is not even here.

For that matter, if there is anything - for the honourable Member to claim that it should go to a Committee of Legal - it is not a petition, it has been presented to this House. If the Member

whom the allegations have been driven towards feels that he is offended, he has a right to reply –

**THE SPEAKER:** He is there.

**MR MUSAMALI:** Rt Hon. Speaker, yes, thank you. So, the matter which I want Hon. Kim Gai – unfortunately, he has gone out and I don't know whether he is coming back - to withdraw that statement because it is unprocedural and it is uncalled for because he is diluting the debate of this House.

Those documents which have been presented are in line with the speech of the President. Let me refer you to paragraphs 18, 19, 21 and 25 of the speech. In paragraph 18, the President says that the work of this Assembly does matter. We must, therefore, remain focused on what is at stake. This is the President, and I don't want to complete it.

Paragraph 19 says, peace, stability and security must remain our foremost concerns because they are the foundations that underlie all our pursuits for growth, development and prosperity.

Mr Speaker, in the document he was putting here, he said that this is money which was meant for the Peace Fund and this is the speech of the President. Where is the illegality which the Hon. Kim Gai is alleging?

Paragraph 21 says, “Now that we have adequately established that this Assembly possesses what it takes to drive our vision of a prosperous, competitive, secure, stable and politically united East Africa, I take this opportunity to pose a couple of challenges to the honourable members gathered here.” The President is telling us that we possess what it takes and we are representatives - I mean one of the roles of this House is to oversee the organs and institutions of the Community. Therefore, if a Member has presented evidence here about fraud, incompetence, and things which are not going on well, why should he say that this is a wrong forum?

Lastly, paragraph 25 of the President's speech says, “To ameliorate the resource constraint which persistently hampers our progress, this Assembly is called upon to reflect deeply on the range of opportunities and various ways in which it can complement national and regional efforts...” – (Interruption)

**MS MUGYENYI:** Mr Speaker, while I appreciate the presentation being made, many of us are not privy to the document that is being discussed. We are taking a lot of time listening to Hon. Musamali but we are actually lost. Where is this document? Has everybody seen it? I personally have not seen it. So, I think it would be procedurally right if we had access to this document so that we can appreciate what our colleague is talking about. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** About this document, Hon. Musamali, can I respond? Can I have the floor? Because all that you are talking about is about Hon. Kim Gai's contribution and Hon. Kennedy's contribution.

**MR MUSAMALI:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, but I want to seek your indulgence without losing this point because I rose on a procedural point. The Hon. Mary who is talking about documents came late when the documents had already been laid.

However, let me conclude that we do not want that matter which was raised by Hon. Kim Gai to dilute our debate, including these documents which have been laid because they are here and the honourable Secretary-General is a member of this House. They were raised against him and he will have the time to respond. Mr Speaker, I beg to submit. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. I have just received these documents and I haven't even read them. As Hon. Mary is complaining, even me, this is the first time I have been given these documents so I think I will need to go and look into them myself. I promise you that by Tuesday, I will rule on these documents. I will guide you, but give me –

**MR KAKOOZA:** Mr Speaker, I am sorry to not have concluded, but procedurally, it would be correct - these documents have been forwarded to the House and they become property of the House. It would have been better that they are committed to the relevant committee to investigate and report back before the ruling comes.

**THE SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I have told you that I will rule on these issues on Tuesday afternoon during the Plenary. Now we can go to Hon. Umukiza.

4.54

**MS FRANCOISE UMUKIZA (Rwanda):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me the floor. I rise to also support the motion that is really relevant and timely. Let me call it a motion brought by the Kenya Chapter through the chapter Chair. Thank you very much for allowing us to debate this motion. It is very important and from the onset, I also rise to congratulate His Excellency, William Samoei Ruto, the President of the Republic of Kenya, for also addressing the House yesterday. It was insightful and that is why I take this opportunity to comment on the content of the speech that is constructive and educative.

I concentrated on page 7 of this speech, especially paragraphs 20, 21, and 22. Mr Speaker, as you can see, His Excellency, the President mentioned that as we continue to work on such challenges - all the challenges that are brought and I am not going to repeat all of them - of trade and investment, persistent non-tariff barriers - Hon. Kakooza tackled them and I am not going to repeat them - but we have these non-tariff barriers that are distracting, and we have costly trade disputes.

I looked at conflicting tax regimes - and there are many of them. In paragraph 21, we also have challenges that were given by His Excellency yesterday. We have to look at these challenges and bring solutions, not to complain.

The time I was reading through, I managed to look at the challenges that we are yet to bring solutions to, as a House. You know our core functions are legislation, oversight, and representation of EAC citizens. As you know, we are singing – Hon. Sadia said, “One People, One Destiny”. I am also adding that one of the principles of EAC as a region is people-centeredness and also market-driven or private sector-driven Community. That is why I am

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talking of the private sector that was mentioned by His Excellency. You have to get prepared as we have emerging threats which impede the progress of the private sector and people centeredness.

I found out that the implementation of the EAC common external tariff 2022 version needs to be given attention. I have also found out that harmonisation of customs and domestic taxes is urgent. Hon. Odongo said he is going to bring a motion so we are waiting for that motion to see whether it will give us solutions.

I also found out that activation of the EAC Committee on Trade Remedies - because here we are talking of trade disputes - We thank His Excellency for having brought these trade disputes. These have been here since the Fourth EALA. I have been hearing about the Trade Remedies Committee that was not put in place by the Council of Ministers. I don't know what is going on or what they are missing to make sure that this committee is put in place.

There is also elimination of non tariff barriers in the EAC. They are rising every day. We eliminated about 40 percent but today, many more are coming up with no reasons and they are impeding trade. Trucks at the border – these are the things that we face and our core function is to address them.

There is also the review of the EAC Rules of Origin. If we want to have the EAC we want, and the Africa we want, we should make sure that the Rules of Origin are not a matter. We have to go borderless as we talk of origin. Why origin? We are all Africans. We should simply ascertain trade products or goods that are from Africa. The rest that are from outside Africa can be an issue.

Then there is the telecommunications service sector in the EAC. The EAC mutual recognition agreements for movement of professionals, this cross-border trading, free movement of workers, fast tracking the process required for the implementation of the AfCFTA. This is the market that is bringing together traders of EAC, citizens, private sector and everyone.

The operationalisation of the Trade Remedies Committee – I have already mentioned this but I have to say to handle emerging trade related issues even with the AfCFTA. Slow implementation of Council decisions in the Summit resolutions, especially the Open Skies One Area Network was mentioned, use of a single tourist visa and lack of implementation of mutual recognition agreements. Need for the EAC local contents policy.

Mr Speaker, these are the issues that I have just tried to find out under our core functions and they should pass through the committee so that we can bring solutions and report on that. Thank you very much.

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Gideon, five minutes.

5.00

**MR GIDEON THOAR (South Sudan):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I take this opportunity to thank the great Republic of Kenya under the leadership of His Excellency, Dr William Ruto.

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I also thank the leadership of my brother, Hon. Hassan, who has made all of us feel at home. I know that he is a good leader that has a vision for East Africa like some of us.

Mr Speaker, I will restrict my speech to two items only; paragraphs 18 and 20. But before that, I have been a beneficiary of Kenyan politics. My primary, secondary and university education was in Kenya and I am doing my doctoral studies in Kenya. So, I am purely in Kenya and I am very conversant with how Kenyan politics is moving. One of the leaders that I have admired in my political career as part of the leaders in East Africa is President Ruto. He is very progressive, forward thinking with a vision.

Mr Speaker, in this great speech, you can draw three things. One is that President William Ruto is well grounded in fast-tracking the East African Integration agenda. He has knowledge about it, he knows about the challenges, he knows about the progress and he, as well, located the functions and the mandate of the East African Parliament as an important organ of the Community.

His speech tells you that the East African Community is a model of governance that is being promoted by this Community and being a model of good governance, it has to be safeguarded against any malicious interest. The Assembly is the right organ or institution to do that when it comes to questions of accountability.

I was alarmed and really saddened about the state of our union when I heard of the documents being submitted with such figures being approved by the Council of Ministers which is a policy organ of the Community. It questions our aspirations as a whole - where are we heading to?

To protect this mode of governance, the Assembly and this great speech – paragraph 18 is to look at issues which are at stake in the Community and one of them is the governance itself. How do you address the question of governance if you cannot address the issue of corruption? You cannot go forward without addressing issues of corruption when you are dealing with governance. You must safeguard the continuity and prosperity of the Community by ensuring that your resources are being used efficiently and effectively.

Mr Speaker, the other issue that is at stake is peace and stability. Having a stable region will lead us to achieving the main objective of the East African Community which is to develop policies and programmes aimed at achieving economic, social, political and cultural development. We cannot achieve that holistic development without safeguarding against any malicious interests in the Community. I think it is high time that we demonstrated, as legislators in the East African Parliament, because we are accountable to our citizens who are contributing taxes for us to be here. How do the common *wanainchi* feel when we are dealing with issues of corruption?

I want to emphasise one thing before my time ends. The President was very clear about the issue of non-tariff barriers and this is a question that needs to be addressed with a lot of urgency by the Council.



The Council has to prioritise some key areas in this policy document to be dealt with, especially non tariff barriers need to be addressed. I support this motion by my colleague, Hon. Hassan, and I submit. Thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Gideon. We will have Hon. Burikukiye and Hon. Ngate.

5.06

**MR VICTOR BURIKUKIYE (Burundi):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity that you have given me to add my voice to this debate congratulating H.E Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya. Let me also thank our Kenyan colleagues for their willingness and enthusiasm in making us enjoy this beautiful city of Nairobi.

I will pick the second paragraph of the speech of His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Kenya, where he appreciates and recognises the role and importance of the Assembly in advancing the integration agenda of the EAC. Unfortunately, we do not see the same spirit or perspective on the side of the Council. You can see that they do not value our activities. See the attendance here. How many are they? We should have the same spirit from the Council of Ministers as we see the Summit members appreciating our role and importance.

To support my point, you cannot imagine - is it proper or conceivable that the CEO of EAC who is supposed to spearhead all the activities of EAC can deny funds for the activities of the Assembly? I will give you an example. There is a planned tour which is very important for East African citizens of this region. I may be mistaken and I stand to be corrected – *(Interruption)*

**MR SANKOK:** Mr Speaker, I think the document of the President's speech is on our tables. We are diverting so much to discuss an honourable member of this House. You cannot discuss an honourable member without bringing a substantive motion but we are discussing a member of this House. Mr Speaker, I think we should stick to the content of the speech.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. I even guided you before.

**MR BURIKUKIYE:** I was speaking about the tour and its importance for the citizens of this Community. If I am not mistaken, this activity has no funds so far. I stand to be corrected. Rt Hon. Speaker, I would like to seize this opportunity to implore Council members to value the importance of activities of this Assembly. I take this opportunity to urge this same Council to look with an eagle's eye at the day-to-day activities of the Secretariat. With this, I beg to submit and I support the motion.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Hon. Ngate and then hon. Francine.

5.10

**MR FRANCOIS NGATE MANGU (Democratic Republic of Congo):** Thank you, Mr Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to add some ideas about the address we followed yesterday. I thank colleagues from Kenya for two things. We feel really at home here. Also,

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we thank them for the assistance given to one young lady who died here. They assisted in having the body returned to the DRC.

Mr Speaker, I cannot speak much because I am limited by the language but I want to insist on three or four things which caught my attention yesterday. I think yesterday, we realised that we were before an African leader with a vision for this Community. His vision in paragraph 3 is to transform, to translate economic, political, social and cultural integration into a positive impact on the wellbeing of every citizen in East Africa.

Honourable Speaker, I asked my friend, Hon. Makame; if you have a leader talking like this, why can't we be in this country?

Paragraph 13 says that political federation depends on effective cooperation in political affairs, regional peace and security. It is real hope for us that we have leaders who need peace and security in the region.

It is also added in paragraph 19 that we want East Africa to be peaceful, stable and secure. All that gives us real hope because at a certain time, when we were facing some problems in the EAC, we asked, "What will be the future of the Community?" but yesterday, we were happy to hear what was said.

When he spoke about opening up to the Atlantic Ocean, to build a bridge between the Atlantic Ocean and Indian Ocean, I said he is now referring to DRC. It is also a great move for us, especially when he referred to human resources, natural resources and the land we have in EAC. I realised that the President was opening the eyes of those who do not know that we have all that is necessary to develop Africa *-(Applause)-* instead of being pushed by others we are only looking out for their interests.

As Africa, we have to face this. We have natural resources, human resources and land, and can profit from what we have to develop this Community. I feel that if you open your eyes and be clever, because we are blind, you can develop East Africa, which can be a real power in Africa. *(Applause)*

It also gave me the opportunity to think that during the meeting to be held in Nairobi soon - because he said it - they will talk about development, peace and security in Africa. With that thinking, we cannot fail to benefit from what we have. I also support the motion given by the Kenya Chapter and thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for giving me this opportunity. *(Applause)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Ngate. You had told us that your speech would be short because of your *-(Laughter)-* poor English, but look, you have even gone beyond five minutes. I should maybe make it ten minutes. Let us go to Hon. Francine.

5.17

**MS FRANCINE RUTAZANA (RWANDA):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity. I stand to thank the Government of the Republic of Kenya, the people of Kenya

and members of the Kenya Chapter for the hospitality. We feel at home and in good hands to conduct our business comfortably. Thank you very much, Kenya Chapter.

Mr Speaker, I rise to also support the motion to thank the President of the Republic of Kenya for the very elaborate speech that we heard yesterday. I would like to go straight to point 7 on page 3, where he stated that the instruments and frameworks needed to bring into operation our semi-autonomous institutions, delineate our areas of cooperation and attend to the pillars of integration are promulgated under the exclusive mandate of this Assembly's commitment to deliver a robust architecture for the successful delivery of an ambitious programme of action.

From this point, I see that we are on track, only if we try to follow up and fast track the implementation of decisions and directives of the Council and Summit, and the recommendations of this Assembly. We have various meetings from the Summit; they give a number of directives. The Council of Ministers provides important decisions, as well as the Assembly - we are always providing recommendations, under our mandate.

I am glad that on the Front Bench, we have at least three Ex-officios and members of the council who are listening to what we are talking about today. Yesterday, we listened to a member of the Summit; they were here and listened. Today, we are reinforcing for them to help us move forward the agenda of this Community.

Mr Speaker, the recommendations we have through the statutory meetings are to support the strengths of the Community, to advise on how we can transform the weaknesses into opportunities for the great development of this community, and also advise on the way forward. Our observation as the Assembly – and we have been singing this song for many years - is meant to enforce the implementation of the recommendations and directives of our organs.

Mr Speaker, this Community is driven by the direction taken by the Summit, but the tyres are at the Council. How are you going to push in that direction if the tyres are not moving? It is not possible. You cannot expect movement if the tyres are not moving. That is the reality.

The Council is here as ex-officios - you are the tyres and we are now looking up to you to move this big bus where we all are. The Assembly represents the biggest number of citizens who are inside that bus.

My appeal is to urge the Council of Ministers - we have the Counsel to the East African Community (CTC) with us. We have the Secretary-General with us, please help us to move this bus so that we can move the agenda of this Community. I submit, Mr Speaker.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Francine. You said that members of the Summit are those who are driving and we have the tyres, but who are we?

**MS RUTAZANA:** We are passengers.

**THE SPEAKER:** Passengers? Okay. Thank you. Let us go to Hon. Mary Mugenyi, then we conclude with Hon. Kering Zipporah.

5.23

**MS MARY MUGYENYI (UGANDA):** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I also stand to appreciate the event of yesterday. First and foremost -

**THE SPEAKER:** Hon. Omar, you need to behave a little bit. You have been moving around; please take your seat. Yes, Hon. Mary, proceed.

**MS MUGYENYI:** Mr Speaker, I also want to start by thanking Kenya. Thank you, honourable colleagues from Kenya, Kenya as a general state, the people and of course His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Kenya, for a very good and informative speech. A lot has been said about this speech, point by point and issues have been raised. Given the time which we have, I think there is no need to go through what was said.

I want to acknowledge and be on the *Hansard* that yesterday, we were privileged to listen to a leader that is so knowledgeable and eloquent, and a leader with not only courage, but a vision for Kenya and East Africa in particular. Thank you so much, His Excellency, for the time that you took to come and be with us.

Some of us have been following President Ruto over the mainstream and social media, particularly on issues that deal with the Continent and the region of East Africa, with a lot of admiration. Yesterday, I was privileged to now see and listen to him deliver this important information that he has been giving out, including the world financing by the financial institutions that he has talked about a number of times. I appreciate him for having come to our Parliament to address us.

I, of course, appreciate being in Kenya. As someone said, two of us have already mentioned that they have had the privilege of living and benefitting from Kenya. I lived in Nairobi in particular at one time in my life, when it was not possible to live at home.

As a matter of fact, as a young woman, who had just graduated, I had my second child in Aga Khan Hospital. It was warm and hospitable, and I of course came back over time. Kenya has been sentimentally at my heart as a place where I can go and live as an African. So, thank you Kenya, once again, for receiving EALA.

I would also like to appreciate the President of Kenya for appreciating and emphasising the role that has been played by EALA in achieving the developments that have already been achieved, and also the role that we need to play as parliamentarians in the work that still has to be done.

Many times, you have a feeling that East Africa or at least the leadership of the Community is not appreciating Parliament. From time to time, you come to wonder whether EALA is actually being appreciated, whether it will continue to exist or whether its role is seen - at least by the leadership of the region does.

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Yesterday, again, one of the areas of appreciation and admiration for me was to listen to President Ruto underscoring the role of Parliament of EALA in the integration agenda, the achievements that have been registered and also encouraging us to do more, in order to move together and achieve our goals.

Lastly, while listening to President Ruto yesterday, I was reminded of the many speeches from our Summit members that echo the same value for integration, encouraging us to do more, and showing us the role, use and value of the leadership of the Summit that says this is the direction that we need to take.

I keep wondering where the problem then is when it comes to actually moving together towards achieving the pillars of integration, especially the area of political integration. Is it we the legislators? Is it the citizenry? Is it the civil service? Where is the problem? This is because the leadership we see is echoing the same message on the importance of East African integration and it can also be seen by the fact that we are growing over time.

Therefore, I thank you, Mr Speaker, for allowing me to add my voice in appreciating the speech of His Excellency, William Ruto, and to also say that East Africa has a future, listening to such a bright, young leader with enthusiasm about our integration. Thank you.  
(Applause)

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Mary. Hon. Shahbal, were you not there? We looked for you but we did not find you, so we have Hon. Zipporah. We will maybe close our eyes and give you a chance then we will go to ex-officios.

**MS ZIPPORAH KERING (KENYA):** Thank you so much, Mr Speaker, for this opportunity. Let me take this opportunity to thank His Excellency, Dr William Samoei Ruto, for the elaborate speech that he gave that made us understand where East Africa is, where it is supposed to be and how it is supposed to go.

I would like to thank my colleagues who spoke before me and more so, the “thank you” that you have given to Kenya. I was sitting here and wondering about the kind words and strong sentiments that you have shared to describe Kenya, through this speech from our dear President.

If we had an opportunity to maybe sponsor a dinner, we would think that you are thanking us because of the amount and kind of food you have eaten. But the kind words you have shared with us are about what the President said through his speech.

Nevertheless, you still have an opportunity to thank us. We were telling our dear minister, who is seated with us here today, that when we come to Kenya for Plenary, she should distribute our credit cards in the hotels here in Nairobi, so that you simply go with your badge and you are sorted there. Those are joints that are actually licensed, so you should not worry about that.

**THE SPEAKER:** So, should she pay for us?

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**MS KERING:** Yes, see me so that I give you the pin because you need it. *(Laughter)* Otherwise, Mr Speaker, let me also join colleagues to thank our chapter chairperson for this motion that he moved, as well as Hon. Sankok and the Kenyans who have spoken. I forgot to tell you that this is a brand new building that has never been handed over to do the committees. The Bunge building that is here, it has never been used, we are using it for the first time. So, we must leave blessings in those buildings as we sit there. That is the kind gesture that our Government has actually accorded EALA. And our President spoke yesterday.

Mr Speaker, there is one thing I believe in, that we are in a place for a season, for a reason. We are in East Africa as legislative members of that Assembly in this season for a reason. And the reason is what the President told us yesterday. We have all the mechanisms. I am sure in his speech, he said that each instrument and/or each institution has its mandate.

I want to urge my colleagues here that when you look at 18, I know the first speakers have spoken about it - that the work that this Assembly does matters, and I underline the word "matters." We must therefore, remain focused on what is at stake, committed to completing the outstanding work, and determined to do our best, at all times, when called upon to serve the people of East Africa.

Mr Speaker, that takes me to number six where H.E the President, spoke about the four protocols that we need to have done away with and we need to implement.

I want to ask my colleagues - because there is one that he actually stressed. That is the last pillar, the political federation, where he spoke about the three countries that have done their public participation - that is Burundi, Uganda, and Kenya.

I managed to gate-crash and attend one session in the western region of Kenya. My brother, Shahbal talked about one that was in Mombasa. Otherwise, I gate-crashed into one that was in western Kenya. But you see because I gate-crashed I would not be allowed to give my view. So, I just sat there and only got introduced.

Anyway, from that meeting, I realised if EALA members were incorporated into that public participation, I am telling you these are the people who would carry this and ensure that it comes to its conclusion in not a long time. I now want to urge honourable members who have not done this in their countries whether invited or not, to please gate-crash into those meetings. Just get into the programme no matter whether you have been facilitated or not; just get to that programme and you will find out that your presence there will be very important and you will be counted to have been part of this fourth pillar.

Otherwise, I want to tell my colleagues that feel comfortable in Kenya; you are safe. In case you think that you are not properly taken care of where you are, we are here to change you from where you are to another place. Each one of you, keep a smile on your face until we finish this Plenary. Thank you so much. I submit.

**THE SPEAKER:** Now let us have the Hon. Shahbal.

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**MR SULEIMAN SHAHBAL:** Mr Speaker, I rise to support the Hon. Hassan Omar's motion in complimenting the President's speech. And I would like to add one or two things that the President raised, which require our serious consideration, particularly paragraph 25, where he talked about ameliorating the resource constraints that persistently hamper our progress.

This Assembly is called upon to reflect deeply on a range of opportunities and the various ways in which it can complement national and regional efforts to mobilise and allocate more resources to the regional integration agenda.

Now, His Excellency, raised the challenge, and the challenge that I see is that - I as an African, am fed up of hearing, "Oh! Africa is the richest country, oh! Africa has got the most resources, oh! Africa is this" - I mean, that is a lot of hot air. Resources in the ground that do not support our people are worthless to us. So, what is important for us is: how do we take these opportunities; whether it is gold; fishing or mining - how do we take them from opportunities into viable and bankable projects that will create wealth and jobs? That is what counts.

I want to say very clearly that Africa's challenge is not the shortage of capital. I am repeating that: it is not the shortage of capital, but it is the way in which we are trying to raise money. Our dependence on donors and foreigners to come and do things for us automatically leads us to being exploited. I think it is time that we followed what His Excellency said and found alternative ways. Let me give you two examples:

In 2015, a small Kenyan company called Gulf Energy raised \$2.2 billion to build a 1,050-megawatt power plant. A small Kenyan company! Why? Because they took a viable opportunity and made it a bankable project and once it became bankable the donors came in; the funders came in; the investors came in; and everybody wanted to jump on that bandwagon. That is proof that if a small company could do that and had they succeeded in this, it would have been the largest infrastructure project in Eastern and Central Africa. The project failed not because of lack of capital, but because of geopolitics, which Hon. Sankok had nothing to do with.

The second example that I want to give to you, my dear colleagues, is that I started an affordable housing project in Mombasa. Not one bank was willing to finance it. However, the day it became successful, every single bank was lining up to give us money, which is an indication that we need to take an opportunity and make it viable and show people that this is viable. Therefore, proof of concept is important.

We, in Africa, suffer from the perception that there is too much risk, but risk has mitigants. It is good that you take up an idea and identify the risks. Convert it into a bankable project and the money will come. And most of this money is available within Africa itself. These opportunities exist in every East African country. So, what am I proposing?

I am proposing that our Committee on Communication, Trade and Investment should put up a motion to propose the setting up of an East African Investment Bank whose job will be to take up ideas and opportunities into bankable projects and raise money for them across the East African spectrum. This is not going to be like the East African Development Bank; we even don't know who owns that bank now. We need a bank that will drive investment into East Africa; that will be owned by East Africans; and that will then invite other parties to come in.

Finally, Mr Speaker, in paragraph 26 of the speech, the President invited us to make sure we participate in the World Bank Group International Development Association Summit that will be held in April 2024. I am begging you, Mr Speaker, to make sure that EALA is well represented there. Thank you very much. (*Applause*)

**THE SPEAKER:** Did you support the motion?

**MR SHAHBAL:** A hundred percent, I support the motion.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you. Now let us go to - if there is any ex-official member who would like to take the floor, you have it.

If there is no issue, we proceed. Yes, honourable Secretary General.

5.43

**DR PETER MUTUKU MUTHUKI (Secretary General):** Mr Speaker, I thank you and indeed the Members for this opportunity, but also congratulate you and the Assembly that in the spirit of rotational sitting, you chose Kenya to host this sitting. I want just to inform you, just like all the partner states in East Africa, Kenya remains very inclusive, accommodative, and I am sure you take time while you are here to explore the magic of Kenya. And we were invited to do so by H.E, the President, when he gave his speech yesterday.

But also thank you, Mr Speaker, and the Members, for also prioritising this item on your calendar. I also thank the Hon. Omar Hassan, for moving this very important motion. And right from the onset, I support it.

Mr Speaker, I thank the President, for not only giving a very great speech, but also for giving a strategic view on how he foresees our Community, going forward. He brought out some of the things that he thinks we should focus on. He spoke of a very expanded East African Community. As we speak, we are eight partner states of the East African Community. We thank the Summit for admitting the Federal Republic of Somalia in November last year.

I also wish to inform you that the Federal Republic of Somalia submitted their instruments with the Secretary General two days ago. And, therefore, now, Mr Speaker, the next sitting or possibly the coming sittings, you will be bigger, having a bigger voice because you will be having more members of this Assembly coming from the Federal Republic of Somalia. I have already given a guideline and a roadmap to the Government and I am sure they will also be joining in other activities.

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Mr Speaker, I want to assure you, as the President said, we are talking of 350 million people now in our Community, and that is a huge market. We are talking of 5 million square kilometers size of our Community, and therefore, there is no reason whatsoever to see our people in East Africa go without food because we should take advantage of this expanded land to ensure there is enough food supply and security.

We are talking about GDP of \$350 billion and therefore, going forward you will not be surprised to see more members join this Community because, as the President said, it is now the most progressive regional economic bloc. Thanks to the members of the Summit and to the people of East Africa for continuously putting pressure to ensure that their Community serves their interests.

Mr Speaker, looking at the bigger picture, which I think is very important and in fact, I want to invite the private sector and fully associate myself with Hon. Shabal and his comments, that we need to move to invite the private sector to take advantage of this now expanded market, but also to ensure that they invest.

We are talking of a 3,300 kilometer coastline of the Federal Republic of Somalia, 1,400 kilometers of coastline of the Republic of Kenya, and 1,500 kilometers from the United Republic of Tanzania, which gives you almost 5,000 or 6,000 kilometers of coastline, which is the longest in Africa. What does that mean? It means now the cost of goods coming to East Africa will be cheaper. It also means that even the goods coming into it and out of East Africa will be competitive. And that is for the interest of the people of East Africa. That's how we need to create wealth. We need to put a lot of energy in wealth and creating jobs for our youth and for our population.

Mr Speaker, as I finalise, I want to carefully and I have carefully listened to the issues that members of the Summit are addressing. They are talking about the market, the Community expanding, but at the same time they are saying, and I want to associate fully with the views of the members of this Assembly who are saying that we need to implore the Council to ensure that they increase the budget to accommodate the increasing number of activities in our Community, if we are going to have a meaningful Community.

However, at the same time, the Summit has directed that we need to rationalise the cost of running the Community. So, we need to strike a balance to ensure that the effectiveness of the Community is meaningfully serving the people of East Africa, looking at the bigger picture. But the issues raised by Members in relation to their participation in activities and programmes due to issues of budgets, is something well noted and we will continue to address it. For your information, from the 27<sup>th</sup> of this month to 31<sup>st</sup>, we are inviting members of the Council to a retreat, and we kept on talking about it, to see where we could address some of the issues that Members kept talking about.

The issues of their visit and the tours, to appreciate the kind of instruments and infrastructure we have, are a priority in the list and I want to fully associate myself with that.

Therefore, honorable members, we need to implore patience, we need to appreciate that the Community is growing, and like any other child who is growing, there are always those teething problems. Problems will be there, challenges will be there, but we must not accept to

stay below the challenges. Let us rise above the challenges by looking at the bigger picture and of a Community that is serving the people of East Africa.

The Summit directed that we protect and we are meeting to, of course, to interrogate the communication, the Communique of the Summit. These are some of the things that you will be evaluating so that we have a Community that is functioning.

I thank you, Mr Speaker and Members, for strictly keeping and respecting the speech of the President, to address the issues that are raised in the speech and not getting out of the issue, because that is the only way we respect a member of the Summit. We respect the country, and respect the mover of the motion by focussing and strictly sticking to this. I want to thank you and I support the motion. I thank Hon. Omar, for moving the motion. I thank you.

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, Hon. Secretary General. If there is any - I now have - do you want to take the floor, honourable minister or it is okay? Yes, please, you have the Floor.

5.50

**MS PENINAH MALONZA (Cabinet Secretary EAC, Kenya):** Thank you very much, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to hear my voice on behalf of the Council Chair and the Council Members. From the onset, allow me to welcome you once again into the Parliament Chamber of Kenya, and we always say, “the home of human origin.”

Mr Speaker, I would also love to join the Members of this Assembly in congratulating His Excellency, the President of the Republic of Kenya, for his inspirational and yet a call-to-action speech. Yesterday marked a great day for us; the beginning of vibrancy for the great East Africa Community. As we saw, the Executive, the Council, the Legislature, and even a Member of the Summit was present delivering such a speech in a very fullest and fertile ground in our country.

Mr Speaker, allow me to pick on the concluding remarks of His Excellency, the President, and the challenge that was laid down to this great House and the Community governing bodies as a whole. In his speech, he focused on what is at stake and reminded this House to commit in completing the outstanding integration pillars work and be determined to do our best, at all times when called upon, to serve the people of the East Africa Community. And two, to provide a strong framework for achieving rapid leap-frogging, and the development of a sustainable and competitive advantage in emerging hi-tech fields like digital economy and artificial intelligence.

Mr Speaker, he went on to ask our support to the East African leaders’ Nairobi Declaration and call to action on climate change and sustainable development, which I have listened to the members address. Finally, to reflect deeply on the range of opportunities and the various ways in which it can complement national and regional efforts to mobilise and allocate more resources to the regional integration agenda as well as to reflect, deeply, on the debt management.

Mr Speaker, before I conclude, I would like to mention that the Republic of Kenya has aligned its programs to the bottom-up economic transformation agenda by implementing programs targeted at increasing East African trade and developing regional value chains, and

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creating awareness on the trade and investment opportunities available in the East Africa region to not only Kenyans but to the entire Community.

Mr Speaker, I would like to address myself to the many matters that have been laid by the honorable House in the matters concerning the Council. As highlighted by the Secretary General, we will be retreating in the third week of this month to stock take and also reflect on where we have come from as a Council, but more so to forge a speedy strategy on some of the pivotal remarks elaborated by this honourable Assembly, as well as the speech of the President.

Mr Speaker, I have observed the EAC slogan of “One people, One destiny.” I have keenly looked at this and observed that there are missing words between the two words. And these words are: “one voice” and therefore, honourable House, let us speak with one voice as we forge forward and we will grow into a very strong Community. I support the motion and I submit

**THE SPEAKER:** So, the slogan should be: “One people, one voice, one destiny.” Thank you, honourable members, for your contributions. Now, I invite the mover of the motion to give his remarks.

**MR SANKOK:** Mr Speaker, I am rising concerning Rule 40 of our Rules of Procedure. With your permission, Mr Speaker, the rule says, “A member may explain a matter of personal nature, although there is no question before the House, but such matter may not be debated.”

Mr Speaker, I want to seek your indulgence that you allocate a day of your own choice to discuss a matter that is very important of a kind that is personal in nature but also cross-border in nature where two groups fought in Zanzibar and we were forced with Hon. Falhada Iman to travel to Zanzibar because one community was being victimized simply because they were having *rungus* and *shukas* and traditional attires.

So, Mr Speaker, I seek your direction that you may allocate time next week or any other day that we discuss this matter under Rule 40 of our Rules of Procedure.

**THE SPEAKER:** You should formally submit it to us. We will look into it and guide you.

**MR SANKOK:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I stand guided.

**THE SPEAKER:** Now I give the floor to Hon. Hassan Omar.

**MR HASSAN OMAR:** Mr Speaker, I want to first and foremost thank all the members who made their contributions and supported the motion expressing gratitude, through facts and other proclamations, for the speech of His Excellency, the President.

I thank the following Members for having contributed to this motion: Hon. Dennis Namara, Hon. Musamali Paul, Hon. Ayasson Mukulia, Hon. Clement, Hon. Dr. Abudulla Makame, Hon. George Odongo, Hon. Kanini, Hon. Caroline Kanyonga, Hon. Rose Akol, Hon. Mathias Harabemungu, Hon. David Ole Sankok, Hon. Gerald Siranda Blacks, Hon. James Kakooza,

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Hon. Dr Woda, Hon. Maina Karobia, Hon. Kim Gai, Hon. Ng'waru Maghembe, Hon. Sadia Sebit, Hon. Francoise, Hon. Gideon Gatpan, Hon. Victor, Hon. Ngate, Hon. Francine Rutazana, Hon. Mary Mugenyi, Hon. Suleiman Shahbal, Hon. Zipporah Kering, the Secretary General, Hon. Dr Peter Mathuki, Hon. Minister Penninah Malonza. I – *(Interjections)* – pardon – and the honourable myself. *(Laughter)*

I, therefore, want to really thank all of you for the extraordinary kind words you spoke about – *(Interjections)* – I mentioned them by name – H.E, President Dr William Ruto. Should I get the opportunity together with other members, I will express directly the appreciation and the thanks of this House for the great words. And I hope it will drive the policy orientation of this Assembly and move it forward. I take great note of the reforms that have been asked for. I take great note of the fact that we must develop this. I take great note of what the minister has said that this is a fresh start. EALA will never be the same again and as we move forward, particularly those who are serving their second term, I think we need to leave this Assembly with a bang and this is your opportunity to make that difference.

Finally, Mr Speaker, I was very anxious that some of you might refer yourself specifically to paragraph 31 of the President's speech, but none of you did. The President said, "I urge Hon. Omar Hassan, the Chair of the Kenya Chapter of the Assembly to use this session to introduce you to the warmth and hospitality of our country." Since none of you - and by the way, this is part of the - I wanted to address ourselves to the fact that that this is a part of an ongoing programme that we have from the time you came in to the time of your departure. We will make it as comfortable as possible. I can see the programme is extremely congested. The Minister here, Hon. Peninah Malonza – *(Interjections)* - yes, she is also the immediate former Minister of Tourism and Wildlife. We, therefore, will benefit immensely by association with her to see what else we can fit in the programme that will help you explore the magical Kenya in your own unique way.

With that, I thank everybody. I thank the members for the kind words about Kenya's hospitality and generosity. God bless you. *(Applause)*

**THE SPEAKER:** Thank you, honorable member. It is clear that we have been granted a very great speech from a statesman, an East African leader, and a great leader. Every one of us has been touched. He addressed us about issues which are very pertinent to our Community; peace and security, conflict resolution, common roots as East Africans, the economy, etcetera. All of us are in the spirit of supporting this motion.

With that, honourable members, I put the question that this Assembly do resolve to record its comments to appreciate His Excellency, Dr William Samoei Ruto, President of the Republic of Kenya, for his impetuous guidance and clear vision of the East African Region integration agenda during his address to the East African Legislative Assembly on Tuesday, 5 March 2024.

*(Question put and agreed to.)*

Honourable members, I have three communications to address you on before we adjourn. I have to confirm that as I said before, we have to look carefully at the documents that we received here, and on Tuesday, we decide on how to deal with those documents.

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Secondly, we have been invited by the Rt Hon. Moses Wetang'ula. He has invited all EALA Members for a cocktail dinner tomorrow, Thursday, 7 March 2024 at 7.15 p.m. at the Bunge Restaurant Gardens where we were yesterday. Honourable colleagues, please let us respond to the invitation extended by our colleague, the Speaker of the National Assembly of Kenya.

The third one is to adjourn. I adjourn this House to Tuesday, 12 March 2024 at 2.30 p.m. in the same Chamber. Thank you.

*(The House rose at 6.06 p.m. and adjourned until Tuesday, 12 March 2024 at 2.30 p.m.)*