

**SPEECH BY THE PRESIDENT OF ZANZIBAR AND CHAIRMAN OF THE  
REVOLUTIONAY COUNCIL; H. E. DR. ALI MOHAMED SHEIN AT THE  
COMMENCEMENT OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> MEETING OF THE 5<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup>  
ASSEMBLY- AT ZANZIBAR HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BUILDING –  
MBWENI- ZANZIBAR.  
OCTOBER 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2016**

**The Rt. Honourabe Daniel Fred Kidega, Speaker of East African Legislative  
Assembly;**

**Honourable 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of Zanzibar, Amb Seif Ali Iddi**

**The Chairperson and Council of East African Community Ministers;**

**The Rt. Honourable Zubeir Ali Maulid, Speaker of the Zanzibar House of  
Representatives;**

**Honourable Ministers of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar;**

**Honourable Members of the Assembly and the Zanzibar House of  
Representatives;**

**The Secretary General of the East African Community;**

**Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners;**

**Distinguished Guests;**

**Ladies and Gentlemen:**

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to be given this opportunity to address and to officially open the Second meeting of the Fifth Session of Third Assembly of the East African Legislative Assembly here in Zanzibar. I am delighted to have been granted the honour to share my thoughts and experience with you; distinguished Members of this August assembly. Before I proceed, allow me, at this juncture, to wholeheartedly thank you, the Honourable Speaker and Members of the Assembly, for this cordial invitation which I proudly cherish. Thank you very much.

**Honourable Speaker,**

I sincerely commend the existing arrangement of the East African Legislative Assembly to hold its meetings in different cities and towns of the partner states based on the established rotational principle. This is indeed a constructive arrangement which greatly helps to increase people's awareness of the community and ultimately become wholly supportive in implementing our integration agenda.

On behalf of the people of Zanzibar, I would once again like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to the Honourable Speaker and Members of the Assembly for holding your meetings here in Zanzibar for the second time. We still treasure the memories of the first Assembly meeting which was held in Zanzibar in December 2007. We warmly welcome you all to Zanzibar and ask you to feel at home. - KARIBUNI SANA.

Let me share good news with you that Zanzibar has continued to grow as a hot spot for international conferences. I appreciate your recognition by coming here for the second time. We now offer excellent meeting facilities which are of great value for money. The government, in collaboration with foreign and local investors, has been committed to building state-of-the-art conference facilities to attract more international conference organizers to undertake their activities in Zanzibar. It is our hope that the East African Community will gratefully avail itself of the opportunities and services we offer in the hospitality industry. Zanzibar is a cosmopolitan society and historically we have taken great pleasure in welcoming visitors. Our hotels development has grown tremendously and you are invited to taste what they offer.

**Honourable Speaker,**

Coming to your agenda of the visit, I have been informed that the Assembly is expected to dispense with three key Bills, the EAC Trafficking in Persons Bill 2016, the EAC

Polythene Materials Control Bill 2016 and the EAC Gender Equality and Development Bill 2016. These are certainly important bills for our integration programmes.

It is surely high time that across the East African region we need to have strong laws to deal effectively and decisively with human trafficking; which is a serious crime and a grave violation of human rights. Likewise, the EAC Polythene Materials Control Bill is coming at the right time. It will evidently provide a legal framework for the preservation and promotion of healthy environment through the prohibition of manufacturing, sale, importation and use of polythene materials.

I hope you know that the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar banned the importation and production of plastic bags in 2011. The full ban of using the bags has been enforced since then. We found that the bags were very damaging and harmful to the marine environment and hurting our crucial tourism industry. We have been promoting the use of raffia bags, which are environmental friendly, as an alternative. Let us hope the new legislation that you will pass on Polythene Materials Control will go a long way towards promoting healthy and clean environment.

On the other hand, the EAC Gender Equality and Development Bill 2016 will certainly pave the way for promoting gender equality, harmony and women participation in the implementation of our development programmes. It is my hope that you will have constructive discussions on various issues pertinent to these bills, and ultimately you will be able to pass legislation that will be in line with our development objectives and people's aspirations.

**Honourable Speaker,**

It is gratifying to note that, to date, East African Legislative Assembly has passed over 70 pieces of legislation, several resolutions and reports. This is a laudable contribution to the East African Community Integration process for which the Revolutionary Government

of Zanzibar and the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania highly value and adhere to.

I congratulate you, the Honourable Speaker, for the new found resilience and energy that the Assembly has employed since you took over the mantle in December 2014. Since then, there has been a steady flow of work and the region continues to feel and appreciate the weight of the regional Assembly. In fact, your exemplary leadership has tremendously motivated many Honourable Members of the Assembly to work much harder and all of them have become more resourceful. Congratulations to all of you.

**Honourable Speaker,**

As East Africans, we take great pride in the fact that we have attained considerable achievements in strengthening the main pillars of the East African Regional Integration.

Through the Custom Union Protocol, we have enormously enhanced the volume of trade within the Community. The Bloc has been rapidly emerging as a magnet for foreign direct investment. We are on the right track in our quest to improve agriculture which is one of East Africa's most important sectors, with about 80 percent of the population of the region living in rural areas and depending on it for the livelihood.

It is inspiring to see that we have many infrastructure projects in progress. However, we still need to accelerate our efforts to improve our roads, railways, waterways, aviation and communication system. It is the high-quality and robust infrastructure systems that will facilitate the movement of goods, persons, capital and services. In addition, having modern and sustainable infrastructure will make us closer together and become more inspired in developing other sectors.

**Honourable Speaker,**

It is interesting to know that all the Governments within the East African Community have stepped up efforts to promote the growth of industries and SMEs. We can make

East Africa an industrial powerhouse. We need to move from where we are now, where the contribution of manufacturing to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in East Africa is estimated at 8.9%, which is considerably below the average target of about 25% that all the Partner States have set for themselves to achieve by 2032. It is through the industrial development that we can eliminate the current unemployment challenges that exist in all partner states.

As you are all aware, since the coming of the Fifth Phase of the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania, the President, His Excellency Dr. John Pombe Joseph Magufuli, has asserted an impressive industrialization focus. At the same time, Zanzibar is in the process of reviewing its industrial policy targeting improvement of its industrial sector. We hope to raise industrial productivity and secure market within the East African Region and beyond.

It is certainly that East African Legislative Assembly has to take a leading role in making our noble objectives achievable. I call upon the Assembly to hasten the pace of creating effective policies that will eliminate the existing constraints in various economic and social sectors and advise the community and member states accordingly.

**Honorable Speaker,**

Allow me now to share my thoughts with you on tourism, which is the mainstay of Zanzibar's economy. It is a matter of fact that East Africa has recorded some impressive achievements in the tourism sector and our region is increasingly becoming an important global tourist destination. However, I am of the view that vigorous efforts must be undertaken by the Community to attract more tourists and improve the sector. Despite the fact that our region has been endowed with abundance of natural attractions and magnificent wildlife, the number of international tourist arrivals in our region is comparatively low.

It has been reported that the region receives less than 5 million tourists and holiday makers from abroad a year out of over one billion, which is the world's total. This number, in fact, does not reflect the global popularity and fame of our tourist attractions. We can do better as a bloc. The total number of tourists who visited Zanzibar in 2014 was 311,801. Our target is to reach 500,000 tourists by 2020.

It is time now for East African Community through the East African Legislative Assembly to come up with robust strategies and policies that will enable us to increase our market share of international tourist arrivals in East Africa. We need to accelerate our efforts in creating strong; interconnected domestic and regional institutions that will improve tourism and promote the region as a common tourist destination. Together, we can do it.

**Honourable Speaker,**

I was so impressed by how the heads of state of East African Community reacted and then responded to Kagera earthquake which happened on 10<sup>th</sup> of September, 2016. Acting together, they played a leading role in providing various material and financial assistance to the victims. They demonstrated the Community has gone far beyond the signed protocols. They gave hope to our people that we are together in good and hard times. They have set an example on how we should help each other as East Africans, let us follow their footsteps. As Tanzanians, we appreciate their responses and assistance.

**Honourable Speaker,**

On another subject, I am delighted by the East Africa Community's decision to choose Zanzibar as the headquarters of the East African Kiswahili Commission (EAKC). This is a very important institution of the Community. You have made the right decision, taking into account of the fact that the standard Kiswahili is spoken in Zanzibar. We thank you sincerely for the decision and pledge our full support.

Equally, I commend the recent resolution by East African Legislative Assembly on the envisaged promotion and use of Kiswahili in daily activities. As the lingua franca, Kiswahili is set to strengthen our brotherly bonds even further.

It is the intention of the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar to assist the Commission to achieve its intended goals. I would like to inform you that in Zanzibar we have stepped up efforts to promote Kiswahili globally and now the language is taught extensively in our universities. The State University of Zanzibar (SUZA) has broadened its Kiswahili curriculum. It offers special Kiswahili courses at various levels to foreign students and PhD courses to both local and foreigner students. You are welcome to join all these programmes.

**Honourable Speaker,**

I am aware that Honourable members of East African Legislative Assembly have visited Zanzibar to undertake sensitization programme- second phase - in order to create more awareness of the community and its integration agenda to the people of Unguja and Pemba. Sensitization programmes are a costly affair but the benefits they bring to the people outweigh the costs and they are extremely important, if the EAC is to be wholly owned by the people and working for the people of East Africa.

I would like to reassure you of our Government's commitment to East African integration. We will play our part in creating and shaping the laws, the institutions and the framework that will help us face that future together. Our unity is the vital precondition of our prosperity and freedom. Nonetheless, it is crucial for the EAC to learn from the past and current experience of other regional economic blocs so that we can manage the roadmap to single currency and political federation carefully and systematically. We need to address the existing challenges, including that of funding which the Community is facing at the moment to ensure the objectives and goals of the regional integration process are maintained.

The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar will do all that it takes to ensure the economic and social development future of the region is sustained. It is our ultimate desire to make our region a haven of peace, unity and stability. I assure you that the doors are open at any time for further consultations to attain this.

**Honourable Speaker,**

It is now my singular privilege and honour to declare the 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the 5<sup>th</sup> Session of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Assembly officially open.

**I thank you for your kind attention.**