



EAST AFRICAN LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

For Immediate Release

EAC BUREAU OF SPEAKERS CONCLUDES ITS 21ST MEETING IN ARUSHA, SOLIDIFYING PARLIAMENTARY DIPLOMACY AND REGIONAL INTEGRATION

ARUSHA, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA – October 2, 2026 — The Bureau of Speakers of the National Legislatures of the East African Community (EAC) and the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) successfully concluded its 21st Ordinary Meeting today at the EAC Headquarters in Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania. The summit of parliamentary leaders was preceded by the preparatory Meeting of the Clerks and Secretaries-General held on September 29–30, 2026, which laid the technical groundwork for the adoption of key policy and institutional frameworks.

Chairing the meeting, the Speaker of the House of the People of the Federal Republic of Somalia, **Rt. Hon. Abdulkadir Mohamed Nur**, emphasized the transformative potential of legislative cooperation across the bloc. Reflecting on Somalia's term and its institutional vision, Speaker Nur highlighted that regional parliamentary cooperation must directly deliver tangible outcomes to East African citizens. He noted, ***"Our vision is to strengthen the House of the People as a professional institution, effective in legislation and oversight, open and responsive to citizens, and capable of contributing to national dialogue and stability. This reform agenda shapes Somalia's engagement with the EAC, seeking both to learn from and contribute to fellow Parliaments. Regional parliamentary cooperation must ultimately deliver practical benefits to citizens, and not simply dialogue among institutions"***. Speaker Nur reaffirmed Somalia's readiness to continue steering the Bureau for another year and welcomed delegates to host the 22nd Meeting in Mogadishu in early 2027.

Representing the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania, **Rt. Hon. Daniel Baran Sillo**, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly, welcomed the Partner States Speakers and highlighted Tanzania's unwavering commitment to the Community. Emphasizing the collective responsibility of member parliaments, Deputy Speaker Sillo remarked, ***"This meeting provides an important opportunity to strengthen parliamentary, social, and economic cooperation in East Africa. Such platforms enable Partner States to deliberate, assess progress, plan, and implement agreed programs, thereby strengthening the performance of Parliaments and contributing to the well-being of citizens. Tanzania remains proud to be part of the EAC and stands as a faithful partner in building a stronger Community"***. He also highlighted Tanzania's introduction of newly sworn-in EALA members and invited delegates to the upcoming 153rd Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) in Arusha.

Addressing the assembly, the Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Kenya, **Rt. Hon. (Dr.) Moses M. Wetang'ula, SC, EGH, MP**, called for enforceable accountability and institutional discipline within the Bureau. Urging the operationalization of an actionable execution plan, Speaker Wetang'ula stated, *“The strength of the Bureau lies in the institutions that support it, with the meetings of Clerks acting as our technical engine. Once the Bureau pronounces itself on a matter, it is our collective duty through our Clerks to follow decisions through to full implementation. A decision that is not implemented is no decision at all. We must adopt an action matrix assigning a responsible office and timeline to every decision, while continuing to champion peace as the bedrock of regional economic development”*.

The Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Uganda, **Rt. Hon. Jacob Marksons Oboth-Oboth, MP**, underscored the shared diplomatic duty and alignment among EAC leaders. Commenting on his transition into the speakership and the common goals of member states, Speaker Oboth-Oboth said, *“Assuming this office allows me to draw notable parallels with my colleagues, where shared backgrounds in public service serve as a foundation for common understanding. Partner States must engage in the proceedings of the Bureau through the lens of shared interests, ensuring that our participation is consistently guided by the common good and shared aspirations of the East African Community”*.

Speaking on behalf of the Senate of the Republic of Burundi, the 2nd Deputy Speaker, **Rt. Hon. Kampimbare Clotilde**, welcomed the formalization of the regulatory structures governing the Bureau. Hon. Kampimbare observed, *“The proposed regulatory framework for the Bureau of Speakers and EALA represents a historic step towards formalizing and strengthening the role of parliamentary institutions within the EAC integration architecture. The Senate of Burundi remains fully committed to supporting regional integration through enhanced parliamentary cooperation and looks forward to actively participating in upcoming regional engagements”*.

Host Speaker, **Rt. Hon. Joseph Ntakirutimana** of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), guided the meeting through the formal adoption of key resolutions, including the long-awaited Rules of Procedure of the Bureau. EALA Speaker Ntakirutimana opened the proceedings with prayers and emphasized the legislative organ's continuous efforts to establish a legal framework elevating the Bureau of EAC Speakers to a formal organ of the East African Community.

ADOPTION OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE

During the session, the Bureau formally approved and adopted its comprehensive Rules of Procedure following extensive technical reviews conducted by parliamentary legal drafters and the Clerks in Kampala, Dar es Salaam, and Arusha. This milestone establishes a regulatory framework to govern meeting schedules, quorum requirements, and leadership rotations.

INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF THE BUREAU AS AN EAC ORGAN

In pursuit of statutory institutionalization, the Bureau tasked Speaker Ntakirutimana with introducing a legislative proposal in EALA to grant the Bureau formal legal status as an official Organ under the EAC Treaty. Simultaneously, the Speaker of the Parliament of Uganda was designated to directly

escalate the institutional recognition of the Bureau with the Chairperson of the EAC Summit of Heads of State, **H.E. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni**, The President of the Republic of Uganda.

16TH EDITION OF THE EAC INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GAMES (IPG) AND BUDGET

On sports diplomacy, the Bureau finalized arrangements for the 16th Edition of the EAC Inter-Parliamentary Games (IPG), resolving that the annual tournament will be hosted by EALA in Arusha, Tanzania, from **December 4 to December 15, 2026**, under the official theme ***"Umoja Wetu, Utajiri Wetu"***. The games will feature a league format across all disciplines and will fully deploy a newly developed Digital Registration Application created by Kenyan ICT Officer Amos Kimathi. The application rights will be transferred to EALA following technical capacity building.

BUDGET OF 16th EDITION OF IPG IN ARUSHA

The Bureau approved a total operational budget of **USD 134,900** for the games, to be cost-shared equally through a one-off fee of **USD 19,239** among seven Partner State legislatures and EALA by **October 15, 2026**, with the Democratic Republic of Congo excluded because they have not been attending the games. Participating parliaments were instructed to submit updated biodata and confirm sports disciplines by October 23, 2026.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS AND ARREARS

Regarding governance and financial obligations, the Bureau examined the financial health of the EAC in light of the 25th EAC Heads of State Summit directive, which instituted a revised financing formula comprising **50 percent equal contributions** and **50 percent assessed contributions**, alongside a conditional **50 percent waiver on historical arrears**. Noting with concern that current financial contributions for **FY 2026/2027** stand at **only 17 percent**, with total outstanding dues exceeding **USD 125 million**, the Speakers committed to actively engaging their respective national governments and finance ministries to expedite the clearance of outstanding arrears.

CHAIRPERSHIP AND ROTATION

The Bureau resolved that the Federal Republic of Somalia will retain the chairpersonship for an additional year, with the Republic of Burundi undertaking internal consultations to prepare for the subsequent handover in 2028.

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING ON EALA ELECTIONS AND REMUNERATION

To maintain momentum on pressing directives from the Summit regarding EALA member elections and remuneration arrangements for the 6th Assembly starting in December 2027, the Bureau scheduled an Extraordinary Meeting to be held in Nairobi, Kenya, on **October 29, 2026**, preceded by a Clerks' Meeting on **October 27–28**. Additionally, Speaker Nur and Speaker Ntakirutimanas were mandated to engage the leadership of the Parliament of the Democratic Republic of the Congo on the sidelines of the upcoming 153rd IPU Assembly in Arusha to foster their full participation in Bureau activities.

ADOPTION OF THE MEETING REPORT

The meeting concluded with the formal adoption of the comprehensive report, symbolizing a unified commitment by East African parliamentary leaders to leverage legislative alignment, financial discipline, and parliamentary diplomacy in advancing regional integration for the benefit of all citizens.

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